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Colloquial Hebrew imperatives revisited

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Abstract

In revisiting Bolozky's [Bolozky, Shmuel, 1979. On the new imperative in colloquial Hebrew. *Hebrew Annual Review* 3, 17–24] and Bat-El's [Bat-El, Outi, 2002. True truncation in colloquial Hebrew imperatives. *Language* 78(4), 651–683] analyses of colloquial Hebrew imperatives, the article argues for restricting Imperative Truncation to the morphologically-triggered process of #tV prefix elision (or even to just #t prefixes). Elision of *e* and *i* in imperatives is claimed to be effected by the general, phonetically-motivated elision of the same vowels in casual speech. The prominence and sonority of the vowel *a* protects it from elision in imperatives, and short forms like *kum* 'get up!' are not derived from their *takum* counterparts, but rather borrowed from the normative register.

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1. Introduction

Normative Modern Hebrew maintains the Classical Hebrew distinction between the Imperfect (or Prefix) conjugation – which now functions as the Future conjugation – and the Imperative. In the colloquial register, however, the second person of the Prefix (or Future) conjugation often has an imperative function. Thus, a sequence like *titragel laze*¹ '(You will) get used to it' can refer to the future in:

(1) *tox šana titragel laze* 'In a year's time you'll get used to it'

but it can also function in commands:

(2) *titragel laze* 'get used to it!'

In addition to the register difference, the use of *titragel* as an imperative moderates the urgency of the command, making it sound "more polite." In normative Hebrew, only the Imperative form *hitragel* would be used for commands.

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¹ Stress is word-final, unless marked otherwise.

In many instances, however, the colloquial register seems to allow use of **both** the Prefix-conjugation-as-Imperative form and its normative Imperative counterpart. Thus, for instance, *tedaber bešeket* ‘(you will) speak quietly’ can refer to the future in:

(3) *yavínu otxa yoter tov im tedaber bešeket* ‘They’ll understand you better if you (will) speak softly’

or convey a command in:

(4) *tedaber bešeket* ‘speak softly!’

But at the same time, *daber bešeket* ‘speak softly!’, using what appears to be the normative Imperative form *daber*, is also commonly found in the colloquial, alongside *tedaber*.

A closer look suggests that although *daber*, the colloquial alternant of *tedaber*, is identical to the normative Imperative *daber*, it does not constitute a “revival” of the latter; rather, it is a form derived from its Prefix conjugation counterpart used imperatively, with the prefix, or part of it, “chopped off”: *tedaber* > *daber*. In passing, Bar-Adon (1966)² notes that one way of creating formal imperatives in contemporary Hebrew is “to separate the prefix from the stem”, as in *kanes* (<*tikan*es ‘enter!’), or *stalek* (<*tistalek* ‘be gone!’). Bolozky (1979) develops a full analysis of such forms, and argues that deriving the ‘new Imperative’ from the prefix conjugation is intended to increase “imperative force”. This type of truncation operates on *e* and *i*, applying either to the vowel in the #tV sequence of the Prefix conjugation, or to the whole #tV string, and depends on style and degree of casualness. In speech prevalent in the 1970s, on which Bolozky’s (1979) analysis was based, it was almost always the case that when the vowel alone was elided, the process was blocked if an initial three-consonant cluster would have been formed in the process:

(5)	M. Sing.	Gloss	Alternants	F. Sing.	Alternants
(a)	<i>tiftax</i>	open!	* <i>tftax</i> ~ <i>ftax</i>	<i>tiftexi</i>	* <i>tftexi</i> ~ <i>ftexi</i>
	<i>timrax</i>	smear!	* <i>tmrax</i> ~ <i>m(e)rax</i>	<i>timrex</i>	* <i>tmrex</i> ~ <i>mrex</i>
(b)	<i>tikan</i> es	come in!	<i>tkan</i> es ~ <i>kan</i> es	<i>tikan</i> si	<i>tkan</i> esi ~ <i>kan</i> si
	<i>tizah</i> er	watch out!	<i>dza(h)er</i> ~ <i>za(h)er</i>	<i>tizah</i> ari	<i>dza(h)ari</i> ~ <i>za(h)ari</i>
(c)	<i>texab</i> es	launder!	<i>txab</i> es ~ <i>xab</i> es	<i>texab</i> si	<i>txab</i> si ~ <i>xab</i> si
	<i>tešal</i> em	pay!	<i>tšal</i> em/čal _{em} ~ <i>šal</i> em	<i>tešal</i> mi	<i>tšal</i> milčal _{mi} ~ <i>šal</i> mi
(d)	<i>titlab</i> eš	get dressed!	* <i>ttlab</i> eš ~ <i>tlab</i> eš	<i>titlab</i> ši	* <i>ttlab</i> ši ~ <i>tlab</i> ši
	<i>tictal</i> em	get photographed!	? <i>tictal</i> em ~ <i>ctal</i> em	<i>tictal</i> mi	? <i>tictal</i> mi ~ <i>ctal</i> mi

Currently, these constraints are not always enforced; in casual speech, one may sometimes hear *tftax/tftexi*, *tmrax/tmrex* (where *m* is usually syllabic; *mrax/mrex* with non-syllabic *m* may also occur), as well as *ttlab*eš = [t:lab_eš] and *tctal*em = [t:stale_m].³

In the 1970s as well as currently, the blocking of vowel elision (to prevent the formation of a three-consonant cluster) is always removed if the segment following the prefix *t* is a sibilant fricative, since the sibilant merges with that *t* into an affricate, resulting in the formation of a shorter cluster (see Bolozky, 1980):

(6)	Form	Gloss	Alternants
	<i>tisgor</i>	close!	<i>tsgor</i> > <i>cgor</i> ~ <i>sgor</i>
	<i>tistok</i>	shut up!	<i>tštok</i> > <i>čtok</i> ~ <i>štok</i>
	<i>tistakel</i>	look!	<i>tstakel</i> > <i>ctakel</i> ~ <i>stakel</i>

In her extensive discussion of the same phenomenon, Bat-El (2002) names these forms “truncated imperatives”. She provides a detailed Optimality Theory analysis, which accounts for full prefix truncation as well as for elision of only the prefix-vowel, and also captures the environments in which truncation is blocked.

² Bar-Adon (1966) introduces new jussive and imperative formations in colloquial Hebrew – where *še* + prefix-conjugation forms function as jussives, and as imperatives when *še-* is reduced to *š-*, as in *š(e)tavo maher* ‘come quickly!’, *šeyelex kvar* ‘let him go already!’, *š’e’amut* ‘may I die! (desiderative sense)’. The reference to forms like *kanes* and *stalek* is incidental.

³ Forms whose source is not specifically noted were found in various recordings by Shmuel Bolozky.

In revisiting the imperative truncation phenomenon, I will argue that of the two options of imperative truncation, the elision of the vowel-only and “chopping off” the whole #tV sequence, are different in nature. The former is essentially the same as the general, phonetically-motivated deletion of *i* and *e* in casual speech, and the latter is the “heart” of imperative truncation, whose function it is to make the command more immediate and stronger, and is (morphologically) limited to Prefix-conjugation-cum-imperative forms. It will also be claimed below that frequency of use plays a role in accounting for the distribution of imperatives in colloquial Hebrew.

2. Elision of *e* and *i* in casual speech

In casual/fast speech, speakers may weaken almost any unstressed vowel in very common, easily recoverable clitics and function words, given the right prosodic configuration:

- (7) *hu kaná et aóto bezól* ‘He bought the car cheap’ > *u kana taóto bezól*
atà bá ‘Are you coming?’ > *átabà ~ tabá*
má atèm xošvím al zè ‘What do you think of that?’ > *má tem xošvím al zè*
maxár anì noséa abáyta ‘Tomorrow I am going home’ > *maxár anosèabáyta* (Izre’el, 2002)
aní caríx laléxet ‘I need to go’ > *ncəx laléxet* > *cəxlaléxet* (Bolozky, 2002)
bìmyuxád bišviléx ‘especially for you (f.s.)’ > *bèmyuxád bəšəléx* (Bolozky, 2002)

In the most casual and/or fast registers, frequent lexical items may undergo similar weakening, as in (illustrations from Izre’el (2002)):

- (8) *naxon* ‘correct’ > *nexon*   *áf exad lo...* ‘nobody’ > *áfəxadlo*
haytá noténet lexà ‘she used to give you...’ > *əytə noténdlexà*
ki ani ohév et haréax ‘because I love the smell’ > *ki ani oəf taréax*

but full deletion in lexical morphemes, as in

- (9) *má atà xošév al zè* ‘What do you think of it?’ > *máta xšév al zè*
éyfo ašutáf šelxà ‘Where is your partner?’ > *éfo aštáf šəxà ~ éfo aštáfšəxə*,

is rare. This should not be understood, however, as implying that casual vowel deletion is a marginal phenomenon. Bolozky (1977, 1999) and Bolozky and Schwarzwald (1990) show that the quality of the vowel determines the likelihood of fast/casual vowel weakening taking place, and that the process applies quite frequently to *e* and *i*. Weakening (often manifest in complete deletion) is most likely to affect the vowel *e*. In Israeli Hebrew *e* constitutes a merger of three historical entities: two Classical Hebrew phonemes and the *shva* allophone: /ɛ/, /e/ and [ə]. In Classical Hebrew, the *shva*, which is probably the commonest source for Israeli Hebrew *e*, was inserted to prevent impermissible initial or medial clusters (or resulted from reduction that “did not go all the way” in order to prevent such clusters from being formed), and many occurrences of *e* from /ɛ/ originated from an epenthetic vowel whose original function was to split an impermissible final cluster. With the loss in Israeli Hebrew of many constraints on initial, medial and final clusters, *e* from historical [ə] or from epenthetic /ɛ/ is often reduced or elided when the phonetic *raison d’être* for it is no longer there; the *e* in *ye.la.dim* ‘children,’ for instance, is required to prevent a #yIV sequence, which would have violated the correct sonority sequencing, whereas *a.ye.la.dim* ‘the children’ may alternate with *ay.la.dim*, since resyllabification circumvents such violation. Furthermore, *e* is the vowel most likely to be epenthesized when a hard-to-pronounce sequence is created through morpheme combination (e.g., *avád + ti* ‘I worked’ > *avád-eti*), or to break sequences violating the sonority hierarchy (e.g., *hércel* ‘Herzl’ > *hércel*, /nšama/ ‘soul’ > *nešama*). Preliminary measurements (Bolozky, 2004) also suggest that in Israeli Hebrew, *e* tends to be shorter than *i*. Consequently, although *e* is higher than *i* on the sonority scale, it is still the “minimal” vowel of the language, and is thus far more likely to be weakened than *i* is. It tends to be elided as a function of its frequency, familiarity and recoverability – which essentially means that it elides most easily in (unstressed) affixes, or in very frequent/familiar items, as in:

- (10) *hu ló medabér ivrít* ‘He does not speak Hebrew’ > *u ló mdabér ivrít*
hi tèlaméd otò anglít ‘She’ll teach him English’ > *ì tlamédotò anglít* ~ *ìtlaméttò anglít*
matáy hu yèxabés kvar et amìxnasáim ‘When will he finally launder his pants?’ > *matáy u yxabés kvar*
tamìxnasáim
hi šoméret alàv ‘She’s protecting him’ > *i šomért alàv*
raíta kvar et haséret hazè ‘Have you already seen this movie?’ > *raíta kvar tasért azè*
šèteléx kvar ‘(I wish) she left already!’ > *šteléx kvar*
lèdabér hu yodéa’ tóv me’ód ‘In talking he is very good’ > *ldabér u y(o)déa tóv meód*

At first glance, *i* does not seem to be as vulnerable to such elision in affixes, but a closer look reveals that its apparent resistance to elision may be due to potential formation of impermissible sequences that would have resulted from *i*-deletion. When the right configuration arises, it may be deleted as well:

- (11) *ze ló mištalém li làasót et zè* > ‘It does not pay for me to do it’ ~ *ze lómštalémli lasót edzè*
matáy hi tìstalék mipó ‘When will she get out of here?’ > *matá i tstalék mipó* ~ *matái ctalék mipó*
hi ló tikanés habáyta blì rešút ‘she won’t enter the house without permission’ > *i ló tkanés abáyta blì rešút*
hi ló tišáer itò yotér mišaná > ‘She won’t stay with him longer than a year’ > *iló tšáeritò yotér*
mišaná ~ *iló čaéritò yotér mišaná*
kedáy šehi tizaér miménu ‘she’d better watch out for him’ > *kedáy šei tzaér miménu* ~ *kedáy šeìdzaér*
miménu

The question is whether the V-only option in imperative truncation is a manifestation of the same process as general *eli* elision, or is independent of it. Bolozky (1979) shows that there are some minor differences, but on the whole, it is the same process of *eli* elision, in the same colloquial register. It is true that in the majority of cases, casual *eli* elision tends to apply when the phonetic need for it is removed through resyllabification, whereas imperative truncation is morphologically-triggered. However, while #tV truncation applies only to imperatives, *eli* casual elision operates everywhere, including *e* or *i* in an utterance-initial syllable (of imperatives as well as non-imperatives) in frequent, easily recoverable morphemes, i.e., even when potential resyllabification is irrelevant. This can be seen in illustrations such as *šetelex kvar* ‘(I wish) she left already!’ > *šteléx kvar* above. In other words, since elision of *i* or *e* is not categorically limited to imperatives, V-only truncation is already “covered” by casual *eli* elision, and there is no need for a separate V-only truncation process.

One could argue for imperative truncation being a two-step process – vowel elision followed by *t*-deletion – and thus cover all truncated vowels by one process. However, an independent #tV truncation rule will be required anyway, to yield forms like *ftax* without going through a *tftax stage in cases like *tiftax* ‘open!’

3. Short CVC imperative stems

Short CVC imperative stems related to irregular “defective” verbs in the Prefix conjugation are very commonly used, and they figure quite prominently in both normative and colloquial Hebrew, as in:

(12)	M. Sing.	Gloss	Alternants	F. Sing.	Alternants
(a)	<i>takum</i>	get up!	* <i>tkum</i> ~ <i>kum</i>	<i>takúmi</i>	* <i>tkúmi</i> ~ <i>kúmi</i>
	<i>taruc</i>	run!	* <i>truc</i> ~ <i>ruc</i>	<i>tarúci</i>	* <i>trúci</i> ~ <i>rúci</i>
	<i>tasim</i>	put down!	* <i>tsim</i> ~ <i>sim</i>	<i>tasími</i>	* <i>tsími</i> ~ <i>sími</i>
	<i>tavo</i>	come!	* <i>tvo</i> ~ <i>bo</i>	<i>bói</i>	* <i>tvói</i> ~ <i>bói</i>
(b)	<i>titen</i>	give!	* <i>tten</i> ~ <i>ten</i>	<i>titni</i>	* <i>ttni</i> ~ <i>tní</i>
	<i>tigaš</i>	approach!	* <i>tgaš</i> ~ <i>gaš</i>	<i>tigši</i>	* <i>tgši</i> ~ <i>gši</i>
	<i>tikax</i>	take!	* <i>tkax</i> ~ <i>kax</i>	<i>tikxi</i>	* <i>tkxi</i> ~ <i>kxi</i>
(c)	<i>tešev</i> ~ <i>tišev</i>	sit down!	<i>tševlčev</i> ~ <i>šev</i>	<i>tešvi</i> ~ <i>tišvi</i>	<i>tšvilčvi</i> ~ <i>švi</i>
	<i>telex</i>	go!	* <i>tlex</i> ~ <i>lex</i>	<i>telxi</i>	* <i>tlxi</i> ~ <i>léxi</i>

<i>tered</i>	come down!	* <i>tred</i> ~ <i>red</i>	<i>terdi</i>	* <i>trdi</i> ~ <i>rédi</i>
<i>tece</i>	come out!	* <i>tce</i> ~ <i>ce</i>	<i>tec(')i</i>	* <i>tc(')i</i> ~ <i>c(')i</i>

To account for the inadmissibility of most of sequences resulting from V-only truncation in such verbs (*tkum, etc.), Bat-El (2002) invokes Steriade's (1999) Correspondence Condition, which requires that corresponding stressed syllables be segmentally identical. Thus, *tkum is not segmentally identical with the *kum* in *ta-kum*, *tku is not identical with *ku* in *ta-kú-mi*, etc. The acceptability of *tševlčev* (the only one that can also undergo vowel-only truncation) may be due to the single-unit affricate allowing rough equivalence of *šev* = *čev*, and possible syllabic division of the feminine prefix-conjugation form as *te-švi*. The *e* in *rédi* and equivalent forms is the original *e* of normative *redí*, possibly maintained so as to prevent violation of the sonority scale; the penultimate stress of *rédi* appears to result from analogy with the large class of verbs of the *kúmi* type (the “hollow” verbs). *tiftáx* ‘open!’ > *ftáx* is allowed even though the most likely syllable division in the former is *tif-táx*, not *ti-ftáx*,⁴ i.e., an exception to the Correspondence Condition; an anonymous reviewer suggests that it may be accounted for by ranking the constraint requiring truncation above the Correspondence Condition.

3.1. Accounting for #tV truncation in verbs with CVC imperative stems

At this point, the question is how to account for #tV truncation in verbs with CVC imperative stems. We have two options:

- Delete all #tV strings, which is the approach taken in Bolozky (1979) and also adopted in Bat-El (2002).
- Delete only *e* and *i* (not *a*) in instances of #*te* and #*ti*, as allowed by the general casual *e/i* elision rule, and assume that forms like *kum* are not derived, but borrowed, or inherited, from normative Hebrew – borrowing that resulted from their frequency and familiarity.

The first approach is the simplest and most straightforward. Since #tV is morphologically restricted, i.e., is not a phonological process with “pure” phonetic motivation, any vowel can be subject to it, *a* included.

The second approach is based on the observation that the natural, general process of casual vowel elision rarely allows deletion of the vowel *a*, and that if that is also what applies to the vowel in these #tV strings, the vowel *a* should not be deleted by imperative truncation. The exclusion of *a* from this process is supported by the following arguments:

First, Bolozky (1999) shows that while *e* is the “minimal” vowel in Hebrew phonology, and is thus the most likely vowel to be elided or used to break impermissible clusters, the sonority and prominence of *a* make it the most stable vowel in the language and the least likely to be deleted. There are indeed many alternations that involve the loss of *a*, like *kataav* ‘he wrote’ ~ *katva* ‘she wrote’, *gadol* ‘big m.s’ ~ *gdolim* ‘big m.pl’, all cases of construct-state reduction like *šana* ‘year’ ~ *šnat* ‘the year of’, etc. But although such alternations originally captured well-motivated processes at certain historical phases of the language, today they are imposed by morpho-phonological templates, and no longer reflect phonetically-motivated elision. And in spite of the fact that *a* can be reduced or centralized by phonetically-motivated reduction processes (as in *naxon* ‘correct’ > *nexon*, etc. above), full elision of *a* rarely applies (except in very common, easily recoverable clitics, and very rarely in some frequent lexical items in the most casual or fastest register). On the other hand, since *e/i* casual elision is a phonetically-motivated process, one could also consider the possibility of allowing it to operate on #tV sequences as well. If #*ta* sequences are not affected (given the assumption that forms like *kum* are borrowed from the normative register, not derived), and *e* and *i* in #*te* and #*ti*, respectively, can also be covered by casual *e/i* elision, then it may be argued that #tV truncation is actually just #*t*-truncation.

⁴ While sibilant fricatives may either precede or follow plosives, segments like *f* are generally more sonorant than *t*, and languages tend to prefer syllables starting with a consonant that is lower in sonority than the one closing the former one (Vennemann's, 1988 Contact Law).

Second, the resistance of *a* to reduction offers an additional explanation why imperative truncation is blocked in *hif'il* (the verb pattern, or template, hiCCiC), which in the Prefix conjugation starts with *#ta*. Bat-El (2002) argues that the initial *a* of the participle and Prefix-conjugation of *hif'il* (as well as the *i* counterpart of its past tense paradigm) belongs to the stem, and stem vowels are not subject to truncation. Her claim is also reinforced by the fact that with the exception of *tasim* 'put!' > *sim*, taCiC forms in *pa'al* (the verb pattern/template CaCaC), such as *tašir* 'sing!', are not subject to either V-only or *#tV* truncation owing to their surface similarity to *hif'il* forms such as *tapil* 'drop (tr.)!' or *tavin* 'understand!', which as *hif'il* forms are not subject to truncation.⁵ However, the fact that two possible explanations work here – avoidance of stem vowel truncation and the resistance of *a* to deletion – does not necessarily imply a contradiction; in the case of *hif'il*, the two accounts simply **reinforce** each other. The stability of *a* and its durability in face of reduction pressures is independently needed for this *binyan*, to explain the resistance of *a* to *hif'il* centralization (hiCCiC > heCCiC). As is well known, there is a strong tendency in colloquial Hebrew today for *hif'il* forms in the past tense to be realized as *hef'il*: *hisbir* 'he explained' > *hesbir*, *higdir* 'he defined' > *hegdir*, etc. Bolozky (2007) shows that unlike the *hipil* 'he dropped' > *hepil* phenomenon, which is triggered by analogy to the more frequent "hollow" verbs like *hekim* 'he raised, set up,' the *hif'il* > *hef'il* phenomenon is a phonetically-motivated centralization process. Centralization, however, never applies to the Participle or Prefix-conjugation paradigm of *hif'il*, which are realized with *a*: one never finds *masbir* 'explain' > *mesbir or *tasbir* '(you will) explain' > *tesbir, owing to the resistance of *a* to reduction (and centralization is a type of reduction).

Perhaps the strongest argument against deriving *kum*-type imperatives from forms like *takum* comes from a single case, but a crucial one nevertheless. The original claim in Bolozky (1979) for deriving the colloquial "new" imperatives from Prefix-conjugation forms used imperatively was supported by alternations like

- (13) *tiftax* 'open! m.s.' ~ *tftax ~ *ftax*   *tiftexi* 'open! f.s.' ~ *ftexi*

above, which showed not only direct derivation from the Prefix-conjugation paradigm (the normative imperatives in this case, for instance, are *ptax*, *pitxi*), but also by the fact that the initial stem consonant remains a fricative, as in the Prefix-conjugation paradigm, and does not revert back to the stop expected in initial position, as in the normative realizations. Similarly, in short imperatives, we get (repeated from above):

- (14) *tavo* 'come! m.s.' ~ *tvo ~ *bo*   *bói* 'come! f.s.' ~ *tvói ~ *bói*

Had the "new" imperative been derived by truncation, one would have expected *vo, *vói.

As noted above, this second analysis would require that frequent imperative CVC stems be borrowed from the normative register, rather than be derived from Prefix-conjugation forms used imperatively. This would also explain why a significant number of imperative forms are used in both registers, the normative as well as the colloquial. From a very young age, children hear short CVC imperatives such as *kum* 'get up!', *šev* 'sit down!', *lex* 'go!', *bo* 'come!', *ruc* 'run!', *ce* 'go out!', *ten* 'give!', *kax* 'take!' – probably more frequently than their Prefix-conjugation-as-imperative counterparts. There is no need for derivations like *takum* 'get up!' > *kum*, since forms like *kum* are readily available, and more frequently encountered than their *takum* counterparts. On the other hand, considerable exposure to forms like *tiftax* 'open!' do make derivations like *tiftax* > *ftax* quite feasible, and the same applies to *texabes* 'laundry!' > *xabes*, *tizaher* 'watch out!' > *za(h)er*, *tistakel* 'look!' > *stakel*, etc. Where do we have complete overlap of imperative forms in both registers? The normative imperative forms of *nif'al* (niCCaC), *hif'il* (hiCCiC) and *hitpa'el* (hitCaCeC), all of which contain an initial *h*, are restricted to the normative register. In the colloquial, and only in the colloquial, the Prefix-conjugation form, with its initial *t* in the second person, functions as an imperative in these *binyanim*, as it normally does, and in *nif'al* and in *hitpa'el* it also tends to undergo truncation, as shown above. Only in *pi'el*

⁵ Analogical formation in the opposite direction is also possible, i.e., chopping off a *#ta* prefix in a *hif'il* form because of its similarity to *pa'al*. Shlomo Izre'el pointed out to me that p. 104 of Ro'i Politi's 2001 novel *'Arnevoney Gagot*, which has some good colloquial representation, includes an utterance like: *rim, rim, tarim tayadám!* 'Raise, raise, raise your hands!', where a soldier is ordering an elderly Palestinian at a road block. This is an instance of a *hif'il* form that may be erroneously identified as belonging to *pa'al* owing to similarity with *tasim* 'put down!', and consequently *tarim* > *rim* is parallel to *tasim* > *sim*.

and in *pa'al* may normative and colloquial variants of the imperative coexist (in part) in the spoken register, e.g.,

(15)	Normative	Colloquial
pi`el	<i>saper, sapri...</i> ‘tell!’ <i>kabes, kabsi...</i> ‘launder!’	same, and <i>tsaper/caper, tsapril/capri...</i> <i>xabes, xabsi...</i> / <i>kabes, kabsi...</i> (the former commoner), and <i>txabes, txabsi...</i>
pa'al	<i>sgor, sigri...</i> ‘close!’ <i>ptax, pitxi...</i> ‘open!’	<i>sgor, sgeri...</i> and <i>tsgor/cgor, tsgerilcgeri...</i> <i>ftax, ftexi...</i> / <i>ptax, ptexi...</i> (<i>ftax</i> , etc. probably more common)

So in regular verb forms, even when there is partial coexistence of normative and colloquial variants of the imperative in the spoken register, there is no complete identity, since there exist at least two “deviations” from the norm: CCECi variants in *pa'al*, and stop/fricative non-normative realizations in both *pi`el* and *pa'al*. The only instances in which there exists **complete identity** of realizations in both registers are the irregular CVC verb imperatives of *pa'al*; in other words, *kum, kúmi...* ‘get up!’ and all other CVC imperative stems are **fully identical** in both registers, and even stop/fricative realization is the same, as seen in *bo, bói*. So the argument that they are borrowed from the normative register rather than by derivation from Prefix-conjugation counterparts makes sense. Also note that although Bar-Adon (1966) did not propose an analysis of contemporary imperatives (his article only dealt with *še*-jussives and *š*-imperatives), he already suggested then that there existed both old and new imperatives.

4. #t-only truncation in hifil?

It was suggested above that if truncation actually operates only on *e* and *i* (assuming that *kum*-type verbs are borrowed from the normative register, not derived from *takum*, etc.), then #tV truncation may in fact be redefined as #t truncation. Shlomo Izre'el reports two instances he noted: in one, about 20 years ago, he heard a father rebuking his son: *afsik* ‘stop!’ instead of the expected *tafsik* (note: not the normative *hafsek*), and in May 2004 he heard *orid tagag* ‘remove the awning’ (note: not the normative *hored*), followed by a subsequent response from another speaker: *al torid* ‘don’t remove!’ In both instances, a *hif`il* (hiCCiC) form is affected by truncation – only #t, of course, not a stem vowel, which is always immune to truncation. Could these constitute support for the possibility that Imperative #tV Truncation is in fact #t-truncation? As these are isolated cases, possibly resulting from interference of the normative forms (*hafsek* and *hored*, respectively), they do not constitute sufficient independent evidence in favor of this claim. But they do suggest that Imperative Truncation may be in flux.

5. Conclusions

We may come up with the following suggestions:

First, where only the vowel is removed from Prefix-conjugation forms used imperatively, accounting for the resulting forms does not require that they constitute part of imperative truncation, since the general phonetically-motivated rule of *e/i* casual deletion would independently generate such forms.

Second, Imperative Truncation only applies to the whole #tV string. It is morphologically restricted to prefix-conjugation forms used imperatively, and is blocked from applying to stem-initial vowels, and/or to #ta prefixes because of the resistance of the vowel *a* to reduction. If casual *e/i* elision is assumed to operate on #tV sequences as well, we may redefine #tV truncation as #t truncation.

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