

# The Ditransitive Construction in Phoenician

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# Structure

Phoenician

Ditransitive construction

- Definition
- Alignment

Corpus

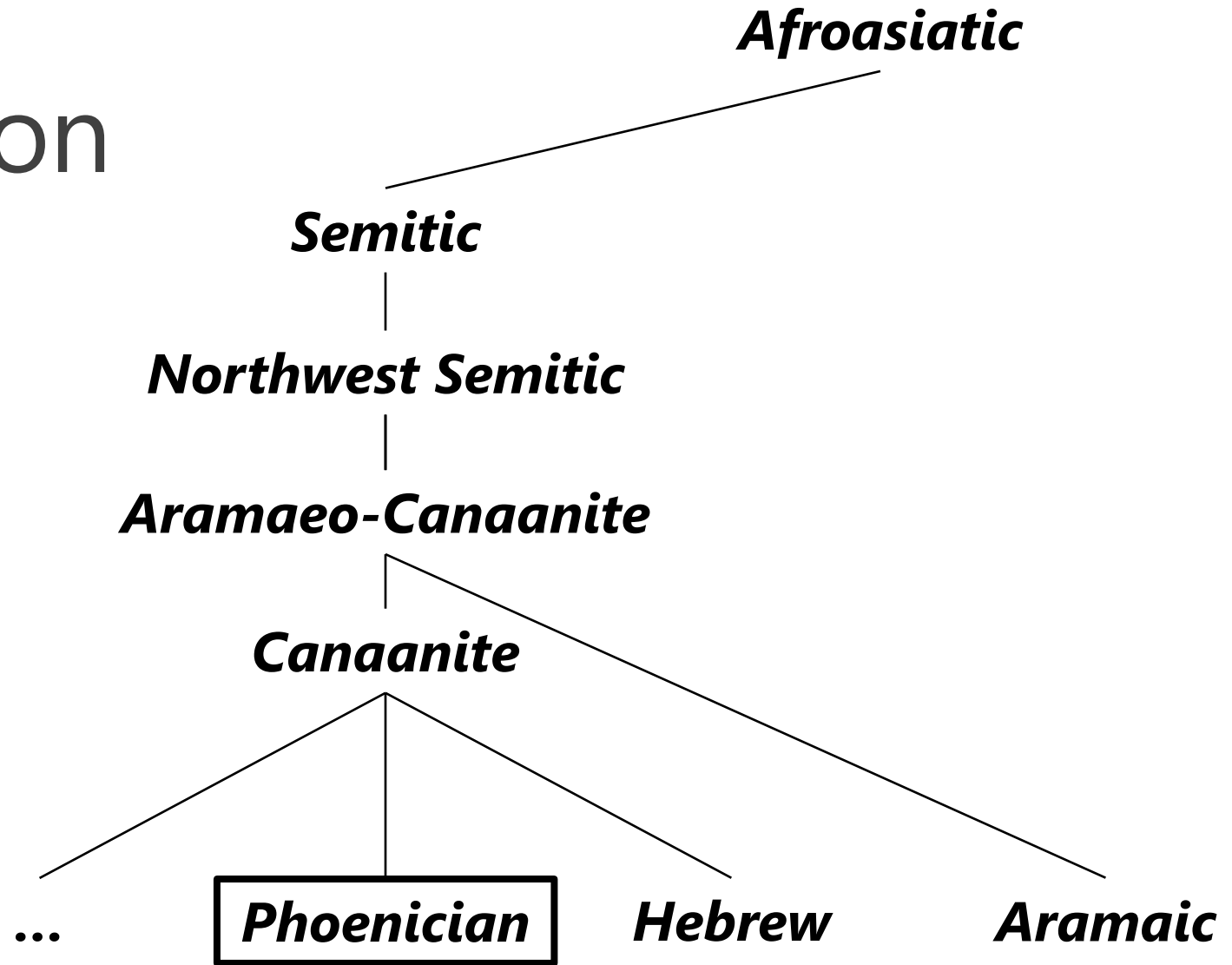
Ditransitive construction in Phoenician

- Relativization
- Polysemy of the R-marker
- Typological tendency: „give“ & neutral alignment

Phoenician



# Classification



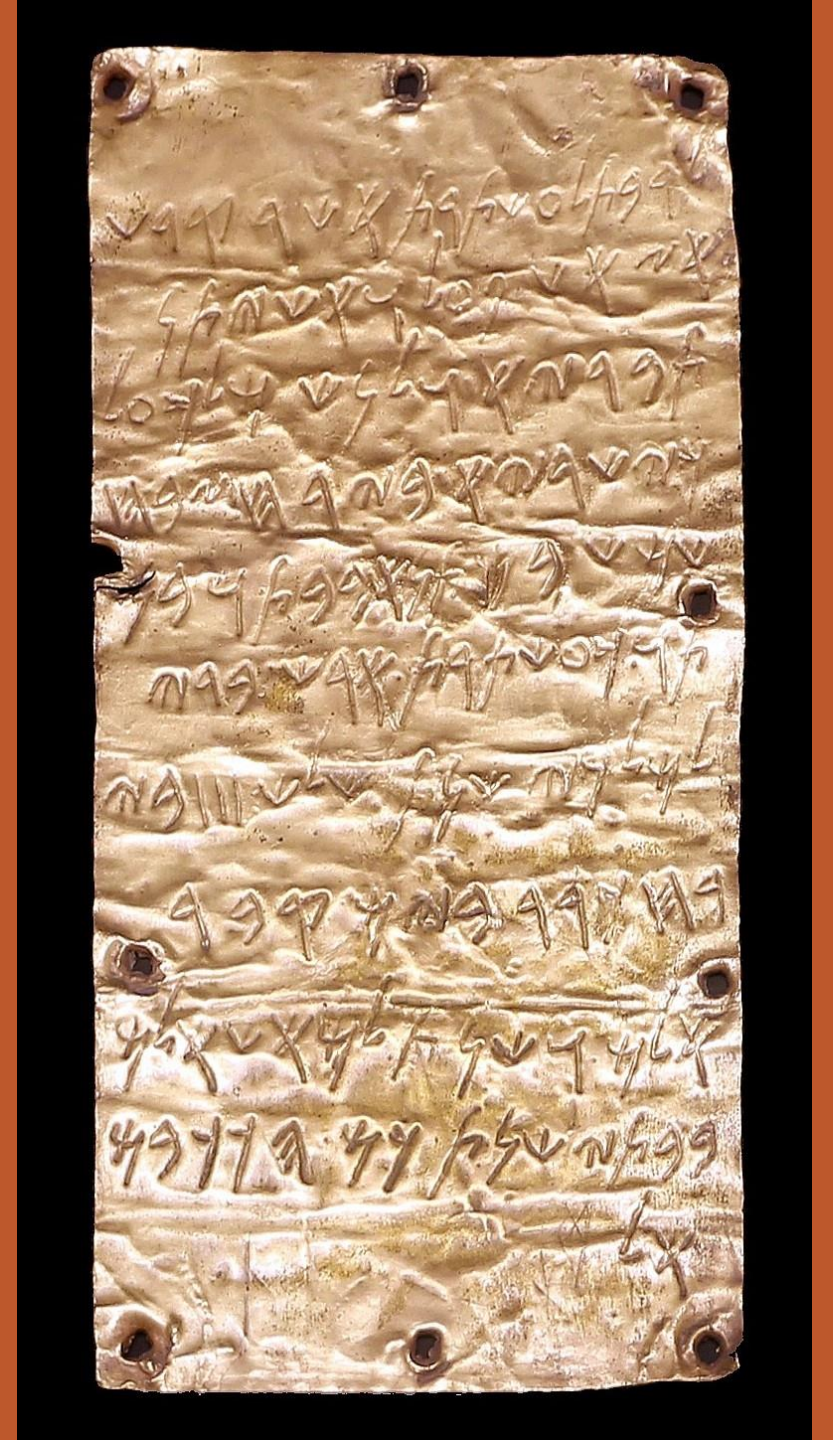
# General overview

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- attested from about 1000 BCE and probably spoken until the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE
- about 12000 texts
- originated in the Levant, then spread around the Mediterranean Basin
- major dialects:
  - Tyro-Sidonian (Standard)
  - Byblian
  - Punic (Late Punic after the Fall of Carthage 146 BCE)

# Script

- purely consonantal script
  - some letters later used to indicate vowels in certain environments
- Punic also attested in the Greek (Graeco-Punic) and Latin (Latino-Punic) scripts
- examples will be given in transliteration



Picture:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lamine\\_d%27oro\\_in\\_lingua\\_etrusca\\_e\\_fenicia\\_con\\_dedica\\_di\\_un\\_luogo\\_sacro\\_a\\_pyrgi\\_A.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lamine_d%27oro_in_lingua_etrusca_e_fenicia_con_dedica_di_un_luogo_sacro_a_pyrgi_A.jpg)

# Linguistic overview

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- root-and-pattern morphology
- complex verbal morphology
- three-way number distinction: singular, plural and dual
- flexible verb-initial word order

# Argument marking

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- originally tripartite case distinction NOM-GEN-ACC
  - in the earliest attestations already zero-marked
  - Distinction between NOM/ACC and GEN retained before possessive suffixes
- direct object (DO) marker *'yt / 't*
- other arguments marked with prepositions



# Ditransitive construction

# Definition

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“a construction consisting of a (ditransitive) verb, an agent argument (A), a recipient-like argument (R), and a theme argument (T)”

- Malchukov / Haspelmath / Comrie (2010: 1)

# Alignment I

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- method of describing the relationships between arguments, dependent on semantic roles and valency
  - S** = single argument of the intransitive verb
  - A** = agent-like argument of the (di-)transitive verb
  - P** = patient-like argument of the transitive verb
  - T** = theme-like argument of the ditransitive verb
  - R** = recipient-like argument of the ditransitive verb

# Alignment II

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- distinction between subject alignment (A, S, P) and object alignment (P, T, R)
- object alignment:
  - neutral (**P=T=R**)
  - indirective (**P=T≠R**)
  - secundative (**P=R ≠T**)

# Corpus

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- data from:
  - Hoftijzer/Jongeling 1995, an exhaustive dictionary of Phoenician
  - standard grammars & dictionaries (Krahmalkov 2000, 2001 & Friedrich/Röllig 1999)
  - additional examples from newer publications (e.g. Xella 2017 & Amadasi Guzzo/Zamora López 2013)
- 55 examples in total
- no data from Latino-Punic and Graeco-Punic

# Ditransitive construction in Phoenician

# Ditransitive construction in Phoenician I

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(1) Phoenician: Saqqara, Egypt (cf. Donner/Röllig 1964: 67-68)

<i>w-šlh-t</i>	<i>l-y</i>	<i>'t</i>	<i>spr</i>	<i>h-nqt</i>
and-send.PFV-2.SG.F	to-1.SG	DO	document.SG	DET-acquittal?

'and you sent to me the document of acquittal?'

- DO-marker flags T-argument
- R-argument marked with the preposition *l-* „to; for“

# Ditransitive construction in Phoenician II

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- animate T-argument:

(2) Tyro-Sidonian: Cebel Ires Dağı, Turkey (cf. Mosca/Russell 1987: 5)

*ysb-∅*

*l-msn'zmš*

turn\_over.PFV.3.SG.M-3.SG.F

to-PN

'He transferred her to MSN'ZMŠ.'



# Ditransitive construction in Phoenician III

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- recipient marker *l-* used with indexed pronouns and full nominals

(3) Phoenician: Kition, Cyprus (cf. Yon/Szzymer 1991: 805)

<i>w-ytn</i>	<i>l-y</i>	<i>w-l-kl</i>	<i>‘m</i>	<i>kty</i>
and-give.PFV.3.SG.M	to-1.SG	and-to-all	people.SG	GN
<i>b‘l‘z</i>	<i>‘z</i>			
DN	strength.SG			

‘And Ba‘al ‘Oz gave strength to me and all the people of Kition.’

# Relativization I

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- Phoenician uses the general relative pronoun 'š (z in Old Byblian)
- relativization of the T-argument:

(4) Punic: Mozia, Sicily (Amadasi Guzzo 1986: 30)

<i>mtnt</i>	'š	<i>ytn</i>	<i>l-b' lḥmn</i>	<i>ytnb' l</i>
gift.SG	REL	give.PFV.3.SG.M	to-DN	PN

'Gift which YTNB' L has given to Ba' l Hammon.'

# Relativization II

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- relativization of the R-argument (with omitted T-argument)

(5) Punic: Carthage, Tunisia (cf. Amadasi Guzzo/Zamora López 2013: 191)

<i>l-rbt</i>	<i>l-tntpnbʿl</i>	<i>w-l-ʿdn</i>	<i>l-bʿlḥmn</i>	ʿš
to-lady.SG	to-DN	and-to-lord.SG	to-DN	REL
<i>ndr</i>	<i>ʿdnbʿl</i>			
VOW.PFV.3.SG.M	PN			

‘To the lady Tanit Pane-Baʿal and to the Lord Baʿal Hammon, whom  
ʿDNBʿL has vowed.’

# Relativization III

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- relativization of the T-argument with fronting of the R-argument
  - occurs in votive inscriptions, likely to emphasize the deity offered/sacrificed to

(6) Punic: Mozia, Sicily (cf. Amadasi Guzzo 1970: 105)

<i>l-ʻ dn</i>	<i>l-bʻ lḥmn</i>	<i>mtnt</i>	<i>ʻš</i>	<i>ytn</i>	<i>ʻbdmlqrt</i>
to-lord	to-DN	gift.SG	REL	give.PFV.3.SG.M	PN

‘To the lord Baʻal Hammon, a gift that ‘BDMLQRT has given.’

# Polysemy of the R-marker

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- R-marker *l-* also used for beneficiary
  - occasionally marking the agent of a passive construction, marginally also in locative or allative function

(7) Byblian: Byblos, Lebanon (cf. Donner/Röllig 1964: 16-17)

*h-ḥnwṭ-m*      'l                      p'l-t                      'nk    (...)

DEF-ḥnwṭ-PL    DEM.PL                      make.PFV-1.SG    1.SG

*l-'dn-n*

for-lord.SG.M-POSS.1.PL

'I made these *ḥnwṭ* for our lord.'

- some cases are ambiguous; possibly marking a broader semantic role encompassing both recipient and beneficiary

(8) Phoenician: Tamassos, Cyprus (cf. Donner/Röllig 1964: 58-59)

<i>sml</i>	'z	'š	<i>ytn</i>	
statue.SG	DET.SG	REL	give.PFV.3.SG.M	
<i>w-yṭn'</i>		<i>mnḥm (...)</i>	<i>l-'dn-y</i>	<i>l-ršp</i>
and-erect.PFV.3.SG.M	PN		to-lord.SG-POSS.3.SG	to-DN

'This statue, which MNḤM (...) gave and erected to his Lord, to Reshep.'

# Typological tendency: 'give' & neutral alignment

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- 'give'-verbs cross-linguistically tend to display neutral alignment (P=T=R) (see Malchukov et al. 2010: 50)
- Phoenician however displays indirective alignment (P=T≠R)
  - P & R either unmarked or with the DO-Marker (or indexed on the verb)
  - R-argument flagged by *l-*
- proposed reason: reduction of ambiguity between A & R
  - A & R prototypically animate
  - highly permissive word order



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Thank you for  
listening to my talk!