animate beings, grammatical gender usually coincides with natural gender, male and female respectively. Unlike languages such as Greek, Latin, and German, the Semitic gender system lacks a morphologically distinct mechanism for marking an abstract, inanimate entity of *neuter* gender; cf. Latin: *bonus* 'good (male person)', *bona* 'good (female person)', *bonum* 'good thing; good state of affairs'.

Classical Biblical Hebrew has a substantive of the masculine gender, דָּבָר *dāḇār* (e.g., Isa. 39.2), which denotes, in addition to a spoken or written word or utterance and a tangible object, a general state of affairs or an event. An example is אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה *ʾaḥar had-dḇārīm hā-ʾelle* 'after these things (i.e., the events recounted above)' (Gen. 15.1). Likewise לֹא הָיָה דָבָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא הֶרְאָם *lō hāyā dāḇār ʾăšer lō herʾām* 'there was not a thing that he did not show them' (Isa. 39.2). A Late Biblical Hebrew substantive עִנְיָן *ʿinyān* 'task, occupation', has come to express in Modern Hebrew a vague notion of a state of affairs, e.g., זה עניין מגוחך *ze ʿinyan meguxax* 'this is a ludicrous business'.

When the demonstrative pronouns for 'this', 'that', 'these', and 'those' are used without specific reference to male or female animates, especially humans (including adjectival use, as in 'this husband'), but in reference to a more abstract concept, as in 'this (state of affairs)' and the like, the pronoun for near deixis is used, e.g., שִׁמְעוּ־זֹאת *šimʿū zōṯ* 'Hear this' (Amos 8.4); אַחֲרֵי־זֹאת *ʾaḥărē zōṯ* 'thereafter' (Job 42.16). The pronoun used is most often feminine singular. Occasionally the masculine singular form is used, especially in Late Biblical Hebrew, e.g., אַחַר זֶה *ʾaḥar ze* 'thereafter' (2 Chron. 32.9). The plural form is also used at times: עֹשֵׂה אֵלֶּה *ʿōśē ʾelle* 'one who does these things' (Deut. 18.12).

A substantivized adjective often functions analogously to the above-mentioned Latin *bonum* of the neuter gender, e.g., שֹׂנְאֵי טוֹב

שֹׂנְאֵי טוֹב וְאֹהֲבֵי רָע *śōnʾē ṭōḇ wə-ʾōhăḇē rāʿ* 'those who hate the good and love the evil' (Mic. 3.2); יְמֵי רָע *ymē rāʿ* 'days of hardship' (Ps. 94.13). The feminine form is also used interchangeably, e.g., יוֹם רָעָה *yōm rāʿā* 'the day of calamity' (Jer. 17.17). Though the masculine plural is not used, the feminine plural is rather common, e.g., וַתַּעֲשִׂי הָרָעוֹת *wat-taʿăśī hā-rāʿōṯ* 'and you did the evil things' (Jer. 3.5); מְצָאֻנִי הָרָעוֹת הָאֵלֶּה *məṣāʾūnī hā-rāʿōṯ hā-ʾelle* 'these disasters have befallen me' (Deut. 31.17).

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Neutralization

The notion of 'neutralization' in phonology refers to the loss or merger of phonemic contrast, such that two distinct phonemes (input) become identical in their surface representation (output). A distinction between input and output implies two phonological levels of representation (→ Phonology, Generative), and thus neutralization is a byproduct of phonological processes or the relation between these two levels.

One such process is voicing assimilation in Modern Hebrew casual speech (Barkai and Horvath 1978), in which voicing contrast is neutralized. Regardless of the phonemic representation, obstruents tend to become voiced before voiced obstruents (e.g., הסדיר *hisdir* > [hizdir] 'to arrange') and voiceless before voiceless obstruents (e.g., הבטיח *hivtiax* > [hiftiax] 'to promise'). Consequently, there is no surface contrast between phonemic voiced and voiceless obstruents when they are followed by obstruents with the same value for voicing. As exemplified below for each voicing value, the output clusters in (1a) are identical to the output clusters in (1b), although they differ in terms of input.

(1) NEUTRALIZATION IN VOICING CONTRAST

		Voiceless clusters			Voiced clusters		
		'to promise' הבטיח			'regularity' סדירות		
(1a)	Input	C[+voice]	C[-voice]	/hivtiax/	C[-voice]	C[+voice]	/sdirut/
	Output	C[-voice]	C[-voice]	[hiftiax]	C[+voice]	C[+voice]	[zdirut]
		'to surprise' הפתיע			'wickedness' זדוניות		
(1b)	Input	C[-voice]	C[-voice]	/hiftia/	C[+voice]	C[+voice]	/zdoniut/
	Output	C[-voice]	C[-voice]	[hiftia]	C[+voice]	C[+voice]	[zdoniut]

If the language has minimal pairs distinguished only by the voicing of the first consonant in the cluster, neutralization creates homonymy, as in הזכיר *hizkir* > [hiskir] 'to remind', which is homonymous with השכיר *hiśkir* [hiskir] 'to rent (something to someone)'.

Another case of neutralization is due to Vowel Reduction in Tiberian Hebrew verbs, which results in merger of vowel contrast. A non-high vowel (*a*, *e*, *o*) in the final syllable of a verb stem is reduced to a shewa (*ə*) when a vowel-initial suffix is added.

(2) Neutralization in Vowel Contrast

Vowel	Base		Vowel	Base + *u*	
a	*yigdál*	יגדל	ə	*yigdəlú*	יגדלו
o	*yišmór*	ישמור	ə	*yišmərú*	ישמרו
e	*yəgalgél*	יגלגל	ə	*yəgalgəlú*	יגלגלו

The example of vowel neutralization is a case of positional neutralization (Steriade 1995; Barnes 2006), since the loss of contrast among the vowels is limited to a specific position in the word, namely, a stem-final, unstressed, light (CV) syllable.

The loss of contrast can be between feature values (1), segments (2), as well as prosodic structures. Some plural nouns and most plural adjectives in Modern Hebrew undergo *a*-Deletion when a plural suffix is added, as in /sarid-im/ > שרידים *śridim* 'remnants'. Consequently, the CVCVC stem of the singular surfaces as CCVC in the plural. This process leads to neutralization in prosodic structure, since there are underlying CCVC stems in the language, such as צריף *ṣrif* 'hut', whose plural form, צריפים *ṣrifim*, also has a CCVC base. That is, the contrast between CVCVC and CCVC stems is neutralized to CCVC when followed by a suffix.

The cases of neutralization illustrated above involve 'contextual neutralization', i.e., loss of contrast in a particular context. In contextual neutralization, the input can be recovered on the basis of the paradigm (i.e., related morphological forms). For example, the input of [zdirut], derived from סדירות *sdirut* 'regularity' via voicing assimilation, is identified on the basis of the related form סדיר *sadir* 'regular'.

Some approaches to generative phonology also refer to 'absolute neutralization', where the contrast is merged in all contexts. One may assume that the Modern Hebrew phonemic inventory includes the pharyngeal fricative *x̣*, although it does not appear in the phonetic inventory (of most dialects). The assumption that *x̣* is a phoneme in Modern Hebrew allows for the distinguishing between minimal pairs such as עורך *ʿorex* [orex] 'editor' and אורח *ʾoreax̣* [oreax] 'guest', where in the latter, but not in the former, there is an [a] before the final [x]. Since the plural form of both is pronounced by most speakers [orxim], it is assumed that their underlying representation is identical in terms of the CV structure. In order to account for the distinction in the singular forms (i.e., [orex] 'editor' vs. [oreax] 'guest'), it is assumed that the underlying representation of אורח 'guest' is /ʾorex̣/, while that of עורך 'editor' is /ʿorex/. The distinction in the surface representation is due to the insertion of the vowel *a* before *x̣*, but not before *x*. After the vowel is inserted, the contrast between *x* and *x̣* is neutralized in all contexts.

(3) Absolute Neutralization

Input	/ʾorex̣/	/ʿorex/
a-Insertion before final *ḥ*	oreax̣	—
x̣ → *x* 'absolute neutralization'	oreax	—
Output	[oreax] 'guest' אורח	[orex] 'editor' עורך

As claimed by Kiparsky (1968; 1982), rules of absolute neutralization cause sound change. Since language learners do not have a context where the underlying phoneme is surface-true, they eliminate the absolute neutralization rule and reanalyze their grammar. That is, learners of Modern Hebrew eliminate the *x̣* > *x* rule and assume that there is no *x̣* in the phonemic inventory of Modern Hebrew. Following this approach, only contextual neutralization is part of synchronic grammars.

The notion of neutralization has a long history in phonological theory (see a review in Anderson 1985), dating back to the Kazan School (Baudouin de Courtenay) and the Prague School (Trubetzkoy), where the latter proposed

the concept of 'archiphoneme', which stands for the segment specified for the features shared by the two allophones.

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News Interviews

News interviews in the Israeli context have been studied from two main perspectives: socio-pragmatics and media studies. The findings and claims of these studies can be best understood against the background of a large body of research focusing on the news interview in the English-speaking world, which represents four conceptual paradigms: Conversation Analysis, media studies, socio-pragmatics, and social psychology. This literature will therefore be briefly reviewed before turning to the Israeli context.

Research in the school of Conversation Analysis (CA) is concerned with news interviews as instances of institutional discourse, "produced for an overhearing audience and restricted by institutionalized conventions" (Heritage 1985:112). These are shown to be manifest, for example, in the asymmetrical distribution of question-answer design, in the formulaic, audience-oriented nature of openings and closings, in strategies of the interviewee's evasions or resistance and in the co-production of the interviewer's apparent neutralism achieved through the interviewer's practices and the interviewee's responses (for an overview see Clayman and Heritage 2002, Weizman 2008).

In the framework of discourse-centered media studies, mostly of the Ross Priory Group for Research on Broadcast Talk, the news interview is viewed as an instance of broadcasting, inherently characterized by 'double articulation' (interaction in the studio designed to be heard by absent audiences) (e.g., Scannell 1996; 1998) and ongoing personalization (Thornborrow and Montgomery 2010). In terms of discourse, attention is given to the conversationalization of interviews (e.g., Fairlcough 1995; Tolson 2006), and it is claimed that acceleration in aggressiveness and argumentativeness challenge the ethos of neutrality (Hutchby 2011; Eriksson 2011). Montgomery (2007; 2008; 2010) has differentiated sub-types of news interviews (the accountability interview, the experiential interview, the expert interview, and the affiliated interview), emphasizing the importance of the three last types and criticizing the disproportional centrality assigned to the first one in previous research.

Studies of news interviews in the tradition of socio-pragmatics are more heterogeneous, but they all focus on the study of discourse patterns and interpret them in terms of their functions. Pragmatic studies view the news interview as a case of dynamic negotiations of meanings and positions. These include, for example, the re-contextualization and co-construction of objects of discourse in interaction (Johansson 2006); the negotiations of meanings and viewpoints through challenges to social norms and conventions (Cmejrková 2003) as well as through the construction of femininity (Cmejrková 2006 regarding Czech television); the management of face-work (Jucker 1986; Fetzer 2002), i.e., the strategies employed to claim for oneself a positive self-image or freedom from imposition (Goffman 1955; Brown and Levinson 1987) and the strategic use of self- and other references in the establishment of accountability (Fetzer and Bull 2008). In a similar vein of thought, the micro-analyses of news interviews, specifically of questions and answers, as typical cases of equivocation intended to avoid face-loss is mostly anchored in social psychology (e.g., Bull 2003).

Socio-pragmatics further views media practices as culture-dependent, for example, in the analysis of television discourse on election night