

**THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM**

**Thursday 19.11.2020**  
**16:15-17:45**

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**How do penguins differ from kangaroos? Vowel 'dropability' in the pluralization of vowel ending loanwords in Hebrew**

This study examine variation (and lack thereof) in pluralization of loan nouns in Hebrew that end with a vowel. Most loanwords take the suffix plural *-im* with no variation as demonstrated for *pingwin-im* 'penguins' (1). In contrast, words that end with vowels other than *a*, demonstrate variation where at least four options can be found. The word *kenguru* 'kangaroo' can take the suffix *-im* (2a), it can take the same suffix with the deletion of the final vowel (2b), it can retain its singular form (2c), and it can surface in its English plural form (2d)

(1) *higiu od šloša pingwin-im*

'three more penguins arrived'

(<https://nanitriptonezealand.wordpress.com/2016/11/>)

(2) a. *šloša kenguru-im še hayu ba-kluv barxu*

'three kangaroos that were in the cage escaped'

(<http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4268082,00.html>)

b. *šney kengur-im ravu al nekeva*

'two kangaroos were fighting for one female'

(<https://forum.12p.co.il/index.php?showtopic=24170>)

c. *krav egrofim ben šney kenguru*

'a feast fight between two kangaroos'

([http://holesinthenet.co.il/uncategorized/%D7%A8%D7%A7\\_%A0%D7%99\\_%D7%A7%D7%A0%D7%92%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%95\\_%D7%94%D7%95%D7%9C%D7%9B%D7%99%D7%9D\\_%D7%9E%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%AA\\_%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%97-4](http://holesinthenet.co.il/uncategorized/%D7%A8%D7%A7_%A0%D7%99_%D7%A7%D7%A0%D7%92%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%95_%D7%94%D7%95%D7%9C%D7%9B%D7%99%D7%9D_%D7%9E%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%AA_%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%97-4))

d. *im lahaka šel 34 kanguru-z*

'with a group of 34 kangaroos'

(<http://mynetkfarsaba.co.il/article/140291?OriginalPostId=140478>)

Why does such variation occur? Primarily, Hebrew nouns that end with vowels other than *a* are relatively rare. The Hebrew morphological mechanism is not accustomed to pluralizing such words and as a result, speakers apply a variety of strategies. This talk focus on the competition between plural forms in (2a) and (2b), namely variation in deleting and not deleting the final vowel. I will propose a hierarchy of vowel 'dropability' with respect to the five vowels in Hebrew. This hierarchy predicts which vowels are more or less likely to be dropped. It is based on the interaction of markedness and faithfulness constraints as well as on paradigm accessibility in word formation.

**YOU ARE ALL INVITED**

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