29a A word in the construct state very rarely has the article. Normally, the only word in a construct chain that can have the article is the last word in the chain. Nevertheless, a few construct chains in the Bible break this rule by putting the article on a word in the construct state.

- וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ הַמַּמְלְכוֹת כָּל and all the kingdoms of the earth. Jer 25:26
  - The word מַמְלְכוֹת ‘kingdoms of’ is in the construct state, so it is expected to lack the article. The fact that it has the article (הַ) is very unusual.

- Words in the construct state that have the article occur in Gen 31:13; Exod 9:18; Judg 8:11; Josh 3:14; 1 Kgs 14:24; 2 Kgs 23:17 (twice), 25:19; Isa 36:16; Ezek 46:19.

29b A genitive phrase may modify a construct term. A construct term normally has only one genitive, the word that immediately follows it. If two genitives are closely related, however, they may form a genitive phrase that modifies the construct term.

- וְעֵשָׂו יַעֲקֹב אֵם the mother of Jacob and Esau. Gen 28:5
  - ‘the mother of Jacob and Esau’ is a construct chain. The construct noun אֵם ‘mother of’ is modified by the genitive phrase יַעֲקֹב וְעֵשָׂו ‘Jacob and Esau.’ Both יַעֲקֹב and עֵשָׂו are in the absolute state.

- Other examples of genitive phrases include Gen 14:19 and Deut 10:18.

29c Construct override. The word that immediately precedes a genitive is normally the only construct term that a genitive modifies. Occasionally, however, two or more words in the construct state can be modified by the same genitive. This is sometimes referred to as a construct override. It occurs more often in late texts than in early texts.

- שׁוֹן כַּשְׂדִּים וּלְ סֵפֶר the literature and language of the Chaldeans. Dan 1:4

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36 Cf. BHRG §25.3.1(ii); GKC §127f–h; IBHS §9.7a, 13.6b; JM §140c.
37 If the last word in a construct chain is indefinite, then the entire chain is indefinite (e.g., ‘a throne of a king’). If the last word is definite, then the entire chain is definite (e.g., ‘the throne of David’). The last word in a construct chain is definite if it is a proper noun (e.g., ‘David’), has the article (‘the book’), or has a pronominal suffix (‘his book’). See BHRG §24.4; GKC §127a. See GKC §127e; JM §139b–c, 140a for exceptions.
38 Cf. BHRG §25.3.1(iv)b; IBHS §9.3b; JM §129a–b; Denio 1885; Verheij 1989.
39 Cf. BHRG §25.3.1(iv)a; IBHS §9.3b; JM §129a.
Syntax of Nominals – Construct Chain

• Both סֵפֶר ‘writing of’ and לָשׁוֹן ‘language of’ are in the construct state. Both are modified by the genitive כַּשְׂדִּים ‘Chaldeans.’ Normally the genitive would be written twice, once after each construct noun (i.e., סֵפֶר כַּשְׂדִּים לָשׁוֹן ‘the writing of the Chaldeans and the language of the Chaldeans’), but in Dan 1:4 the genitive כַּשְׂדִּים ‘Chaldeans’ is written only once.

• Another example of a construct override is Ezek 31:16.

30a A construct term may have the directive suffix הוֹן ‘toward,’ even though this separates the construct term from its genitive.\(^40\)

- יִשָּׁהְיָהוּ into Joseph’s house
  - יִשָּׁהְיָהוּ toward house of Gen 43:17
- מִדְבַּרָה toward the wilderness of Damascus
  - מִדְבַּרָה toward wilderness of 1 Kgs 19:15
  - מִדְבַּרָה into the wilderness of Damascus and מִדְבַּרָה into Joseph’s house are both construct chains. מִדְבַּרָה ‘toward wilderness of’ and מִדְבַּרָה ‘toward wilderness of’ are both in the construct state, yet they both have the directive suffix הוֹן, which indicates the direction of movement.

30b Broken construct chain.\(^41\) On rare occasions, a word separates a construct noun from its genitive.

- כָּל all of my life is still in me
  - כָּל in me  my life still all of 2 Sam 1:9
  - כָּל ‘all of’ separates the construct term נפשי ‘my life.’ Normal word order would be נפשי כָּל שֶׁעָלָי ‘all of my life is still in me.’ Perhaps the unusual word order emphasizes שֶׁעָלָי ‘still,’ drawing attention to the fact that the speaker had expected himself to have already died.

• Other examples include Job 27:3; Isa 19:8; Hos 14:3.

30c Construct chain with a genitive prepositional phrase.\(^42\) Although the genitive in a construct chain is typically a noun or pronoun, a prepositional phrase can act as the genitive.

- שֶׁמֶךָ early morning risers
  - שֶׁמֶךָ in the morning early risers of Isa 5:11

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\(^40\) Cf. BHRG §25.3.1(iii)a; IBHS §9.3d; JM §129a note 3; JM93 §129a note 4.

\(^41\) Cf. Freedman 1972; Blommerde 1974; Frendo 1981. Prior editions of this textbook referred to this switch in word order as **hypallage**. GKC §128e states that the construct terms in these examples should be understood to be adverbs rather than construct terms.

\(^42\) Cf. BHRG §25.3.1(iii)b, 25.3.1(iv)c; GKC §130a; IBHS §9.6b; JM §129l–o; Grossberg 1979–80.