Part 5: Narrative-links in the *Book of Mormon*

5.1   Images

Year-related expressions are the central focus of this study. They have been symbolized by the yellow center of a circular archery target mentioned in previous Parts of this Division. However, each year-related expression is linked to its associated narrative by a word or phrase that is the most basic language making the connection with the secondary language of the year-related narrative. Without that connection, a year-related expression is merely a free-floating statement that uses or implies the use of a year-term. To be meaningful in a narrative, every year-term must have a "narrative-link".[1] Narrative-links provide a crucial way to obtain another accurate view of every year-related expression. In terms of the symbolism of the archery target, narrative-links form the primary red circle of language connecting the yellow center of the target to the secondary blue circle of language in the narratives that contain year-related expressions. When this image is applied to a single year-related expression, it must be understood that its narrative-link also is singular. However, in a few instances, the same secondary narrative language may be used with more than one narrative-link and year-related expression. In such instances, it is as though the permanent target had the same painted blue and white external circles, but the central yellow and red circles were interchangeable paper parts of the target.

In the foregoing paragraph and the following discussions, the adjective *secondary* is used in the specific way introduced in Part 1 of this Division.[2] With respect to any narrative language, *secondary* does not mean "of minor importance, subordinate" or "dependent on something else which is primary".[3] A secondary word, phrase or clause in a year-related narrative usually is vital to the meaning of the narrative. In this study, the word *secondary* means "[b]elonging to the second stage in a process of … combination" or "[c]onnected with what is second in local position".[4] At the center of this study is a specific group of texts, the year-related expressions of the *Book of Mormon*. They are the focus of inquiry, the center of the target of investigation. Narrative-links are the primary circle of narrative language connecting the center of the target to the secondary language of the *Book of Mormon* narratives that include year-related expressions.

Parts 2 through 4 of this Division also likened year-related expressions to Christmas ornaments decorating a grove of evergreen trees. Each bright ornament was attached to a tree branch by a ribbon. The primary function of the ribbon or narrative-link was to connect the ornament to a tree branch or year-related narrative. Ribbons appeared in five colors symbolizing the textual fact that each narrative-link may be sorted into one of five linguistic categories: prepositions, verbs, conjunctions, participles or adverbs. As the attention of this Part 5 is directed at the different colored ribbons and their ornaments, one also may note that in a few instances more than one ribbon and ornament are attached to the same tree branch. The secondary language of a year-related narrative may carry more than one narrative-link and its year-related expression. Just as all 426 year-terms have been classified by their linguistic function (noun), textual forms (express or implied), basic meanings (singular or plural) and modifying time- and number-terms, so all 426 narrative-links may be classified by their linguistic functions, textual forms, basic meanings and

---

[1]   See Section 1.5 in Part 1 of this Division.

[2]   See Section 1.10.

[3]   *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, II: 2701 (secondary).

[4]   Ibid.

related texts. This Part 5 identifies, categorizes and introduces narrative-links in the extant text of the *Book of Mormon*. Each narrative-link is itemized in Table 5.A.

In the text of the *Book of Mormon*, secondary language (a tree branch) at one end of a narrative-link (ribbon) describes a basic situation or narrative context in which the link performs its connecting function. At the other end of the link is a year-related expression (an ornament) that provides chronological information in a form chosen by the writer for the purpose of qualifying or modifying the secondary narrative language. This Part begins by examining the five different colors of ribbons, the five proposed ways that narrative-links appear to connect year-related expressions to their associated narratives. Five linguistic types of narrative-links were noted in Part 1 of this Division.[5] The preposition, verb, conjunction, participle or adverb chosen by the writer to be the narrative-link for a year-related expression must be understood in terms of its function in the narrative. The introduction of these five linguistic types of narrative-links concludes by analyzing the structure of their placement within the text of the *Book of Mormon* (either as detached elements or as elements connected with distinct types or components of year-related expressions). This structural approach to narrative-links and their relationships with year-related expressions introduces key concepts required for a thorough analysis of year-related expressions. This technique provides a basis for understanding the decisions each writer made when placing year-related expressions within their associated narratives.

Having introduced in this Part 5 the function that narrative-links play in the chronological structure of the *Book of Mormon*, Part 6 of this Division then introduces the meanings that appear to be associated with temporal-expressions, the combined narrative-links and their year-related expressions. The components of a year-related expression, its type of narrative-link and its associated narrative have interconnected meanings. The organization of meanings is not separate from the structure or form of temporal-expressions, but is closely interconnected with textual forms. This semantic aspect of temporal-expressions also introduces concepts needed for a thorough analysis. With the conclusion of Part 6, the analytical concepts identified in this Division may then be applied in Divisions 2 through 4 of this source book to the year-related expressions, narrative-links and year-related narratives in the three principal sets of plates.

5.2   Linguistic types of narrative-links

As described in previous Parts of this Division, the organization of a year-related expression includes one necessary component (a year-term) and may include one or both of two optional components (a time-term and/or a number-term). Year-terms are express or implied nouns that appear to be separated into three separate types. Time- and number-terms are adjectives, each of which may be separated into six analytical types. Complicating the picture even further is the textual fact that narrative-links apparently may be separated into five linguistic types by the functions they perform in their associated narratives. One of the five proposed functions (prepositional, verbal, conjunctional, participial or adverbial) is carried out by the most basic or primary language that serves as the narrative-link for each year-related expression.

5.2.1   Prepositional narrative-links

When a year-related expression is the object of a prepositional phrase, the narrative-link is the preposition that begins the phrase. Prepositions form the largest category of narrative-links. They expressly connect 253 (59.4%) of the 426 year-related expressions to their associated or year-

---

[5]   See Section 1.5.

related narratives. A preposition shows the relation between its associated year-term (as often modified by the adjectival components of the year-related expression) and another word or phrase that is integral to the year-related narrative's secondary language. The nine prepositions that perform this function in the extant text of the *Book of Mormon* are listed in Table 5.B.

For example, Alma 8:3 includes the following year-related narrative statement: "And it came to pass in the commencement of the tenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi that Alma departed from [his house at Zarahemla]". The year-related expression, "the tenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi", is the object of a prepositional phrase; so, its narrative-link is the preposition *of*, which shows the relation between the secondary noun *commencement* and the year-term. This particular commencement is clearly identified as the one that was part of the 10th Judges calendar year. Phrases such as "And it came to pass", "in the commencement" and "that Alma departed" are part of the secondary language of this year-related narrative. The function of the narrative-link "of" is to connect the year-term (as modified by its adjectives) with a noun that is part of the secondary language of the narrative. In simplest form, the separate parts of this connection may be depicted as: commencement … *of* … year.

As another example, the sons of king Mosiah$_2$ are described in Alma 17:6 as "having taken leave of their father Mosiah in the first year of the reign of the judges". Here, the preposition *in* is the narrative-link that depicts the relation between the noun *year* and the secondary language *having taken leave*, a participial form of the past perfect tense of the combined base verbs *take leave*. The narrative-link describes the time of this action by the sons of Mosiah$_2$. They left their father within the temporal limits of the first Judges calendar year. The function of the narrative-link "in" is to show the relation of the year-term with the secondary language of the year-related narrative. The simplest depiction of this relationship is: having taken leave … *in* … year.

As a third example, Alma 16:1 includes the following complex chronological phrase: "until the fifth day of the second month in the eleventh year". The year-related expression includes only three words: "the eleventh year". The narrative-link is the preposition *in*, which describes the relation between the secondary noun *month* and the essential component of the year-related expression, the noun *year*. The preposition clearly presents the time of the narrative's second month within the calendrical limits of an 11th year. Based on nearby texts,[6] this 11th year may be understood as being part of the Judges era context. The most basic form of this linkage is: month … *in* … year.

5.2.2   Verbal narrative-links

Verbs constitute the second largest category of narrative-links. A total of 145 (34.0%) of the 426 narrative-links are categorized in Table 5.B as 15 base verbs that appear in 33 textual forms (representing different verb tenses). A verb is the narrative-link for a year-related expression in three situations. First, when a year-related expression is the subject of a clause, the narrative-link is the verb that makes an assertion about the year-related expression. Second, when a year-related expression is used as an adverb that directly modifies a verb, the narrative-link is that verb. Third, when a year-related expression is a subject complement, the narrative-link is a form of the verb *be* that connects the year-related expression to the subject of the clause.

A couple of examples of the first situation, where the year-related expression is the subject of a clause, will indicate the simplicity of some such clauses and the complexity of others. As an example of simplicity, Helaman 11:21 includes the following narration: "and the seventy and seventh year began in peace". The year-related expression is "the seventy and seventh year". The

---

6   Alma 16:1, 9.

narrative-link for this expression, the primary language connecting it to the narrative, is the verb *began*, the past tense form of the base verb *begin*. Without any other narrative language, the assertion "the seventy and seventh year began" is a complete clause that places the related secondary narrative language after the beginning moment of the 77th year. Nearby texts identify this 77th year as part of the Judges era context.[7] The phrase "in peace" is part of the narrative, but it is not part of the narrative-link because how the year began is secondary to the basic chronological placement provided by the verb *began*. The conjunction *and* connects this narrative to the preceding one, but *and* also is secondary to the basic clause. The simple connection between the secondary narrative language and the year-term may be understood as: year ... *began* ... in peace.

Helaman 1:13 provides a more complex example. The conjoined clauses in this verse assert, "And all this was done in the fortieth year of the reign of the judges, and it had an end." The unique clause "it had an end" contains the one-word year-related expression "it", which refers to the year-related expression "the fortieth year of the reign of the judges" in the initial year-related narrative of the sentence. In Parts 2 and 4 of this Division, the pronoun *it* was categorized both as implying a singular *year* and as referring to the previous number-term. The pronoun *it* is the subject of the latter clause in Helaman 1:13. As noted above, when a year-related expression is the subject of a clause, the narrative-link is the verb that makes an assertion about the expression. In this instance, the narrative-link is the verb *had*, the past tense form of the base verb *have*. The most basic form of this assertion is "it had". Of course, the meaning of this assertion, standing by itself, is not clear. Secondary narrative language also must be understood. The initial clause of the sentence (a separate year-related narrative) and the object of the latter clause ("an end") are vital to the meaning of the assertion "it had". For example, the assertion is entirely comprehensible in the context of a question using secondary narrative language. Had the 40th year of the reign of the judges come to an end? In that context, a meaningful answer is the two word assertion, "It had". The latter clause in Helaman 1:13 is preceded in the text and further connected to the narrative by the conjunction *and*, but this conjunction also is secondary to the narrative-link "had". The basic relation shown by this narrative-link between the implied year-term and the secondary narrative language is: it ... *had* ... an end.

A couple of examples of the second situation, where a year-related expression is used as an adverb that directly modifies a verb, also will indicate the simplicity of some such instances and the complexity of others. Ether 10:32 provides this simple example: "Com … reigned over the half of the kingdom [*during, for, throughout, over the course of, from beginning to end of*] forty and two years." Brackets and italicized simple and complex prepositions have been inserted into this quotation where it seems that a preposition has been ellipted; however, exactly which preposition may have been ellipted cannot be known. Because of the apparent ellipsis, the year-related expression "forty and two years" directly modifies the narrative-link "reigned". The year-related expression describes how long the subject of the clause (a king named Com) reigned over half of the Jaredite kingdom. The king's name and the other adverbial phrase "over the half of the kingdom" are secondary language of the complete narrative. The function of the narrative-link is to connect the year-term with the secondary language that identifies the subject of the assertion. This connection may be depicted simply as: Com ... *reigned* ... years.

As a more complex example, the year-related expression in Jacob 7:7 appears in a subordinate adjectival clause of an elaborate sentence. Eleven of the words at the end of this sentence are "a being which ye say shall come many hundred years hence". The subordinate adjectival clause begins with the relative pronoun *which* and qualifies the noun phrase *a being*. The year-related expression "many hundred years hence" states a time in the future. This year-related expression is

---

7   Helaman 11:1-3, 5-6, 17, 21-24.

an adverbial phrase directly modifying the verb *shall come*. The function of this narrative-link also is to connect the year-term with the secondary language that identifies the subject of the assertion. The simplest depiction of this linkage is: a being ... *shall come* ... years. Hence, when a year-related expression directly modifies a verb, whether because of an apparent ellipsis or not, the narrative-link is the verb.

A single example of the third situation, where a year-related expression is a subject complement, indicates the simplicity of such instances. Alma 43:17 includes the following language, which appears in a more lengthy narrative: "he was only twenty and five years old". The subject of this clause is "he", the only secondary language in this quotation. The year-related expression, "only twenty and five years old", is a subject complement that describes the subject. Joining the subject and the subject complement is the narrative-link, the verb *was*, the past tense form of the base verb *be*. The basic clause (subject, verbal narrative-link and year-term as a subject complement) may be depicted as: he ... *was* ... years.

5.2.3   Conjunctional narrative-links

When a year-related expression is conjoined to a previous year-related narrative without any other more basic bond, the narrative-link is the conjunction *and*. Table 5.B lists the conjunction *and* as the narrative-link for 15 (3.5%) of the 426 year-related expressions. As a simple example, 4 Nephi 1:1 includes the following narrative statement, "And it came to pass that the thirty and fourth year passed away, and also the thirty and fifth". Two different year-related expressions and narrative-links appear in this text. The initial year-related expression is the subject of the clause, "the thirty and fourth year passed away". The narrative-link for the year-term is the verb *passed*, the past tense form of the base verb *pass*. The kind of passing is described by the adverb *away*, which is secondary language apparently meaning that the year came to an end or vanished from sight.[8] The latter year-related expression, "the thirty and fifth", is linked to the foregoing clause by the simple conjunction *and*. A singular year-term is implied by the initial year-related expression, the conjunction *and*, the additive adverb *also*, and the increased numerical quantity of the second number-term. The adverb *also* is secondary narrative language confirming that the 35th year ended like the 34th; i.e., it "passed away". The function of the conjunction *and* is to link the secondary narrative language "also" to the implied year-term. This relation may be shown in schematic form as: also ... *and* … (implied year).

As a more complex example, 4 Nephi 1:6 lists many conjoined year-related expressions. The initial part of the verse provides four of them: "And thus did the thirty and eighth year pass away, and also the thirty and ninth, and the forty and first, and the forty and second". The express singular noun *year* appears in the first year-related expression. The other year-terms have been ellipted, but they are implied by the initial year-related expression, the conjunctions, the additive adverb *also*, and the increasing numerical quantities set forth in the number-terms. The initial year-related expression is the subject of a clause; so, its narrative-link is the verb of the clause, *did … pass*. Each of the following three expressions is conjoined with the preceding one and with the secondary language of the year-related narrative by its respective narrative-link (in each instance, the conjunction *and*). The first conjunction *And*, and the adverbs *thus*, *away* and *also*, are part of the secondary language of the first two conjoined year-related narratives. Each of the third and fourth year-related narratives consists of the narrative-link "and", a stated ordinal number-term, and an implied year-term. The narrative-link and implied year-term depend for their complete meanings on

---

[8]   Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, II: [250] (pass away); *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, II: 2091.

the secondary language of the two previous year-related narratives. The simple connections between the secondary language and the following year-terms are the conjunctional narrative-links. The connection of each of the three latter implied year-terms to the secondary language may be depicted schematically as: thus/away/also ... *and* … (implied year).

5.2.4   Participial narrative-links

When a year-related expression is the object of a participial phrase, the narrative-link is the participle that begins the phrase. The participle shows the relation between its associated year-term (as often modified by one or both of the adjectival components of the year-related expression) and another word or phrase that is integral to the year-related narrative's secondary language. Table 5.B records that ten (2.3%) of the 426 narrative-links in the *Book of Mormon* are participles whose objects are year-related expressions. These participles are the phrase *having commenced* and the words *being* and *making*.

The participle *having commenced* appears in Alma 51:1, where "the people of Nephi" or "they" are described as "having commenced the twenty and fifth year in peace". The year-related expression, "the twenty and fifth year", is the object of the phrase *having commenced*, which is a participial form of the past perfect tense of the base verb *commence*. The participle *having commenced* modifies the previous pronoun *they*, which is secondary language in the narrative. Other words and phrases of this verse, such as "the people of Nephi" and "in peace" also are secondary language. The function of the narrative-link is to depict the relation of the year-term and the secondary language of the narrative. The most basic depiction of this relationship is: they … *having commenced* … year.

Six of the ten participial phrases that have year-related expressions as their objects begin with the present participle *being*. For example, Mosiah 29:45 presents this narrative text: "And now it came to pass that his father died, being eighty and two years old". The year-related expression is "eighty and two years old" and it is the object of the present participle *being*, the narrative-link. Webster's 1828 dictionary defines the participle *being* to mean "[e]xisting in a certain state".[9] Together, the participle and its object qualify the noun phrase *his father*, which is part of the secondary language of the narrative. Hence, from the noun phrase *his father* and other tertiary language in nearby narratives,[10] the reader is informed in Mosiah 29:45 that $Alma_1$ existed or lived into his 83rd year. The function of the narrative-link "being" is to show the relation of the year-term with the secondary narrative language. This relation may be shown as: father … *being* … years.

The remaining three narrative-links use the present participle *making*. For example, in Mosiah 29:46, the narrative states that "Mosiah died also, in the thirty and third year of his reign, being sixty and three years old, making in the whole five hundred and nine years from the time Lehi left Jerusalem". This narrative contains three year-related expressions, the first of which is "the thirty and third year of his reign". The narrative-link is the preposition *in*. This temporal-expression describes the regnal year in which king $Mosiah_2$ died. The most basic form of this linkage is: died … *in* … year. The second year-related expression is "sixty and three years old" and its narrative-link is the present participle *being*. This temporal-expression describes the age of king $Mosiah_2$ when he died; he existed or lived into his 64th year. This relation may be shown simply as: Mosiah … *being* … years. The third year-related expression, "five hundred and nine years from the time

---

9   Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, I: [248] (being).

10   E.g., Mosiah 27:8-34; 29:42-44; Alma 5:11.

Lehi left Jerusalem", expressly numbers time in the Lehi era. This year-related expression is the object of the present participle *making*; hence, the narrative-link is "making".

Webster's 1828 dictionary defines the present participle *making* with just five synonyms: "[f]orming; causing; compelling; creating [or] constituting".[11] The temporal sense of the present participle *making* is somewhat ambiguous because the activity that it is used to describe may be future, ongoing or finished, depending on the nearby language. In Mosiah 29:46, a subordinate prepositional phrase, *in the whole*, immediately follows and modifies the participle *making*. This phrase removes any sense of ambiguity associated with *making*. When the *Book of Mormon* was first published, the noun *whole* meant "[t]he entire thing [or] the entire or total assemblage of parts".[12] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the prepositional phrase *in the whole* to mean "[t]o the full amount, in full, entirely, completely" or "[i]n total amount, all together, all told, in all".[13] Thus, the figure of speech *making in the whole* states that the "making" or "constituting" was full, total, entire or complete. The total quantity of 509 Lehi calendar years had been completed. Nonetheless, for this introduction of participial narrative-links, the question whether a "making" was yet to begin, in process or completed is unrelated to identifying the narrative-link. The phrase *in the whole* is secondary language in this narrative, even though *in the whole* is placed between "making" and its object, the year-related expression. The participle *making* is the most basic word that joins the year-related expression to the secondary language of its narrative. A simple presentation of this third kind of participial narrative-link, its year-term and the associated secondary narrative language is the following schematic diction: Mosiah … *making* … years.

5.2.5   Adverbial narrative-links

Table 5.B presents the word *yea* as an adverbial narrative-link connected to the remaining three year-related expressions in the *Book of Mormon*. In each instance, the adverb introduces a year-related expression that "enforces the sense"[14] of the immediately preceding chronological statement by being more specific. The adverbial narrative-link in 1 Nephi 10:3-4 was mentioned as an example in Section 1.5 of Part 1 of this Division. The initial chronological statement is a general one: "after [the Jews] are brought back out of captivity, to possess again their land of inheritance". This statement describes a time spoken of by Lehi$_1$ when "a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews". Directly following the general chronological statement, a more specific year-related expression is introduced: "yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem". The year-term is plural, the time-term is a personalized description of the day when the Lehi era began, and the number-term is an emphatic and definite "even six hundred". The narrative-link "yea" connects the more specific year-related expression to the same secondary language of the narrative as the earlier general statement. The simple connection between the secondary narrative language and the year-term may be understood as: would ... raise up ... *yea* … years.

In 1 Nephi 17:4, the narrative states, "we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness". The initial chronological statement is the complex prepositional phrase "for the space of many years". The year-related expression "many years" is a referenced general or common number expression that is connected with secondary language of the narrative "for the space" by a narrative-link "of". An emphatic, stated cardinal number expression "even

---

[11]   Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, II: [90] (making).

[12]   Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, II: [926] (whole); see also *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, II: 3768-69.

[13]   *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, II: 3769 (whole).

[14]   Webster II: [948] (yea).

eight years" follows the expression "many years" and is connected to the secondary language by a separate narrative-link "yea". The two chronological statements, one general and the other more specific, describe how long the followers of Lehi$_1$ "did sojourn … in the wilderness", at least according to Nephi$_1$'s view of their situation.[15] The simplest depiction of the linkage between the secondary narrative language and the latter year-term is: did sojourn … *yea* … years.

The third adverbial narrative-link occurs in 3 Nephi 7:1, which continues a report[16] about a rebellious combination of Nephite judges, priests and other elites who were seeking to overthrow the rule of judges elected by the people and establish a king in the 30th NC calendar year: "Now behold ... in this same year—yea, the thirtieth year—they did destroy upon the judgment seat, yea, did murder the chief judge of the land". The referenced ordinal or common number expression "this same year" refers to the 30th year mentioned in an earlier text.[17] The connection between the secondary language and the year-term may be depicted as: did destroy … *in* … year. The stated ordinal number expression, "the thirtieth year", is connected to the secondary language by a separate narrative-link "yea". This linkage may be shown simply as: did destroy … *yea* … year.

In all three instances, the adverb *yea* is the narrative-link that adds and connects a year-related expression that is more specific than the immediately preceding chronological statement. The adverb *yea* functions somewhat like the conjunction *and*. However, unlike the word *and*, which simply adds another similar type of year-related expression to the secondary narrative language, the word *yea* specifies a more precise year-related expression. Is this a distinction without a difference insofar as the chronological structure is concerned? One way to analyze the texts is to examine the placement of the five linguistic types of narrative-links—including the placement when the adverb *yea* is combined with the conjunction *and* into a single linguistic type.

5.3   The placement of linguistic types of narrative-links

In this Section, the placement of the five proposed linguistic types of narrative-links is sorted by the three sets of plates and their major divisions in the same way as year-, time- and number-terms were sorted in previous Parts of this Division. As in those earlier discussions, the statistics in the following discussion are intended to be introductory. They describe narrative-links solely from the perspective of their linguistic functions within their associated narratives. The components of their linked year-related expressions and their associated meanings are not considered. This discussion will conclude with an examination of the placement sequence or letter patterns of the five proposed linguistic types of narrative-links. The narrative-links engraved on the small plates of Nephi seem to exhibit balanced and reversible letter patterns, perhaps deliberately organized by their linguistic type. With the plates of Mormon and Moroni, however, the picture is much less clear—whether the five types are examined separately or the types are combined in some manner (such as combining the specifying conjunctional adverb *yea* and the non-specifying conjunction *and* into a single category of conjunctions, as suggested above).

5.3.1   Narrative-links in the three sets of plates

Table 5.C presents the numbers of expressions associated with the five proposed linguistic types of narrative-links in the small plates of Nephi, the plates of Mormon and the plates of Moroni. Totals for all the plates also are given. In the small plates of Nephi, 15 (51.7%) of the 29 narrative-

---

[15]   His elder brothers also appear to have measured their existence in the land Bountiful as time spent " in the wilderness" (1 Nephi 17:6-21).

[16]   3 Nephi 6:14-30.

[17]   3 Nephi 6:14.

links are verbs and 12 (41.4%) are prepositions. In the plates of Mormon, however, most narrative-links are prepositions (219 or 60.3% of the 363 narrative-links in those plates) and the same is true for the plates of Moroni (22 or 64.7% of the 34 narrative-links). More than 90% of the narrative-links in each set of plates are prepositions or verbs. The 15 conjunctional narrative-links only occur in the plates of Mormon, but two of the three adverbial narrative-links occur in the small plates.

5.3.2   Narrative-links in the major divisions

Table 5.D depicts the numbers of narrative-links appearing in the major divisions of the *Book of Mormon*. Prepositional narrative-links, the ones that occur most often in the *Book of Mormon*, also occur most often in eight of the books: First Nephi, Second Nephi, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, Third Nephi, Mormon and Ether. A total of 245 (65.0%) of the 377 narrative-links in these eight books are prepositional and another 112 (29.7%) are verbal. In the other seven major divisions (the Words of Mormon and the books of Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, Fourth Nephi and Moroni), verbal narrative-links constitute the most common type (33 or 67.3% of the 49 narrative-links in these major divisions) and prepositional narrative-links occur with another eight (16.3%) of the year-related expressions.

5.3.3   The placement of the five linguistic types of narrative-links

The 426 narrative-links have been separated into five linguistic types: prepositions (253 instances); verbs (145 instances); conjunctions (15 instances); participles (10 instances); and adverbs (3 instances). Table 5.E presents the placement of these types of narrative-links throughout the *Book of Mormon*. The texts are sorted by the major divisions appearing in the three sets of plates. To help identify potential patterns in the placement of these texts, each linguistic type of narrative-link is labeled with a capital letter: Q = preposition; R = verb; S = conjunction; T = participle; U = adverb. These letters were chosen for ease of recognition and so as not to be confused with the capital letters that identify year-, time- and number-terms in the previous Parts of this Division.

As Table 5.E indicates, the letter-group representing Nephi$_1$'s choices in First Nephi (QUQUQRQ) contrasts with the (RQ) letter-group representing his choices in Second Nephi and with the (R) letter-sets representing the choices of all the later writers in the small plates of Nephi. When major divisions in the small plates of Nephi are disregarded, the R narrative-links in all the major divisions following Second Nephi merge into a single letter-set. Thus, the letter pattern in these plates may be symbolized as a single letter-group (QUQUQRQRQR), as two imbalanced and non-reversible letter-groups (QUQU)(QRQRQR) or as two balanced and reversible letter-groups (QUQUQ)(RQRQR). This last depiction of the letter pattern of narrative-links may suggest that Nephi$_1$ created a systematized pattern of narrative-links associated with the three proposed linguistic types: prepositions, verbs and adverbs. One might resist this suggestion because the final (R) letter-set is not part of Nephi$_1$'s writings; he did not complete the proposed pattern in Second Nephi. However, he did give Jacob$_2$ instructions about the content to be placed in the remainder of the small plates of Nephi[18] and every narrative-link thereafter is a verb; so, it seems possible that the pattern could have been completed in accordance with Nephi$_1$'s balanced and reversible plan, as passed down from writer to writer and as perceived hundreds of years later by Mormon$_2$. This hypothetical plan for organizing narrative-links by their linguistic function in the narratives is examined further in Division 2.

---

[18]   Jacob 1:1-4, 8; 7:26-27.

Moroni₂, who engraved both books in the plates of Moroni, made choices resulting in a proposed (QRQRTRQRQRQ) letter pattern for narrative-links in the Book of Ether and then continued with an (R) letter-set for narrative-links in the Book of Moroni. The pattern of narrative-links in the Book of Ether (QRQR)(T)(RQRQRQ) is not balanced, but it is somewhat reversible, in the sense that in either direction (QR) letter groups repeat until the (T) letter-set is reached. When major divisions in the plates of Moroni are ignored, the narrative-link placement pattern may be represented by a single (QRQRTRQRQRQR) letter-group, by unequal letter-groups (QRQR) and (RQRQRQR) on either side of the (T) letter-set or perhaps by four balanced and reversible letter-groups (QRQ)(RTR)(QRQ)(RQR). One may certainly question whether alternating (Q) and (R) letter-sets in the plates of Moroni necessarily present a systematized pattern solely because a (T) letter-set (indeed, one T narrative-link) seems to highlight a single year-related expression. If Moroni₂ used some sort of organizing protocol associated with the linguistic types of narrative-links, the evidence from the foregoing letter patterns does not provide a convincing indication. These patterns are examined further in Division 4 of this study.

Table 5.E also depicts the placement sequence for the five proposed linguistic types of narrative-links in the extant books of the plates of Mormon as follows: Mosiah (QTRQRQTQT), Alma (QRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRSQRQTQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR), Helaman (QRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR), Third Nephi (QRQRQRSRQRQRQRQRQRQRSRQRQRQURQRQRQR), Fourth Nephi (RSQRSRSRSRQRQRQRSRQ) and Mormon (TRTQTQRQRQRQRTQRQRQR). These letter-groups begin with a single Q narrative-link in the extant Book of Mosiah and end in the Book of Mormon with a single R narrative-link written by Mormon₂, which is followed by another R narrative-link written by Moroni₂ long after Mormon₂'s death. Including the beginning (Q) letter-set and the ending (R) letter-set, 75 (QR) letter-groups appear in the extant text of the plates of Mormon. The seemingly constant lock-step march of alternating Q and R narrative-links through Mormon₂'s writings is interrupted 17 times by (S), (T) and (U) letter-sets. The 15 S narrative-links occur in eight separate letter-sets placed in Alma, Third Nephi and Fourth Nephi. Nine T narrative-links occur in eight letter-sets placed in Mosiah, Alma and Mormon. A single U narrative-link appears in Third Nephi. These interruptions in most of the books—Mosiah (T); Alma (S) and (T); Third Nephi (S) and (U); Fourth Nephi (S); and Mormon (T)—perhaps suggest that major divisions (at least as far as linguistic types of narrative-links are concerned) are integral to the organized structure of the plates of Mormon. However, this suggestion also may be resisted on three grounds. First, the suggestion that the structure of narrative-links is limited by major divisions runs counter to the hypothetical letter patterns proposed for year-, time- and number-terms in the previous Parts of this Division. Second, as suggested above, the three linguistic types of narrative-links appearing in the small plates of Nephi and the plates of Moroni seem to suggest organizing protocols unrestricted by major divisions. Thus, separating the patterns of narrative-links by major divisions in the plates of Mormon would be unique. The third and most important ground for resisting the suggestion is in the patterns themselves. Viewed with the limitation of major divisions in the plates of Mormon, the narrative-link letter patterns might be symbolized for the extant Book of Mosiah as (QT)(RQRQ)(TQT), and for the complete books as: Alma (QRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR)(SQRQT)(QRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR); Helaman (QRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR); Third Nephi (QRQRQ)(RSR)(QRQRQRQRQ)(RSR)(QRQRQ)(U)(RQRQRQR); Fourth Nephi (RS[Q]RSRSRSR)(QRQRQR[S]RQ); and Mormon (T[R]T[Q]T)(QRQRQRQR[T]QRQRQR). None of these patterns for individual major divisions is convincing by itself or even replicated well in a separate major division. Moreover, other possible letter patterns for each book other than Helaman could be proposed. For example,

Mosiah might be (QT)(RQR)(QTQT) and Mormon might be (T[RTQ]T)(QRQRQRQ[RTQ] RQRQR). Hence, these apparent letter patterns are merely interesting at this point of the introduction and they require much more careful examination to rise to the level of hypothetical patterns. In Division 3 of this study, the linguistic types of narrative-links in the plates of Mormon are subject to a detailed analysis.

When the extant texts in the plates of Mormon are assumed to be divided only by the five linguistic types of narrative-links and book divisions are ignored, the letter pattern becomes a lengthy letter-group (Q[T]RQRQ[T]Q[T]QRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR[S]QRQ[T]Q RQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQRQR QRQRQRQRQRQR[S]RQRQRQRQRQRQR[S]RQRQRQ[U]RQRQRQRSQR[S]R[S]R[S]RQRQ RQR[S]RQ[T]R[T]Q[T]QRQRQRQR[T]QRQRQR). In this depiction of the letter-group, the intermittent use of S, T and U narrative-links is marked with brackets. The R narrative-links at the end of Third Nephi and the beginning of Fourth Nephi merge into a single letter-set. Parts of this letter pattern may suggest an organized structure like the ones associated with year-, time- and number-terms. For example, a possible balanced and reversible pattern (SRQR[Q]RQRS) stretches from 4 Nephi 1:14 through 1:41 and another such potential letter-group (QT[R]TQ) begins with the second narrative-link in 4 Nephi 1:48 and ends in Mormon 1:12. Nonetheless, apparently unorganized letter-sets and lists of letter-sets separate the few seemingly organized patterns that appear. Thus, when the text is viewed without the structure imposed by major divisions, there seems to be no overriding organizational pattern for the five proposed types of narrative-links in the plates of Mormon.

In the search for systematized letter patterns in the linguistic types of narrative-links, as in the six analytical types of time- or number-terms, potential letter lists were created by combining the five separate types in numerous ways. As noted at the beginning of this Section, types may be combined in some manner (such as combining the specifying adverb *yea* and non-specifying conjunction *and* into a single category of conjunctions). As with time- and number-term combinations, each potential letter list that was considered had three or four categories because combinations resulting in just one or two categories could not display any meaningful pattern. The 35 potential letter lists were created merely because they could be, not because prepositions and verbs belong together, or prepositions and participles, or even conjunctions and adverbs. The analysis merely created possible combinations. Many of the letter lists intermixed seemingly organized letter-groups (based on balanced and reversible patterns) with random patterns of letters. A few simplistic three-part patterns also occurred. However, none of the lists seemed to display a meaningful pattern of systemization.

This Section 5.3 has presented the placement of narrative-links in the *Book of Mormon* solely from the perspective of the five proposed linguistic types. From that perspective, when the books in the small plates of Nephi are disregarded, a systematized letter pattern may seem to exist, consisting of two balanced and reversible letter-groups (QUQUQ)(RQRQR), but much more analysis is necessary. The plates of Moroni do not have a similarly distinct organizational structure, whether or not major divisions are ignored. In the plates of Mormon, the major divisions of the narratives might seem to present some sort of an intricate type of structure associated with 17 interruptions of the repeating (QR) letter-groups by (S), (T) and (U) letter-sets, but when the books of the plates of Mormon are disregarded, no such systemization of the textual patterns appears to be present. These differences in the three sets of plates and the indistinct letter patterns unquestionably suggest that further examination is required.

5.4   The placement of narrative-links with year-related expressions

In this Section 5.4, the placement of the linguistic types of narrative-links with their associated year-, time- and number-terms begins to be introduced. This examination relies on the definition of a temporal-expression presented in Section 1.5 of Part 1 of this Division. The hyphenated term "temporal-expression" means a combined narrative-link and its year-related expression. The discussion about temporal-expressions in this Section 5.4 begins with a question. Does the linguistic structure of temporal-expressions suggest a systematized placement pattern? To begin to answer this question, each temporal-expression (taken as a whole) was categorized by one of the five linguistic types of narrative-links, one of the three types of year-terms, one of the six analytical types of time-terms and one of the six analytical types of number-terms. As thus categorized, all 426 temporal-expressions are set forth in Table 5.F.

Admittedly, this approach to temporal-expressions is complex and perhaps, initially, a bit confusing. A simple example may help. The first temporal-expression in 1 Nephi 1:4 may be sorted into a category of temporal-expressions that have a prepositional Q narrative-link (*of*), an express singular A year-term (*year*), a personalized G time-term (*of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah*) and a stated ordinal K number-term (*the first*). This temporal-expression is one of 11 identically categorized QAGK temporal-expressions in the *Book of Mormon*. QAGK temporal-expressions constitute one of the 45 separate categories of temporal-expressions listed in Table 5.F. Another example is the second, more specific temporal-expression that appears in 1 Nephi 17:4. This temporal-expression is categorized by its adverbial U narrative-link (*yea*), express plural B year-term (*years*), omitted H time-term and stated cardinal L number-term (*even eight*). As can be seen in Table 5.F, this UBHL temporal-expression is the only one that exists in the extant text of the *Book of Mormon*. For the purposes of Table 5.F and the following discussion in Section 5.4.1, it must be understood that temporal-expression categories such as QAGK and UBHL have been created on the basis of the five proposed types of narrative-links discussed in Sections 5.2 and 5.3 above and on the basis of the 15 proposed types of year-, time- and number-terms introduced in Parts 2 through 4 of this Division.

5.4.1   Narrative-links with 15 types of year-, time- and number-terms

Table 5.F displays the ways in which the five linguistic types of narrative-links and 15 analytical types of year-, time- and number-terms are combined in the *Book of Mormon*. In the small plates of Nephi, only prepositional Q, verbal R and adverbial U narrative-links have been employed. All six types of number-terms appear, but year-terms are limited to express (A and B) types and time-terms use just the long name D, personalized name G and omitted name H types. As a result, the small plates include just 17 of the 45 categories of temporal-expressions that occur in the *Book of Mormon*. Two of the 45 categories of temporal-expressions (UBGL and UBHL) only appear in the small plates of Nephi.

In the plates of Moroni, only prepositional Q, verbal R and participial T narrative-links have been used. Year-terms again are limited to express (A and B) types and time-terms use just the long name D, personalized name G and omitted name H types. The plates of Moroni do not contain any referenced cardinal N or absent P number-terms. Consequently, these plates only have 10 of the 45 categories of temporal-expressions that appear in the *Book of Mormon*. None of the categories of temporal-expressions is unique to the plates of Moroni, but the RBHO category only appears in the plates of Moroni and the small plates of Nephi.

In these smaller sets of plates, the most common kinds of year-related expressions are symbolized by the (BHL) and (BHO) letter-groups: an express plural B year-term combined with an omitted H time-term and either a stated cardinal L number-term or a referenced general O number-term. These (BHL) and (BHO) letter-groups account for 41.4% of the year-related expressions in the small plates of Nephi and 70.6% of the expressions in the plates of Moroni. In the small plates of Nephi, (BHL) year-related expressions are connected to their narratives by the three types of narrative-links that appear in these plates: prepositions, verbs and adverbs; and (BHO) year-related expressions are connected by prepositions and verbs. In the plates of Moroni, only prepositions and verbs link (BHL) and (BHO) year-related expressions with their narratives.

The 42 proposed types of temporal-expressions that appear in the plates of Mormon contrast with those in the smaller sets of plates. In the plates of Mormon, the most common kinds of year-related expressions are symbolized by the (AHK) and (AEK) letter-groups: an express singular A year-term combined with a stated ordinal K number-term and either an omitted H time-term or a short name E time-term. These (AHK) and (AEK) letter-groups account for 47.1% of the year-related expressions in the plates of Mormon. All five linguistic types of narrative-links are employed in these plates to connect (AHK) year-related expressions to their narratives, but only prepositional and verbal narrative-links are used with (AEK) year-related expressions. The (BHL) and (BHO) categories of year-related expressions in the plates of Mormon only account for 12.9% of the 363 expressions in these plates.

The 45 separate categories of temporal-expressions shown in Table 5.F are symbolized by the letters that represent the five types of narrative-links and 15 types of year-related expression components used by writers to structure the chronology presented in the major divisions of their plates. The ten largest of the 45 categories are used in 320 (75.1%) of the 426 temporal-expressions. These ten categories may be subdivided into 211 expressions (65.9%) that use prepositional Q narrative-links and 109 (34.1%) that use verbal R narrative-links, or into 243 expressions (75.9%) that use express singular A year-terms and 77 (24.1%) that use express plural B year-terms. The data in Table 5.F condense and yet clearly depict the great complexity of the chronological structure of the *Book of Mormon* when all 15 types of year-, time- and number-terms are considered.

Another way to view this structural complexity is through an examination of the placement of these 45 categories of temporal-expressions. For this purpose, a numerical system was adopted for representing the categories of temporal-expressions. In Table 5.F, each category is associated with a category number (1 through 45). The smaller category numbers are related to the more abundant temporal-expressions; e.g., category 1 includes 74 QAHK temporal-expressions and category 2 includes 41 RAHK temporal expressions, while categories 29 through 45 each includes a single unique temporal-expression. These category numbers simplify and clarify the data analyzed in the following examination of the placement of the 45 temporal-expression categories.

Table 5.G identifies the placement of each temporal-expression in the major divisions engraved on the three sets of plates. To simplify this table, category numbers that appear in Table 5.F have been chosen to represent the separate categories of temporal-expressions. Category numbers are presented in parentheses to make their placement patterns easier to analyze when they are placed together in horizontal written form. Viewing an expression category as (2) or (6) is simpler than viewing it as (RAHK) or (QBHL), particularly when the distribution is viewed as a long string of letters and parentheses in a major division or set of plates. In addition, if category numbers were to be presented without parentheses, the categories would become indistinguishable. For example, the numbers 31217 could represent categories (3)(12)(17), (3)(1)(2)(17), (31)(2)(1)(7), and so forth. When the temporal-expression categories are placed into the paragraphs of this study, the

parentheses are crucial both for maintaining category separation and for developing an understanding of the placement patterns of temporal-expressions.

When the distribution of the 45 temporal-expression categories is examined in the three sets of plates, seemingly ordered patterns rarely occur. Examples include patterns like the balanced and reversible ones in Helaman (5)(1)(2)(1)(5), Fourth Nephi (4)(5)(1)(5)(4) and Ether (6)(9)(12)(9)(6). Dozens of simple three-part patterns may be identified in the extant text; e.g., Second Nephi (15)(6)(15); Jacob (21)(22)(21); Mosiah (17)(11)(17); Alma (11)(9)(11); Helaman (3)(37)(3); Third Nephi (12)(26)(12); Fourth Nephi (4)(13)(4); Mormon (17)(12)(17); and Ether ((22)(4)(22). However, it seems entirely possible that these various three- and five-part lists of numbers may not evidence an overriding arrangement because before and after these seemingly organized lists, the lists of category numbers seem to be completely disorganized.

5.4.2   Narrative-links with nine types of year-, time- and number-terms

In Parts 2 through 4 of this Division, the suggestion was made that at least in the plates of Mormon, just nine types of year-, time- and number-terms may have been used for organizational purposes, three each for the three components of year-related expressions.[19] This more limited categorization and the 36 resulting categories of temporal-expressions are introduced in this Section 5.4.2. In this view of temporal-expressions, omitted time-terms and absent number-terms are disregarded. Long and short era names are combined into a single "official" type of time-term and the three types of referenced number names are combined into a single "common" type of number-term.[20] Table 5.H displays the 36 ways in which these different types of narrative-links and year-, time- and number-terms are combined in the *Book of Mormon.* The letter categories for time- and number-terms are quite different from the letter categories identified in Table 5.F. With only 36 categories, the category numbers also represent different categories than in Table 5.F. The placement of the 36 temporal-expression categories is sorted in Table 5.I by the three sets of plates and their major divisions. Different category numbers are used, but a similar conclusion as to their seemingly jumbled placement occurs when temporal-expressions are defined by the five types of narrative-links and by the nine types of year-, time- and number-terms that seem to have been used to organize the plates of Mormon. There are few patterns that suggest an order based on balanced and reversible number lists. Examples include patterns like the balanced and reversible ones in Alma (2)(9)(8)(9)(2), Helaman (2)(1)(6)(1)(2), Fourth Nephi (4)(5)(1)(5)(4), Mormon (5)(1)(4)(1)(4)(1)(5) and Ether (7)(8)(10)(8)(7). Again, dozens of simple three-part patterns may be identified in the extant text, but these three-, five- and seven-part lists of numbers may not demonstrate any systematic arrangement because before and after these seemingly organized lists, the lists of category numbers appear to be disordered.

5.4.3   Narrative-links and year-terms

A perceived lack of a unified linguistic system for organizing narrative-links and year-related expressions also occurs when the five linguistic types of narrative-links are combined just with year-, time- or number-terms. Table 5.J presents the association of all five types of narrative-links with the three types of year-terms. Three of the nine prepositions (*in*, *of* and *for*) link with 186 express singular year-terms and 54 express plural year-terms, which together constitute 94.9% of all prepositional narrative-links. Three of the 15 base verbs (*pass*, *end* and *be*) connect with 76 express

---

[19]   See Sections 2.2 in Part 2, 3.8.4 in Part 3 and 4.8.4 in Part 4 of this Division.

[20]   This is the last of the three, closely-related, potential letter lists identified as depicting an organizational system for number-terms in the plates of Mormon. See Section 4.8.4 in Part 4 of this Division.

singular year-terms and 49 express plural year-terms to make up 86.2% of all verbal narrative-links. These three prepositions and three base verbs are used with 262 (92.9%) of the express singular year-terms and 103 (76.9%) of the express plural year-terms, or with 85.7% of the 426 year-terms in the *Book of Mormon*. These six narrative-links and their related year-terms unquestionably create the foundation for most of the chronological structure of the *Book of Mormon*. Still, when the placement of narrative-links and year-terms is charted, as shown in Table 5.K, a result similar to that for the 45 or 36 various analytical categories of temporal-expressions discussed above is obtained. Many seemingly organized patterns occur, but they are separated from each other by one or more sets of letters and numbers that seem to have no organization, whether major divisions are observed or not.

5.4.4   Narrative-links and time-terms

In a similar manner, Table 5.L depicts the connections of the five linguistic types of narrative-links with the six analytical types of time-terms that were introduced in Part 3 of this Division[21] and listed in Table 3.E. Three of the nine prepositions (*in*, *of* and *for*) are used with 240 (94.9%) of the 253 temporal-expressions that begin with a preposition. Similarly, the three base verbs identified above in Section 5.4.3 (*pass*, *end* and *be*) are linked with another 125 time-terms, which make up 86.2% of the verbal narrative-links associated with 145 express or omitted time-terms. Table 5.M shows the connections of the five linguistic types of narrative-links with the three express types of time-terms that were discussed in Part 3 of this Division[22] and listed in Table 3.F as suggesting an organized structure for express time-terms in the plates of Mormon. Two of the nine prepositions (*in* and *of*) are associated with 61 official names, three altered names and 20 personalized names, which together constitute 96.6% of the 87 prepositional narrative-links associated with express time-terms. Likewise, the three base verbs identified above (*pass*, *end* and *be*) are linked with another 38 official names, three altered names and 12 personalized time-terms to make up 93.0% of the 57 verbal narrative-links associated with express time-terms. The three prepositions *in*, *of* and *for* and three base verbs *pass*, *end* and *be*, with their associated time-terms, also appear to form a significant part of the chronological structure of the *Book of Mormon*. Nonetheless, when the placements of narrative-links and time-terms are listed, as shown in Tables 5.N and 5.O, results comparable to that for the several categories of complete temporal-expressions are found. Many seemingly organized patterns occur, but they are separated by what seem to be unrelated individual sets of letters and numbers or groups of disorganized sets. When major divisions and omitted time-terms and their narrative-links all are disregarded, the patterns in the plates of Mormon seem more organized (perhaps due to what appears to be the underlying organizational structure for express time-terms indicated in Part 3 of this Division), but single, apparently unrelated sets and disorganized groups of sets continue to exist.

5.4.5   Narrative-links and number-terms

Table 5.P correlates the five linguistic types of narrative-links with the six analytical types of number-terms that were introduced in Part 4 of this Division[23] and listed in Table 4.G. Three of the nine prepositions (*in*, *of* and *for*) again appear with 240 (94.9%) of the 253 temporal-expressions that begin with a preposition. Similarly, the three base verbs identified Section 5.4.3 (*pass*, *end* and *be*) are linked with another 125 number-terms, which together make up 86.2% of the verbal

---

[21]   See Sections 3.2 through 3.6.

[22]   See Section 3.8.4.

[23]   See Sections 4.5 through 4.7.

narrative-links associated with 145 express or absent number-terms. Table 5.Q presents the connections of the five linguistic types of narrative-links with the three express types of number-terms that were discussed in Part 4 of this Division[24] and listed in Table 4.H as suggesting an organized structure for express number-terms in the plates of Mormon. Two of the nine prepositions (*in* and *of*) are associated with 147 stated ordinal names, 27 stated cardinal names and 53 common names to constitute 92.7% of the 245 prepositional narrative-links associated with express number-terms. Likewise, the three base verbs identified above (*pass*, *end* and *be*) are linked with another 75 stated ordinal names, 44 stated cardinal names and six common names, which together make up 86.2% of the 145 verbal narrative-links associated with express number-terms. The three prepositions *in*, *of* and *for* and three base verbs *pass*, *end* and *be,* with their associated number-terms, also appear to shape a substantial part of the chronological structure of the *Book of Mormon*.

Tables 5.R and 5.S display the placement of the combined types of narrative-links and number-terms. Table 5.R includes the six analytical types of number-terms (including absent names), while Table 5.S includes the three types of express number-terms (when the referenced number-terms are combined into a "common" number-term category). Each set of plates seems to display some organized patterns when major divisions and absent number-terms and their narrative-links all are disregarded. However, these seemingly organized patterns are often separated by individual letter-sets or apparently disorganized letter-groups.

5.5   Conclusion

A linguistic approach to analyzing narrative-links and their year-related expressions has found no apparent system for arranging links and expressions that is consistent for all three of the principal sets of plates. This conclusion seems to hold, whether the five linguistic types of narrative-links are sorted by themselves (Table 5.E), or sorted into 45 temporal-expression categories (Tables 5.F and 5.G) or 36 temporal-expression categories (Tables 5.H and 5.I), or sorted with the three separate types of year-terms (Tables 5.J and 5.K), with the six analytical types of time- or number-terms (Tables 5.L, 5.N, 5.P and 5.R), or with the three express types of time- or number-terms suggested by the plates of Mormon (Tables 5.M, 5.O, 5.Q and 5.S).

This introduction of narrative-links relies on the five proposed linguistic types for classification and analysis. When sorted in this limited way, a potentially systematized placement pattern appears in the small plates of Nephi, but the other two sets of plates seem likely not to have any consistent placement patterns. When the five proposed linguistic types of narrative-links are examined in terms of all three adjoined components of year-related expressions, the placement patterns (whether employing 45 or 36 temporal-expression categories) not only do not suggest an overall systemization, they almost might be thought to indicate an underlying process for obscuring the patterns indicated by the placements of year-, time- and number-terms when such terms are considered separately (at least within the plates of Mormon).

Clearly, the organizational processes for structuring the chronology of the *Book of Mormon*, if such processes actually exist, have been glimpsed only partially in the foregoing introductions of narrative-links and year-, time- and number-terms. More detailed analysis of each set of plates is necessary. Furthermore, the apparent lack of organized patterns for the five linguistic types of narrative-links in the plates of Mormon and Moroni suggests that the meanings of narrative-links within their various narrative contexts and with the meanings of their respective year-related expressions also must be examined for implications regarding chronological structure. This

---

[24]   See Section 4.8.4.

suggestion is reinforced by the apparent placement patterns of year-terms analyzed in Part 2 of this Division by both their linguistic forms (express or implied) and their meanings (singular or plural). The apparent placement patterns of time-terms also seemed to be structured by their diction and meanings (standardized, altered or personalized era names and other personalized names), as discussed in Part 3 of this Division. Similarly, the apparent placement patterns of number-terms identified in Part 4 of this Division perhaps seemed to be organized by their diction and meanings (stated ordinal, stated cardinal or common names). Thus, to conclude the Research Foundations presented in this Division, both the diction and meanings of narrative-links must be considered together with the diction and meanings of their associated year-, time- and number-terms. The following Part 6 concludes this Division by introducing the systematized patterns of temporal-expressions that appear to exist when the diction and meanings of temporal-expressions are examined and understood in this more comprehensive way.