

STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER ONE

last revision date 2013 January 12

(updated notes to the vocabulary. both 'hn' and 'dd' start with upper case MdC letters)



Working together

Main topics in this chapter:

- Some aspects of hieroglyphic writing,
 - Direction
 - Arrangement
 - Principal features
 - Logograms
 - Rebus
 - Monoliteral signs
 - Transliteration
 - Manuel de Codage (not in the book)
- Introduction to the Middle Egyptian verb.
 - Simple sentences - statements of purported fact following 'iw'
 - “adverbial” comment (no verb)
 - “adverbial” ~~modifier~~ (with verb)

There's a lot that's important in this chapter, but you don't have to pay much attention to sections #1-3 of the text (in fact, they're not essential at all), but do get serious about reading starting with #4.

Normally, I don't like to tell people that they should memorize things, but the following chart shows you some things that it would be very, very much to your advantage to take some time and memorize.

Things to memorize:

- The chart of monoliteral signs in the table in #4 on pages 6 & 7 (but only the first three columns)
- The exact order of the monoliteral signs in the table just mentioned
- The Manuel de Codage given below (it is not in the book, it is given below – you'll need for transliteration)

Section #4 notes:

In addition to what Hoch has to say in the book, the table on the next page shows you some other things you need to be aware of (and may help you understand the text).

| Types and subtypes of signs. | | Notes. |
|------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Logograms | | One sign = one word (not usual in Egyptian) |
| Determinatives | | Help the reader identify the meaning of the word by using a generic sign to represent general concepts like “man, woman, god, goddess, writing etc.” These usually, but not always, come at the end of a word. Usually only one determinative is employed, but more can sometimes be found. |
| Rebus signs | | |
| | monoliterals | Stand for one consonant only. |
| | biliterals | Stand for pairs of consonants. |
| | triliterals | Stand for groups of three consonants. I don't think there are any that stand for more. |

Egyptian hieroglyphs almost never use a single sign to represent a word. Instead, they usually employ some additional signs to help readers sound out the word.

When the Egyptian hieroglyphic system was first developing, the scribes recorded only the consonants of the language, the vowels were left out completely. There were about twenty three different consonantal sounds in the language at that time. Each of these sounds is represented by a hieroglyph. Some of these sounds have two hieroglyphic signs associated with them. These glyphs are shown in the table on pages 6 and 7

Obviously, there are more hieroglyphs in the language. You will become familiar with many of them as we go forward through the book.









Section #5 notes:












For right now we need to concentrate on the monoliteral signs on pages 6 and 7. Each of these signs is accompanied by a transliteration symbol. Transliteration exists because it is often impractical to show the original signs, far easier just to use a keyboard. Despite the appearance of some of them, all of these symbols can be typed on a keyboard. You can see some of these symbols in use on the top of page 6.










There is a transliteration font available on the internet, but you don't need it. And in fact it won't be represented correctly in many venues, so you will need to learn the **Manuel de Codage**, otherwise known as **MdC**. Manuel de Codage is a way of representing the transliteration font in regular, everyday alphabetic characters. Anyway, the key strokes are identical between the standard transliteration font and MdC.

One more note: The standard practice in Egyptian was to write from right to left. Hoch writes from left to right almost always, if not always. You should be able to read and write in both directions, so I'll show you the glyphs reading from right to left.

I couldn't fit the following table all on one page (well, I could have, really, but then it would have been so tiny as to make the print unreaable), so it will spread over a few pages.

| Hieroglyph | Transcription | Manuel de Codage | Notes |
|---|---------------|------------------|--|
|  | <i>ʒ</i> | A | MdC is case sensitive, so 'a' won't work, 'A' is a must for this sign. |
|  | <i>i</i> | i | I use this transcription for the single reed feather only. In non-monumental inscriptions this can look like this:  |
|  | <i>y</i> | y | Egyptologists are not consistent in using this transcription, some use ' <i>i</i> '. I will be consistent. The two signs shown are interchangeable. |
|  | <i>ɹ</i> | a | Lower case 'a'. |
|  | <i>w</i> | w | The two signs shown are interchangeable. |
|  | <i>b</i> | b | |
|  | <i>p</i> | p | The non-monumental form is always, as far as I know drawn like this: |

| | | | |
|---|------------|-----|--|
| | | |  |
|  | <i>f</i> | f | |
|  | <i>m</i> | m | <p>Non-monumentally it can appear as</p>  |
|  | <i>n</i> | n | |
|  | <i>r</i> | r | |
|  | <i>h</i> | h | Be very aware of the transliteration and MdC representations of this and the three following glyphs. |
|  | <i>h</i> | H | |
|  | <i>h</i> | x | |
|  | <i>h</i> | X | |
|  | <i>z/s</i> | z/s | Although different in OE, these two sounds merged into 's' and |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|--|
|  | <i>s</i> | s | became interchangeable. Some Egyptologists differentiate between them, Faulkner does not, nor does Hoch, nor do I, except to reflect OE usage. |
|  | <i>š</i> | S | Upper case here. |
|  | <i>q</i> | q | You will also find 'ḳ' used. |
|  | <i>k</i> | k | This sign is sometimes reversed by the scribes. |
|  | <i>g</i> | g | |
|  | <i>t</i> | t | Lower case. |
|  | <i><u>t</u></i> | T | Upper case. |
|  | <i>d</i> | d | Lower case. |
|  | <i><u>d</u></i> | D | Upper case. |

MEMORIZE THESE SIGNS, TRANSLITERATIONS, AND MdC BEFORE YOU PROCEED. You can find a rationale for the order the signs appear in at www.bobmanske.com/monoliterals.shtml. Word lists, dictionaries, etc. “alphabetize” use the order shown above.

All of the sounds in the language are represented in the table above. All of them. There ain't no more. But there are lots more signs which you will encounter later on.

One important note here – and it's important that you get this distinction clear: The signs in the second column above use the transliteration font.

The sings in the third column are the MdC (Manuel de Codage). That's what you're going to use when you turn in your homework. **So when you are told to “transliterate” - use the MdC.**

If you load the transliteration font into your computer, you will find that it uses the same keystrokes as the MdC. But there is one small distinction. Hoch did not actually use the transliteration font when he wrote this book – it didn't exist then. And you will find that Hoch regularly capitalizes all proper nouns, just like you do in English. But the computer's transliteration font – and the MdC, of course, are case-sensitive! So do NOT use upper case unless the MdC itself, as shown in the third column, calls for it.

Example, in MdC:

Even though we write “Ra” for the god's name in English, when using MdC we must write 'ra' for the god Ra, do not write 'Ra'. 'Ra', in MdC, is wrong! (Upper case 'r' does not exist in MdC.) An better example is this:

The name of more than one king is Senwosret , which is actually three words 's – n – wsrt' and means “Man of Wosret” (Wosret/Wesret/whatever, is an Egyptian goddess). To represent it in MdC you could write: 's-n-wsrt' (preferred) or even 'snwsrt' but it would be wrong to write 'S-n-Wsrt', or 'SnWsrt', or anything like that. Even though the letter 'w' isn't ambiguous because there is no upper case 'w' in MdC (don't use it anyway), there is a distinct difference between 's' and 'S'.

Do not automatically start MdC sentences with upper case letters unless the MdC itself requires it.

Sections #9 and #10 notes:

Already at the end of Chapter One we have arrived at the meat of the book. Well, your first taste of it anyway. The entire system of Egyptian verbs depends in large part on whether or not the word '*iw*' appears at the start of a sentence. In these sections we will see two small examples of the types of sentences that can follow the word '*iw*'.

But first, I want to supersede the word-order charts on pages 12 and 13 with the generic, one size fits almost all, word-order chart:

| P | V | s | i | o | S | O | A |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| particles (some are actually 2nd in a sentence but can be plotted here. | The word functioning verbally in the current clause | The subject of the verb if it is a pronoun | The whole indirect object phrase if the object is a pronoun. | The direct object if it is a pronoun. | The subject if it is not a pronoun. | The object if it is not a pronoun. | Any additional info. |

Just about every sentence in the Egyptian language can be diagrammed this way. And when you do the English to Egyptian exercises in this book you can use this word order without fear. Just put the English words in this order and then replace them with the corresponding Egyptian words.

Egyptian sentences usually leave several of the grid slots unused, so do not expect to fill in each slot for each sentence. Only rarely will that happen, maybe never. But the word order is just about inviolable. We'll note exceptions as they occur.

You'll see this mnemonic **PV^sioSOA** a lot in these *Study Guides*, and we'll revisit the grid often.

If you read the *Grammar Supplement* you noticed that I personally disapprove of what I call the "sloppy" definition of adverb. All of the uses exemplified in the book at this point are really simply phrases which provide additional information and that's really all you have to know.¹

The next thing you need to know is that in addition to dispensing with definite and indefinite articles, Egyptian regularly dispenses with the present tense of the verb "be" (except when it is negated).

The difference between the sentences on pages 9 and 10 is simply this (whether you agree with Hoch's definition of adverb or not):

On page 9 the sentence reads '*iw s m pr*'. Here it is in the chart:

| P | V | s | i | o | S | O | A |
|-----------|-----------|---|---|---|----------|---|--------------|
| <i>iw</i> | <i>dd</i> | | | | <i>s</i> | | <i>m pr</i> |
| | speaks | | | | the man | | in the house |

The sentence on page 10 diagrams like this:

| P | V | s | i | o | S | O | A |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|----------|---|--------------|
| <i>iw</i> | | | | | <i>s</i> | | <i>m pr</i> |
| | | | | | the man | | in the house |

What's the difference between the two? There ain't no verb in the second example. That's all.

A few extra points:

- You do not have to translate the particle '*iw*', although you need to understand that its presence indicates that any sentence which contains it intends to portray a statement of undeniable fact. Loprieno² translates it as "truly" but you'll find that doing this routinely can become really annoying after while.
- Look at the sentences when we remove the words in the A slot:
 - sentence #1 "The man speaks" - this all by itself is a complete sentence. When the information in the A slot is included then Hoch says that the A slot contains an "adverbial modifier". By now you should know what I think of this terminology - but that aside, the real, and only difference is the presence of the verb.
 - sentence #2 "The man" - this all by itself is NOT a complete sentence. In fact, it's not even a sentence. Because of this, Hoch prefers to use the word "topic" instead of "subject" and "adverbial comment" instead of "predicate". These are fine points of distinction and you don't really have to pay too much attention to them. Later on we'll see other instances of

1 If you like Hoch's definition of adverb, or at least have no problems with it, and if you think that the distinctions between adverbial modifier and adverbial comment are important, fine. What I do know is that neither actually helps you understand the Egyptian. That's been my experience. So, if you don't want to, don't bother about them.

2 Antonio Loprieno is an Egyptologist who has authored "[Ancient Egyptian: A linguistic introduction](#)", a book on Egyptian grammar (but it is not a textbook for introductory students, it is discussion of Middle Egyptian grammar. Unless you are a devotee of grammar and the study of linguistic morphology, you do not need this book.

Hoch making this distinction but again, without adding much to the discussion.

Basically what I want you to take away from this is the presence of the particle '*iw*' and, by unstated corollary, its absence - which we'll cover later. When present it indicates a statement of purported fact. That's all I want to say right now. We will revisit this topic in the next and succeeding chapters.

XXXX

Assignment:

Memorize all the stuff I told you to memorize above.

All the words in the vocabulary for this chapter are important. Here's the awful truth:

- 70% - The most important point of translation is knowing what the words mean - i.e. vocabulary.
- 25% - The second most important point is understanding the environment - i.e. context.
- 5% - Grammar is the final reality check on your translation.

That may sound to some people like I've said grammar is relatively trivial. It's not at all what I mean. Grammar is the method by which we "prove" our translation. If we can't get the grammar right, or don't understand it - can't justify our translation grammatically, our translation is worse than wrong - it's useless. But grammar by itself will never produce a translation for you and, if taken by itself, can even mislead you. As you progress in your independent readings you'll discover that as your vocabulary grows and your understanding of the context becomes better that you can translate very quickly without having to worry about every little fine point of grammar - because the grammar will actually fall into place for you, you'll recognize it subliminally. But that's for later, not for now.

Vocabulary notes:

'*pn*' and '*tn*' form a masculine/feminine pair (yes, most Egyptian nominals exhibit grammatical gender).

'*ky*' and '*kt*' are also masculine and feminine versions of the same basic meaning.

'*hn*' does not simply mean "and". Egyptian has no word for "and", it simply puts two words or phrases together and lets you infer "and" or "or". '*hn*' implies concerted action: "together with".

'*m*' has a bunch of different meanings, be aware of them all. If these different meanings seem unrelated, they're really not - but the important thing I want you to understand here is that prepositions almost never translate directly from one language to another. Prepositions are the most culturally biased words in any language, their uses comprehensible only to native speakers and truly advanced non-native speakers.

'*n*' does not indicate "dative". Egyptian does not have datives.³ When Hoch says "dative" he means, and should (I wish he would) say, "indirect object". Always. Always.

In this entire vocabulary list there is only two words that use an upper case letter in MdC, '*hn*' and '*dd*'.

Homework (make sure you send this to the Hoch group and NOT to GlyphStudy where it will be lost): Send in your work for each of the 7 items in part C (some of these are not complete sentences).

For each item:

Transliterate using MdC.

³Egyptian nouns do not exhibit case endings - if you don't know what noun cases are, don't worry about them.

Provide an English translation.

Example:

I'll do the first one for you:

n ky s

“to another man”

The subject line of your homework MUST read: **HOCH-01**. Just that. Nuthin' else. I'll look at it, make some comments if so moved, and put it all into a collation. If you want to be able to quickly identify your work in the collation, put your name or your name or initials or some unique identifying mark at the top of your homework but not in the subject line. If you put it in the subject line it will not be copied into the collation. I'll announce on GlyphStudy when the collation is done. Then you open it, read it, and compare your work with everyone else.