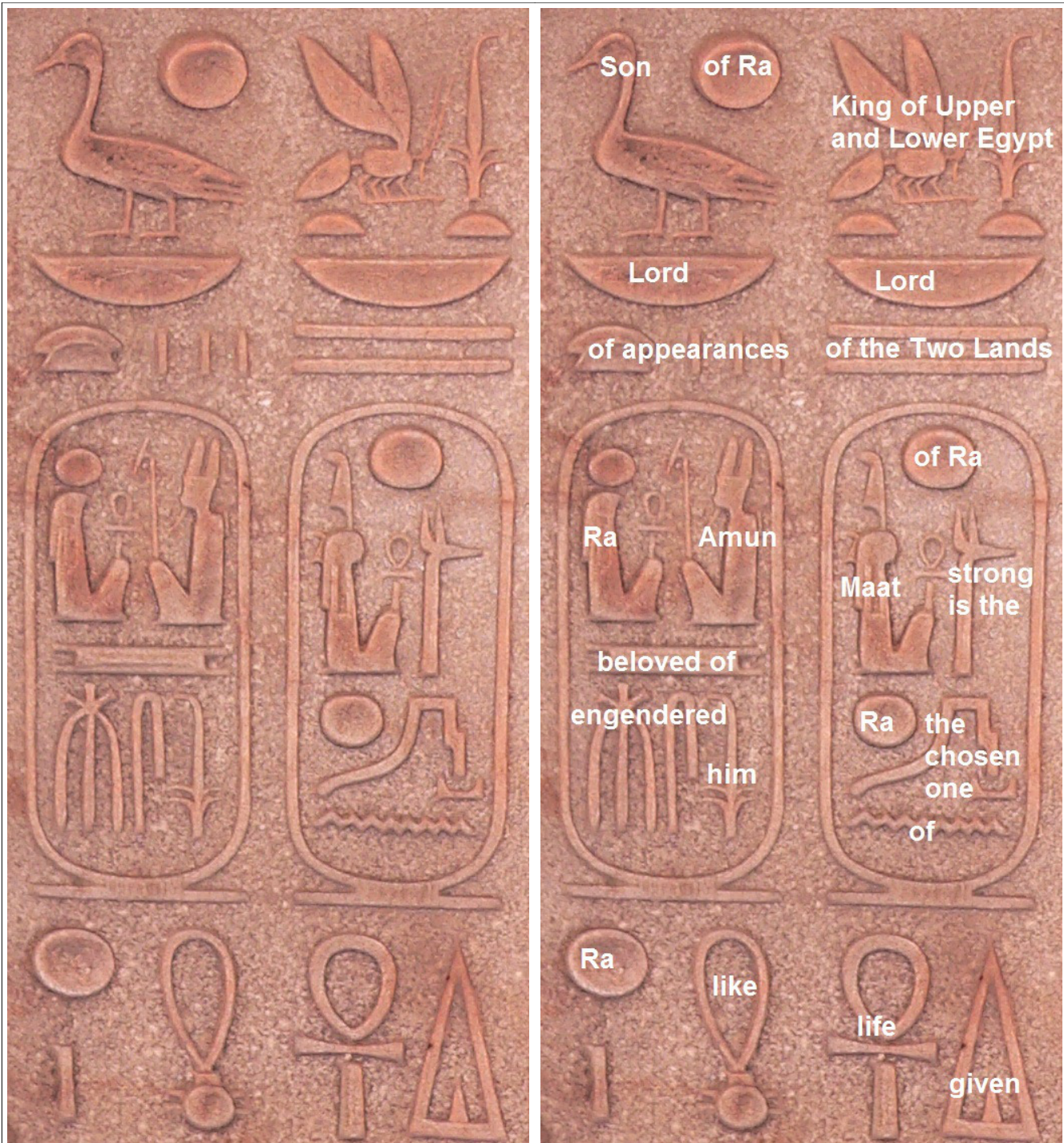


## LESSON 4 STUDY GUIDE



The cartouches of Ramesses II, perfect illustrations of the concepts of directional writing and honorific precedence. The two columns are to be read from the outside in. The names (in English) mean (in the left hand column: “Son of Ra, Lord of Appearances” followed by “It is Ra who engendered him, he who is beloved of Amun” (and in the right hand column): “King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands” followed by “Strong is the Maat of Ra, The chosen one of Ra”. At the bottom is “Given life like Ra” - but - the writing of the bottom sentence follows the directions, from right in and from left in. Thus, even here, the name of Ra actually appears first. Left column: ‘s3 r<sup>c</sup>, nb h<sup>c</sup>w, r<sup>c</sup> mss sw, mry imn’, Right column: ‘nswt bity, wsr m3<sup>c</sup>t r<sup>c</sup>, stp n r<sup>c</sup>’, and on the base: ‘di(w) n<sup>c</sup>h mi r<sup>c</sup>’.

**Last Revision Date: 2013 March 9**  
**CHANGE LIST**

I think some things are missing in the translation.

left column:

"It is Ra ... is beloved of \_Amun\_"

right column:

"king of upper and lower egypt, \_lord of the two lands\_"

and in the transliteration:

right column:

nswt bity \_nb tAwy\_

shouldn't it read nsw bity? - there are a number of standard transliterations of that word, 'nsw' and 'nswt' are the most popular. **I don't know which is right, if any are. 'nswt' is what I learned - so that's what I use. If someone can convince me otherwise (and it ain't hard) I'll keep using that one.**

p.4:

line -3: "i" is not in italic font **How did you spot that? - Great eyes!**

p.5:

- first grid, "s" is missing in the object slot on the second line.
- sec #38, transliteration: ... nDs ...
- footnote 3, last line: Dws.i

p.9:

- sec #48, nfr.wy st n(y)t sxtty **I have no idea what I was thinking here. Maybe I wasn't even thinking.**

p.10:

- sec #49, transliteration: aA sA.i r sA n(y) sS pn,  
also in the grid on top of p.10

**'n' for 'n(y)' is the way I learned it. I've tried to update myself but often backslide, as you've seen.**

p.11:

- supplemental exercise, first line: ... and go \_to\_ the supplemental exercise

p.12:

- last line of Sinuhe transliteration:  
shouldn't it be hrw n(y) qrs ? **and I found another one in the grid on page 13.**

p.14:

- grid on the bottom: shouldn't n.k go into the "i"-slot? **yes, it should**  
SAa is intransitive?

regards

Franz

**Thanks, Franz. Very much appreciated. When reviewing your own work you often read what's supposed to be there instead of what's there - and someone else's eyes, unprejudiced by your own thoughts, are a great help.**

Lesson Four contains the usual potpourri of subject material.

- We'll start with a new way for verbs to express action - passively.
- Then we'll meet another set of pronouns and find out how their uses differ from the suffix pronouns which you've already learned.
- Adjective/participles come next. A more complete look at them. And you'll learn why I call them that.
- At the end of the Study Guide is a special supplement I inserted here to make sure you understand the material so far. If you don't, now is the time to ask. I am building in some extra time into this lesson just for that purpose. I am willing to break the group up into two parts, those who can proceed on and those who want to take a little more time. I don't want to lose anyone and I'm willing to help, so dammit, this is not the time to be a shrinking violet - and you have no reputations to lose. If you have issues, **ASK!** On GlyphStudy.<sup>1</sup>

### **Section #34:**

A little terminology is in order. Keep in mind that the verb, as always, identifies the action.

Transitive verb	A verb which can (doesn't necessarily have to) have a direct object	Bob <b><u>throws</u></b> the ball
Intransitive verb	A verb which does not take a direct object	Bob <b><u>is going</u></b>
Active voice	Subject performs the action	Bob <b><u>throws</u></b> the ball
Passive voice	The action is done to the subject	The ball <b><u>is thrown</u></b> by Bob
Agent	The person (or thing) that performs the action - although there are active voice agents, this term is usually applied only when the verb is passive.	The ball is thrown by <b><u>Bob</u></b>

Intransitive verbs are almost always active in meaning and almost never can be turned into passives.

An active voice statement with a transitive verb can almost always be turned into a passive statement. When that happens, the

- active voice subject → the passive agent
- active voice direct object → the passive subject
- the active verb form → a passive verb form.

You learned with the infix '**n**' does not necessarily identify past tense verbs in Egyptian.

Now learn that the infix '**tw**' does not necessarily identify passive voice verbs in Egyptian.

Those infixes are just part of the verb forms you need to learn for certain particular situations.

---

<sup>1</sup> A tennis pro once told his students that when he told them to do something he didn't want to hear them complain that that "wasn't their game". "You are beginners," he said, "you have no game." **ASK.**

$\text{w } \underline{d}3i.t(w).s' = \text{"she is ferried" } \text{'srqss}$

And, of course, a noun subject can be present:

P	V	s	i	o	S
---	---	---	---	---	---

One of the problems you encounter in translating is exemplified by the verb “ferry”. The English idiom practically requires that the word “across” be present. That's a preposition. Egyptian does not require a preposition in this case.

And right away Hoch gives you a case where a passive is NOT formed with *'tw'*, and, oh, by the way, the same form also has no *'n'*, even though it's a past tense.

As far as missing glyphs (especially the missing *'-l'*, *'-w'*) are concerned, pay special attention to looking for those on the homework.

How do you grid a preposed subject? Put it in the normal place and attach a note:



“Amenhotep, he says: ‘I did not denounce a man to his superior’ or perhaps better: ‘It is Amenhotep who says ...’”<sup>2</sup>

2 Egyptian has a separate verb form called a “relative” and it looks like very much the “circumstantial” '*sdm.f*' form we've seen so far. If '*dd.f*' were a relative verb form it could be translated as “who says...”. This might be that case, or it might simply be that by pre-posing his name, Amenhotep simply wanted to emphasize himself, in which case the English translation could still be: “It is Amenhotep who says ...” So, unless you want to be really picky about it (and there is no point to being so picky) let your translation match your interpretation of the original author's intent.



P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
	<i>dd</i>	<i>f</i>			<i>imn-ḥtp</i> (preposed)	<i>n dws(.i) s</i> <i>n ḥry-tp.f</i>	
<i>n</i>	<i>dws</i>	<i>(.i)</i>				<i>s</i>	<i>n ḥry-tp.f</i>

See how the grid, by forcing you to put the word in its normal position, helps you identify areas of emphasis like this, which was one of the ways, and sometimes the only way, Egyptian had of producing such emphasis.<sup>3</sup>

### Section #37:

I would go along with the suggestion that this '*iw.f sdm.f*' construction probably produces a very light sense of emphasis, although I wonder if this is not simply a dialectical variant. At any rate, it doesn't seem to affect the meaning much at all.

How to put it in the grid? I would put the '*iw.f*' in the P slot and the other subject wherever it's supposed to go.

### Section #38:

*'iw rh.n.i nds ḥmsi.f m dd-snfrw'*

"I have a learned of a peasant who lives in Djed-Sneferu."

This is not the same thing as the example as the example of '*Imn-ḥtp dd.f*' I gave in section #36. Here the grid works like this:

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
<i>iw</i>	<i>rh.n</i>	<i>.i</i>				<i>nds ḥmsi.f</i> <i>m dd-</i> <i>snfrw</i>	
	<i>ḥmsi</i>	<i>f</i>					<i>m dd-</i> <i>snfrw</i>

The problem I have with calling '*ḥmsi.f m dd-snfrw*' a "circumstantial" is that you start to think of it as "adverbial" (there's that useless word again<sup>4</sup>) which very effectively disguises the fact that the whole clause is really adjectival - it's describing '*nds*'! Relative clauses are adjectival. Everything from '*nds*' on goes in the O slot in the first line, not the A slot where it would go if it were simply additional information. And then see how we expand this clause into all its own glory in line 2 of the grid. The grid forces you to think of how the words, phrases, and clauses are being used, i.e. what their function is, in the sentence.

The last paragraph on page 48 illustrates, I think, the most common complaint against the word "circumstantial" - which is that, like the word "adverbial", it is overused, too broad a concept to be really useful.

3 In this example pay attention to the O slot in the first line. That whole thing is the direct object of '*dd*'. If you have difficulty following that, ask on GlyphStudy. But also, that whole thing is a sentence in itself so it becomes expanded on its own line. Egyptian can go on and on like this. I call these things "virtual clauses" (cause I can't think of anything else to call them) and liken them to an old pirate's folding telescope where one section is enclosed in another - is enclosed in another - and so on. And all of them maintaining the same standard word order.

Oh, the '*n*' before '*dws.i*'? Here it's a particle which negates the following verb.

4 I might stop complaining about this word some day, but don't hold your breath.

### Section #39:

I am writing a supplement on Egyptian pronouns. Don't know when it'll be published.

Now for something really useful.

So far you have learned about suffix pronouns, and you have seen that they are used where English would use subject pronouns and possessive pronouns. While the suffix pronouns, as you've seen, are always directly attached to the word they relate to, the dependent pronouns are so called because, while they are separate words, they always depend on some other preceding word. And yes, there are independent pronouns which you'll meet shortly. As you might expect, these are completely independent of any other words. There are also a bunch of other pronoun types<sup>5</sup>, but for right now, add the dependent pronouns to your list.

Note in particular the variant forms. If, as I think they were, the sounds '*t*', '*d*', and '*š*' were something like the slender consonants of Irish or Russian, that is, palatalized consonants or close to it, they, over time, became merged with the consonants '*t*', '*d*', and '*s*' pretty much as we know them in English. At any rate, confusion of the two different varieties ensued. Later on, when Egyptian scribes began to try to artificially spell their words so that they looked ancient, and therefore “classical” and more authoritative somehow, they often made mistakes and put '*t*', '*d*', and '*š*' where they had never been originally. This is not an infrequent event.

'*st*' you'll see a lot.

When a dependent pronoun is used as the direct object, it'll go in the o slot (not the big O slot, that's for things that aren't pronouns).

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
<i>iw</i>	<i>m33</i>	<i>.tn</i>		<i>sy</i>			

'*iw m33.tn sy*'

“You all see her”.

There's a little notice on the bottom of page 49 that dependent pronouns can also be used reflexively.

'*rdi n.i wi hr ht.i*'

“I placed myself on my belly”.

Actually, this is no different usage than any other dependent pronoun functioning as the direct object. It's called “reflexive” only because English uses a special pronominal form. Egyptian doesn't. So calling this a “reflexive” is not describing it in terms of Egyptian grammar but rather of the target language, English. That's not the way to do things.

“I placed me on my belly” - that's what it really says. So you haven't learned anything new here.

### Section #40:

Now you know why I write '*m.k, m.t, m.t, m.tn, m.tn*'.

### Section #41:

---

<sup>5</sup> English is fond of creating “group” words for things, like: “a pack of wolves” or “a pod of dolphins”, or even “a murder of crows” (good grief!). Perhaps, instead of “bunch” we could say “a substitution of pronouns”. Naaa, I don't like it either. Sorry. I digress.

## THIS IS IMPORTANT STUFF - PAY ATTENTION!!!!

- you will run into honorific transposition very, very frequently. Even in the homework. Especially in the homework. See the image at the start of this Study Guide for some examples.

I may have said at one point that I don't like to tell you to memorize things. Memorize every word of this section - both subsections. Memorize.

### **Section #42:**

Norwegians go through a spelling reform every 10 years. Germans have had one recently (and many didn't like it). English hasn't had one for several centuries now and really could use one<sup>6</sup> (along with an alphabet that actually reflects the 43 (at least) phonemes in the language. Even Irish spelling has been reformed - kinda sorta.

The Egyptians never did. For them spelling was often a free-for-all. So aren't you happy you're learning Egyptian?

Again, learn 'em. Particularly the stuff on top of page 51. Sorry about all the memory stuff.

### **Section #43:**

I've said this before, I think. The Egyptian language was actually rather short of adjectives. '*nb, nbt*' (= "all, every") may have exhausted the inventory of true adjectives. You will be much better off remembering that almost all of these things are really participles. You'll find me referring to these as "participle/adjectives" or maybe "adjective/participles", whatever.

At this point I'm going to add something to Hoch's text which I think is important. You're going to see a lot of this in the very near future, and it is never explicitly defined in our text, so you might as well get a preview of it now.

## THE NOMINAL

**A nominal is any word or phrase that can act as a noun. It includes:**

nouns (of course)  
pronouns  
adjectives/participles  
infinitives  
gerunds (whatever they are)

**Any nominal can function as a:**

subject (s or S slot)  
direct object (o or O slot)  
indirect object (i or O slot)  
object of a preposition (A slot)

Whenever you encounter any of these types of words, it is always true, always true, that the word is

<sup>6</sup> Actually, early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Daniel Webster reformed American spelling somewhat, so we do spell differently than the British, or even the Canadians, do. But it didn't go nearly far enough. In the 1930's the Chicago Tribune tried another spelling reform but gave up on it. Too bad.

functioning as if it were a noun! In either English or Egyptian. I am not denying that some of these things subsequently take on a verbal aspect but that is not always the case. They are nouns first, then maybe some verbal aspect emerges. Nouns first.<sup>7</sup>

Don't worry about gerunds. Grammarians are sure, absolutely positive, that they exist in English but they can't agree on a definition of the term. (So, what's new?) Anyway, Egyptologists are sure they don't exist in Egyptian. I just threw the term in there for completeness.

This does not exhaust the list. There are also whole phrases and clauses that function as nouns, as you'll see in the supplement at the end of this Study Guide.

The identities of which slot they go into holds only for the actual virtual clause they are a member of. They may appear in a different slot on an earlier line in the grid if they are members of larger phrase or clauses. The last time they appear in the grid is when they appear in the appropriate slot.

#### **Section #44:**

I call these things “initial adjectives” because

- there is no universally accepted definition of “predicate” (so, what's new?) and
- I've never actually found any use for the term “predicate” or the concept, whatever definition is used.

How do you grid these things? Well, they're identical to the subject of the sentence. And they're not pronouns, so they all must go in the big “S” slot.

'ʕ dpt tn'

“This boat is large”

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
					'ʕ dpt tn		

Nothing could be simpler (except, of course, for tensor analysis, which any school boy can do. I can't, but then, I'm not any school boy).

Hoch brought up the issue of '*iw*' and '*m.k*' here. Basically, wherever '*iw*' can appear you can find '*m.k*' instead, but never both together. In addition, '*m.k*' has some additional uses as well, poorly defined ones, actually. I'm not sure there is a good definition of all the places it can appear.

My understanding of the two particles is this (**caution**, most of the following may actually be true):

- '*iw*' is a statement of purported fact which you are not supposed to doubt.
- '*m.k*' is a statement of fact which you are invited to look up for yourself and confirm, if you want.

In the second paragraph of this section Hoch says that in the case of initial adjectives if the subject is a pronoun the dependent series is used.

It ain't necessarily so.

---

<sup>7</sup> I have no idea why these things are not taught this way - unless it's because traditional grammars ape the Roman grammarians who, after all, were operating pretty close to the beginning of grammatical analysis. Our understanding of grammar and of how to teach it SHOULD have improved since that time. For some people, clearly, it hasn't.



If the subject is a first person singular or plural (“I” or “we”) then the independent pronoun series is usually used. You haven't had these yet. See Lesson 5, #56 for these forms.

*'iqr sw'* = “he is excellent”

but

*'ink iqr'* = “I am excellent”, although as far as I know *'iqr wi'* isn't completely ruled out.

#### Section #45:

Another transcriptional difference between Hoch's practice and mine. I recommend putting a dot between the adjective and the intensive, e.g. *'nfr.wy'* instead of *'nfrwy'*, “how good!” because it helps identify the basic word. Anyway, the intensifier is put into the same slot in the grid as the adjective/participle.

#### Section #46:

Here we go with the “dative” nonsense again. Only this time it's **not** an indirect object that Hoch is referring to, it's a prepositional phrase! So these things go in the A slot, eventually.

*'bin.wy n.i'*

“How bad things are for me”

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
					<i>bin.wy</i>		<i>n.i</i>

#### Section #47:

I will tell you right now, you will forget the fact that feminines express general or generic concepts. I don't know why - but that's the way this language works. The first time you see this in a homework sentence you're going to wonder what it's doing there. I hope I'm wrong about your forgetting, which is the whole purpose of this paragraph.

#### Section #48:

I can almost understand why Hoch calls the *'nfr hr'* type phrase a “bound construction”. It is sort of similar to the bound construction he notes in #3, 22. But it ain't an exact copy. It is best to simply call this what other Egyptologists call it: “the *'nfr hr'* construction”.

It is, however, so closely related to the initial adjective that it can be considered a variant. Here's how:

What is not necessarily clear in Hoch, and in some other grammars, is exactly how the adjectives work:

- **Initial adjective** from #4, 44: *'nfr.wy st n(y)t shty'* (= “how lovely is the peasant's woman”) - adjective is always masculine singular, even though, in this case, it's referring to a female.
- *'nfr hr'* construction from #4, 48: *'ink ʕʕ ʕw'* (= “I have many donkeys”) with a masculine referent (in this case, *'ink'* (= “I”), an independent pronoun, refers to a male).
- *'nfr hr'* construction from #4, 48: *'ink nfrt hr'* (= “I am beautiful”) with a feminine referent (in this case *'ink'* is a woman).

**IMPORTANT:** - note the second example above. While the other two examples are translated with the

verb “be”, this one does NOT mean “I am many donkeys”<sup>8</sup>. In this case, I assure you, it's one of the many ways Egyptian has of indicating ownership. The language does not have a verb “have”, as in “own”. The third example could work either way: either “My face is beautiful” or “I have a lovely face”, or just “I am beautiful”.

In particular, the word '*nb*' (= “lord, owner, all, every”) needs to be carefully considered when you are confronted with this construction in a sentence like this: '*ink nb ʕw*'. It **does NOT** mean “I am every donkey”, **NOR** does it mean “I am lord of donkeys”. It means “I own donkeys”.

No, I'm not through playing with this yet. '*ink nb ʕ3 ʕw*' = “I own many donkeys”. How do you tell which meaning to use? Context, as usual, will help - but mainly, use your head. For example, '*nb pt*' **DOES** mean “lord of the sky” not “owner of the sky”. You'll encounter '*nb pt*' quite often.

All of the examples above occur in verbless phrases/clauses/sentences. But the first one, the one with the initial adjective, occurs in what is called an “adjectival sentence” for reasons which should be clear.

The '*nfr hr*' construction cannot appear first in a sentence, so that will eliminate some possibilities for you. Here's a good example:



*'mi in.tw n.i s(w)t hmt 20 m nfrt nt h'.sn'*

“Have someone bring me 20 slave girls who are lovely of form” (literally: “lovely of their bodies”). The second group in red refers back to the word '*s(w)t*' (the plural of '*st*', “woman”). If all he said was '*nfrt nt h'.sn*' (= “lovely of their bodies”) you would need to know the context in which he uttered the exclamation - and an exclamation is all it would be, not a complete sentence.

#### **Section #49:**

I have always been bothered by this secondary meaning of the word “respect” in English<sup>10</sup>. If you have the same problem then try thinking of it like I do: its general meaning is “thinking of...” or “in comparison with...”

So,

*'ʕ3 s3.i r s3 n(y) sš pn'*<sup>11</sup>

“My son is big in comparison with this scribe's son”.

However you translate it or think about it, you must always keep in mind that '*r*' is a preposition, and that the thing that comes immediately after it is the object of the preposition.

<sup>8</sup> Nor does it mean “I am a big jackass”, which, under any circumstances, would be an unusual and unexpected confession.

<sup>9</sup> Said by a king in the Papyrus Westcar. I echo his request, only let it be to me that they are brought!

<sup>10</sup> For example,  $y' = d(x^2)/dx = 2x$  means that at any point on the equation  $y = x^2$  the value of  $y$  will be instantaneously changing twice as fast as the value of  $x$  at that exact location. Mathematicians say that this change is in “respect to  $x$ ”. But it doesn't mean that they have any great respect or admiration for  $x$ , it simply means “in comparison to  $x$ ”.

<sup>11</sup> Some of you may have noticed that there's a typo in Hoch's example. The second word should be '*s3*', not '*š3*'. As if I should rag on about someone else's typos! But just to remove any confusion, I note it.

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
					ʕ s3.i		r s3 n(y) sš pn

### **SUPPLEMENTAL EXERCISE:**

At this point I want you to skip over the homework and go to the Supplemental Exercise at the end of the Study Guide. I'll give you an extra week to go through it, so instead of March 31 being the due date for the homework, take until April 7. But I strongly advise you - DO NOT PUT THIS STUFF OFF until the due date is on top of you. There's a lot of heavy duty stuff in the supplement, to prepare you for things to come, and then there's some more heavy lifting for you to do in the homework.

Questions? I expect to see some questions from you on GlyphStudy and I want to see you do your best to answer those questions. To hell with what other people think of your answers. They can't reach you anyway. It's a way I have of seeing where any problems might reside so don't worry about making mistakes. The best way to lose yourself is to suffer in silence. We need to make sure those issues are resolved before we move on. This stuff ain't easy, even for those of us who have studied other languages before. Leo DePuydt, an author of a grammar on Middle Egyptian, has said that no one, not even Egyptologists, read all of these texts at sight. It takes study<sup>12</sup>.

### **Vocabulary notes:**

“Beer” is often transliterated '*h(n)qt*'. The '*n*' is very rarely included in the Egyptian original (I think I've seen it once), but Egyptologists are sure, on linguistic grounds, that it was there.

*'hm*' is a negative verb. It always means “not know”.

*'m3ꜥ hrw*' (= “true of voice”). You might see some notes saying that this indicated that the person whom this was said of was dead. Ain't necessarily so. In fact, I saw a note like that just recently and whoever wrote it should have realized that the person so indicated was very much alive! It does mean “true of voice” and it most often is applied to people in the afterlife defending their actions while they were alive (the so-called negative confessions like: “I did not hurt anyone, I did not cheat anyone, etc.”) but really it means simply that the person's word is reliable.

### **Homework:**

**HOCH-04** is your title line. Only **HOCH-04**. Nuthin' else.

Turn in Part B on pages 56 and 57.

*Here are some maybe unhelpful hints:*

- 1) Cleanliness is next to the boss' children.
- 2) Two sentences here.
- 3) Active voice agent.
- 4) Three sentences.
- 5) Benefactor.
- 6) He hasn't forgotten his roots

<sup>12</sup> Just for further encouragement, I had a Greek teacher tell her graduate seminar group that no matter how often she had read any particular ancient Greek play, she always had to prepare before she came to class. No sight reading even after all her time as a full professor! So why would you think all us other people are having such an easy time? It's easier for us than it is for you but we still have our problems, lots of them, and you'll catch up - fast!

- 7) A transaction dealing in unhired help.
- 8) A modest man, in the typical Egyptian style of modesty - you see this kind of statement everywhere.
- 9) Quite a shack you have here.
- 10) Nobility arises in unexpected ground.

## SUPPLEMENTAL EXERCISE

Here's your first piece of extended Egyptian. I'll use it to show you how things like this can be analyzed. It's not the only way to analyze Egyptian but it's a good way.

For your convenience I've broken the piece into three lines each of which contains a complete thought (see? I'm a nice person, the original Egyptian scribe would not have done that for you - they would all be run together with no obvious breaks in them.)

This piece is from the Story of Sinuhe. The cultural background is the Egyptian view of life and death. They did not look forward to dying, they loved life, but they figured that since they were going to spend most of their time dead, a proper burial was very important, particularly in view of the fact that a proper Egyptian burial greatly increased their chances of surviving in the afterlife.

Don't worry, I'll give you the vocabulary and I'll take you through the analytical process. Step by step.



Sinuhe EG: B189, 190

*'iw min is š3<sup>c</sup>.n.k tni*

*fh? n.k b33wt*

*sh3? n.k hrw n(y) qrs'*

The red question marks in the transliteration indicate special locations of trouble in our text - which we're going to attempt to resolve.

Here's the vocabulary:

Line One		Line Two		Line Three	
<i>iw</i>	particle	<i>fh</i>	strong verb, “release”	<i>sh3(w)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>masculine noun “remembrance, memorial”</li> <li><b>or ...</b></li> <li>weak verb “remember, keep in mind”</li> </ul>
<i>min</i>	masc. noun, “today”	<i>n.k</i>	what is this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepositional phrase indirect object “to/for you”</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>past tense marker with suffix pronoun (2<sup>nd</sup> person masc. singular)</li> </ul>	<b>or</b> <i>sh3</i>	
<i>is</i>	particle, intensifies previous word	<i>b33wt</i>	feminine noun, “virility”, really! And it's a feminine noun! Anyway, look at the determinative. That should clear up any doubts.	<i>n.k</i>	what is this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepositional phrase indirect object “to/for you”</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>past tense marker with suffix pronoun (2<sup>nd</sup> person masc. singular)</li> </ul>
<i>š3<sup>c</sup></i>	strong verb, “begin”			<i>hrw</i>	masculine noun “day”
<i>n.k</i>	prepositional phrase “to/for you”			<i>n(y)</i>	masculine adjective, indirect genitive
<i>tni</i>	masculine noun, “old age”			<i>qrs</i>	masculine noun “burial”

And the analysis, line by line:

#### LINE ONE



This sure looks like the beginning of a statement of fact because it begins with '*iw*'. Since '*iw*' is not followed by a suffix pronoun we don't have to worry about this being a subsequent clause, it's the start of the sentence for sure. Let's write it out in the grid, word for word in the original order:



P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
<i>iw</i>					<i>min is ...</i>		

The first word after '*iw*' is a noun, no verb in sight, so we can proceed on the assumption that this is a nominal, verbless clause, until proven otherwise. One extra note: I know '*is*' is a particle but I've kept it with the noun '*min*' in this case because this particle applies only to the word in front of it, so, as far as meaning is concerned, it could be considered as a detachable part of the word. Let's move on and complete the first line.

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
<i>iw</i>					<i>min is š3<sup>c</sup> n.k tni</i>		

Hold on, Bob. You just told us that '*š3<sup>c</sup>*' is a verb. What's it doing in the S slot with the noun '*min*'? This is a difficult thing to explain - and it's something you're going to be confronted with often. Maybe if I translate the whole line into English which is more familiar to you, you'll see how the thinking progresses. So here goes:

“Today is when old age begins for you”

Now look at that. “Today” is a noun. No question about that. The English verb “be” (“is” in this case) indicates that the first thing in the sentence is the same as the next thing in the sentence. I don't want to put too much emphasis on the equality business but it's close to mathematical equality:

“Today” = “when old age begins for you”.

If “today” is a noun” then so is “when old age begins for you”. Because they're equal.

You're not used to seeing nouns like that, I'll bet. I'll bet this was never taught to you this way in your English grammar classes. *It should have been.*

This is a nominal clause!

I'll add the '*is*' intensifier to my translation now just to give you a somewhat exaggerated notion of its impact:

“It is today, like right now, that old age begins for you.” Here comes the recognition of the virtual clause in line two of the grid:

P	V	s	i	o	S	O	A
<i>iw</i>					<i>min is š3<sup>c</sup> n.k tni</i>		
	<i>š3<sup>c</sup></i>		<i>n.k</i>		<i>tni</i>		

This virtual clause on the second line is a straight forward, standard word order, Egyptian structure. I can't emphasize that too strongly. Let the word order be your guide - it is rarely broken.

Well! A lot happened in line one. Study it to make sure you understand it. Questions go to GlyphStudy. I expect to see a few questions there.

NOT!

*As if that's not enough, you also have to be on guard when you see something like 'n.k'. Is this a past tense marker with a suffix pronoun or is it an indirect object?<sup>13</sup>*

- '*fh n.k b33t*' - active voice present tense verb followed by indirect object and subject “Virility for you is going away” (present tense in Egyptian because it's happening right now, today).
- '*fh.n.k b33t*' - active voice past tense verb followed by indirect object and subject “You have already lost virility” (it left some time ago<sup>14</sup>).
- '*fh(w) n.k b33t*' - passive voice past tense verb followed by indirect object and subject: “Virility has already been lost for you”.

1. vocabulary
2. context
3. grammar as a reality check

It doesn't. The grammar supports all three choices.

14 George Burns at age 95 said that he'd love to get into bed with a 20 year old girl, but that he'd forgotten what to do with her! But I do think at that age he'd probably fall asleep before he got around to doing whatever it is he had in mind.

All three versions, as far as I can tell, are perfectly valid. Context, in my opinion, tends to rule against the past tense versions only because loss of virility here is being equated with the onset of old age, so if virility would have escaped at some time in the past, that's when old age would have begun, but we're told it's beginning now, so my guess is the first one is right. But each of the others is supportable and I could not call them wrong.<sup>15</sup>

Moral: do not ever get discouraged by this sort of thing. It may take some persistence on your part and maybe you'll fall down every now and then and skin your nose, but no damage will have been done. Be of good cheer! The casualty rate is really quite acceptably low. No one, as far as I know, has ever been killed by translating Egyptian hieroglyphs! Your chances of making mistakes aren't bad but your chances of survival are excellent. Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!<sup>16</sup>

Ready for line 3? I thought so.

### LINE THREE



Let's get rid of the easy part first. This line ends with '*hrw n qrs*' which has got to be an indirect genitive, "day of burial". A noun phrase.

OK. Now let's go after the verb. Again keeping in mind the possibility of lost consonants and the apparent ambiguity of phrases like '*n.k*' let's proceed.

Is it:

1. '*sh3(w) n.k hrw ...*' = "a remembrance for you of the day ..."
2. '*sh3(w) n.k hrw ...*' = "for you the day ... has been remembered"
3. '*sh3 n.k hrw ...*' = "the day ... is remembering for you"
4. '*sh3.n.k hrw ...*' = "the day ... remembered for you"
5. '*sh3 n.k hrw ...*' = "remember the day of burial for you"

Again, the grammar alone will not help you. It will only confirm that the choice you have made is a viable construction, or invalidate it. What DOES matter is the context - and this time it's pretty straightforward. #2, #3, and #4 don't make any sense at all as far as I can tell. I hope they don't to you either. We are talking about the day of burial which has not happened yet. So none of the past tense versions are going to work anyway, no matter how grammatically correct they are! #5 is an imperative, you haven't had imperatives (commands) yet. Some people think this is the right answer but I have a hard time thinking that '*n.k*' has any real reason for being there if the verb is an imperative. Those people might be right but I'm going to look for the prize behind door #1. It makes more sense to me.

<sup>15</sup> Actually there is a fourth choice: "For you, may virility depart!" I reject this out of hand on the grounds that it's probably an inappropriate comment at a time like this.

<sup>16</sup> A quote from Admiral David Farragut in the American Civil War (or War of Northern Aggression, depending upon your point of view). His fleet was attacking Confederate defenses in Mobile Bay in 1864. In his day, "torpedoes" were what we would call mines today. To make a long story short: he won.

“Today is the day old age begins  
because virility is leaving you  
so it is a remembrance for you of the day of burial.”