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اللغة في العصر القديم

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OLD EGYPTIAN

اللغة في العصر القديم

James P. Allen

Altägyptisch
Ancien égyptien

Old Egyptian is the earliest stage of the ancient Egyptian language that is preserved in extensive texts. It represents a dialect as well as a historical stage of the language, showing grammatical similarities with and distinctions from later ones. One particular issue in studying Old Egyptian lies in the uneven nature of the Old Kingdom written record, which mostly consists of texts relating to the funerary domain.

اللغة في العصر القديم هي أولى مراحل اللغة المصرية القديمة المحفوظة علي نطاق واسع في النصوص ، حيث انها تمثل لهجه فضلا عن كونها أحد المراحل التاريخية للغة ، حيث تظهر التشابهات النحوية والإختلافات عن المراحل التالية ، وهناك أمر واحد معين في دراسة اللغة في العصر القديم يكمن في الطبيعة المتفاوتة للسجلات المكتوبة خلال عصر الدولة القديمة ، والتي تتكون في معظمها من النصوص المتعلقة بالنطاق الجنائزى.

Old Egyptian is the name given to the stage of the ancient Egyptian language that is preserved in texts of the Old Kingdom. It is normally considered to begin with the inscriptions from the tomb of Metjen (early Dynasty 4, ca. 2575 BCE; Sethe 1932-1933: 1-8), historically the first to contain more than the few words or phrases that are found in earlier sources (for the immediately preceding Dynasty 3, cf. Kahl et al. 1995). Its latest manifestations are in the Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom—although the composition of at least some of these may in fact date to the end of the Old Kingdom (on the resulting linguistic layering in the Coffin Texts, cf. Vernus 1996).

Old Egyptian can be considered a dialect as well as a historical stage of Egyptian. Judging from its predominantly Memphite attestation, it probably represents a northern variety of the language (Allen 2004). It shares with Late

Egyptian a number of grammatical features that are absent in the intervening stage of Middle Egyptian (Edgerton 1951; but cf. also Gundacker 2010). These suggest that Late Egyptian represents a related dialect, although it is primarily attested in Upper Egyptian sources.

Sources

Old Egyptian texts consist primarily of tomb inscriptions. Those from non-royal tombs generally represent the genre known as tomb biographies, in which the deceased (usually in the first person) recounts his achievements and his deeds on behalf of the pharaoh (many published by Sethe 1932-1933). A few of these also preserve the text of letters received from the king (cf. Eichler 1991), most notably those of Senedjemib Inti (Dynasty 5, Giza: three letters of Izezi; Brovarski 2002: 89-110) and Harkhuf (Dynasty 6, Aswan: a letter of Pepi II; Sethe 1932-1933: 128, 4-131, 7). Royal tomb

inscriptions are primarily Pyramid Texts, a collection of rituals and magic spells inscribed in the pyramids of King Unas (Dynasty 5) and his successors of Dynasties 6 and 8 (Sethe 1908-1922; Jéquier 1928, 1933, 1935, 1936; Leclant 2001; Allen 2013b). These are ancestral to the Coffin Texts (de Buck 1935-1961); some of the spells in both corpora are identical (Allen 2006), and other Coffin Texts are reedited versions of those from the Pyramid Texts. A number of royal decrees are also preserved (Goedicke 1967).

Representatives of other textual genres are minimal. These include accounts from royal funerary establishments of Dynasty 5 (Posener-Krieger and de Cénival 1968), rock inscriptions (Anthes 1928; Müller-Wollermann 2005; Seidlmayer 2005), a few non-royal letters (e.g., Gunn 1925; Sethe 1926; Baer 1966; Manassa 2006), and the dialogue and songs of workers depicted in non-royal tombs (Erman 1919). A further source for the study of Old Egyptian is represented by personal names (Scheele-Schweitzer 2014). Notably absent are “scientific” texts (medical and mathematical) and literary texts such as the stories and wisdom literature of the Middle Kingdom; although some of those are ascribed to Old Kingdom authors, they are composed in Middle Egyptian and preserved in manuscripts that date, at the earliest, to the Middle Kingdom (Allen *fc.*). Translations of Old Egyptian texts include Strudwick (2005: tomb biographies and royal decrees), Allen (2005: Pyramid Texts), and Wentz (1990: letters). Most Old Egyptian texts have been indexed lexically in the online *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptia* (<http://aew2.bbaw.de/tla/index.html>).

The limited nature of this corpus presents some difficulties in the description of Old Egyptian grammar. Funerary texts can be suspected of language that is formalized and somewhat archaic; they contain virtually no narrative and little dialogue. Tomb biographies do contain narrative sequences (Doret 1986) but were composed as records of accomplishments rather than as historical narrations of past events. It is therefore difficult to determine, for instance, precisely how the language expressed the historical past

as opposed to the perfect, if it made such a distinction at all. As an example, the tomb biography of Harkhuf expresses two commissions of the king in close succession with different forms of the same verb: *jw h3b.n w hm n mr.n-r nb(.j) hn(.j) ... r jm3m 3nd h3b w hm.f m snnw zp w3.k* (Sethe 1932-1933: 124, 9-11 and 17): do these represent merely stylistic variants or a true grammatical contrast between historical perfect (“The Incarnation of Merenra, my lord, has sent me with my father ... to Yam”) and past (“His Incarnation sent me a second time alone”)?

Studies

Old Egyptian was first codified as a distinct stage of the language in the middle of the twentieth century (Edel 1955-1964). The grammar of the Pyramid Texts has merited two independent studies (Sander-Hansen 1956; Allen 1984), and the narrative verbal system of tomb biographies has been examined by Doret (1986). A study of 4th Dynasty inscriptions specifically is Schweitzer (2005). These are complemented by a number of smaller studies in journal articles, such as those of Edel (1959, 1960) and Schenkel’s studies of the Coffin Texts (2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2009). Edel’s *Altägyptische Grammatik* (1955-1964) remains the standard reference work for Old Egyptian, except for the verbal system, now supplemented by other studies, such as Allen (1984), Doret (1986), and Stauder (2014: for the passive). Particles are now discussed in Oréal (2011).

Orthography

Most Old Egyptian texts were inscribed on stone in hieroglyphs; the accounts and non-royal letters were written in hieratic on papyrus, and the Coffin Texts exhibit a mixture of carved or painted hieroglyphs, cursive hieroglyphs, and hieratic on stone, wood, or papyrus. With the partial exception of some Coffin Texts, these sources exhibit a number of orthographic conventions different from those of later texts (e.g., Edel 1955-1964: §§ 24-107; Kahl 1992).

Old Egyptian uses final *j* in a few cases where *w* later becomes standard: the

demonstrative and copular pronouns *pj* (masculine singular) and *tj* (feminine singular), also attested as *pw* and *tw*; the passive suffix *tj* (usually *t*, except in the Pyramid Texts) and the 1s stative pronoun *kj* (usually *k*, except in the Pyramid Texts). The particle *jw* is regularly written *j* when it has a singular pronominal suffix other than 1s *j* (i.e., *j.k*, *j.f*, *j.s*, etc.), indicating that the *w* expresses a vocalic desinence: i.e., *jw* for *[u] and *j.f* for *[uf] (the latter sometimes written like the word *jf* “flesh” = *[uf] > Coptic ⲉⲘ/ⲁⲘ). Verbs with final radical *j* show that radical (as *j* or *y*) more often than in later texts: e.g., *prj.k* and *pry.k* as well as the more usual *pr.k* “you emerge” (e.g., Allen 2013b: PT 215.32, 437.15).

The dual and plural of nouns is usually conveyed, respectively, by the two-fold or three-fold repetition of the word or its determinative instead of by the two or three strokes added to the singular in later texts (Faulkner 1929; Vernus 2012). Determinatives (or classifiers) are used less often than in later texts, particularly for verbs. The first-person pronominal suffix (*j*) is usually unexpressed in writing, in contrast to later texts in which it is usually represented by a reed-leaf or an ideogram such as the seated man (A1), seated woman (B1), or god (A40 or G7). Conversely, uniliteral phonetic complements are somewhat more frequent, including numerous examples preceding the multiliteral sign, whereas Middle Egyptian prefers complements following it: e.g., s-D-F21-*m* for *sdm* “hear,” later regularly F21-*m*. Words beginning with *j* often have an initial reed-leaf, such as *j-jn-n* for *jn* “fetch,” later regularly *jn-n*. The combination of two tall signs can be metathesized, most often when one is a bird: for example, *wḏ-w* for *wḏ* “command” (a convention that persists for this word in later stages).

These conventions sometimes result in ambiguity with regard to the identification of distinct words: for example, the sequence *j-s-p n.k jrt ḥrw* (Allen 2013b: PT 143.1) can be read *sjp n.k jrt ḥrw* “allot to yourself Horus’s eye” or “Horus’s eye has been allotted to you,” *j.s(j)p n.k jrt ḥrw* “allot to yourself Horus’s eye,” and *sjp.(j) n.k jrt ḥrw* or *j.s(j)p.(j) n.k jrt ḥrw* “I allot to you Horus’s eye.” The value of

an initial reed-leaf in words that begin with *j* is also uncertain: for instance, does the imperative *j-jn-n* “fetch” represent *j.jn* (as in Late Egyptian) or only *jn* (as in Middle Egyptian)?

Phonology

The phonemic inventory of Old Egyptian differs from that of its descendants in several respects (cf. Kammerzell 2005). The consonants represented by the transcription symbols *z* and *s* (most likely [th] as in *think* and [s] as in *sink*, respectively), which are conflated (as *s*) in later stages, are still distinct. The historical derivation of *t* from *k* (Allen 2013a: 48) is evinced by pairs such as *kw* ~ *tw* “you” (2ms dependent pronoun), undoubtedly reflecting a process of palatalization and fronting: *[ku] (or *[kúwa]) > *[kʷu] > *[tʷu].

Old Egyptian also demonstrates the derivation of *š* from *h*. These two consonants do not appear to be phonemically distinct, at least in the Pyramid Texts. Although some words are written only with the uniliteral signs for each (for example, *šj* “lake” and *ht* “belly”), some that later have *h*, such as *phr* “go around,” are written with *š* (*pšr*), and some with both (such *šst* and *hst* “corpse,” later only *hst*). A spelling such as *šhst* (Allen 2013b: PT 336.7)—never the reverse, **hšst*—both indicates that the *š*-sign had come to be pronounced as [š] in some words and signals that the older pronunciation of the sign was intended. Since both consonants are cognate with Semitic *h* (e.g., *hm* ≈ *šm* “father-in-law” and *hlq* ≈ *hʿq* “shave”), these phenomena apparently reflect a historical process of fronting and palatalization: **h* > *h* ([xʷ]) and then, in some words, *h* > *š*.

A number of the sound changes that characterize later stages of the language are first attested in Old Egyptian. Depalatalization of *t* > *t* appears a few times in late Dynasty 6 (Edel 1955-1964: § 112). Loss of the feminine ending *t* occurs sporadically in attributives but is also suggested for nouns by the occasional use of a suppletive *t* in pronominal forms: e.g., *mrt nb jrt.n stš* “everything painful that Seth has done” (*nb* for *nbt*: Allen 2013b: PT 587.30),

jntwt.tf for *jntwt.f* “his fetters” (Allen 2013b: PT 254.28 T). Loss of word-final or syllable-final *r* is more firmly attested, either by the use of *j* in its place or by its omission in writing: e.g., *zwtj* and *zwt.k* for *zwr* and *zwr.t.k*, forms of the verb *zwr* “drink” (Allen 2013b: PT 519.58). A similar alteration affects the consonant transcribed as ʕ (a liquid, like *r*), though less universally: e.g., *zš* for *zḥʕ* “write” (Allen 2013b: PT 305.14-15), *ḥby* for *ḥʕby* “be festive” (Allen 2013b: PT 602.2). The consonant *y* may not have been phonemic in Old Egyptian: it usually reflects a semi-vocalic “bridge” between two vowels (e.g., *pry.k* for *[piriák] > *[piriyák]: Allen 2011: 4 n. 12) and does not seem to reflect the change of phonemic *w* to *y* as it does later (Schenkel 1962: 47-59; Allen 2013a: 38).

Lexical Morphology

Old Egyptian seems to represent a stage in which verbal stem formation was still at least partly productive, as opposed to later stages of the language, in which most stems have become lexicalized. Root augmentation by gemination, reduplication, medial-intransitive *n* (Vernus 2009; Stauder 2014: 212-220), and causative *s* is more productive than later, exemplified by *fh* “become loose, lose” → *fhḥ* “become loose,” *sfh* and *sfhḥ* “loosen,” and *snfhḥ* “unravel,” of which only *fh* and *sfh* survive in later stages. Old Egyptian also has some 6-lit. verbal roots, formed by total reduplication of 3-lit. roots: e.g., *nddndd* ~ *ndddd* “perdure” (Allen 2013b: PT 219.55).

Nisbe formation is also more productive in Old Egyptian than later. It applies not only to prepositions and to nouns of place such as *jmnt* “west” → *jmntj* “western” and *njwt* “town” → *njwtj* “local” but is also used to convert proper nouns to attributives: e.g., *jʕwt ḥrwt* ... *jʕwt stšt* “Horian mounds ... Sethian mounds” (Allen 2013b: PT 690.19), from *ḥrwt* “Horus” and *stš* “Seth.” In later texts the last process is not attested, replaced by attributive clauses with *nj*, and other nisbes have apparently become lexicalized.

Gender and Number

Unlike later stages of the language, Old Egyptian has the full range of six gender and number forms: masculine and feminine; singular, plural, and dual. The dual is still productive for nouns of all types—e.g., *ḥfʕwj* “two snakes” (Allen 2013b: PT 491A.7)—and not, as in Middle Egyptian, merely for those that typically appear in pairs. Adjectives show not only the three common forms—masculine singular, masculine plural, and feminine (singular)—but also occasional instances of the dual and feminine plural (Edel 1955-1964: §§ 352-353). Dual forms, obsolescent in Middle Egyptian, are attested for personal pronouns; when used attributively, the demonstratives *pn/tm*, *pw/tw*, and *pf/tf* have plurals formed with initial *jp*, obsolescent in later texts: *jpn/jptm*, *jpw/jptw*, and *jpf/jptf* (*jpp*- written *jp*). The stative may also have dual pronominal suffixes, at least for the third person feminine, and the third person plural distinguishes masculine and feminine in place of the unitary (masculine) suffix of Middle Egyptian (Edel 1955-1964: § 572).

Pronouns

Second- and third-person singular independent pronouns are formed from their dependent counterparts (*tw/tm* → *twt/tmt*, *sw/sj* → *swt/stt*); the later forms consisting of *jnt*- plus a suffix pronoun are first attested at the end of Dynasty 6 (*ntf*: Allen 2013b: PT 681.18; Kammerzell 1991). The 1pl stative suffix is *nw* (Allen 2013b: PT 599.6) as well as the more common form in later texts, *wjn* (Edel 1955-1964: § 574). The neutral third-person pronoun *st* does not exist in Old Egyptian (Edel 1955-1964: § 169).

Non-verbal Predicates

One of the features that Old Egyptian has in common with Late Egyptian, but not Middle Egyptian, is gender and number concord between an initial nominal predicate and a following demonstrative subject (“copula”) in the non-verbal A *pw* construction: e.g., *zʕ.k pw* “he is your son,” *jst tw* “it is Isis,” *msw nwt nw* “they are Nut’s children” (Allen 2013b: PT

217.34, 356.7, 519.39). The Middle Egyptian construction using the invariable masculine singular form of the demonstrative, however, also appears sporadically, as well as in the tripartite A *pw* B construction (Allen 2013b: PT 422.35, 553.26, 519.51).

The adverbial-predicate constructions known as “pseudo-verbal,” consisting of the preposition *r*, *hr*, or *m* governing an infinitive, are unevenly distributed in Old Egyptian. The constructions A *r sdm* and A *hr sdm* appear in tomb biographies in Dynasty 5 (Edel 1955-1964: §§ 926, 933-34), and a single example of the less common A *m sdm* occurs in a non-royal letter from the end of Dynasty 6 (Vernus 1990: 148-149). None of these constructions is attested in the Pyramid Texts (Allen 1984: § 720 E3), for unknown reasons (perhaps a difference in registers between these and other Old Egyptian texts, or because the constructions are unsuited for the largely atemporal tenor of the Pyramid Texts).

Synthetic Verb Forms

Old Egyptian exhibits the full range of synthetic verb forms (those distinguished by changes in the forms of a word), although one of these, the *sdm.hr.f*, is attested only once (Edel 1955-1964: § 550).

Infinitival forms are the negational complement, a number of verbal nouns, and the complementary infinitive. The first of these shows some evidence of being derived from a finite verb form through omission of an expressed subject: e.g., *m jmk* ~ *m jmk.k* “don’t rot” ~ “don’t you rot” (Schenkel 2000a; Allen 2013b: PT 412.4), the second of these peculiar to Old Egyptian (Allen 1984: §§ 686-688). Verbal nouns have four forms: the verb root (e.g., *hṯp*) and the root plus the endings *-t*, *-w* or *-y*, and *-wt* or *-yt* (e.g., *hṯpt*, *hṯpw* and *hṯpy*, *hṯpwt*). The first two are used, for different verbs, in the paradigm of the infinitive, but it is not certain that a distinct infinitive existed as such, as least in the Pyramid Texts (Allen 1984: §§ 676-679). The first and third forms (*hṯp* and *hṯpw*) characterize the complementary infinitive, which is used to reinforce a verbal

predicate based on the same root (Vernus 2001).

Finite nominal forms are the active and passive participles and the *sdmj.f* or “verbal adjective” (the pronominal-suffix desinence *j* does not occur in Old Egyptian: Edel 1955-1964: § 680; for the “nominal” and relative *sdm.f* and *sdm.n.f*, see Allen 2013c). Forms are generally the same as in Middle Egyptian with the exception of the geminated 2-lit. passive participle (e.g., *hmm* “unknown”), which is more common than in later texts. As in Middle Egyptian, the *sdm.f* and *sdm.n.f* can be used in attributive function; when they receive endings reflecting the gender and number of their antecedent, they are commonly known as relative forms. The active participle and the relative *sdm.f* and *sdm.n.f* of some verbs occasionally have prefixed forms; prefixed examples of the first two appear sporadically in Middle Egyptian and more frequently again in Late Egyptian.

The imperative has singular and non-singular forms, as in Middle Egyptian; the latter has the ending *-y* in the Pyramid Texts and elsewhere also *-w* as in Middle Egyptian. Prefixed forms are common, as in Late Egyptian; a few are also attested in Middle Egyptian. The stative also has occasional prefixed forms; these disappear in later stages of the language.

The category of the suffix conjugation comprises six or seven forms: active *sdm.f*, passive *sdm.f*, *sdm.n.f*, *sdm.jn.f*, *sdm.hr.f*, *sdm.kz.f*, and *sdmt.f*, the last probably an infinitival form rather than a finite one. Prefixed forms are attested for the active *sdm.f* and the *sdm.n.f*; these are absent in later stages of the language except for rare examples of the prefixed *sdm.f* in Middle Egyptian.

The Old Egyptian *sdm.f* is remarkable in several respects. It can be used to express past or completed action (see below); in Middle Egyptian, by contrast, this use is largely limited to the negative construction *nj sdm.f*. Moreover, the Old Egyptian *sdm.f* displays two morphological features virtually unknown in Middle Egyptian and obsolescent thereafter: occasional examples of the active form with

the ending *-w* in all root classes except 2-lit., 2ae-inf., 3-lit., and the verb *rdj* (thus, e.g., *mrw.f*); and examples of the passive form with geminated stem in the 2-lit. and 3-lit. classes and some 4ae-inf. verbs (thus, e.g., *jpp.f*). These appear almost exclusively in the Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts. The active form was first analyzed as a separate form, the “*sdmw.f*,” by Edel (1955-1964: §§ 511-531) and later identified as a distinct form of the *sdm.f*, either future in meaning (Allen 1984: §§ 360-365; also Schenkel 2000b for Coffin Texts) or future in meaning and emphatic in function (Vernus 1990: 29-53). The geminated passive, or *sdmm.f*, has been identified as the passive counterpart of this form in the classes in which it appears (Allen 1984: §§ 515-529). In the other classes, passive forms with the ending *-w* have also been analyzed as a distinct, future form of the passive (Allen 1984: §§ 487-514; Schenkel 2004-2005; Stauder 2014: 21-44). In addition to the unaccomplished/aorist (or “circumstantial”) *sdm.f*, the *mrr.f* (or “nominal” *sdm.f*), the subjunctive *sdm.f*, and the passive *sdm.f*, Old Egyptian would thus have had:

a) an “indicative” *sdm.f*, productively used with past as well as non-past meaning in affirmative as well as negated clauses;

b) a fully productive paradigm of synthetic forms in the future, consisting of:

- an active “prospective” *sdm.f*, the so-called “*sdmw.f*”: unmarked in writing in 2-lit., 2ae-inf., 3-lit., and the verb *rdj*; with a not uncommon written ending *-w* in the other classes;

- a passive *sdmm.f* (in 2-lit. and 3-lit. classes and some 4ae-inf.), largely in complementary distribution to a passive *sdm.f* in the other classes (with a not uncommon written ending *-w*).

Recently, however, the existence of any form of the *sdm.f* other than a single active and a single passive has been called into question (Allen 2011, 2012b). For the “*sdmw.f*” the value of the ending *-w* as a morphological index is questionable: where a passage with this form is attested in multiple copies, almost half show a form without ending, and no meaning

or use can be demonstrated for the “*sdmw.f*” that is not also expressed by the *sdm.f* without ending; it is conceivable that the *-w* is merely an optional representation of a vocalic ending. For the *sdmm.f*, gemination may represent an imperfective stem, as in other verb forms, or a strategy of stem lengthening to accommodate passive morphology under conditions yet to be determined (for the latter interpretation, Stauder 2014: 44-60)—perhaps dialectal. These are areas for further research.

The use of the *sdm.f* and stative is somewhat different in Old Egyptian than in Middle Egyptian (Doret 1986; Allen 2013a: 132-135). As in Late Egyptian, the *sdm.f* can appear in sentence/clause-initial position as an expression of completed action (past or perfect), although only with nominal subjects: e.g., *h3b w hm.f* “His Incarnation sent me” (Sethe 1932-1933: 124, 17), *j n.k snt.k jst* “your sister Isis came to you” (Allen 2013b: PT 366.18). Also as in Middle Egyptian, the stative can express completed action for intransitive verbs, e.g., *pr.k/pr pjpj pn m gs j3btj n pt* “I have/this Pepi has emerged in the east side of the sky” (Allen 2013b: PT 466.3); but with transitive verbs (and 1s subject) the stative is sometimes used as a past tense with a direct object—e.g., *qrs.k zj pn m jz.f* “I buried that man in his tomb” (Sethe 1932-1933: 140, 8)—a use that is absent elsewhere, with the exception of the verb *rh* “learn of” (“learned of” = “know” in the stative), which survives into Late Egyptian. In Middle Egyptian, completed action is regularly expressed in sentence/clause-initial position by the *sdm.n.f* and by the subject-stative construction for intransitive ones, uses that also occur in Old Egyptian: e.g., *jr.n.(j) d-r-t3* “I made landing” (Sethe 1932-1933: 104, 16), *j.n wnjs hr.t* “Unas has come unto you” (Allen 2013b: PT 272.2), *m-k ttj/sw jy/j* “Look, Teti/he has come” (Allen 2013b: PT 360.4). It is difficult to judge the significance of these peculiarities, because of the nature of the evidence: the initial use of the transitive *sdm.f* occurs only in tomb biographies, and its intransitive counterpart only in the Pyramid Texts (and a few Middle Egyptian religious texts), and the use of the transitive stative with direct object is also

largely restricted to tomb biographies. It is possible that the distribution of the forms reflects, in part, a distinction between past (preterite) and perfect in Old Egyptian (Allen 2013a: 132-35). If so, that distinction has disappeared in Middle Egyptian, reappearing in the language only in Demotic (Allen 2013a: 151). Alternatively, the occasional use of the stative with transitive events may reflect an emphasis on the resultative aspect of the speaker's action in some tomb biographies (Stauder 2014: 112-118).

Compound Constructions

Apart from subject-stative, the most common compound construction in Old Egyptian is subject-*sḏm.f*. Like the *sḏm.f* itself, this construction merely expresses action, without an inherent tense or aspect. Unlike the *sḏm.f*, however, it regularly expresses progressive action in non-dependent clauses—that is, action in progress with respect to the moment of speaking or another action: e.g., *m-k s jw.s* “Look, she is coming” (Allen 2013b: PT 254.20). With rare exceptions (Edel 1955-1964: § 884), this value of the construction is restricted to the Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts. Elsewhere it is largely replaced by the subject *ḥr sḏm* construction (Vernus 1990: 163-193), grammaticalized as a dedicated expression of progressive aspect.

The common Middle Egyptian constructions in which the *sḏm.n.f* or *sḏm.jn.f* of a few intransitive verbs is used as an auxiliary to a verbal predicate (e.g., *ḥr.n sḏm.n.f*, *wn.jn.f ḥr sḏm*) are largely absent from Old Egyptian (completely so for *ḥr.n sḏm.n.f*; *wn.jn.f ḥr sḏm* is attested infrequently at the end of the Old Kingdom), perhaps only because these are characteristic of narrative texts. The analytic counterparts of the *sḏm.ḥr.f* and *sḏm.k3.f—ḥr/ḥr.f sḏm.f* and *k3/k3.f sḏm.f*—do not appear in Old Egyptian and may be considered an early Middle Egyptian innovation (Vernus 1990: 61-99).

Negations

Old Egyptian uses the negative particle *nj* (sometimes spelled *ny*) in constructions for which Middle Egyptian uses either *nj* or *nn*. As

in Middle Egyptian, *nj ... js* is used to negate nominal and emphatic predicates and *nj js* for contrastive negations (“and not, but not”).

The Old Egyptian negation *nj sḏm.f* is mostly found in the Pyramid Texts, where it is largely future, corresponding to Middle Egyptian *nn sḏm.f*, or gnomic, corresponding to occasional uses of *nj sḏm.f* in Middle Egyptian (Allen 2013a: 127-132). Outside the Pyramid Texts, *nj zp sḏm.f* occurs as a past or perfect negation, rather than the Middle Egyptian *nj sḏm.f*, probably not because it was the regular construction for such negations but because the autobiographies, where it is primarily attested, are concerned with exceptionalism (e.g., Sethe 1932-1933: 217, 4 *nj zp ḥwj.j rmt nb* “I never hit any person”) rather than mere denial (“I did/have not hit any person”). When negated by *nj*, the passive *sḏm.f* and the *sḏm.n.f* are regularly gnomic or express inability, as in Middle Egyptian, but a few examples with the perfect sense of the affirmative forms are also attested (Allen 2013a: 131-132). Old Egyptian also negates the *sḏm.f* by means of the enclitic particle *w* (*sḏm.f w*, also *nj sḏm.f w*), with jussive sense (Kammerzell 1993).

The negative verbs *jmj* and *tm* are used largely as in Middle Egyptian. The imperative *jm/m*, however, is used not only as a negation of the imperative, with the negational complement (*m sḏm* “don't hear”), but also of the *sḏm.f* with third-person as well as second-person subject (*m sḏm.k* “don't you hear,” *m sḏm.f* “don't let him hear”; Allen 1984: § 203; Schenkel 2000a: 3-7). The *sḏm.f* constructions are replaced in Middle Egyptian by the negated imperative and *jm.f sḏm*, respectively.

Subordination

Old Egyptian is similar to Middle Egyptian in its broad use of morphologically unmarked subordination, or parataxis, and the morphemes used to signal marked subordination, or hypotaxis, are generally the same in both stages as well. Differences are observed mostly at the level of particles (Oréal 2011). For example, Old Egyptian uses the enclitic particle *js* to subordinate not only

clauses, as in Middle Egyptian, but also nouns and noun phrases: e.g., *wd.f mdw ntr js* “He governs as a god” (Allen 2013b: 556.22). The particle *js* is used only as an enclitic, also to subordinate nouns or noun phrases: e.g., *rdj.n.(j) n.k ntrw nbw wʿt.sn js* “I have given you all the gods, and their inheritance as well” (Allen 2013b: PT 425.1-2).

The Old Egyptian particle *sk/st* corresponds morphologically to Middle Egyptian *js*. It generally signals clauses of restrictive circumstance, either sentence-initial or after the governing clause: e.g., *hft ddt.n.f jm*

sk sw ʿnh “according to what he said about it when he was alive” (Sethe 1932-1933: 16-17). Old Egyptian does not use *js* to introduce such clauses, unlike Middle Egyptian. For object clauses, Old Egyptian prefers *wnt* to the more common Middle Egyptian morpheme *ntt* (Uljas 2007: 50-51). It also uses the negative morphemes *jwt* and *jwtj* to introduce object and relative clauses, respectively, in contrast to the analytic constructions more common in Middle Egyptian, with *ntt* and *ntj* governing a negative statement.

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