On Forms and Functions:
Studies in Ancient Egyptian Grammar

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Widmaier Verlag · Hamburg
2014

copies of this volume may be ordered from the publisher (orders@widmaier-verlag.de)
and the North American distributor Eisenbrauns (www.eisenbrauns.com)
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The Verb *ib* and the Construction *ib=f r sdm*  
On modal semantics, graphemic contrasts, and gradience in grammar

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Abstract

Based on graphemic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic evidence, the paper shows that a clear-cut distinction can be made between a verb *ib* expressing an epistemic judgment (“to think”) and a non-verbal predicative construction *ib=f r sdm* (literally “his heart is towards hearing”), expressing volition (“to want”). In a second step, the volitional construction *ib=f r sdm* is shown to occasionally display features of syntactic gradience, reflecting its quasi-verbal semantics (“volitive agent-oriented modality”): in particular, this construction can combine with a marker of passive voice, a verbal category that is otherwise alien to non-verbal constructions. Problematic late occurrences of the construction *ib=f r sdm* are discussed in turn: in some of these, *ib=f* may have been subjected to alternative construals as a verb.

0 Introduction

Egyptian has a noun *ib* "heart”, cognate to Semitic *lbb*. In addition, there are constructions in which *ib*, written and , displays verbal, or verb-like, semantics, expressing meanings such as “wish, want” (volitional modality) and “to think, surmise” (epistemic modality). In a common interpretation, three lexemes are thus distinguished:

- the noun *ib* "heart";
- derived from the first, a denominative verb *ib* "want, wish", in the construction *ib=f r sdm* (volitional meaning);
- a verb *ib* "think, surmise" (epistemic meaning).

The two verbs thus posited contrast both in semantics and in writing. The first, written like the noun, would also be derived from it. In an alternative interpretation, only two lexemes are distinguished, the noun and only one verb, covering the field of

* We are grateful to Eitan Grossman for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper.
1 Gundacker (2011: 66–69, also discussing indications of an alternative realization of Egyptian *ib* as */lbb/ or */li:bvw/ in early historical times); Takács (1999: 87–88, with numerous references to the previous literature); Loprieno (1995: 31).
2 E.g., Wb. 159.10–60.11, 60.12–13, 61.15, respectively, and several authors since.
3 On the epistemic verb never being written with the sign of the heart, see also Meltzer (1977: 149).
4 On *ib* “want, wish” as “denominative”, GEG §292; Lefebvre (1955: §394); FCD 15; AL 78.0243, 79.0156. Authors generally remain uncommitted as to whether *ib* “think, surmise” is also connected with the noun; without further argument, a possible etymological link is suggested by Vycichl (1958: 390).
both volitional and epistemic semantics. In common to both these interpretations is that \( ib \) in \( ib=f r sdm \) is interpreted as a verb, thus: \( ib_{\text{VERB}}=f_{\text{SUBJECT}} r sdm \).

Other authors, particularly grammarians, have proposed that \( ib \) in \( ib=f r sdm \) is to be viewed as the subject of a non-verbal predicative construction, more precisely, of a situational predicate construction (or adverbial predicate construction), thus: \([ib=f]_{\text{SUBJECT}} [r sdm]_{\text{PREDICATE}}\). This interpretation is not uncommon in Late Egyptian studies, but also occasionally found in Middle Egyptian ones.

Making things even more complex, \( ib=f r sdm \) has a passive counterpart in \( ib.tw r sdm \), -\( tw \) being a bound passive marker. This has been interpreted as evidence for a verbal analysis of \( ib \) in \( ib=f r sdm \), in contradiction with the non-verbal analysis of the same construction just referred to.

In the present paper we argue for a basic distinction between a verb \( ib \), which always expresses epistemic meaning, “think, surmise” (§1), and another \( ib \), which is only apparently “verbal”. The latter is found only in the construction \( ib=f r sdm \) which expresses volitional semantics, “want, wish” (§2). This is a situational predicate construction in which the noun \( ib \) “heart” fills the subject slot, while the prepositional phrase \( r \) + INFINITIVE “towards INFINITIVE” fills the adverbial predicate slot, thus: \([ib=f]_{\text{SUBJECT}} [r sdm]_{\text{PREDICATE}}\), literally “his heart is towards hearing” > “he wishes/wants to hear”. In a second step, we discuss how the volitional construction \( ib=f r sdm \), although syntactically non-verbal, can display “verb-like” features: the construction has a passive counterpart, \( ib.tw r sdm \), which represents a remarkable instance of syntactic gradience (§3). Going further, rare examples, rather late in the overall history of the construction, suggest that \( ib=f r sdm \) could have been alternatively construed, and possibly even gone some way towards being reanalyzed, as verbal in specific contexts (§4).

The present study is based on all the examples that we were able to collect in the Old, Middle, and Late Egyptian records (2650-700 BCE). Neither the verb \( ib \) nor the non-verbal construction \( ib NP r sdm \) seem to be attested in Demotic anymore.

---

5 Hannig (1995: 39; 2006: 159), for instance, acknowledges the existence of a verb \( ib \), with the meaning “want” (volitional semantics), while the TLA lumps all “verbal” occurrences of \( ib \) (be these written \( ib \) or \( ib \)) into a single lemma (#23370).


7 Borghouts (2010: 429, discussing Ex. 24 below); Brose (2014: §348, discussing Ex. 18 below).

8 Thus, \( Wb. I, 60.12–13: \) “ib wie ein Verbum gebraucht | \( ib=f r \) sein Herz steht nach…, er wünscht | \( ib.tw \) r man wünscht zu tun”; similarly, e.g., Fischer-Elfert (1997: 104, discussing Ex. 49 below).

9 The noun \( ib \) “heart” is still attested (see \( DG \) 26; \( CDD \) 1, 77–79), but apparently not in the volitional construction discussed here. We are grateful to Joachim Quack who confirmed this and further pointed to a passage in which a word for “heart” is associated with the expression of volition in an altogether different construction: \( Ankhseshonqy \) 1.x+17 (= Glanville 1955: pl. I) \( p\dot{t} \text{n\dot{i} m\dot{i} w} [r] h\dot{y} s m r m-nfr \) (\text{ART,MSG REL suit-STAT to heart=1SG go:INF to Memphis}) “what would suit my heart would be to go to Memphis”. This construction, which is not regularized like the earlier one, is nonetheless illustrative of the general semantic connection between “heart” and volition.
1 The epistemic verb *ib* \(\text{ib}\) “think, surmise”

The existence of a verb *ib* “think, surmise”\(^\text{10}\) expressing epistemic modality\(^\text{11}\) is established based on both morphological and syntactic criteria.

1.1 Verbal inflection

When expressing meanings such as “think, surmise”, *ib* can be found with the personal endings of the pseudoparticiple, an inflected form of the verb with resultative meaning. When combined with the personal endings of the pseudoparticiple, *ib* must be analyzed as verbal. Examples are from Middle Egyptian (Ex. 1) and early Late Egyptian (Ex. 2):

**Ex. 1**  
\[\text{ib-kw} (\text{ib} \text{pseudoparticiple}) \text{ w3w pw n w3d-wr} \]

think-STAT.1SG wave COP of sea

“(Then I heard a noise of thunder) and I thought it was a wave of the sea.”

*(Shipwrecked Sailor 57–59 = Blackman 1932: 43.6)*

**Ex. 2**  
\[\text{ib-kw} (\text{ib} \text{pseudoparticiple}) \text{ ink hr=f p}\text{i} \]

think-STAT.1SG I with the

“I thought, myself, with the [...]”

(P. Boulaq 15 [= P. Cairo CG 58060] vso 1 = KRI III 157.5)\(^\text{12}\)

When expressing meanings such as “think, surmise”, *ib* can also be found with the infix -\(\text{hr}\) in earlier stages of Late Egyptian. Like in the case of the endings of the pseudoparticiple, the combination with -\(\text{hr}\), a marker of verbal inflection expressing deontic as well as epistemic modality,\(^\text{13}\) implies a verbal analysis of *ib*. This form *ib*-\(\text{hr}=f\) is noteworthy in itself: the infix -\(\text{hr}\) is otherwise Earlier Egyptian, and *ib* is apparently the only verb that still has a synthetic -\(\text{hr}\) marked form in earlier Late Egyptian; the form *ib*-\(\text{hr}=f\) is thereby seen to be a frozen one. Its distinguished literary flavor\(^\text{14}\) is manifest notably in its twofold occurrence in the high-flown rhetoric and recherché language of the *Satirical Letter* (Ex. 3–4). Occurrences in inscriptonally published texts arguably carry a similar flavor (Ex. 5–6):

**Ex. 3**  
\[\text{\	ext{ib-hr}} (\text{ib} \text{pseudoparticiple}) \text{ pt wn} \]

ART sky open:STAT

\[\text{ib-hr=k} (\text{ib} \text{pseudoparticiple}) \text{ p}\text{i} \text{ hrw n-hr=k tly=k p} \text{ly sdi}\text{d3} \]

think-OBLV=2MSG ART enemy behind=2MSG begin:SBIV=2MSG DEM tremble

“The sky is now open, but you of course think of the enemy behind you, so that you begin to tremble.”

*(Satirical Letter, P. Anastasi I ro 24.8 = Fischer-Elfert 1983: 144)*

\(^{10}\) Recognized by, e.g., *Wb.* I 61.15; *GEG* 552; *FCD* 15; *AL* 77.0219, 79.0161; Hannig (2003: 64); Borghouts (2010: I, 451).

\(^{11}\) Incidentally, note that overall occurrences of explicit epistemic judgments are noticeably and surprisingly few in the Ancient Egyptian record (Polis 2009a: 343ff.).

\(^{12}\) The reading of this lacunous first line is problematic (Bakir 1970: pl. XI; Allam 1985: pl. V–VI). *Pace* Kitchen, the text probably stems from the late Eighteenth to early Nineteenth Dynasty (Allam 1985: 30).

\(^{13}\) On the modal polysemy of *hr* and its diachronic evolution, Polis (2005: 305–15).

\(^{14}\) Vernus (1990: 65 and n. 34).
Ex. 4

\[ hr \ bwpyw=i \ nri \ r-h't=k \ rh-k \ ki=k \]
but \ Neg.Pst=1sg \ be_\text{afraid} \ before=2msg \ know-\text{Stat.1sg} \ character=2msg
\[ lb-hr=i (\{ f_s f_s \} \{ k \} \{ k \}) \ iw=k \ r \ hsf=s \ w3t \ hr-tp=k \]
think-oblv=2msg \ fut=2msg \ fut \ answer=3sg \ alone \ on\_top=2msg
“(...) but I did not become afraid in front of you, knowing your character, I obviously thought that you would answer it alone by yourself.”

(Satirical Letter, P. Anastasi I ro 5.5 = Fischer-Elfert 1983: 59–60)

The verb \textit{ib}, here on the papyrus version of the \textit{Satirical Letter}, is strikingly absent from the ostraca preserving the same text, which have the subjunctive form \( (\text{hsf}=s) \), e.g., O. DeM 1178 ro 1–3 (= Fischer-Elfert 1983: 59–60) \hr bwpyw=i \ nri \ r-h't=k \ rh-k \ ki=k \ hsf=k \ n=i \ w f' \ <hr->tp=k \“(...) but I did not become afraid in front of you, knowing your character, so that you would answer me alone by yourself.” This absence of \textit{ib-hr=f} in the ostraca versions of the \textit{Satirical Letter}, as opposed to its presence in the papyrus version of the same composition, possibly also reflects the literary character of the construction.

Ex. 5

\[ ib-hr=sn (\{ f_s f_s \} \{ k \} \{ k \} \{ k \} \{ k \}) \ ihm-n=sn \]
think-oblv=3pl \ not\_know:rel=pst=3pl \ art \ ruler \ valiant \ like \ falcon
“(Who do they think they are, these despicable Asiatics, when taking up their bows again for conflict?)
They should think about what they do not know, the ruler, valiant like a falcon
(…)”

(Second Beth-Shean Stela 13–14 = KRI I 116.10–11)

Ex. 6

\[ lb-hr=i (\{ f_s f_s \} \{ k \} \{ k \} \{ k \} \{ k \}) \ nn-wn \ r-c \ (n) \ t(i) \ pt \]
think-oblv=1sg \ neg.exist \ limit \ to \ art \ sky
“(Speech by a prince):
‘I certainly thought that there was no limit to the sky,
(but the Ruler has caused us to see its limit in the South.’)”

(Temple of Beit el-Wâli, speech of the prince Amunherwenemif 1–3 = KRI II 198.11–12). Sim. in the speech of a Syrian chief 1–3 = KRI II 196.7 (Ex. 9)

Given the apparently exclusive combination of \textit{ib} with the synthetic \textit{-hr-} form in the late Eighteenth to early Nineteenth Dynasty, a singular contemporaneous instance of \textit{3bi} “desire” in the synthetic \textit{-hr-} form (\textit{3b-hr=i}: Ex. 7) should also be discussed briefly here:

Ex. 7

\[ nn-wn \ gr \ m \ rm=k \ r \ ph-tw \ ntt \]
Neg.exist \ be\_silent:ptcp \ in \ beweep=2msg \ until \ reach\_pass \ what
\[ 3b-hr=i \ iw=k \ n=i \ r \ hh \]
desire-oblv=1sg \ compl=2msg \ to=1sg \ until \ eternity
“There is none who is silent in beweeping you until one reaches what […]
I desire that you be mine for ever (…)”

(Berlin 12411, B 1–5 = AIB II 180: a dirge on a stela from the tomb of Neferrenpet in Saqqara)

An interpretation as a merely graphic alternation (\textit{3b-hr=i} as a spelling for \textit{ib-hr=i}) would make it difficult to account for the volitional semantics of the construction in the present context, since all other instance of the verb \textit{ib} discussed in this paper express epistemic modality (“to think” or the like). Alternatively, this could therefore be an exceptional extension of the synthetic \textit{-hr-} form to a semantically
(i.e., modally) and phonetically related verb, thus bearing additional witness to the verbal nature of ib in ib-ḥr=f.

1.2 Syntax: complement clauses

A verbal interpretation of ib is required on syntactic grounds when ib introduces a complement clause. In the Middle Egyptian record,18 ib is once attested introducing the classifying pattern A pw (Ex. 1) and once a verbal clause, with a mrr=f:19

Ex. 8  
ib=f(\text{iwt zp xpr mrtt Dr-bAH})  ir-r-t  hr  mdt  n=f  
think=3MSG  do~IPFV-PASS  to punish:INF  to=3MSG  
on matter DEM  say:REL-PST=3MSG  
“This peasant became afraid, thinking that it was done in order to punish him because of these words he said.”  

Ib “think” is echoed in B2 119 by ib “the thirsty man” (a participle of the etymologically unrelated verb ibi “be thirsty”), and further echoes ib “heart” and ibw “shelter”, two core notions throughout the composition.20

In the earlier Late Egyptian record, ib is attested introducing bare complement clauses, both with verbal predications (Ex. 4, with the Third Future) and with predications of non-existence (nn-wn NP: Ex. 6 and Ex. 9 below):

Ex. 9  
ib-hr(=f)  (\text{iwt zp xpr mrtt Dr-bAH})  nn-wn ky  mi  bfr  
think=OBLV=1SG  NEG  other like Baal  
“(Speech by the despicable chief while magnifying the Lord of the Tow Lands:) ‘I thought that there was no one like Baal, (but the Ruler is his true son of eternity!’)”  
(Temple of Beit el-Wâli, Speech of a Syrian chief, 1–3 = KRI II 196.7)

1.3 Syntactic issues

A verbal analysis of ib is also required when ib with a nominal expression (ib NP) is found in a clause that otherwise consists only of an adverb or particles. If ib were not a verb, the segment would lack a predicative relationship. The nominal expression is therefore analyzed as the subject of ib, which must then be verbal:

---

19 With caution, Uljas (2007: 122–23, and n. 5) quotes one possible example of the verb ib followed by a complement clause introduced by iwt (the negative equivalent of the complementizers ntt/wnt) (... n int [i]=k ib(=i) iwt zp hpr mrtt dr-bih “(...) by bringing (back) your father, for I think nothing similar has ever happened before” (Urk. I, 138.15–16: Sabni son of Mekhu, Qubbet el-Hawa 26, Inscription A, 11–12). This is highly suspicious in view of the general phraseology of Old Kingdom autobiographies, in which the ubiquitous mentions of exceptionality of the speaker’s deeds are always directly asserted, never presented as being subject to an epistemic judgment. An epigraphic examination of this admittedly difficult inscription demonstrates that the text reads not as in the second edition of Urk. I, but otherwise: (...) n int [i]=k p<n> m hlst f[n] n zp hpr mrtt dr-bih “(...) for the bringing back of this father of yours from this foreign country. Never had the like occurred before” (Edel et al. 2008: 50 and pl. IX; Seyfried 2005: 316 and fig. 1, p. 314).
20 Parkinson (2012: 304–05; 2002: 127–28). A similar word-play is in Kagemni 1.5–6, also with ibi “be thirsty”, but with ib “heart” (Stauder 2013: 36–37).
Ex. 10
[...] \( \text{ib}=\text{k} (\text{ib} \text{\textsuperscript{\textendash}ib}) \) \( \text{wrt} \)
think=2SG greaty
\( \text{rd-in} \) \( \text{hm}=f \) \( \text{lw-t} \) [...]
give-PST Majesty=3SG come-3BJV
“[...]'You think greatly.'
His Majesty caused [...] to come [...]” (Kaiemtenenent, B 10–11 = Urk. I 182.1–2)

Ex. 11
\( \text{ib}=\text{i} (\text{ib} \text{\textsuperscript{\textendash}ib}) \) is \( \text{rf} \)
horizons COP with Shesmetet think=1SG PTCL PTCL
“(– 'What are those two towns, O magician?')
– 'It is the horizons and Shesemtet, at least I think so.'
– ('You know those two towns, O magician?')” (CT V 113j-k T1C [= Spell 397])

1.4 Summary

As discussed, \( \text{ib} \) is necessarily verbal when it combines with marks of verbal inflection (§1.1), when it introduces a complement clause (§1.2), and when a verbal analysis is required for the segment in which \( \text{ib} \) occurs to be predicative (§1.3). The above discussion leads to two observations:

– In all the above securely verbal instances of \( \text{ib} \), \( \text{ib} \) expresses meanings along the lines of “think, surmise, etc.”, i.e., it has epistemic modality;
– In all the above securely verbal instances of \( \text{ib} \), \( \text{ib} \) is written \( \text{ib} \) (with minor variants) — never logographically as \( ? \); what is more, all instances of \( \text{ib} \) written \( \text{ib} \) support an epistemic reading.

This establishes the existence of a verb \( \text{ib} \) “think, surmise”. Generalizing, this further implies that in cases when none of the morpho-syntactic diagnostics used above applies, this verb \( \text{ib} \) “think, surmise” can be identified based on its distinctive spelling \( \text{ib} \) (with minor variants).

This verb \( \text{ib} \) “think, surmise” is documented from the time when continuous texts were first written down, by the Fifth Dynasty (Ex. 10), then continuously through the Middle Kingdom (Ex. 1, 8, 11) until early Ramesside times (Ex. 2–6, 9). The following spellings are documented; no diachronic trends are discernible:

– \( \text{ib} \) (Ex. 10, Old Kingdom; Ex. 8, Middle Kingdom; Ex. 3, New Kingdom), var. (Ex. 4, NK);
– \( \text{ib} \) (Ex. 1, MK; Ex. 2, 6/9, NK);
– \( \text{ib} \) (Ex. 11, MK; Ex. 5, NK).

As the script expresses, the epistemic verb \( \text{ib} \) was conceived of as distinct from the noun \( \text{ib} \) “heart”: the spelling of the verb does not ever include the iconic representation of the heart. An altogether different question is whether the verb \( \text{ib} \) and the noun \( \text{ib} \) “heart” are in fact etymologically related. The possibility for such a relationship is given by the Egyptian cultural encyclopedia, in which the heart was conceived of as the locus of intellectual activity, among other things (below, §2.3.1; §5).

2 The volitional construction \( \text{ib}=\text{f r sdm} \) “he wishes/wants to hear”

Turning to \( \text{ib}=\text{f r sdm} \), various arguments imply an analysis of this construction as based on the situational predicate construction, with the noun \( \text{ib} \) “heart” filling the
subject slot and the prepositional phrase \( r sdm \) “to listen” serving as the predicate (§2.1). The distribution of the construction across time and text genres is discussed in turn (§2.2). To conclude, \( ib=fr sdm \) is considered in relation to other idioms with \( ib \), among which the tightly related \( ib=fr NOUN \) (§2.3).

2.1 \( ib=fr sdm \) as a non-verbal construction

The non-verbal nature of \( ib=fr sdm \) is most readily identified in Late Egyptian (§2.1.1). Some of these arguments, as well as other ones, also apply to earlier stages of Egyptian, demonstrating that the non-verbal analysis holds for these as well (§2.1.2).

2.1.1 In Late Egyptian

In Late Egyptian, four arguments, all individually sufficient, establish the non-verbal nature of the construction \( ib=fr sdm \).\(^{21}\)

– 1/ When the participant who is the experiencer of the desire is expressed by a full noun, the full noun is introduced by \( n \) in Late Egyptian \((ib \ n \ r sdm, \not*ib \ N \ r sdm)\).

E.g.:

\[
\text{Ex. 12} \quad \text{ir-iw} \quad \text{ib} \quad n \quad R2 \quad r \quad iy-t \quad iw=f \quad [...] \\
\quad \text{COND heart of R2 ALL come-INF FUT=3MSG} \\
\quad \text{“If Ramesses II wants to come, he will [...]”} \\
\quad \text{(Hittite Treaty [K] 18= KRI II 228.9–10)}
\]

\[
\text{Ex. 13} \quad \text{ist} \quad \text{ib} \quad n \quad p^3-r^c \quad r \quad dl-t \quad t\beta \quad i\beta wt \quad n \quad swth \\
\quad \text{Q,IRR heart of Pre ALL give-INF ART function to Seth} \\
\quad \text{“Would Pre ever want to give the function to Seth?”} \\
\quad \text{(Horus and Seth 1.12–2.1 = LES 38.8–9)}
\]

If \( ib \) were a verb in this construction, it should have been followed by its full noun subject directly. This demonstrates that the syntax of the segment \( ib \ n \ N \) is nominal (“the heart of N”), without any predicative link. The predication is therefore between \( ib \ n \ N \) and \( r sdm \) \([ib=f / ib \ n \ N] ++ \text{SUBJECT} \ [r sdm] ++ \text{PREDICATE}: \text{literally “his heart is towards hearing”}\). The overall construction \( ib=fr sdm \) is accordingly non-verbal.

– 2/ Late Egyptian has only two independent forms of the \( sdm=f \), the past/accomplished \( sdm=f \) and the subjunctive \( sdm=f \). The construction \( ib=fr sdm \), for its part, is broadly associated with relative present tense, deriving its temporal profile from the context. \( lb \) in \( ib=fr sdm \) can therefore not be an inflectional form of the verb in Late Egyptian.

– 3/ The construction is negated by \( bn \). In Late Egyptian, this implies an analysis of the construction as a situational predicate construction:\(^{22}\)

\[^{21}\text{See Polis (2009a: 274–75 & 2009b: 210, n. 26). To the four arguments mentioned here, one can add the analogous instances of } ib=fr \text{ functioning as the subject of an adverbial predicate } hr + \text{INFINITIVE. See the discussion below in §2.3.1.}\]

\[^{22}\text{In Late Egyptian, } bn \text{ is also the negation of the subjunctive, an inflected form of the verb. However, the negation } bn sdm=f \text{ has a strong modal meaning (“it is impossible for him to hear” or the like) that can be ruled out for the negated examples of the construction } bn \ lb=fr sdm.\]
Ex. 14

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Q} & \quad \text{NEG heart} = 2 \text{MSG} \quad \text{ALL give-INF ART boat} \\
\text{“If you do not want to give the boat, (write to your wife so that she gives the 80 debens of copper ...)”} \\
\text{(P. Cairo CG 58056 ro 8 = KRI III 255.9–10)}
\end{align*}
\]

Ex. 15

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{but COND NEG heart of} \quad \text{PN ALL go-INF} \\
\text{“But if PN does not want to go, (he will let his army and his chariotry go, that they kill his enemy.)”} \\
\text{(Hittite Treaty [K], 13 = KRI II 228.5–6)}
\end{align*}
\]

– 4/ \(ib=f\) r sDm is once found in the subject slot of a qualifying predicate construction (\(nfr\) sw: Ex. 16). It is also found once in the object slot after a verb (Ex. 17). In both constructions, \(ib=f\) is a noun phrase on which \(r\) sDm depends. This implies that \(ib=f\) associated with volitional semantics and followed by \(r\) sDm is more generally a noun phrase, in \(ib=f\) r sDm like in the two examples below:

Ex. 16

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{small heart} = 3 \text{PL ALL destroy-INF=3MSG SBRD NEG come-COMPL break} \\
\text{“Their desire to destroy it is small, since the break did not come yet.”} \\
\text{(Satirical Letter, P. Anastasi I ro 17.1-2 = Fischer-Elfert 1983: 118)}
\end{align*}
\]

Ex. 17

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ignore=2MSG heart=2MSG ALL live} \\
\text{“Did you forget your desire to live, (do you prefer death over good health)?”} \\
\text{(O. Gardiner 320 ro 6 [= O. DeM 1595, 2–3] = HO 97.2)}
\end{align*}
\]

2.1.2 In Earlier Egyptian

Earlier Egyptian has a broader variety of sDm=f’s, so the second of the above criteria cannot be made to apply. Negative occurrences of the construction are not documented in Earlier Egyptian, so the third criterion cannot be made to apply either. Nor is \(ib=f\) r sDm documented in the subject slot of the \(nfr\) sw construction, so the fourth criterion is also in default.

However, various other considerations can help establish that the non-verbal analysis of \(ib=f\) r sDm holds in Earlier Egyptian, as in Late Egyptian:

- 1/ Assuming that the construction was verbal in earlier times, it must have been reanalyzed as non-verbal by Late Egyptian. No path or motivation for the hypothesized change can be named. (Productive diachronic connections between non-verbal constructions, and particularly such based on the situational predicate construction, on the one hand, and verbal ones, on the other hand, are observed in many languages, including Earlier Egyptian itself. These typically go from the former to the latter, not the other way around, for example \(\text{NP } hr\) sDm and \(\text{NP } r\) sDm, both grammaticalized from the situational predicate construction (the former as a progressive [lit. “he is on hearing” > “he is hearing”], the latter as a future [lit. “he is directed towards hearing” > “he will hear”]). If \(ib=f\) r sDm were originally verbal, to become

---

23 See the discussion of this example in Kruchten (1994: 102). On the absence of \(r\) for introducing the infinitive, see §4.1 below.

24 Alternatively, \(ib=f\) r nh could be interpreted as a bare complement clause after the verb \(hm\) (“did you forget (that) you want to live?”). If so, the example would not be an illustration of the argument made under 4/.
non-verbal in Late Egyptian, a reverse type of development would have to be posited, without there being any evidence to back this up.)

– 2/ If $ib=f\text{rsdm}$ were verbal, $\text{rsdm}$ would be part of the argument structure of the hypothesized verb $ib$. In Earlier Egyptian, prepositional phrases can be part of the argument structure of verbs, thus $r\text{NP}$ itself with verbs of oriented motion (expressing the GOAL), yet not in general and not with verbs of emotion or desire, such as a supposedly verbal $ib$ “wish, want”; compare, for example, the direct object syntax of $mri$ “wish” or $3bi$ “desire”. This demonstrates that $r\text{NP}$ can only be the predicate in a situational predicate construction.

– 3/ In earlier stages of Earlier Egyptian (down to the Twelfth Dynasty), the construction $ib=f\text{rsdm}$ is apparently documented only once with a full noun participant:

Ex. 18 $iw\text{ }b\text{ik-im} \ [ib]\text{=}f\text{ }r\text{ }r\text{h} \text{shr nb n nb }c\text{.w.s}(\ldots)$

COMPL PTCL servant-there heart=3MSG ALL learn plan any of Lord L.P.H.

“But the servant-there precisely wants to learn about any plan of the Lord L.P.H.” (P. UCL 32205 ro 9–10 = Collier & Quirke 2002: 120–21)$^{26}$

In Twelfth Dynasty Middle Egyptian, this construction is formally ambiguous: in isolation, $b\text{ik-im} \ ib=f$ could be analyzed as verbal, as an instance of the unmarked unaccomplished SUBJECT–$sdm=f_{AGR}$ (essentially a relative present tense, commonly with habitual or general imperfective readings). It could also be analyzed as non-verbal with the possessor, here $b\text{ik-im}$, regularly anticipated before an inalienably possessed entity, such as a body part, here $ib$: $N_i \text{BODY}_\text{PART}=\text{POSS}_i$. That the latter analysis is correct is demonstrated by later occurrences of the construction in Middle Egyptian, in which the syntax of inalienably possessed entities has aligned to the syntax of non-inalienably possessed entities ($N\text{ }n\text{ }N$). The earliest occurrence is from the depths of the Second Intermediate Period, followed by further occurrences in the Eighteenth Dynasty:

Ex. 19 [...] $\text{wnt}^2 \text{ib} \text{n }hm=f\text{ }c\text{.w.s} \text{r }tr-t$

COMPL heart of Majesty=3MSG L.P.H ALL do-INF

$mnw \text{ }n \text{inn}-r^\circ \text{[\ldots]}$

monument for Amun-Re

“[…] that His Majesty L.P.H. wanted to make a monument for Amun-Re […]”

(Seneferibre Senwosret IV’s Karnak Stela (late D.16?29), 1–2 = HHT 141)

Ex. 20 $[iw\text{ ib} \text{n }hm=i] \text{r }tr-t \text{sp nfr }\text{(\ldots)}$

COMPL heart of Majesty=1SG ALL make-INF occasion good (\ldots)

“My Majesty wants to make a good occasion (\ldots)”

(Thutmosis III’s Inscription of the 7th Pylon = Urk. IV 181.17)$^{30}$


26 For the restoration, see Collier & Quirke (2002: 120); Brose (2014: §348).

27 With another subject-initial construction, compare, e.g., $iw\text{ }b\text{ik-im} \text{li }ds=f$ (COMPL PTCL servant-there come:STAT self=3MSG “The servant-there could hardly have come” (P. UCL 32203 ro 6 = Collier & Quirke 2002: 114–15 [translation of Collier & Quirke]).

28 E.g., also with $ib$, $wn-in \text{ }hm=f \text{ib=f }w3-w \text{r }dwt \text{hr=s }$ (AUX.PST Majesty=3MSG heart=3MSG fall-STAT to evil on=3FSG) “His Majesty’s heart fell into a bad mood about it” (Cheops’ Court 9.12 = Blackman 1988: 12.3).

This change — from *iw n ib=f r sdm* (Ex. 18) to *iw ib n r sdm* (Ex. 19–21) — is of course only a reflection of a broader change in the syntax of inalienably possessed entities (from \( N_i \text{BODY}_\text{PART}=\text{POSS} \) to \( N n N \)), not a change specific to the construction here under discussion. Yet it demonstrates that the syntax of the latter had been non-verbal all along.

### 2.1.3 Summary

Based on the above discussion, the construction *ib=f r sdm* can be analyzed as non-verbal, and more precisely as based on the situational predicate construction. The verbal event in the infinitive implies an agent (compare the events in the examples above and below, e.g., *iri “do”, rdj “cause, give”, m’t “see”, etc.). For obvious semantic reasons, the participant who is the experiencer of the wish or desire is animate. The construction expresses volitive agent-oriented modal semantics:

\[
\text{NP}_{\text{SUBJECT}} \text{AP}_{\text{PRED}} \text{NOUN}_{\text{POSS}}
\]

**Fig. 1. The construction *ib=f r sdm***

The construction is unrestricted as to the syntactic environments in which it can occur. Occurrences in the first person are by far the most common, but the construction is documented with other persons as well. The skew towards the first person, the speaker, reflects the agent-oriented volitive semantics of the construction.

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30 The restoration is certain in view of the parallel formulation in *Urk. IV 181.11*, with a *ib=f r NOUN* construction (quoted below as Ex. 43); e.g., Shirun-Grumach (1993: 110–11).
32 Agent-oriented modality in general is defined by Bybee et al. (1994: 177) as reporting “the existence of internal and external conditions on an agent with respect to the completion of the action expressed in the main predicate.” It covers the conceptual domains of obligation/necessity, ability, promise and willingness/desire. The *volitive* agent-oriented modality — which is at the core of this paper and relates to willingness and desire — “reports the existence of internal volitional conditions in the agent with respect to the predicate action” (Bybee et al. 1994: 178).
In the semantic field of volitive agent-oriented modalities, the construction $ib=f\ r\ sdm$ is the neutral and most frequent expression for willingness, a modality that can be described as internal to the grammatical subject [+INTERNAL] and over which (s)he has some control [+CONTROL]. In this same semantic field, other verbs express more specific types of wishes or desires, e.g., $3bi$ “to desire” ([+INTERNAL]&[−CONTROL]) or $mr$ “to love → to wish”, and later $w\ h\ i$ “to search → to wish → to love”.\footnote{A preliminary discussion in relation to complementation is found in Polis (2009b: 210–19).}

The non-verbal analysis of $ib=f\ r\ sdm$ is also consistent with the logographic writing of $ib$ in this construction (⟨⟩), contrasting with just as consistently standing for the epistemic verb $ib$ “think, surmise” (§1). The graphic contrast thus neatly mirrors the semantic contrast (volitional vs. epistemic) and the syntactic one (a noun in a non-verbal construction vs. a verb). In addition, the spelling $ib$ of $ib$ in $ib=f\ r\ sdm$ demonstrates, and no doubt further supported, the ancient awareness that the construction included the noun $ib$ “heart”.

2.2 Distribution of $ib=f\ r\ sdm$ in the record: genre and time

$ib=f\ r\ sdm$ is documented across all types of texts, and therefore appears to be unrestricted as to genre or register. Examples are found in:

- so-called Reden und Rufe (i.e. the short segments of reported speech accompanying pictorial scenes in private tombs):
  
  Ex. 22 \[\text{wn} \ t_n \ \text{iw} \ \text{ib} (=i) \ r \ \text{dm}^3 \ \text{hms}\]
  
  hurry:IMP 2PL COMPL heart=1SG ALL tie:IMP
  
  “Please hurry up, for I want to tie (them). Sit!”
  
  (Tomb of Mehu, Saqqara = Altenmüller 1998: pl. 22b)

- business letters, in the Middle Kingdom (Ex. 18), in the early Eighteenth Dynasty (Ex. 23, below), and in Ramesside times (Ex. 14):
  
  Ex. 23 \[\text{in} \ \text{iw}=k \ \text{mi}\ \text{s}\ s \ \text{mk} \ \text{ib}=i \ r \ \text{m}\ 3\ n=k \ \text{wr} \ \text{sp}-2\]
  
  Q SBRD=2MSG as all_right look heart=1SG ALL see to=2MSG greatly twice
  “Are you doing all right? Look, I really want to see you!”\footnote{For the translation of $m\ 3\ n$ ANIMATE as “to see someone” instead of “to look after someone” (e.g., Winand 1992: 69), see, e.g., the graffito of the tomb of Pere, l. 9 (= Gardiner 1928: pl. 5).}
  
  (P. Louvre E 3230 ro 5 = Peet 1926: pl. 35; temp. Hatshepsut)

  Compare with the expression $imy \ ib=k \ r$ INFINITIVE “do what you can (literally “give your heart") in order to do something/focus on doing something” in lines 8 and 8–9.

- Middle Kingdom literary texts (in the passive, also Ex. 51):
  
  Ex. 24 \[\text{ir} \ \text{wnn} \ \text{ib}=f \ r \ \text{r}\ 3\ h\ 3\]
  
  TOPZ to_be:NMLZ heart.3MSG ALL fight
  
  $imy \ dd=f \ \text{ht}\ r\ ib=f$
  
  CAUS.IMP say:SBJV=3MSG what_he_wants
  “If he wants to fight, let him say what he wants.” (Siuhe B 125 = Koch 1990: 49)

- literarizing compositions of the Eighteenth Dynasty (Ex. 21);

- Late Egyptian narrative literature (numerous examples, also Ex. 13):
Ex. 25  hr  ib=i  r  di-t  iry=k  n=f  nḥt
and  heart=1SG  ALL  CAUS-INF  do:SBJV=2MSG  for=3MSG  champion
“(…) and I want you to be a champion for him.”

*(Horus and Seth 6.11–12 = LES 45.6–7)*

Ex. 26  iw=f  in  w=f-n  ḫnw  ḫ Cord.PST=3MSG  bring  one  vessel  large
iw  ib=f  r  lḥ3  prw[t]  ḫnw  SBRD  heart=3MSG  ALL  take  seeds  many
“(…) and he fetched a large vessel, since he wanted to take a lot of seeds.”

*(The Tale of Two Brothers 3.3 = LES 12.3-4)*

– Ramesside love poetry (numerous examples, 35 below, Ex. 27–28), and the related
genre of personal piety (below, Ex. 29, a prayer to Amun; in prayers, further
Ex. 52–54): 36

Ex. 27  ib=i  r  wnm  s3-kw  m  rmw
heart=1SG  ALL  eat  feed_up-STAT:1SG  with  fishes
“I want to eat so as to be sated with fishes.”

(O. DeM 1657 ro 1 = Posener 1980: pl. 75)

Ex. 28  ib=i  r  šm-t  ḫr  p3[y=s]  ḫn]-n-wšb
heart=1SG  ALL  go-INF  on  her(?)  answering_song
“I want to go following her(?) answering song.”

(P. Chassinat III ro 1.x+2 = Barbotin 1999: 8)

Ex. 29  ib=i  r  mAA=k  nb  šwb
heart=1SG  ALL  see=2MSG  lord  Persea
“(He says:) ‘I want to see you, Lord of the Persea.’” 37

(TT 139, Tomb of Pere, Graffito, 6 = Gardiner 1928: pl. 5)

– royal inscriptions of the Second Intermediate Period (Ex. 19), of the transition to
the New Kingdom (Ex. 30, in an innovative register with literarizing tendencies),
of the early Eighteenth Dynasty (Ex. 20), of Amaran times (Ex. 31, in an
innovative register), of Ramesside times (Ex. 12), and of the transition to the
Twenty-First Dynasty (Ex. 32, in Traditional Egyptian):

Ex. 30  tw=i  r  ḫn  ḫn=f  sd=i  ḫt=f
PRS=1SG  ALL  engage:INF  with=3MSG  crush:SBJV=1SG  belly=3MSG
ib=i  r  nḥm  kmt  ḫw-t  c3mw
heart=1SG  ALL  protect:INF  Egypt  beat-INF  Asiatics
“I am to engage with him so as to crush his belly,
I want to protect Egypt and to beat the Asiatics.”

*(Kamose Inscriptions, T. Carnarvon I 4–5 = HHT 1 84)*

This occurrence documents the possibility of coordinated predicates, the second without
r (thus  ib=f  r  sḏm  sḏm). In terms of register, note the occurrence of  ib=f  r  sḏm  alongside
the innovative construction  tw=i  r  ḫn, an exploratory future construction. 38 Seman-
tically, note the sequence: exploratory Future (tw=i  r  ḫn)–subjunctive (sd=i), then  ib=i  r
nḥm ... ḫw ...
The construction \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) is thus continuously documented from the Old Kingdom on (Ex. 22) through the Middle Kingdom (Ex. 18, 21, 49), the Second Intermediate Period (Ex. 19, 30), the Eighteenth Dynasty (Ex. 20–21, 23, 31, 49), Ramesside times (passim), and down to the Twenty-First Dynasty (Ex. 32). The isolated Old Kingdom occurrence of the construction is from a “Reden und Ruf”, but this cannot be taken as indicative that the construction was then associated with lower registers: the nature of the Old Kingdom written record is of a sort that the construction, given its semantics, would not otherwise have come to order anyway. The majority of occurrences are from Ramesside times, but this need not mean that \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) would then have become more common: the Ramesside written record is not only generally larger than the record of previous periods, it is also more internally diverse, including types of texts, such as love poetry and the related “genre” of personal piety, in which \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) is naturally more common than elsewhere.

2.3 \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) in the broader linguistic context of Egyptian

2.3.1 \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) among other idioms with \( \text{ib} \)

In the construction \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \), \( \text{ib} \) is associated with the expression of agent-oriented volitive modality. \( \text{ib} \) “heart” is a central concept in the Egyptian cultural encyclopedia,\(^39\) as is reflected for example in word-plays on \( \text{ib} \) in Middle Egyptian literature\(^40\) and more broadly in the language itself. \( \text{ib} \) is indeed found in a variety of other Egyptian idioms, reflecting how the heart is conceived of as the locus of an individual’s intelligence,\(^41\) feelings,\(^42\) and desire/wish.\(^43\) Regarding the last, compare the following selection of idioms:

39 Nyord (2009: 55–143); Toro Ruenda (2003); Piankoff (1930).
40 E.g., Stauder (2013: 36–37); see also Ex. 8 above.
41 E.g., \( \text{ib tm-w n sht-n=f sf} \) (heart be_complete-STAT NEG recall-PST=3MSG yesterday) “The mind is at an end, it cannot remember yesterday” (Ptahhotep 16 P = Žába 1956: 16); \( \text{in ib=i shtnt st=i} \) (FOC heart=1SG promote:PTCP place=1SG) “It was my intelligence which promoted my position” (Leyde V.4 [Wepwawet], 6 = Boeser 1909: 3 and pl. IV); after FCD 14. Further, e.g., \( \text{iri m ib=f} \) “conceive in one’s heart” (AL 79.0155); see also Ex. 33 below.
42 E.g., \( \text{ptyr ffr pr ib} \) (what PTCL DEM heart) “What is this mood?” (Cheops’ Court 9.13 = Blackman 1988: 12.4); \( \text{ir=rf=t pr ib hr-m} \) (do~IPFV=2SG DEM heart why) “Why are you in this mood?” (Cheops’ Court 12.21–22 = Blackman 1988: 17.2–3); after FCD 15. Also, e.g., \( \text{wn-in nfr st hr ib=f} \) (AUX-PST good 3FSG on heart=3MSG) “And they were perfect on his heart” (a literary topos,
“what is in his mind” > “what he wishes, desires” (very common, e.g., Ex. 51, see also §4.3);
- *ir i hr=f* (act according to heart=3 MSG) “to act according to one’s desire”; 44
- *rdl m hr=f* (put in heart=3 MSG) “to determine”; 45
- *nh m hr=k* (what in heart=2 MSG) “what do you want?”; 46
- *n-ih-n* (for heart of) “in order to”; 47 etc.

The heart is more generally the locus of agency. 49 *ib* is thus found as the subject of verbs expressing intellectual activity (Ex. 33–34) or wish/desire (Ex. 35–36). In the examples from the Ramesside period (Ex. 34, 36), the object of the heart’s activity is introduced by allative *r*, while it is introduced directly in the earlier ones (Ex. 33, 35):

Ex. 33  
\[ k3-t \ hr=i \ pw \ hprt \ m \ \epsilon=i \]  
reflect–IPFV:PTCP-FSG heart=1 SG COP occur:PTCP with arm=2 MSG  
“It is whatever my heart ponders that happens through my arm.”  
(Year 16 Semna Stela [Berlin 1157], 5–6 = Les 83.23)

Ex. 34  
\[ bnt \ hr=i \ r \ m33 \ nfrw=s \ iw=i \ hms-kw \ m-hnw=s \]  
think heart=1 SG ALL see:INF beauty=3 FSG SBRD=1 SG sit-STAT:1 SG in=3 FSG  
“My heart was contemplating the idea of seeing her beauty, while staying at her place.”  
(P. Chester Beatty I vso C 2.4–5 = Mathieu 1996: pl. 2)

Ex. 35  
\[ iw \ 3b-n \ hr=i \ m33 \ ssW \ p3wt \ tpt \ nt \ tm \]  
COMPL desire-PST heart=1 SG see:INF writings primordial first of Atum  
“My Majesty’s heart desired to see the primeval writings of Atum.”  
(Neferhotep’s Great Abydos Stela 2–3 = HHBT I 21)

Ex. 36  
\[ 3b{b} \ hr=i \ r \ m33 \ km3-n=i \]  
desire-PST heart=1 SG ALL see:INF create:REL-PST=1 SG  
“(…) for my heart had wished to see what I created.”  
(P. Turin 1993 ro 3–4 = Pleyte & Rossi 1869–1876: pl. 133)

Coming closer to the construction here under discussion, *ib* can further be the subject of constructions in which no verb expresses intellectual activity or desire. In these cases, such semantics are carried by *ib* itself. 50 Thus, expressing intellectual activity (Ex. 37), control (Ex. 38), or agency more generally (Ex. 39–40):

50 In addition to the constructions discussed in this section, one should mention the expression *ib r=k/T/tn r NOUN* (heart ALL=2 MSG/FSG/PL ALL NOUN) “pay attention to NOUN” (see, e.g., Andreu & Cauville 1978: 11), which has been interpreted by Sweeney (2001: 46) as an adverbial predication with *ib* functioning as subject. Depending on the context, this expression can have both the positive (“watch out for”) and negative (“be chary about”) connotations that are attached to English “pay attention to”. The noun slot of this expression can also be filled by an infinitive: *ib*
The Verb *ib* and the Construction *ib=f r sdm*  

2.3.2 *Ib=f r NOUN*

A construction *ib=f r NOUN*, similarly with volitional semantics, is also documented. The construction *ib=f r INFINITIVE* is therefore only a subtype of the construction *ib=f r NOUN*:

Ex. 41  

(...) *smnh* *mi* *ntt* *ib* *r=s*  

perfect:PTCP like REL:FSG heart ALL=3FSG  

“(...) who perfects according to the desire for it”  

(Louvre C 167 [*temp. Senwosret I*], 8 = Simpson 1974: pl. X, ANOC 4.1)

A rare construction in which *ib* is not followed by a noun phrase, making the construction quasi-impersonal.

---

51 For *ib=f r hrp* in the Eighteenth Dynasty, further Urk. IV 75.2. Also in the Nineteenth Dynasty, e.g., KRI II 327.9; 346.9 (*AL* 79.0155). On the related expression *hrp-ib*, probably meaning “one whom his heart directs”, Stauder (in press: n. 85).

---

Note the allative *r ir-t* (...). In Urk. IV 750.6, the same expression is remarkably with the other expression for “heart”, *h3ti* (*h3ti=i Hr xrp=i*). The contrast is of registers: while roughly contemporaneous in time, Ex. 37 is from a very elevated and recherché register, while Urk. IV 750.6 is from Thutmosis III’s Annals, a composition that more generally accommodates a high number of innovative expressions.
Ex. 42

\[ mk ib=i \quad r \quad nw \quad [n?] \quad nsw \quad n \quad dd=s \]

look! heart=1SG ALL time of king of say=3FSG

“Look, I crave for the time of the king that she mentioned.”

(Sporting King C1.9-10 = Caminos 1956: pl. 11)

Ex. 43

\[ d=i \quad rh=tn \quad r-ntt \quad ib \quad n \quad hm=i \quad r \quad mnjh \quad [...] \]

CAUS:SBJV=1SG know=2PL COMPL heart of Majesty=1SG ALL beneficial

“I want you to know that my Majesty wants beneficial things [...]”

(Thutmosis III’s Inscription of the 7th Pylon = Urk. IV, 181.10–11)

Ex. 44

\[ n3 \quad ihw \quad m-di=k \quad r-dr=w \quad sp-sn \]

ART oxen by=2SG all=3PL twice

\[ t[\text{iy}] \quad n=\{i\} \quad p[\text{fy}] \quad nty \quad ib=k \quad r=f \]

take:IMP to=2MSG ART REL heart=2MSG ALL=3SG

“Absolutely all the oxen are at your disposal:

take for you the one you want!”

(The Blinding of Truth 8.7–9.1 = LES 34.16–35.1)

Ex. 45

\[ hr \quad iw \quad ib=k \quad r \quad p[\text{fy}] \quad lh \quad (...) \]

and SBRD heart=2MSG to ART cow

“whereas you want the cow (...)”

(P. Anastasi V 13.4 = LEM 63.2–3)

Ex. 46

\[ inn \quad ib \quad n \quad p[\text{fy}] \quad rmt \quad r=t \]

if heart of this man to=2FSG

\[ imy \quad t[\text{fy}]=f \quad r \quad t \quad knbt \quad irm \quad t[\text{fy}]=f \quad hmt \quad (...) \]

CAUS:IMP enter:SBJV=3MSG ALL ART court with POSS.ART=3MSG wife

“If this man wants you,

let him enter the court with his wife (...)”

(P. BM EA 10146 vso 8–9 = LRLC pl. 19)

Ex. 47

\[ iv=i \quad qst=f \quad m \quad [i\text{t}] \quad n \quad nbw \quad (...) \]

FUT=1SG furnish=3MSG with barley with gold

\[ nk\text{t} \quad nb \quad nty \quad ib=f \quad r=w \quad (\text{thing every REL heart=3MSG to=3PL}) \]

“...thing every REL heart=3MSG to=3PL

“I will provide him with wheat, with gold (... with) everything he wants.”

(P. BM EA 10587 vso 37–42 = OAD XIV)

This construction \( ib=f \quad r \quad NOUN \) is sometimes followed by a subjunctive form, which refers to the event to be performed in relation to the desired entity, whether inanimate (Ex. 48) or animate (Ex. 49):

Ex. 48

\[ ib=tn \quad r \quad lh \quad iry-tw \quad n=tn \]

heart=2PL ALL what do:SBJV-PASS to=2PL

\[ ib=n \quad r \quad twf \]

heart=1PL ALL meat

“...What do you want to be done for you?”

– ‘We would like some meat.’ ”

(O. DeM 1640 ro x+4 = Posener 1980: 66)

52 Translation: Caminos (1956: 34).

53 \( Mnjh \) has been interpreted as a verb, in which case this would be an instance of \( ib=f \quad r \quad sdm \), thus, Uljas (2007: 79) "(...) that My Majesty’s mind will be fixed ("to build this temple’ or the like’); Shirun-Grumach (1993: 110) "(...) daß es der Wunsch meiner Majestät ist, trefflich zu machen”. In the former translation, the passive/stative orientation is not to be found in the Egyptian; the latter translation, for its part, would imply a causative \( smnh \). That \( mnjh \) is not a verb here is also demonstrated by the plural strokes in the text: these signal a nominal plural formation. Similarly already Sethe (1914: 85) “der Wunsch meiner Majestät ist auf Wohltaten (gerichtet)”.

The Verb *ib* and the Construction *ib=f r sDm*

2.3.3 *ib=f r sDm* not expressing a wish or desire

In one passage, the formally identical construction *ib=f r sDm* does not express the wish or the desire:

Ex. 50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>ib</em></th>
<th><em>hm=kJkbb njns</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>heart</td>
<td>Majesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hn=sn hnt m-hd m-hnt</em></td>
<td>cool:INF at see:INF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>iw=kJkbb hns</em></td>
<td>rowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPL</td>
<td>heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Your Majesty’s heart will be cool at seeing how they row a rowing trip up and down! (…) For your heart will be cool through it.”

*(Cheops’ Court 5.3–7 = Blackman 1988: 5.14–6.2)*

This construction differs from volitional *ib=f r sDm* on two accounts. The verb *kbb* “become cool” precludes an agentive participant exerting control over the event, which makes a volitive reading of the construction impossible. Furthermore, this requires a reading of *ib* in Ex. 50 with its fully lexical meaning, denoting the body part “heart”.54 The construction *ib=f r sDm* has therefore here a predictive meaning akin to the one expressed by the future construction *iw=f r sDm* from the Middle Kingdom onwards.55

3 *ib.tw r sDm*: the passive counterpart of a non-verbal construction

3.1 Occurrences

The “passive” counterpart of *ib=f r sDm* is *ib.tw r sDm* (for a qualification of this notion of a “passive” of a non-verbal construction, below §3.2). *ib.tw r sDm* can have impersonal reference, the agent being left unexpressed because it is non-specific or irrelevant:

Ex. 51

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>ksw pw hdd-w hwrw</em></th>
<th>narrow COP destroy-PTCP wretch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ib-tw ir-t ntt</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heart-PASS ALL do-INF REL:FSG in heart=2MSG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“One the one who destroys a wretch is a difficult person; One wishes to do what you wish.”56

*(Ptahhotep 81-82 P = Žába 1956: 23)*

---

54 For other aspects of the grammar of this passage, Stauder (2013: 123–24; 2014a: 88).
55 See Grossman at al. (this volume) where a similar diagnostic is used.
56 This passage is near-universally segmented otherwise, as *ksw pw hddw hwrw-ib | tw r ir-t ntt m ib=k* “The one who destroys the poor-hearted is a difficult person; what you wish will be done.” This traditional segmentation is based on the reading in the Eighteenth Dynasty version of the text (L2), where it is both marked by the verse point and required by the grammar: *ksw pw hdd hwrw-ib sw r ir-t ntt m ib=f* “The one who destroys the poor-hearted is a difficult person; he will do what is
Note the stylistic balancing in the second verse, expressing reciprocity between the addressee’s wish and people’s wishes (\textit{ib-tw r ntt m ib=k}). The triptych of maxims 2–4 (60–83 P: the maxims on disputants, all three beginning with \textit{ir gm=k dišuw m 3r=f} (\ldots”) “If you find a disputant in his hour (\ldots”) is more generally full of \textit{ib}’s, which are disposed in a manner so as to structure the triptych symmetrically.

Ex. 52 \textit{ib-tw r m33 inn}
\begin{quote}
heart-PASS ALL see:INF Amun
“One wants to see Amun!” (Tomb of Nebamun, TT 90, third register from top, on the right = Davies 1923: pl. 21)
\end{quote}

Ex. 53 \textit{ib-tw r m33 i}[h …]
\begin{quote}
heart-PASS ALL see:INF moon
“One wants to see the Moon.”
\end{quote} (\textit{Hymn to the Moon},\textsuperscript{58} O. Gardiner 321 ro 1 = \textit{HO XCVIII}, 4)\textsuperscript{59}

Ex. 54 \textit{ib-tw r m33=f}
\begin{quote}
hear-PASS ALL see:INF=3MSG
“One wants to see him.”\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}
\textit{(O. Berlin P. 9026 ro x+2 = Hierat. Pap. Berlin III, pl. XL)}

In the New Kingdom, \textit{ib.tw r sdm} is also found in reference to the king\textsuperscript{61} (an “honorary passive”: although the referent is perfectly identified, a direct reference to him is avoided for pragmatic reasons\textsuperscript{62}). One can note in these cases the use of the “divine” classifier that bears either on the impersonal pronoun \textit{tw} (Ex. 55) or on the lexeme \textit{ib} (Ex. 56):

Ex. 55 \textit{iw ib=tw ([t]l3g.t.i) r ir=f}
\begin{quote}
SBRD heart-PASS\_DIVINE ALL do=3MSG
“(If there is some delay,) while One wants to do it, (...)”
\end{quote}
\textit{(P. Turin 1882 ro 2.8 = KRI VI 72.9–10)}

\textsuperscript{57} Stauder (in press: §5.2, more broadly §5).
\textsuperscript{58} See Herbin (1982: 238, n. 1).
\textsuperscript{60} This construction, possibly a proper name based on the classifier \textit{([t]l3g.t.i)}, occurs in a lacunary context on the recto of the Berlin ostracon, which is completed by O. Moscow 4478 (Matthieu & Lourié 1929, \textit{non vidi}). On the verso is an early Nineteenth Dynasty copy of the end of the \textit{Teaching of a Man to His Son}, see already Posener (1950: 71–74).
\textsuperscript{61} Polis (2009a: 178).
The Verb *ib* and the Construction *ib=f r sdm*

Ex. 56 (...) *smn-tw pî mnw hr st=f*

establish-PASS ART monument on place=3MSG

*ib²r²n-tw r ptr=f*

heart-PASS ALL see=3MSG be_beautiful-STAT

“(…) so that the monument (viz., the colossus) may be erected in his place —
One wishes to see it beautiful!”

*(Satirical Letter, P. Anastasi I ro 17.2 = Fischer-Elfert 1983: 119)*

Compare with the following example in a letter, also referring to Pharaoh, but
with a third person singular subject:

Ex. 57 *ib²r²n-sic=f r ([habi] r mAA) dl-t bsy=s [...]*

give-INF introduce:SBJV=3MSG

“He wants to let her introduce [...]”

*(P. Turin 167+2087/219-198 ro 3 = KRI VI, 639.16)*

Occurrences are from the Middle Kingdom (Ex. 51), the Eighteenth Dynasty (Ex. 52)
and Ramesside times (Ex. 53–57). Several New Kingdom occurrences are variations
on a formula expressing the desire to see (*ib.tw r mAA*) a divine being (Ex. 52–54). The
partly formulaic nature of the expression is evidenced by the contrast with an expres-
sion of the desire to “see” a monument (Ex. 56: *ib.tw r ptr*): the former has the old
verb *mAA* is used, while the latter has the more contemporary verb *ptr*. Also attested
are expressions of the desire that there be “acting” or “doing” things (*iri*: Ex. 51, 55).

3.2 Analysis: the “passive” of a non-verbal construction

The passive being a verbal category, the construction *ib.tw r sdm* has been taken as
evidence that *ib* in *ib=f r sdm* should be analyzed as a verb. Yet, as discussed, the
construction *ib=f r sdm* is non-verbal (§2.1). One may then be tempted to analyze
*ib.tw r sdm* as an active impersonal construction including the impersonal pronoun *tw*,
historically reanalyzed from the erstwhile exclusively inflectional passive marker *tw*.
In its innovative uses as an impersonal pronoun, *tw* can be found in the
situational predicate construction, a non-verbal construction (Ex. 58):

Ex. 58 *[hsbt] 2’ 3bd l ptr [...]*

year 2’ month 1 winter

*iw=tw m niwt rst m pî bhîn n h∗-m-ḥPt (…)*

SBRD=one in city southern in ART complex of Haemakhet

“One year 2’, the first month of winter, [day …]
when One was in the Southern City in the complex of Haemakhet (…)”

*(hieratic note added to EA 27, from Tushratta to Akhenaten = Urk. IV 1995, 16–17)*

However, the active impersonal pronoun *tw* remains strictly limited to the subject slot,
in non-verbal constructions (Ex. 58) like in verbal ones (Ex. 59–62), including when it is
a morphological component of the new subject pronoun (Ex. 61–62):
Ex. 59 ُهُن=ُهُوُءٌ im wr r ht nbt
AUX-PST=one rejoice-STAT therein much more than thing every
“Then one rejoiced over it exceedingly and more than anything.”
(Ameniseneb, Louvre C12, 17 = HHBT I 9)

Ex. 60 (...) iw iw=tw r mni r hwt-sdm
SBRD FUT=one FUT moor:INF ALL Hutsekhem
“(…) when one will moor at Hutsekhem.”
(P. Berlin 10463 ro 2 = Caminos 1963: pl. VI-VI A)

Ex. 61 hrw nfr tw=tw kb (...)
day good BASE=one cool:STAT
“A good day: one is cool (…”)
(Paheri, pl.3, 3rd register from top, central horizontal inscription = Tylor & Griffith 1894: pl. 7)

Ex. 62 hr mk tw=tw hr ln n=f inw ...
and look! BASE=one PROG bring to=3MSG tribute
“And look, one is bringing him tribute […]”
(Astarte I.x+10 = Collombert & Coulon 2000: 194)

In the construction *ib.tw r sdm*, by contrast, the subject slot is filled by *ib* “heart”, not by *tw*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iv=tw</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>mni (Ex. 60)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FUT=one:SBJ</td>
<td>FUT moor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ib-tw</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>sdm (Ex. 51-54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heart:SBJ-??</td>
<td>ALL hear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ib=f</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>sdm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heart:SBJ=3MSG:POSS</td>
<td>ALL hear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2. *Ib-tw r sdm*

In short, an active impersonal analysis of *ib.tw r sdm* is made more than unlikely by the fact that *tw*, however to be analyzed in this construction, does not fill the subject slot, which is already filled by *ib* “heart”. On the other hand, as discussed first, a straightforward passive analysis of *ib.tw r sdm* would seem impossible as well, in view of the non-verbal syntax of *ib=f r sdm*. One is thus faced with an apparent contradiction:

- *ib=f r sdm* is necessarily analyzed as a non-verbal construction (§2.1);
- yet *tw* in *ib.tw r sdm* must be the passive marker, since an analysis as the active impersonal subject pronoun is ruled out, the subject being *ib* (above).

---

67 There is possibly only a singular exception to this generalization, from a text that dates to the early Twentieth Dynasty, a time somewhat later than the examples discussed above: (...) *r ph=f tw ِsm* (about ART.POSS=one go:INF) “(...) about the fact that one has gone” (P. Salt 124, vso 1.11 [= KRI IV 413, 14]). The construction *ph=f sdm* (ART.POSS=3MSG hear:INF) amounts functionally to a finite periphrasis of the infinitive, and its possibly unique passive counterpart may well be exploratory. This apparently isolated example does not, therefore, speak against the above generalization, that *tw*, when not an inflectional passive morpheme, is an impersonal subject pronoun, and subject pronoun only.
The general condition for passivization in Earlier Egyptian may be recalled at this point. The condition is semantic: to be passivized, the verbal event must have an agent in its semantic representation. For example, taking intransitives, prf “go out” can be passivized (the event implies an agent; Ex. 63), while sDr “sleep” cannot (the event is non-dynamic and does not imply an agent; Ex. 64):

Ex. 63  \[ n \ pr-n-t(w) \ n \ snd=f \]
\[ \text{NEG } \text{go}_{\text{out}} \text{-HAB-PASS for } \text{fear}=3\text{MSG} \]
“There was no going out for fear of them (scil. the troops).”
(Mo’alla II.η.2, Inscription #7 = Vandier 1950: 202)

Ex. 64  \[ sDr \ o \ n=f \ hdr \ r^\text{r} \ nb \]
\[ \text{lie:IPFV} \ [\text{SBJ for}=3\text{MSG be}_{\text{anguished-STAT} \text{day every}} \]
“Because of it one lies anguished every day.”
(Ptahhotep 10 P = Žába 1956: 16)

Agents being defined in their relation to verbal events, the passive is itself an inherently verbal category. Turning back to ib=f r sDm, this is syntactically a non-verbal construction, but its semantics are quasi-verbal: the construction expresses volitive agent-oriented modality. What is more, therefore, the animate participant who is the experiencer of wish or desire in ib=f r sDm is semantically an agent. While syntactically non-verbal, the construction ib=f r sDm thus meets the semantic condition for passivization. In ib.tw r sDm, semantics are seen winning over syntax in making the passivization of a non-verbal construction exceptionally possible.

In descriptive terms, ib.tw r sDm represents an instance of gradient category membership. The active construction ib=f r sDm meets all criteria for being a syntactically non-verbal construction, yet also displays verbal features in its semantics. Given these semantically verb-like features, the construction can be passivized. In accommodating an inflectional passive marker after ib, ib.tw r sDm behaves as if ib — although morpho-syntactically a noun — were verbal. The passive ib.tw r sDm can

69 The condition for passivization (a semantic issue) is independent of the inflectional type of the passive (a morphological one); thus, with the same event, in another morphological passive type, not marked by tw, (...) pr r hnmwt=sn (...) (go_{out}:PASS.PFV ALL wells=3pl.) “(...) their wells have been gone to (...)” (Year 16 Semma Stela [Berlin 1157], 13 = Les 84.10).
70 For this much disputed verse, Stauder (2013: 478–79; also Stauder 2014a: 198, with n. 248). For the zero-subject active construction as providing a counterpart to the passive with events that cannot be passivized on semantic grounds, Stauder (2014a: 198–200; also 76–77 for other counterparts to the passives). The combination of tw with a non-dynamic event (thus sDr.tw as in Neferti 9c: Stauder 2014a: 352, 354), represents a later development, not attested before the late Twelfth Dynasty (Stauder 2014a: 350–53; 2014b: 464–67).
71 See n. 32. To our knowledge a large-scale typological study of expressions of volition is still missing.
72 On syntactic gradience, Aarts 2007a (with Croft 2007 and Aarts 2007b). Succinctly: category membership can be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, in which case an object either belongs to a category, or does not. Category membership can also be defined in terms of a bundle of parameters or criteria: membership is then gradient, depending on whether an object meets all, many, or only some of the criteria for membership. For example, syntactic transitivity is a matter of necessary and sufficient conditions (a verb either has a direct object or has not), while semantic transitivity is a matter of gradience (an event such as “kill” scores higher in semantic transitivity than one such as “drink”, while one such as “know” scores even lower; for Earlier Egyptian, see Stauder 2014a: 288–90, with references).
thus be viewed as making visible the gradience already inherent to the active \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \). In doing so, \( \text{ib.tw r sdm} \) goes one degree further on the nominality–verbality scale.

4 Alternative construals of \( \text{ib} \) as a verb?

Possible evidence from the New Kingdom

In all the examples discussed so far, \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) can be safely analyzed as a non-verbal construction (§2). Given its agent-oriented modal semantics, this non-verbal construction remarkably combines with a marker of passive voice (\(-\text{tw}\)), in a construction analyzed as an instance of gradient category membership (§3). On the other hand, isolated examples may point to a possible reanalysis of \( \text{ib} \) as a verb.

Instances in which the infinitive is not introduced by the allative preposition \( r \) (\( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \)) are occasionally encountered (§4.1), as are instances lacking a coreferential person marking on \( \text{ib} \) in relative clauses (\( \text{INK P3 nty ib}=\text{o r infinitive} \), §4.2). As will be seen, the examples in these two categories do not represent reliable evidence for a verbal reanalysis of \( \text{ib} \).

There are, however, rare examples which do seem to suggest a reanalysis — or, perhaps better, alternative construals — of \( \text{ib} \) as verbal (§4.3). All examples to be discussed in the present section date to the Ramesside or early post-Ramesside period (ca. 1300–1000 BCE), thus to the last period in the documented history of the construction \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) (ca. 2500–1000 BCE).

4.1 \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \): absence of the allative preposition \( r \)

Examples of the construction without the preposition \( r \) occur in several texts of the Ramesside period. These would at first seem to speak against a non-verbal analysis of the construction because of the lack of a proper adverbial phrase (\( r + \text{INFINITIVE} \)), and instead support a verbal interpretation (\( \text{ib} + \text{VERB} \rightarrow \text{SUBJECT} \rightarrow \text{OBJECT} \rightarrow \text{INFINITIVE} \)). There are, however, several other factors that need be taken into consideration, with the result that \( \text{ib}=\text{fr sdm} \) hardly represents solid evidence for a reanalysis of the construction.

First, some of these examples are philologically problematic. The absence of \( r \) can sometimes be accounted for by a line break occurring between \( \text{ib}=\text{SUFFIX} \) and the infinitive, a place where scribes are likely to drop small graphemes:

\[
\text{Ex. 65} \quad \text{ib}=i \quad \text{§m-t m-hnty r iwnw} \\
\hspace{1cm} \text{heart=1SG [LINE BREAK] go-INF southwards ALL Heliopolis} \\
\hspace{1cm} \text{“I want to go southwards to Heliopolis.”}^{73} \hspace{1cm} \text{(P. Anastasi II ro 10.2–3 = LEM 18.10)}
\]

In other examples, the absence of \( r \) can be accounted for as a haplography reflecting phonemic factors, as in the following example before the verb \( \text{rÎ}: \)

\[
\]

---

\( ^{73} \) This example is translated by Caminos (1954: 60) “[m]y heart goes southerly to Heliopolis”, which shows that he analyzed the proposition as a First Present with an omitted preposition \( \text{hr} \).
Ex. 66  iw  ib=s  ṛḥ=f  m ṛḥ  n ṭḥwty
SBRD  heart=3FSG  know:INF=3SGM  with  knowing of male
“For she was willing to know him as one knows a man.”
(P. d’Orbiney ro 3.6 = LES 12.9–10)

Finally, omissions of the preposition occur in a frequent formula of the Late Rames-
side Letters:
Ex. 67  mtntk  pî  nty  ib=w  ptr=k
2MSG  ART  REL  heart=3PL  see:INF=2MSG
“You are the one they want to see.” (P. Genève D 407 ro 15 = LRL 15.1)
Note the abbreviated spelling (LRL 68a.9a-b & LRLC pl. 83) because of the
damaged state of the papyrus. Note the causative construction with a stative verb form.74

Based on the high frequency of the expressions ib=i ṛ ptr=k/sDM a=k “I want to see
you/to hear how you are” in the Ramesside corpus of letters, almost always with the
preposition ṛ, the absence of ṛ may well represent a graphic reduction due to the for-
mulaic nature of the expression.

In another instance, however, this explanation does not apply:
Ex. 68  ib=i  di-t  ṛ=k  [s]ḥ[t][-w]  n[=i]  m-nnt
heart=1SG  CAUS-INF  ba=2MSG  remind-STAT  DAT=2MSG  daily
“I want your ba to be remindful of me daily.”  (P. BN 198 II vso 6 = LRL 68.9)
This example is paleographically difficult (LRL 68a.9a-b & LRLC pl. 83) because of the
damaged state of the papyrus. Note the causative construction with a stative verb form.74

However, Late Egyptian hieratic displays a general tendency to omit the preposition ṛ in writing (most probably because of its vocalic realization, cf. Coptic ⲫ- e-), which
may be relevant to the last example. Instances of ib=f ø sDM do not, therefore, provide
reliable evidence for an ongoing reanalysis of ib as a verb in Ramesside times.

4.2  Pî  nty  ib=ø  r  sDM  ℓ=k “I want to see
you/to hear how you are” in the Ramesside corpus of letters, where the expected suffix pro-
noun of the first person on ib is lacking:
Ex. 69  ink  pî  nty  ib=ø  ṛ  ptr=m  r  sDM  ℓ=m  m-[mnt]
1SG  ART  REL  heart=ø  ALL  see:INF=2PL  ALL  hear:INF  condition=2PL  daily
“I am the one who wants to see you and to hear how you are doing every day.”
(P. Leiden I 369 ro 6 = LRL 1.8–9)

The construction in Ex. 69 differs from the one in Ex. 41 (smnh  mi  ntt  ib  ṛ=s
(perfect:PTCP like REL:FSG heart all=3FSG) “(...) who perfects according to the desire
about it”); ca. 1950 BCE), where the lack of a noun phrase after ib serves to make the
construction impersonal. Unlike in Ex. 41, the writer expresses his personal feeling in
Ex. 69 (ca. 1100 BCE), and a noun phrase after ib, coreferential to the antecedent of
the relative clause, is therefore expected. One may therefore wonder whether such an
omission could be a clue pointing to a reanalysis of ib as a verb. Thus, hypothetically:

4.2  Pî  nty  (hr)  ib  ṛ  ptr=m  (ART  REL  PRS  want  ALL  see:INF=2PL).

74  See Polis forthcoming, with previous literature and additional Late Egyptian examples.
At his point, it is worth noticing that the formula of Ex. 69 is opposite to the one found in other letters of the *Late Ramesside letters*. The stress is usually placed on the addressee whom the writer (Ex. 70–71) or a third party (Ex. 72) wants to see or get news about:

Ex. 70  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mntk} & \quad p^3 \quad nty \quad ib=i & \quad r & \quad ptr=k & \quad sdm & \quad c=k & \quad m-mnt \\
\text{2SG} & \quad \text{ART} & \quad \text{REL} & \quad \text{heart}=1\text{SG} & \quad \text{ALL} & \quad \text{see}=:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{hear}=:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{condition}=2\text{SG} & \quad \text{daily} \\
\text{You are the one whom I want to see and hear news about daily!}
\end{align*}
\]
(P. Griffith ro 5-6 = LRL 12.6–7)

Ex. 71  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mntk} & \quad p^3 \quad nty \quad ib=i & \quad r & \quad sdm & \quad c=k & \quad m-mnt \\
\text{2SG} & \quad \text{ART} & \quad \text{REL} & \quad \text{heart}=1\text{SG} & \quad \text{ALL} & \quad \text{hear}=:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{condition}=2\text{SG} & \quad \text{daily} \\
\text{You are the one whom I want to have news about daily!}
\end{align*}
\]
(P. Bologna 1094 ro 7.5 = LEM 7.4–5)

Ex. 72  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mntk} & \quad p^3 \quad nty \quad ib=s^75 & \quad r & \quad ptr=k & \quad r & \quad sdm & \quad c=k & \quad m-[mnt] \\
\text{2SG} & \quad \text{ART} & \quad \text{REL} & \quad \text{heart}=3\text{SG} & \quad \text{ALL} & \quad \text{see}=:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{hear}=:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{condition}=2\text{SG} & \quad \text{daily} \\
\text{You are the one whom she wants to see, to hear news about daily.}
\end{align*}
\]
(P. Turin 1974+1985 vso 4 = LRL 40.3)

The lack of a coreferential expression in Ex. 69 possibly reflects the fact that the expression is here reversed with respect to the more usual epistolary pattern, which might have led to the omission of the first person pronoun in hieratic, which is not unusual. A verb-like construal of *ib* is less likely.

### 4.3 Instances of *ib* construed verbally?

Unlike *ib=f ø sdm* and *p^3 nty ib=ø r sdm* just discussed (§4.1–2), some passages would seem to suggest that *ib* was at least occasionally construed verbally. In Ex. 73, the allative preposition introducing the infinitive is missing (as in §4.1); in addition, the participant who is the experiencer of volition is not introduced by *n* (as in §2.1.1). The compounding of the two might be interpreted as suggestive of a verbal analysis of *ib* (with *ntr pn* as subject), governing an infinitival phrase directly (*shpr t i m whm-*).

Caution is nonetheless urged, because of the register (Traditional Egyptian, which can be somewhat artificial or heterogeneous in general), and the nature of the possessive relation, relating an inalienably possessed to a divine possessor; the latter, incidentally, begins in *n-(ntr)*, so that the lack of *n* may represent an instance of haplology (<n>^2 ntr). In addition, *r smn* in the second part of the example may be either dependent on the preceding clause (thus expressing purpose: “in order to establish (...))” or on *ib* (“and to establish (...))”); in the latter interpretation, the lack of *r* before *shpr* would be merely coincidental:

Ex. 73  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ist} & \quad rf \quad ib & \quad ntr \quad pn \quad shpr \quad t\bar{i} & \quad m \quad whm-c \\
\text{SBRD} \quad \text{PTCL} & \quad \text{?want}^2 \quad \text{god} \quad \text{DEM} & \quad \text{fashion}:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{land} & \quad \text{anew} \\
\text{r} & \quad \text{smn} & \quad \text{tšw} & \quad t\bar{i} \cdot \text{mrt} \quad \text{hr} & \quad \text{nhtw} \quad \text{wrw} & \quad \text{ALL} & \quad \text{establish}:1\text{INF} & \quad \text{borders} \quad \text{Egypt} & \quad \text{under} & \quad \text{victories} \quad \text{great} \\
\text{Now, this god was willing to fashion the land anew (and) to establish the borders of Egypt through great victories.}^{76}
\end{align*}
\]
(Ramses III’s Second Libyan War [Medinet Habu], 3-4 = KRI V 59.4–6)

---

75 With corrected over $ø$ (see LRL 40a.3a).
76 This sentence is translated by Kitchen: “Now, the mind of this god created the land again, to affirm the frontiers of Nile-land through mighty victories” (KRITA V 47).
A seemingly stronger indication for an occasionally verbal construal of ib is found in instance where ib is not followed by any prepositional phrase at all. If the construction were the non-verbal one discussed until now ([ib=f]SUBJECT [r sdm]PREDICATE), its very predicate would be missing:

Ex. 74  
\[\begin{array}{ccc}
sm\hat{i}=k & n\hat{t} y & \text{ib}=k & r & \text{mrr}=k \\
\text{slay:SBJV} = 2\text{MSG} & \text{REL} & ?\text{want}? = 2\text{MSG} & \text{as} & \text{like} \sim \text{IPFV} = 2\text{SG} \\
\end{array}\]

“(May you give the breath to the ones among them which you wish [ibb=k]), may you slay whom you want, as you wish.”

(Triumph Scene of Ramesses III [Medinet Habu], 102.7 = KRI V 97.4)

Ex. 75  
\[\begin{array}{ccc}
iw=f & \text{ir-t} & n \hat{p} \hat{A} & n\hat{t} y & \text{nb} & \text{ib}=f \\
\text{SBRD}=3\text{MSG} & \text{do-INF} & \text{in} & \text{ART} & \text{REL} & \text{all} \ \ ?\text{want}? = 3\text{MSG} \\
\end{array}\]

“(He used to cultivate his fields year after year,) [doing] just whatever he wanted.” (Inscription of Mose, 32 = KRI III 430.16)

However, both Ex. 74 and Ex. 75 are in relative clauses. They might therefore be a variation on the common expression p3 nty nb m ib=k “anything you want” (literally, “anything that is in your heart”), with the preposition m “in” followed by the noun ib “heart” (see §2.3.1):

Ex. 76  
i-Dd & n=i & p3 & nty & m & \text{ib}=k & r=f \\
\text{IMP}-\text{say} & \text{to}=1\text{SG} & \text{ART} & \text{REL} & \text{in heart}=2\text{MSG} & \text{ALL}=3\text{MSG} \\

“Tell me what you want, (and I will make it be done for you).”

(O. Gardiner 306 [= Khonsuemhab] ro 1 = HO, pl. 41.4)

Interestingly, this expression is also attested in the Medinet Habu inscriptions:

Ex. 77  
n\hat{n} & \text{sw} & \text{hr} & h3kw & m & \text{shr}w & \text{shw} \\
\text{NEG.EXIST 3SG} & \text{under} & \text{plunders by plans} & \text{counsels} \\
\text{nty} & \text{m} & \text{ib}=l & (\text{\footnotesize{1/18}}) & r & \text{shgr} & t3-mri (...) \\
\text{REL in} & \text{heart}=1\text{SG} & \text{ALL} & \text{fashion:INF} & \text{Egypt} \\

“(A moment did not happen in your presence,) which did not carry plunder by the plans and counsels which are in my heart to refashion Egypt, (which had been destroyed)”

(Ramses III’s Great Inscription of Year 8 [Medinet Habu], 46.34 = KRI V 42.6–7)

Hence, two options seem possible: either one emends Ex. 74–75 based on the numerous phaseological parallels (Ex. 76) and the occurrence of such constructions in the same textual register (Ex. 77), or one considers that the verb-like semantics of the construction ib=f r sdm may have led to an occasional reanalysis of ib “heart” as a verb, at least in some specific textual environments. The second option is perhaps slightly more likely in view of the high degree of elaboration of the hieroglyphic inscriptions of Ex. 73–75, suggesting a full awareness by the writers of linguistic variation they could play with. In addition, there is another, although not directly related, construction where ib “heart” has obviously been used as a verb:
Ex. 78  \text{mtw}=\text{w} \quad \text{ir-t} \quad \text{bt}: r \quad \text{rmf}
CORD.MOD=3PL \quad \text{do-INF} \quad \text{fault against someone}
\text{rmf} \quad \text{nb} \quad \text{nty} \quad \text{ib} \quad n=w \quad p3(y)-ndm
\text{someone any REL care for=3PL Pinedjem}

“(... evil things,)
which would do wrong to someone,
anyone for whom Pinedjem has affection.”
77
(Decree for Neskhons, T. Cairo 46891, l. 20 & P. Cairo 58032, l. 74
= Edwards 1955: 102, l. 7 & Golénischeff 1927: 183)

\text{Ib} \ here \ combines, \ not \ with \ the \ allative \ preposition \ \text{r}, \ but \ with \ the \ benefactive \ \text{n} + \text{ANIMATE}. \ The \ meaning \ of \ the \ construction \ thereby \ shifts \ from \ the \ volitional \ domain \ (”to \ want”) \ to \ the \ emotional \ one \ (”to \ like, \ care \ about \ someone”), \ exploiting \ another \ dimension \ of \ the \ polysemy \ of \ the \ noun \ \text{ib} \ “heart”. \ The \ syntax \ of \ the \ relative \ clause \ would \ make \ it \ very \ difficult \ not \ to \ interpret \ \text{ib} \ as \ a \ verb, \ with \ a \ behavior \ close \ to \ that \ of \ \text{mri} \ “to \ love, \ to \ like” \ in \ relative \ clauses \ of \ texts \ from \ the \ post-Ramesside \ era.78

In \ sum, \ there \ are \ some \ indications \ that \ \text{ib} \ expressing \ volition \ may \ have \ occasionally \ been \ reanalyzed, \ or \ subjected \ to \ an \ alternative \ construal, \ as \ a \ verb. \ Once \ cases \ that \ can, \ or \ must, \ be \ explained \ otherwise \ are \ taken \ out, \ instances \ suggestive \ of \ a \ possible \ reanalysis \ are \ few, \ and \ dating \ to \ the \ tail-end \ of \ the \ documented \ history \ of \ \text{ib}=f\text{r sDm}. \ Furthermore, \ these \ instances \ stand \ against \ a \ number \ of \ instances \ of \ \text{ib}=f\text{r sDm} \ in \ similarly \ late \ documents, \ for \ which \ the \ non-verbal \ analysis \ of \ the \ construction \ is \ required. \ Rather \ than \ generalized, \ any \ reanalysis \ there \ may \ have \ been \ would \ have \ been \ occasional \ only. \ The \ phenomenon \ is \ therefore \ perhaps \ best \ described \ in \ terms \ of \ alternative \ construals \ of \ the \ construction \ in \ speakers’ \ representations. \ When \ mapped \ out, \ these \ alternative \ construals \ can \ occasionally \ be \ visible \ in \ the \ written \ record.

5 Conclusion

By way of a brief summary, Old, Middle, and Late Egyptian make a basic distinction between a verb \text{ib} \ “think, surmise” (§1) and a non-verbal predicative construction with the allative preposition \text{r}, \ \text{ib}=f\text{r sDm} \ “he \ wishes/wants \ to \ hear” \ (lit. “his \ heart \ is \ (directed) \ towards \ hearing: \ [ib=f]_{\text{SUBJECT}} [r \ sDm]_{\text{PREDICATE}}; \ §2). \ The \ verb \ \text{ib} \ “think, surmise” \ is \ probably \ denominal, \ from \ \text{ib} \ “heart”, \ as \ is \ made \ likely \ by \ its \ semantics, \ by \ the \ Egyptian \ cultural \ encyclopedia \ in \ which \ the \ “heart” \ is \ among \ other \ things \ the \ locus \ of \ intellectual \ activity, \ and \ by \ various \ idioms \ in \ which \ the \ noun \ \text{ib} \ is \ associated \ with \ the \ expression \ of \ volition. \ If \ so, \ both \ \text{ib} \ “think, surmise” \ and \ \text{ib}=f\text{r sDm} \ “he \ wishes/wants \ to \ hear” \ are \ ultimately \ related \ to \ the \ noun \ \text{ib} \ “heart”. \ The \ two \ expressions \ are \ consistently \ distinguished \ on \ various \ correlating \ levels: \ their \ morphosyntax \ (verbal \ vs. \ non-verbal), \ their \ semantics \ (epistemic \ vs. \ volitional), \ and \ the \ associated \ graphemics (\text{mri} (and \ variants) \ vs. \ \text{ib}). \ The \ graphemic \ contrast \ is \ thus \ seen \ to \ reflect \ the \ morphosyntactic \ one: \ while \ \text{ib} \ in \ \text{ib}=f\text{r sDm} \ is \ written \ like \ the \ noun \ \text{ib} \\

77 Gunn (1955: 91, n. 11): “Lit., ‘has desired’; a good example of $\text{ib}$ as verb. This construction with $n$ (also 118, 120 = NB 20, 43, 45) is unknown to Wb.” Note that in l. 43 and l. 45 (= Edwards 1955: 104, l. 22 & 105, l. 2), the text has $\text{rmf nb nty ib=f n=w}$.

78 \text{Ib} \ would \ be \ in \ the \ so-called \ “indicative \ sDm=f” \ form \ (e.g., Vernus 1990: 168–69), \ also \ documented \ in \ Demotic \ (e.g., Johnson 1976: 72).
“heart” — which it is — the (arguably denominal) verb *ib* “think, surmise” is written distinctively from the noun, and thus, in particular, from the same noun in the non-verbal construction. More generally, the existence of both an epistemic verb *ib* and a volitional non-verbal construction *ib=f r sdm* bear eloquent witness to how a fact of the cultural encyclopedia — here the centrality of the “heart”, *ib*, as the locus of emotions, desires, and intellectual activity — can find a conventionalized reflection in language.

Another remarkable feature of the construction *ib=f r sdm* is its passive counterpart, *ib.tw r sdm* (§3). This had been analyzed as straightforwardly passive (with *tw* the inflectional passive marker), and thereby taken as evidence to the fact that *ib=f r sdm* itself should be analyzed verbally: this line of analysis is ruled out, however, by the incontrovertible evidence in favor of a non-verbal analysis of *ib=f r sdm*, presented first (§2). On the other hand, *ib.tw r sdm* cannot be analyzed as an active impersonal construction either: the impersonal pronoun *tw*, developing from the passive marker *tw*, is strictly an impersonal subject pronoun, while it would be a possessive pronoun in *ib.tw r sdm* (“*one’s heart is directed towards hearing*”). In view of the resulting apparent contradiction, *ib.tw r sdm* must be analyzed as gradient in category membership: the basic construction is fully non-verbal morphosyntactically, yet expresses volitive modality — an agent-oriented category — and thereby displays a verbal feature on a semantic level. Passivization in Egyptian itself underlies a semantic condition, namely that the event referred must imply an agent (expressed or not) in its semantic representation. In *ib.tw r sdm*, a non-verbal construction is passivized: semantics is here seen to win over syntax.

**Glossing abbreviations**

| 1  | 1<sup>st</sup> person | F  | feminine | POSS  | possessive |
| 2  | 2<sup>nd</sup> person | FUT | future   | PROG  | progressive |
| 3  | 3<sup>rd</sup> person | HAB | habitual | PRS   | present |
| ALL | allative       | IMP | imperative | PTCL  | particle |
| ART | article        | INF | infinitive | PTCP  | participle |
| AUX | auxiliary      | IPFV | imperfective | PST   | past |
| CAUS | causative   | IRR | irrealis | Q     | question marker |
| COMPL | completive | M | masculine | REL   | relative marker / relative form |
| COND | conditional | MOD | modal | SBJ   | subject |
| COP | copula        | NMLZ | nominalized | SBJV  | subjunctive |
| CORD | coordination | OBLV | obligatory (epistemic or deontic) | SBRD  | subordinating |
| DAT | dative        | NEG | negation | STAT  | stative |
| DEM | demonstrative | PASS | passive | SG    | singular |
| DU  | dual          | PL  | plural | TOPZ  | topazler |
| EXIST | existential | PN  | proper name |
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