LESSON 01

ALPHABET, TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION

In this presentation of the Demotic alphabet, only the unilateral signs are introduced. Biliterals and triliterals as well as ideograms and determinatives will be introduced gradually, through the lessons.

The roman period of the language used more “alphabetic” signs than the others stages, however all periods used such signs.

Attention should be paid to the forms of the signs as they are used as the first letter (initial) of a word or elsewhere in a word (medial or final). The list bellow represents paleographical Ptolemaic signs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Demotic</th>
<th>Hieratic</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(mem)</td>
<td>ꜯ</td>
<td>never word initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ꜯ</td>
<td>rarely word final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ꞌ</td>
<td>ꞌ</td>
<td>word initial only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>꜇</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>prothetic i, internal e in early Demotic ꜇ ꞌ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>with horizontal signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>꜆ or ꜆</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>with vertical signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>꜇</td>
<td>꜇</td>
<td>y or internal i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>initial, consonantal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>medial or final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>plural, 3 pl. suffix pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>no distinction in usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>꜆</td>
<td>some times ligatured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 1 -
\[\begin{align*}
p & \quad \text{generally early with space filler dot } \ \cdot \\
m & \quad \text{no distinction in usage} \\
n & \quad \text{often unwritten (preposition and genitive) form when alone} \\
r & \quad \text{prothetic } i, \text{ prep. } r, \varepsilon \\
 & \quad \text{same usage} \\
 & \quad \text{normal form} \\
l & \quad \text{Demotisches Glossar} \\
 & \quad \text{(often confused with } r) \\
h & \quad \text{often confused } h \\
h & \quad \text{no distinction in usage with space filler dot } \ \cdot \\
 & \quad \text{in } \cdot \mid \cdot h \text{ “and, with”} \\
h & \quad 2 \text{ or } \omega, \ \varepsilon \text{ or } \omega, \ 2 \\
h & \quad \omega, \ 2 \\
 & \quad \text{above or bellow other sign normal form; } 2, \ \varepsilon, \ 2 \\
s & \quad \text{most common} \\
 & \quad \text{names, Greek, not initial under signs} \\
 & \quad \text{above signs} \\
 & \quad \text{3 fem sing suffix pronoun,} \\
 & \quad \text{3 sing dependent pronoun}
\end{align*}\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$s$</td>
<td>3 or 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more common above or below other sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$k$</td>
<td>$\sim$ or $\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no distinction in usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$k$</td>
<td>$\sim$ or $\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>underline, 2 masc. singular suffix pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>old $k\beta$, later texts $k$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$g$</td>
<td>$\sim$ or $\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>much confusion $g$, $k$, $k$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$t$</td>
<td>$\sim$ or $\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>often for historical $d$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>less frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$d$</td>
<td>$\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>foreign words $n + t &gt; d$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$t$</td>
<td>$\sim$ or $\sim$ or $\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>historical $t$, infinitives, pronominal nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$t$</td>
<td>$\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb $t$ “to take”, phonetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$d$</td>
<td>$\sim$ or $\sim$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no distinction in usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb $d$ “to say”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The way the signs were written changed slightly through the periods of Demotic. The unilateral sign changes are shown in Appendices, page 170, as example.
DETERMINATIVES

Determinatives are used in almost every word. They are meaning signs placed at the end of the word, after the sound signs. Determinatives do not contribute to the sound of the word and are not transliterated. Their function is to help the reader to get some general idea of the meaning of the word.

A large number of signs can be used as determinatives, actually, something about 180 signs, some used many times and some very rarely used.

One point you have to always remember is that orthography was not as consistent in Ancient Egypt as it is nowadays. You can find the same word written with small differences from text to text and even in the same text. So, you can find the same word written with a determinative in a text, other determinative in some other scribe’s text and even without determinative in other texts.

A great number of determinatives can be found through the lessons and in the vocabulary and many of them have their meanings explained.

TRANSLITERATION

Discussions concerning transliteration are not yet finished among Egyptologists and specially Demotists. The system adopted at the International Congress of Egyptologists in 1979 is consistent, although artificial. It is based on earlier stages of Egyptian language, especially Middle Egyptian. It means Demotic words are transliterated as words are transliterated historically in Middle Egyptian. Demotic ligatures cannot be broken down into unilateral signs, so they are transliterated as words are transliterated historically. Demotic phonetics (e.g. $d = t$ but $d \neq t$) are used and particularly when ligatures are combined with alphabet signs, the evidence of such alphabetic sign is given preference to historical transliteration.

Some special punctuation conventions are used to indicate some grammatical points.

A dot (.) is used to indicate the position of determinatives in a word if any part of the word is written after the determinatives, excluding phonetic complements.

In Demotic, the plural strokes (ı, ҭ) are written after the feminine marker (♀, t), but this combination is transliterated ʿwr.
Diagonal parallel lines (in this guide = is used) are used to indicate the connection of a suffix pronoun to the pronominal form on which it depends, such as verbs, nouns or prepositions.

Compounds and grammatical elements are connected with a hyphen `-`.

( ) Parenthesis is used to add words or part of words that are not represented but were part of the word nonetheless.

[ ] Square brackets show words or parts of words that are missing because of damage or have become broken away. When it is not possible, even not fairly certain, to point what is written, than the square brackets enclose ellipsis [ ... ].

{ } Curly brackets are used to enclose words or parts of words for which Demotists think the scribe wrote a wrong sign.

<> Pointed brackets enclose words or parts of words that are not represented in the text but Demotists think it occurred by an error of the scribe.

Because Demotic does not preserve the original vowels of Egyptian language, Demotists put e [as in met] between consonants other than ʒ, ɛ, i, e, y and w (ah, ah, ee, eh, ee, oo).

Some notes on pronunciation should be regarded:

By the end of the Middle Kingdom, r closing a syllable became silent.

By the end of the Third Intermediate Period, d and t became indistinguishable.

In Ptolemaic Period, g, k and k became indistinguishable, generally k.

By the end of the Ptolemaic Period, ɛ and ʒ became indistinguishable.

By the end of the first century BC, h and h and also h and h became indistinguishable.

Much confusion in writing these signs were made by scribes because they had similar sounds. Many times they are used interchangeably.
The dictionary order set by Demotists is:

```
3 i y w b p f m n r l h y h s s v t d
```

Pronunciation has similarities to Coptic and to Late Egyptian.

**COPTIC AND DIALECTS**

Coptic is the name given to the final phase of Egyptian language, which is closely related to Demotic. It became important at the end of the first century AD and was spoken for more than a thousand years thereafter. In the beginning of 2007, a paper was publicized noticing that two families living in Egypt can speak a dialect of Coptic and may be the last people speaking it as native language.

Egypt was conquered by Greece (Alexander the Great) in 313 BC, and became heavily influenced by Greek culture. The Greeks brought with them their alphabet which had originally come from Egypt, and which they were now about to give back to the Egyptians. It offered 24 characters, all pronounceable, as opposed to over 400 symbols that only a small percentage represented sounds and the rest were ideograms.

Greek was very much the ‘in culture’; you had to be Greek to be seen. A crisis started to hit Egyptian pagan priests. Sales of magic amulets were an important revenue raiser, however sales had plummeted after people had stopped being able to read Demotic, as all the rich important people could only read Greek. The pagan priests at the time then decided to transliterate the spoken Egyptian language into Greek letters, adding some Demotic letters for sounds that did not have a Greek equivalent. This new script was a hit, and started to spread to other applications.

Coptic first appears in late third century BC. The earliest inscription is a graffito of Horonnophris (205-199 BC) at Abidos.

The Coptic alphabet is a slightly modified form of the Greek alphabet, with some letters (which vary from dialect to dialect) deriving from demotic.

Coptic possesses a number of regional dialects that were in use from the Mediterranean coast and south into Nubia, as well as the western oasis. However, while many of these dialects reflect actual regional linguistic variations, some are more probably
localized orthographic traditions and likely should not be taken as a true indication of linguistic variation.

There were 5 major dialects used, but there were as many as 12 altogether, including the less common ones. The dialect which was spoken by a particular Copt depended largely on where he lived, as already said. Starting north in the Nile Delta, where Alexandria and Cairo are today, we find Bohairic. Traveling south we come to Fayum, where Fayumic was spoken, followed by Lycopolitan of Asyut, then the Akhmin of middle Egypt which had Akhminic, and finally Sahidic of Upper Egypt.

Besides the chronological changes of Egyptian language, it may always have had several dialects. These regional differences are best attested in Coptic, as already exposed. They cannot be exactly detected in the writing of earlier phases of Egyptian, including Demotic, but they undoubtedly existed. For example, in about 1200 BC, a letter writer complained that a correspondent’s language is as incomprehensible as that of northern, Bohairic, Egyptian speaking with an Egyptian from the south, Sahidic.

COPTIC PRONUNCIATION

It will be used to represent the Demotic pronunciation of some words in the lessons and in vocabulary, used to represent how they must have been pronounced. This pronunciation tends to the northern dialect.

VOWELS

\( \text{I} \) \quad [I]. \ In Sahidic usually spelt \( \text{EI} \). High front unrounded. As \( ee \) in \( \text{see} \). Also as consonant – see below.

\( \text{H} \) \quad [e]. \ Upper mid front unrounded. As French \( \text{é} \) in \( \text{été} \). In Greek loans [i] (same as \text{i}).

\( \text{E} \) \quad [e]. \ Lower mid front unrounded. As \( \text{ê} \) in French \( \text{rêve} \).

\( \text{A} \) \quad [a : ]. \ Low vowel. As \( a \) in \( \text{far} \).

\( \text{OY} \) \quad [u : ]. \ High back rounded. As \( oo \) in \( \text{moon} \). Also as consonant – see below.

\( \text{Y} \) \quad Only in Greek loans. Same as \text{i}.

\( \text{O} \) \quad [o]. \ Upper mid back rounded. As \( o \) in French \( \text{chose} \).
O  [ɔ]. Lower mid back rounded. As (British) o in *hot*.

Supralinear stroke (Sahidic: ⲑ ⲑ) or *jinkim* (Bohairic: ‘М ‘N). Neutral vowel (*shwa*) [ə] preceding consonant. As *e* in *stricken*.

Ⱥ [aɪ]. As ai in *aisle*. But same as *ε* in Greek loans.

Ȭ [ɔɪ]. As *oy* in *boy*. But same as *ι* in Greek loans.

Ⱥɭ [au]. As *ow* in *cow*.

ɭɭ [ɛu].

ɭɭ [eu]. Also spelt *HOY*.

OØɭ [ɔu].

ɭɭ [ow]. Bohairic only.

CONSONANTS

B  Sahidic: [v]. Voiced labio-dental fricative. As *v* in *vex*.
Bohairic: (1) [β] after a vowel. Voiced bilabial fricative. As Spanish *b* in *trabajar*.

(2) [ʍ] at the beginning of a word or after a consonant. Voiced bilabial plosive with lip rounding. As *bw* in *cobweb*.

(3) [h] when doubled (BB).

ɭ [ɪ]. Voiced palatal approximant. As *y* in *yacht*.

ɭ [k]. Voiceless velar plosive. As *k* in *skill*.

ɭ Same as ɭ. But in Greek loans before ɭ, ɭ or ɭ pronounced as voiced velar nasal [ŋ] (as *ng* as in *sing*).

ɭ  Sahidic: [kh]. Equivalent to *Kğ*. Voiceless velar plosive followed by voiceless glottal approximant. Probably not to be interpreted as an aspirated plosive.
Bohairic: [gh]. Voiced aspirated velar plosive. As *g* in *go* but with voiced aspirated ‘h’ following. But same as *ȝ* [ʃ] in Greek loans.

ɭ [l]. Voiced lateral. As *l* in *long*.

ɭ  [m]. Voiced bilabial nasal. As *m* in *moon*.

ɭ  [n]. Voiced dental nasal. As *n* in *noon*. In a small number of cases in Sahidic, the combination *NF* represents [ŋ] (as *ng* in *finger*).
\( \chi \) [ks]. Equivalent to \( \mathbf{KC} \).

\( \pi \) [p]. Voiceless bilabial plosive. As \( p \) in \( \text{spin} \).

\( \phi \) Sahidic: [ph]. Equivalent to \( \pi \bar{z} \). See note on \( \chi \).

Bohairic: [bh]. Voiced aspirated bilabial plosive. As \( b \) in \( \text{boy} \) but with voiced ‘h’ following. But same as \( \eta [f] \) in Greek loans.

\( \rho \) [r]. Voiced apico-alveolar trill or flap. As Italian \( r \) in \( \text{andare} \).

\( \varsigma \) [s]. Voiceless alveolar fricative. As \( s \) in \( \text{sun} \).

\( \zeta \) Same as \( \varsigma \).

\( \tau \) [t]. Voiceless apico-dental plosive. As \( t \) in \( \text{steel} \).

\( \lambda \) Same as \( \tau \).

\( \theta \) Sahidic: [th]. Equivalent to \( \tau \bar{z} \). See note on \( \chi \).

Bohairic: [dh]. Voiced aspirated apico-dental plosive. As \( d \) in \( \text{dog} \) but with voiced ‘h’ following. But same as \( \tau [t] \) in Greek loans.

\( \omega \) [w]. Voiced rounded labio-velar approximant.

\( \psi \) [ps]. Equivalent to \( \pi \varsigma \).

\( \omega \) [ʃ]. Voiceless laminal fricative. As \( sh \) in \( \text{shine} \).

\( \eta \) [f]. Voiceless labio-dental fricative. As \( f \) in \( \text{five} \).

\( \upsilon \) (\( \upsilon \)) Bohairic only. [x]. As Welsh \( ch \) in \( \text{bach} \).

\( \theta \) [h]. Voiceless glottal approximant. As \( h \) in \( \text{heart} \).

\( \chi \) [tʃ]. Equivalent to \( \tau \omega \). Voiceless palato-alveolar affricate. As \( ch \) in \( \text{church} \).

\( \delta \) [c]. Voiceless palatalized velar plosive (palatal [k]). Probably with affrication [çç]. As \( c \) in \( \text{cute} \), or Modern Greek κ in \( \text{κύριος} \).

THE BILITERAL SIGN \( ti \)

\( t \) Equivalent to \( \mathbf{T} \). As \( \text{tea} \) in \( \text{steal} \). Also written \( \mathbf{T} \).
GLOTTAL STOP

- If a word (minus prefixes) is spelt with an initial vowel, there is actually an unwritten initial consonant present, the glottal stop [ʔ].
- In Sahidic, a doubled vowel indicates the presence of a glottal stop: **ʔʔ ʔʔ ʔʔ**. It is not clear if related words in Bohairic contain the glottal stop, as there is no clue to it in the spelling.

STRESS

- Stress is usually on the last syllable, even in words of Greek origin.
- However, in Sahidic words that end in **ε** or Bohairic words that end in **ί**, the stress is on the second last syllable.
- The shwa vowel (marked with a supralinear stroke or **jinkim**) is never stressed.
- In the basic form of reduplicated verbs, such as **ƣơơrt̠p̠** (Boh: **ƣơơrt̠p̠** ‘disturb’ or **mơmек** ‘ponder’, stress is on the first syllable. In the pronominal and qualitative forms, stress is on the final syllable.
- The construct form of verbs is unstressed, the stress falling on the following noun.
EXERCISES

1) Learning the basic alphabet as soon as possible is necessary to continue with the lessons.

2) Write these names in Demotic alphabet:

Anna _______________  John _______________
Maria _______________  Peter _______________
Elizabeth _______________  Paul _______________
Antonio _______________  Jessica _______________
George _______________  Susan _______________
Larry _______________  Janet _______________
James _______________  Garry _______________
Douglas _______________  Barbara _______________

3) Transliterate these Egyptian and Roman names and titles and guess who they were (royal names are often enclosed with a cartouche $\text{nameC}$, $\text{nameD}$) or just imagine it:

[Images of cuneiform characters]
4) Transliterate the place names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كِتَابُ أَرْضٍ</td>
<td>Galgama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كَتِبُ أَرْضٍ</td>
<td>Kom Ombos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَرْضٍ</td>
<td>Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَرْضٍ</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>رَمَّةٍ</td>
<td>Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>رَمَّةٍ</td>
<td>Luxor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غَيْضٍ</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غَيْضٍ</td>
<td>Crete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VOCABULARY

From now on, the lessons will present you a vocabulary section. First column presents the word in Demotic script. Second column transliterates the script. Third column has the meaning of the word. In this lesson, the vocabulary is just to get used to the alphabet. Remember that some words must be learned as a whole, because they are not always spelled out!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demotic Script</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hy</td>
<td>h m.t</td>
<td>Husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>Wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rm t</td>
<td>sh m.t</td>
<td>Say, to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>byn.t</td>
<td>Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g 3l 3g 3ntsy</td>
<td>Cooper sulfate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhy</td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rh</td>
<td>Know, to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d n h</td>
<td>Wing, arm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d dy</td>
<td>Run, to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d dy</td>
<td>Fight, to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WRITING MATERIALS

Papyrus plant *twfy*, in antiquity, grew wild in thickets up to 4m high in shallows along the Nile banks and in the swamps of the Delta Region. To obtain writing material, the triangular stem of the plant was peeled, cut into pieces 42-44cm long, and split into thin strips. The strips were laid out in parallel, slightly overlapping, rows which were the covered with another set of strips perpendicularly over the first set. The strips were glued together by pressure and pounding. When dry, the surfaces were polished with a smooth stone and the edges trimmed. The dimensions differed form one period to another, but in the Ramesside Period (New Kingdom), the pages were generally 42cm high.

Papyrus reached the consumer in rolls which were usually formed by gluing together some 20 sheets, kꜣḥ.t. The joins overlapped by one or two cm, and the longest known scroll is the 40.5m long pHarris I. Although some texts were written on complete rolls, ḏmꜣ, most rolls were cut in half before use, so that they were some 20cm high.

Scrolls were kept in covers, and these in wooden boxes, ḫr.t-ꜣ. Papyrus is rolled so that the horizontal fibers run inside, along the length of the scroll, while the vertical strips run outside, parallel to the ends of the scroll.

For a longer text, the scribe spread the scroll in front of him (her)self with the rolled part on the left and uncovered “page” on the right, and wrote on the horizontal fibers of the inner surface. This scribed inner surface is termed the recto. The scroll was rolled up again starting from the end on the scribe’s right. In earlier times, it was conventional to inscribe the papyrus in vertical columns, writing from the upper right to the lower left, so that the scroll could be rolled up practically column by column. From Dynasty XII it was usual to open up an entire page at a time, and to write in the horizontal lines from top to bottom.

At first, the outer surface, termed verso, was not used and the scroll was re-rolled after completion, so that the beginning of the text was at the beginning of the scroll again. But the progressive need of writing material was, however, such that the back was very frequently inscribed as well. The scribe could simply take the inscribed papyrus and start writing without re-rolling the scroll, so that the first page of the verso was on the back of the last page of the recto text. If a papyrus with an inscribed verso had been re-rolled, the scroll could simply be turned over, and the first
Some letters and official documents were prepared differently. The scribe took the scroll and unrolled it away from himself, and wrote in parallel lines to the end of the papyrus until about half of the text was completed, at which point the text was cut off from the rest of the scroll. He then turned the sheet over and wrote so that the first line of the recto was on the back of the last line of the verso. The recto of such a text is thus written perpendicular to the fibers, and the verso parallel to the fibers. The length of such a text reflects the scribe’s decision, and the breadth depends upon whether the papyrus had been halved (22cm) or quartered (11cm).

When finished, the scribe would turn back to the recto and fold it several times, beginning with the end of the recto text, which the uninscribed bottom bit the verso on the outside. The packet was then folded in half, and the ends tied together. On the upper surface the name of the recipient was written, and on the other side, that of the author.

However, the supply of papyrus seemed not to have matched the demand which was only met by re-using papyrus (“palimpsests”), along with the parallel use of limestone flakes and potsherds, which are termed “ostracon” n-d-r (pl. ostraca), in Egyptology. In palimpsests, the original text was deliberately washed away, and the papyrus could be re-used.
LESSON 02

ARTICLES

Now that you have learnt how to read the basics, the next step is to understand what you are reading. Here is where grammar and vocabulary come in. Learning what different words mean is the first step, putting them together requires an understanding of grammar.

The first important thing to learn is that different words belong to different classes. Some words are nouns, some are verbs, and some are prepositions. In fact, there are many different categories to which words can belong. These categories are known as “parts of speech.”

The first part of speech we will look at is the article and then the noun. Nouns are basically naming words as ‘cat’, ‘dog’, ‘house’ etc.

In many cases, nouns are introduced by little words called “articles”. These are little words which frequently come before the nouns. Learning these will be our first step in learning Demotic grammar.

There are two types of articles in Demotic, the definite article and the indefinite article.

DEFINITE ARTICLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>masc. singular</th>
<th>fem. singular</th>
<th>masc. and fem. plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ω, ι, ι, ι, ι</td>
<td>ι, ι, ι</td>
<td>ι, ι, ι</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In earlier texts, scribes used to write ⲟ for the feminine singular and Ⲡ for the masculine and feminine plural, to distinguish each form.

Realize that different nouns are defined as being either masculine or feminine. There’s no reason why a particular object should be masculine or feminine, but that is just the way it is.
Before geographic terms, scribes used to write the masculine singular article ⲝ p(r) (p 𓊱 m ḫt, ᴧ𓊱𓊱, “the north”).

The definite article is used when the reference is made to a specific or unique item, object or individual. When reference is made to a mass noun, such as a concept or property, or a noun with a generic use, not specifying a given noun, either the definite article or no article might be used.

The name of the sun-god always includes definite article P₃-r c, ⲟ Ⲝ, ⲣ “Pre”.

In vocatives, the article preceded the noun and both were generally preceded by the interjection ḫt, ḫt, ḫ, ḫ, i (e.g. i P₃-r c, ⲣwt, “Oh Pre!”) (see Vocative and Interjections in following lessons)

**INDEFINITE ARTICLE**

masc. sing. 𓊱, Ⲝ, ⲥ, Ⲡ, ⲟ ⲝ w c
fem. sing. Ⲡ, Ⲥ, Ⲩ w c.t
masc. and fem. plural Ⲛ w n, ⲟ n, ḫ n hyn. w

The indefinite article might be used when it is not needed to point out the specific individual, item or object to which reference is being made. However, many texts did not use the indefinite article and the plural indefinite article is rarely used.

Articles might not be used when:

- precede the expression ḫwt-ntr, ⲣwt-ỉ, “temple”;
- precede body parts;
• adverbial expressions;
• precede second noun if two nouns are used in direct genitive as in *mr-ṃs*, "overseer of the army, general";
• the noun depends on the verb *ir*, *ṣ*, *ḏ*, "to do, make", with several meanings.
• expressions of time
• names of materials
• after negatives (often)

BEYOND THE ALPHABET

Demotic is not a purely alphabetic script. It keeps the characteristics of ancient hieroglyphic writing of a mixture of uni, bi and trilateral signs and many ideograms and determinatives to write the words. Each lesson will provide you some of the "other letters" of the alphabet. The other signs are the biliterals and triliterals. Almost always these signs are accompanied with uniliterals to easy and confirm the reading.

Biliteral

| ṭ   | ḫ | wn | ḫs
| mn  | nb | mr |

Triliteral

| ṭ ṭ | ḫ ḫ | ḫ ḫ
| ṭ ṭ | ḫ ḫ | ḫ ḫ

-18-
A noun is the part of the speech that designates all elements of reality, whether concrete or abstract aspects. In Demotic the nouns can be either masculine or feminine in gender, and singular or plural in numeral.

Masculine nouns have no special ending.

- yb: Claw, nail
- d 3 y: Ship
- ls: Tongue
- n 3 r: God
- i l: Father
- n k t: Thing, property
- b 3 k: Servant
- $r$: Son

Feminine nouns usually end in a final $, after the determinative. However this $ is merely a graphic sign, and is never pronounced. The residue of this sign is a short vowel at the end of many feminine words, and many scribes indicate this vowel writing ꞈ or ꞉ that are transliterated $ and $, respectively, as a convention.

The Sahidic Coptic pronounced it as [ɛ] and the Bohairic as [i].
In words with two determinatives, the feminine marker usually comes between the determinative signs and not at the end of the word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$sr.t$</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$hsbt$</td>
<td></td>
<td>Royal year (at the beginning of texts, probably a contraction meaning “counting year”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rnp(.t)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mw.t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b3kt.t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Female servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gw.t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shrine, chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fks.t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kle.t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shm.t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Woman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The plural form of the nouns is made by adding the plural mark $.w,$ after the determinative sign and after the feminine marker $.t.$ However, the transliteration of the word, by convention, puts the $.w$ after the dot marking the determinative and before the feminine $.t,$ i.e. $.wt$ and not $.tw.$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rmt.w</td>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b3kw.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nkt.w</td>
<td></td>
<td>Things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dy3w.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$nh.w$</td>
<td></td>
<td>Living ones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are a few nouns in Coptic which take a different form in the plural than they do in the singular, but the thematic sound [oʏ] always appears. However we cannot know exactly how they were pronounced in Demotic because writing does not show these differences. Ptolemaic Demotic probably began to loose the plural form in pronunciation but kept it in writing.

EXERCISES

1) Write the following words in Demotic script and translate:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wσ.t</td>
<td>ntr</td>
<td>rmt</td>
<td>nkt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kle.t</td>
<td>ڈ ज्य</td>
<td>mहt</td>
<td>ढ ड्य</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rहy</td>
<td>ह m.t</td>
<td>mव.t</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Write the words of exercise 1 in their plural forms.

3) Translate into Demotic and write in Demotic script:

a) a man  b) the man  c) men
d) living one  e) some living ones  f) year
g) a woman  h) shrine  i) the tongue
j) the north  k) to say  l) to take
m) to know  n) the ship  o) the daughter
4) Translate into English:
LESSON 03

INTERJECTIONS

The vocative case is the case used to identify the person (animal, object, etc.) being addressed and/or occasionally the determiners of that noun. A vocative expression is an expression of direct address, wherein the identity of the party being spoken to is set forth expressly within a sentence. In Egyptian, the vocative case is made with the use of an interjection particle.

Resuming, the vocative is used to call upon someone, usually in the context of asking for their attention or help.

An interjection is a part of speech that usually has no grammatical connection to the rest of the sentence and simply expresses emotion on the part of the speaker, although most interjections have clear definitions.

In Egyptian Demotic, interjections are uninflected function words, but sometimes, these particles have grammatical connections to the sentence and even change the meaning of the sentence.

oh! 

- Used before nouns as vocative - in vocatives, the article preceded the noun and both were generally preceded by the interjection.
- Used before in $sdm=f$ optative in expressions $i \ ‘nh=f$ “may he live” and $i\ ir=f$ “may he do”.

oh, hail, salute, hello 

hail, bravo (joyful) 

here it is, yes

- 23 -
here it is, yes $z_1 | z_2$, $z_3 | z_4$ $tw(y) = s$

- Often best left not translated, followed by a noun or a complete sentence.

!, that $\frac{\overline{y}}{\overline{y}}, \overline{y}$

- When it introduces a direct quote, it is equivalent to quotation marks.
- When it introduces an indirect quote, it may be translated “that”.
- It introduces a clause serving as direct object after verbs with a redundant pronominal direct object.
- Can be translated “because”, “for”, “in order to”, “so that” or “namely”.

oh, by $\mathcal{O}_1, \mathcal{O}_2, \mathcal{O}_3, \mathcal{O}_4, \mathcal{O}_5, \mathcal{O}_6, \mathcal{O}_7$

- $\mathcal{O}_n h$ ntr –oh (by) good!

POSSESSIVE ARTICLES

We have already seen about definite and indefinite articles. The possessive articles consisted partially of the definite articles and partially of some suffix pronouns, which will be learnt in following sections.

These articles refer to people and are used to indicate possession.

The older usage of attaching a suffix pronoun directly to the noun being possessed was of very limited usage in Demotic. The most common use of the possessive was as an article, preceding and modifying a following noun.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>MASCULINE</th>
<th>FEMININE</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st s</td>
<td>$p_3 y = y$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = y$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = y$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd s m</td>
<td>$p_3 y = k$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = k$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = k$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd s f</td>
<td>$p_3 y = t$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = t$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = t$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd s m</td>
<td>$p_3 y = f$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = f$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = f$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd s f</td>
<td>$p_3 y = s$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = s$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = s$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st p</td>
<td>$p_3 y = n$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = n$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = n$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd p</td>
<td>$p_3 y = tn$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = tn$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = tn$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd p</td>
<td>$p_3 y = w$</td>
<td>$t_3 y = w$</td>
<td>$n_3 y = w$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Possessives agreed in number and gender with the noun being possessed and the suffix agreed with number and gender of the possessor. It can be confusing at this point. For example, if it is said “his mother”.

Looking at the table, there are three possibilities: \( p \ y = f \), \( t \ y = f \), \( n \ y = f \). As a plural article, \( n \ y = f \) can be left off the possibilities, what leaves \( p \ y = f \) and \( t \ y = f \).

The next step to choose the correct possessive is to look up the gender of the noun in context. In this example, \( m \ w \ t \), mother, is a feminine noun, so you have to pick the feminine article, which in case is \( t \ y = f \). So, if you were to say ‘his mother’, you would base the decision on the gender of ‘mother’, and it would be \( t \ y = f \ m \ w \ t \).

Now suppose you wanted to say “your father” while speaking to a feminine. Again, the possibilities: \( p \ y = k \), \( t \ y = k \), \( n \ y = k \), \( p \ y = t \), \( t \ y = t \), \( n \ y = t \). Scratch out the plural forms, since your address just one person. The word for father is \( i \ y \), masculine, so you have only \( p \ y = k \) and \( p \ y = t \) left.

Since you’re speaking to the 2nd person singular feminine (you), pick the \( p \ y = t \), what gives \( p \ y = t i \ y \).

\[ n \ y = f \ s n \ w \quad \text{his brothers} \]
\[ p \ y = y \ s n \quad \text{my brother} \]

BEYOND THE ALPHABET

Biliteral

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c}
4 & 3b & 5 & iy \\
\text{iw} & iy & im(i) & \text{in} \\
\end{array}
\]
DEMONSTRATIVES

Two commonly used words for introducing nouns are “this” and “that”. They are used to point to or to demonstrate a particular noun.

Demonstratives might be used with the meaning “this” or “these”, near demonstratives, or as an article, with which it agrees in number and gender, modifying a noun. Demonstratives can be used as a pronoun or as an article.

This way to show determinatives was very rarely used in inscriptions of Classical Egyptian; originally the definite article was the determinative. After the Middle Kingdom, it occasionally appears in more colloquial texts. Therefore, this aspect of the language is particularly closer to Coptic, which generally uses this construction.

Masculine

Feminine

Plural

The plural was often used with the neutral meaning for the “this”.

Demonstratives come straight before nouns, as do articles.
Far demonstrative, or the word for “that”, not actually a word but a periphrases, is \( \text{nt n-im= w} \), which is there, is a little different:

- it comes after the noun;
- the definite article must be used before the noun.

\[ p 3 \ b 3 k \ nt \ n-im= w \ - \text{that servant} \]

PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Pronouns are words used to stand in for nouns. The Egyptian languages had three types of personal pronouns, independent, dependent and suffix pronouns.

Personal pronouns are word used to substitute for people and for the grammatical persons. The independent pronouns are so called because they can stand alone in the sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>1\textsuperscript{st} s</th>
<th>( \text{nt n-im} )</th>
<th>1\textsuperscript{st}</th>
<th>ink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} s m</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>mtk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} s f</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>mtw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} s m</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>mtf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} s f</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>mw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} p</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>inn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} p</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>mtn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} p</td>
<td>( \text{nt n-im} )</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>mtww</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GENITIVE

To express the idea of possession, when something belongs to someone the genitive construction is used.
In Demotic this construction can be made in two ways:

- indirect genitive
  Consists in the use of  n between the possessed noun and the possessor noun.

\[
\text{man of the town} \quad rm t n tmy
\]

\[
\text{house of the poor man} \quad c(wy) n \, 3by n
\]

- direct genitive
  It consists in putting a noun directly after the regent noun.
The possessor comes in second place.

\[
\text{window of the house} \quad s s t p 3 \, c(wy)
\]

Another way to show possession is with the particle  ns or  i(w=)s “belonging to” singular and  i(w=)s “belonging to” plural. This construction, specially the singular one, occurs mostly in names. The second form and the plural form may actually represent the contemporary pronunciation of  (not  but  ).

Despite of being singular and plural, they can be used interchangeably.

\[
i(w=)s \, Pr-\, c 3 \quad \text{belonging to the Pharaoh}
\]
VOCABULARY

wp.t  Work
lgynws  Bottle, jar
gml  Camel
hl  Child
lk  Cup, bowl
c  Donkey
lkn t  Frying pan, cauldron
htr  Horse
yl  Mirror, glass
hm  Salt
sh  Scribe, teacher
hd  Silver, money
3d  Thief
ms  Crocodile

EXERCISES

1) Write the following words in transcription, translate:

[提供图片]
2) Write in Demotic alphabet and say their meanings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sḥ</th>
<th>mw.t</th>
<th>$$t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tmy</td>
<td>d 3 y</td>
<td>hwt-ntr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gml3</td>
<td>ink</td>
<td>ihy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) Translate into Demotic and then write them again, but in their plural forms:

a) My camel.  b) The donkey of the scribe.
c) This ship.  d) Their servant.
e) The money of the thief.  f) The claw of this crocodile.
g) That general’s house.  h) Oh god! The horse of the child!
i) His cat.  j) That mirror.
k) Woman’s daughter.  l) Thief of money.
m) Hail to the general!  n) Man of Rome.

4) Transliterate the following:

From a mummy label

“She being mistreated by her husband”

From an ostracaon of Thebes with a list of names

“Tiukens, Esmitra” (*remember not ns but is)