

H8a

# More Grammar

## Adjectives

HPAH4016/5066/6066 Hieroglyphs 1

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 *shd* 'controller'

  
*mnw-wsr* Minuser

  
*tp dw.f*  
'upon his hill'



*rn-nfr=f*

  
*im³hw*  
'revered one'

# Word order

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- *rn-nfr=f*
- rn – noun – “name”
- nfr – adjective – “beautiful, good, perfect”
- f – pronoun – “his”
  - Pro
  - Noun
  - Standing in for a noun – *Peter’s hut, the class of Katharina*

# Word order *rn-nfr=f*

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- rn – noun – “name”
- nfr – adjective – “beautiful, good, perfect”
- f – pronoun – “his”
  - His/her = ?
  - Personal pronoun → see handout
  - English: 4 kinds
    - Subject (he)
    - Object (him)
    - Possessive (his)
    - Reflexive (himself)

# Word order

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  - His/her = ?
  - Personal pronoun
- *His perfect name*

# Adjectives

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- ❑ Describe qualities (size, colour, value, ...)
- ❑ English – mostly used to qualify nouns in a noun phrase
  - big house, narrow road → what kind of noun is meant?
- ❑ Middle Egyptian – three types of adjectives
  - Primary – only *nb* all, every
  - Secondary – most adjectives; created from specific verb-form (participle)
    - ❑ *nfr* good, beautiful, perfect → from to be/to become good, beautiful, perfect
  - Derived – formed from nouns or prepositions (**nisbe**)
    - ❑ *nwt* town → *nwtj* “local”
    - ❑ Also preposition “n” – genitival adjective (indirect genitive)

# Adjectives - usage

## □ Modifier

- Then adjectives have the **same gender/number as noun**

| Noun Endings |                  |                         |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Number       | Masculine        | Feminine                |
| Singular     | -                | ⤵ <i>t</i>              |
| Plural       | 𓂏, 𓂐 <i>w</i>    | ⤵ ( <i>w</i> ) <i>t</i> |
| Dual         | 𓂏𓂐, 𓂐𓂐 <i>wy</i> | ⤵ <i>ty</i>             |

Egyptian adjectives are often used to modify nouns. In this use, adjectives generally have the same gender and number as the noun; this feature is known as “agreement.” In Middle Egyptian, modifying adjectives have three basic forms: masculine singular, masculine plural, and feminine. The masculine singular is the basic form: primary and secondary adjectives have no ending in this form, and nisbes have the ending *-j*:

 *nb* “all”     
  *nfr* “good”     
  *njwtj* “local.”

Masculine plural adjectives add the ending *-w* to the singular form. This is the same ending used for masculine plural nouns (§ 4.5), and is written in the same ways (§ 4.6): for example,

 *nbw*     
  *nfrw*     
  *njwtjw*.<sup>1</sup>

Feminine adjectives add the ending *-t* to the masculine singular form of primary and secondary adjectives, and *in place of* the ending *-j* of masculine nisbes:

 *nbt*     
  *nfrt*     
  *njwt*.

# Adjectives - usage

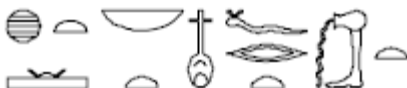
## □ Modifier

- ALWAYS follow the noun

|           | SINGULAR                       | PLURAL                          |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| MASCULINE | <i>sh.tj nb</i> “every farmer” | <i>sh.tjw nbw</i> “all farmers” |
| FEMININE  | <i>h.jmt nfrt</i> “good woman” | <i>h.jmw nfrt</i> “good women.” |

The rule that adjectives must follow their noun is invariable. This helps to distinguish the adjective  $\neg$  *nb* “all, every” from the noun  $\neg$  *nb* “lord, master, owner” (feminine *nbt* “lady, mistress”): thus,  $\neg$  *pr nb* “every house” but  $\neg$  *nb pr* “lord of the house, owner of the house”;  $\neg$  *prw nbw* “all the houses” but  $\neg$  *nbw prw* “lords of the houses”;  $\neg$  *hwt nbt* “every enclosure” but  $\neg$  *nbt hwt* “mistress of the enclosure.”

- Several adjectives follow a noun – all same form

□  *jh.t nb.t nfr.t w<sup>c</sup>b.t* - all good and pure things

# Adjectives - usage

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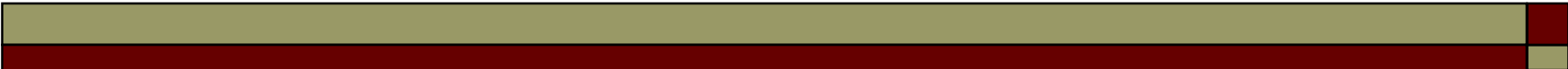
## □ As noun

- *nfr.t* – any good/beautiful/perfect (female) person or thing
- Qualified by determinative

𐎢𐎠𐎡𐎢 *nfrt* ‘the beautiful woman,’ 𐎢𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎠𐎡 *nfrt* ‘a pretty cow,’ 𐎢𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎠𐎡𐎢 ‘a good thing, something good.’

## □ In fact, all Eg. adjectives ARE nouns – string of adjectives behind first noun = apposition

*shrw.j jqrw* ‘my excellent plans,’ for example, actually means ‘my plans, the good ones.’



# Adjectives – comparative/superlative

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- a cheap hat – a cheaper hat – the cheapest hat
- ME – no comparative/superlative → grammatically easier, more tricky to translate
  - *nfr* – beautiful, more beautiful, most beautiful

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 *nfrt r ht nbt*

“something better than anything”—literally, “a good one with respect to everything.”

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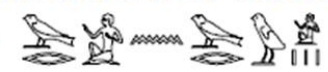
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- Superlative:

The **superlative** can be shown in several ways. Egyptian normally uses the superlative for adjectives that stand by themselves and do not modify a noun. Most often, it is indicated by a direct or indirect genitive: for example,  *wr wrw* or  *wr n wrw* (Peas. B1, 84) “the greatest of the great” or “the greatest of all”—literally, “the great one of the great ones.” Sometimes the word  *jm(j)* “among” is used after the adjective instead of a genitive:  *wr jm(j) sḥw* (Urk.VII, 39, 6) “greatest of the dignitaries” or “the greatest dignitary”—literally, “the great one among the dignitaries.”