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Eitan Grossman, Stéphane Polis,
Andréas Stauder & Jean Winand

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

On modal semantics, graphemic contrasts, and gradience in grammar




Stéphane Polis & Andréas Stauder




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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*.¹ 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:²

- 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.³ The first, written like the noun, would also be derived from it.⁴ 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 **lib*/ or **li:bw*/ in early historical times); Takács (1999: 87–88, with numerous references to the previous literature); Loprieno (1995: 31).

2 E.g., *Wb*. I 59.10–60.11, 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 (1955²: §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.⁵ In common to both these interpretations is that *ib* in *ib=f r sdm* is interpreted as a verb, thus: *ib*_{VERB}=*f*_{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*]_{SUBJECT} [*r sdm*]_{PREDICATE}. This interpretation is not uncommon in Late Egyptian studies,⁶ but also occasionally found in Middle Egyptian ones.⁷

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.⁸

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*]_{SUBJECT} [*r sdm*]_{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.⁹

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 or) into a single lemma (#23370).

6 Erman (1933²: 206, §426); Kruchten (1997: 62–63; 1994: 101–102); Junge (1996: 121, 135, 213, 341) who analyzes *ib* “als Subjektsnomen mit Suffix im Adverbialsatz (*ib=i r* ...; auch unter Weglassung von *r*): mein Herz ist gerichtet auf etw. > ich bin bestrebt/habe den Wunsch; mein Sinnen trachtet nach”.

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* i, 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: *Anksheshonqy* 1.x+17 (= Glanville 1955: pl. I) *p3 nti mti-w* [*r*] *h3t=y sm r mn-nfr* (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* (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) “think, surmise”

The existence of a verb *ib* “think, surmise”¹⁰ expressing epistemic modality¹¹ 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 ***ib-kw*** (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *w3w pw n w3d-wr*
 think-STAT.ISG 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 ***ib-kw*** (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *ink hnꜥ p3 [...]*
 think-STAT.ISG I with the
 “I thought, myself, with the [...]”
 (P. Boulaq 15 [= P. Cairo CG 58060] vso 1 = *KRI* III 157.5)¹²

When expressing meanings such as “think, surmise”, *ib* can also be found with the infix *-hr-* in earlier stages of Late Egyptian. Like in the case of the endings of the pseudoparticiple, the combination with *-hr-*, a marker of verbal inflection expressing deontic as well as epistemic modality,¹³ implies a verbal analysis of *ib*. This form *ib-hr=f* is noteworthy in itself: the infix *-hr-* is otherwise Earlier Egyptian, and *ib* is apparently the only verb that still has a synthetic *-hr-* marked form in earlier Late Egyptian; the form *ib-hr=f* is thereby seen to be a frozen one. Its distinguished literary flavor¹⁴ is manifest notably in its twofold occurrence in the high-flown rhetoric and *recherché* language of the *Satirical Letter* (Ex. 3–4). Occurrences in inscriptionally published texts arguably carry a similar flavor (Ex. 5–6):

Ex. 3 *3 pt wn*
 ART sky open:STAT
ib-hr=k (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *p3 hrw n-h3=k 3y=k p3y sd33*
 think-OBLV=2MSG ART enemy behind=2MSG begin:SBJV=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 bwpwy=i nri r-h3t=k rh-k k̄i=k*
 but NEG.PST=1SG be afraid before=2MSG know-STAT.1SG character=2MSG
ib-hr=i (𐎛𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀) *iw=k r hsf=s w3t hr-tp=k*
 think-OBLV=2MSG FUT=2MSG answer=3FSG 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.”¹⁵

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

The verb *ib*, here on the papyrus version of the *Satirical Letter*, is strikingly absent from the ostraca preserving the same text, which have the subjunctive form (*hsf=k*, instead of *ib-hr=i iw=k r hsf=s*), e.g., O. DeM 1178 ro 1–3 (= Fischer-Elfert 1983: 59–60) *hr bwpwy=(i) nri r-h3t=k rh-k k̄i=k ° hsf=k n=i w^c <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 *ib-hr=f* in the ostraca versions of the *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* (𐎛𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀) *i.hm-n=sn [p3 hk3 kn m]i bik (...)*
 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* 16.10–11)

- Ex. 6 *ib-hr=(t)* (𐎛𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀) *nm-wn r^c (n) t(3) 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.)’”¹⁶

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

- Ex. 7 *nm-wn gr m rm=k r ph-tw ntt [...]*
 NEG.EXIST be_silent:PTCP in beweeep=2MSG until reach-PASS what
3b-hr=i iw=k n=i r h̄h (...)
 desire-OBLV=1SG COMPL=2MSG to=1SG until eternity
 “There is none who is silent in beweeeping 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 (*3b-hr=i* as a spelling for *ib-hr=i*)¹⁷ would make it difficult to account for the volitional semantics of the construction in the present context, since all other instance of the verb *ib* 𐎛𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤 discussed in this paper express epistemic modality (“to think” or the like). Alternatively, this could therefore be an exceptional extension of the synthetic *-hr-* form to a semantically

15 This observation by the writer is evidently full of irony as the text goes on: *ist n3y=k mwnf hr °h^c n-h3=k* “but your aides are standing behind you!”

16 Wentz (1967: 11) translates: “(I) did believe that there was no limit to the sky.” On the initial use of the *sdm-hr=f* construction, see Wentz (1967: 11, n. d).

17 Vernus (1990: 65, n. 34).

(i.e., modally) and phonetically related verb, thus bearing additional witness to the verbal nature of *ib* in *ib-hr=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*** (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *ir-r-t* *r* *hsf* *n=f*
 think=3MSG do~IPFV-PASS to punish:INF to=3MSG
hr mdt tn ddt-n=f
 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.”

(*Eloquent Peasant* B2 117–118 = Parkinson 1991: 47)

Tb “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 (*nm-wn* NP: Ex. 6 and Ex. 9 below):

Ex. 9 ***ib-hr(=i)*** (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *nm-wn ky mi bʿr*
 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-Wāli, 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:

18 Uljas (2007: 123–124); Lefebvre (1955²: §708).

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* [*it*]=*k ib(=i) iwt zp hpr mrtt dr-b3h* “(...) 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* [*it*]=*k p<n> m h3st t[n] n zp hpr mrtt dr-b3h* “(...) 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 [...] **ib=k** (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *wrt*
 think=2SG greatly
rd-in hm=f iw-t [...] [
 give-PST Majesty=3SG come-SBJV
 ‘[...] ‘You think greatly.’
 His Majesty caused [...] to come [...]’ (Kaiemtjenenet, B 10–11 = *Urk. I* 182.1–2)

Ex. 11 *3hwt pw hn^c šsmtt* **ib=i** (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *is rf*
 horizons COP with Shesmetet think=1SG PTCL PTCL
 ‘(– ‘What are those two towns, O magician?’)
 – ‘It is the horizons and Shesmetet, at least I think so.’
 (– ‘You know those two towns, O magician?’)’ (CT V 113j-k T1C [= Spell 397])

1.4 Summary

As discussed, *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 *ib* occurs to be predicative (§1.3). The above discussion leads to two observations:

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

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

This verb *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:

- 𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 (Ex. 10, Old Kingdom; Ex. 8, Middle Kingdom; Ex. 3, New Kingdom), var. (Ex. 4, NK);
- 𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 (Ex. 1, MK; Ex. 2, 6/9, NK);
- 𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 (Ex. 11, MK; Ex. 5, NK).

As the script expresses, the epistemic verb *ib* 𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 was conceived of as distinct from the noun *ib* 𓂏 “heart”: the spelling of the verb does not ever include the iconic representation of the heart. An altogether different question is whether the verb *ib* 𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 and the noun *ib* 𓂏 “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 *ib=f r sdm* “he wishes/wants to hear”

Turning to *ib=f r sdm*, various arguments imply an analysis of this construction as based on the situational predicate construction, with the noun *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=f r sdm* is considered in relation to other idioms with *ib*, among which the tightly related *ib=f r NOUN* (§2.3).

2.1 *Ib=f r sdm* as a non-verbal construction

The non-verbal nature of *ib=f r 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=f r 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 N r sdm*, not **ib N r sdm*). E.g.:

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

Ex. 13 *ist **ib** n p3-r^c **r** *dt-t* t3 i3wt n swth*
 Q.IRR heart of Pre ALL give-INF ART function to Seth
 “Would Pre ever want to give the function to Seth?”
 (*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]*_{SUBJECT} *[r sdm]*_{PREDICATE}: literally “his heart is towards hearing”). The overall construction *ib=f r 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=f r sdm*, for its part, is broadly associated with relative present tense, deriving its temporal profile from the context. *Ib* in *ib=f r 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 See Polis (2009a: 274–75 & 2009b: 210, n. 26). To the four arguments mentioned here, one can add the analogous instances of *ib=f* functioning as the subject of an adverbial predicate *hr* + INFINITIVE. See the discussion below in §2.3.1.

22 In Late Egyptian, *bn* is also the negation of the subjunctive, an inflected form of the verb. However, the negation *bn sdm=f* 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 ib=f r sdm*.

Ex. 14 *in* (𓂏𓂏) *bn* *ib=k* (𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏) *r* *dt-t* *p3* *k3r*
 Q NEG heart=2MSG ALL give-INF ART boat
 “If you do not want to give the boat, (write to your wife so that she gives the 80 debens of copper ...)” (P. Cairo CG 58056 ro 8 = *KRI* III 255.9–10)

Ex. 15 *hr* *ir-iv* *bn* *ib* *n* (𓂏𓂏𓂏) PN (*r*) *sm-t*
 but COND NEG heart of PN ALL go-INF
 “But if PN does not want to go, (he will let his army and his chariotry go, that they kill his enemy.)” (Hittite Treaty [K], 13= *KRI* II 228.5–6)²³

– 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 *sri* *ib=w* *r* *hm(-t)=f* *iw* *bw* *iy-t* *ḥ*^c
 small heart=3PL ALL destroy-INF=3MSG SBRD NEG come-COMPL break
 “Their desire to destroy it is small, since the break did not come yet.”
 (*Satirical Letter*, P. Anastasi I ro 17.1-2 = Fischer-Elfert 1983: 118)

Ex. 17 *hm=k* *ib=k* *r* *ḥh*
 ignore=2MSG heart=2MSG ALL live
 “Did you forget your desire to live, (do you prefer death over good health)?”²⁴
 (O. Gardiner 320 ro 6 [= O. DeM 1595, 2–3] = *HO* 97.2)

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 NP *hr sdm* and 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 ḥh* 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 r sdm* were verbal, *r sdm* 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 NP* itself with verbs of oriented motion (expressing the GOAL),²⁵ 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 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 r sdm* is apparently documented only once with a full noun participant:

Ex. 18 *iw 3 b3k-im [ib]=f r rh shr nb n nb ʕ.w.s(...)*
 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, *b3k-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).²⁷ It could also be analyzed as non-verbal with the possessor, here *b3k-im*, regularly anticipated before an inalienably possessed entity, such as a body part, here *ib*: N_i BODY_PART=POSS_i.²⁸ 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 n N). The earliest occurrence is from the depths of the Second Intermediate Period, followed by further occurrences in the Eighteenth Dynasty:

Ex. 19 [...] *wnt⁹ ib n hm=f ʕ.w.s r ir-t*
 COMPL heart of Majesty=3MSG L.P.H ALL do-INF
mnw n imn-r^c [...]
 monument for Amun-Re
 “[...] that⁹ 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 = *HHBT* I 41)

Ex. 20 [*iw ib n hm=i r ir-t sp nfr (...)*]
 COMPL heart of Majesty=1SG ALL make-INF occasion good (...)
 “My Majesty wants to make a good occasion (...)”
 (Thutmosis III’s Inscription of the 7th Pylon = *Urk.* IV 181.17)³⁰

25 Stauder-Porchet (2009); Grossman & Polis (2012: 210–17).

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

27 With another subject-initial construction, compare, e.g., *iw 3 b3k-im ii 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 hm=f ib=f w3-w r dwt hr=s* (AUX.PST Majesty=3MSG heart=3MSG fall-STAT to evil on=3MSG) “His Majesty’s heart fell into a bad mood about it” (*Cheops’ Court* 9.12 = Blackman 1988: 12.3).

29 Following Ryholt (1997: 157, 306).

Ex. 21 *ir wnn ib n dhwtj r šd=s hr r^c (...)*
 TOPZ be:NMLZ heart of Thoth ALL recite=3FSG on Re
 “If Thoth wants to recite it for Re, (...)”

(*Heavenly Cow* 261–262 [S 78–79] = Hornung 1982: 25)³¹

This change — from *iw N ib=f r sdm* (Ex. 18) to *iw ib n 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 BODY_PART=POSS_i to $N N$), 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”, *rdi* “cause, give”, *m33* “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:³²

(NP _{SUBJECT}	=f / n ANIMATE	r	sdm) AP _{PRED}
<i>ib</i>				
heart	=POSS / of ANIM.	ALL	hear:INF	
<p>“his heart (/the heart of ANIMATE) is towards hearing” ≈ he (/ANIMATE) wants to hear</p>				
<p><i>With full noun subject, in earlier times:</i></p>				
(NP _{SUBJECT}	ANIM. <i>ib=f</i>	r	sdm) AP _{PRED}
ANIM. heart=POSS		ALL	hear:INF	

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.

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).

31 See already Kruchten (1997: 63, Ex. 17). On the dating of *Heavenly Cow* to the Eighteenth Dynasty, Stauder (2013: 301–22).

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 *mri* “to love → to wish”, and later *wh3* “to search → to wish → to love”.³³

The non-verbal analysis of *ib=f r sdm* is also consistent with the logographic writing of *ib* in this construction (𓂏), contrasting with 𓂏𓂏𓂏 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 𓂏 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 *wn tn iw ib(=i) r dm3 hms*
 hurry:IMP 2PL COMPL heart=1SG ALL tie sit: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 *in iw=k mi šs mk ib=i r m33 n=k wr 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!”³⁴

(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 *ir wnn ib=f r h3*
 TOPZ to_be:NMLZ heart.3MSG ALL fight
imy dd=f hrt-ib=f
 CAUS.IMP say:SBIV=3MSG what_he_wants

“If he wants to fight, let him say what he wants.” (*Sinuhe* B 125 = Koch 1990: 49)

- literarizing compositions of the Eighteenth Dynasty (Ex. 21);
- Late Egyptian narrative literature (numerous examples, also Ex. 13):

³³ A preliminary discussion in relation to complementation is found in Polis (2009b: 210–19).

³⁴ For the translation of *m33 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).

Ex. 25 *hr ib=i r di-t iry=k n=f nht*
 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^c-n hnw ʕ*
 CORP.PST=3MSG bring one vessel large
iw ib=f r itʕ prwt knw
 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 sʕ-kw m rmw*
 heart=1SG ALL eat feed_up-STAT:1SG with fishes
 “I want to eat so as to be satiated with fishes.”
 (O. DeM 1657 ro 1 = Posener 1980: pl. 75)

Ex. 28 *ib=i r šm-t hr pʕ[y=s hn]-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 mʕʕ=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 Amarnat 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 thn hn^c=f sd=i ht=f*
 PRS=1SG ALL engage:INF with=3MSG crush:SBJV=1SG belly=3MSG
ib=i r nhm kmt hw-t ʕmw
 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 1 ro 4–5 = *HHBT* I 84)

This occurrence documents the possibility of coordinated predicates, the second without *r* (thus *ib=f r sdm sdm*). In terms of register, note the occurrence of *ib=f r sdm* alongside the innovative construction *tw=i r thn*, an exploratory future construction.³⁸ Semantically, note the sequence: exploratory Future (*tw=i r thn*)–subjunctive (*sd=i*), then *ib=i r nhm ... hwt ...*

35 In the love-songs, the construction *ib=i r INFINITIVE* is a traditional incipit (Mathieu 1996: 71, n. 188), which sometimes appears to give rhythm to the literary composition.

36 Mathieu (1993: 344).

37 See the construction *mʕʕ n=k* in l. 9 (with n. 34 here).

38 See the discussion in Stauder (2013: 45, 94–96 with n. 105); Kroeber (1970: 93–97).

- Ex. 31 *p3y ʿnh n mʿt nty ib=i r dd=f*
 this oath of thruth REL heart=1SG ALL say=3MSG
nty bn dd=i sw m ʿd3 r nhh dt
 REL NEG say:SBJV=1SG 3MSG as false for ever ever
 “This oath of truth that I want to say,
 that I shall never ever denounce as being false.”
 (Amarna Boundary Stela A, 7–8 = Murnane & van Siclen III 1993: 90)

- Ex. 32 *ist ib n hm=f r s3 pr it(=f)*
 SBRD heart of Majesty=3MSG ALL enlarge temple father=3MSG
 “His Majesty was willing to enlarge the temple of his father.”
 (Karnak, Temple of Khonsu, Dedicatory inscription of the High Priest Herihor,
 = Epigraphic Survey 1981: pl. 143, B.2)

The construction *ib=f r 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 Rufe”, 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 *ib=f r 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 *ib=f r sdm* is naturally more common than elsewhere.

2.3 *Ib=f r sdm* in the broader linguistic context of Egyptian

2.3.1 *Ib=f r sdm* among other idioms with *ib*

In the construction *ib=f r sdm*, *ib* is associated with the expression of agent-oriented volitive modality. *Ib* “heart” is a central concept in the Egyptian cultural encyclopedia,³⁹ as is reflected for example in word-plays on *ib* in Middle Egyptian literature⁴⁰ and more broadly in the language itself. *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 Rueda (2003); Piankoff (1930).

40 E.g., Stauder (2013: 36–37); see also Ex. 8 above.

41 E.g. *ib tm-w n sh3-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); *in ib=i shnt st=i* (FOC heart=1SG promote:PTCP place=1SG) “It was my intelligence which promoted my position” (Leyde V.4 [Wepwawetaa], 6 = Boeser 1909: 3 and pl. IV); after FCD 14. Further, e.g., *iri m ib=f* “conceive in one’s heart” (*AL* 79.0155); see also Ex. 33 below.

42 E.g., *pty irf p3 ib* (what PTCL DEM heart) “What is this mood?” (*Cheops’ Court* 9.13 = Blackman 1988: 12.4); *ir-r=t p3 ib hr-m* (do-IPFV=2FSG 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., *wn-in nfr st hr ib=f* (AUX-PST good 3FSG on heart=3MSG) “And they were perfect on his heart” (a literary topos,

- *ntt m ib=f* (REL:FSG in heart=3MSG) “what is in his mind” > “what he wishes, desires” (very common, e.g., Ex. 51, see also §4.3);
- *iri r ib=f* (act according_to heart=3MSG) “to act according to one’s desire”;⁴⁴
- *rđi m ib=f* (put in heart=3MSG) “to determine”;⁴⁵
- *ih m ib=k* (what in heart=2MSG) “what do you want?”;⁴⁶
- *n-ib-n* (for heart of) “in order to”;⁴⁷ etc.⁴⁸

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 *k3-3-t ib=i pw hprt m ʿ=i*
 reflect-IPFV:PTCP-FSG heart=1SG COP occur:PTCP with arm=2MSG
 “It is whatever my heart ponders that happens through my arm.”
 (Year 16 Semna Stela [Berlin 1157], 5–6 = *Les* 83.23)

Ex. 34 *hmt ib=i r m33 nfrw=s iw=i hms-kw m-hnw=s*
 think heart=1SG ALL see:INF beauty=3FSG SBRD=1SG sit-STAT:1SG in=3FSG
 “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 ib=i m33 sšw p3wt tpt nt tm*
 COMPL desire-PST heart=1SG 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 = *HBT* 1 21)

Ex. 36 *3b{b}-n ib=i r m33 km3-n=i*
 desire-PST heart=1SG ALL see:INF create:REL-PST=1SG
 “(...) 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):

e.g., *Eloquent Peasant* B2 131, and *passim* in *Eloquent Peasant*, *Kagemni*, and *Cheops’ Court*); see also Ex. 50 below.

43 See also the compound lexeme *hrt-ib* “wish, desire” (e.g., *FCD* 195) and the related preposition *m/n-hrt-ib-n* “according to the desire of” (e.g., O. DeM 791 vso 1–2).

44 E.g., *AL* 78.0241.

45 E.g., *GEG* §303.

46 E.g., *AL* 79.0155.

47 E.g., Loprieno (1995: 100); Malaise & Winand (1999: §951).

48 E.g., *r pd n ib=f* “according to his will”; (*r-)**dr ib=f* “as much as he wants”; etc.

49 Beyond the examples quoted below, also, e.g., in the idiom *rđi m ib*, literally “place in someone’s heart”, where *ib* is the (necessarily agentive) causee’s. Thus *in ntr dd m ib=f ir-t r mk-t n=f kmt* (...) (FOC god put:PTCP in heart=3MSG do-INF to protect-INF for=3MSG Egypt) “It is the god who tells him to act to protect Egypt for him.” (Amenhotep II’s Sphinx Stela = *Urk.* IV 1282.5–6).

50 In addition to the constructions discussed in this section, one should mention the expression *ib r=k/t/in r* NOUN (heart ALL=2MSG/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*

Ex. 37 *ist ib=i hr it-t in-t hr k3-t mdw rhyt (...)*
 PTCL heart=1SG PROG take-INF bring-INF PROG reflect-INF words people
 “My mind was turning this way and that, reflecting the words of the people (...)”
 (Hatshepsut’s Northern Karnak Obelisk, Basis, D 16–17 = *Urk.* IV 365.6–7)

Ex. 38 *rdwi=i hr hwhw ib=i hr hrp=i*
 feet=1SG PROG scurry:INF=1SG heart=1SG PROG control:INF=1SG
ntr š3 wrt tn hr st3s=i
 god fate:PTCP flight DEM PROG drag:INF=1SG
 “My feet were scurrying, my heart was overmastering me,
 the god who fated this flight was dragging me.”
 (*Sinuhe* B 228–230 = Koch 1990: 67–68)

The speaker anxiously questions whether his flight from the king was of his own agency, claiming that he was not in control of himself.

Ex. 39 *ib=i hr hrp=i r ir-t n=f*
 heart=1SG PROG control:INF=1SG ALL do-INF for=3MSG
thn-wi m d3m (...)
 obelisk:DU in electron
 “My heart was directing me to do for him (viz., the god) two obelisks in
 electron.”
 (Hatshepsut’s Northern Karnak Obelisk, Basis, D 15 = *Urk.* IV 365.1–2)

Note the allative *r irt (...)*. In *Urk.* IV 750.6, the same expression is remarkably with the other expression for “heart”, *h3ti (h3ti=i hr hrp=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 Thutmose III’s Annals, a composition that more generally accommodates a high number of innovative expressions.⁵¹

Ex. 40 *ib=i hr tnr r k3b hbt*
 heart=1SG PROG be_strong ALL propagate:INF festival_offerings
 “(I am not unmindful of his shrine,
 I am determined to propagate (literally, my heart is being strong in order to
 propagate) the festival offerings.”
 (Ramses III’s Great Inscription of Year 8 [Medinet Habu], 46.34 = *KRI* V 42.12)

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.

r=k/tn r INFINITIVE. In this case, however, the meaning of the construction seems to be systematically a negative one, i.e., “pay attention not to do something”. See, e.g., *iw ib r=k r mdw m-di rmt nb* (SBRD heart ALL=2MSG ALL talk:INF with someone all) “and pay attention not to talk with anyone (... until Amun brings me back safe)” (P. BM EA 10326 vso 2-3 = *LRL* 19.4-5).

51 For *ib=f hr 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).

- Ex. 42 [m]k **ib**=i r nw [n[?]] nsw n dd=s
 look! heart=1SG ALL time of^o king of say=3FSG
 “Look, I crave for the time of the king that she mentioned.”⁵²
 (*Sporting King* C1.9-10 = Caminos 1956: pl. 11)
- Ex. 43 d=i rh=tn r-ntt **ib** n hm=i r mnhw [...]
 CAUS:SBJV=1SG know=2PL COMPL heart of Majesty=1SG ALL beneficial
 “I want you to know that my Majesty wants beneficial things [...]”⁵³
 (Thutmose III’s Inscription of the 7th Pylon = *Urk.* IV, 181.10–11)
- Ex. 44 n3 ihw m-di=k r-dr=w sp-sn
 ART oxen by=2SG all=3PL twice
 t3y n={i}k p3 nty **ib**=k 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 iw **ib**=k r p3 ih (...)
 and SBRD heart=2MSG to ART cow
 “whereas you want the cow (...)” (P. Anastasi V 13.4 = *LEM* 63.2–3)
- Ex. 46 inn **ib** n p3y rmt r=t
 if heart of this man to=2FSG
 imy k[=f] r b knbt irm t3y=f hmt (...)
 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 10416 vso 8–9 = *LRLC* pl. 19)
- Ex. 47 iw=i tst=f m [it] n nbw (...)
 FUT=1SG furnish=3MSG with barley with gold
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- Ex. 49 *ib=i r=k sft=n sw n-sp*
 heart=1SG to=2MSG untie:SBJV=1PL 3MSG together
iw=i hn^c=k w^c-kw
 SBRD=1SG with=2MSG be_alone-STAT:1SG
 “(Literally) My desire is towards you, that we untie it together,
 me being with you, alone!” (P. Harris 500 ro 4.5 = Matthieu 1996: pl. 11)

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 *ib n hm=k r kbb n m33*
 heart of Majesty=2MSG ALL cool:INF at see:INF
hn~n=sn hnt m-hd m-hnt (...)
 row~IPFV=3PL rowing downstream upstream
iw ib=k r kbb hr=s
 COMPL heart=2MSG ALL cool:INF under=3FSG
 “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 *ksn pw hdd-w hwrw*
 narrow COP destroy-PTCP wretch
ib-tw r ir-t ntt m ib=k
 heart-PASS ALL do-INF REL:FSG in heart=2MSG
 “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 *ksn pw hddw hwrw-ib | tw r irt 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: *ksn pw hdd hwrw-ib sw r irt 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 (*ib-tw – ntt m ib=k*). The triptych of maxims 2–4 (60–83 P: the maxims on disputants, all three beginning with *ir gm=k d3isw m 3=f (...)* “If you find a disputant in his hour (...)”) is more generally full of *ib*'s, which are disposed in a manner so as to structure the triptych symmetrically.⁵⁷

Ex. 52 *ib-tw r m33 imn*
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)

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

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

In the New Kingdom, *ib.tw r sdm* is also found in reference to the king⁶¹ (an “honorific passive”: although the referent is perfectly identified, a direct reference to him is avoided for pragmatic reasons⁶²). One can note in these cases the use of the “divine” classifier that bears either on the impersonal pronoun *tw* (Ex. 55) or on the lexeme *ib* (Ex. 56):

Ex. 55 *iw ib-tw (𐀓₁𐀓₂𐀓₃)r ir=f*
SBRD heart-PASS^{DIVINE} ALL do=3MSG
“(If there is some delay,) while One wants to do it, (...)”
(P. Turin 1882 ro 2.8 = *KRI* VI 72.9–10)

in his heart.” The option of projecting the segmentation as in L2 on P was initially taken by Žába (1956: 23), enshrined by the synoptic typographical disposition of the versions in his standard text edition, and taken over near-universally by subsequent readers. (A lone exception is Lichtheim (2006² [1975¹]: 64, 77) who reads *ib.tw* without further justification of her interpretation.) Yet this received segmentation of P solely relies on the assumption that P should be segmented like L2, even though the L2 is demonstrably secondary on other accounts as well (for example the change in grammatical persons). It also reflects a time in Egyptology when the construction *ib.tw r sdm* had not yet been described. For a variety of converging reasons, concerning both verse 81 and verse 82, as well as the broader context of these verses, *ib.tw r sdm* must be read in the earlier version of the text (P). In details, Stauder (in press); more concisely, Stauder (2013: 358–61).

57 Stauder (in press: §5.2, more broadly §5).

58 See Herbin (1982: 238, n. 1).

59 Picture: Fischer-Elfert (1997: 191). Fischer-Elfert (1997: 107) observes that *tw* does not refer to the king here but to an unspecified group of individuals.

60 This construction, possibly a proper name based on the classifier (𐀓₁𐀓₂𐀓₃𐀓₄𐀓₅), occurs in a lacunary context on the recto of the Berlin ostrakon, which is completed by O. Moscow 4478 (Matthieu & Lourié 1929, *non vidi*). On the verso is an early Nineteenth Dynasty copy of the end of the *Teaching of a Man to His Son*, see already Posener (1950: 71–74).

61 Polis (2009a: 178).

62 Stauder (2014a: 137–38).

- Ex. 59 *ḥ^c-n=tw ḥ^c-w im wr r ḥt 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 ḥwt-šhm*
 SBRD FUT=one FUT moor:INF ALL Hutsekhem
 “(...) when one will moor at Hutsekhem.”
 (P. Berlin 10463 ro 2 = Caminos 1963: pl. VI-VIA)
- 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 *ḥr mk tw=tw ḥr in 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*:

<i>iw=tw</i>	<i>r mni</i> (Ex. 60)
FUT= one :SBJ	FUT moor
<i>ib-tw</i>	<i>r sdm</i> (Ex. 51-54)
heart:SBJ-??	ALL hear
<i>ib=f</i>	<i>r sdm</i>
heart:SBJ= 3MSG :POSS	ALL hear

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 pšy=tw šm* (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 *pšy=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.⁶⁸ The condition is semantic: to be passivized, the verbal event must have an agent in its semantic representation. For example, taking intransitives, *pri* “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*
 NEG go_out-HAB-PASS for fear=3MSG
 “There was no going out for fear of them (*scil.* the troops).”
 (Mo’alla II.η.2, Inscription #7 = Vandier 1950: 202)⁶⁹
- Ex. 64 *sdr 0 n=f hdr r^c nb*
 lie:IPFV [SBJ] for=3MSG be_angushed-STAT day every
 “Because of it one lies angushed every day.”
 (*Ptahhotep* 10 P = Žába 1956: 16)⁷⁰

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.⁷¹ 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.⁷² 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

68 Discussion in Stauder (2014a: 71–79).

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 Semna 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 *ib=f r sdm*. In doing so, *ib.tw r sdm* goes one degree further on the nominality–verbality scale.

4 Alternative construals of *ib* as a verb?

Possible evidence from the New Kingdom

In all the examples discussed so far, *ib=f r 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 (*-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 *ib* as a verb.

Instances in which the infinitive is not introduced by the allative preposition *r* (*ib=f ø sdm*) are occasionally encountered (§4.1), as are instances lacking a coreferential person marking on *ib* in relative clauses (*ink p3 nty ib=ø r INFINITIVE*, §4.2). As will be seen, the examples in these two categories do not represent reliable evidence for a verbal reanalysis of *ib*.

There are, however, rare examples which do seem to suggest a reanalysis — or, perhaps better, alternative construals — of *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 *ib=f r sdm* (ca. 2500–1000 BCE).

4.1 *Ib=f ø r 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* + INFINITIVE), and instead support a verbal interpretation (*ib*_{VERB-SUBJECT-OBJECT}_{INFINITIVE}). There are, however, several other factors that need be taken into consideration, with the result that *ib=f ø r 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 *ib*=SUFFIX and the infinitive, a place where scribes are likely to drop small graphemes:

Ex. 65 *ib=i* | *šm-t m-hnty r iwnw*
 heart=1SG [LINE BREAK] go-INF southwards ALL Heliopolis
 “I want to go southwards to Heliopolis.”⁷³(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 *rḥ*:

73 This example is translated by Caminos (1954: 60) “[m]y heart goes southwards to Heliopolis”, which shows that he analyzed the proposition as a First Present with an omitted preposition *ḥr*.

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 *mntk p3 nty ib=i r ptr=k sdm ʕ=k m-mnt*
 2SG ART REL heart=1SG ALL see:INF=2SG hear:INF condition=2SG daily
 “You are the one whom I want to see and hear news about daily!”
 (P. Griffith ro 5-6 = *LRL* 12.6–7)
- Ex. 71 *mntk p3 nty ib=i r sdm ʕ=k m-mnt*
 2SG ART REL heart=1SG ALL hear:INF condition=2SG daily
 “You are the one whom I want to have news about daily!”
 (P. Bologna 1094 ro 7.5 = *LEM* 7.4–5)
- Ex. 72 *mntk p3 nty ib=s⁷⁵ r ptr=k r sdm ʕ=k m-[mnt]*
 2SG ART REL heart=3FSG ALL see:INF=2SG ALL hear:INF condition=2SG daily
 “You are the one whom she wants to see, to hear news about daily.”
 (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 ʕ sdm* and *p3 nty ib=ʕ 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 t3 m whm-ʕ*).

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 haplogy (<*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 *ist rf ib ntr pn shpr t3 m whm-ʕ*
 SBRD PTCL ?want? god DEM fashion:INF land anew
r smn t3w t3-mri hr nhtw wrw
 ALL establish:INF borders Egypt under victories great
 “Now, this god was willing to fashion the land anew
 (and) to establish the borders of Egypt through great victories”⁷⁶
 (Ramses III’s Second Lybian War [Medinet Habu], 3-4 = *KRI* V 59.4–6)

75 With $\left| \right|$ corrected over $\left| \right|$ (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 *smʒ=k nty ib=k r mrr=k*
 slay:SBJV=2MSG REL ?want?=2MSG as like~IPFV=2SG
 “(May you give the breath to the ones among them which you wish [*ʒbb=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 [*iw=f ir-t n pʒ nty nb ib=f*]
 SBRD=3MSG do-INF in ART REL all ?want?=3MSG
 “(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 *pʒ 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 pʒ nty m ib=k r=f*
 IMP-say to=1SG ART REL in heart=2MSG ALL=3MSG
 “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 *nn sw hr hʒkw m šhrw šhw*
 NEG.EXIST 3SG under plunders by plans counsels
nty m ib=i (𓏏𓏏) r šhpr tʒ-mri (...)
 REL in heart=1SG ALL fashion:INF 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 *mtw=w ir-t bt3 r rmt*
 CORD.MOD=3PL do-INF fault against someone
rmt nb nty ib n=w p3(y)-ndm
 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)

Ib here combines, not with the allative preposition *r*, but with the benefactive *n* + 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 *ib* “heart”. The syntax of the relative clause would make it very difficult not to interpret *ib* as a verb, with a behavior close to that of *mri* “to love, to like” in relative clauses of texts from the post-Ramesside era.⁷⁸

In sum, there are some indications that *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 *ib=f r sdm*. Furthermore, these instances stand against a number of instances of *ib=f 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 *ib* “think, surmise” (§1) and a non-verbal predicative construction with the allative preposition *r*, *ib=f r sdm* “he wishes/wants to hear” (lit. “his heart is (directed) towards hearing: [*ib=f*]SUBJECT [*r sdm*]PREDICATE, §2). The verb *ib* “think, surmise” is probably denominal, from *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 *ib* is associated with the expression of volition. If so, both *ib* “think, surmise” and *ib=f r sdm* “he wishes/wants to hear” are ultimately related to the noun *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 (𓆎𓆏𓆑𓆒 (and variants) vs. 𓆑). The graphemic contrast is thus seen to reflect the morphosyntactic one: while *ib* in *ib=f r sdm* is written like the noun *ib*

77 Gunn (1955: 91, n. 11): “Lit., ‘has desired’; a good example of 𓆑 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 *rmt nb nty ib=f n=w*.

78 *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 st person	F	feminine	POSS	possessive
2	2 nd person	FUT	future	PROG	progressive
3	3 rd 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 /
COND	conditional marker	MOD	modal		relative form
COP	copula	NEG	negation	SBJ	subject
CORD	coordination	NMLZ	nominalized	SBJV	subjunctive
DAT	dative	OBLV	obligative (epis- temic or deontic)	SBRD	subordinating particle
DEM	demonstrative	PASS	passive	SG	singular
DU	dual	PL	plural	STAT	stative
EXIST	existential	PN	proper name	TOPZ	topicalizer

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