



**The First Perfect ury.f smtr:
New Evidence on its First Attestation**

By

Yassmin Atef Ahmed Fathy

Faculty of Art, Assiut University.

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Abstract:

The Non-literary texts are important sort of texts that represent the events and missions of daily life in Ancient Egypt. The language of these texts was the low dialect or the so-called vernacular dialect. Many periphrastic constructions appeared in these texts such as: First Present, Second Tense, Third Future....etc. One of them was the First Perfect Construction *iry.f smtr*. This paper is a part of my MA thesis⁽¹⁾ and it is dedicated to study the First Perfect construction in the Non-literary texts of the 19th dynasty.

Although *Junge* pointed that First Perfect was not attested before the Demotic and Roman Period, This study proves that it was found in the early Late Egyptian period particularly at the time of 18th dynasty. Furthermore, the study of the construction *iry.f smtr*⁽²⁾ lingheits on its origin, morphology, function and attestation.

Keywords:

First Perfect *iry.f smtr*, Late Egyptian (L.E), Non-literary Texts, Ramessid Period.

ملخص :

تُعد النصوص الإدارية نوعاً هاماً من النصوص في المرحلة المتأخرة، وقد كُتبت أغلبها باللغة المصرية المتأخرة. ويظهر بهذه النصوص العديد من التراكيب المتأخرة التي تتبع النظام التحليلي للمرحلة المتأخرة، ومنها: تركيب المضارع الأول، تركيب الزمن الثاني، تركيب المستقبل الثالث وغيرها.

وعلى خلاف ما ذكره *Junge* أن تركيب الماضي الأول لم يظهر إلا في النصوص الديموطيقية المتأخرة ثم الفترة الرومانية إلا أن الدراسة الحالية أثبتت ظهور تركيب الماضي الأول منذ البدايات المبكرة للمرحلة المتأخرة وذلك في عصر الأسرة الثامنة عشرة ثم استمر استخدامه بعد ذلك في عصر الرعامسة.

وسيتناول هذا المقال دراسة تركيب الماضي الأول في النصوص الإدارية لعصر الأسرة التاسعة عشرة من حيث: تطوره ووظيفته وظهوره مدعماً ذلك بالأمثلة.

-The construction of the First Perfect:

The First Perfect is one of the periphrastic constructions. It follows the analytic system, consisting of the auxiliary verb *iry* following by the subject (nominal / pronominal, φ) and infinitive. The infinitive in this construction should be more than three radicals.⁽³⁾The First Perfect is common with the *4ae* infinitives that consist of repeating syllables such as: *knkn*⁽⁴⁾, *wšwš*⁽⁵⁾, *hbhb*⁽⁶⁾, *ꜥkꜥ*⁽⁷⁾, *ptpt*⁽⁸⁾, *sksk*⁽⁹⁾, *ndnd*⁽¹⁰⁾...etc.

The function of the First Perfect expresses an event that happened in the past, hence, the construction *iry.f smtr* could be translated "He examined".

It can be supposed that this construction developed from Middle Egyptian to the Coptic Period as follows:⁽¹¹⁾

M.E	T.E	L.E	Coptic
<i>smtr.n.f</i>	<i>smtr.f</i>	<i>iry.f smtr</i>	ⲁⲩⲘⲟⲩⲧⲙ̅

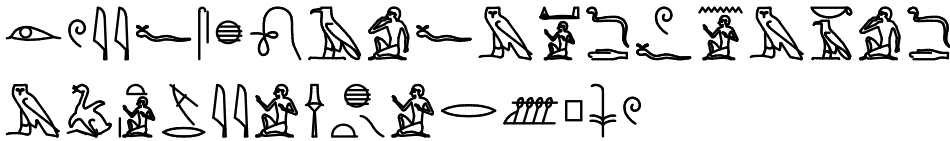
Junge supposed that this construction *iry.f smtr* does not occur before the Late Demotic Texts and Roman period⁽¹²⁾, but this current study presents new attestation of the Perfect that dates back to the 18th dynasty in these two examples:

iry.i smtr p3-h3rw n pr-Dhwty i.h3b.k n.i hr.f

“I inquired about the Syrian of the temple of Thoth, about whom you hve sent to me”⁽¹⁵⁾

In this example there are two events: the former one is “*i.h3b.k*” and the latter is “*iry.i smtr*” , for this reason the oldest event must be translated in Perfect while the latter event translated in Past Simple Tense.

Ex (4):



iry.f shw3.f m-di.i dd.f n.i m k3 dd

m t3ty Mry-shmt r. šsp.φ sw

“He lied to me and told me another story: it is the vizier Merysekhmet who took him”⁽¹⁶⁾

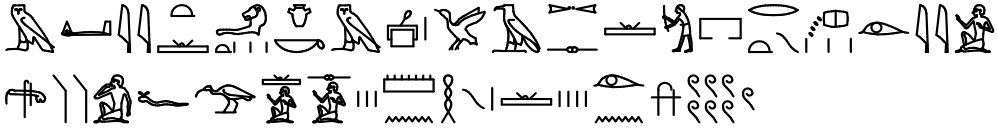
Ex (5):



iry.f shw3 irm n3y.f sšw (š3h.w) r-dd:bw-pwy.n ptr.f

“He and his scribes lied, saying: we did not see him his”⁽¹⁷⁾

Ex (6):



*m-dyt ḥ3ty.k m-s3 p3- ts prt iry.i smtr.f gm.i s 3 mnḥ 1 dmd 4
iry.n<.w> ḥ3r 700*

“Do not worry about the seed-sowing assessment. I inquired about it and found (that) three men and one stripling, total four, make seven hundred sacks”⁽¹⁸⁾

Ex (7):



s 2 w^cr m-im.sn r-ḥ3t ḥry-ih Nfr-ḥtp iw iry.f knkn.s

“Two men amongst them flee before the face of the stable-master Neferhotpe, as he was beating them”⁽¹⁹⁾

Ex (8):



mtw.f smi t3ty n Msy mtw.f dit rwi.f m t3ty r-dd: iry.f knkn.i

“.....and he (Paneb) accused the vizier to Moisy, and he had him dismissed from being vizier, (Paneb) saying: He beated me”⁽²⁰⁾

The second, third and sixth examples contain the infinitive *smtr* which has many meanings (to examine , to investigate, to give testimony)⁽²¹⁾ and it widely used with First Perfect in Ramessid Period.⁽²²⁾ This may reflect that this construction was used officially in important documents in this period.







Conclusion:

The construction of the First Perfect is one of the innovations of Late Egyptian. Its earliest occurrence came from the 18th dynasty. Moreover it also appeared in the texts of the 19th and 20th dynasties.

Although *Neveu* points out that *4ae* infinitives are often paraphrased using the auxiliary verb *iri*,⁽²³⁾ it also could be used in the synthetic *s $\overline{d}m.n.f$* ⁽²⁴⁾ and *s $\overline{d}m.f$* ⁽²⁵⁾ forms.

From the previous point of view, one supposes that there is no need to say that the innovation of First Perfect was to express the perfect from more than *3ae* infinitives. This new innovation was to create new Perfect construction that could adapt to the new periphrastic system of Late Egyptian. The First Perfect

construction can include both of transitive and intransitive infinitives.

The morphology of the auxiliary verb *iry*   with the end "y"  distinguishes the First Perfect construction. Additionally the absence of the phonetic complement  is an evidence that the construction expresses perfective events. Most of the Ramessid examples occurred with the morphology  .

Both of preterite *s \overline{d} m.f* and First Perfect have the same function but they have different linguistic systems. Despite the first appearance of this construction from the time of 18th dynasty, the transitional preterite *s \overline{d} m.f* was used widely in all sorts of texts in that period.

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(1) MA. thesis in Arabic in title: Late Egyptian Constructions in Non-literary Texts of the 19th Dynasty, Faculty of Arts, Assuit University, under the supervision of Prof.Dr.Hanan Abbas and Dr.Omar Osman.

(2) According to an oral discussion with Prof. Dr. Ahmad Elnassari, he pointed that we should say *iry.f smtr* instead of *iry.f sdm* because *sdm* is a *3ae* infinitive, while the infinitive in First Perfect must be more than three radicals.

(3) Spiegelberg 1925:81; Winand 1992:197; Johnson 2004:115; Junge 2005:155; Neveu 2015:41.

(4) LEM, 3(8); *KRI* IV, 412(8); *KRI* V, 471(16) ; LEM,101(11).

(5) *KRI* VI , 579(8-11).

(6) LEM, 14(5); *KRI* V, 91(8).

(7) *KRI* V,24(13).

(8) *KRI* V,91(11).

(9) *KRI* V,91(13).

(10) *KRI* V, 563(15); *KRI* VI, 833(16)-834(1).

(11) Polotsky 1957:109; Kroeber 1970:98; Frandsen 1974:9; Černý-Groll 1993:155; Loprieno 1995:91, 220; Junge 2005:97; Allen 2013:145.

(12) Junge 2005:155.

(13) P.Ebers, 42(9-10).

(14) *KRI* III, 428(14-15)= The Inscription of Mes, L.16.

(15) *KRI* IV,79(12)= P.Bologna 1086, L.9.

- (16) *KRI* IV, 80(6-7)= P.Bologna 1086, L.15.
- (17) *KRI* IV,80(9-10)= P.Bologna 1086, L.16.
- (18) *KRI* IV,81(1-2)= P.Bologna 1086, L.20-22.
- (19) LEM, 3(8)= P.Bologna 1094, L.3,2-3,3.
- (20) *KRI* IV,412(7-8) = P.Salt 124, rt.2,17-2,18.
- (21) Lesko II 2002:45.
- (22) *KRI* III, 428(14-15); *KRI* IV, 79(12); *KRI* IV, 81(1-2); *KRI* VI , 473(14-15); *KRI* VI , 475(3-4); *KRI* VI , 479(11); *KRI* VI , 487(6); *KRI* VI, 821(1).
- (23) Neveu 2015:41.
- (24) *ptpt.n hps.f psdt* =Urk IV, 555(17); *ḥḥk.n.w sḥt n Kmt* = *KRI* IV, 4(9-10).
- (25) *hk3 pf ndnd.f hnc.i*= Sin.B.113; *iw in.i sw r knkn.f*=*KRI* III, 503(5-6); *t3y hrt nty tw.i ḥḥ.kwi ḥḥr.s* = *KRI* VI, 520(16).

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