

# LREC-COLING 2024 / Joint Workshop MWE-UD

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<https://multiword.org/mweud2024/>

## Identification and Annotation of Body Part Multiword Expressions in Old Egyptian

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### 1. Definition of Body Part Multiword Expression

A body part MWE may be defined as a sequence of at least two lexicalized components, one of which is a body part name, whose semantic idiosyncrasy results from the association of a body part with a figurative meaning and another component(s), for example:

1. English:  
LM: "Listen to your heart."  
FT: "Act according to your feelings."

2. Latin (Plaut., *Asin.* 729):  
nec caput nec pes  
neither-neg head nor-neg foot  
LM: "Neither head nor foot."  
FT: "Completely wrong."

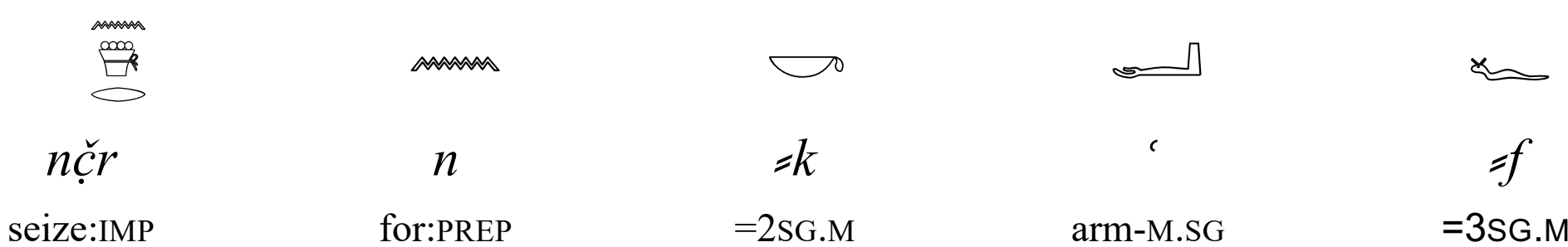
### 2. Methodology

The selection and identification of Old Egyptian body part MWEs was carried out through a series of verification tests:

**Test 1.** Does the body part noun have a literal meaning?

- Yes ⇒ It is not an MWE, for example:

3. Pyramid Texts § 49 Nt:

  
nçr n sk ' ef  
seize:IMP for:PREP =2SG.M arm-M.SG =3SG.M

LM: "Seize for yourself his arm."  
FM: "Seize his arm!"

- No ⇒ Test 2:

**Test 2.** Does the body part noun have a metonymic meaning?

- Yes ⇒ It is a potential MWE ⇒ Test 3, for example:

4. Pyramid Texts § 1675b:

  
ssm cw ib sk  
guide:SBJV =2SG.M heart-M.SG =2SG.M

LM: "Your heart shall guide you."  
FT: "Your will shall guide you"

- No ⇒ It is not an MWE, see test 1:

**Test 3.** Is the body part noun used with an idiosyncratic meaning in close syntactic relationship with a head word?

- Yes ⇒ It is an MWE, for example:

5. Pyramid Texts § 116a:

  
inç (si) hr sk  
ask:SBJV =1SG face-M.SG =2SG.M

LM: "May (I) ask your face."  
FT: "Hail to you!"

- No ⇒ It is a fuzzy MWE consisting of a body part noun with a metonymic meaning (see test 2).

**Test 4.** Is the body part noun used in a lexicalized expression with an idiosyncratic meaning?

- Yes ⇒ It is an MWE. This is the usual case for complex prepositions (CPs), for example:

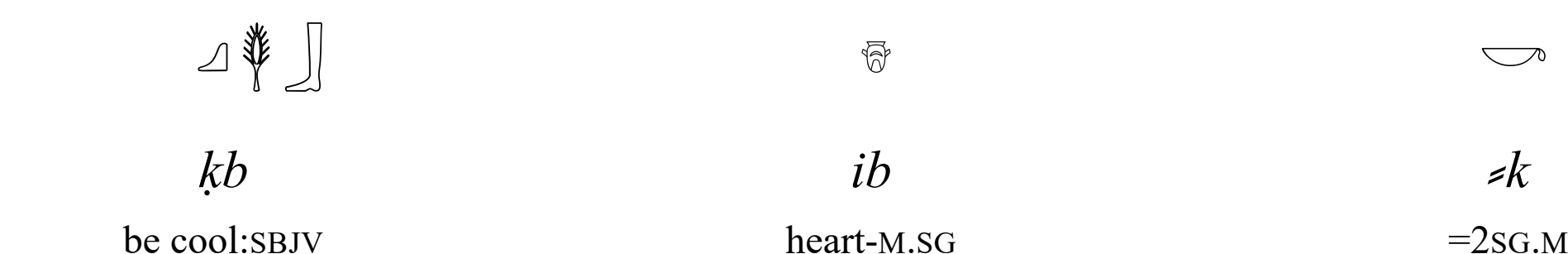
6. Pyramid Texts § 54b:

  
ft hft hr ef  
lift up:IMP in front of:PREP face-M.SG =3SG.M

LM: "Lift up in front of his face."  
FT: "Lift up before him."

**Note:** Body part MWEs are clearly identified when their figurative meaning results from the close association of the body part noun with its head word, for example:

7. Pyramid Texts § 22b:

  
kb ib sk  
be cool:SBJV heart-M.SG =2SG.M

LM: "Your heart may be cool."  
FT: "You may be calm (i.e. satisfied)."

In Egyptian the **figurative meaning** of a body part MWE is often related to the idiosyncrasy of this language, as the following example shows:


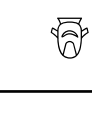
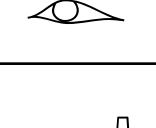

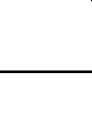
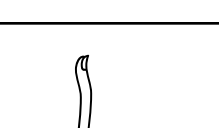



8. Pyramid Texts § 417b:

  
im(i) rft  
one who is on-M.SG foot-M.SG

LM: "One who is on foot"  
FT: "Enemy"



### 3. List of body part nouns used in Old Egyptian MWEs

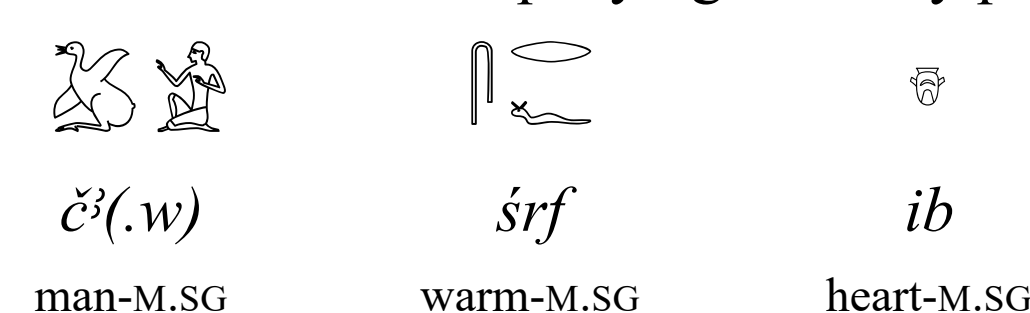
	<i>iwf</i>	flesh
	<i>ib</i>	heart
	<i>ir.t</i>	eye
	'	arm
	<i>'n.t</i>	nail
	<i>r'</i>	mouth
	<i>rmn</i>	shoulder
	<i>rft</i>	foot
	<i>hr</i>	face
	<i>h't</i>	forehead
	<i>h'ti</i>	heart
	<i>hpsš</i>	strong arms (biceps)
	<i>h.t</i>	belly
	<i>š'</i>	back
	<i>šni</i>	hair
	<i>tp</i>	head
	<i>ç.t</i>	body
	<i>çb'</i>	finger
	<i>çr.t</i>	hand

### 4. Typology

Old Egyptian body part MWEs can be classified according to a universal typology as nominal, prepositional and verbal.

#### 4.1 Nominal Multiword Expressions


The head word accompanying the body part noun can be a noun, an infinitive, an adjective or a participle:

  
ç'(w) šrf ib  
man-M.SG warm-M.SG heart-M.SG

LM: "A warm man of heart."  
FM: "A hard-working man!"

#### 4.2 Prepositional Multiword Expressions

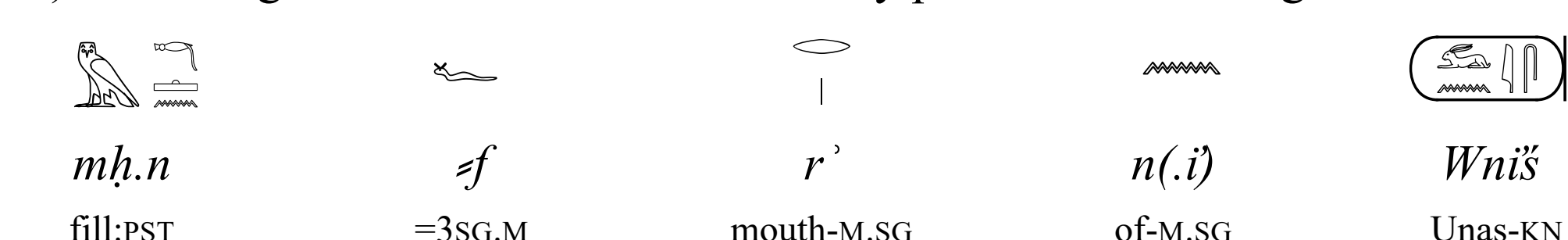
Body part nouns are used as modifiers in prepositional multiword expressions. Two types of PMWEs can be found in Old Egyptian: prepositional idioms (PIs) and complex prepositions (CPs):

  
hr ' š' (si) šmš.w  
under:PREP arm-M.SG son-M.SG (=1SG) eldest-M.SG

LM: "(...) under the arm of (my) eldest son."  
FT: "(...) under the care of (my) eldest son."

#### 4.3 Verbal Multiword Expression

Body part nouns are also modifiers in VMWEs. Old Egyptian body part VMWEs are usually verbal idioms (IDs) consisting of a verb as a head and a body part noun with a figurative meaning:

  
mh.n ef r' n(i) Wniš  
fill:PST =3SG.M mouth-M.SG of-M.SG Unas-KN

LM: "(...) he filled the mouth of Unas."  
FT: "(...) he fed Unas."

### 5. Conclusion

Research on MWEs in Egyptian will be continued following these phases:

- 1) Publication of the selected examples in PARSEME after having annotated them manually in the Universal Dependencies treebank "Egyptian-Ujaen".
- 2) Identification and classification of new Old Egyptian MWEs following the rules discussed in this paper.
- 3) Once the synchronic study of MWEs in Old Egyptian is completed, their analysis in later stages of Egyptian will follow in order to identify changes during their historical development.

