



Two kinds of definiteness in Coptic

Barbara Egedi

Research Institute for Linguistics
Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Crossroads

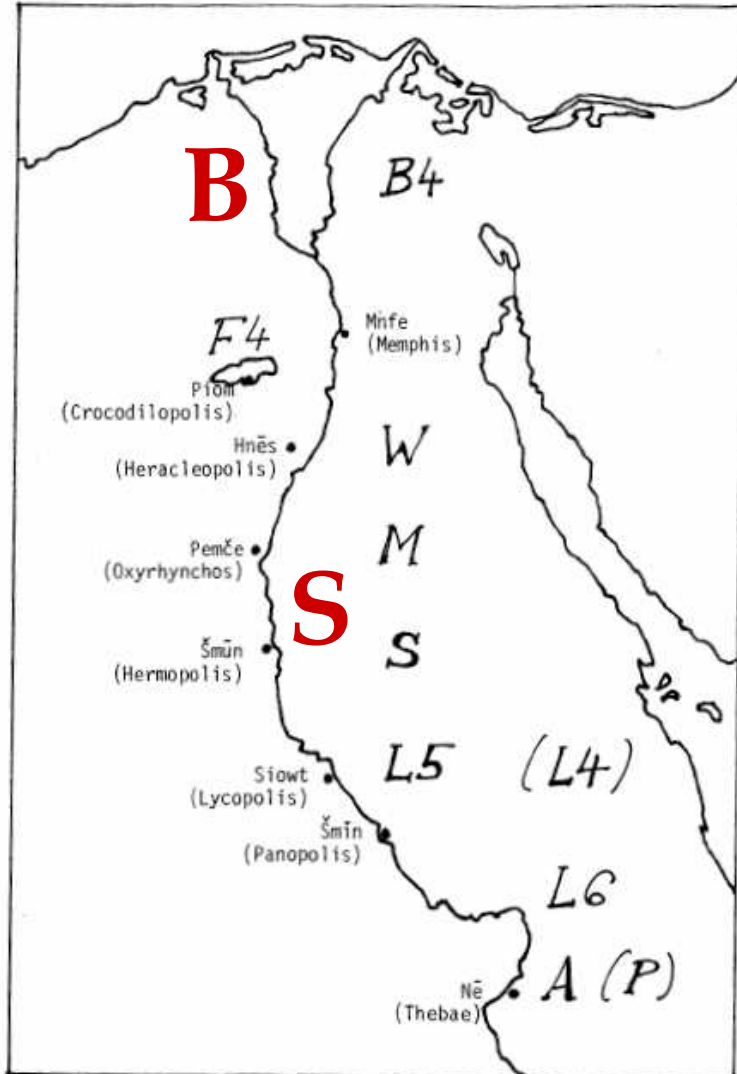
Whence and whither?
18 February 2016. Berlin

Introduction

Aims:

- ◆ to describe in a comparative way how definiteness is marked in certain Coptic dialects
- ◆ to answer the question: What is the functional difference between the two series of definite determiners in dialects that make use of a double system of determination?
- ◆ Proposal
 - The functional split can be explained by distinguishing different strategies of referential identification
 - hypothesis not yet widely tested in texts, but supported by linguistics typology and diachronic studies

Coptic dialects and definite article in Egyptian



← Dialects between the 4th és 6th centuries
After Funk (1988: 182)

About the Coptic dialects:

inter alia Funk (1988), Kahle (1954: 193-278),
Kasser (1991), Vergote (1973: 53-59),
Worrell (1934: 63-82), and Egedi (2012: 17-28)

DEM > DEF.ART.
 p^3 -series > π-series

About the LE articles:

Černy-Groll (1978: §3.2. and §3.5); Erman (1933: §§171-182);
Junge (1996: §2.1.1-3);
Loprieno (1995: 69);
Neveu (1996: §2.1)

More detailed analyses of the emergence of the article:
Kroeber (1970); Loprieno (1980); Kupreyev (2014)

About definiteness and reference

The semantic and pragmatic notion of definiteness can be considered to be universal, only its grammatical realization is a language specific property
(cf. Lyons 1999, esp. Ch. 1. and 7. For an overview, see also Abbott 2004)

Article:

- ◆ many languages have no article at all ,
- ◆ in languages that have an article, these articles may even behave differently
- ◆ there are languages that distinguish more than one sets of definite articles

Definiteness = referential identification

- the speaker signals that the hearer is able to assign a referent for a certain noun phrase because i.) accessible in context or
ii.) familiar via general knowledge of the world
- existence and uniqueness relative to the discourse situation
(cf. Hawkins 1991)

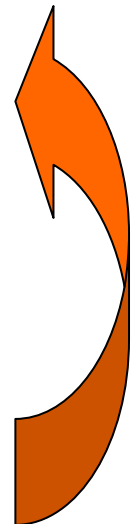
Strategies for referential identification

anaphoric use	"There's <i>a new café</i> in our street. We have nothing in the fridge. Let's go and see what we can get in the café. "
associative-anaphoric use	"There's <i>a new café</i> in our street. The cheesecake is just perfect!" / " The owner has just come back from Japan."
larger situational use = inherent uniqueness	" The sun is shining brightly." "I am never bored with the Italian cuisine "
situational uniqueness	"There are many new cafés in the city. " <i>(here, where we live)</i> "What does the cheesecake cost?" <i>(here, in the café)</i>

Strategies for referential identification

anaphoric use	"There's <i>a new café</i> in our street. We have nothing in the fridge. Let's go and see what we can get in the café ."
associative-anaphoric use	"There's <i>a new café</i> in our street. The cheesecake is just perfect!" / " The owner has just come back from Japan."
larger situational use = inherent uniqueness	" The sun is shining brightly." "I am never bored with the Italian cuisine "
situational uniqueness	"There are many new cafés in the city ." <i>(here, where we live)</i> "What does the cheesecake cost?" <i>(here, in the café)</i>

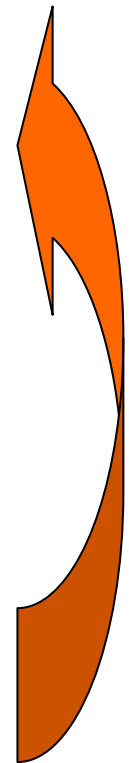
extra-linguistic identification



Strategies for referential identification

anaphoric use	"There's <i>a new café</i> in our street. We have nothing in the fridge. Let's go and see what we can get in the café ."
associative-anaphoric use	"There's <i>a new café</i> in our street. The cheesecake is just perfect!" / " The owner has just come back from Japan."
larger situational use = inherent uniqueness	" The sun is shining brightly." "I am never bored with the Italian cuisine "
situational uniqueness	"There are many new cafés in the city ." (<i>here, where we live</i>) "What does the cheesecake cost?" (<i>here, in the café</i>)

general knowledge of the world



Basic conceptual lexical types of nouns (Löbner 2011)

	-U	+U
-R	<p>sortal nouns <e,t></p> <p><i>stone, book, adjective, water, etc.</i></p>	<p>individual nouns <e></p> <p><i>moon, weather, date, Maria, etc.</i></p>
+R	<p>relational nouns <e,<e,t></p> <p><i>sister, leg, part, attribute, etc.</i></p>	<p>functional nouns <e,e></p> <p><i>father, head, age, subject, etc.</i></p>

Löbner (1985): semantic and pragmatic definiteness

Löbner (2011): semantic and pragmatic uniqueness
+ congruent vs. incongruent definiteness

Definite articles in Sahidic

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>(1) a. πρωμε
 p-rôme
 DEF:SG.M-man
 ‘the man’</p> | <p>b. τωψε
 t-sôše
 DEF:SG.F-field
 ‘the field’</p> | <p>c. ἄρωμε/ωψε
 n-rôme/sôše
 DEF:PL-man/field
 ‘the men/fields’</p> |
| <p>(2) a. περρου
 pe-hrouu
 DEF:SG.M-voice
 ‘the voice’</p> | <p>b. τεσσιμε
 te-shime
 DEF:SG.F-woman
 ‘the woman’</p> | <p>c. νεσση
 ne-snêu
 DEF:PL-brother
 ‘brothers/siblings’</p> |

	SG.M	SG.F	PL
definite article	π-	τ-	ἄ-
”long” definite article	πε-	τε-	νε-
πi-determination	πi-	†-	ni-
demonstrative article	πει-	τει-	νει-
possessive article	πεϙ-	τεϙ-	νεϙ-

Formenlehre:

Layton 2000: §52; Steindorff 1951: §136-139; Stern 1880: §§227-230;
 Till 1961: §§87-91, 94-99; Vergote 1983: §§121-122, 124-125.

Definite articles in Sahidic

pi-determination: reduced form of demonstratives?

Polotsky (1957:229-230): exhaustive listing of contexts

- in temporal and spatial expressions
- in comparative constructions of the form $\bar{n}\theta\epsilon \bar{n}\text{-}n\iota\text{-}$ ‘like’ (always in plural!)
- in the expression $\pi\iota\text{-}\dots \bar{n}\text{-}\omicron\gamma\omega\tau$ ‘the same...’. (cf. Layton 2000: §58: “insisting upon identification”)
- an affective/emotive use in attributive constructions (e.g. something described as admirable or horrible)

	SG.M	SG.F	PL
definite article	$\pi\text{-}$	$\tau\text{-}$	$\bar{n}\text{-}$
”long” definite article	$\pi\epsilon\text{-}$	$\tau\epsilon\text{-}$	$n\epsilon\text{-}$
emotive / demonstrative? article	$\pi\iota\text{-}$	$\dagger\text{-}$	$n\iota\text{-}$
demonstrative article	$\pi\epsilon\iota\text{-}$	$\tau\epsilon\iota\text{-}$	$n\epsilon\iota\text{-}$
possessive article	$\pi\epsilon\varphi\text{-}$	$\tau\epsilon\varphi\text{-}$	$n\epsilon\varphi\text{-}$

The determiner $\pi\iota\text{-}$ and its corresponding pronominal form $\pi\iota$: Lambdin (1983: 30.8. *remote demonstratives*); Layton (2000: §58. *affective demonstrative*); Steindorff (1951: §89 and §136); Stern (1880: §§227); Vergote (1983: §§127-128)

Definite articles in Sahidic

- (3) ΠΕΟΟΥ ΠΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤ̄Μ̄ ΠΙΟΥΑ ΝΟΥΩΤ
p-εοου p-ebol hitm pi-oua n-ouôt
DEF:SG.M-glory DEF:SG.M-out from DEF:SG.M-one ADJZ-single
‘How will ye be able to believe, taking glory from one another,
and the glory which is from the/this only one ye seek not for.’ [John 5:44]

- (4) ΑΦΟΥΩΨΒ ΧΕ ΠΙΡΩΜΕ ΕΤΟΥΜΟΥΤΕ ΕΡΟΦ ΧΕ ῙC̄
a-f-ouôšb če pi-rôme et-ou-moute ero-f če i<êsou>s
PF-3SG.M-answer that DEF:SG.M-man REL-3PL-call to-3SG.M that Jesus
‘he answered that the/this man who is called Jesus
(is he who made clay and put it on my eyes...)’ [John 9:11]

Manuscript: P. Palau Ribes Inv. 183. (5th century)

Definite articles in Bohairic

- (5) a. **ΠΙΟΜ** b. **ΤΦΕ** c. **ΝΕΝΩΗΡΙ ΝΑΒΡΑΑΜ** [John 8:39]
p-iom **t**-phe **nen**-šêri n-abraam
 DEF:SG.M-sea DEF:SG.F-sky DEF:PL-son POSS-Abraham
 ‘the sea’ ‘the sky’ ‘the sons of Abraham’
- (6) a. **ΠΙΡΩΜΙ** b. **†ΣΙΜΙ** c. **ΝΙΡΩΜΙ**
pi-rômi **ti**-shimi **ni**-rômi
 DEF:SG.M-man DEF:SG.F-woman DEF:PL-man
 ‘the man’ ‘the woman’ ‘the men’

	SG.M	SG.F	PL
‘weak’ article	π- / φ-	τ- / θ-	ΝΕΝ-
‘strong’ article	ΠΙ-	†-	ΝΙ-

NB. *n- → *nen-* with possessed nouns only

Lit. (mainly on B5): Stern 1880: §§226-227; Mallon 1907: §§41-44;
 Polotsky 1968: 243; Depuydt 1985; Shisha-Halevy 1994, 2007:430-447

The functional difference of the two series as described in literature

	‘weak’ article	‘strong’ article
Stern (1880: §227)	“(…) hat der schwächere artikel gewöhnlich eine allgemein bestimmende bedeutung, und findet daher vor generischen und abstracten begriffen seine anwendung”	“(…) hat der starke artikel eine vereinzelt und unterscheidend bestimmende bedeutung”
Mallon (1907: §42) “on emploie l’un ou l’autre article selon le degré de détermination qu’on veut donner au nom”	“détermine d’une manière moins précise ; il se place devant les noms génériques ou abstraits et devant les noms d’êtres uniques”	“détermine avec plus de précision, il indique un individu en particulier”
Polotsky (1968: 243)	‘generically’	‘individual’
Depuydt (1985: 59)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the indication of unique beings, - the generic use, - the use ‘par excellence’ all derive from the basic notion of indicating one element of a genus as the representative of the entire genus	<i>agrees on previous definitions</i>
Shisha-Halevy (1994: 233-234) and (2007: 389, 392)	“the genus or class naming determination” “the determinator is deictically inert, non-phoric, properizing” --- “non-cohesive, pure- actualization designative or naming article”	“deictic, cohesive specifying article” “characterizes the noun as familiar and of high specificity”

Proposal

A distinction based on semantic vs. pragmatic definiteness

- Weak article: inherent and situational uniqueness (including singular generics)
- Strong article: anaphoric and associative-anaphoric use, pragmatic definiteness

Weak articles in possessive constructions:

(the problem of plural weak art. $N \in N$ -)

Weak articles grammaticalized

to encode **inherently unique AND**

inherently relational nouns

	-U	+U
-R	sortal nouns	individual nouns
+R	relational nouns	functional nouns

Question: How do we know that anaphoric article are not demonstratives?

→ Associative-anaphoric use! (no DEM allowed)

(7) $\alpha\varphi\iota$ $\Delta\epsilon$ $\text{N}\chi\epsilon$ $\bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\varsigma}$ $\alpha\varphi\chi\epsilon\mu\varphi$ $\epsilon\alpha\varphi\omicron\gamma\omega$
a-f-i de nče iê<sou>s a-f-čem-f e-a-f-ouô
PF-3SG-come SP PTCL Jesus PF-3SG-find-3SG SBRD-PF-3SG-complete

$\epsilon\varphi\epsilon\rho\bar{\Delta}$ $\text{N}\text{N}\epsilon\zeta\omicron\omicron\gamma$ $\eta\epsilon\text{N}\pi\text{I}\text{M}\zeta\alpha\gamma$
e-f-er-4 n-n-ehoou xen-**pi**-mhau
SBRD-3SG-do-4 PART-DEF:PL-day in-DEF.SG.M-tomb

‘Jesus came, and he found that he (Lazarus) had already been in **the tomb** four days.’ [John 11:17]

(8) εταροϋζι δε ψωπι ανεφμαθητης ει εζρηι **εφιου** · αγαλλι **εϋχοι** αϋψε επατ **μπιουμ**
 εκαφαρναουμ νεα**τχεμτς** ουω εσψωπιπε νεμπατειη̄ς ῑ ζαρωϋπε · νεα**πιουμ** δε τωουν
 επψωπιπε ντενοϋχιννιϋι ντεϋνιϋτ̄ νηουϋ · εταϋ<ου>ει εβολ ν̄ενσταϋιον ιε λ̄ · αϋναϋ
 εῑη̄ς εϋμοϋι ϋιχεν**πιουμ** εαϋηωντ **επχοι** · αϋερζοτ̄ · νηουϋ δε πεχαϋ νωουϋ χεανοκπε
 μπερερζοτ̄ · ναϋ<ου>ωϋ δεπε εψοπϋ ερωϋϋ **επιχοι** σατοτϋ **απιχοι** μονι **επχρο** **επιμα**
 [εναϋ]ναζωλ εροϋ

“¹⁶An evening having come, his disciples came down to **the sea**; ¹⁷and having entered into **a ship**, they were going across **the sea** to Kapharnaum. And **the dusk** had now come, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸And **the sea** was heaving by the blow of a great wind. ¹⁹Having then been distant about twenty-five stadia or thirty, they saw Jesus walking upon **the sea**, approaching **the ship**, and they feared. ²⁰But he said to them: ‘It is me, do not be afraid’ ²¹They were wishing then to *get* him into **the ship** with them, and immediately **the ship** landed at **the shore** on **the land** to which they were to go.”

Analysis of the determined noun phrases:

φιουμ	p^h -iom	‘the sea’	first mention, but unique reference	✓
ουχοι	ou -čoi	‘a ship’	first mention, new referent	✓
πιουμ	pi -iom	‘the sea’	unique reference, anaphoric	✓✓
τχεμτς	t -k ^h emts	‘the darkness’	abstract noun, unique reference	✓
πιουμ	pi -iom	‘the sea’	unique reference, anaphoric	✓✓
πιουμ	pi -iom	‘the sea’	unique reference, anaphoric	✓✓
πχοι	p -čoi	‘the ship’	anaphoric	?
πιχοι	pi -čoi	‘the ship’	anaphoric	✓✓
πιχοι	pi -čoi	‘the ship’	anaphoric	✓✓
πχρο	p -k ^h ro	‘the shore’	relational	✓
πιμα	pi -ma	‘the place’	cataphoric	✓

Definite articles in early Fayyumic

Manuscript: BM Or. 5707 (Crum and Kenyon 1900) ➤ John 3:5-4:49

~ 120 simple, definite determiners

	SG.M	SG.F	PL
possessed (10)	Π-/ΠΕ-	Τ-/ΤΕ-	ΝΕΝ-
inherently/situational unique (70)			∅
generic (7+7)			ΝΙ-
direct anaphor (8)	ΠΙ-	†-	
art.+rel.conv. (16)	Π-ΕΤ-	Τ-ΕΤ-	Ν-ΕΤ-
art.+N+rel.conv. (4)	Π-... ΕΤ-	<i>no data</i>	<i>no data</i>

Typological considerations

Double systems

Two sets of articles in German dialects (weak vs. strong, full vs. reduced):

- ◆ Himmelmann (1997: 54-55): Rhineland dialects, North Frisian dialect
- ◆ Schroeder (2006): Low German dialects next to the North Sea
- ◆ Studler (2011): Swiss German
- ◆ Simonenko (2014): Austro-Bavarian (an Upper-German dialect)

Opposition of simple marking vs. double marking

- ◆ e.g. Swedish (cf. Lyons 1999: 327; Schroeder 2006: 564)

Diachronic aspects – evidence from language change

New article to encode pragmatic definiteness

- ◆ Egedi (2013, 2014): Old Hungarian
- ◆ Czardybon (2012): Upper Silesian dialect of Polish
- ◆ Breu (2004) and Scholze (2012): Colloquial Upper Sorbian (Slavic dialect)

References

- Abbott, Barbara 2004. Definiteness and Indefiniteness. In: Laurence R. Horn – Gregory Ward (eds.): *The Handbook of Pragmatics*. Blackwell Publishing, 122-149.
- Breu, Walter (2004) Der definite Artikel in der obersorbischen Umgangssprache. In: Krause, M. - C. Sappok (eds.): *Slavistische Linguistic 2002*. München: Otto Sagner, 9-57.
- Černý, Jaroslav – Groll, Sarah I. 1978. *A Late Egyptian Grammar*. 2nd ed. Roma: Biblical Institute Press
- Crum, Walter E. & F. G. Kenyon. 1900. Two Chapters of Saint John in Greek and Middle Egyptian. *Journal of Theological Studies* 1. 415-433.
- Czardybon, Adrian 2012. The definite article in the Upper Silesian dialect of Polish. Talk given at the Workshop on "Semantic and Typological Perspectives on Definites", Düsseldorf, Germany (presentation 2012.06.01)
- Depuydt, Leo 1985. The double definite article in Bohairic. *Enchoria* 13. 51-63
- Egedi, Barbara 2012. *Coptic noun phrases*. PhD Dissertation. Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University.
- Egedi, Barbara 2013. Grammatical encoding of referentiality in the history of Hungarian In: A. G. Ramat – C. Mauri – P. Molinelli (eds.): *Synchrony and Diachrony: a Dynamic Interface*. Amsterdam, 367-390.
- Egedi, Barbara 2014. The DP-cycle in Hungarian and the functional extension of the noun phrase. In: É. Kiss, Katalin (ed.) *The Evolution of Functional Left Peripheries in Hungarian Syntax*. Oxford Studies in Diachronic and Historical Linguistics 11. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 56-82.
- Erman, Adolf. 1933. *Neuägyptische Grammatik*. 2. Aufl. Leipzig
- Funk, Wolf-Peter 1988. Dialects wanting homes: a numerical approach to the early varieties of Coptic. In Fisiak, J. (ed.) *Historical Dialectology: Regional and Social*. Trends in Linguistics Studies and Monographs 37. Mouton de Gruyter. 149-192.
- Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. 1997. *Deiktion, Artikel, Nominalphrase: zur Emergenz syntaktischer Struktur*. (Linguistischer Arbeiten 362) Tübingen: Niemeyer
- Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. 2001. Articles. In: Martin Haspelmath et al. (eds.): *Language Typology and Language Universals*. Handbücher der Sprach und Kommunikationswissenschaft. Volume 20.1. Berlin – New York: Walter de Gruyter, 831-841.
- Junge, Friedrich 1996. *Einführung in die Grammatik des Neuägyptischen*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
- Kahle, Paul E. 1954. *Bala'izah. Coptic Texts from from Deir el-Bala'izah in Upper Egypt*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kasser, Rodolphe 1958. *Papyrus Bodmer III. Evangile de Jean et Genese I-IV,2 bohairique* CSCO 177-178. Louvain.
- Kasser, Rodolphe 1991. Dialects, grouping and major groups of. In Aziz S. Atiya (ed.): *The Coptic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 8. New York: Macmillan. 97-101.
- Kroeber, Burkhart 1970. *Die Neuägyptizismen vor der Amarnazeit. Studien zur Entwicklung der ägyptischen Sprache vom Mittleren zum Neuen Reich*. Bamberg: Aku
- Kupreyev, Maxim 2014. The origins and Development of the definite article in Egyptian-Coptic. *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilizations* 18: 223-237.

- Layton, Bentley 2000. *A Coptic Grammar with Chrestomathy and Glossary. Sahidic Dialect*. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz (2. jav. kiadás: 2004)
- Loprieno, Antonio 1980. Osservazioni sullo sviluppo dell'articolo in egiziano e nelle lingue semitiche. *Oriens Antiquus* 19. 1-27.
- Loprieno, Antonio 1995. *Ancient Egyptian. A linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
- Löbner, Sebastian 1985. Definites. *Journal of Semantics* 4. 279-326.
- Löbner, Sebastian 2011. Concept types and determination. *Journal of Semantics* 28. 279-333.
- Lyons, Christopher 1999. *Definiteness*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Mallon, A. 1907. *Grammaire copte avec bibliographie, chrestomathie et vocabulaire*. 2. ed. Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique.
- Neveu, François 1996. *La langue des Ramsès. Grammaire de néo-égyptien*. Paris: Khéops
- Polotsky, Hans J. 1968. The 'Weak' Plural Article in Bohairic. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 54. 243-245.
- Scholze, Lenka 2012. On the grammaticalization of the definite article in Colloquial Upper Sorbian (CUS). In: Wiemer, B. - B. Wälchli - B. Hansen (eds.): *Grammatical Replication and Borrowability in Language Contact*. Berlin - Boston, 323-353.
- Shisha-Halevy, Ariel 1994. Pluridimensional Oppositions: Three Case Studies in Scripture (Pentateuch) Bohairic. In: Giversen S. at al. (eds.): *Coptology: Past, Present and Future, . Studies in Honour of Rodolphe Kasser*. OLA 61. Leuven, 225-247.
- Shisha-Halevy, Ariel 2007. *Topics in Coptic Syntax: Structural Studies in the Bohairic Dialect*. OLA 160. Leuven: Peeters
- Simonenko, Alexandra (2014): Semantics of DP islands. In: Jyoti Iyer and Leland Kusmer (eds.): *Proceedings of the 44th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS 44)*. Vol. 2, 131–143.
- Steindorff, Georg 1951. *Lehrbuch der koptischen Grammatik*. Chicago – London
- Stern, Ludwig 1880. *Koptische Grammatik*. Leipzig: T. O. Weigel Verlag.
- Studler, Rebekka 2011. Artikelparadigmen. Form, Funktion und syntaktisch-semantische Analyse von definiten Determinierern im Schweizerdeutschen. PhD diss. Universität Zürich
- Till, Walter C. 1930. *Koptische Chrestomathie für den fayumischen Dialekt, mit grammatischer Skizze und Anmerkungen*. Wien
- Till, Walter C. 1961. *Koptische Grammatik (Saïdischer Dialekt)*. 2. Aufl. Leipzig: VEB Enzyklopädie Verlag
- Vergote, Jozef 1973. *Grammaire Copte. Ia. Introduction, Phonétique et phonologie, morphologie synthématique (structure des sémantèmes) Partie synchronique*. Louvain: Peeters.
- Vergote, Jozef 1983. *Grammaire Copte. Ila. Morphologie syntagmatique. Syntaxe. Partie synchronique*. Louvain: Peeters
- Worrell, William H. 1934. *Coptic sounds*. University of Michigan studies, humanistic series 26. Ann Arbor