

# Unit 4: Nominal Sentences

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# Unit 4 Vocabulary

## Numbers (1-10)

	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>English</u>
-			One
-	`	` †	Two
-	ω	ω †	Three
-	`ϥ	`ϥ `	Four
-	`	†	Five
-			Six
-	ω ωϥ	ω ωϥ	Seven
-	`ω	`ω	Eight
-		†	Nine
-		†	Ten

## Occupational Nouns

<u>Coptic</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Irregular Plural</u>
	servant	M	
	servant	F	
ϩ	writer	M/F	ϩ
ϥ ω	reader	M	
	reader	M	
ϥϩ	singer	M	

†	teacher	M	
2	iconographer	M	
	physician	M/F	
†	baptizer	M	
	prophet	M/F	
	psalmist	M	
	shepherd/shepherdess	M/F	
	archdeacon	M	
	deacon	M	
	priest	M	
	presbyter (priest)	M	
	bishop	M	
	metropolitan	M	
	patriarch	M	
	monastic	M/F	
	hermit	M	
	archimandrite	M	
	apostle	M	
	disciple	M	
	evangelist	M	
	martyr	M/F	
	beloved	M/F	†

	general	M	
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# Lesson 1: Nominal Tripartite Sentences (Definite Predicate)

## Sentences

A sentence is a set of words that contains a subject (what the sentence is about) and a predicate (what is said about the subject). The predicate always contains a verb.

- This is a sentence.
  - "This" is the subject
  - "is a sentence" is the predicate.
  - "is" is the verb
- That man is the ruler.
  - "That man" is the subject
  - "is the ruler" is the predicate
  - "is" is the verb
- John and Mike read many books this summer.
  - "John and Mike" are the subject
  - "read many books this summer" is the predicate
  - "read" is the verb
- Smoke rises.
  - "Smoke" is the subject
  - "rises" is the verb which serves as the whole predicate
- The boy is riding his bike down a long, windy road without stopping
  - "The boy" is the subject
  - Everything else is the predicate

## Nominal Sentences

In Coptic, a sentence can be made in which a noun or noun equivalent serves as the predicate (i.e. without the use of a verb). This is called a Nominal Sentence. In English, this would look something like: "Very interesting, those books!" The subject is "those books" and the predicate is "very interesting." The verb is implied to be "be (is/are)" (i.e. "Those books 'are' very interesting.").

In Coptic, there are three patterns of nominal sentences:

- **A B** (Bipartite)
- **A <copula> B** (Tripartite)
- **A B <copula>** (Tripartite)

## Copula

The copula is a connecting word; in particular, it is a form of the verb "to be" connecting a subject and a complement. In English, an example would be "You smell nice." Instead of "Your smell is nice" which uses the "is" conjugation of the verb "be," "smell" acts as a copula.

In Coptic, there are three copulas.

Masculine (am/is)	Feminine (am/is)	Plural (are)

In this section, we will study a couple forms of a tripartite sentence. In a future lesson, we will look at bipartite sentences. Tripartite sentences have three components:

- Subject
- Copula
- Predicate

It can take on several forms depending on whether the predicate is definite or indefinite. The rules for choosing the gender and number of the copula are as follows:

1. When both the subject and object are nouns and agree in gender and number with each other, the copula will also agree in gender and number with them.
2. If there is a disagreement in gender or number, then the copula in the masculine form ( ) is used.
3. If the subject is a pronoun in the 1st or 2nd person (i.e. , , ) then the masculine form ( ) is used regardless of the gender and number of the object.

In a sentence, the subject is who or what the sentence is about (and more specifically, the noun or pronoun that performs the verb in the sentence); the predicate gives more information about the subject. For example, in English:

- "The man is a teacher" - the subject is "the man" and the verb here is "is" so the (indefinite) predicate is "a teacher."
- "The teacher is a man" - the subject is "the teacher" and the (indefinite) predicate is "a man."
- "The teacher is the man" - the subject is "the teacher" and the (definite) predicate is "the man."
- "This man is a teacher" - the subject is "This man", the verb is "is" and the (indefinite) predicate is "a teacher."
- "This man is my teacher" - the subject is "This man", the verb is "is" and the (definite) predicate is "my teacher."

## Definite Predicate

There are several forms of a nominal tripartite sentence. The first structure is used when both the subject and the object are definite noun phrases. At this point, we can define a "definite noun phrase" as any of the following; nouns with a definite article, nouns with a possessive article, nouns with a demonstrative article, pronouns.

Note that the word "predicate" is the more accurate term for what is referred to as the "object" below. However, "predicate" has a different meaning in Coptic than in English. In English, the "predicate" includes the verb (or copula). For that reason, I've chosen to use the word "object."

**<Definite Subject> <Copula> <Definite Predicate>**

**<Definite Predicate> <Copula> <Definite Subject>**

Definite Subject	Copula	Definite Object	Translation
			This man is my father
			This man is the father
ⲁⲓ		ⲓ	This woman is the mother
ⲁⲓ			This woman is their mother
		ⲛⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲓ	These Christians are the children of God
ⲓ		ⲁⲓ	The queen is my mother

What is the difference between the subject and object in this case? How do you know if the noun is the subject or the object? Does it even matter?

Consider the following [English] sentence: "I am the ruler." - What is the subject and what is the predicate/object? It is ambiguous! If the sentence is in response to the question "Who is the ruler?," then "the ruler" is the subject and "I" is the object. If the sentence is in response to the question "Who are you?" then "I" is the subject and "the ruler" is the object.

## Application

### Application 1:

This is an excerpt from the Reconciliation Prayer of the Liturgy of St Gregory.

ⲛⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲓ	For you are the provider and the giver of all goodness
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1.



- ACTS 2990 Introduction to the Coptic Language (Bohairic) with Hany Takla Lesson 3A

# Lesson 2: Nominal Tripartite Sentences (Indefinite Predicate)

## Indefinite Predicate Sentences

There are two forms of nominal tripartite sentences when the object is indefinite. These forms are translated to English in the same way as the ones with a definite object.

The forms are:

**<Definite Subject> <Indefinite Object> <Copula>**

<b>&lt;Definite Subject&gt;</b>	<b>&lt;Indefinite Object&gt;</b>	<b>/ /</b>	<b>Translation</b>
			my father is a man
			I am a man
	2		I am a woman
2			She is a mother
2	2		They are women
2 q	q†		He is a teacher
			This man is a physician
			My brother is a physician
			My father is a presbyter (priest)

**<Indefinite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>**

<b>&lt;Indefinite Object&gt;</b>	<b>/ /</b>	<b>&lt;Definite Subject&gt;</b>	<b>Translation</b>
			my father is a man
			I am a man

ⲁⲓ			I am a woman
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## Application

### Application 1:

This is an excerpt from

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1.

### Application 2:

This is an excerpt from

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## Biblical Examples

ⲕⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲉⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲕⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲕⲁⲓ	His clothing is from camel hairs (Matthew 3:4)
ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ	Joseph, her husband, was a righteous [person] (Matthew 1:19)
ⲁⲓ ⲉⲓ ⲁⲓ	He is the one from a holy spirit (Matthew 1:20)
ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ	an open tomb is their throat (Psalms 13:4)
ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ	The judgments of the Lord are true judgments (Psalms 18:9)

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

1.

### Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

1. ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ

2. ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ

3. ⲁⲓ

- 4. `
- 5. 2 `
- 6. ` 2 ω
- 7. ` 2 2

## Exercise 3: Practice Text

Translate the following text:

## Resources

- "A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162
- See Moawad Daoud Lesson 2
- See Sameh Younan page 59 in the PDF
- ACTS 2990 Introduction to the Coptic Language (Bohairic) with Hany Takla Lesson 3A

# Lesson 3: Nominal Bipartite Sentences

## Nominal Bipartite Sentences

In the previous lessons, we studied several forms of Nominal Tripartite Sentences. They are enumerated here:

<Definite Subject> <Copula> <Definite Object>  
<Definite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>  
<Definite Subject> <Indefinite Object> <Copula>  
<Indefinite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>

We defined a Tripartite Sentence as a sentence with three parts (hence the name), so naturally a Bipartite Sentence will be a sentence with two parts. We'll use the same building blocks as in the last two lessons.

We have two forms of Nominal Bipartite Sentences:

<Subject> <Object>

In this sentence structure, the copula or the "is/am/are" is assumed and understood by the context of the sentence. This structure is common found with personal pronouns as the subject, although it could be used with a regular definite noun as the subject. This structure is also commonly found when a demonstrative pronoun is the object.

<Subject>	<Object>	Translation
	א	I am a prophet
א		You are the Christ
	א	We are Jews
א		This is my son
	א	The man is a prophet

<Object> <Copula>

In this sentence structure, the subject is assumed to be the relevant pronoun (i.e. it, he, they, etc.), and the object is what is specified. The object here can be an indefinite noun, a definite noun, a possessive noun, a pronoun, etc.

<Object>	<Copula>	Translation
		he is my father
		she is my mother
`		they are my brothers
		he is the wise one
†		she is the wise one
		he is a man
` 2		she is a woman
2 x		they are ships
		this is it (m.)
		this is it (f.)
		they are these

Naturally, this would take on a different translation when the object is a personal pronoun (since it doesn't make much sense to say "he is him" or "she is her").

<Object>	<Copula>	Translation
		it is I
		it is us
`		it is you (m.)
`		it is you (f.)
`		it is you (pl.)
` q		it is him
`		it is her
`		it is them

## Application

### Application 1:

This is an excerpt from <>.

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1.

## Exercises

## Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

- 1.

## Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

- 1.

## Resources

"A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162

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# Lesson 4: Negative Nominal Sentence Construction

## Indefinite Pronoun - -

An indefinite pronoun is a pronoun that does not refer to any person, place, or thing in particular. Some examples of indefinite pronouns in English are: "anything" - "something" - "anyone" - "anywhere" - "someone" - "somewhere" - etc. The infix - - is a noninflectional word element that is inserted between the noun prefix and the noun. It expresses the meaning "other" and can be used with definite or indefinite articles, demonstrative articles and possessive articles.

	the other man	Definite Article (m.)
	the other men	Definite Article (f.)
† ` 2	the other woman	Definite Article (pl.)
*	another man	Indefinite Article (s.)
2	some other men	Indefinite Article (pl.)
	this other man	Demonstrative Article (m.)
	my other man	Possessive Article (1s.)

\*Note that for the singular indefinite noun, the singular indefinite article is dropped. However, in the case of the plural, the plural indefinite article 2 is kept.

## Nominal Sentences: Negative Construction

All of the nominal sentences we have taken so far are of positive construction (e.g. "This man is my father"). Negating the sentence (e.g. "This man is not my father") is achieved by placing the particle ` (sometimes ` ) before the object and before the copula. Below, we will discuss negating both types of bipartite sentences, and all four types of tripartite sentences that we have taken thus far.

When do we use ` versus ` ? ` is used when the following letter is:

**<Object> <Copula>**

	he is my father
`	he is not my father
	he is a bishop
`	he is not a bishop

**<Subject><Object>**

This sentence type cannot be negated. To negate it, you will need a copula which will make it a tripartite sentence.

**<Definite Subject> <Copula> <Definite Object>**

	this man is my father
`	this man is not my father
	this is the man
`	this is not the man

**<Definite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>**

	my father is this man
`	my father is not this man

**<Definite Subject> <Indefinite Object> <Copula>**

9	my mother is a teacher
` 9	my mother is not a teacher

**<Indefinite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>**

` 2	I am a woman
` ` 2	I am not a woman

## Application

### Application 1:

This is an excerpt from the Orthodox Creed.



# Lesson 5: Relative Nominal Sentence Construction

## Interrogative Form

### Application

#### Application 1:

This is an excerpt from <>.

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1.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

1.

### Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

1.

## Resources

"A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162

See Moawad Daoud Lesson 2

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# Lesson 6: Interrogatives

## Interrogative Form

### Application

#### Application 1:

This is an excerpt from <>.

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1.

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

1.

### Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

1.

## Resources

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