

Three particles in Andaandi Nubian interrogative clauses: [aba], [sen], and [on]

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The goal of this study is to investigate the purposes and meanings of the three morphemes [aba], [sen], and [on] in interrogative clauses including rhetorical questions. In Charles Armbruster's Andaandi Nubian grammar and lexicon (1960 and 1965) no indication of these particles nor of rhetorical questions is found. Also any other discussion of modal particles is missing.

We begin with some unpublished interrogative clauses, both polar and content, taken from the poems of the Andaandi poet Jalaal Omar. Rhetorical questions are one of his stylistic elements, engaging the listener.

aba is shown to be a modal particle related to epistemology that cannot easily be literally translated into English. Real and rhetorical Andaandi questions with *aba* show a sense of possibility, desire, need for affirmation or discussion, surprise, wonder, heavily depending on the context.

So far in the text corpus of Jalaal Omar's poetry *sen* only appears in subordinate clauses of rhetorical questions. Other language data show that it also occurs in real questions. We show that while being interpreted in English as part of a causal clause, *sen* is a modal particle, due to its meaning being different from the causal markers =*ged* and *illar* employed in other kinds of Andaandi causal clauses.

on at the beginning of interrogative clauses is distinguished from its homonyms, as the conditional clitic *-on* that occurs within statements and interrogatives. *on* is a discourse marker that introduces a new aspect to be considered.

Finally, the results are compared with other Nubian languages, particularly Mattokki Nubian. *aba* is only mentioned in passing in Massenbach's Mattokki study (1933); *sen* is missing altogether; *on* seems to align with *woon*. Among language data from Samuel Ali Hussein (1863-1927) *aba* and *woon* are found, also in Mattokki daily conversation; we are still looking for subordinate clauses of Mattokki interrogative sentences that align with Andaandi *sen*.