

Noun modification in Siwi (Berber, Egypt)

The aim of the presentation is to show how the three most common strategies used to modify a head noun, namely through a possessive, an adjective and a relative clause constructions feature in Siwi, a Berber language spoken in Egypt, the use of the preposition **n**.

As hypothesised by Galand (1969, 2015) **n**, together with other vocalic elements, is part of the complex system of pronominal particles of Berber languages, called determination carriers, historically linked to demonstratives.

n is obligatory in an adnominal possessive construction (ex.1), but optional before an adjective and a relative clause (ex.2 and 3).

In a relative clause, this element **n** is part of the relative marker **w-ən** (SG.M) and **t-ən** (SG.F), where **w-** and **t-** indicate the gender of the noun they refer (**w-ən** is now also used for M/F.PL).

The aim of the article is to 1) describe the use and function of **n** in all three contexts of noun modification, analysing the different kinds of relationship between two nouns in an adnominal possessive construction and the cases where this preposition is present or absent, when a noun is modified by an adjective or a relative clause and 2) supply more data in support of the pronominal origin of this preposition.

Data used for this study were collected by the author from 2011 to 2018 in Siwa (Egypt) among speakers of different ages.

Examples:

- (1) əlqáʃɾ n ssólɬan
castle.SG.M of king.SG.M
'The castle of the sultan.'

- (2) læbsís n aməllál d læbsís n azəttáf /
lebsis.SG.M of white.SG.M and lebsis.SG.M of black.SG.M /
'White lebsis and black lebsis.'

- (3) tizárrət wən i-fərrɾ-ən s-əgd-əs əlhámmam
broom.SG.F REL.M 3-sweep.IPFV-PL with-in-3SG toilet
'The broom with which they sweep the bathroom.'

References

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