THE CATEGORY OF SPACE IN ARABIC DP STRUCTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON DP WORD ORDER

Francesco Grande,
Università di Pisa

Space in Language Pisa, October 8-10 2009
0. Aim

Investigating the category of space in the domain of Arabic DP

Is this category found in the items that make up the DP-structure, i.e. N and its modifiers (Dem, Num, A)?

\[ [+\text{LOC F}] \ ??? \]

'these three new newspapers'

If the case, how does it impact on their word orders?

\[ N > \]
\[ A > \]
\[ \text{GM.newspapers.NOM} \]
\[ \text{GM.new.F.NOM} \]
\[ 'these three new newspapers' \]

\[ \text{GM} = \text{grammatical marker, usually regarded as Art} \]

(Classical Arabic: Fassi Fehri 1998)
1. Proposal and framework

CURRENT PROPOSAL

[+LOC F] --- [+LOC F] [+LOC F]
N > A > Num > Dem

Arabic N, Dem, Num carry [+LOC F], A does not

THE FRAMEWORK

Cinquè’s (2003) \Shlonsky’s (2004) minimalist\ antisymmetric account of the Semitic DP

Problem #1: why phrasal movement?

Problem #2: why exceptions to it?

Universal word order
Dem > Num > A > N
these-1 three-2 new-3 newspapers-4

PHRASAL MOV.

Mirror image
N > A > Num > Dem
I-SuHufu-1 I-jadiidatu-2 I-thalaathu-3 haadhihi-4

these-1 three-2 new-3 newspapers-4
2. Revising syntax of Modification

Arabic Modification = Predicate Inversion

Arab grammarians’ (800-1400 d.C.) view (Sh. K. II, 283ff.; Wright 1896, II: 284):

\[ N^i > A \rightarrow \text{verbal} A + 0PRN \rightarrow \text{Predicate Inversion} \]

\[ \text{PREDICATE}_{\text{OLD INFO}} + \text{SUBJECT}_{\text{NEW INFO}} \]

(l-)Hamaamu l-muTawwaqu = (l-)Hamaamu\[
\text{GM.doves GM.ring-necked ‘the ring-necked doves’}
\]

Brockelmann\Fleisch\Greenberg (see Drodzik 1998 and refs. therein):

- \text{baqar} - cow.MASS ‘cows’
- \text{baqar-at}^{un} - cow.CL ‘a cow’

Cl(assifier)-system in Arabic

Den Dikken (2006): Predicate Inversion = FP above Modification-structure, where:

- \( F \) hosts a (kind of) copula (‘LINKER’)
- Modifier raises to Spec, FP
- If occurring in L’s with a Cl-system:
- a CIP above FP attracts the Modified NP

NO Spec-to-Spec movement of SUBJECT across its Inverted Predicate (Moro 1997) \( \rightarrow \) ONLY phrasal movement allowed (Den Dikken 2006) \( \rightarrow \) phrasal movement in Semitic DP explained

\[ \text{‘Une pizza de chaude’} \]

(VS ‘Une pizza chaude’: Den Dikken 2006)
3. Deriving the exceptions

Exceptional word orders < Minimal Link Condition

Lyons (1977):
Items classified by CI’s: perceived as located in a 3D space → Arabic N’s carry [+LOC F]

Deixis = location → Brugè’s (2002) [+/-DEICTIC F] on Dem \ CP hosting Dem = [+/- LOC F]

Arab grammarians’ (800-1400 d.C.) view on LI’s (Sh.K. II, III, Wright 1896, I:255, II:247):

→ [-F] on CIP attracting NP is unknown. BUT:
→ CIP is a phase like CP, which carries [-LOC F], and is
→ in a checking relation with NP, which carries [+LOC F].
→ This plausibly proves that CIP carries [-LOC F]
→ “Exceptional” word orders are regular instances of

Minimal Link Condition (aka Attract Closest) (Chomsky 1995)

[CIP e [C'I CI <-LOC F>...[FP α <+LOC F>...[LP NP <+LOC F>...]
4. Conclusions

Results: Arabic N's carry [+LOC F] and Art is a LINKER

Implications: this account of Arabic DP-structure contributes, among others, to:

- solve the problem of “double definiteness” in Arabic (Adjectival Art being a recursive LINKER)
- clarify the nature of the nominal n-suffix (tanwiin): it signals [+LOC F] and hence is to be identified with the locative particle n found in Semitic Dem (cp. Ar. ay-na ‘where?’, hu-naa ‘here’: Hasselbach 2007)
- explain phrasal movement in terms of constraints on SUBJECT-raising (Moro 1997, Den Dikken 2006)
- economize the theory of the Semitic DP, in compliance with minimalist guidelines:
  - Brugè’s (2002) strong \ weak features and LF movement in Dem no longer needed (cp. Kayne 1998)
  - Shlonsky’s (2004) separate mechanism accounting for pre-N Num\Dem (i.e. ‘freezing’ in their base-generation position) replaced by Minimal Link Condition
- account for recursion of AgrP in Semitic (Shlonsky 2004) as a deceiving effect of head-movement of Agr-features to Cl’, descriptively recursive (Den Dikken 2006). More generally this study corroborates Greenberg's idea that Arabic is a classifier-language
5. References

Contacts: grandefrancesco@hotmail.com

Primary sources:

Secondary sources:
Fassi Fehri, A. (1998) 'Layers in the Distribution of Arabic Adverbs and Adjectives and Their Licensing". In: E. Benmamoun, M. Eid, N. Haeri (eds.) Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics XI. Amsterdam: John Benjamins