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Structural and Inherent Case between Minimalism and Lexical Functional Grammar

presented by

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study is to examine structural and inherent Case in Standard Arabic (SA) in the light of two linguistic theories: Government and Binding (GB) theory and the Minimalist Program (MP), as proposed by Chomsky (1981, 1986a, 1986b, 1993, 1995, 2000) and Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG), as presented by Bresnan (2001), Dalrymple (2001) and Falk (2001). Chomsky (1981) distinguishes two types of Case: structural and inherent. LFG, on the other hand, distinguishes three types of Case: structural Case, semantic Case and quirky Case. According to these modern linguistic theories, this study distinguishes two main types of Case in SA: argument Case and non-argument Case. Argument Case is assigned to arguments, i.e., obligatory constituents, whereas non-argument Case is assigned to adjuncts, i.e., optional constituents. Argument Case involves two types of Case: structural and inherent. Non-argument Case involves two types of Case: semantic Case and concord Case. Semantic Case is assigned to VP adjuncts, whereas concord Case is assigned to NP modifiers. This thesis argues that all these types of Case in SA are assigned structurally under the c-/m-command constraint, a core structure notion in Chomsky's approach. This argument obviates the need for the structural/inherent distinction in Chomsky's theory. One piece of evidence in support of this argument is provided by the behavior of two types of Case which have not received enough attention in the literature. These are: the semantic Case and the concord Case. Another crucial piece of evidence is presented by the syntactic behaviour of lexical barriers which proves that Case assignment in SA is structurally constrained. A third piece of evidence is provided by examining Case assignment in two types of di-transitive constructions in SA: the morphological causative construction (MCC) and the double object construction (DOC). Finally, in support of the assumption that Case assignment in SA is purely structural, this study argues that genitive Case in construct state (CS) in SA is structural.

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LIST OF PHONEMIC SYMBOLS

The Arabic data and terms throughout the present dissertation have been represented by the following phonemic symbols:

A. The Consonants		Phonological Description	Examples
/ʔ/	voiceless glottal stop	ʔasad (lion)	
/b/	voiced bilabial stop		bāb (door)
/t/	voiceless alveolar stop		tuffāh (apples)
/θ/	voiceless inter-dental fricative		θawb (dress)
/j/	voiced palatal affricate		jamīl (beautiful)
/ħ/	voiceless pharyngeal fricative		ħuSān (horse)
/x/	voiceless uvular fricative		xubz (bread)
/d/	voiced alveolar stop		dub (bear)
/ð/	voiced inter-dental fricative		ðiʔb (wolf)
/ɾ/	voiced alveolar flap		rajul (man)
/z/	voiced alveolar fricative		zuhūr (flowers)
/s/	voiceless alveolar fricative		samāʔ (sky)
/š/	voiceless alveolo-palatal fricative		šams (sun)
/S/	voiceless apico-alveolar emphatic fricative		Sadīq (friend)
/D/	voiced apico-dental emphatic stop		Dābit (officer)
/T/	voiceless apico-dental emphatic stop		Tāʔira (plane)
/Ḍ/	voiced inter-dental emphatic fricative		Ḍarf (envelope)
/ʕ/	voiced pharyngeal fricative		ʕayn (eye)
/ġ/	voiced uvular fricative		ġarīb (strange)
/f/	voiceless labio-dental fricative		faʔr (mouse)
/q/	voiceless uvular stop		qamar (moon)
/k/	voiceless velar stop		kitāb (book)
/l/	voiced alveolar lateral		lawn (colour)
/m/	voiced bilabial nasal		maktab (office)
/n/	voiced alveolar nasal		nagm (star)
/h/	voiceless glottal fricative		hadiyya (present)
/w/	voiced bilabial semi-vowel		walad (boy)
/y/	voiced palatal semi-vowel		yad (hand)

B. Vowels:

I- Short Vowels:

/a/ short central unrounded vowel

/i/ short high front unrounded vowel

/u/ short high back rounded vowel

II- Long Vowels:

/ā/ long central unrounded vowel

/ī/ long high front unrounded vowel

/ū/ long high back rounded vowel

Arabic alphabet contains 28 consonants which are classified into two groups: *ʔal-ḥurūf ʔal-šamsiyya* ‘the sun letters’ which are 14 and *ʔal-ḥurūf ʔal-qamariyya* ‘the moon letters’ which are also 14. This classification is based on the way these letters affect the pronunciation of the definite article *ʔal* ‘the’ at the beginning of words. The *lām* of the definite article *ʔal* ‘the’ is assimilated into the following consonant and loses its distinctive sound when it comes before one of the sun letters, such as *ʔaš-šams* ‘the sun’. In contrast, the definite article retains its distinctive sound when it comes before one of the moon letters, such as *ʔal-bāb* ‘the door’. In this study, the definite article is transliterated as it is written, as *ʔal*- ‘the’, in all cases.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Below is a list of the abbreviations and symbols used throughout this dissertation.

Agr	Agreement
A-P	Articulatory-Perceptual
AVM	Attribute-value matrix
CA	Classical Arabic
CC	Causative Construction
C-I	Conceptual-Intentional
COMP	Complementizer
CP	Complementizer phrase
CS	Construct State
C-selection	Categorical selection
C-structure	Constituent Structure
D	Determiner
DCT	Differential Case Theory
DOC	Double Object Construction
DP	Determiner phrase
D-structure	Deep-Structure
ECM	Exceptional Case Marking
ECP	Empty Category Principle
EPP	Extended Projection Principle
EST	Extended Standard Theory
FI	Full Interpretation
F-structure	Functional Structure
GB	Government and Binding theory
GF	Grammatical Function
GG	Generative Grammar
GT	Generalized Transformation
Infl	Inflection
IP	Inflectional Phrase
LFG	Lexical Functional Grammar
LI	Lexical Item
LMT	Lexical Mapping Theory

LF	Logical Form
MCC	Morphological Causative Construction
MP	Minimalist Program
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
Neg	Negation
OBJ	Object
OBL	Oblique
PF	Phonetic form
P&P	Principles and Parameters
PSRs	Phrase Structure Rules
PredP	Predicate Phrase
SA	Standard Arabic
SC	Small Clause
Spec	Specifier
S-structure	Surface Structure
S-selection	Semantic Selection
ST	Standard Theory
SUBJ	Subject
T	Tense
TAG	Traditional Arabic Grammar
TG	Transformational Grammar
TGG	Transformational Generative Grammar
UG	Universal Grammar
UTAH	Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis
VI	Verb Incorporation
VSO	Verb-Subject-Object
1,2,3	First, second, third persons
s	Singular
d	dual
p	plural
f	feminine
fd	feminine dual
fp	feminine Plural
fs	feminine singular

m	masculine
md	masculine dual
mp	masculine Plural
ms	masculine singular
def.	Definite
indef.	Indefinite
nom	nominative
acc	accusative
gen	genitive

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Chapter One

Introduction and Theoretical Framework

1.0 Introduction:

This chapter is introductory. It is divided into eight main sections. Section (1.1) highlights the aim and scope of the study. Section (1.2) presents Standard Arabic (SA) which is the language under investigation in this work. Section (1.3) reviews briefly the traditional approaches to Case, referring to the Greek tradition, the Roman tradition and finally the Arabic tradition. Section (1.4) provides an overview of the theoretical framework addressed in this study. It is divided into three subsections: section (1.4.1) provides a general idea about transformational generative grammar, section (1.4.2) discusses the basic tenets of Government and Binding (GB) theory and finally, section(1.4.3) is devoted to introducing the Minimalist Program (MP). Section (1.5) reviews the development of the Case theory from GB to MP. Section (1.6) introduces Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG). It is a linguistic theory that has appeared as a reaction to the direction of the research proposed by Chomsky in transformational grammar. Section (1.7) demonstrates the organization of the study. Finally, section (1.8) concludes and summarizes the whole chapter.

1.1 The Purpose and Scope of the study:

The main aim of this study is to examine Structural and Inherent Case in Standard Arabic (SA) in the light of two linguistic theories: first, GB and MP, as developed by Chomsky (1981, 1986a, 1986b, 1993, 1995, 2000) and second LFG, as proposed by Bresnan (2001), Dalrymple (2001) and Falk (2001a). In doing so, it attempts to explore two main distinctions between these two linguistic theories. The first distinction is the different types of Case identified in each framework. The second distinction is between Chomsky's approach as a transformational/derivational approach and LFG as a non-transformational/non-derivational approach.

With regard to the various types of Case identified in each framework, Chomsky, in GB/MP, distinguishes two types of Case: structural and inherent. LFG, on the other hand, distinguishes three types of Case: structural Case, semantic Case and quirky Case. Based on these modern linguistic theories, this study distinguishes two main types of Case in SA: argument Case and non-argument Case. Argument