

SEEKING CONTROL IN MODERN STANDARD ARABIC

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OVERVIEW

1 BACKGROUND

- Modern Standard Arabic
- ?an clauses

2 THE STUDY

- Research questions
- Co-referring and dis-referring predicates
- Predictions
- A corpus study
- Proposed analysis

3 CONCLUSIONS

WORD ORDER AND AGREEMENT

VSO: Unmarked, partial agreement

- (1) qaraʔat t^f-t^fa:liba:t-u l-kita:b-a
 read.3SF the-students.PF-NOM book-ACC
 'The female students read the book.'

SVO: Marked, full agreement

- (2) t^f-t^fa:liba:t-u qaraʔna l-kita:b-a
 the-students.PF-NOM read.3PF book-ACC
 'The female students read the book.'

pro-drop: Full agreement

- (3) qaraʔat l-kita:b-a
 read.3SF book-ACC
 'She read the book.' (Not: 'They read the book.')

COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

ʔanna clauses

- (4) ʔarafa muḥammad-un [ʔanna l-walad-a sa-yaktubu
 knew.3SM Muhammad-NOM that the-boy-ACC will-write.3SM.IND
 r-risa:lat-a].
 the-letter-ACC
 'Muhammad knew that the boy would write the letter.'

ʔan clauses

- (5) qarrara muḥammad-un [ʔan yaktuba r-risa:lat-a].
 decided.3SM Muhammad-NOM AN write.3SM.SBJ the-letter-ACC
 'Muhammad decided to write the letter.'

ʔAN CLAUSES

- Verb initial
- Subjunctive form
- The embedded verb carries agreement features
- Ambiguous between co-reference and dis-reference with matrix argument

(6) qarrara muḥammad-un [ʔan yaktuba r-risa:lat-a].
 decided.3SM Muhammad-NOM AN write.3SM.SBJ the-letter-ACC
 ‘Muhammad_i decided that he_{i/j} would write the letter.’

ʔAN CLAUSES: PATTERNS

- (7) a. qarrara_i muḥammad-un_i [ʔan yaktuba_{i/j} r-risa:lat-a].
 decided.3SM Muhammad-NOM AN write.3SM.SBJ the-letter-ACC
 ‘Muhammad_i decided that he_{i/j} would write the letter.’
- b. qarrara_{i/j} [ʔan yaktuba_i muḥammad-un_i r-risa:lat-a].
 decided.3SM AN write.3SM.SBJ Muhammad-NOM the-letter-ACC
 ‘Muhammad_i decided that he_i would write the letter.’
 ‘He_j decided that Muhammad_i would write the letter.’
- c. qarrara_i muḥammad-un_i [ʔan taktuba_j (raniat-u_j)
 decided.3SM Muhammad-NOM AN write.3SF.SBJ (Rania-NOM)
 r-risa:lat-a].
 the-letter-ACC
 ‘Muhammad decided that Rania/she would write the letter.’

?AN CLAUSES: PATTERNS

- **Matrix subject**
 - $V1 \gg S \gg [AN \gg V2 \gg O]$
 - $S \gg V1 \gg [AN \gg V2 \gg O]$
- **Embedded subject**
 - $V1 \gg [AN \gg V2 \gg S \gg O]$
- **Two different subjects**
 - $V1 \gg S1 \gg [AN \gg V2 \gg S2 \gg O]$
- **No subjects**
 - $V1 \gg [AN \gg V2 \gg O]$

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Do all verbs in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) allow for both co-reference and dis-reference in *?an* clauses?
- Is there obligatory control in MSA?
- What is the syntactic structure of the construction(s)?

SENTENTIAL COMPLEMENTS IN MSA

(PERSSON, 2002)

- A corpus-based study
- *?an* clauses with an overt embedded subject vs. *?an* clauses in which the subject is deleted under co-reference
- The semantics of the embedding verb determines the preference for dis-reference or co-reference:
 - **manipulative** predicates prefer co-reference (*force, allow*).
 - **cognitive** predicates (desiderative, commentative, fearing) prefer dis-reference (*want, wish*).
 - **modal** predicates were not included under the assumption that they always require co-reference.

STANDARD ARABIC *ʔan* AND *ʔanna*

(HABIB, 2009)

- There are no real “control” predicates in MSA.
- All *ʔan*-clauses allow for both co-reference and dis-reference.

MODERN GREEK COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

(ROUSSOU, 2009)

?oti clauses

- (8) O Yannis pistevi [**oti** to sipiti ine/itan oreo].
 The Yannis.NOM.S believes.S that the house.NOM.3S is/was.3S beautiful
 Yannis believes that the house is/was beautiful.'

na clauses

- (9) O Kostas matheni [**na** odhiji].
 the Kostas learn.3S PRT drive.3S
 Kostas is learning (how) to drive.'

MODERN GREEK *na*-CLAUSES

(ROUSSOU, 2009)

Obligatory co-reference

- (10) O Kostas matheni [na odhiji].
the Kostas learn.3S PRT drive.3S
Kostas is learning (how) to drive.'

Co-reference/dis-reference

- (11) O Kostas theli [na odhiji].
the Kostas want.3S PRT drive.3S
Kostas wants (him) to drive.'

THE CONTROL CONTINUUM

(ROUSSOU, 2009)

+Control

-Control

start ---→ *can* -----→ *dare* -----→ *try* -----→ *want*

OBLIGATORY CONTROL VS. NO CONTROL

(LANDAU, 2013)

Predicates which select **tensed** complements

- Factives (glad, sad, like,...)
- Propositional (believe, think, claim,...)
- Desideratives (want, prefer, hope,...)
- Interrogatives adjectives (wonder, ask, find out,...)

(12) Yesterday, John hoped to solve the problem tomorrow.

Predicates which select **untensed** complements

- Implicatives (dare, manage, remember,...)
- Aspectuals (start, stop,...)
- Modals (have, need, may,...)
- Evaluative adjectives (rude, silly,...)

(13) *Yesterday, John managed to solve the problem tomorrow.

OBLIGATORY CONTROL VS. NO CONTROL

(LANDAU, 2013)

Landau's finiteness rule for Obligatory Control:

	T+	T-
Agr+	NC	OC
Agr-	OC	OC

- If a complement clause is untensed it will enforce obligatory control.
- “There cannot be a language where modal, aspectual and implicative verbs or evaluative adjectives allow an uncontrolled complement subject.” (p. 106)

SEEKING CONTROL IN MSA: PREDICTIONS

- Persson (2002): Obligatory co-reference in MSA with modals
- Habib (2009): No obligatory co-reference in MSA
- Roussou (2009): A continuum (aspectuals — desideratives)
- Landau (2013): Control is obligatory when the complement clause is untensed

METHOD

- Corpus based search:
The 115-million token sample of *arTenTen* corpus of Arabic (Arts et al., 2014), installed in the Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2004).
- Representative predicates from Roussou's continuum and Landau's classification
 - *ʔara:da* 'want' (*desiderative*)
 - *ħa:wala* 'try' (*implicative*)
 - *zaruʔa* 'dare' (*implicative*)
 - *ʔaɣnaʔa* 'convince' (*manipulative*)
 - *samaħa* 'allow' (*manipulative*)
 - *ʔistt^ʕa:ʔa* 'be able' (*modal*)

ʔara:da 'want' (desiderative)

- (14) a. ʔara:da [ʔan yaɣmala dira:sat-an]
wanted.3SM AN do.3SM.SBJ study-ACC
'He wanted to conduct a study.'
- b. ʔara:da [ʔan yakuna r-radd-u wat^faniyy-an]
wanted.3SM AN be.3SM.SBJ the-reaction-NOM national-ACC
'He wanted the reaction to be national.'

ħa:wala 'try' (implicative)

- (15) a. ħa:wala r-raḡul-u [ʔan yatakallama maħa-na]
 tried.3SM the-man-NOM AN speak.3SM.SBJ with-us
 'The man tried to speak with us.'
- b. ʔinna-na nuħa:wilu [ʔan yataħaddaθa s^ʔamt-u-na]
 indeed-we try.1P.IND AN speak.3SM.SBJ silence-NOM-our
 'We will try that our silence will speak.'

zaruʔa 'dare' (implicative)

- (16) a. la: yaʒruʔu raʒul-un [ʔan yaqu:la l-ḥaqi:qat-a fi:
 not dare.3SM man-NOM AN say.3SM.SBJ the-truth-ACC in
 l-zawa:ʒ-i]
 the-marriage-GEN
 'No man dares to say the truth in the marriage.'
- b. lan taʒruʔu [ʔan yakuna raʔy-u-ha yair-a
 never dare.3SF AN be.3SM.SBJ opinion-NOM-her not-ACC
 musa:nid-in li-l-mayrab-i]
 supportive-GEN to-Morocco-GEN
 'She will never dare that her opinion would be non-supportive of Morocco.'

ʔaqnaʕa 'convince' (manipulative)

- (17) a. mala:k qad ʔaqnaʕat wa:lid-a-ha [ʔan yaʔmura
 Malak already convinced.3SF father-ACC-her AN order.3SM.SBJ
 sa:ʔiq-a-hu...]
 driver-ACC-his...
 'Malak had already convinced her father to order his driver...'
- b. ʔaqnaʕna:-hum [AN yuʕayyina huwa
 convinced.1P-them AN appoint.3SM.SBJ he.NOM
 l-ḥuku:mat-a]
 the-government-ACC
 'We convinced them that he will appoint the government.'

samaħa 'allow' (manipulative)

- (18) a. iða: lam nasmaħu li-lʔameri:ka:n-i [ʔan yamurru: min
 if NEG allow.1P to-the-Americans-GEN AN pass.3PM.SBJ from
 ʔara:d^fi: t-turkiya yada:n]
 territory Turkish tomorrow
 'If we don't allow the Americans to pass from Turkish territory
 tomorrow..'
- b. fa-mawqiʔ-u-hu l-ʔiʒtima:ʕiyy-u la: yasmaħu lahu [ʔan
 and-status-NOM-his the-social-NOM NEG allow.3SM to.him AN
 yaku:na bn-u-hu fi: haða: l-maka:n-i]
 be.3SM.SBJ son-NOM-HIS in this the-place-GEN
 'And his social status does not allow him that his son will be in this
 place.'

ʔistt^ʕa:ʕa 'be able' (modal)

- (19) a. lam ʔastat^ʕi:ʕu [ʔan ʔasmaʕa s^ʕawt-a-hu ʔaw ʔara:-hu]
 not be.able.1S AN hear.1S.SBJ voice-ACC-his or see.1S.SBJ-him
 'I can't hear his voice or see him.'
- b. lan nastat^ʕi:ʕu ʔan tataħammala l-ħuku:mat-u
 never be.able.1P.IND AN bear.3SF.SBJ the-government-NOM
 ka:mil-a l-nafaqa:t-i
 all-ACC the-expenses-GEN
 'We will never be able that the government will bear all the expenses.'

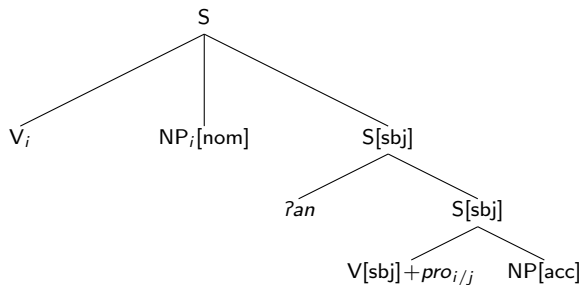
INTERIM SUMMARY

- Instances of dis-reference were found across all semantic categories.
- Although Landau's tensed-untensed classification holds for MSA, predicates which select untensed complements allowed dis-reference.

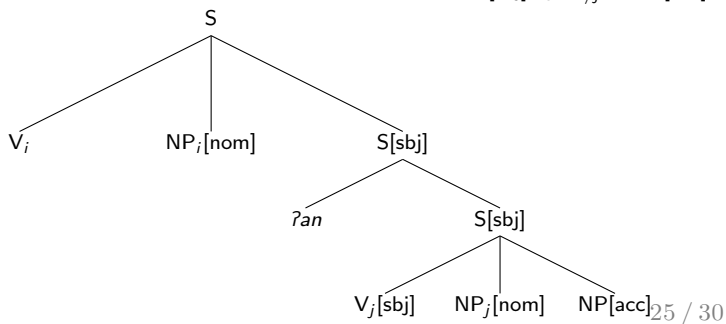
	<i>ʔan</i> clause complements	Co-reference	Dis-reference
All predicates	249,190	100,763	66,946
<i>ʔara:da</i> 'want'	20,590	11,034	4,137
<i>ʔistt^ʃa:ʃa</i> 'be able'	14,568	11,884	299

POSSIBLE STRUCTURE

Co-reference/dis-reference:

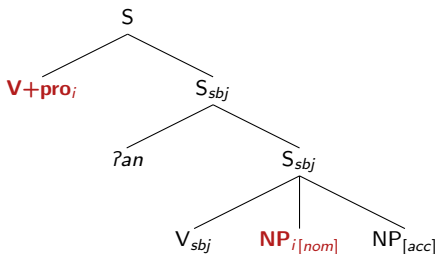


Dis-reference:



BACKWARD “CONTROL”

- The proposed analysis predicts **full agreement** when only the embedded subject is realized:



- But with co-reference, only cases with **partial agreement** were found.

- (20) taka:li:f-u l-ʕila:ʒ-i l-ba:hið^fat-i llati [la
 costs-NOM the-treatment-GEN the-expensive-GEN that neg
 yastat^fi:ʕu [ʔan yataħammilu-ha l-fuqara:]]
 be.able.3SM AN bear.3SM.SBJ-it the-poor.PM
 ‘The costs of the expensive treatment that the poor will not be able
 to bear’

BACKWARD RAISING

(WURMBRAND & HADDAD, 2016)

- Only raising verbs of “appropinquation” (proximity, hope, inception) can occur in a backward raising configuration:

(21) ?awʃakat/?awʃakna [(?an) tanʒaħa
 were.about.to.3SF/3PF (AN) succeed.3SF.SBJ
 t^ʃ-t^ʃa:liba:t-u]
 the-students.PF-NOM
 ‘The female students were about to succeed.’

- Prescriptively, partial agreement on the matrix predicate is considered ungrammatical.
- But no conclusive evidence of full agreement was found in contemporary texts.
- Both patterns are available in SA (traditional and contemporary).

BACKWARD PATTERNS WITH “CONTROL” PREDICATES

- Contrary to Wurmbrand & Haddad (2016), the backward pattern was found also with “control” predicates.
- Corpus-based usage data contradict prescriptive grammar **and** the internal logic of the grammar.
- We propose that the use of partial agreement in the backward pattern is motivated by analogy to the partial agreement of simple VSO clauses.
- We suspect that this has to do with the fact that MSA is not spoken natively by any speakers.
- This phenomenon remains an open issue.

CONCLUSIONS

- Predicates which select *?an* clause complements vary with respect to their “preference” for co-reference vs. dis-reference.
- This variance seems to align with Roussou’s (2009) semantic-based continuum and with Landau’s (2013) tensed/untensed distinction.
- Nevertheless, there is no evidence for the existence of obligatory co-reference or control in MSA *?an* clauses.

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