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Raising in Standard Arabic: Backward, Forward, and None

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STANDARD ARABIC (SA) is a verb-initial, verb–subject–object (VSO) language in which preverbal subjects are also allowed, producing subject–verb–object (SVO) structures. As sentences (1) and (2) demonstrate, the verb shows partial agreement in gender (and probably person) in VSO structures (1a, b), but it shows full agreement in person, gender, and number in SVO structures (2a, b). The sentences also show that VSO plus full agreement and SVO plus partial agreement result in ungrammaticality:

(1) VSO + Partial Agreement[1]

(a) *daras-a/*ū* l-ʾawlād-u l-ʾumθūlat-a*
studied-3ms/3mp the-children-nom the-lesson-ACC
"The children studied the lesson."

(b) *daras-at/*na l-fatayāt-u l-ʾumθūlat-a*
studied-3FS/3FP the-girls-NOM the-lesson-ACC
"The girls studied the lesson."

(2) SVO + Full Agreement

(a) *l-ʾawlād-u daras-ū/*a l-ʾumθūlat-a*
the-children-NOM studied-3MP/3MS the-lesson-ACC
"The children studied the lesson."

(b) *l-fatayāt-u daras-na/*at l-ʾumθūlat-a*
the-girls-NOM studied-3FP/3FS the-lesson-ACC
"The girls studied the lesson."

In addition, SA is a subject pro-drop language. When the subject is not pronounced, the verb shows full agreement, as (3) illustrates:

(3) *daras-ū/na l-ʾumθūlat-a*
studied-3MP/3FP the-lesson-ACC
"They(M/F) studied the lesson."

The main purpose of this chapter is to examine a category of SA subject-to-subject raising verbs known as verbs of appropinquation. Subject-to-subject raising is a dependency relation between two subject positions in a given structure, one in the matrix clause and one in a subordinate clause; the matrix subject position is not assigned a thematic role. The standard assumption is that this dependency relation is established through movement. For example, in *John$_i$ seems* _____$_i$ *to love Mary*, the pronounced noun phrase in the higher clause and the implied noun phrase in the subordinate clause are one and the same, *John*, related by movement. In addition, *John* is not assigned a thematic role in the matrix clause—that is, *John* is not a "seemer"—but it is assigned one in the subordinate clause; thus, *John* is a "lover."

SA verbs of appropinquation license two types of raising structures, forward and backward. In addition, they license nonraising structures:

1. Forward raising: The subject undergoes first merge in the subordinate clause before it moves to the matrix clause where it is pronounced.
2. Backward raising: The subject moves to the matrix clause as evident by the structural effect it triggers on the matrix predicate, but it is pronounced in the subordinate clause.
3. Nonraising: The subject does not move beyond the subordinate clause in which it is pronounced.

The chapter is organized as follows: The first section presents an overview of the relevant SA raising verbs. The second section runs a number of tests to show that the verbs under investigation are, in fact, raising verbs. The third section introduces data of the different types of raising and analyzes them within Nunes's (2004) Minimalist framework of the Copy-plus-Merge Theory of Movement. And the fourth section concludes and provides directions for further research.

SA Raising Verbs of Appropinquation: An Overview

SA has raising verbs known as verbs of proximity, hope, and inception (Badawi, Carter, and Gully 2004; Wright 2007, 106–8). Wright (2007) labels them collectively as verbs of appropinquation, a practice I adopt here.

These verbs take as a complement a subordinate clause whose predicate is headed by an imperfective verb. The subordinate verb can be subjunctive (preceded by *ʾan* "to"), indicative (not preceded by *ʾan* "to"), or either, depending on the selection properties of the raising verb. In the following subsections I give an overview of the three types of verbs of appropinquation.

Verbs of Proximity

The raising verbs of proximity are *kād-a*, *ʾawʃak-a*, and *karab-a*, and they all mean "to be on the verge of" or "to be about (to)." The sentences in (4) are examples. While *ʾan* "to" is optional, it is less common with *kād-a* and *karab-a*:

(4a) *kād-a* *l-maṭar-u* *(ʾan)* *ya-hṭil-u/a*
was.about-3MS the-rain-NOM to 3M-fall-S.IND/SUB
"The rain was about to fall."

(b) *ʾawʃak-a* *l-waqt-u* *(ʾan)* *ya-ntahi*
was.about-3MS the-time-NOM to 3M-end.S.IND/SUB
"The time was about to end."

(c) *karab-a* *l-ṣubḥ-u* *(ʾan)* *ya-nbalij-u/a*
was.about-3MS the-morning-NOM to 3M-emerge-S.IND/SUB
"The morning was about to dawn."

Verbs of Hope

The raising verbs of hope are *ʿasā*, *ḥarā*, and *ʾixlawlaq-a*. They all denote a hope for the occurrence of the predicate. All subcategorize for a subordinate clause headed by *ʾan* "to," as (5a–c) show, although *ʾan* is optional with *ʿasā* (Al-Ghalayini 2003, 206):

(5a) *ʿasā* *rabb-u-kum* *(ʾan)* *ya-rḥam-u/a-kum*
may.3MS god-NOM-your to 3m-have.mercy.on-S.IND/SUB-you
"May your Lord have mercy on you."

(b) *ḥarā* *zayd-un* **(ʾan)* *ya-qūm-a*
may.3MS Zaid-NOM to 3M-rise-S.SUB
"Perhaps Zaid will rise."

(c) *ʾixlawlaq-at* *l-samāʾ-u* **(ʾan)* *ta-mṭur-a*
may-3FS the-sky-NOM to 3F-rain-S.SUB
"The sky is likely to rain."

(from Wright 2007, 108)

Verbs of Inception

The raising verbs of inception are plenty, some of which are *ʾanʃa-a*, *habb-a*, *ʃaraʿ-a*, and *ṭafiq-a*. They mean "to start" or "to set about" (6). These verbs do not subcategorize for *ʾan* "to":

(6a) *ʾanʃa-a* *xalīl-un* *(*ʾan)* *ya-ktub-u*
started-3MS Khalil-NOM 3M-write-S.IND
"Khalil started to write."

(b) *habb-a* *l-qawm-u* *(*ʾan)* *ya-tasābaq-ū-n*
started-3MS the-people-NOM 3-race.each.other-MP-IND
"The people started to race each other."

(from Al-Ghalayini 2003, 204)

The following section runs three tests to show that the SA verbs of appropinquation qualify as raising verbs.

Raising Tests

Subject-to-subject raising predicates share at least three properties (Davies and Dubinsky 2004; Polinsky and Potsdam 2006):

1. They do not check accusative case.
2. They select a clausal complement (IP or CP).
3. They are one-place predicates that do not take an external argument.

First Property

The examples presented thus far show that the subject of an SA raising verb of appropinquation is always nominative. This is true in all cases except when the subject occupies a sentence-initial position and is preceded by the complementizer *ʾanna/ ʾinna*. In this case the complementizer checks accusative case on the subject, (7). The crucial point is that the raising verbs themselves do not check accusative case.

(7) *ʾinna* *l-nisāʾ-a* *ṭafiq-na* *ya-ʿtaq-na* *ʿabid-a-hunna*
COMP the-women-ACC started-3FP 3-free-FP.IND slaves-ACC-their
wa-ya-tazawwaj-na-hum
and-3-marry-FP.IND-them
"The women started to free their slaves and marry them."

Second Property

I take the property that SA verbs of appropinquation select for a clausal complement to be evidently available for the raising verbs that obligatorily select for complements headed by the particle *ʾan* "to." The assumption is that *ʾan* occupies a position higher than vP/VP, probably IP or CP (Habib 2009; Soltan 2007, 143).

Evidence that this property is also available for the verbs that select for complements with an optional or no *ʾan* "to" comes from the fact that the complements may project their own negative nodes, (8a). Assuming that negation projects higher than vP/VP, it is fair to consider the complements of these verbs as clausal complements. Further evidence comes from the fact that each clause in a raising structure may receive independent event modification, as (8b) illustrates (for similar tests, see Potsdam and Polinsky 2012; for an argument that the complements under examination are IPs, see Fassi-Fehri 1993, 52):

(8a) *ʾa-kād-u* *lā* *ʾu-ṣaddiq-u* *l-tarḥīb-a* *l-ḥārr*
1S-am.about.IND NEG 1S-believe-IND the-welcome-ACC the-warm
"I almost can't believe the warm welcome."
(from *Ahram* 1999 newspaper)[2]

(b) *ʾaxīran* *ʃaraʿ-a* *l-ḍabāb-u* *ya-nqaʃiʿ-u* *bi-buṭʾin*
at.last started-3MS the-fog-NOM 3M-clear-S.IND in-slow
"At last the fog started to clear slowly."

Third Property

One way to show that the SA raising verbs of appropinquation are one-place predicates is by contrasting them with two-place control predicates. Three diagnostics are available (Davies and Dubinsky 2004):

Diagnostic 1: Selectional Restriction

Given that one-place raising predicates do not assign an external theta role, they do not have a restriction on the type of subject they may have. The same is not true with two-place control predicates. To illustrate, the sentences in (9) indicate that the raising verb *ʾawʃaka* "was about (to)," unlike the control verb *qarrara* "decided," may have an inanimate NP as a subject.

(9a) *ʾawʃak-a* *l-ḥajar-u* *ʾan* *ya-tadaḥraj-a*
was.about-3MS the stone-NOM to 3M-roll-S.SUB
"The stone was about to roll down."

(b) *#qarrar-a* *l-ḥajar-u* *ʾan* *ya-tadaḥraj-a*
decided-3MS the stone-NOM to 3M-roll-S.SUB
"The stone decided to roll down."

Diagnostic 2: Idiom Chunks

Raising, but not control, predicates may take the subject of an idiom chunk as their own while still preserving the idiomatic meaning. Observe the idiom chunk in (10). It preserves its idiomatic meaning when used with the raising verb *kāda* "was about (to)" in (11). It can only be interpreted literally, however, when it is used with the control verb *ḥāwal-a* "tried" in (12):

(10) *ʾirtabaṭ-a* *lisān-u-hu*
got.tied-3MS tongue-NOM-his
Literal meaning: "His tongue was tied."
Idiomatic meaning: "He became speechless."

(11) *kād-a* *(lisān-u-hu)* *ʾan* *ya-rtabiṭ-a* *(lisān-u-hu)*
was.about-3MS tongue-NOM-his to 3M-get.tied-S.SUB tongue-NOM-his
Literal meaning: 'His tongue was about to be tied.'
Idiomatic meaning: 'He was almost speechless.'

(12) *#ḥāwal-a* *lisān-u-hu* *ʾan* *ya-rtabiṭ-a*
tried-3MS tongue-NOM-his to 3M-get.tied-S.SUB
Literal meaning: "His tongue tried to be tied."
No idiomatic meaning

Diagnostic 3: Passive

Finally, the sentences in (13–14) show that an active construction is semantically equivalent to its passive counterpart with the raising verb *kāda* "was about (to)," but not with the control verb *ʾistaṭāʿ-a* "managed":

(13a) *kād-a* *liverpūl* *ʿan* *yu-ḥaqqiq-a* *l-taʿādul-a*
was.about-3MS Liverpool.NOM to 3M-achieve-S.SUB the-draw-ACC
"Liverpool was about to achieve a draw."
(from the *Thawra* 1996 newspaper)

(b) *kād-a* *l-ta'ādul-u* *'an* *yu-ḥaqqaq-a*
was.about-3MS the-draw-NOM to 3M-be.achieved-S.SUB
'alā yad *liverpūl*
on.the.hand Liverpool
"A draw was about to be achieved by Liverpool."

(14a) *'istaṭa'-a* *liverpūl* *'an* *yu-ḥaqqiq-a* *l-ta'ādul-a*
managed-3MS Liverpool.NOM to 3M-achieve-S.SUB the-draw-ACC
"Liverpool managed to achieve a draw."

(b) # *'istaṭa'-a* *l-ta'ādul-u* *'an* *yu-ḥaqqaq-a*
managed-3MS the-draw-NOM to 3M-be.achieved-S.SUB
'ala yad *liverpūl*
on.the.hand Liverpool
"A draw managed to be achieved by Liverpool."

Three Types of SA Raising: Data and Analysis

Following Doron and Heycock (1999), I assume that the subject in each of the above SA examples is a narrow subject that undergoes its first merge in Spec,vP/VP before it moves to Spec,IP, if at all. If the subject remains in Spec,vP/VP, it triggers partial agreement on the verb. If the subject moves to Spec,IP, it triggers full agreement (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998). I also assume that subject pro-drop may only take place after the subject has moved to Spec,IP, which explains the full agreement on the verb of sentences with null subjects.

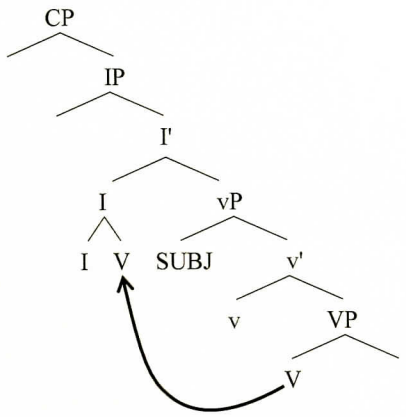
On the basis of the points made above, I conclude that simple uni-clausal Arabic sentences like (15–16) have the structures in (17a, b). The subject undergoes first merge in Spec,vP. If it remains there, the result is a VS(O) structure and partial agreement on the verb, (15, 17a). Alternatively, the subject may move out of vP and merge at Spec,IP, triggering full agreement on the verb. In this case, two outcomes are possible: SV(O) or Null Subject V(O), (16, 17b):[3]

(15) *daras-a* *l-'awlād-u* *l-'umθūlat-a*
studied-3MS the-children-NOM the-lesson-ACC
"The children studied the lesson."

(16) *(l-'awlād-u)* *daras-ū* *l-'umθūlat-a*
the-children-NOM studied-3MP the-lesson-ACC
"The children studied the lesson."

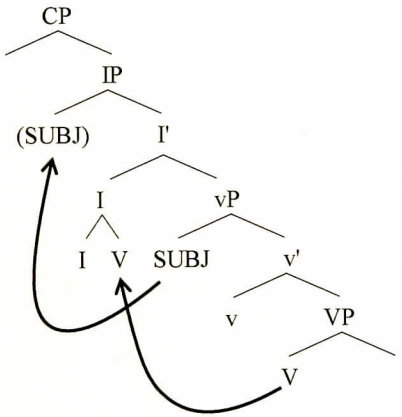
(17a)

Partial Agreement:[4]



(b)

Full Agreement:



I adopt Nunes's (2004) Copy-plus-Merge Theory of Movement, which holds that movement is made of four operations: Copy, Merge, Form Chain, Chain Reduction. That is, the movement of the subject in (17b) constitutes the following four steps: (1) The subject copies out of Spec,vP; (2) it merges in Spec,IP; (3) the two copies form a chain, a step contingent on c-command; and (4) chain reduction takes place, whereby only one copy survives deletion.

Step 4 takes place in order for the structure to be mapped into a linear order at PF in accordance with Kayne's (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom. The gist of this axiom is that precedence at PF is asymmetric. This entails that a syntactic object may not be preceded and followed by the same element at PF. The verb in (17b) is preceded and followed by the same element, namely, two nondistinct copies of the subject related through movement. This is why one of them has to be deleted.

In the rest of this section I present data of the different types of raising. I also present the derivational history of each type, showing that the raising structures in question can be either forward or backward raising; alternatively, selected predicates of appropinquation may not involve raising at all.

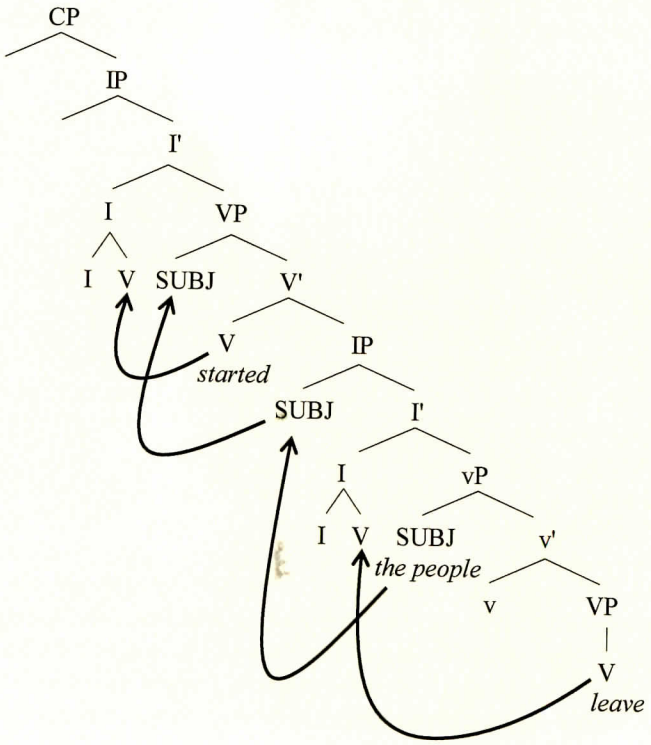
Forward Raising

All the raising structures we have seen so far have the pattern in (18). This is a forward-raising construction in which the subject is base generated in the subordinate clause before it moves to the matrix clause where it is pronounced:

(18) *ṭafiq-a* *l-nās-u* *ya-nṣarif-ū-n*
started-3MS the-people-NOM 3-leave-MP-IND
"The people started to leave."
(adapted from Al-Ghalayini 2003, 205)

Derivationally, sentence (18) has the structure in (19). The subject *l-nās-u* "the people" undergoes first merge in Spec,vP of the subordinate clause and moves to Spec,IP, triggering full agreement on the subordinate verb *ya-nṣarif-ūn* "leave." Subsequently, the subject moves to Spec,VP of the matrix clause. No further movement takes place, which is why the matrix verb *ṭafiq-a* "started" takes on partial agreement.

(19)



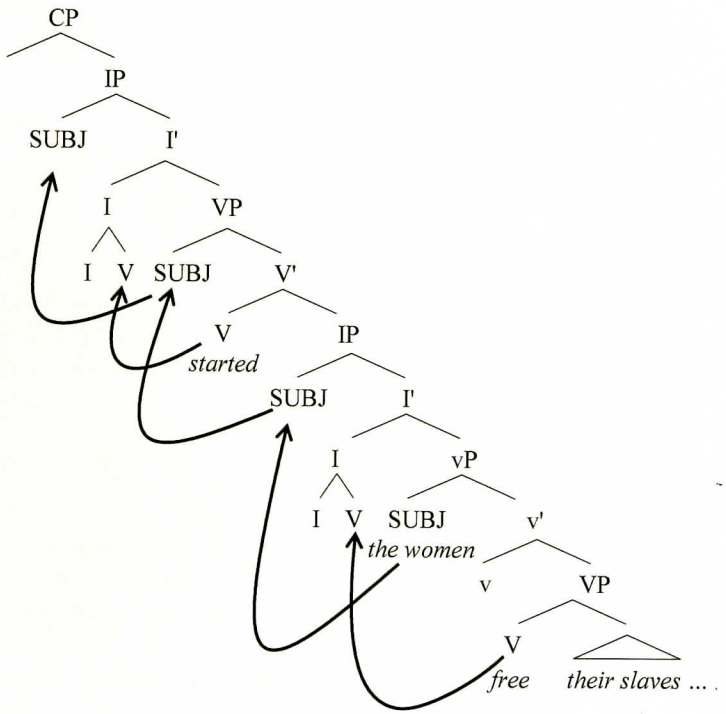
The three copies of the subject *l-nās-u* "the people" in (19) enter a c-command relationship and form a chain. At PF, all but the highest copy are deleted, as (20) illustrates.

(20) [$_{CP}$[$_{IP}$[$_{I'}$ started [$_{VP}$ *the.people* [$_{V'}$ ~~started~~ [$_{IP}$ ~~*the.people*~~ [$_{I'}$ leave [$_{vP}$ ~~*the.people*~~ [$_{v'}$ ~~leave~~ [$_{VP}$ ~~leave~~]]]]]]]]]]

The matrix clause in (18) is of the VS(O) type. Alternatively, the subject may be realized in a clause-initial position, resulting in a matrix clause of the SV(O) type, (21). Derivationally, this means that the subject undergoes one more instance of movement, as (22) shows, triggering full agreement on the matrix verb. At PF, all but the highest copy of the subject are deleted, as illustrated in (23).

(21) *l-nisā'-u* *ṭafiq-na* *ya-ʿtaq-na* *ʿabid-a-hunna*
the-women-NOM started-3FP 3-free-FP.IND slaves-ACC-their
wa-ya-tazawwaj-na-hum
and-3-marry-FP.IND-them
"The women started to free their slaves and marry them."
(from the *Ahram* 1999 newspaper)

(22)



(23) [$_{CP}$[$_{IP}$ *the.women* [$_{I'}$ started [$_{VP}$ ~~*the.women*~~ [$_{V'}$ ~~started~~ [$_{IP}$ ~~*the.women*~~ [$_{I'}$ free [$_{vP}$ ~~*the.women*~~ [$_{v'}$ ~~free~~ [$_{VP}$ ~~free~~ their.slaves]]]]]]]]]

Given enough context, the subject in structures like (21) may not be pronounced at all. That is, (21) may also be realized as (24). For the purpose of this chapter, I consider both structures as instances of forward raising:

(24) *ṭafiq-na* *ya-ʿtaq-na* *ʿabid-a-hunna*
started-3FP 3-free-FP.IND slaves-ACC-their
wa-ya-tazawwaj-na-hum
and-3-marry-FP.IND-them
"They(F) started to free their slaves and marry them."

Backward Raising

Another type of raising licensed in SA is backward raising. Backward raising structures show evidence that the subject has moved to the matrix clause, yet the subject is pronounced in the subordinate clause. Sentences (25) and (26) are examples. The partial agreement on the raising verb is an indication that at some point in the derivation the subject occupied a postverbal position in the matrix clause. That is, (25) and (26) have the same structure in (19) above. Yet, the subject is pronounced postverbally in the subordinate clause, triggering partial agreement on the subordinate verb:

(25) *kād-at* *ta-tawaqqaf-u* *ḥarakat-u* *l-sayyārāt*
was.about-3FS 3F-stop-S.IND the.movement-NOM the-cars
"The cars almost stopped moving."
(from *Ahram* 1999 newspaper)

(26) *kād-a* *yu-ṣbiḥ-u* *ʾawlād-u-na* *ġāʾibīn*
were.about-3MS 3M-become-S.IND children-NOM-our lost
fī *ġābāti* *l-ʾismant*
in forests the-cement
"Our children became almost lost in the forest of cement."
(from *Hayat* 1996 newspaper)

In addition, Al-Ghalayini (2003) holds that structures like (27) are also possible. In this case, the raising verb shows full agreement. This is evidence that derivationally the subject has touched down in a preverbal position in the matrix clause. In other words, sentence (27) has the structure in (22) above. Yet it is similar to (25) and (26) in that the subject is pronounced in a postverbal position in the subordinate clause, and the subordinate verb displays partial agreement:[5]

(27) *ṭafiq-ū* *ya-nṣarif-u* *l-nās-u*
started-3MP 3M-leave-S.IND the-people-NOM
"The people started to leave."
(from Al-Ghalayini 2003, 205 n. 2)

The difference between the backward-raising structures (25–27) and their forward-raising counterparts in the previous section is due to the PF operation Chain Reduction. Whereas Chain Reduction saves the highest copy in each of (18) and (21), as (20) and (23) illustrate, the same operation saves the lowest copy in (25) and (27), as (28) and (29) show:

(28) [$_{CP}$[$_{IP}$[$_{I'}$ was.about [$_{VP}$ ~~*the.movement.of.the.cars*~~ [$_{V'}$ ~~was.about~~ [$_{IP}$ ~~*the.movement.of.the.cars*~~ [$_{I'}$ stop [$_{vP}$ *the.movement.of.the.cars* [$_{v'}$ ~~stop~~ [$_{VP}$ ~~stop~~]]]]]]]]]]

(29) [$_{CP}$[$_{IP}$ ~~*the.people*~~ [$_{I'}$ started [$_{VP}$ ~~*the.people*~~ [$_{V'}$ ~~started~~ [$_{IP}$ ~~*the.people*~~ [$_{I'}$ leave [$_{vP}$ *the.people* [$_{v'}$ ~~leave~~ [$_{VP}$ ~~leave~~]]]]]]]]]

According to Nunes, Chain Reduction usually saves the copy with the least unchecked features, unless other conditions apply. In the case of backward raising, Chain Reduction is free to choose which copies to delete because all copies have equal status with respect to feature checking. They all have checked nominative case.

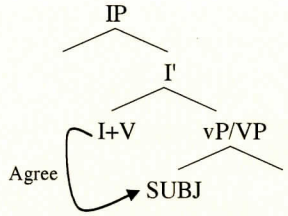
A point is in order before I proceed. Although agreement on the matrix verb is evidence that the pronounced subordinate subject has a copy in the matrix clause, it is not sufficient evidence. Recent research (e.g., Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998; Polinsky and Potsdam 2001; Potsdam 2009; Potsdam and Polinsky 2012) shows that agreement does not have to be local and that long-distance agreement, whereby the matrix predicate agrees with a subordinate argument, is possible. In other words, sentences (25) and (27) may have the structures in (30) and (31), in which the matrix verb establishes long-distance agreement with the subordinate subject:

(30) [$_{Matrix}$ kād-at [$_{Subordinate}$ ta-tawaqqaf-u [$_{Subject}$ ḥarakat-u l-sayyārāt]]]
was.about-3FS 3F-stop-S.IND the.movement-NOM the-cars
"The cars almost stopped moving."

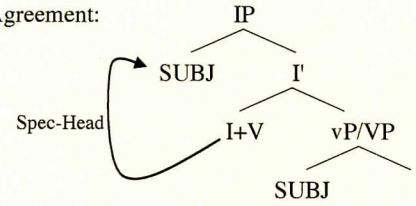
(31) [$_{Matrix}$ ṭafiq-ū [$_{Subordinate}$ ya-nṣarif-u [$_{Subject}$ l-nās-u]]]
started-3MP 3M-leave-S.IND the-people-NOM
"The people started to leave."

I rule out this possibility on two grounds. First, partial agreement between the verb and the subject in SA obtains when the subject remains inside vP/VP. This means that partial agreement obtains via Agree à la Chomsky (2000), (32). Full agreement, on the other hand, is the outcome of a Spec-Head relation between the verb and the subject, (33). The agreement patterns in (30) and (31) indicate that the former corresponds to (32) and is the outcome of Agree, while the latter corresponds to (33) and is the outcome of a Spec-Head configuration. Stated differently, long-distance agreement cannot be responsible for both partial and full agreement. This is why the agreement patterns in (30) and (31) are more likely to be of the local type:

(32) Partial Agreement:



(33) Full Agreement:



Further evidence comes from impossible cases of long-distance agreement with nonnominative subjects. To elaborate, SA has verbs that subcategorize for accusative experiencers. Some examples are *yuʾsif* "make sorry," *yumkin* "enable," *yuġḍib* "make angry," *yantāb* "haunt," *yaġlib* "overcome," *yuzʿij* "annoy." The sentences in (34) are examples. Notice that the verb agrees with the nominative argument, which is masculine in (34a) and feminine in (34b):

(34a) *ġalab-a-hā* *l-nuʿās-u*
overcame-3MS-her the-sleepiness-NOM
"She was overcome by sleepiness."
Literally: "Sleepiness overcame her."

(b) *zaʿaj-at-ni* *taṣarrufāt-u-ka*
annoyed-3FS-me behaviors-NOM-your
"I was annoyed by your behavior."
Literally: "Your behaviors annoyed me."

Although SA prefers nominative arguments to be the functional subjects, the accusative arguments in (34) may also function as subjects. For example, they can function as the subordinate controlees in control structures like (35a, b):

(35a) *ḥāwal-at* *ʾan-lā* *ya-ġlib-a-hā* *l-nuʿās-u*
tried-3FS to-NEG 3M-overcome-S.SUB-her the-sleepiness-NOM
"She tried not to be overcome by sleepiness."
Literally: "She tried that sleepiness would not overcome her."

(b) *ḥāwal-tu* *ʾan-lā* *tu-zʿij-a-ni* *taṣarrufāt-u-ka*
tried-1S to-NEG 3F-annoy-S.SUB-me behaviors-NOM-your
"I tried not to be annoyed by your behavior."
Literally: "I tried that your behaviors wouldn't annoy me."

Similarly, SA verbs of appropinquation may display agreement with an accusative experiencer, as the sentences in (36) show. Under a long-distance-agreement analysis, the verbs of appropinquation in (36) agree with the subordinate accusative experiencers, which is not possible. The reason is that in SA a postverbal argument has to be nominative in order to trigger agreement on the verb; for example, this is why the subordinate subject agrees with the subordinate nominative NP. This implies that agreement in SA is strictly local; it is established between the verb and a nominative copy of the experiencer available in the matrix clause as a result of movement:

(36a) *bi-llāhi* *ʿalaj-ki* *ʾajīb-ī-ni* *fa-ʾana* *ʾa-kād-u* *ʾan*
in-God on-you.F answer-2SF-me for-I 1S-am.about to
ya-ġlib-a-ni *l-ḥayāʾ-u*
3M-overcome-S.SUB-me the-shyness-NOM
"By God answer me, for I am about to be overcome by shyness."

(b) *sawwad-ū* *l-malāmiḥ-a* *l-ʿarabīyat-a* *wa-badà-at*
blackened-3MP the-features-ACC the-Arab-ACC and-started-3FS
ya-ġlib-u-hā *l-sawād-u* *l-kāḥil*
3M-overcome-S.IND-her the-blackness-NOM the-pitch
"They tarnished the Arab face, and it (the Arab face) started to look pitch black."

This said, it is important to note that the sentences in (36) may also be realized as (37), with the raising verbs displaying agreement with the nominative arguments in the subordinate clauses. Prescriptively, the sentences in (37) belong to a higher variety. If the analysis thus far is correct, then sentences (37a, b) involve the movement of the subordinate nominative subject to the matrix clause, and the structures are also instances of backward raising:

(37a) ... *ya-kād-u* *ʾan* *ya-ġlib-a-ni* *l-ḥayāʾ-u*
... 1M-am.about-S.IND to 3M-overcome-S.SUB-me the-shyness-NOM
". . . Shyness is about to overcome me."

(b) ... *wa-badà-a* *ya-ġlib-u-hā* *l-sawād-u*
. . . And-started-3MS 3M-overcome-S.IND-her the-blackness-NOM
l-kāḥil
the-pitch
". . . And blackness started to overcome it (the Arab face)."

Nonraising

Of all the verbs of appropinquation, three may take a single default form (third person, singular masculine) regardless of the phi features of the subject of the subordinate clause. These are *ʿasa* "may" and *ʾawfak-a* "was about," and less commonly *xlawlaq-a* "may" (Al-Ghalayini 2003, 207; Wright 2007, 107–8). The sentences in (38) and (39) are examples. Notice that the raising verbs *ʿasa* "may" and *ʾawfak-a* "was about (to)" are masculine singular irrespective of the gender and number of the

subordinate subject. Wright (2007, 107) calls these invariable verb forms impersonal; that is, they take the whole subordinate clause as their subject:

(38a) *ʿasā* *ʾan* *ta-qūm-a* *l-nisāʾ-u*
may-3MS to 3F-rise-S.SUB the women-NOM
"Perhaps the women will rise."

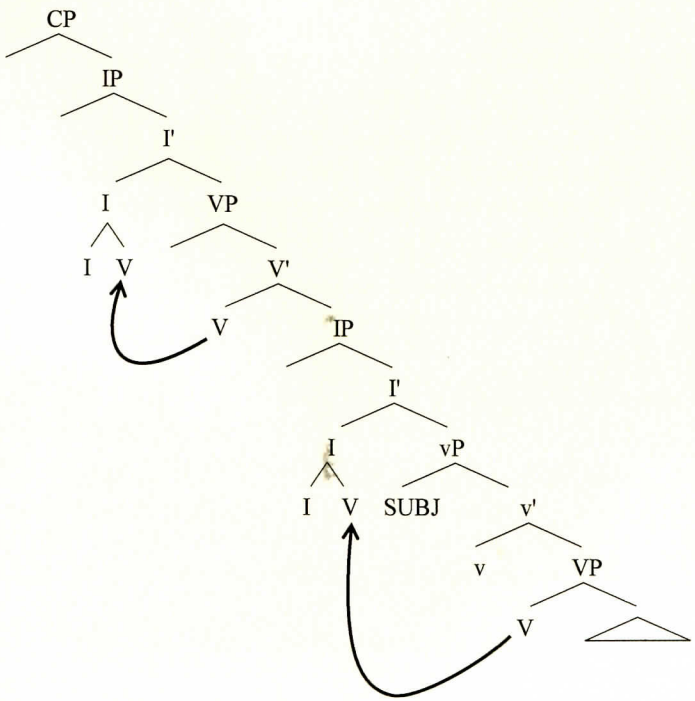
(b) *ʿasa* *ʾan* *ya-qūm-a* *ʾixwat-u-ka*
may-3MS to 3M-rise-S.SUB brothers-NOM-your
"Perhaps your brothers will rise."
(adapted from Jamal-El-Din 1996, 290)

(39a) *ʾawfak-a* *ʾan* *ta-tʿab-a* *l-qawiyyāt-u*
was.about-3MS to 3F-get.tired-S.SUB the.strong.women-NOM
"The strong women were about to get tired."

(b) *ʾawfak-a* *ʾan* *ya-tʿab-a* *l-ʾqwiyyāʾ-u*
was.about-3MS to 3M-get.tired-S.SUB the.strong.men-NOM
"The strong men were about to get tired."
(adapted from Hasan 1975, 617)

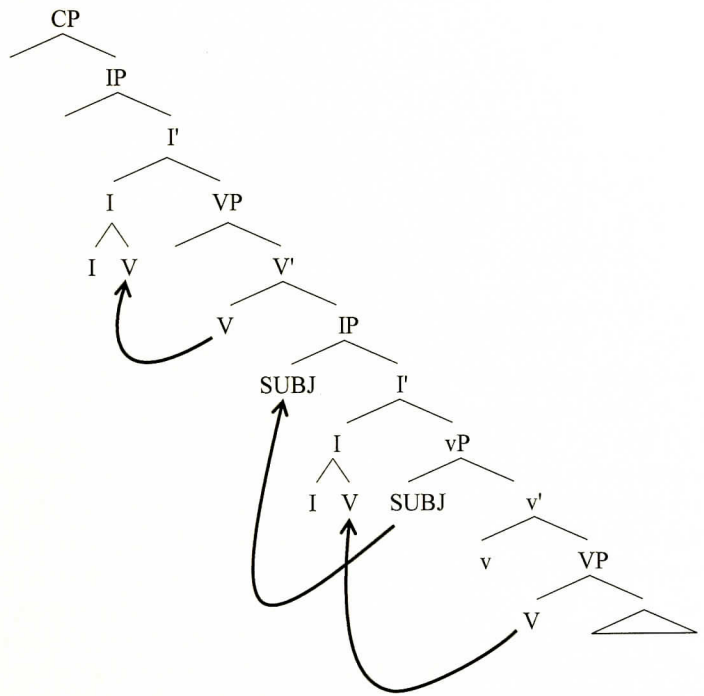
Derivationally, the sentences in (38) and (39) have the structure in (40). The subject undergoes first merge in Spec,vP/VP of the subordinate clause, triggering partial agreement on the subordinate verb. No further movement takes place. This is why the matrix verb takes on default agreement (third person, masculine, singular).

(40)



Another option should be available within the nonraising category. The subject may move to Spec,IP of the subordinate clause, triggering full agreement on the subordinate verb. No further movement takes place, resulting in default agreement on the matrix verb. Thus, (41):

(41)



This nonraising pattern is also attested. For example, sentence (42) shows that the matrix verb may display default agreement although it is linearly followed by a feminine subject. The subordinate verb, on the other hand, shows full agreement (the verb takes on third-person singular feminine with nonhuman plural):

(42) *ʿasā* *l-jihāt-u* *l-maʿnīya* *ta-qūm-u*
may-3MS the-concerned authorities-NOM 3F-advance-S.IND
bi-mā *ya-tawajjab-u* *ʿalay-ha* *min* *masʾūliyyāt*
with-what 3M-advance-S.IND on-her of responsibilities
"Perhaps the concerned authorities will attend to the issues they should take care of."
(from *Thawra* newspaper)

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented evidence of three types of subject-to-subject raising structures in SA. These are forward, backward, and nonraising structures. All three are licensed by what is called verbs of appropinquation in SA grammatical tradition. These include verbs of proximity, hope, and inception. In addition, I have analyzed

the data in the framework of Nunes's (2004) Copy-plus-Merge Theory of Movement. And I have suggested that forward and backward raising are derivationally similar. In both cases, the subject undergoes first merge in the subordinate clause before it moves to the matrix clause. The difference between the two structures resides in the outcome of deletion at PF. If a copy of the subject in the matrix clause survives deletion, the result is forward raising. If, conversely, a copy of the subject in the subordinate clause is spared, the result is backward raising. With regard to nonraising structures, I have shown that the subject does not move to the matrix clause at all, in which case the raising verb takes on default agreement.

At a broader scale, this chapter helps bridge the gap between raising and control, and it contributes to the typology of control and raising put forth by Polinsky and Potsdam (2006). To elaborate, Hornstein (1999) argues that control is movement, just as raising is movement. Recent work by Polinsky and Potsdam (2002, 2006) and Haddad (2009, 2010, 2011), among others, shows that control structures may be realized as instances of forward, backward, or copy control. The SA-raising structures analyzed here, along with work by Potsdam (2009) and Potsdam and Polinsky (2012), show that raising, just like control, is not always unidirectional.

At the same time the SA backward-raising data lead to two questions that call for further research. First, backward raising seems to be a rare phenomenon cross-linguistically. I am only aware of one other case of true backward raising in Adyghe, a Northwest Caucasian language (Potsdam and Polinsky 2012). The question is: What makes languages like Adyghe and Standard Arabic different in this respect?

Equally important is the question of agreement. In the Chomskyan tradition, agreement takes place in narrow syntax as a result of feature checking. Backward-raising structures like (43) challenge this view. We learned above that *l-nās-u* "the people" in (43) moves to a preverbal position in the matrix clause, touching down in Spec,IP of the subordinate clause. At PF, chain reduction applies, deleting all but the lowest copy. In principle, an overt copy of the subject in Spec,IP of the subordinate clause should be able to trigger full agreement on the subordinate verb in narrow syntax. (Note that this is exactly what happens in the matrix clause; the matrix verb displays full agreement as a result of an unpronounced copy in matrix Spec,IP.) Nevertheless, the PF operation chain reduction seems to leave its marks on agreement. Chain reduction spares a postverbal copy of the subject in the subordinate clause; consequently, the subordinate verb takes on partial agreement:

(43) *ṭafiq-ū* *ya-nṣarif-u* *l-nās-u*
started-3MP 3M-leave-S.IND the-people-NOM
"The people started to leave."

This observation seems to suggest that agreement does not (only) take place in narrow syntax, and that it is a postsyntactic, morphological process. Recent work by Ackema and Neeleman (2003), Benmamoun and Lorimor (2006), and Bobaljik (2008) suggests that this is probably the case. I leave this topic for future research.

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NOTES

1. The following abbreviations are used in the glossing: 1, first person; 3, third person; ACC, accusative; COMP, complementizer; F, feminine; IND, indicative; M, masculine; NEG, negative; NOM, nominative; P, plural; S, singular; SUB, subjunctive.
2. All data collected from newspapers (*Ahram*, *Thawra*, etc.) are taken from the Arabic Corpus search tool, http://arabicorpus.byu.edu.
3. Although this approach to agreement in SA is reasonable (e.g., Benmamoun 1992; Bahloul and Harbert 1993; Guasti and Rizzi 2002; Franck et al. 2006), nothing serious hinges on it. For an overview of different analyses of agreement in SA, see Aoun, Benmamoun, and Choueiri 2010, chap. 4. The crucial point for the purpose of this chapter is that the two types of agreement (partial vs. full) are contingent on word order, which is also true of approaches that argue for one mechanism of agreement (only Spec-Head or only Agree).
4. The verbs in (17a, b) probably undergo head movement to v^0 before they move to I^0. This movement is not presented in the trees for simplicity.
5. Al-Ghalayani (2003, 205) extends his observation to all verbs of appropinquation, implying that a structure like (i) is also possible. See Hasan (1975, 628) and Rida (1962, 266) for a similar observation:
   (i) *ʾawʃak-ū* *ʾan* *ya-tàaxxar-a* *l-ṭullāb-u*
   were.about-3MP to 3M-be.late-S.SUB the-students-NOM
   "The students were about to be late."

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5

Construct State Nominals as Semantic Predicates

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THE SEMITIC CONSTRUCT state nominal (*idaafa* in Arabic[1] or *smixoot* in Hebrew; henceforth, "the construct") has received considerable attention in the syntactic literature and has recently regained popularity in the work of, for example, Borer (2008), Choueiri (2008), and Danon (2008), with key contributions in semantic work by Dobrovie-Sorin (2000, 2002, 2005) and Heller (2002). An example of the construct appears in (1). It is a left-headed construction whose head composes with its nonhead and assigns it genitive case (visible in Standard Arabic). The purpose of this chapter is to propose a different semantics of the construct based on novel observations regarding its composition with quantifiers and adjectives in Lebanese Arabic, a dialect of Arabic in which the construct is still widely used.[2]

(1) *kteeb* l-esteez Lebanese Arabic
book the-teacher
"The teacher's book."

Taking into account the known properties of the construct, in this chapter I present a compositional analysis of the construct as a semantic predicate (of type <e,t>) composed of a relational head (of type <e,<e,t>>) and an individual denoting nonhead (of type e). In the first section I review what is known about the construct and, based on a partition of constructs by Borer (2008), narrow down the object of interest to the so-called individual construct (called R-constructs in Borer 2008). In the second section I present the main empirical evidence for treating the construct as a predicate, showing (1) that adjectives cannot compose with the head of the construct alone, but must compose with the entire construct as a phrase; and (2) that to get a restrictive reading of the possessive, cardinals and quantifiers cannot compose with the head before its composition with the nonhead and must compose with the entire construct. In the third section I consider the implications of these observations and show why the construct must be a predicate. In the fourth section I review the foremost existing semantic treatment of the construct, proposed by Dobrovie-Sorin (2000, 2002, 2005) and built upon by Heller (2002), to which I refer as the individual approach. The individual approach treats the construct as an individual denot-