

On the Syntax of Complementizer Phrases in Standard Arabic: A Minimal Approach¹

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ملخص:

تعتبر المركبات المصدرية موضوعا مهما تمت إثارته مع تطور النحو التحويلي التوليدي. اللغات الطبيعية تتمتع بمواصفات مورفولوجية و نحوية مختلفة فيما يتعلق بالمركبات المصدرية، إلا إن النحو الخاص بهذه المركبات في اللغة العربية الفصحى يمثل نموذجا للتفاعل بين المركب المصدر مع مركبات وظيفية وسيطية بما في ذلك الزمن والمبني للمجهول. يهدف هذا البحث إلى إظهار محدودية التحليل التقليدي للمركب المصدر بناء على أدلة تركيبية كما يقترح بديلا مبنيا على تحليل أدنوي للمركب المصدر في علاقته مع المركبات الاستفهامية والمركبات المنقولة بما في ذلك المركبات الاسمية المفككة إلى اليسار. نقترح في هذا البحث أن المركبات المصدرية و المركبات الاستفهامية تعود إلى رأس وظيفي مرخص دون الحاجة إلى عملية النقل. سنبين في إطار البرنامج الأدنوي لتشومسكي (2000، 2004، 2005، 2008) أن فحص السمات القوية في المركب المصدر يتم بناءً على نظرية الرحائل على المستوى الصوتي في حين أن فحص السمات الاستفهامية يتم على المستوى الدلالي أخذاً بمبدأ التأجيل ونقل العناصر الاستفهامية اعتباراً المبدأ إعادة البناء.

Abstract:

The syntax of Complementizer Phrases (henceforth, CPs) is an interesting issue that has been raised with the development of Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG). Languages display different morphological and syntactic properties of CPs; however, the syntax of this construction in Standard Arabic (SA) is a typical case of the interaction of CPs with other parameterized functional categories including Tense and the Passive (PASS). The purpose of this paper is to present empirical limits to the traditional analysis of CPs and suggest instead a minimal analysis of CPs in relation to resumption, Wh-phrases and moved constructions including Left Dislocated Noun Phrases (LDNPs) and Wh-constructions. The main proposal is that CPs and Wh-constructions, contrary to Left Dislocation, may be affected without recourse to any movement to a licensing Functional Head. Under minimalist assumptions (Chomsky 2000, 2004, 2005, 2008), strong features checking needed in the CP analysis will be shown to apply, in accordance with the phase-based model, at PF while Wh-features are checked at LF in satisfaction of Procrastinate, where displacement of Wh-elements is altruistic and applies in satisfaction of reconstruction.

Key words: Complementizer Phrases, Minimalism, Wh-Constructions, Phases, Resumption

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1. Introduction

The CP analysis adopted in this paper is basically related to the typology of Standard Arabic (henceforth, SA). Essentially, the difference between SA as a Verb Subject Object (VSO) language and English as a Subject Verb Object (SVO) language reduces to the morphology and the configurational properties of AGR (element) in both languages (Borer, 1983; Fassi Fehri, 2000; Chomsky, 1993; Soltan, 2007; Radford, 2009; Jalabneh et al 2014). With respect to SA structures, the CP analysis is handled via raising of wh-constructions and the derivation of SVO order which is derived in view of some specific minimalist assumptions. Wh-constructions, in comparison to Left Dislocated NPs or topicalized phrases, operate minimally in relation to their licensing functional head. Thus, a CP analysis is required both for checking domains as well as for focus phrases which involve quantificational A-binding. In fact, the syntax of CPs reflects the typological specific nature of the language as a base generated VSO language. CPs structural patterns in SA are defined in this paper according to some minimalist principles besides some parametric variables related to functional categories and phrases, namely the VP.

This paper is organized in a way to cover the major structural patterns in relation to the analysis of interrelated clauses. Thus, the second section illustrates the syntax of CPs in relation to the marked SVO order. The third section discusses the interaction of CPs with the marked SVO order. The fourth section demonstrates the checking of case for LDNPs and Wh-constructions. Finally, the fifth section will compare the minimal syntactic behavior of relative pronouns and resumptive pronouns in the CP domain.

2. Review of the literature

The CP analysis had its earliest roots in Chomsky (1977), developed later in Radford (1988), where he relates it to the nature of tense, with both values [\pm Tense], where [+Tense] stands for finite and [-Tense] for infinitival. [+Tense] which consists of CP and tense phrase while [-Tense] has only tense phrase but without CP. Within X-bar syntax, the CP is projected to account for moved constituents outside the boundary of inflectional phrase (IP) and for the fronted Wh/that-phrases. A clause therefore has the structure [C' Spec [C' C [I' Spec [I' I V'']]]]. [Spec, CP] is optional and it is a non-argument position. The Extended Projection Principle (EPP) states that the specifier position of the inflectional phrase is an obligatory argument position while the specifier position of CP is a non-argument position.

However, within minimalism, Chomsky (1995) referred to theta marking of CP as informal universal features among others like the nominative case and agreement-subject. These features are claimed to be unpredictable; therefore, they constitute problems to the grammaticality of the sentence if they are not checked properly at all levels of syntax. With regard to the CP analysis, Chomsky (2004, 2005) suggested that the derivation proceeds phase by phase, whereby the uninterpretable features are valued and deleted. It has also been claimed in Chomsky (2008: 149-50) that an edge feature (EF) in C interacts with the ϕ -features (Agree features) that C passes down to T. This state of affairs has been conceived of as an EPP feature that the Phase heads C and v (Chomsky, 2004).

With respect to SA, Ouhalla (1993) assumes that feature identification applies in terms of a certain set of features on a head F, maximally projecting FP (= FinP in R&R's account and FocP in Aoun et al.'s (2010) analysis). In Ouhalla's (1993: 282–283) terms, the head F is “specified for both the feature [+Wh] which characterizes Wh-phrases (and Wh-questions), and the feature [+F] which characterizes f-phrases (and sentences with focus)”. Following this line of reasoning, the licensing conditions that Ouhalla (1993:297) considers operable in the derivation of sentences in SA in terms of the Identification Requirement are applicable to all structural configurations that highlight the interaction of some element merged into the structure with the modal/tense properties of the sentences in question. Following Pesetsky and Torrego (2001), Lewis (2013) claimed that, in Najdi Arabic, the complementizer has an uninterpretable finiteness feature that must be licensed by a subject with an interpretable finiteness feature or by an auxiliary/verb moving to Fin.

An important aspect of the current analysis is the dependency relations involved in the derivation of the relevant sentences where the roles of the CP domain projection and feature identification within CP are essential for interpretation at the interface levels. In this feature-based analysis of parametric variation, feature combinations concern the feature structure of the T-node in relation to the position where T is spelled out at the interface (Jouini, 2014).

Considered cross-linguistically, the CP was analyzed in different ways. Aoun and Audrey (2003) worked on the CP analysis in terms of the Wh-elements in situ (i.e., the Wh-elements that have not been overtly moved to the Spec of Comp position). They argued that Wh-elements in situ are subject to a covert raising process in the Logical Form (LF) component. Nishigauchi (1999) argued that in Chinese these Wh-elements in situ are coindexed and interpreted with

respect to a question operator (Qu-operator) that is raised to the appropriate Spec of Comp position by S- Structure. He claimed that Chinese has overt raising of a Qu-operator and that the scope of a Wh-in-situ is determined by reference to the Qu-operator which is coindexed with the landing site for moved Wh-words, relative clauses and in situ Wh-words. In Romanian, Hill (2002) states that sentences exhibit a reduced CP complement that qualifies as FinP. The head Fin displays lexical checkers at all times, while left dislocation to Top and Focus is clause internal, following but not preceding the lexical material in Fin.

In SA, however, Jalabneh (2007) proposed to deal with the SVO order at spell-out and apply the Verb movement to get the VSO order at LF. Later, Jalabneh et al (2014) examined the formal and informal universal features of the complementizer in the mandative subjunctive structure used in English, SA and German. Jalabneh et al explained some features of the CP category that is selected by a verb and initiated by the complementizer ‘that’, ‘ʔan’ and ‘dass’ for English, MSA and German respectively. They proved that the formal features like tense phrase, noun phrase, verb phrase and complementizers which serve as mood-force indicators are universal. With respect to what has been advanced so far in the literature on CPs, the following research questions need to be raised:

- How does the interaction of CPs and SVO order conform to the features associated with TNS and CP?
- Can we assume that strong features, like the case feature and the D-feature, are determined by TNS in SA structures?
- Given the syntax of Wh-constructions in SA, what would the derived order be with regard to resumption, left dislocation and topicalization?
- What motivates the movement of the relative clause to the higher CP clause?
- Is the relative feature an obligatory or an optional feature for convergence?
- What is the minimal level for checking features when displacement of Wh-elements is altruistic?

3. CPs and SVO order

The marked SVO word order in SA is derived as follows: the verb (probe) is selected from the lexicon with its uninterpretable ϕ -features, then it merges with the NP object (goal) forming a VP; the VP is then merged with the light v forming the vP node where the subject is

placed. The *v* assigns the goal its accusative case, and then attracts the verb to adjoin it to make up the derived *vP* that is considered to be a phase in Chomsky's latest Phase Based Model (PBM) (Chomsky 2005, 2008). The derived active structure in relation to Chomsky's PBM, along with Soltan (2007), that Determiner Phrases (DPs) in SVO orders are actually in a left-peripheral position in the sentence would be questioned and therefore compared to the derivation of Passive structures in the same language. The derived order in passive structures will take into consideration the syntax of the CP analysis in relation to the moved constructions namely Wh-constructions and LDNPs. Consider the following examples:

- (1) a. man untuxib-a.
 who elected (PASS)- 3p.ms
 (Who was elected?)
- b. ʔal-ʔawlaad-u ʒaaʔ-uu.
 the-boys-nom came-they
 (The boys came)
- c. [IP [pro] [V-I] ʒaaʔa [VP ʔal -ʔawlaad-u]]
 came.3ms the-boys-nom
 (The boys came)
- d. haaḏaa l-maqaal-u kaatib-u-hu maʕruuf-un
 this article-nom writer-nom-it known(PART)-nom
 (The writer of this article is known)

According to Sportiche (1998) parameterization of the case-agreement system, case is assigned in terms of Spec-head agreement and/or Case transmission while Benmamoun (1993) referred to the conceptualization of agreement in ϕ -features and Case between the subject and the verb in SA. In (2b) below, an SVO structure is provided to highlight a subject-verb agreement as opposite to a VSO order as in (2c) in SA. In (2b), full subject-verb agreement obtains since the fully inflected verb under I (NFL) agrees in person and number with the raised subject in [Spec, IP]. As for the VS (O) structure in (2c), the verb fails to agree with the subject kept in situ. The result is that the verb bears a default set of ϕ -features (3rd person singular). Following this reasoning, only in (2b) does nominative Case assignment obtain along with agreement in ϕ -features under the Spec-head agreement relation. In (2c), however, the subject in [Spec VP] fails to be assigned nominative case via the Spec-head agreement relation and, as a consequence, no agreement in ϕ -features

arises. Nominative Case is assigned to expletive *pro* in [Spec IP] and is transferred, along with Benmamoun's analysis, from *pro* to the subject in [Spec VP].

Notice that the examples under (1a.b.d)) display an SVO order. In (1a), the Wh-element in [Spec CP] is assumed to move to this [+Wh] position from within the verb phrase (i.e. the node Top dominated by S in Chomsky's (1977) terms). Under minimalist assumptions, however, the Wh-feature is assumed to be a variant of D (Chomsky 1995: 289) and that the subject first moves to [Spec IP] in order to check the D-feature of INFL. In (1c) and (1d), the preverbal NPs '*ʔal-ʔawlaad-u*' (the boys) and '*haaḏaa l-maqaal-u*' (this article) are generated in an A-bar position, namely [Spec CP], in the course of the derivation. Like Wh-phrases, however, these LDNPs are treated as quantificational elements which operate as quasi-operators binding variables at the level of LF, the pronoun in the case of LDNPs and the trace in the case of Wh-phrases. In this connection, it has been assumed within the Minimalist Program that merger of elements in the interpretation of the sentence is only checked at the interface. Therefore, the claim that I want to advance is that in (1d) the DP '*kaatib*' (writer) is merged in [Spec TP] at PF, while the LDNP '*haaḏaa l-maqaal-u*' (this article) is a D-feature checked due to procrastinate only at Logical Form (LF). However, the problematic issue of both proposals is that the D-feature of T will be checked in [Spec TP] and [Spec CP] as well. As Tense strong features, D-feature and a Case feature are at issue in that the [-interpretable] case feature of '*kaatib*' (writer) in (1d) will be assumed to be checked at PF and therefore it survives after being checked at LF. For the sake of argumentation, let us consider the following examples:

- (2) a. *haaḏaa l-kitaab-u buʕθirat ʔawraaqu-hu.*

This book-nom scattered (PASS)-3m.s pages-it

(The papers of this book were scattered)

- b- *haaḏaa l-kitaab-u ʔawraaqu-hu buʕθirat*

This book-nom pages-it scattered (PASS)-3m.s

(The papers of this book were scattered)

- (3) a. *man qutil-a ʔax-uu-hu.*

who killed (PASS)-3m.s brother-nom-him

(Whose brother was killed?)

- b. **man ʔax-uu-hu qutil-a.*

who brother-nom-him killed (PASS)

Obviously, the constructions under (2) and (3) are derived structures by means of the requirements of D-feature of I (Extended Projection Principle) as well as case checking. Evidence for movement of Determiner Phrases (DPs) or wh-phrases comes essentially from the obligatory existence of a null object in SA passives. The left dislocated construction ‘*haaḏaa l-kitaab-u*’ in (2a-b) will therefore be assumed to undergo topicalization to Spec Upper Phrase (UP), while ‘*ʔawraaq*’ (papers) is only merged in spec TNSP at PF. If this assumption is correct, then we might basically adopt the working hypothesis that topicalized objects are operators (Akkal, 1996; Rizzi, 1997). As such, they require to bind a variable which turns out to be the resumptive pronoun (*-hu*) attached to ‘*ʔawraaqu*’ (papers) in (2) and (3).

Essentially, a comparison of the examples under (2) and (3) seems to offer a solid background for the assumption of similar behavior of LDNPs and Wh-phrases; though we might assume that LDNPs and Wh-phrases differ in terms of their binding the variables at LF. Indeed, given (2a-b), there is a clear sense in which the topicalized object is to be considered as occupying a peripheral position. In the spirit of Chomsky (1977), this position is labeled as a TOP Phrase which may project as one of the components of the sentential structure. This position is also labelled as a Focus Phrase where the focus feature suggests the relevant category carries more stress than the co-occurring constituents. Thus, object topicalization is assumed to be the direct consequence of Greed where according to Chomsky (2005:5) “Move raises α to a position β only if morphological properties of a itself would not otherwise be satisfied in the derivation”. Consider the following examples:

- (4) a. *haaḏaa l-kitaab-u qaala ʕamr-un ʔinna al-muʔallif-a allaḏii kataba-hu suʕina.*

This book -nom said Amr-nom that the author who-ms wrote-it jailed (pass)
(This book, Amr said that the author who wrote it was jailed.)

- b. [TOP *haaḏaa l-kitaab-u* [CP *qaala ʕamr-un* [CP *ʔinna* [NP *al-muʔallif-a allaḏii*
kataba-hu [*suʕina*]]]]]

By making reference to the resumptive pronoun strategy that SA employs systematically to save structures like (4), the N-feature of the verb is discharged. This follows from the fact that the nominal feature of the verb disappears on a previous case-feature checking basis. In other words, after incorporation of the resumptive pronoun to the verb, the latter checks its N-feature. The outcome of these facts is that the resumptive pronoun performs the major morphological function of the affected category in its original (embedded) domain. All things considered, we may claim

that the case feature of the resumptive pronoun as well as that of the NP ‘*al-muʔallif*’ (the author) will be checked at PF, while the NP ‘*haaḏaa l-kitaab-u*’ (*this book*) in a non V-related [Spec TOP] position checks the D-feature of I only at LF. If this reasoning is correct, then the question that we might ask is as follows: are strong features like the case feature and the D-feature determined by TNS in SA? Before answering this question, let us see how pronominals are generated in SA passive constructions with respect to the generation of topicalized and Wh-constructions inside the CP.

4. CP analysis and resumptive strategy

4.1 Left dislocated constructions

With reference to the resumptive strategy advocated above, we assume that the movement of the LDNP leaves a trace which instantiates morphologically as a pronoun so that the head of the chain discharges its N- features. If this line of reasoning is correct, two advantages may raise as outstanding characteristics of the resumptive strategy: First, the case feature will be checked properly at PF and therefore eliminated because of its [-interpretable] features. Second, the use of the resumptive might prevent the effects of "shortest move" condition since the displaced category leaves behind a copy of its features so that the latter may function morphologically like the displaced NP. However, it will be shown below that beyond the advantages of the resumptive strategy cited in different works (Aoun & Choueiri 1996, 1997; Aoun et al. 2001), the resumptive strategy is not compulsory in SA passives constructions. Before dealing with this issue, let us first see how pronominals are represented in SA passives. Following Benmamoun (1993); Mohammad (1989); Aoun & Choueiri (2000), the following representations for pronominals in SA are taken into consideration:

(5)

- ❖ a. [DP [D Pronominal]]
- ❖ b. [DP DP_i [Di pronoun]]
- ❖ c. [DP R-expression [Di pronoun]]
- ❖ d. [DP wh-phrase [Di pronoun]]

The explicit assumption under (5a) is that an overt pronominal, be it strong or weak, heads its own projection; while in (5b), a DP may be generated as the specifier of the pronominal. This

overt specifier may be an R-expression or a Wh-phrase as in (5c) and (5d), respectively. Focusing on the representations under (5c-d), let us consider the following examples:

- (6) a. al-ʔustaað-u saʔal-a attilmiið-a qabla ʔixbaari-hi bi-nnatiiʒat-i .
 the-teacher-Nom asked-3m.s the-student-Acc before informing-him by the result-Gen
 (The teacher asked the student before giving him the result.)
- b. al-ʔustaað-u saʔal-a attilmiið-a qabla*Ø/ ʔan yu-xbar-a
 the-teacher-nom asked-3m.s the-student-acc before/*Ø/that Pron-informed-3m.s
 bi-nnatiiʒat-i.
 by the result-Gen
 (The teacher asked the student before he was given the result.)
- c. al-ʔustaað-u saʔal-a attilmiið-a qabla ʔan
 the-teacher-nom asked-3m.s the-student-acc before that
 yu-xbar-a-*hu / haaðaa al-muʒtahid-u bi-nnatiiʒat-i.
 Pron-informed (PASS)-3m.s-*him/ this the-hardworking-nom by the-result-Gen
 (The teacher asked the student before this hardworking boy is given the result.)

Given the examples in (6), we may wonder why the resumptive strategy is possible only in (6a) but not (6b-c). For the sake of argumentation, let us assume that the passive verb ‘yuxbara’ (he was informed) in (6-b), contrary to its active counterpart in (6a), does not need to discharge its N-feature to a resumptive pronoun in that the LDNP has checked its case feature in its original embedded position. Assuming this reasoning to be correct, left dislocation in (6b) would be claimed accordingly to be greedier than that in (6a). Nevertheless, (6b) is not well formed in that no resumptive pronoun is available to bind the LDNP generated in [Spec TOPP]. With regard to this state of affairs, can we assume that the epithet phrase ‘*haaðaa al-muʒtahid-u*’ (this hardworking student) in (6c) to be a resumptive pronoun or a bound variable that discharges the N-feature of the passive verb?

Following Aoun & Choueiri (1997:4), epithets cannot be used as resumptive elements because they cannot be A-bar-bound but can be interpreted as bound variables that display a dual characteristic in that they are inherently pronominals as well as referential expressions. The LDNP object in (6c) is however generated in a non L-related position and therefore will be claimed to A-bar- bind the epithet which is also characterized inherently as a variable realized

morphologically as an epithet to discharge the relevant N-feature of the passive verb. Following this line of reasoning, let us see how this can be applicable for Wh-constructions.

4.2 Wh- Constructions

One basic assumption that we may advance is that Wh-constructions, contrary to LDNPs, may be affected without the need to move to a functional licensing head. This proposal overrides the effects of strict locality on feature checking; therefore Wh-constructions would be interpreted, under Reconstruction, in their original positions at least because of their generation in a non L-related peripheral position. Due to this generation, Wh-constructions will be claimed to A-bind variables and epithets as well.

With respect to SA passive constructions, however, some relative pronouns will be shown to function syntactically as resumptive pronouns and left dislocated constructions. For illustration, consider the following:

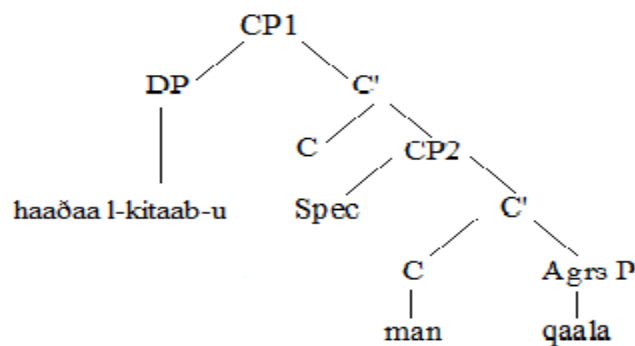
- (7) a. *haaḏaa l-kitaab-u man qaal-a ʔanna-hu suriq-a.*
 This book-nom who said -3m.s that-it stolen (PASS)-3m.s
 (Who said that this book was stolen?)
- b. **man qaal-a haaḏaa l-kitaab-u ʔanna-hu suriq-a.*
 who said-3m.s this book-nom that-it stolen (PASS)- 3m.s
- c. *ʔayy-u kitaab-in qaal-uu ʔanna-hu buʕθirat ʔawraaqu-hu.*
 which-nom book-Gen said-they that-it scattered (pass) papers-it
 (Which book did they say that its papers were scattered?)
- d. *ʔayy-u kitaab-in qaal-uu ʔanna ʔawraaqa-hu buʕθirat.*
 which-nom book-Gen said-they that papers-it scattered (PASS)-3m.s
 (Which book did they say that its papers were scattered?)

In (7a), contrary to (7b), the LDNP is fronted to the initial position where it surfaces in [Spec TOPP]. The well-formedness of (7a), however, does not obey the requirements of the wh-island constraint in that the LDNP '*haaḏaa l-kitaab-u*' (this book) is bound by the resumptive pronoun attached to the complementizer '*ʔanna*' (that) irrespective of the wh-island. Therefore, only the LDNP, but not the wh-phrase, is resumed by a pronoun.

On the contrary, the ill-formedness of (7b) may be linked first to the non L-related position where it surfaces. Second, following Aoun & Choueiri (2000: 27), reconstruction for Wh-interrogatives resumed by a pronoun is available only when the Wh-interrogative and the resumptive element are not separated by an island. In this regard, we might wonder whether the movement of the Wh-phrase is motivated by the necessity to check the [Wh] feature of the CP. Assuming the impossible movement when the resumptive pronoun occurs inside a complex NP island, the Wh-phrase will be then assumed to be interpreted in the non L-related position where it is generated. Evidence for this stipulation comes out on the basis that the resumptive pronoun does not bind the Wh-phrase but the LDNP as the agreement relation involved implies. Still, the grammaticality of (7a), contrary to (7b), is due to the fact that Dislocation does not obey locality requirements, whereas Wh-movement does.

One other problem that remains to be solved is linked to the syntactic locus of the LDNP '*haaḏaa l-kitaab-u*' (this book) in (7a). In the case of LDNPs and Wh-constructions interaction, we may adopt a Larsonian CP recursion analysis according to which the structure in (7a) involves two projections of CP:

(8)



The major problem in (8), however, Chomsky (1993) argues, is that in case of multiple specifiers, multiple assignments of case and agreement by the same head will be allowed. To overcome this problem, I assume that, given the resumption involved in (7c), only the nominative case of the LDNP is checked at LF, whereas that of the Wh-phrase is a default case and thus Wh-constructions are proposed to be effected without the need to move to a functional licensing head.

Following this line of reasoning, the Wh-construction will be also predicted not to check the Wh-feature in that it is not generated in the selected domain (i.e., CP1). Moreover, given that

this feature cannot be checked by a non Wh-feature, the derivation crashes accordingly in satisfaction of last resort (Chomsky 1995: 282).

One of the implications of the discussion in this section is that, with respect to resumption, left dislocated NPs, contrary to Wh-constructions, are claimed not to obey locality requirements. Second, resumption is a prerequisite of LDNPS more than Wh-constructions in view of the agreement relation involved. Yet, this had led us to claim that Wh-phrases are interpreted in their position where they may check the Wh-feature while the nominative case is a default case. In this regard, the question that may be raised is: can we assume that Wh-phrases do not check their case in the domain of the VP? In fact, this assumption is problematic in that both LDNPs and Wh-phrases are arguments of the passive verb in the course of the derivation. With regard to (7a) and (7b), the proposal already made is that the trace of the raised Wh-phrase in (7a) is resumed by a pronoun so that the passive verb could discharge its case. Still, resumption here operates with respect to the morphological requirements of the passive verb and the DP assigned case in Spec VP. On the contrary however, the NP '*ʔawraaq*' (papers) discharges its accusative case leftward from the complementizer '*ʔanna*' (that) but not the tense element associated with the passive verb.

Alternatively, the DP '*ʔawraaq*' (papers) in (7c) checks its nominative case in [Spec TNSP] while in (7d) it checks its accusative case by the relevant head in [Spec AGRsP]. As for the resumptive pronoun '*hu*' (him/it) which may be assumed to result from spelling out the trace of the Wh-phrase in spec CP, it may be claimed to belong to the chain (hu-Wh) where only the head of the chain checks case. Additionally, following Chomsky (1995), we might claim that with regard to A-bar- movement, the formal features of the Wh-trace or the resumptive pronominal in this case, are retained, contrary to A-movement where formal features of the trace are deleted and erased. To see whether this reasoning is correct, it would be convenient to give a certain merit to the licensing properties of the passive verb with regard to the syntactic status of relatives in SA.

5. Relatives

The analysis of resumption put forward considers that LDNPs and Wh-phrases may be generated in the specifier positions generated in the CP domain. However, in this section it will be shown that relative constructions are also generated within the domain of CP where they

behave syntactically like resumptive pronouns displaying rich agreement, adjacency to the passive verb and subject-like properties as well. For purposes of illustration, consider the following:

- (9) a. man haaḏaa llaḏii ntuxib-a.
 who this who elected (PASS)-3m.s
 (Who is the one that was elected?)
- b. haaḏaa llaḏii ntuxib-a man huwa.
 this who elected (PASS)-3m.s who him
 (The one who was elected, who is he?)
- (10) a. hali llaḏii qutil-a Zayd-un.
 Qs who killed (PASS)-3m.s Zayd-nom
 (Is Zaid the one who was killed?)
- b. hal llaḏii-na qutil-uu ʔaTfaal-un.
 Qs that (pl.m) killed (PASS)- they children-nom
 (Were those who were killed children?)
- (11) a. Zayd-un *Ø/ huwa allaḏii ntuxib-a.
 Zaid-nom*Ø/ PRON(3m.s) that elected (PASS)-3m.s
 (It is Zaid who was elected?)
- b. ʔal-banaat-u hunna allawaatii ntuxib-na.
 the-girls-nom PRON (3pl.f) who (pl) elected (PASS)-3pl.f
 (It is the girls who were elected)

The obvious property of relatives seems to lie, with regard to (9a) and (9b), in the fact that the relative pronoun functions as a Comp head. Given its syntactic locus and grammatical status, the relative pronoun operates differently since it is the head of CP in (9a) and (9b), but a base generated category in the former and a raised category in the latter.

Under the analysis that Wh-phrases and LDNPs are generated in the CP domain, I have claimed that Wh-phrases check the Wh-feature in [Spec CP] or the selected domain. However, contrary to (9a), the relative clause in (9b) is raised to the upper domain where the Wh-feature is supposed to be checked. The outcome of this displacement is that the relative pronoun and the passive verb form an island where Phi-features of the relative pronoun and the passive verb match irrespective of whether the structural subject is preverbal or post verbal as is clear in (9),

(10) and (11). Still, the question that may be raised in this regard remains as to what motivates the movement of the relative clause to the higher CP clause. Second, is the relative feature an obligatory or an optional feature for convergence?

Following the major claim that features are optional rather than movement, the features to be checked would fall into two types:

- (12) a. Obligatory features: \emptyset features, case and [Wh] feature.
- b. Optional features: [TOP] and prosodic features such as [focus]

According to (12a), the case feature of the Wh-element must be checked otherwise the derivation will crash since the illegitimate object (i.e. nominative case) will be involved in the interfaces. As for the relative feature instantiated in (10a-b), we may claim along the lines in (12b) that it is an optional feature which does not need to be checked for convergence. Assuming that, we may suggest that the question particle “*hal*” (Qs) in (10a-b) is base generated in [Spec CP2] and moves up overtly to [Spec CP1] to eliminate the relative feature. However, the problem remains as to whether the relative clause projects into CP1, and the relative pronoun targets its Spec position. With regard to the contrasts in (9b) and (10a-b), [Spec CP1] is optionally targeted by the relative pronoun. Evidence for this may be highlighted in (11a-b) where the relative pronoun does not target [Spec CP1] in that a lexical subject is located in this position.

Alternatively, the strong or ‘tonic’ pronouns “*huwa*” (he) and “*hunna*” (they. fem) in (11a) and (11b) respectively seem to offer the possibility to project [Spec CP1]. In fact, the proposal that I want to advance here is that the strong pronoun, contrary to the relative pronoun, projects [Spec AGRsP] where ‘*Zayd*’ checks its nominative case, and therefore will operate merely as AGRs. If this assumption is correct, the relative pronoun together with the passive verb will be expected to encode some phi-features that match those of the strong pronoun. Accordingly, the relative pronoun may be claimed to display weak features in SA passive constructions. Although its adjacency to the passive verb is required and matching the phi-features of the pronoun and the verb is satisfied in VSO or SVO constructions, the relative feature is weak and so the domain of the relative clause is optional for checking and convergence. As a way to test the validity of these claims, let us consider the following examples:

- (13) a. *al-raʒul-u allaðii ntuxib-a maʕruuf-un.*
the-man-nom that elected (PASS)-3m.s known-nom
(The man who was elected is known.)
b. **al-raʒul-u huwa allaðii ntuxib-a maʕruuf-un.*
the-man-nom him that elected (PASS)-3m.s known-nom
- (14) a. **al-raʒul-u allaðii huwa ntuxib-a maʕruuf-un.*
the-man-nom that him elected (PASS)-3m.s known-nom
b. *al-raʒul-u allaðii huwa maʕruuf-un ntuxib-a .*
the-man-nom that him known-nom elected (PASS)-3m.s
(The man that he is known was elected.)
- (15) a. ?*ntuxib-a al-raʒul-u allaðii huwa maʕruuf-un.*
elected-3m.s the man-nom that him known-nom
(The man who is known was elected.)
b. * *al-raʒul-u ntuxib-a allaðii huwa maʕruuf-un*
the-man-nom elected (PASS)-3m.s that him known-nom

Notice that the co-occurrence of a passive verb and a participial passive construction raises a lot of problems for the claims I made above. Basically, in (13b), contrary to (13a), the strong pronoun is not needed for checking in that the relative pronoun functions as a resumptive pronoun bound by the definite NP in [Spec CP]. Additionally, if we consider (14a) to be an instance of left dislocation reconstruction effects will obtain. Following Aoun and Choueiri (1997), the reconstruction effects with resumptive clitics support the generation of LDNPs in the specifier of the pronominal projection (see also Aoun et al, 2001). Contrary to fact however, the NP '*al-raʒulu*' (the man) in (14b), may be claimed to be targeted and also bound by the relative pronoun '*allaðii*' (that) and the strong pronoun '*huwa*' (him). In order to circumvent the problem encountered, let us assume that in (14b), contrary to (13a), the strong pronoun is a copy of the LDNP '*al-raʒulu*' and therefore checks, under reconstruction, its formal features in the domain of the embedded participial phrase. If this is correct, the ungrammaticality of (13b) and (14a) follows on substantial grounds. The second evidence in favor of this claim is that in (13b) and (14a), the passive will be expected to discharge nominative case twice: in [Spec VP] for '*al-raʒulu*' (the man) and [Spec IP] for the strong pronoun '*huwa*' (him).

To account for the examples under (15), we need to make recourse to the property of strength of features. In particular, it has already been claimed that VSO order in SA structures follows from the fact that N-features of AGRs are weak. Thus, in (15a) ‘*al-raʒulu*’ checks nominative case in [Spec TNSP] deriving VSO order in that further movement as in (15b) will cause the sentence to diverge in violation of Last Resort Principle, which according to Chomsky (1992: 46), requires that “a step in a derivation is legitimate only if it is necessary for convergence”. Therefore, for a derivation to converge it must involve only legitimate objects, otherwise the derivation crashes either at PF or LF. Finally, the function of the relative and strong pronouns in (15a-b) would help to conclude that if resumption is altruistic in SV or VS orders, pronouns will be interpreted as PRON elements displaying AGR (and possibly TNS) features that match those AGR elements displayed by the passive verb.

6. Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the relation between the syntax of CPs, passive structures, Wh-phrases and LDNPs. Some of the major findings of the current paper have minimal perspectives of the syntax of SA. In comparison to inflectional categories, LDNPs and Wh-phrases movement is shown to differ in terms of binding the variables at LF, the pronoun in the former and the trace in the latter. The adjacency of the relative pronoun to the passive verb is required while matching the phi-features of the pronoun and the verb is satisfied in VSO or SVO constructions. However, the relative feature is shown to be weak and so the domain of the relative clause is optional for checking and convergence. With respect to the marked SVO order in SA, resumptive pronouns check the strong tense features namely at PF; while, LDNPs check their case feature in their original position. Like relative pronouns, resumptive pronouns exhibit a similar minimal syntactic behaviour in the CP domain. Wh-constructions are shown to be effected without recourse to any movement to a licensing functional head. Checking is assumed therefore to apply at LF in satisfaction of Procrastinate, where displacement of Wh-elements is altruistic and applies in satisfaction of reconstruction in that only copies are interpreted.

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