On case assignment in Standard Arabic
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The issue: Generative accounts of structural case licensing/assignment in Standard Arabic (SA) hold that structural accusative (ACC) case is the result of an Agree relation between a functional head v* (light verb) (or Aspect) and an object determiner phrase (DP) (Benmamoun 1999, 2000, Ouhalla 2005, Aoun, Benmamoun and Choueiri 2010, Mohammed 1990, 2000, Rahhali 2003, Soltan 2007, 2011, Al-Balushi 2011, 2012). While these accounts can explain the ACC of the theme object with process nominals in (1), they fail to explain the genitive (GEN) case of the theme object with process nominals in control structures such as (2):

(1) Ɂaqlaq-a-nii   [DP ntiqaad-u   l-rajul-i   **nafs-a-hu/*nafs-i-hi**]
       annoyed-3MSG-me   criticizing-NOM the-man-GEN self-ACC-his/*self-GEN-his
       'The man's criticizing himself annoyed me.'

(2) y-uriid-Ø-u   [DP ntiqaad-a   *PRO*   **nafs-i-hi/*nafs-a-hu**]
       3-want-MS-INDIC   criticizing-ACC   self-GEN-his/*self-ACC-his
       bi-qaswat-in
       with-bitterness-GEN
       'He wants to bitterly criticize himself.' (adapted from Fassi Fehri 1993, ex. 65b: 242)

 Given that process nominals in SA are internally verbs but externally nouns (see Fassi Fehri 1993: 232-269), these accounts would hold that the process nominal in (1) projects an external argument, hence a v*P, before being nominalized, and ACC on the theme object is the result of an Agree relation with v*. However, these accounts cannot explain why the theme object in (2) receives GEN even though the process nominal projects an external argument, hence a v*P witnesses its compatibility with a modifying adverbial phrase and the fact that the anaphor has to be bound in its local DP domain.

 Fassi Fehri's (1993) account: Fassi Fehri (1993:242-243) accounts for (2) through his proposed condition on case discharge in (3): (3) "Object Case is discharged only if subject Case is discharged" (Fassi Fehri 1993: 243). He claims that the theme object in (1) receives ACC from V presumably because the case of the agent subject is discharged as GEN. To account for (2), Fassi Fehri claims that *PRO* is caseless; it cannot absorb the GEN case assigned by D. As a result, the theme object fails to receive ACC, and is assigned GEN by D.

 Problems with Fassi Fehri's (1993) account: Fassi Fehri (1993, fn. 31: 278) claims that the condition in (3) is analogous to the case tier approach of Yip, Maling and Jackendoff (1987). However, unlike Yip et al.'s (1987) theory, Fassi Fehri's account (i) does not map any cases to grammatical functions, (ii) does not make reference to the domain of case assignment, (iii) *PRO* does not receive case, and (iv) VPs (v*P in current theory) supply a case tier.

 Proposal: I show that Fassi Fehri's (1993) account can be accommodated within Baker's (2015) theory of dependent case, where (1-2) can be accounted for using the rule (parameter) in (4): (4) "If NP1[noun phrase] is c-commanded by NP2, and both are in the same domain (TP or VP), assign NP1 case Y" (Baker 2015: 139). To account for (1), I claim that DP in SA is a "hard" phase in the sense of Baker (2015), where "hard" means that the material inside D is inaccessible

to the domains outside D. Some support for the DP as a hard phase comes from its status as a subject in (1). At the insertion of D, its complement is sent to Spell-Out, where case and word order are calculated (á la Baker 2015). Two NPs are available in the domain; and the agent subject is a case competitor in the sense of Baker (2015: 201); therefore, the theme object receives the dependent ACC. At the insertion of D in (2), its complement is sent to Spell-Out, where two NPs are available, but *PRO* is not a case competitor in the sense of Baker (2015: 201); therefore, the theme object is assigned GEN by D. I also show that other structures in SA such as double object constructions, exceptional case marking structures, and structures lacking a thematic subject, can also be accounted for using (4).

Conclusion: The proposed account succeeds where the dominant Agree-based account of case fails.

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