**Decomposing Arabic Complementizers**

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This study investigates the internal structure of Arabic declarative complementizers (Cs). Most studies have looked at the role of Arabic Cs in forming complex constructions and how case-assignment takes place (Ahmed, 2015; Jarrah, 2019b; Ouhalla, 1994; Shlonsky, 1997; Soltan, 2006). However, comparing the C systems of Standard Arabic (SA) with Jordanian Arabic (JA) and other varieties of Arabic shows that the systems are more complex than previously stated. The complexity can be realized clearly with the use of clause-initial Cs.

(1)  *ʔinna al-banāt-i waʂal-na* (SA)(2) *\*ʔanna al-banāt-i waʂal-na* (SA)

comp the-girls-acc arrived-3f.pl comp the-girls-acc arrived-3f.pl

‘Indeed, the girls arrived.’ ‘Indeed, the girls arrived.’

(3) \**ʔɨnn-u ʔil-walad ʔiʤa* (JA)(4) \*ʔɘnno *ʔɪl-walad ʔiʤa* (LA)

comp-3m.sg the-boy.acc arrived comp the-boy.acc arrived

‘Intended: the boy arrived.’ ‘Intended: the boy arrived.’ (Jarrah, 2019b)

The examples above show that, in SA, two forms of Cs are used in the system *ʔinna* and *ʔanna*. In JA, nevertheless, only one form is used *ʔinn*. A notable difference between the two systems is that, in SA, it is acceptable to have the C in clause-initial position, yet the C must be *ʔinna*. The use of *ʔanna* leads to ungrammatical construction (2). However, the ungrammaticality of using *ʔanna* intersects with the ungrammaticality of using Cs in the same position in JA; the use of the C *ʔinn* is unacceptable, which makes it behave like the C *ʔanna* in SA. Ross (1970) attributes the behavior to the existence of a hidden performative verb of saying, whereas Fassi Feheri (2012) claims that the distinction is based on embedding contexts, overlooking the fact that both Cscan be embedded. Looking at data from JA questions the validity of previous conclusions (6).

(5) (*ʔaqulu) ʔinna al-banāt-i waʂal-na* (SA)(6) *baɡūl ʔɨnnu ʔɪl-bānt ʔɪʤ-ū* (JA)

(say.I) COMP the-girls-ACC arrived-3F.PL say.I COMP the-girls.ACC arrived—3F.PL

‘(I say) that the girls arrived.’ (Ross, 1970) ‘I say that the boy arrived.’ (Jarrah, 2019b)

The use of the C *ʔɨnn* along with an explicit verb of saying is acceptable in JA. However, assuming that the verb of saying is hidden does not lead to grammatical structure in this variety (compare (3) with (6)). Comparing the two systems highlights the following pressing research questions: (a) Why does the hidden performative verb hypothesis only apply to SA but not JA Cs? And (b) How is the SA C system different from that of Arabic varieties? If not, how do they fit the universal pattern? The study argues that Cs in Arabic are complex morphemes that are composed of nano-syntactic features that affect their size and function as triggers of presupposition (Baunaz & Lander, 2018; Baunaz, 2018; Starke, 2009). Syncretic Cs cannot be used without explicit verbs since their use results in uncontrolled presuppositions – as the case of JA. SA, on the other hand, licenses *ʔinna* but not *ʔanna* because *ʔinna,* unlike *ʔanna,* is not syncretic. The analysis tests constructions across factive and non-factive verbs. To arrive at their functional sequence (7), we compare Arabic Cs across different languages (Baunaz, 2018). The following table illustrates and orders Cs in away to avoid ABA patterns (Caha, 2009).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Emotive Factive F1 | Semi-factive F2 | Nonfactive F3 | Desiderative F4 |
| Modern Greek | pu | pu/oti | oti | na |
| SA | ʔanna | ʔanna | ʔɪnna | ʔan |
| Sason Arabic | le | le | le | ta |
| JA | ʔɪnn | ʔɪnn | ʔɪnn | ʔɪnn |
| Labanese Arabic | ʔɘnno | ʔɘnno | ʔɘnno | ʔɘnno |
| French | que | que | que | que |
| Serbo-Croatian | da | da | da | da |

The distribution is argued to pour out from the Cs internal semantic composition (Baunaz, 2018). Avoiding \*ABA patterns (Caha, 2009) makes the following ordering an optimal option for the functional sequence of Arabic Cs.

(7) SA JA LA SnA

a. [F1P F1] => /ʔan/ /ʔɪn/ /ʔɘnno/ /ta/

b. [F2P F2 [F1P F1]] => /ʔɪnna/ /ʔɪn/ /ʔɘnno/ /le/

c. [F3P F3 [F2P F2 [F1P F1]]] => /ʔanna/ /ʔɪn/ /ʔɘnno/ /le/

d. [F4P F4 [F3P F3 [F2P F2 [F1P F1]]]] => /ʔanna/ /ʔɪn/ /ʔɘnno/ /le/

As a trigger of different degrees of presupposition (veridical > nonveridical), factivity affects Arabic Cs. Cs can be used in clause-initial positions, only if their use is not syncretic and enables the recoverability of presupposed information without intersection. In addition to supporting Baunaz’ (2018) conclusion, the study shows how a cognizant point of view can affect veridicality and the selection of Cs cross-linguistically.

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