



Phrasal Modification of Complex Noun Phrases in Arabic

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ABSTRACT

The complex noun phrase (CNP) is that in which the head (H) is premodified by certain elements called determiners (Ds) and/or postmodified by other elements called qualifiers (Qs). The current study tries to shed light on these elements (Ds and Qs) in the Arabic CNP since the phrase unit in Arabic has not been investigated comprehensively. In fact , grammarians of Arabic do not admit that the CNP exists as an independent unit functioning in the structure of the sentence. The study is based on the hypothesis that CNPs do exist in Arabic and that each CNP represents one constituent and realizes one function. It aims at investigating the list of Ds and Qs and their linear arrangement in the CNP. To do so a two-phase model is adopted in the study. First , sentences will be analyzed according to the structural approach to show that a CNP realizes one function. Then , some sentences will be analyzed according to the Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) approach to prove that a CNP represents one unit in sentence structure.

1. Introduction

The complex noun phrase (CNP) is that in which the head (H) is premodified by certain elements called determiners (Ds) and/or postmodified by other elements



called qualifiers (Q_s). The current study tries to shed light on these modifiers (D_s and Q_s) in the Arabic CNP. It comes against the long-adopted view that denies the existence of the phrase unit in general and the CNP in particular on the Arabic scale of ranks. In fact, Arabic does include NPs that can either be simple (H only) or complex (H with D_s) and/or Q_s). The study tries to list the group of D_s and Q_s and investigate their linear arrangement in the CNP structure. Actually , neither old nor modern Arabic references admit the existence of most modifiers in Arabic (e.g., quantifiers) and if some modifiers are mentioned in some references , they are investigated under different headings and assigned various functions. Moreover ,such modifiers are parsed differently according to whether they precede or follow the H .For example , the demonstrative that precedes its H takes the main function while the H is parsed as an appositive element that can replace the demonstrative , but when the same demonstrative follows the same H , it is parsed as an adjective. Thus ,according to grammarians of Arabic (See for example Al Samarraa'i 2000:1/88),in 1A ana 1B below, *haatha l rajul* and *alrajulu haatha* respectively are not parsed the same despite the fact that both phrases and ultimately both sentences mean exactly the same at least grammatically.

1.A: *jaa'a haatha l rajulu mubakiran*. (This man came early.)

B: *jaa'a l rajulu haatha mubakiran*. (This man came early.)



The CNP functions in the structure of the clause unit to perform a particular nominal function (subject (S), object (O), complement(C) , adverbial(A)). Consider the following examples:

2.dhaahaba l taalibu ila l madrasa. (The student went to school.)

V S A

3.shaahadtu l taaliba l dhaki . (I saw the clever student.)

VS O

4.haadha l taalibu l dhakiyu sadeeki. (This clever student is my friend.)

S C

In 2 above, the word *altaalibu* is a simple noun phrase (SNP) realizing the S function . In 3, *altaaliba l dhaki* is a CNP in which the H (*altaaliba*) is modified by one Q (*aldhaki*). The CNP in 4 (*haadha l taalibu l dhaki*) has the H (*altaalibu*) both premodified by one D (*haadha*) and postmodified by one Q (*aldhaki*).

Further, the current study deals only with phrasal modification in the CNP. Clausal modification (e.g., modification by relative clauses) , morphological modification by affixes(e.g., the definite article) and morphophonemic modification (by diacritics) shall be excluded because this will exceed the limits of the study as the study is concerned with phrasal modification only. Sentences in the study will be analyzed according to the structural approach to show that a CNP realizes one function. Then some sentences will be further analyzed



according to the TGG approach by using tree diagrams in order to show that a CNP represents one constituent.

2. Determiners

Determiners (Ds) are modifiers that premodify the H of the CNP(Quirk etal 1973:61). There are five types of phrasal Ds in Arabic and they can be summarized as follows

2.1 Quantifiers

Quantifiers define the quantitative properties of the H. in Arabic, quantifiers include such elements as *kul* (all), *ba'd* (some), *nisf* (half), *jamee'* (all), etc. (Jawad 2015:287 ; Hallman 2016:1).

However, some quantifiers can also be used as Qs to postmodify the H under certain restrictions. In this case, they should be suffixed by cataphoric pronouns referring to the H in order to maintain concord with the H. Compare the following pairs of sentences:

5.A. wasala jamee'u l musafireen. (All passengers arrived.)

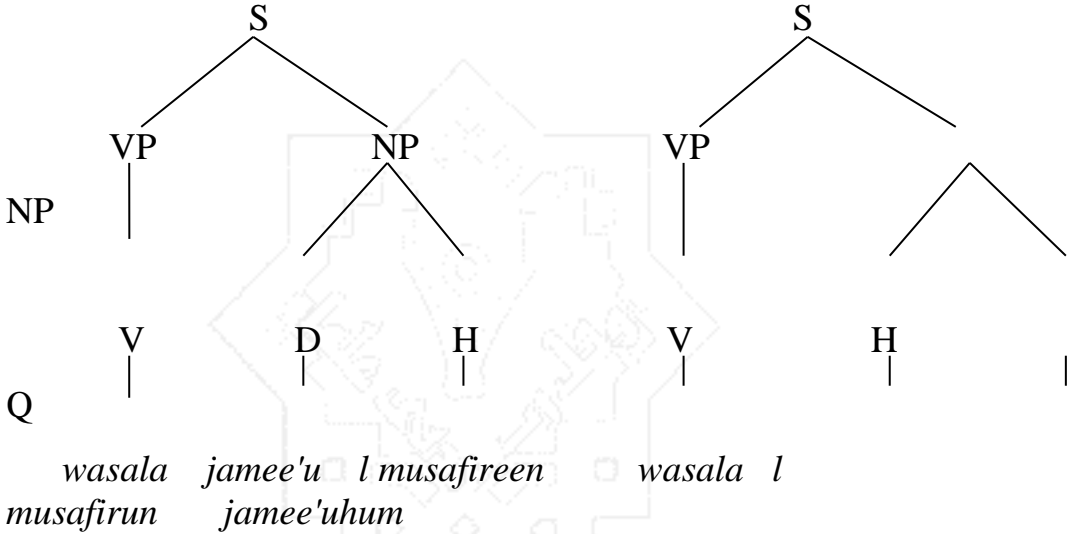
V S

B. wasala l musafiruna jamee'uhum. (Passengers all arrived).



V S

The distinction between the two uses is shown in the following tree diagrams:



It is to be noted that Arabic does not have a specific term for the class of quantifiers and the only term used is *kalimaatu tawkeed* (emphatic words). Besides , grammarians of Arabic argue that a quantifier before and after the H does not perform the same function. Before the H it is assigned the main sentential function(S , O ,...) and its H is just an additive element. After the H , however , the quantifier is parsed by Arab grammarians as an emphatic element(Ibnu Ya'eesh , d.643: 3/40). In fact, Arabic does not admit more than one word to realize the same function. Thus, in 5A above, the quantifier *jamee'* is parsed as S while *almusafireen* is parsed as an additive element despite the fact *almusafireen* (the H) is more important than its modifier which just describes the quantitative property of the



H; therefore, both words (*jamee' ul musafireen*) represent one constituent (CNP) and realize on function(S).

2. 2 Demonstratives

Demonstratives (e.g., *haadha* (this) , *dhaalika* (that) , *haa'ulaa'* (these), etc.) are used to indicate whether the referent is near or far, masculine or feminine and singular, dual or plural(Ibn Hisham d.761:1/136). As a result, there should be concord in person, gender and number between the demonstrative and the referent (H) it modifies. Thus, the demonstrative *haadha* (this), for instance, indicates that the H it modifies is near, singular and masculine while the demonstrative *tilka* (that) means that the H is far, singular and feminine . This contradicts with the traditional view that separates between the demonstrative and its referent in function. Arab grammarians claim that if the demonstrative precedes its referent, it is assigned the main clausal function and its referent is parsed as an appositive construction. Conversely, if the referent precedes the demonstrative, Arab grammarians give the former the main clausal function and the latter is treated as an emphatic element(Al Zamakhshari , d.643:2/351). The current study argues that the demonstrative and the noun it modifies form one constituent (CNP) and realize one function in the clause structure whether the demonstrative precedes or follows the H. Consider the following pair of examples:

6.A. *haadha l kitaabu mufeed.* (This book is useful.)

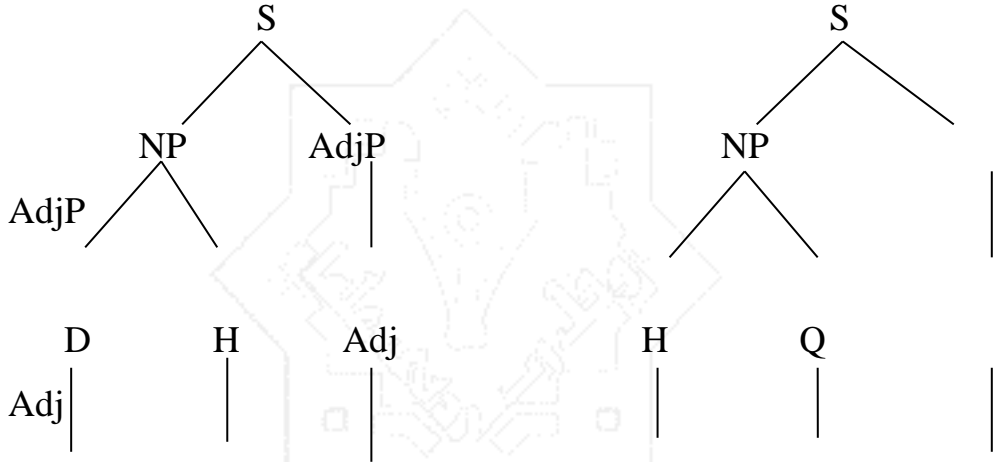
S C

B. *alkitaabu haadha mufeed.* (This book is useful)



S C

This fact can also be enhanced by the following two diagrams:



haadha l kitaabu mufeed
mufeed

alkitaabu haadha

2. 3 Cardinal Numerals

In Arabic, all cardinal numerals premodify the H except for the numeral *wahid* (one) which always comes as a postmodifier and the dual numeral *ithnan* (two) which is integrated within the H as an infix (Kremers 2003:62).

However, other cardinal numerals can also be used as postmodifiers and again Arabic grammarians argue that a numeral before the noun has a function different from its function after the noun. Before the noun, the numeral has a phrasal function (S, O, C, ...) but after the noun, it is regarded as an adjective (Al Zamakhshari d.643:4/4).As for



the H itself , it is also parsed differently. Before the numeral , the H takes the main clausal function (S,O,C) but after the numeral, it is regarded as an additive element that does not have any function (Ibnu Hishaam d.761:247) .

Moreover, Arab grammarians think that numerals are not the same with regard to the functions they perform in sentence structure. In compound numbers (e.g.,*ahada ashar* (eleven), *arba'atu ashar* (fourteen), *khamsun wa'ishrun* (twenty-five), etc.) only the first part has a clausal function while the second is parsed as a neglected form . As for the subsequent H , it is claimed that in this case it realizes an adverbial function called in Arabic *tamyeez* (Ibnu Ya'eesh d.643:2/71)).The current study argues that the numeral (single or compound) and its counted noun (H) represent one unit (CNP) and realize one clausal function whether the numeral precedes or follows its H. In 7 below , both CNPs (*thalaathatu tullaab* and *tullaabun thalaatha*) realize the same function (S) and in both phrases the noun (*tullaabun*) represents the central element(H) in the phrase that is modified by a numeral that is used just to tell us that the number of students is three , no more no less.

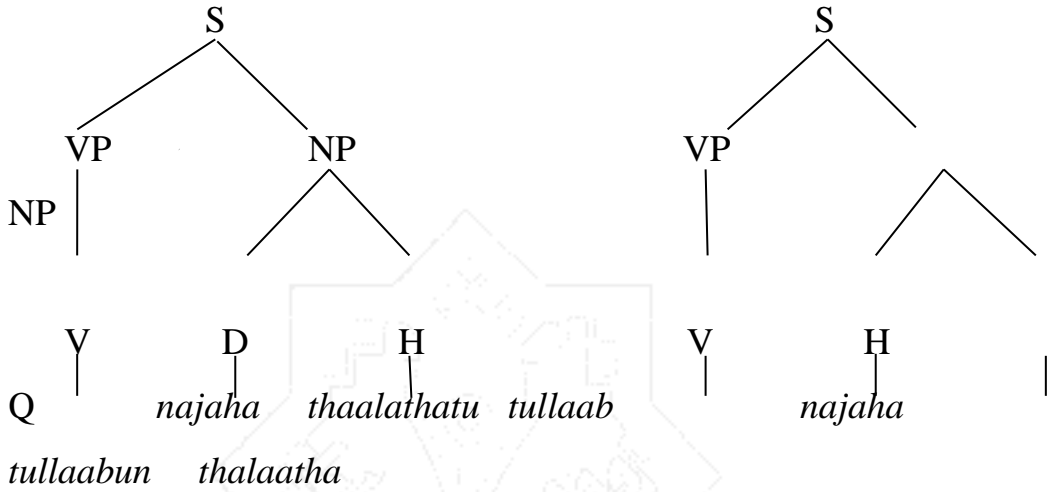
7. A. *najaha thalaathatu tullaab*. (Three students succeeded)

V S

B. *najaha tullaabun thalaatha*. (Three students succeeded).

V S

This can also be enhanced by the following two T-diagrams



2. 4 Indefinite Articles

Indefinite articles in Arabic include *mujarrad*(just) , *mahdh*(mere) and *min*(any) and they are always used as premodifiers to indicate that the following noun (H) is indefinite. In fact , Arab grammarians do not admit the existence of these articles in Arabic at all and , moreover, they assign various semantic classes to them. The article *min* is regarded as a disposable preposition while the subsequent noun is assigned the main clausal function (Al Darweesh 1992:137). Either for *mujarrad* and *mahdh* , they are assigned the main clausal functions while the subsequent nouns are parsed as additive elements despite the fact that the latter (the H) is more important. Consider the following examples:

8. kaant alqissatu mujarrada kidhba. (The story was a mere lie.)

V S C



9. wama arsalna ileihim qablaka min nadheer. وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَبْلَ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَبْلَ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ

VS A A O

(...nor sent to them before you any warner).(Hilali and Khan translation of the Glorious Qur'an).

According to the current study ,in 8 above , both the indefinite article (*mujarrada*) and the subsequent H (*kidhba*) represent one constituent (CNP) and realize one function(C).The same applies to the indefinite article (*min*) and its subsequent H(*natheer*) in 9.In both examples , the subsequent noun (H) is more important than its modifier. It is to be noted that *mujarrad* and *mahdh* can also be used as Qs but they should have concord in number and gender with the preceding H .Compare *mujarrada kithba* and *kithbatun mujarrada*.

2. 5 Prepositive Dependent Adjectives

Normally in Arabic , adjectives postmodify the H in CNPs. However, some adjectives are used before the H and they are called prepositive dependent adjectives because they can not be used alone without being followed by Hs. These adjectives include *nafs* , *mithl* , *shubh* , 'aks, etc. Grammarians of Arabic argue that the preposed dependent adjectives should be parsed as the main element while the following noun is seen as an additive element despite the fact that the noun (H) is more important than the prepositive adjective (Ibn Ya'eesh , d.643 :3/40).Consider the following examples:



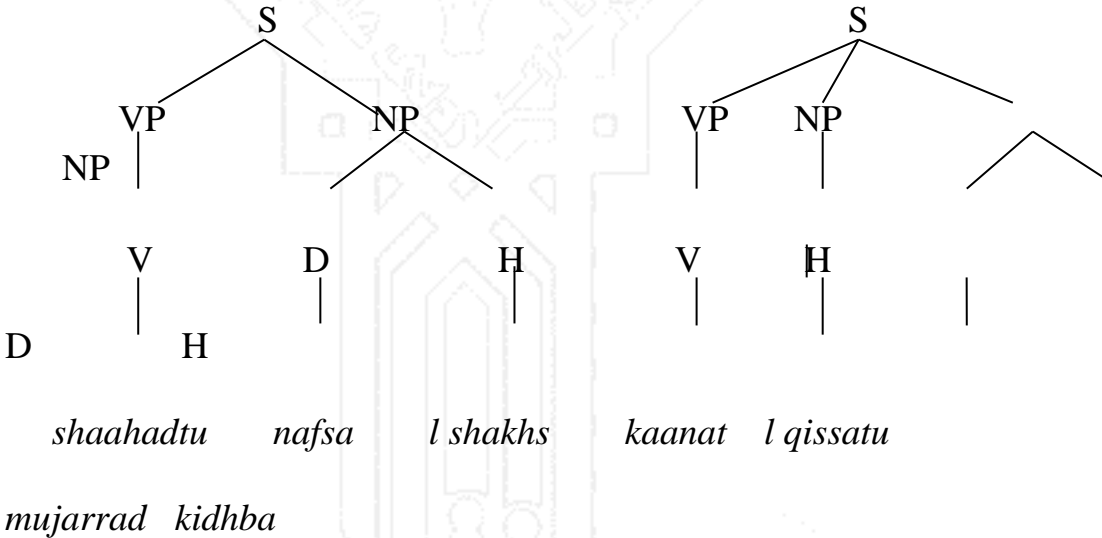
10. *kaanat l jalsatu shubh roteenin yomi.* (The sitting was a daily subroutine.)

V S C

11. *shaahadtu nafs l shakhs.* (I saw the same person.)

VS O

In 11 above ,for instance , both the adjective (*nafs*) and its H (*alshakhs*) represent one constituent (CNP) and realize one function (O).The following two diagrams show how indefinite articles and prepositive adjectives can premodify their respective Hs :



It is worth mentioning that a dependent adjective need not be compatible in gender, number and case with the noun it modifies since it sticks to one form whether the subsequent noun (H)is masculine or feminine; singular or plural. Thus , we can say *nafsu l rajul* , *nafsu l mar'a* , *nafsu lawlaad* ,etc. Further , most prepositive adjectives can be used as predicative adjectives(Qs) but in this case concord



between these adjectives and their Hs should be maintained by adding cataphoric pronouns referring back to the H. Thus we should say *alrajulu nafsuh* , *almar'atu nafsuha* , *alawlaadu anfusuhum* , etc. However , grammarians of Arabic see that ,after the H, such adjectives are used for emphasis and not as Qs (Al Zamakhshari , d.643:2/223).

3. Qualifiers

3. 1 Simple Qualifiers

Qualifiers are elements that postmodify the H in CNPs. These elements, unlike determiners, are always used as postmodifiers and they can never premodify the H. They can be summarized as follows:

3. 1. 1 Descriptive Nouns

A descriptive noun is a nominal element used to describe the H in a particular way. Thus, the noun *nahw* (grammar) in the CNP *kitaabu nahw*(grammar book) characterizes the book as being that of grammar not history or politics. Other examples of descriptive nouns used as Qs include: *sayaratu is'aaf* (ambulance) , *tabeebu atfaal* (pediatrician) , *hadeeqatu haiwanaat* (zoo) , *qaseedatu shi'r* (poem) , etc. Both the descriptive noun and the H it modifies constitute a CNP and realize one clausal function. Grammarians of Arabic ; however, see that the first noun bears the main function while the second is just an additive element(Al Samarra'i 2000:3/117). Consider the following examples:

12. *katabtu qaseedata shi'r.* (I wrote a poem.)

VS O



13. asbaha aliyun tabeeba atfaal. (Ali became a pediatrician.)

V S C

3. 1. 2 Genitive Nouns

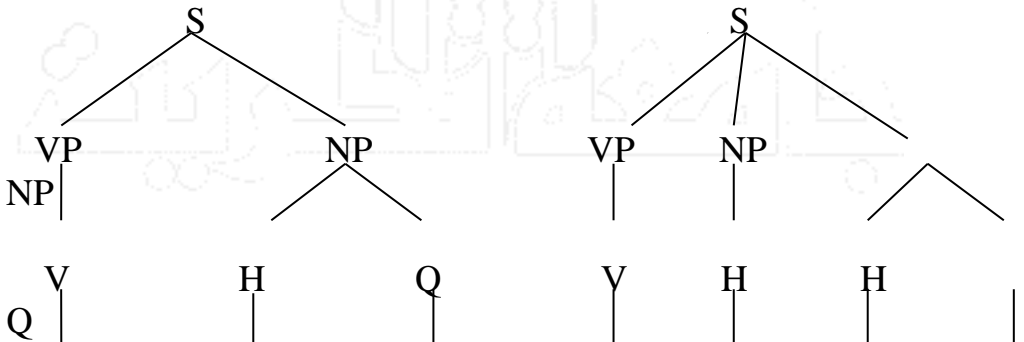
A genitive noun refers to the possessor of the noun that represents the H of the CNP. Thus, the genitive noun *alawlaad* (boys) in the CNP *ghurfatu l awlaad* (the boys' room) represents the owner of the room and the noun *albait* in the CNP *hadeeqatu l bait* (the garden of the house) means that the garden belongs to the house. Arabic traditional grammarians argue that the first noun carries the main function while the subsequent one is just an additive element (Ibnu Aqeel , d.796:3/43 ; Ibnu Jinni , d.329:3/26).

Notice the following example:

14. wajadtu kitaaba sadeeqi. (I found my friend's book.)

VS O

The following two diagrams show how descriptive nouns and genitive nouns modify their respective Hs so that the modifier and its H make one unit .





wajadtu kitaaba sadeeqi asbaha aliyun
tabeeba atfaal

3. 1. 3 Postpositive Adjectives

Normally , adjectives in Arabic are postpositive that are always used as Qs because adjectives in Arabic follow the nouns they describe . Thus, the adjective *kareem* (generous) in the CNP *rajulun kareem* (generous man) distinguishes the man as being generous and the adjective *shujaa'* (brave) in *faarisun shujaa'* (a brave knight) describes the knight as being brave and so on. There should be agreement in gender and number between the postpositive adjective and the H it modifies (Al Khazi 2016:51). In traditional Arabic grammar there is no indication that both the H and the postpositive adjective that modifies it constitute one element and realize one function , while the current study adopts the view that the H and its postpositive adjective represent one unit with one function, e.g.,

15. *aliyun rajulun kareem.* (Ali is a generous man.)

S C

3. 1. 4 Ordinal Numerals

In Arabic, ordinal numerals *alawal* (first), *althaani* (second), *althaalith* (third), etc. and general ordinals *alakheer* (last) , *alsaabiq* (last) , *allaahiq* (next), etc. always follow the Hs in CNPs. Thus, we say *alfa'iz ul thalith* (third winner) but not *althaalith ul faa'iz* *(winner third). As a result , such modifiers function always as Qs since they describe the numerical arrangement of the H. However , grammarians of Arabic do not admit that the H and the

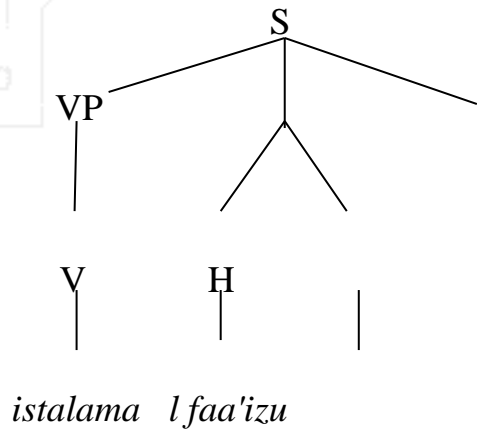
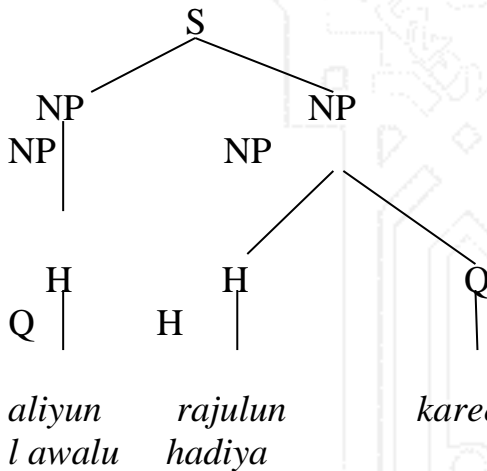


ordinal numeral that postmodifies it constitute one part and realize one function. They argue that the ordinal numeral is just an adjective (Al Zamakhshari d.643:4/29). The analysis of 16 below proves that the H and its ordinal numeral represent one element.

16. *istalama l faa'izu l awalu hadiya.* (The first winner received a present.)

V S O

The following two diagrams show how postpositive adjectives and ordinal numerals postmodify their respective Hs:



3.1.5 Prepositional Phrases

A prepositional phrase is composed of a preposition followed by an NP functioning as its complement . It always follows the H to modify it as a reduced relative clause (Quirk et al 1973:143) .A prepositional phrase used as a Q in a CNP should be distinguished from the prepositional phrase that realizes the clausal A function since the former is always used after the H while the latter is mobile.



However , neither traditional nor modern references of Arabic grammar refer to this fact. Indeed , they neither differentiate between the two different functions realized by this component nor do they indicate that the preposition and its complement realize one function(cf. Ibnu Aqeel , d.769:3/15) Compare this pair of examples:

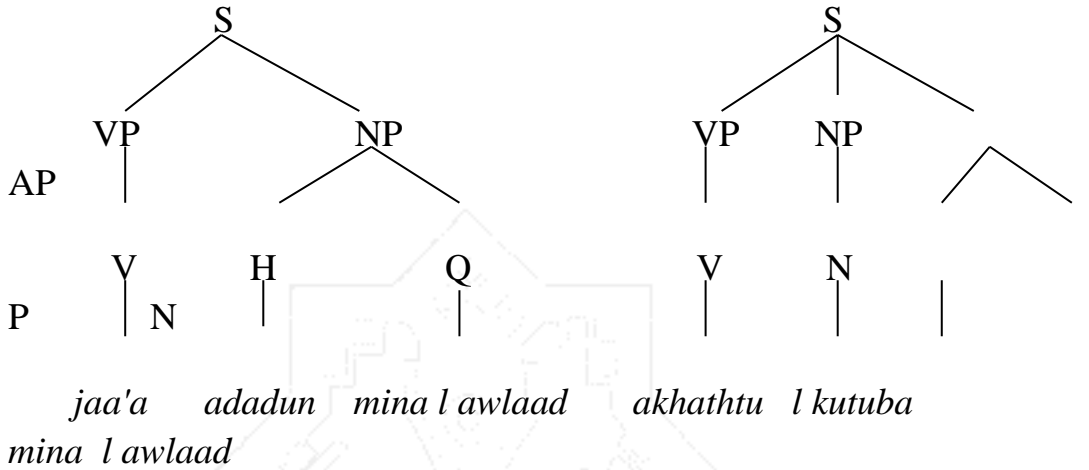
17. jaa'a 'adadun min al alawlad. (A number of boys came.)

V S

18. akhathtu l kutuba mina l awlaad. (I took the books from the boys.)

V O A

The prepositional phrase in 17 (*min al awlaad*) functions as a Q to the H (*adadun*) since it describes the group as being a group of boys and not anything else. In traditional Arabic grammar , there is no indication that the prepositional phrase is part of the main element (the H) used just to define it in a particular way. Rather , it is parsed as if it were an adverbial element .Either for the prepositional phrase in 18 (*mina l awlaad*) , it indicates the source from which the books were taken ; therefore , it realizes an adverbial clausal function. The distinction between the two types of prepositional phrases can be illustrated by the following two diagrams:



3. 2 Compound Qualifiers

3. 2. 1 Stative Compounds

3. 2. 1. 1 Stative Compound Nouns

Compound nouns are those that are made up of two nominal parts representing one entity and realizing one function. The first part of the compound is usually one of the *five nouns* (*akho* (brother of) , *abo* (father of), *hamo* (kin of) etc.) followed by a common noun as in: *bano aadam* (sons of Adam) , *dho l karam* (source of generosity) , *aal Omran* (the Omrans). There is no indication in Arabic grammar books to the fact that the compound noun can function as a post modifier to the H in a CNP. Rather , the compound noun is seen as an adjective (ibid:1/45).

Notice the following examples:

19. *shaahadtu l rajula dha l sha'ri l abyadh.* (I saw the white-haired man.)

VS

O



20. qaatalna rijaalan uli ba'sin shadeed. (We fought fierceful men.)

VS O

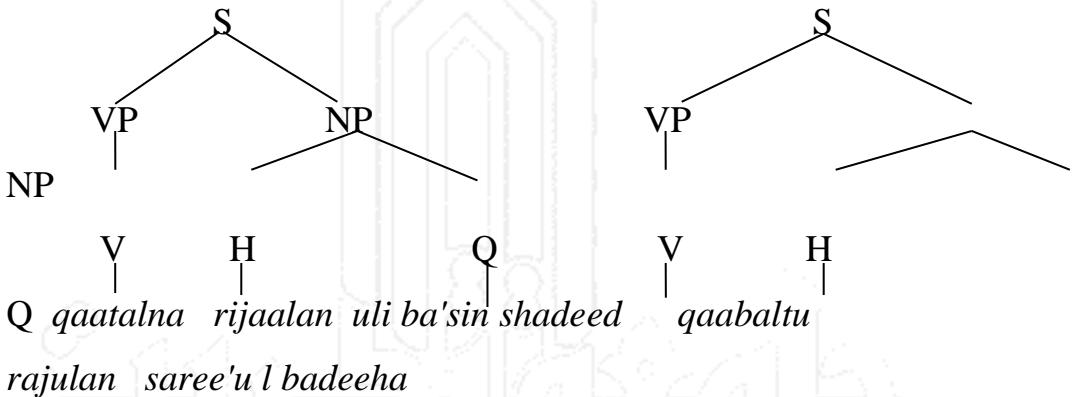
3. 2. 1. 2 Stative Compound Adjectives

A stative compound adjective is composed of an adjective followed by a common noun, e.g. *saree'u l badeeha* (witty) , *taweelu l qama* (tall) , *ghareebu l atwaar* (eccentric) , *shadeedu l iqaab* (fiercful). Notice the following example:

21. qaabaltu rajulan saree' ul badeeha. (I met a witty man.)

VS O

The use of stative compound nouns and stative compound adjectives as Qs can be shown in the following two diagrams:



3. 2. 2 Dynamic Compounds

Dynamic compounds are those derived from dynamic verbs and they are of two types: **dynamic compound nouns** and **dynamic compound adjectives**.

3. 2. 2. 1 Dynamic Compound Nouns



Dynamic compound nouns are composed of two components; the first is the dynamic noun which is derived from a dynamic verb and the second is its complement. There are three types of dynamic compound nouns classified according to the category of the derived form: **present participles** [eg. *kaatib*(writer) , *saa'iq*(driver)], **place nouns** [eg. *multaqa* (place of meeting) , *manzil* (place of living)] and **time nouns** [eg. *maw'id* (time of meeting) , *marji'* (time of returning)](See Al Samarraa'i2000:3/117-126). Consider the following example in which the dynamic compounds (the derived noun and its complementation) are used as Qs.

22. *jaa'a l shaabu kaatibu l riwaaya*. (The young writer of the novel came.)

V

S

3. 2. 2. 2 Dynamic Compound Adjectives

A dynamic compound adjective is composed of an adjective derived from a dynamic verb and its complementation where the dynamic compound adjective functions as apostmodifier (Q) to the preceding H. There are three types of dynamic compound adjectives: **past participles** [eg. *maftoolu l adhalaat* (with strong muscles) , *murtaahu l baal* (mind relieved)], **comparative adjectives** [eg. *akhsabu turbatan* (with more fertile soil) , *ashaddu ba'san* (more fiercerful)] and **exaggerative adjectives** [eg. *mannaa'un lil kheir* (forbidder of good) , *akkaalun lilsuht* (taker of illegal money)](See Sibaweih : 1/194-205).

According to the current study , the H is more important

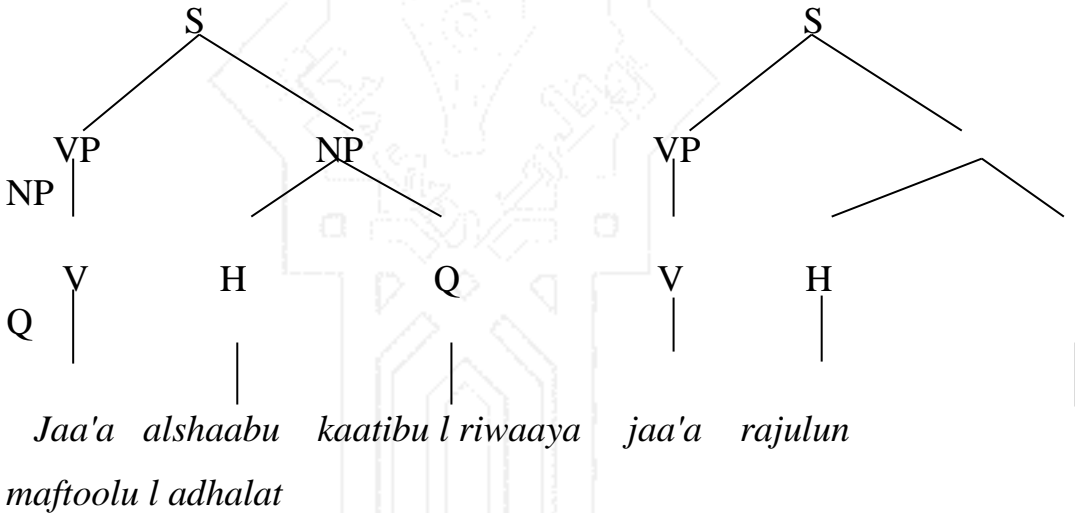


than the dynamic compound adjective which just characterizes it in a particular way ,e.g.,

23. *jaa'a rajulun maftoolu l adhalaat.* (A man with strong muscles came.)

V S

Using dynamic compound nouns and dynamic compound adjectives as Qs can be shown in the following two diagrams:



4. Arrangement of Modifiers in CNPs

Modifiers (Ds and Qs) of the Arabic CNP follow a particular word order and though Arabic is described as being flexible with regard to word order, premodifiers and postmodifiers of the H in CNPs follow a relatively acknowledged structure. As far as determiners are concerned, Arabic tends to locate quantifiers before other premodifiers such as demonstratives and cardinal numerals. Thus, we should say *kul ha'ula'i l arba'ati awlad* or *kulu haa'ulaa'i l awladi l arba'a* (all these four boys) and not



*haa'ulaa' kulu l awlaadi l arba'a **. If there is an attributive indefinite article or a preposed dependent adjective, it should precede all determiners in the CNP. Thus, we should say *nafsu haa'ulaa' il arba'ati awlaad* and not any other arrangement. However, it should be borne in mind that not all elements of determiners can cooccur in the same CNP. Thus, we say *siwa ba'dh* (except some) but we can not say **nafsu kul* (same all) because some modifiers do not collocate semantically.

To sum up, the unmarked arrangement of Ds would be as follows:

**indefinite articles (or prepositive adjectives) ⇒
quantifiers ⇒ demonstratives ⇒ cardinal numerals.** e.g.,

24. *lam ushaahidu siwa ba'dha haa'ulaa'i l thamaaniyati awlaad.* (I did not see but some of those eight boys.

As for Qs, they enjoy more freedom in the CNP structure than Ds though with some restrictions. First, genitive nouns and descriptive nouns tend to precede other postmodifiers in the CNP. Thus, we should say *sayaaratu is'aafin jadeeda* (a new ambulance) but not *sayaaratu jadeedatin is'aaf*.

Besides, stative and dynamic compounds tend to come last in the linear arrangement of Qs and if both exist in the same CNP, stative compounds tend to precede dynamic ones. Moreover simple Qs tend to precede compound ones as in the following example:

25. *latusahibi l rajula l bakheela tha l mizaaji l haad.*
(Do not befriend the miser and moody person.)

If, however, we have an ordinal numeral and a postpositive adjective, the ordinal numeral should precede



the postpositive adjective. Thus , we should say *alnaajihu l awalu l thaki* and not *alnaajihu l thakiyu l awa*l*. Besides , genitive nouns and descriptive nouns should precede the postpositive adjective. Thus , we should say *kitaabu sadeeqi l jadeed* and not *kitaabu l jadeedu sadeeqi**. Either for prepositional phrases , they unmarkedly tend to follow postpositive adjectives. Thus , we should say *adadun kabeerun mina l awlaad*. Hence , the unmarked arrangement of Qs in the CNP would be represented as follows:

Simple Qs { descriptive nouns (or genitive nouns) =ordinal numerals- prepositional phrases =postpositive adjective} **Compound Qs** (stative compounds = dynamic compounds).

5.Conclusions

The study comes up with the following conclusions:

- 1.Arabic has both simple and complex noun phrases.
- 2.A CNP in Arabic represents one constituent and realizes one function.
- 3.Some Ds can sometimes be used as Qs but with certain morphological and morphophonemic changes.
- 4.Some modifiers require concord with the H.
- 5.If the H is modified by more than one D and/or more than one Q , these modifiers should follow a particular linear arrangement in the CNP structure.
- 6.Some modifiers (Ds and Qs) are treated by traditional grammar references as other parts of speech and assigned other functions.



7. Arabic depends on place in deciding the important element that takes the clausal main function. Thus , the element that comes first takes the main function and that which follows is usually treated as an additive element.

8. prepositional phrases can either function as Os or as clausal As. The first function is phrasal where the phrase postmodifies the H in a CNP while the second is clausal where the phrase is used as an adverbial describing the verb in a particular way.

9. Some references of traditional Arabic grammar do not distinguish between parts of speech and functions in the process of parsing sentences. Thus ,an adjective for example is given the function "adjective" despite the fact that *adjective* is a part of speech and not a function.

10. Because Arabic grammar references do not admit the existence of the phrase unit as an independent component in the sentence , there are shifts in units in parsing sentences so that a phrasal element (e.g.,a demonstrative) is assigned a clausal function.

11. Some modifiers in the Arabic CNP belong to more than one category of modifiers such as the modifier *min* which is used both as an indefinite article (D) or as part of a prepositional phrase functioning as Q.

12. A compound Q can both be used as a postmodifier of the H or it can itself represent an independent CNP if the H is missing and, in this case , the first part of the compound assumes the H function while the other part functions as its Q.



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معرفة العبارة الاسمية المعقدة في اللغة العربية

المستخلص

العبارة الاسمية المعقدة هي تلك التي يكون فيها راس العبارة مسبقا بواحد او اكثر من المعارف التي تسمى المحددات و/او متبوعا بواحد او اكثر من المعارف التي تسمى المؤهلات. وتحاول هذه الدراسة ان تسلط الضوء على تلك العناصر (المعارف) في اللغة العربية خصوصا ان العبارة الاسمية لم تدرس بشكل واف في العربية. وفي الحقيقة لم يقر النحاة العرب بوجود العبارة كمكون اساسي من مكونات الجملة العربية كما لا يثيرون في اعراب الجمل الى ان العبارة الاسمية تمثل مكونا واحدا وتؤدي وظيفة واحدة. وبناءا على ذلك فان هذه الدراسة تقوم على فرضية ان العبارة الاسمية تشكل مكونا رئيسا من مكونات الجملة العربية وان هذا المكون يؤدي وظيفة واحدة. وتهدف الدراسة الى تحديد عدد وانواع المعارف في العبارة الاسمية سواء تلك التي تسبق راس العبارة او تلك التي تليه كما تهدف الدراسة ايضا الى بيان ترتيب مكونات العبارة الاسمية المعقدة في حال وجود اكثر من معرف قبل راس العبارة واكثر من معرف بعده. وتستند الدراسة في تحليل الجمل والعبارات الاسمية المعقدة فيها على منهجين: المنهج الاول هو المنهج التركيبي الذي يظهر الوظائف الرئيسية لمكونات الجملة من خلال رسم خطوط تحت كل مكون من مكونات الجملة وذكر وظيفته تحته، اما المنهج الثاني فهو المنهج التحولي التولدي الذي يبين ان الجملة مكونة من عبارات وان العبارات مكونة من كلمات وذلك من خلال رسم مخططات تبين ان العبارة الاسمية في اللغة العربية تشكل وحدة مستقلة.