

The Noun Phrase in Gulf Pidgin Arabic

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abstract

This study is a descriptive account of the grammatical properties of the noun phrase in Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA), a reduced linguistic system widely in use in the region of the Arabian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. The description deals with the morphological and the syntactic properties of each of the components of this phrasal category; the head noun, the determiner system, demonstratives, definiteness, quantification, and the system of noun modifiers, pre- and post- noun modifiers and possessive constructions. It also discusses the grammatical categories that are closely linked to them, such as case, gender and number, and how these are signaled. The description is placed within the context of the corresponding phrases in the lexifier Gulf Arabic and the substrate languages, which shows clearly that GPA differs significantly from them. The properties that the GPA noun phrase exhibits seem to stem from general features and tendencies that characterize the structure of pidgins in the world. Thus, we argue that these structural properties ascertain the pidgin

status of GPA and establish the developmental stage of this pidgin system in relation to other pidgin systems.

1. Introduction

Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA) is the name given to a reduced ‘simplified’ system that is in wide use in the Arab states on the western coast of the Arabian Gulf region and Saudi Arabia¹. It is used for communication between the native Arab communities and those of the Asian expatriates who come from heterogeneous linguistic backgrounds, and among these non-natives when they do not have another common language. It is a natural result of contact between the native language of the region; in our case the different varieties of Gulf Arabic², and the native languages of the expatriate Asian labor force.

The present paper provides a descriptive account of the structure of a certain grammatical construction in this system. This is the noun phrase.³ It will identify the components of this phrase: the head noun, the determiner system, and the nominal modifiers, and discuss the structural and morphological characteristics of each one of these components. The distribution of these constituents in relation to each other will also be identified, together with their syntactic functions, and whatever functional changes any of them might have undergone via the process of grammaticalization.⁴

In the discussion of each of these points, a comparison is attempted between GPA and its substrates and lexifier in order to find the similarities and differences between those languages and GPA. This will be used later to establish the ‘pidginness’ of this system in terms of the general/universal properties that characterize the world’s pidgin systems. The discussion will also help establish the developmental stage of this pidgin system in relation to other pidgin and creole systems in the world.

The paper is divided as follows: section one is an introduction that provides information about the status and locality of GPA. Section 2

provides a sketch of the sociolinguistic background of this system. Section 3 contains a detailed descriptive account of the structure of the noun phrase in this system in terms of the morphological and syntactic properties of its constituents. Section 4 discusses the pidgin status of this system by looking into the special characteristics of this system to reveal its stage of development as a pidgin system within a universal scale of such systems. Section 5 concludes.

2. Sociolinguistic Background

Gulf Pidgin Arabic is a contact linguistic system used in communication between the expatriate labour force from countries of the Indian subcontinent and East Asia and the native Arabic-speaking communities in the Arabian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. Since the native languages of these workers differ, extending from Urdu and Hindi to Malayalam, Bengali, Sinhala, Tamil, Tagalog, Indonesian, Nepalese, etc., GPA is also used for intercommunication among these non-natives.

Trade between this region and other parts of Asia has a long history and a contact language must have arisen to ensure the necessary communication between traders. However, more recently, it has certainly taken force after the development of the oil industry in the late forties and early fifties of the last century. Increasing numbers of laborers, household aids, craftsmen, and skilled workers started coming to the region. GPA has become part of the linguistic inventory in the Arabian Gulf. However, it must be noted that it is socially stigmatized, being a system that is used to communicate only with those who are of lower socio-economic status.

This socio-economic situation is exemplary of those that give rise to such systems. It is a situation where the speakers of two or more languages are compelled to communicate, (Sebba 1997). The diverse linguistic background of this labor force is another factor behind the emergence

of such systems (Holms 1988:5). Besides, it is a situation of unbalanced demography (Owens 1985), where there is a language X, Gulf Arabic in this case, and where the L2 speakers of this language greatly outnumber its L1 (native) speakers.

Furthermore, this situation shares another social condition that helps in the rise of pidgins. This is where the contact situation is very limited and trivial, and/or exhibiting social distance between the speech communities (Foley 2006:7). No group learns the language of the other group for a variety of mainly social reasons: no close contact, no trust, transience of the contact situation, etc. (Holms 1988:5). It is, thus, a situation of continued distance between the members of the dominant linguistic community and those of the other linguistic communities.

The social gap between the speech communities in the Gulf region is the salient factor behind the continuation of GPA. The Arab natives of these countries do not seem to have the desire to integrate the non-dominant linguistic groups into their own community culturally, nor linguistically. This is a fundamental characteristic of the Gulf societies. Even if some of the migrant workers stay for a long period, their stay is still perceived to be transient and temporary. A situation like this does not encourage the non-dominant groups to learn the language of the dominant group. Rather, they are encouraged to learn the alternative reduced system.

The communicative functions that GPA serves and the contexts in which it is used are numerous. It is used in the market, between costumers and shop attendants, at homes between the owners and the members of the household, maids, drivers, etc., and between these latter, when they come from different linguistic backgrounds. It is also used in offices since the lower rank employees belong to those ethnic and national communities who use GPA.

GPA has remained a pidgin. It has no native speakers. The perceived

transience of those expatriates' stay is not conducive of family making among those who do not share a common native language. Furthermore, in a situation of social segregation such as what we witness in the Gulf countries, there are practically no intermarriages between the L1 speakers – i.e. the dominant group of native Arabs - and the L2 speakers. However, in the rare cases of such intermarriages, or of legalized settlement, the GPA speaker will exert all his/her efforts to de-pidginize and to approximate the L1, i.e. Gulf spoken Arabic. Now that they are admitted to the folk, they quickly do what they can to be worthy of membership by learning its language.

3. The noun phrase

The noun phrase, which is the point of focus in this descriptive account, is the phrasal category that comprises the head noun, the system of determiners with its subgroups of articles, demonstratives and quantifiers, and the modifiers of various categories. In addition, the grammatical categories of number, gender and case that are closely linked to its constituents form an integral part of the noun phrase.

An important issue that needs to be addressed at this point concerns the existence of such a phrase in this system. This is not a trivial question, given the fact that in pidgins and creoles, categorial distinction is sometimes difficult to discern. Mülhäuser (1986) talks about the extreme 'multifunctionality' that such systems show. Besides, grammatical distinctions may not be morphologically marked on the lexical items. These turn up without the typical inflectional morphemes that are associated with them in the lexifier language, or the substrate language(s). The processes of grammaticalization, which come with the stabilization and expansion of such systems, help in the development of overt markers to distinguish grammatical categories and relations (Sankoff and Mazzie 1991:1). Lexical items start assuming

specific grammatical functions, such as the use of *belong* as a possessive marker in Tok Pisin, and the demonstrative *disi* ‘this’, as a relative pronoun in Sranan.

When we look at GPA, we find before us a straightforward case of absence of grammatical markings of categorial distinctions. As will be detailed in the next sub-sections, nouns in this system lack the usual inflections that help in identifying their categorial status, a situation that blurs the usual distinctions and makes it impossible to base the decision on the word’s status on the usual morphological attributes. Thus, the decision will have to depend on their syntactic distribution and referential functions: the occurrence of elements that typically co-occur with nouns in the same unit such as determiners and modifiers and reference to entities rather than actions.

3.1. *The Noun*

The most salient feature of world pidgins is the inflectional poverty of the lexical items in these languages. In these systems, the noun is most commonly used in its ‘unmarked’ bare form without the inflections that signal the usual nominal attributes: number, gender, and case. These categories are said to be realized, when they are, as independent lexical items- i.e. grammaticalized lexical items which have lost their lexical content and adopted a purely functional status. This appears to be the case in GPA. The most obvious feature of the noun phrase in this linguistic variety is the general use of one form of the noun, the singular form, by its speakers. Nouns, in this system, seem to be treated as single units. As the examples in the following sections will show, they carry no inflections that signal the above-mentioned grammatical categories.

3.1.1. *Case*

In the two sentences in (1),

1. a. sayyaara yijii ^{5 6}

car come

‘The car comes.’

b. *ruuh jiib* sayyaara

go bring car

‘will bring the car’

the noun sayyaara ‘car’ retains the same form though it is the subject of the sentence in (1.a) and the direct object in (1.b). The lexifier language, Gulf Arabic, does not show such distinctions either. As for the substrate languages, the picture is somewhat different. The overwhelming majority of these languages exhibit case distinctions on their nouns, though to varying extents. This is the case for languages like Urdu, Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil Bengali, and Sinhala.⁷ We may remember here that the absence of case distinction is a common feature of world pidgins and creoles, a sign of the universal reductionist tendencies of these systems.

3.1.2. *Number*

There is no number marking on nouns in GPA either. One form- i.e. usually the unmarked singular form in the lexifier- is consistently used by the speakers when talking about one or more members of the same thing. The expressions in (2) show an invariable ‘singular’ form of the nouns regardless of their reference to one or more referents, e.g. beet in (2.a) and (2.b), filim in (2.c) and (2.d).

2. a. *waahid* beet

‘one house’

b. *tineen* beet

‘two house’

c. *sawwi filim waajid*,

make film many

‘make many films’

d. *Kulliṣ filim maal huwwa*

all film of he

‘all his films’

Nor is there any independent lexical item that is used to signal plurality, which may indicate, if it exists, the working of the process of grammaticalization mentioned above. Plural reference in GPA seems to be left to the context to determine via the presence of numerals or quantifiers.

This runs in obvious contrast to the situation in the lexifier or the substrate languages, all of which have either a binary (singular-plural), or ternary (singular-dual-plural) number distinction. Beside the unmarked singular form, the lexifier Gulf Arabic has two other inflected forms showing the dual and plural forms of the noun. In the lexifier’s counterparts to the above GPA expressions, only the noun in (2.a) will be in the singular form. In (2.b), the noun will have a special dual form, *beeteen* ‘two houses’. Nouns referring to more than two referents will be in the plural form. *aflaam* ‘films’ in (2.c) and (2.d).

Similarly, all the substrate languages exhibit a binary number distinction realized mainly in suffixes that mark plurality, e.g. Urdu/Hindi /-ē/, Malayalam/Tamil /-kal/, Bengali /-ra/, and vowel alternation or subtraction in Sinhala. Given this difference from the lexifier and substrate languages, one can only assume that this reflects the universal reductionist mechanisms that characterize such systems.

However, the absence of a number signal is not without exception. We

do sometimes find instances of etymologically plural nouns borrowed from Gulf Arabic, as in the following:

2. a. *kulliṣ banaat fii junuun*

all girls PM madness

‘All girls are crazy.’

b. *badeen gassil fii tiyaab*

after wash PM clothes

‘After that, I wash the clothes.’

The underlined nouns have singular forms in Gulf Arabic: *bint*, and *ṯoob*, respectively. Nevertheless, these apparently plural nouns should not be considered morphologically complex elements, made of a stem and a plural morpheme (realized as a suffix or a change in the internal vowel pattern), as they would be in the lexifier Gulf Arabic. Rather, they should be taken as simplex units with no derivational relation to their singular counterparts; i.e. items that have been borrowed from Gulf Arabic as such. If they appear in their singular forms in GPA, as some may, they do so with different meanings. Compare *tiyaab* ‘clothes’ with *toob* ‘a man’s long dress’. Reference to more than one item of the latter will be by using the singular form after a cardinal like *sitta toob*, ‘six dresses’

Of course, this is different from another class of seemingly plural nouns occurring in GPA, such as *mukabbilaat* ‘appetizers’, and *mašaawi* ‘grilled meats’. These words do not seem to have a singular form in use in the lexifier language. They are always used in their plural form and are borrowed as such into GPA

3.1.3. Gender

Although nouns in GPA that are borrowed from Gulf Arabic retain their

original masculine or feminine forms, GPA does not exhibit the gender distinctions of the kinds that are found in the lexifier language. There, a productive rule is responsible for signaling feminine gender on nouns and adjectives morphologically via the suffixation with /-a/, e.g. *muḥaamii* > *muḥaamiya* ‘lawyer’; *xaadim* > *xaadmā* ‘servant’; *tabbaax* > *tabbaaxa* ‘cook’, etc. The gender distinction is seen in subject-verb agreement and the agreement of various elements of the noun phrase- i.e. demonstratives and adjectives, with the head noun. This is not the case in GPA, where nouns are borrowed from the lexifier as simplex units. The invariable form of the demonstratives that precede them and of the verbs and adjectives that agree with them is evidence for this absence of gender distinction.

4. a. *sayyaara yiji maʔaana*

car come with-us

‘The car remains with us.’

b. *haadi nafar sawwii muškila*

this person make problem

‘This person makes problems.’

c. *ruuh zawwij hurma taani*

go marry woman second

‘will marry another wife’

In (4.a), the noun *sayyaara* ‘car’ appears with the ‘unmarked 3sm verb form *yiji*. In Gulf Arabic, this noun is of feminine gender, and will thus appear with the 3sf verb form *tiji* : *l-sayyaara tiji*. Similarly, in (4.b) *nafar* ‘person’, which is masculine in Gulf Arabic appears with *haadi*, ‘this’, a feminine demonstrative in Gulf Arabic. The noun *hurma* ‘woman’, in (4.c), is of feminine gender in Gulf Arabic, and will be followed by an ordinal adjective that agrees with it in its gender, *hurma θaanya* ‘second/another woman’. Thus, the absence of gender distinction in GPA cannot be taken to

be the influence of the superstrate language, Gulf Arabic.

Nor is it the result of transfer from the substrate languages. Most of these exhibit gender distinctions. Hindi/Urdu nouns are not morphologically marked for gender, but gender distinctions are manifested in verb and adjective agreement as will be shown below in section 3.3. Similarly, Bengali exhibits gender distinction on its nouns, and adjectives agree with their head nouns in their gender; and so does Tamil. Sinhala shows animate/inanimate gender distinction. It is only Malayalam that does not seem to show gender distinction in its nouns. Thus, the absence of gender distinction in GPA cannot be the result of the substrate languages influence either.

3.2. Determiners

One of the distinctive features of pidgins is the absence of a clearly defined system of determiners. Most of the time, information about definiteness, specificity, etc., is retrieved from the context in which the noun occurs. The grammaticalization of a determiner system, i.e. overt marking via specific functional morphemes that might have been derived from lexical items - is seen as a sign of the system's development and expansion or its creolization (Sankoff and Mazzie 1991:2). As will be seen below, GPA does not appear to have reached that stage yet.

3.2.1. Articles

Definite/indefinite reference, which is one of the main components of the determiner system in the noun phrase, is not generally signaled in GPA. Overwhelmingly, nouns appear without any marker that indicates their reference type – specific, indefinite, generic, etc.... The following examples contain nouns with specific definite, unique or generic reference. They all occur without a marker that signals these reference types.

5. *šinu fi baččaa ?*

what EX child

‘What is wrong with the child?’ (specific definite reference)

6. *jamiila bruuha daakil beet*

Jameela alone inside house

‘Jameela is alone inside the house. (unique reference)

7. *fii har waajid nafar muut*

EX heat much person die

‘If it is very hot a person may die.’ (generic reference)

All the underlined nouns in the above three expressions will be prefixed by the definite article /*(a)l-*/ in the lexifier Gulf Arabic. Definite specific, unique and generic reference in this language is signaled by the use of the definite article.

Even proper names that are borrowed from Gulf Arabic, and which originally come with a definite article lose their original definite article in GPA, e.g.

8. *dooha zahma waajid*

Doha crowd much

‘Doha is very crowded.’

The proper name *dooha* begins with the definite /*al-*/ in Gulf Arabic.

Note that the very few instances of nouns that are prefixed with the definite article in the collected data seem to be some fossilized lexical items borrowed from Gulf Arabic like *wallaah* ‘by (the) God’; *bi-l-leel* ‘at (the) night’; *(h)al-hiin* ‘this (the) time, now’; and *(i)l-yoom* ‘the day, today’. When borrowed they appear to have been considered morphologically simplex items.

The substrate languages signal definite references with markers that are also used as demonstratives. Hindi *vo* ‘that’ and *ye* ‘this; Urdu *vo* ‘that’ *iis*

‘this’, are consistently used as definiteness markers coming before the head nouns. In Malayalam definite reference is either signaled by the use of distal demonstrative *aa* ‘that’ or is more frequently left with no morphological marker. So does Tamil, which sometimes signals definite reference by the distal demonstrative *anta* ‘that’. In Bengali, definite reference is marked by the suffix *-ta* for singular nouns, and *-gula* for plural nouns, and in Sinhala, different noun suffixes are used to mark the definiteness-indefiniteness contrast, which also reflect the animate-inanimate gender distinction.

GPA does not mark indefinite, non-unique reference– specified or general – morphologically either. This is what we find in the expressions below

9. a. *dawwir kafil maa-yhassil* (general)

search sponsor not-get

‘...search for a sponsor and not find any’

b. *anaa matam ašara sana* (specified)

I restaurant ten year

‘I am in a restaurant for ten years.’

The lexifier Gulf Arabic does not have any lexical or morphological marker to signal indefinite reference. So the underlined nouns in the above examples will appear similarly unmarked in the Gulf Arabic corresponding expressions, e.g. (9.a) *?adawwir kafil bes maa- hassil* ‘I search for a sponsor but do not find any.’. (9.b) *anaa šamalit b-matšam šašr sniin* ‘I worked in a restaurant for ten years’. Several of the substrate languages either leave this type of reference unmarked, to be retrieved from the context, or indicate it via the use of the numeral ‘one’. In Hindi/Urdu nouns of indefinite reference may be preceded by *eek* ‘one’ or may appear without one, e.g. *me (eek) kitaab xariida* ‘I a book bought’. So does Bengali, which uses the word *ek* ‘one’ as an indefinite marker *ek boi* ‘a book’. Similarly, Malayalam/Tamil usually use the cardinal *oru* ‘one’ as a marker of indefinite reference for

singular nouns, e.g. *oru kutti* ‘a child’.

The general absence of marking to reference types in GPA does not seem to be the result of transfer from the substrate languages. It is true that these languages leave many instances of indefinite specific or generic reference unmarked, but they do frequently make use of the numeral ‘one’ to signal indefinite reference. As for definite specific reference, these languages usually mark it morphologically on the noun with special prefixes or suffixes or allocate independent lexical items (many times grammaticalized demonstratives) to do this. Nor can we say that the lexifier Gulf Arabic is the source of the present situation in GPA since in this language, definite, unique, and generic references are marked morphologically on nouns with a prefixal definite article. Thus, the fact that GPA does not make use of any such markings and leaves the reference of the nouns to be inferred from the context can only be, again, an instance of the general trend of grammatical paucity long noticeable in pidgin languages (Sankoff and Mazzie, 1991:1)

However, the collected data present us with few instances where definite and indefinite reference are overtly marked. In such cases, singular count nouns of indefinite specific reference are preceded with the lexical item *wahid* ‘one’, and definite nouns are preceded or followed by the demonstrative *haada* / *haadi* / *haay* ‘this’, all of which are borrowed from the lexifier Gulf Arabic. In the following examples, the word *waahid* is used not as a quantifier meaning ‘one’, but as an indefinite article marking non-unique specific reference, e.g.

10. a. *jamiila saakin waahid beet*

Jameela living one house

‘Jameela lives in a house.’

Likewise, the demonstratives *haada*, *haadi* or *haay* are alternatively used as markers of definite reference. The three are in free variation, regardless of the gender or number of the following head noun, as we see in the following:

11. a. *haadi baladiyya alatuul sakkir*

this municipality directly close

‘The municipality will close it right away.’

b. *haadi dreewil maal kafil sawwi kalaam*

this driver of sponsor make talk

‘The sponsor’s driver says.’

c. *baad inta ruuh haay rijjaal fii muškila, inta fii haay sijil*

after you go this man PM problem you PM this record

‘Then, if you go and the man makes problems, you have the record’

The use of these items to mark reference types is a new development in this system. If so, then, one may suggest that the reference types are beginning to get grammaticalized via the use of items from items that originally belong to different subcategories of the determiner system in the lexifier language. They also retain their original use in GPA as a numeral and a demonstrative respectively, as will be seen below in sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3).

The fact that the use of the cardinal ‘one’ and demonstratives to mark reference is shared by several of the substrate languages as was detailed above may be taken as evidence of transfer or a ‘relexification’, from the substrate languages. However, a word of caution needs to be made here: the use of these items to mark different reference types in GPA is obviously neither so stable as it is in the substrate languages, nor does it exhibit the richness of their corresponding systems.

The use of ‘one’ and demonstratives as reference markers is a general tendency found in pidgin systems round the world, as attested in many of the French-based creoles (Déprez 2007), and Tok Pisin (Sankoff and Romaine, 1991). Hence, this feature, like the previous ones, is a general characteristic of pidgin and creole systems.

3.2.2. *Demonstratives*

Demonstratives are the next subcategory of the system of determiners in the noun phrase in GPA. The existence of this functional category in GPA is substantiated by the use of items that mark deixis and are usually positioned pre-nominally. They are all borrowed from the lexifier Gulf Arabic, with the expected phonological changes. The most frequently used demonstratives are *haada*, ‘this (m)’ in Gulf Arabic, and *haadi*, or *haay* ‘this (f)’ in Gulf Arabic.⁸ Speakers of GPA may use any one of these indiscriminately and variably before nouns of etymologically different gender in the lexifier language.

12. a. *anaa maafii guul haada kalaam*

I NEG say this speech

‘I don’t say this speech’

b. *inti fii sawwi haada muškila*

you PM make this problem

‘Did you cause this problem?’

c. *anaa hibbi haadi muganni*

I love this singer

‘I like this singer.’

The lexifier Gulf Arabic makes gender and number distinctions in its demonstratives in addition to the distal/proximate distinction. Thus, (12.a) will be *?ana maa guul haaḏa l-kalaam* ‘I not say this(s.m) def-speech’; but (12.b) will be *?inti sawweeti haaḏi l-muškila* ‘you(s.f) made(s.f) this(s.f) def-problem’; and (12.c) will be *?ana ?hib haaḏa l-muganni* ‘I like this(s.m) singer(s.m)’

Likewise, the demonstratives in several of the substrate languages observe the proximal/distal distinction: Urdu: *iis/wo* ; Hindi: *ye/vo* ; Malayalam: *ee/aa* ; Tamil: *inta/anta* ; Bengali: *ai/oi* (suffixed by *[-gulo]* to indicate plurality); and in Sinhala, demonstratives exhibit a four-way distinction in terms of proximity:

mee/oye/are/ee, that may be suffixed by case/gender markers. Thus, the use of the demonstrative particle – in its different variants - in GPA could not be described as a matter of transfer from any of these languages since it does not retain the distinctions that are exhibited by their demonstratives. Nor can it be said that it shows the influence of the lexifier Gulf Arabic because the demonstratives in this language show distinctions that are absent in GPA. Again, it may be more appropriately ascribed to the general reductionist tendencies that pidgins are characterized with.

In this connection, two questions are raised. The first is about the existence of the definite article as a distinct category to signal definite reference in the determiner system in GPA. As was mentioned above, most nouns of definite reference in this language occur as bare nouns, with no overt definite marker. This apparent inconsistency would not support positing two distinct and well-established grammatical functions to demonstratives in GPA. Instead, we should be content with the weaker claim that demonstratives in GPA are undergoing a process of acquiring a new function as markers of definite reference- i.e. grammaticalization. But this claim cannot be substantiated until the common variability in use ceases and its new use becomes consistent.

The second question concerns the reason behind this occasional use of the demonstrative as a definite article in GPA. This was dealt with in the previous section when the idea of relexification of the corresponding items in the substrate languages was excluded, even though these languages use demonstratives as definite reference markers. This feature is found indeed in many of the world pidgins and other natural languages. Perhaps, the close deictic similarity between definite articles and demonstratives is responsible for this ‘overlap’ in their use in many languages. The same can be said about the use of the numeral ‘one’ as an indefinite article in these languages. As such, this novel use of demonstratives and the numeral ‘one’ as reference markers is better attributed again to general tendencies towards increasing grammatical complexity that goes with the stabilization

and expansion of pidgins.

One further point needs to be mentioned about demonstratives in GPA. The data show instances of doubling in their use. In several sentences, we find two demonstratives, one with a purely deictic function occurring in the usual prenominal position, and a second one occurring in phrase-final position. This postnominal demonstrative seems to function as a reinforcer or an emphasizing element here. Sometimes, it does not occur at the end of the noun phrase itself; rather, it may occupy a final position in the sentence. The co-occurrence of demonstratives and reinforcers is common in world languages (Déprez 2007:271).

13.a. *haadi iid kulla kammal haadi*

this cuff all finished this

‘This sleeve cuff is done.’

b. *haadi dooha halhiin fi jahannam haadi*

this Doha now PM hell this

‘Doha is like hell now.’

The discussion of the demonstratives has been limited to their attributive determinative function as constituents of the noun phrase. In their pronominal function, standing for the whole noun phrase, they seem to function in an analogous fashion to what we find in the lexifier Gulf Arabic.

14. *haadi kalaas*

this finished

‘This is done.’

In the above examples, the demonstrative represents the noun phrase in toto, and can be found in its various grammatical functions, i.e. subject, direct object, etc. In the above example, the demonstrative *haadi* functions as the subject of its clause followed by the predicate *kalaas*.

1.1.3. Numerals

Numerals, which make an important sub-component of the determiner system in the noun phrase, are found in rich display in GPA. They are all borrowed from the lexifier Gulf Arabic. They usually occupy a prenominal position, though there are the expected instances of variability where the numeral appears in a postnominal position, as in (15h) below. There are also instances of demonstratives and numerals co-occurring in the same noun phrase. In these cases, demonstratives precede the numerals, as in (15g) below.

15.a. *kamsa miyya riyaal*

five hundred riyal

‘five hundred riyals’

b. *išriin kamsa sana*

twenty five year

‘twenty-five years’

c. *haada fii suug sitta w arbiin dukkan*

in market six and forty shop

‘There are 46 shops in this market.’

d. *mumkin waahid sana, tineen sana*

maybe one year two year

‘maybe one year, two years’

e. *tineen šahar suug tabaan*

two month market tired

‘For two months, business is not so good.’

f. *haadi karbaan; tamaanya fataayir karbaan*

this damaged eight pasties damaged

‘These are damaged; eight pasties damaged.’

g. *yimkin haadi arbaa murabba iji daakil*

maybe this four square come inside

‘Maybe these/the four squares fit inside.’

h. *anaa fii beibi talaata*

I PM child three

‘I have three children.’

Several things may be noticed about the system of numerals in this language, which set it apart from the original system in the lexifier Gulf Arabic, from which the numerals were borrowed. First, we notice the occurrence of the numerals *waahid* and *tineen* before the head noun as in (15d) and (15e). In Gulf Arabic the system of pre-head numerals starts with ‘three’. *waahid* ‘one’ does not occur before a head noun since the singular form of the noun will suffice to indicate its number; nor does the numeral *thneen* ‘two’. In this case, the noun will be inflected for dual number, e.g. *ktaabeen*. In contrast, the numeral system in GPA seems to start from ‘one’ followed by the unique form of the head noun as is seen in the above sentences. Remember that nouns in GPA do not show any number distinction, whereas there is a three-way number distinction in nouns in the lexifier Gulf Arabic.

Second, besides their more frequent pre-nominal position, numerals in GPA may occupy a post-nominal position, as in (15h). The lexifier Gulf Arabic allows numerals in a post-nominal position too, e.g. *ktaab waahid* ‘one book’, *ktaabeen thneen* ‘two books’, *kutub thlaatha* ‘three books’, etc. However, in this position, they behave more like adjectives than quantifiers, agreeing with their head nouns in definiteness, and retaining full form. No such distinctions obtain between pre-nominal and post-nominal numerals in GPA. The variation is obviously a sign of this system’s instability.

Third, in contrast to the situation in the lexifier, GPA numerals retain their

basic form and do not undergo any morphophonemic changes in agreement with the following head nouns. In Gulf Arabic, the numeral ‘five’, for example, occurs in its full form *xamsa* when it comes alone or in a post-nominal position, but undergoes some phonological changes when it occurs in a pre-nominal position, *xam(i)s njuum* ‘five stars’, or *θalaaθa* ‘three’ and *θla(a)θ sayyaarat* ‘three cars’, and *miyya* ‘hundred’ and *miit ktaab* ‘ hundred books’. There is no analogous change in GPA. The same form is used in all contexts.

Fourth, the system of numerals in GPA seems to be unitary, in the sense that only cardinals are used. The ordinal numerals are absent in GPA with the exception of *awwal* ‘first’ and *taani* ‘second’, which may also be found post-nominally in some instances, in a similar fashion to their use in the lexifier Gulf Arabic , e.g.

16.a. *anaa awwal kafil haadi raašid almaani*

I first sponsor this Rashid Al-Mani’

‘My first sponsor was Rashid Al-Mani’.

b. *taani yoom iji mudiir waddi matam*

second day come manager take restaurant

‘The second day I come the manager takes me to a restaurant’

c. *matam šugul taani*

restaurant job second

‘A restaurant is a second job’

In more than one sentence, the ordinal *awwal* is used to mean ‘previously’, e.g.

17. *anaa awwal yištugul kuwayt*

I first work Kuwait

‘Previously, I worked in Kuwait.’

The ordinal *taani*, is alternatively used to mean ‘another’, e.g.

18. *fii tartiib dukkaan taani*

EX arrangement shop second

‘There is an arrangement for another shop’

These special uses of *awwal* and *taani* are also borrowed from the lexifier.

The last point to mention here is the variability that may be found in the order of the elements in compound numerals. (15c) shows that the digits come before the tens: *sitta w arbiin* ‘forty-six’, which is exactly the order that we have in the lexifier Gulf Arabic *sitta w ?arbi’iin*. On the other hand, we find the reverse order in (15b), with the tens preceding the digits. In the lexifier Gulf Arabic, ‘twenty five’ is *xamsa w iŕriin*, whereas it is *iŕriin kamsa* in the GPA example. In addition to this variability in order, the conjunction *w(a)* ‘and’, which we find between the two elements of the complex numeral in Gulf Arabic is sometimes absent in GPA, as in example (15b).

All the substrate languages retain a distinction between ordinal and cardinal numerals, and most of them reserve a pre-nominal position for their numerals. This is what we find in Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi, Urdu and Bengali. However, In Sinhala, cardinals appear in a postnominal position while ordinals occupy a prenominal position. Compound numerals in these languages start, like in English, with the tens followed by the digit, with or without an intervening conjunction, an order that is reflected in (15b) above, implying an instance of transfer from a substrate language. However, the complexity of the numeral systems in the substrate languages compared to the simplicity of this system in GPA will exclude any substantial transfer from these languages. Rather, once again, one is inclined to explain the GPA system as resulting from the usual process of reduction applied to the superstrate system, a process that characterizes pidgins crosslinguistically.

3.2.4. *Quantifiers*

The quantifiers *kul* ‘every, all’, and more frequently *kulliŕ* ‘all’, both borrowed from Gulf Arabic, are used in GPA. They usually occupy a prenominal position,

as is seen in the following sentences.

19.a. *laazim kulliṣ gurfa nadiif*

must all room clean

‘All rooms should be clean.’

b. *anaa yṣuuf kulliṣ makaan*

I see all place

‘I see all places.’

c. *kul yoom sawwi maal anaa muṣkil*

every day make of I problem

‘Every day he makes problems for me.’

Quantifiers in the lexifier Gulf Arabic are originally positioned in a pre-nominal position, but they could be found post-nominally due to the universal process of quantifier-floating. The substrate languages exhibit similar variation in their quantifier positions. The position and variation of these quantifiers occupy in GPA is probably a reflection of those in the lexifier and the substrate languages.

3.3. *Adjectives*

Within the noun phrase in GPA, the adjective generally occurs after the head noun, in a similar fashion to that in the lexifier Gulf Arabic, but again, not without the expected variation.

20.a. *halhiin maamaa sawwii muṣkila kabiir*

now madam make problem big

‘Now madam will make a big problem.’

b. *sawwii filim waajid*

make film many

‘make many films’

c. *saakin fii beet šwayya fagiira*

living in house little poor

‘living in a rather poor house’

but,

d. *haada zeen jaw*

this good weather

‘This is a good weather.’

The above examples also make it clear that adjectives in this system do not show any agreement in gender, number, or definiteness with their head nouns. They are frozen units that are used without any change in form, regardless of the number or gender of the head noun. With the exception of (c), the adjectives in the above examples are etymologically in the masculine singular form. The modified nouns are of different number and gender. In (20c), the adjective *fagiira* ‘poor’, borrowed from gulf Arabic, is in the singular feminine form, while the head noun is *beet* ‘home’, which is of masculine gender in that language. This is contrary to the state of affairs in the lexifier Gulf Arabic where we find agreement between the adjective and its head noun in gender, number and definiteness. (20a) will be “...*muškila kabiira*”, (20b) “.... *aflaam waajid*” (*wajid* being an exception that doesn’t inflect for either gender or number), and (20c) “....*beet šwayya faqiir*”. In (20d), we find the adjective preceding the head noun, an instance of variation that is expected of such systems. In the lexifier Gulf Arabic, it will be “.... *jaw zeen*”.

The substrate languages vary both in the agreement of their adjectives with the head noun and the position of these adjectives in relation to it. Some, like Malayalam and Tamil retain an Adj-N order, e.g. Malayalam *valiya meen* ‘big fish’, and so does Bengali, *bhaalo chele* ‘good boy’. Adjectives in these languages do not exhibit agreement with their head nouns. In Urdu and Hindi,

adjectives precede their head nouns too, e.g. Urdu *tazi roti* ‘fresh bread’. Their adjectives, however, are of two classes: inflected and uninflected. The first agree with the head noun in number, gender and case. Similarly, in Sinhala, adjectives precede their head nouns, and have a distinctive form (suffixation by /-iy/, when they function predicatively

It appears that the predominant pre-head position of the adjectives in GPA is influenced by the lexifier Gulf Arabic. As for agreement, GPA differs here from both the lexifier and the substrate languages, whose adjectives show this agreement to varying extents. The only explanation for the absence of agreement in GPA adjectives is that it stems from the general morphological paucity that world pidgins are characterized with.

The data does not contain any instances of adjective stacking. Only single adjective occurrences appear within the noun phrases found in the collected data. This might be a coincidence, or the function of the simple structure typical of speech. There should not be any reason to block adjective stacking, and no such constraint has ever been reported of any pidgin or creole language.

3.4. *Possessive Constructions*

Possessive constructions that involve a linkage between two nouns/noun phrases are realized in GPA in two structures: synthetic, ‘construct-state’, structures, and analytic structures. In synthetic possession structures, the linkage is achieved by the juxtapositioning of the two elements (parataxis). In contrast, analytic possession structures contain a third element, e.g. the preposition ‘of’ in English. However, in GPA the use of the analytic possessive construction is by far the more common and more productive.

The synthetic possessive structure has the form [possessed-possessor]. The lexifier Gulf Arabic exhibits a similar construction. However, the data collected show variation in the ordering of the elements inside this construction. In most instances, the construction follows the [possessed N-possessor N] pattern, as in (21) below, though there are few cases that exhibit the reverse pattern, i.e.

[possessor-possessed], as in (22).

21. [possessed-possessor]

a. *anaa yiji ašaan dreewil beet*

I come for driver house

‘I came to be a house (family) driver.’

b. *badeen jiib madrisa banaat baččaa*

afterwards bring school girls child

‘Then, I bring the children from the girls’ school’

c. *zahma sayyaaraat*

crowd cars

‘too many cars’

d. *haada kulla šugul anaa*⁹

this all work I

‘This is all my work.’

e. *haay dukkaan anaa haadi*

this shop I this

‘This is my shop.’

22. [possessor-possessed]

a. *anaa iji šarika dreewil*

I come company driver

‘I came as a company driver.’

b. *anaa guul jiib anaa fuluus*

I say bring I money

‘I say give me my money.’

c. *anaa itti ummaal ajaar*

I give workers wage

‘I give workers’ wages;

The expressions in (21), with the pattern [Possessed-Possessor], follow the same order of these elements in the synthetic possessive construction in the lexifier Gulf Arabic. Thus, they may be the result of the influence of this language. However, there are differences between the analogous constructions in the two languages. The first difference is in the use of subjective independent pronouns in GPA instead of the bound objective pronouns used in the lexifier. As was mentioned in footnote (9), the GPA pronominal system consists of single-form independent subjective pronouns. Thus we have *šugul anaa* in (21.d) and *dukkaan anaa* in (21.e) instead of the Gulf Arabic *šugl-i* ‘work-me’, and *dukkaan-i* ‘shop-me’ respectively, where the pronoun in the possessor position is a bound objective pronoun.

The second difference concerns the phonological changes that occur on the first element in the synthetic possessive construction in Gulf Arabic and which are absent in this construction in GPA. If the first element of this construction, the possessed, ends with the feminine gender suffix /-a/, it will have an epenthetic /-t/ suffixed to it. This change is absent in GPA. Thus, (21b) *madrisa banaat*, and (21c) *zahma sayyaaraat* are *madrisa-t banaat* ‘girls school’ literally; ‘school girls’, and *zahma-t sayyaaraat* ‘crowdedness of cars’, literally: ‘crowd cars’ in Gulf Arabic.¹⁰

In addition, this construction in GPA differs from its counterpart in Gulf Arabic in that the second element of the construction does not appear prefixed by the definite article since there is no such element in GPA. The second element of the construct state in Gulf Arabic can either be definite or indefinite, cf. *baab il-beet*, literally ‘door the-house’, ‘the house door’ and *baab beet*, literally ‘door house’, ‘a house door’, which signifies the definiteness or otherwise of the whole construction. No such distinction is morphologically realized in GPA.

Despite the above differences between the synthetic possessive constructions in Gulf Arabic and GPA, the identity of the order of the two nouns may indicate that possessive constructions in GPA bear the influence of the lexifier Gulf Arabic. The differences can be attributed to the reductionist tendencies of the pidgin systems.

As was said above, these possessive constructions are not free from variation. The expressions in (22) exhibit the reverse order to that found in the expressions in (21) or in the lexifier language, where the possessed element precedes the possessor. Thus, in Gulf Arabic the possessive construction in (22a) will be *dreewil šarika* ‘driver company’, (22b) *fluus-i* ‘money-me’, (22c) *ajar ‘ummaal* ‘workers’ wages’.

The variation that the alternative order represents may be the result of the influence of the substrate languages in which the order of the two nouns in such constructions is the opposite of their order in Gulf Arabic. In Malayalam, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali, the possessor precedes the possessed, in contrast to their order in Gulf Arabic and in GPA, e.g. Malayalam *štriikal-ute kooleej* ‘women’s college’, Tamil *raja-utaiya vitu* ‘Raja’s house’, Urdu *mohammad-kaa sar* ‘Mohammed’s head’, Bengali *baba-r kolom* ‘father’s pen’. In all these languages the first NP, the possessor, is suffixed by a genitive marker: /-ute/ in Malayalam, /-utaiya/ in Tamil, /-kaa/ in Urdu, and /-r/ in Bengali. In some of these languages, e.g. Urdu, this marker varies in agreement with the possessed (second) N. No such marker is found in GPA, a possible function of the simplifying tendencies that characterize the morphology of world pidgins.

However, the more common and highly productive possessive construction in GPA is the analytic possessive construction, of the pattern [possessed–*maal*-possessor].¹¹ Here, the linkage between the two elements of the construction is achieved through the mediation of the possessive ‘particle’ *maal*, or *hag* ‘belonging to, of’, borrowed from Gulf Arabic, and which precedes, and is contextually attached to, the possessor NP. The construction, which maintains the same order of the two nouns as in its Gulf Arabic analogue is an obvious

borrowing from the lexifier.

23.a. *raas maal anaa awwir*

head of I hurt

‘My head hurts.’

b. *kulliṣ filim maal huwwa*

all film of he

‘all films of his/hers’

c. *maafii koof hazband maal intii zawwij*

NEG fear husband of you marry

‘Aren’t afraid your husband will marry?’

d. *um maal šariika*¹²

mother of partner-his

‘his partner’s mother’

f. *iji mudiir maal matam*

come manager of restaurant

‘The restaurant manager comes.’

The above examples of the analytic possessive construction raise a number of points when compared to their lexifier origin. First, in contrast to the lexifier Gulf Arabic, independent subjective pronouns are used in such constructions in GPA, as in (23.a) and (23.b). In Gulf Arabic the bound objective pronominal forms are used in the corresponding constructions instead.

A second point concerns the difference between the way this construction is used in GPA and its use in Gulf Arabic. Gulf Arabic distinguishes between alienable and inalienable possession. The analytic possessive construction is never used for inalienable possession in this system. In all such cases, the

synthetic construction, ‘the construct state’, is used. Thus, in Gulf Arabic, for ‘my head’ we have *raas-i*, literally ‘head-me’, and not the analytical **raas maal-y*; and for ‘Maryam’s husband’ we have *rajil maryam*, literally ‘husband Maryam’ and not **rajil maal maryam*. GPA does not make any such distinction in its use of the analytic possession construction, as evidenced from such examples as (23a) *raas maal anaa awwir* ‘my head hurts’, and (23d) *um maal šariika* ‘his partner’s mother’.

We may remember here that the use of the analytic construction is a common feature of world pidgins; witness Tok Pisin’s use of analytic constructions, with */bilong/* as a possessive ‘linker’ between the two elements involved in this relationship. Thus, although the use of the analytic construction in GPA may be seen as a direct borrowing from the lexifier, its extension to constructions of inalienable possession is again an instance of the reductionist tendency that such systems exhibit in their grammar.

3.5. Clausal Postmodifiers

Relative clauses make an integral component of the system of modifiers in the noun phrase. The collected data exhibit very few instances of clausal constructions that are semantically linked to the head noun via modification, in a similar fashion to that which links standard relative clauses to their head nouns. Here are some of them.

24. a. *ay wakıt [iji doha] fii karbata*

any time [I-come Doha] EX problem.

‘Any time I come to Doha there is a problem’

b. *fii nafar misri [ajlis daakil makbaz bas maafi šugul]*

EX person Egyptian [sit inside bakery but NEG work]

‘There is an Egyptian who sits inside the bakery but does not work.’

c. *laakin awwal fii waahid dukkaan [inta muumkin yištiri]*

but before EX one shop [you possible buy]

‘But in the old days, there was a shop that you could buy.’

d. *fii waahid matam [kasaara fii miit alif]*

EX one restaurant [loss PM hundred thousand]

‘There is a restaurant which made a loss of a hundred thousand.’

e. *haay dukkaan [fii aštugul] fii faayda iji*

the shop [PM I-work] PM profit come

‘The shop I work at makes profit.’

The bracketed ‘relative’ clauses in the above examples display properties that are characteristic of all pidgin/creole systems. The first thing that we notice here is the absence of a morpheme that marks relativization, which represents a general tendency in pidgins, in which such markers seem to be lost or, if retained, acquire new grammatical functions (Bruyn 1995:149). In fact, such systems lack the syntactic means or the morphological marking devices for clausal embedding, relative clauses included. Embedded constructions are lacking or rudimentary in pidgins (Romaine 1984; Mühlhäusler 1986). Even when such devices and strategies are available, the tendency is still to avoid complex embedded structures (Mufwene 1986: 2). That may be responsible for the rarity of relative clauses in many of the recorded texts of these languages in their early stages, i.e. before expansion and stabilization into full-fledged creoles, as is the case in an incipient pidgin system like GPA. It is when these systems expand that various processes of grammaticalization and syntacticization work to supply the missing structures.

GPA seems to be in the beginning stages of this developmental path. There is a clear tendency in this system to avoid structural embedding. The overwhelming majority of the sentences in our data are simple clauses with very few embedded clauses of reason and purpose, and as was said above, there were not many clauses that were found to have a relative-like function.¹³

The absence of the relative marker in GPA cannot be the result of the influence of the lexifier Gulf Arabic. Here, relative clauses that modify indefinite head nouns do not have relative markers, and only those that modify definite head nouns begin with the relativizer *illi* ‘who, which, etc.’, occasionally cliticized into ‘*il-*’, as in (25a). This is contrasted with (25b), in which the head noun is indefinite, and the relative clause does not begin with a relative marker

25.a. *il-ktaab* [*il(li)* *šereet-a*] *ma’ruuf*

def-book [which bought-I-it] well-known

‘The book which I bought is well-known’

b. *‘ataani ktaab* [*štaraah min landan*]

gave-me book [bought-it from London]

‘He gave me a book that he had bought in London.’

On the other hand, in GPA, there is no relative marker regardless of the definiteness or otherwise of the head noun – the head noun in (24.e) is definite but there is still no relative marker.

The other feature that characterizes GPA relative clauses is the absence of a resumptive pronoun. None of the relative clauses in the above examples contains a pronoun occupying the position of the relativized NP in the relative clause, regardless of the grammatical function of the relativized NP. The lexifier Gulf Arabic employs the strategy of resumptive pronouns in relativization from all positions except that of the subject.

We also learn from the preceding observation that relativization in this system is of a rather wide range. It is not restricted to subjects (24.b). Relativization is also possible from direct object position (24.c), and adverbial (24.d-e). Thus, we may infer that relativization is possible from any position. Though this is very similar to the situation in the lexifier language, it must be mentioned that such extensive use of this grammatical process in Gulf Arabic is rendered possible via the use of resumptive pronouns.

Relative clauses in GPA invariably occupy a postnominal position, as illustrated in the sentences in (24) above. This might be the result of the influence of the lexifier Gulf Arabic in which relative clauses occur after the head they modify, as in (25). As was made clear above, the influence of the lexifier language seems to be limited to this aspect of the relative clauses in GPA.

Relative clauses in GPA do not seem to bear strong resemblance to their substrate counterparts either. In Malayalam and Tamil, relative clauses occupy a prenominal position, and the verb is changed into a participle by a participial marker that is suffixed to the verb, e.g. Malayalam [*jon kan unn-a*] *kutti*, literally ‘John saw-a child’, i.e. ‘the child that John saw’. Likewise, relative clauses in Sinhala also occupy a prenominal position and exhibit special verb forms. This is the converse position to that which relative clauses in GPA occupy in relation to the head noun.

In Urdu/Hindi, relative clauses, which occupy a postnominal position, begin with a relative marker *jo*, or its variants, that usually precede the head noun, and the verb is followed by a clitic marking the gender of this head noun, e.g. Hindi *jo kitaab mene xariid-i aččaa-he* ‘the book which I bought is good’. Similarly, relative clauses in Bengali, which assume a postnominal position, begin with a relative marker that precedes the head noun, and may end with another marker correlating the relative clause with the main clause, e.g. *je chele-ta phutbal khelchilo se ram-er bhai* ‘RM boy football playing RM Ram’s brother’, i.e. ‘The boy who is playing football is Ram’s brother’.

These structural complexities are absent in GPA relative clauses. Thus, the possibility of substrate influence on the structure of the GPA relative clauses may be excluded. Most of these features seem to follow from universal tendencies that such systems are characterized with.

4. On the pidgin status of GPA.

The descriptive accounts of the study attest to the pidgin status of this system. The various aspects of morphological impoverishment and syntactic simplification

in the structure of the noun phrase that we dealt with reveal the same general structural properties that universally characterize pidgin and creole linguistic systems (Cf. Holms (1988), Romaine (1988), Sebba (1997), Kaye and Tosco (2001) and Winford (2006). The comparison of GPA with the lexifier gulf Arabic and substrate languages in the above discussion shows how vastly GPA differs from these languages. It represents a refutation of the generally held contention that pidgin languages derive their grammar from their substrate language and their vocabulary from the superstrate language (Siegel 2008). In every one of those points, GPA exhibits structural traits and features that set it apart from them and enhance its affiliation to pidgin and creoles linguistic systems.

Morphologically, in GPA we see the absence of a clear morphological apparatus. There is no morphological marking of categories like number, person or gender on the nouns and adjectives (mostly singular masculine), and demonstratives (mostly singular masculine). Unique forms are used that do not show any inflections that mark these grammatical categories. Even when such markings show up, they are not to be taken to be indicative of the existence of such categories. They are an integral part of the simplex lexical unit they are found in.

This morphological paucity of GPA can also be seen in the absence or minimality of the functional categories, such as the absence of morphological markers of the difference types of reference. Noun reference (definite and indefinite) is mostly left to be retrieved from the context. In those cases where such distinction is attempted, we see the use of grammaticalized numerals and demonstrative. Nor does GPA have a relative marker in its relative clauses, or a resumptive pronoun in these clauses, in contrast to the lexifier that employs both. Furthermore, Pronouns are limited to the morphologically independent first, second and third person singular masculine forms; no bound pronominal forms are found in GPA.

In syntax, GPA reveals the same properties and tendencies that world pidgins have. As the above description indicates, GPA appears to conform to these

tendencies. It shows preference for analytic possessive constructions over the synthetic constructions, which the lexifier and some of the substrates commonly use. It also shows a lack for sentential derivational complexity resulting in minimal subordination or embedding. Most of the sentences in the data are simple sentences with no embedding. The number of relative clauses attested in the data is not very big and they all lack relative markers. There are also some instances of paratactic structures- i.e. two independent clauses that are semantically linked in a modification relationship. All this is in clear opposition to the rich syntactic structures that the lexifier and the substrate languages show.

The features that characterize GPA and other pidgin systems in the world can only be seen as tendencies and general characteristics that allow variation. Pidgins exhibit various degrees of grammatical simplification and reductionism. This seems to be related to the developmental stage that each of these systems has attained. Like language acquisition, first or second, these systems pass through stages of development towards stabilization and expansion. Winford (2006:298) proposes a three-stage developmental hierarchy for such systems.

The development scale is linked to grammatical complexity. Thus, at one end we find the stable and expanded pidgins and creoles, which show a high degree of grammatical consistency and almost no variability, normal grammatical complexity and expanded communicative functions. At the other end we have those varieties which show little grammatical structure and abundant variability; what have come to be called 'jargons'. In terms of this hierarchy, GPA has all that features of a stage-two pidgin, a system that has attained some grammatical structure but without the full grammatical complexity and consistency that we witness in natural languages and in stabilized creoles.

5. Conclusion

The above descriptive account of noun phrase in GPA sketches a structure of this phrase that is headed by a noun and contains determiners and modifiers. It may be represented as in (26).

26. (Article/Demonstrative) (Numeral) N (Adjective) (Rel. clause)

Given the relative instability of the system, and hence expected variability, this order is not without exception or variation.

This order of the constituents seems to follow their order in the lexifier Gulf Arabic. The demonstrative determiners, which are borrowed from Gulf Arabic, appear typically in a prenominal position. So do the quantifiers and the numerals. The adjectives and other clausal modifiers- i.e. relative clauses, occupy a postnominal position. Those instances where this order is violated could have stemmed from the influence of the substrate in which the constituents of this construction stand in different orders. This, of course, runs in opposition to what is claimed about the restricted role of the superstrate language, i.e. that of providing the vocabulary of the contact system.

The comparison with the lexifier and substrate corresponding constructions has revealed significant differences between the structure of this construction and its components in GPA on the one hand, and that found in the other languages. The morpho-syntactic properties of the elements of the noun phrase in GPA do not seem to carry any resemblance to those of their counterparts in the lexifier or the substrate languages. In all these languages, we find rich systems of inflection providing phonological realization of the functional categories of number, case, and gender, and definiteness. These are totally missing in GPA, where the basic, non-varying, form of the, noun, adjective, demonstrative, are used. The lack of syntactic complexity that we find in the use of analytic possessive constructions and in relative clauses are further evidence of this difference.

All this attests first, to the pidgin status of this system. These properties reflect the same general structural properties that characterize pidgin and creole systems. And second, it seems to exclude any suggestion of a highly significant influence from the substrate languages, or from the lexifier. It appears that what we are left with is the conclusion that these features that we find GPA are a reflection of the universal structural characteristics of all such systems.

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Endnotes

- 1 Other names have also been suggested for this system in the literature, e.g. Urdu-Pidgin Arabic (Moaily 2008), Gulf Asian Pidgin (al-Azraqi 2010), Saudi pidginized Arabic (al-Zubeiry 2015).
- 2 Gulf Arabic is the variety of colloquial Arabic spoken in the region (Holes 1995). The sub-dialects that are spoken in the different countries exhibit differences between them, which may be reflected in the pidgin system accordingly. However, the variation does not seem to have any bearing on the descriptive account presented here.
- 3 Until recently, GPA has not attracted the interest of researchers. For more than a decade, Smart (1990) remained the only published study that investigated this system. However, interest in GPA has picked up with the publication of a number of studies of various length in the last two decades. See for example, al-Azraqi (2010); Bakir (2010,2014); Moali (2008 2012,); Næss (2008); Wiswall (2002); and al-Zubeiry, (2015).
- 4 The data on which the descriptive statements of this study are based were collected from about two hours of recordings of conversations by GPA speakers, or interviews with them. The participants in these recordings were ten men and women from the South Asian expatriate labor force living in Doha-Qatar. The duration of their stay in Qatar and in other Gulf countries varied from 2 to 30 years. None of them was a native speaker of Arabic. Their native languages are Urdu, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Bengali, and Sinhala
- 5 In the transliteration of the GPA and Gulf Arabic material, the Latin characters are used with their conventional phonetic values. They are supplemented by the following symbols: /θ/ for voiceless dental fricative, /ð/ for voiced dental fricative, /t/ for voiceless emphatic dental stop, /č/ for voiceless palato-alveolar affricate, /š/ for voiceless palato-alveolar fricative, /x/ for voiceless velar fricative, /ɣ/ for voiced velar fricative, /ħ/ for voiceless pharyngeal fricative, /ʕ/ for voiced pharyngeal stop, and /ʔ/ for the glottal stop. Vowel length and consonant gemination are indicated by character doubling.
- 6 The preposition *fii*, and its negative counterpart *maafii*, are commonly used in GPA as existential auxiliaries and as predication markers in verbless and other sentences, hence the gloss (EX, PM) in this and similar examples. See (Bakir 2014) for details.
- 7 Information about the substrate languages concerning the various points discussed in this paper is mainly from the various chapters in Comrie (1990), Asher (1997) and consultations with native speakers.

8 There are also instances of the contracted affixal /ha-/ ‘this’ used in the fossilized expression *halhiin*, literally ‘this the time’, e.g. *halhiin maafii ittifaag* ‘now there is no agreement’. However, it is obvious that /ha-/ is not treated as a separate component with discrete meaning. Rather, the whole expression is reanalyzed so that the demonstrative is now part of the stem, and the whole word is taken as a single unit meaning ‘now’.

9 Pronouns in GPA are independent forms. Bound pronominal suffixes ‘clitics’ are not found in any of the positions they usually occupy in the lexifier Gulf Arabic, and some of the substrate languages. The absence of these forms in GPA is interpreted on universalist grounds, as an instance of the morphological simplicity which characterizes all such systems. All of them tend to be isolating and their morphemes are generally independent (Romaine 1988:25-31). Nor is there any variation in the form of each pronoun depending on its grammatical function. The same form is used invariably. These pronouns are: *anaa* ‘first person’, *inta*, *intii* ‘second person’, and *huwwa* ‘third person’. The material on which this description is based does not contain other pronouns, specifically plural pronouns. So, one cannot state with any degree of certainty if plural reference is achieved via separate forms that were not included in the corpus as a matter of accident, or whether the present forms are equally used for plural reference.

10 In the face of the overwhelming use of the analytical possessive constructions in GPA, some instances of this synthetic possessive construction in GPA give all the appearance of having been borrowed from Gulf Arabic as single lexical items. as in *madrisa banaat* and *zahma sayyaaraat* in (21) above, and others like *zeit zeytuun* ‘olive oil’, literally: ‘oil olive’, *saaloon hilaaka* ‘barber shop’, literally: ‘salon shaving’ ; *šugul iid* ‘hand work’, literally: ‘work hand’; and *humaar šugul* ‘hard working’ literally: ‘donkey work’.

11 Naess 2008 cites two instances of an analytic possessive construction with the order [possessed-maal- possessed] ,e.g. .

alhīn ana māl bint tālīm arabi (p.63)

now I POSS daughter learning Arabic

“Now my daughter is learning Arabic”

However, she admits to the rarity of such instances.

12 This example shows both types of the possessive construction: the analytic construction with *maal* between *umm* ‘mother’ and *šariika* ‘his partner’, which is itself made of the stem *šariik* ‘partner’ and the pronominal clitic *a* ‘his’, making a synthetic possessive

construction. The appearance of the bound morpheme here may be the result of taking words like *šariika* as fossilized items that are borrowed as single units. It may also be an instance of depigination on part of the speaker.

- 13 Besides the usual subordination structures that relativization is realized in, the data offers us cases of paratactic structures in which two independent clauses seem to be semantically linked in a modification relationship, e.g.

i. *dreewil iji huwwa invelop. invelop huwwa daakil fii yimkin*

driver comes he envelope. envelope he inside PM possible

kamsa ?alf

five thousand.

‘The driver brings an envelope. The envelope contains probably five thousand.’

ii. *huwwa guul zeen kallim maamaa. fii šeeke haadi*

he says well talk madam PM sheikha this

‘He says, well, talk to Madam. She is from the ruling family.’

عبارة الاسم في عربية الخليج الهجينة

تتناول هذه الدراسة وصف الخواص القواعدية لعبارة الاسم في عربية الخليج الهجينة، وهي نظام لغوي مبسط يُستعمل بشكل واسع في بلدان الخليج العربي والسعودية. يتعلق الوصف بالخواص الصرفية والنحوية لكل مكون من مكونات هذه العبارة: الاسم، وهو رأس العبارة، والمحددات، وأسماء الإشارة، والتعريف والتذكير، والأسوار، وما يأتي قبل وبعد الاسم من الصفات كلمات وجملًا، وكذلك بنى الإضافة، فضلًا عن المقولات القواعدية المرتبطة بتلك العناصر كالحالة الإعرابية والجنس والعدد. تُمّ تجري الدراسة مقارنة بين عبارة الاسم في هذه اللغة والعبارات المماثلة في عربية الخليج المحكية وفي اللغات الأم للمتحدثي هذه اللغة الهجين. وترينا المقارنة بوضوح أنّ هذه اللغة الهجينة تختلف بشكل أساس عن تلك اللغات جميعًا. وتخلص إلى أنّ خواص عبارة الاسم فيها تنبع من سمات عامة تسم بنية اللغات الهجينة في العالم. وهو ما نستدل به على “هجينية” هذه اللغة، وكذلك نستدل بتلك السمات على تحديد منزلتها في ميزان النمو الموضوع لهذه اللغات.