

Clitics in Standard Arabic

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This paper offers a description of weak and strong pronouns in Standard Arabic (SA) with a special focus on the object pronominals, and discusses their views as affixes, clitics, or incorporated pronouns. The discussion involves a comparison of object pronominals between Standard Arabic and some colloquial Arabic varieties on the one hand, and Romance languages on the other hand. A brief overview of the distinction between clitics and affixes is also presented. It has been shown that pronominal clitics in Arabic in general and in SA in particular exhibit distinct properties which make them different from other clitics existing in Romance languages. Such distinctive properties comprise their appearance on all lexical and some functional categories, the constant right-adjunction to their hosts, and the lack of overt Case distinctions manifestation, i.e., there is no clear-cut boundary for the Case-marker morpheme, unlike Determiner Phrases (DPs). The last property concerns their attachment to the closest head; the movement involves only one simple head-to-head movement. All these features associated with Arabic clitics are different from their counterparts in Romance languages. In addition, it has been observed that verbs, nouns, and prepositions do not agree with their object complements. These properties and observations lead to the conclusion that object attached pronouns in Arabic are best viewed as incorporated pronouns rather than clitics or agreement markers.

Keywords: clitics, affixes, incorporated pronouns, Standard Arabic, cliticization, incorporation, agreement

Introduction

Traditionally, the Standard Arabic (henceforth SA) pronominal system is thought to consist of subject and object pronouns, which can be classified into attached and free-standing forms. Both subject and object attached pronouns have been analyzed as agreement elements. Interestingly, both of them always appear to the right of their host, with one exception that the subject attached pronouns may appear with another affix attached to the left of the verb in the present/imperfect tense. This makes these verbs look like they have prefix and suffix agreement elements, which are referred to as a discontinuous affix. Object attached pronouns, on the other hand, have been viewed in the literature as clitic pronouns, until a study carried out by Roberts and Shlonsky (1995) compared SA clitics to their Romance counterparts, concluding that the so-called “clitics” in SA are best analyzed as object agreement elements base-generated with the governor they appear associated with in the overt syntax. In this paper, it will be shown that treating these pronouns as object agreement elements is inadequate and these elements are best analyzed as object incorporated pronouns. It is worth noting that the discussion in this paper is restricted to the object attached pronouns.

- b. kita:bu-hu
book-3SM
“His book.”
- c. min-hu
from-3SM
“from him.”

(Abu-Chacra, 2007, p. 34)

Strong and Weak Pronouns

The pronominal system in SA is traditionally classified, from a morphological point of view, into two separate categories: independent (strong) and bound (weak) forms (Fassi-Fehri, 1993). In SA, an object position can be filled by a full Determiner Phrase (DP) or a weak pronoun. Specific strong and weak pronouns are highlighted below.

- (3) a. ?ana: ra?ay-tu l-moʕallim-a
I saw-1SM/F DEF-teacher-ACC
“I saw the teacher.”
- b. l-moʕallim-u ra?aa-ni:
DEF-teacher-NOM saw-me
“The teacher saw me.”

(Fassi-Fehri, 1993, p. 100)

The forms of pronouns that occur in the environments such as (3a) are referred to as strong pronouns. The pronouns that occur in the environments such as (3b) are referred to as weak pronouns or the so-called “object clitics”, which I consider here, following Fassi-Fehri (1993), as incorporated pronouns. These are shown in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. Tables 1 and 2 show the paradigms of SA strong and weak pronouns adapted from Fassi-Fehri (1993).

Table 1

Strong Pronouns

Person	Gender	Singular	Dual	Plural
1	Masc/Fem	?ana:	nahnu	nahnu
2	Masc	?anta	?antuma:	?antum
	Fem	?anti	?antuma:	?antunna
3	Masc	huwa	huma:	hum
	Fem	hiya	huma:	hunna

Table 2

Weak Pronouns

Person	Gender	Singular	Dual	Plural
1	Masc/Fem	-(n)i:	-na:	-na:
2	Masc	-ka	-kuma:	-kum
	Fem	-ki	-kuma:	-kunna
3	Masc	-hu	-huma:	-hum
	Fem	-ha	-huma:	-hunna

The two morphologically distinct series of pronouns differ with regard to their distribution. Pronouns in the strong category behave like full DPs and have the same referential capacities as lexical noun phrases (NPs)

and they can stand alone in the subject position as demonstrated in (4a & c). Ill-formedness arises if a strong pronoun occurs in the object position as in (4b). The weak version of pronouns cannot stand alone after the verb, as illustrated in (4a); they need a governor to support them. In addition, they cannot appear in the subject position as shown in (4d); they can only occur in the object position attached to the verb as illustrated in (4c & d).

- (4) a. hum ntaxab-u: *hu (Fassi-Fehri, 1993, p. 101)
 they elected-3PM him
 “They elected him.”
- b. hum ntaxab-u: *huwa
 they elected-3PM he
 Literally “*they elected he.”
 “They elected him.”
- c. huwa ntaxaba-hum
 he elected.3SM-them
 “He elected them.”
- d. *hu ntaxaba-hum
 him elected-3SM-them
 Literally “*him elected them.”
 “He elected them.”

Strong or free-standing pronouns may occur post-verbally but must be focused (Fassi-Fehri, 1993), as shown in (5).

- (5) ntaxab-u:-hu huwa la: /ʔanta
 elected-3PM-him he not you
 “They elected him not you.” (Fassi-Fehri, 1993, p. 101)

The weak category of pronouns may occur pre-verbally or post-verbally once they find a governor to associate with. Syntactic movement is not an option for strong pronouns, which makes them behave like full DPs. Weak pronouns, on the other hand, obligatorily move from their base-generated position seeking a host.

Weak pronouns as incorporated pronouns

Considering the pronouns in Table 1 as nominative forms (and therefore expected to appear in the subject position) and the pronouns in Table 2 as accusative forms (and therefore expected to appear in the object position) may account for the ill-formed example in (4b) where the strong pronoun *huwa* occurs in the object position. This applies as well to the ill-formed example in (4d) where the weak pronoun *-hu* occurs in the subject position. However, considering the weak pronouns in Table 2 as incorporated pronouns, the ungrammaticality of (4d) is due to two facts; the first applies to incorporated pronouns in general that they need a host in the overt syntax to be attached to. The other fact applies particularly to Arabic incorporated pronouns. One of the distinctive properties of Arabic incorporated pronouns, as we will see in a moment, is that they always incorporate to the right of the host and never to the left, and therefore they cannot occur in the beginning of the sentence. Nevertheless, such pronouns may occur pre-verbally if there is a host/governor to support them. Consider the following example.

- gave.1SG-you -him/it
 “I gave you him/it.”

¹ This functions as a host and it does not have any semantic content.

languages (Uriagereka, 2000) as well as some Arabic varieties such as Lebanese Arabic (Aoun, 1996). The examples below are from Lebanese Arabic. The doubled DPs and the clitics are boldfaced.

- (8) a. kariim jeef-**o** la-**sami** (Aoun, 1996, p. 4)

Kariim saw-**him** to-**Sami**

“kariim saw Saami.”

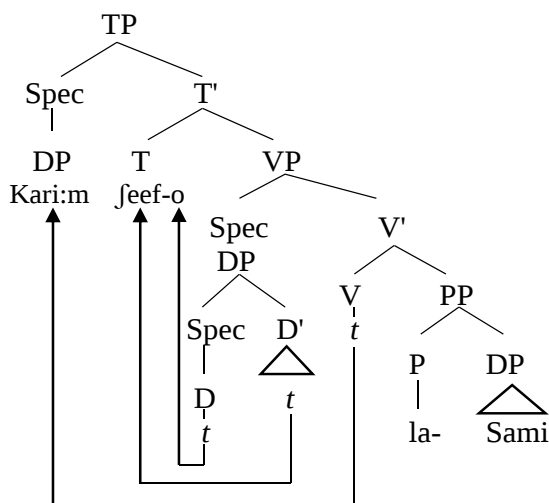
- b. kariim ra:h maʕ-**o** la-**sami** (Aoun, 1996, p. 4)

Kariim went with-**him** to-**Sami**

“Kariim went with Sami.”

Notice that all doubled arguments appear preceded by the preposition *la*. This is one of the striking aspects of clitic-doubled arguments. What is referred to as Kayne’s Generalization suggests that “An object NP may be doubled by a clitic only if this NP is preceded by a preposition” (Aoun, 1981, p. 285). This aspect of clitic doubling was assumed to raise the case-theoretic issue, which involves explaining the obligatory presence of the preposition that always accompanies the doubled DP. Another issue was raised by the phenomena of clitic doubling which is a (T)heta-theoretic problem; this involves how to reconcile T-roles to the two elements, the clitic pronoun and the doubled DP, with the availability of one thematic role (Ouhalla & Shlonsky, 2002). The structure in (9) shows the clitic associated with the verb under T and the doubled DP *Sami* where it is associated with the preposition *la*.

(9)



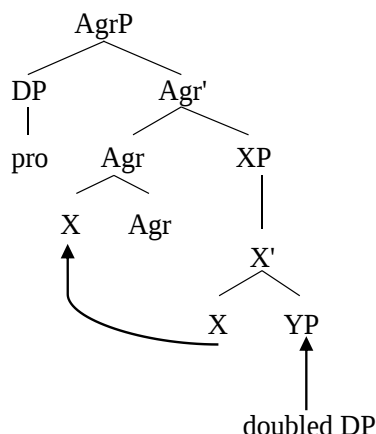
One attempt to account for the *T*-theoretic problem issue was by assuming that the clitic may absorb a *T*-role. Aoun (1981) argued that assuming that clitics function as *r*-expressions:

it follows from the *T*-criterion that an (*r*-clitic) absorbs a *T*-role and cannot occur in the same chain with another argument. Thus, when an (*r*-clitic) is doubled, the doubled element will be in a separate chain and bear a *T*-role similar to the one assigned to appositive or (right) dislocated elements. (p. 279)

Another attempt to account for this issue is by assuming that the clitic is base-generated where it appears attached to its host. The *T*-position is filled by either an overt DP or an expletive *pro* under co-indexation with the clitic (Ouhalla & Shlonsky, 2002). According to this analysis, clitics are Agr elements associated with *X*, i.e., *V* + Agr in (8a) and *P* + Agr in (8b), the doubled DP remains in situ, and Spec-Agr is filled by an expletive *pro*

(Shlonsky, 1997). Shlonsky (1997, p. 195) has given the structure in (10) to show the representation of clitic doubling as suggested by the latter analysis.

(10)



The obligatory presence of the preposition *la* has been viewed as a dummy case assigner, inserted to assign case to the doubled DP. It has been suggested in Aoun (1996) that clitics such as those in (8a & 8b) absorb the Case-feature, which is typically assigned by their governing elements to the doubled DP, leaving the latter with no Case assigned. Hence, the preposition *la* is inserted to assign Case to the doubled DP. The insertion of the preposition is required by the case-filter (Aoun, 1981). For more details, see Aoun (1981), Shlonsky (1997), Ouhalla (1999), Ouhalla and Shlonsky (2002), and the references cited there.

It is worth mentioning that the clitic doubling phenomenon is found only in (*Levantine*) Arabic varieties such as Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, etc. No doubled DPs are allowed in Standard or any of Saudi Arabic varieties (e.g., Hijazi Arabic) as demonstrated by the ungrammaticality of the following examples from Standard Arabic and Hijazi Arabic (HA):

- (11) a. *Zayd-un raʔa:-hu (li) ʕamr-in. Standard Arabic
 Zayd-NOM saw-him (to) Amr-GEN².
 “*Zayd saw him Amr.” (Alhawary, 2011, p. 30)
- b. *ʔal-ʔawla:d katab-u:-h l-wa:ɖʒib /(li)-l-wa:ɖʒib.
 DEF-boys.SGM wrote-1SGM/F-it DEF-homework (to)-DEF-homework.
 “*the boys wrote it the lesson.” Hijazi Arabic³

Clearly the examples in (11) show that no clitic doubling is observed with or without a preposition in these varieties of Arabic.

Properties of Arabic Incorporated Pronouns

A discussion of the properties of so-called Arabic clitics will heavily draw on the illuminating Shlonsky’s (1997) work on Arabic and Hebrew syntax. Here, he undertakes a property for property comparison between Semitic and Romance clitics. In this section, the author shows that the elements which have been considered in the literature as clitics have properties that are very different from properties of the better-known type of clitic

² “Amr” is assigned genitive case because of the preposition, which a genitive case assigner in SA.

³ The author is a native speaker of Hijazi Arabic. It is one of the main dialects spoken in Saudi Arabia, in the western part of the country.

pronouns found in Romance languages. These properties make them look more like incorporated pronouns than clitics.

Degree of Selection With Respect to the Host

Arabic incorporated pronouns seem to be free to appear on all lexical and some functional categories (Shlonsky, 1997; Ouhalla & Shlonsky, 2002). The Standard Arabic paradigm in (12) shows that these pronouns may incorporate as an object to a verb (12a) or preposition (12d); as a possessor to a noun (12c); as a subject to a complementizer (12e); or as a DP to a quantifier (12f). They may also incorporate as a DP to a participle (12b) or an adjective (12g).

(12) a. Verb + Object:

daḡala l-bayt-a / daḡala-hu
entered.3SGM DEF-house-ACC. / entered-3SGM
“he entered the house.” / “he entered it.”

b. Participle + DP:

duḡu:lu l-bayt-i mamnu:ʃun / duḡu:l-hu mamnu:ʃun
entering DEF-house-GEN prohibited / entering-3SGM prohibitaed
“entering the house is prohibited.” / “entering it is prohibited.”

c. Noun + Possessor:

bayt-u r-rajul-i / bayt-u-hu
house-NOM DEF-man-GEN / house-NOM-3SGM
“the man’s house.” / “his house.”

d. Preposition + Object:

fi: l-bayt-i / fi:-hi
in DEF-house-GEN / in-3SGM
“in the house.” / “in it.”

e. Complementizer + Subject:

?inna l-bayt-a kabi:r-un / ?inna-hu kabi:r-un
that DEF-house-ACC big-NOM / that-3SGM big-NOM
“that the house is big.” / “that it is big.”

f. Quantifier + DP:

kull-u l-bayt-i / kull-u-hu
all-NOM DEF-house-GEN. / all-NOM-3SGM
“all the house.” / “all it.”

g. Adjective + DP:

dʒami:l-u l-manḏar-i / dʒami:l-u-hu
beautiful-NOM the-look-GEN / beautiful-NOM-3SGM

This is one of the features of Arabic incorporated pronouns (so-called “clitics”) that distinguishes them from clitics in other languages. Spanish and Romance clitics in general for example always attach to verbs only (Ouhalla, 1999). They typically attach to the verb in simple tenses (13b) and to the auxiliary in compound ones (13a). This is shown by the Spanish examples below:

- (13) a. Maria los-ha visto (Ouhalla, 1999, p. 363)
 Maria them has seen
 “Maria has seen them.”
 b. Maria los-vio
 Maria them saw
 “Maria saw them.”

Recall that one of the defining properties of clitics is the low selection degree with respect to the host. Romance clitics attach only to verbs whereas Arabic so-called clitics are manifested on all lexical categories. However, considering these elements as incorporated pronominal forms of these lexical categories, they are expected to appear on all the lexical categories after which their lexical versions appear.

Direction of Incorporation

This property has already been illustrated by all the previous examples. Incorporated pronouns in SA never occur on the left of the governor with which they are associated. This is illustrated by the ungrammaticality of the following examples.

- (14) a. *l-walad-u ?ahDara l-kita:b-a hu-maʕa
 DEF-boy-NOM brought.3SGM DEF-book-ACC him-with
 “The boy brought the book with him.”
 b. *l-walad-u hu-qaraʕa
 DEF-boy-NOM it-read.3SGM
 “The boy read it.”
 c. *yuri:d.u ?an hu-yaqraʕa
 want-3SGM to it-read.3SGM
 “He wants to read it.”

The asterisk indicates the ungrammaticality of the constituent of clitic + host in SA. Incorporated pronouns in SA always occur to the right of their governor in both finite and non-finite clauses (Alnuqrat, 2003). Recall that Romance type clitics may occur as proclitics or enclitics. That is, clitics in some of these languages such as Spanish and Italian, unlike Arabic, may appear before the verb in finite clauses and after the verb in non-finite clauses (Kayne, 1991; Monachesi, 1999; Shlonsky, 1997). This is illustrated by the Spanish examples in (15a & 15b).

- (15) a. Maria los-ha visto (Ouhalla, 1999, p. 363)
 Maria them-has seen
 b. Maria quiere verlos
 Maria wants to-see-them

Case Distinctions

Romance type of clitics manifests case distinctions. French, for example, has different forms of the accusative clitic, which correspond to the direct object, as in (15a) and different forms of the dative clitic, which correspond to the indirect object, as in (15b). Arabic so-called “clitics”, however, do not.

- (16) a. Elle l’a cousu (Shlonsky, 1997, p. 178)
 she it-has sewn
 “She has sewn it.”

- b. Elle lui donne un cadeau
 she 3s-DAT gives a present
 “She gives her/him a present.”

SA is a Case-marking language. Nouns manifest Case distinctions whereby *u/un* is the nominative Case marker for subjects; *a/an* is the accusative Case marker for objects and *i/in* is the genitive case marker.

- (17) a. raʔa zayd-un ʕamr-an (Soltan, 2006, p. 241)
 saw-3SGM Zayd-NOM ʕamr-ACC
 “Zayd saw Amr.”

- b. ka:na fi l-bayt-i raḏgul-un
 was in DEF-house-GEN man-NOM
 “There was a man in the house.”

Notice that the phonetic form of the third person singular masculine incorporated pronouns in all the examples in (12) is /hu/ except the one in (12d) which is /hi/. It has been argued in Shlonsky (1997) that Semitic so-called “clitics” do not manifest overt Case distinctions. However, the example in (12d), the direct object *l-bayt-i* of the preposition *fi*, carries genitive Case and by pronominalizing the DP *l-bayt-i* and incorporating it to the preposition; it seems as if the genitive Case spreads from the DP *l-bayt-i* to the incorporated pronoun *hi*. This is not, however, strong evidence for arguing that SA incorporated pronouns do manifest overt case distinctions. This also happens with the third person plural masculine pronoun *him* in (18a) as illustrated below:

- (18) a. sallamtu ʕala r-idʒa:l-i / sallamtu ʕalay-him
 Greeted.1SGM/F on DEF-men-GEN / greeted.1SGM/F on-them.3PLM
 “I greeted the men.” / “I greeted them.”
- b. raʔaytu riḏʒa:l-an / raʔaytu-hum
 saw.1SGM/F men-ACC / saw.1SGM/F-them
 “I saw men.” / “I saw them.”
- c. katabtu r-risa:lat-ayni / katabtu-huma:
 wrote.1SGM/F DEF-letters-DUAL.ACC / wrote.1SGM/F-them.3DUALM/F
 “I wrote the two letters.” / “I wrote them.” (Alnuqrat, 2003, p. 76)

The examples in (18b & c) clearly show that the clitic pronouns have the same phonetic form except that the clitic is dual in (18c). The only case where the clitic inflects for a genitive case is when it is preceded by a preposition as in (12d) and (18a). In Arabic traditional grammar, DPs come in two types (*muʕrab/triptote*) and (*mabni:/diptote*).⁴ The former refers to the DPs whose overt Case distinctions vary according to the category preceding them. The latter refers to incorporated pronouns among other categories which do not bear overt Case distinction and are not affected by the categories preceding them. Consider the following examples:

- (19) a. raʔaytu Zayd-an
 Saw.1SGM/F Zayd-ACC
 “I saw Zayd.”
- b. marartu bi-Zayd-in

⁴ The majority of nouns in MSA have three cases: *-u* for the nominative, *-a* for the accusative, and *-i* for the genitive. This three-case system (triptosis) contrasts with a two-case system (diptosis), in which nouns and some adjectives have *-u* for the nominative, and *-a* for accusative and genitive. Moreover, they do not accept the indefinite marker *-n*.

passed-1SGM/F by-Zayd-GEN

“I passed by Zayd.”

c. raʔay-tu-hu

saw-1SGM/F-him

“I saw him.”

d. marar-tu bi-hi

passed-1SGM/F by-him

“I passed by him.”

The Examples (19a & b) show how the Case marker of the DP *Zayd* changes according to the category preceding it. It bears the accusative Case marker when it occurs as the direct object of the verb in (19a), and genitive Case marker when it occurs as the direct object of the preposition in (19b). However, when the DP *Zayd* is pronominalized in (19c), we see that the Case marker is no longer overt. In (19b) the DP *Zayd* bears the genitive Case marker *-in* and by pronominalizing it in (19d), it takes a different phonetic form from the one in (19c), which makes it appear as if it bears genitive Case. If it is true that the incorporated pronoun manifests Case distinctions, we would expect the incorporated pronoun in (19d) to have the same genitive Case marker as the DP in (19b), that is *-in* and not *-i*. It can be concluded that the 3SG/PL incorporated pronouns *-hi* “him” and *-him* “them” are the only ones that take different phonetic forms when they appear after a preposition. In this situation, they take the genitive form, but they do not show the genitive Case marker as a morpheme ending like DPs. SA incorporated pronouns do not have a distinct Case form corresponding to dative arguments, like in sentences including a causative verb with two arguments. In such sentences, ambiguity is avoided either by incorporating to a preposition or presenting in a particular order in terms of person, as we will see shortly, but never manifest Case distinctions.

Number of Clitics Per Host

The issue of clitic clustering has been extensively approached in the literature as a property of clitics in general. Clitic clustering is known to be highly rigid: No element can intervene between the two (or more) clitics and there is a strict ordering between them (Monachesi, 1999). French and Italian, for instance, distinguish accusative, dative, partitive, and locative clitics. In Italian the order of the two object clitics is dative > accusative, as shown in (20).

(20) a. Martina me lo spedisce (Monachesi, 1999, p. 57)

Martina cl.(dat) cl.(acc) sends

b. *Martina lo mi spedisce (Monachesi, 1999, p. 57)

Martina cl.(acc) cl.(dat) sends

“Martina sends it to me.”

Clitics in some other languages, such as Berber may cluster up to five clitics to the same host (Belkadi, 2010).

(21) ad-as -t-id-ge-s awi-gh (Belkadi, 2010, p. 96)

will-to him -it-here-in-it bring-i

“I will bring it to him here in it.”

It has been argued that the absence of clitic clusters is another distinctive feature of Arabic so-called “clitics” (Shlonsky, 1997; Ouhalla, 1999). The Cairene Arabic paradigm cited in Shlonsky (1997, p. 180) is reproduced in (22). This paradigm in particular (22f) shows the ungrammaticality of clusters in Arabic.

Ahmad gave-3sm-it-her
 “*Ahmad gave it her.”

The clustering of incorporated pronouns in Standard Arabic

SA makes use of a strategy, whereby both complements can be pronominalized with no preposition required. Two incorporated pronouns in SA may be incorporated to the same verb. Consider the following examples adapted from Mohamed (1996):

- (24) a. sal-ni:-hi (Mohamed, 1996, p. 33)
 ask-me-it
 “Ask me about it.”
 b. χiltu-ka-hu
 thought.1SGM-you-him
 “I thought you were him.”

In SA, the incorporated form of pronouns is preferred in such constructions. That is, once incorporating the pronominalized complement to the verb is possible, using the independent form of pronouns is not allowed. For example, we can say /*akram-tu-ka* (lionized-1sgm-you), but not */*akram-tu-/anta*. The relationship between the verb /*akram-tu* and the free-standing pronoun /*anta* bans the latter from occurring in such a construction. This relationship is called government whereby α governs β if and only if α is an X^0 category and α c-commands β , (see Ouhalla, 1999 for more details). The verb /*akram-tu* is an X^0 and c-commands the complement /*anta* and therefore it canonically governs it; thus /*anta* must be incorporated into the verb /*akram-tu*. This is formulated in Fassi-Fehri (1993) as: “Arabic pronouns are bound to their canonical governors (general principle permitting). Otherwise, they are free” (p. 99). That is, once the pronoun is canonically governed and there is a head-complement relationship between the head-governor and its complement, this pronoun must be incorporated to its governor.

The question arises here as to how direct and indirect objects in SA may be distinguished. Recall that SA incorporated pronouns do not manifest Case distinctions other than the genitive 3SG/PL incorporated pronouns, and more than one incorporated pronoun may attach to the same governor. The strategy SA follows to avoid ambiguity in constructions such as the ones in (24) are by having a certain order in terms of person number, whereby 1st person pronoun comes first, and then 2nd person. This is more known as the Person Constraint proposed by Fassi (1993). Fassi-Fehri proposes that when two pronominal clitics x and y are incorporated onto the same host, then $PERSx < PERSy$. Consider the following examples.

- (25) a. ʔaʕTaa-ni:-ka (Fassi-Fehri, 1993, p. 105)
 gave.3SGM-me-you
 “He gave me you.”
 b. ʔaʕTayta-ni:-hi (Fassi-Fehri, 1993, p. 105)
 gave.2SGM-me-him
 “You gave me him.”
 c. ʔaʕTaytu-ka-hu (Fassi-Fehri, 1993, p. 104)
 gave.1SGM-you-him
 “I gave you him.”

Notice the way the two incorporated pronouns cluster to their host by taking the order 1sm *ni*: and then 2sm

ka as in (25a); the order 1sm *ni*: and then 3sm *hi* as in (25b); the order 2sm *ka* and then 3sm *hu* as in (25c). It does not always have to be the order that the first person comes first and then the second person must come after. The 2nd person may be jumped over to the third person. It is also allowed to start with 2nd person and then 3rd person comes after. What is not allowed (and therefore violates the Person Constraint) is taking the anti-clockwise order, i.e., the occurrence of the 2nd person before the 1st person or the occurrence of the 3rd person before the 2nd person. The examples in (25) are reproduced as (26) with different person orders.

(26) a. *ʔaʕT-aa-ka-ni:

gave-3SGM-you-me

“He gave you me.”

b. *ʔaʕTayta-hi-ni:

gave.2SGM-him-me

“You gave him me.”

c. *ʔaʕTaytu-hu-ka

gave.1SGM-him-you

“I gave him you.”

In the ill-formed examples in (26), the lower person in the hierarchy comes first on the host, which is not consistent with the Person Constraint. Therefore, and according to the examples from SA in (24 & 25), more than one incorporated pronoun may occur on the same host, though they do not manifest overt Case distinctions. Instead, they must follow the person hierarchy strategy whereby the higher ranked incorporated pronoun comes first, and then the lower in rank follows.

To sum up, the absence of clitic cluster in colloquial Arabic varieties (e.g., HA) and the requirement for the so-called Arabic clitics to follow the person hierarchy order in SA in order to incorporate to the same governor make these elements behave opposite to the better-known type of clitics found in Romance languages. The absence of clitic cluster in some colloquial Arabic varieties and the way these elements behave in SA are a property of incorporated pronouns rather than clitics.

Clitics and Head Movement Constraint

Head Movement Constraint (HMC), formulated in Travis (1984), says that movement of a head is restricted to the nearest head above it, i.e., the head of its complement. A verb, for example, is banned from moving from its base-generation V to C in one go. It has to move to T first as it is the head that comes directly above V and before C.

The HMC accounts for the ungrammaticality of the example in (27a); the example in (27b) is the grammatical contrast.

(27) a. *How tall be John will?

[CP how tall [C be [TP John [T will [VP *t* be ... *t* how tall...

b. How tall is John?

[CP how tall [C is [TP John [T *t* is [VP *t* be ... *t* how tall...

In (27a), we see a movement of the verb directly from V to C violating the HMC. In (27b), the verb consistent with the HMC moves from V to T then to C.

Arabic incorporated pronouns undergo head-to-head movement and then right adjoin their host (Fassi-Fehri,

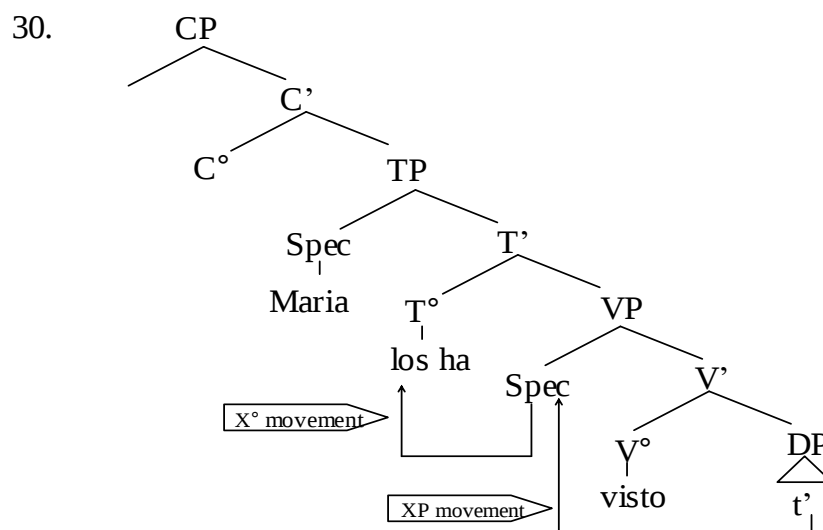
1993). Therefore, they are expected not to jump over the head above them. In SA, incorporated pronouns are always attached to the main verb never to the auxiliary in compound sentences. This is shown by the SA examples in (28).

- (28) a. ka:na yudarribu-ha (Badawi et al., 2004, p. 80)
 was.3SGM train.3SGM-her
 “He was training her”.
 b. ka:na yatadarrabu maʕa-ha
 was.3SGM training.3SGM with-her
 “He was training with her.”

The example in (28b) shows that SA incorporated pronouns are always attached to the nearest head above them, and therefore they are always attached to the closest c-commanding head, which is consistent with the head movement constraint (Shlonsky, 1997). Unlike SA incorporated pronouns, Romance clitics do not necessarily attach to the closest c-commanding head. Recall that Romance type clitics, such as Spanish clitics are typically attached to the auxiliary in compound tenses. The example in (15a), reproduced here as (29), shows a clitic jumping over the main verb and attaching itself to the auxiliary verb.

- (29) Maria los-ha visto
 Maria them-has seen
 “Maria has seen them.”

Assuming that clitics raise from their T-position and attach to an inflectional head, this attachment requires the clitic to be an *X*. The movement of the Spanish clitic in (29) as an *X* seems to be a violation of the HMC, as it does not attach to the first head above it, which is *V*. This problem has been dealt with by assuming that Spanish and Romance clitics in general undergo a two-step movement, a DP-movement, and a Head-movement (Kayne, 1991). In the first step, the clitic moves as a maximal projection namely as a DP to a specifier right below the final adjunction site; in the second movement, the clitic moves as a head namely as *D*° to its final adjunction site, as illustrated in (30).



The Spanish clitic *lo* can be seen in (30) first moves from its base-generation as a maximal projection,

jumping over the head directly above it which is V° , to Spec-VP. Then it moves as a head to T° where it left-adjoins its host.

To sum up, all the properties we have discussed above show that these elements do not behave like clitics. Rather, they behave more like incorporated pronouns.

Object Incorporated Pronouns Versus Object Agreement Elements

Object incorporated pronouns refer to the bound pronouns in Table 2 above. In the previous section, it has been concluded that considering these syntactic elements as clitics is inadequate. Recall that they behave differently from Romance type of clitics. For the same reasons, Shlonsky (1997) argued that Arabic so-called clitics are best analyzed as object agreement elements base-generated on the head they appear associated with in the overt syntax. In this section, following Fassi-Fehri (1993), I argue that treating these pronouns as object agreement elements is inadequate and they are best analyzed as incorporated pronouns.

No Object Agreement in SA

Raising the question whether there is AgrO in Arabic, Fassi-Fehri (1993) concluded that non-nominative bound forms which occur on verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc., are best analyzed as incorporated pronouns.

Let us suppose for the moment that the elements which appear on verbs are inflectional elements manifested by these verbs to agree with their subjects, and thus full agreement is manifested on the verb with pre-verbal subjects as shown in (31a) and partial agreement with post-verbal subjects as shown in (31b).

- (31) a. ʔl-ʔawla:d-u daɣal-u: l-bayt-a (Mohammed, 1989, p. 35)
 DEF-boys-NOM entered-3PLM DEF-house-ACC
 “The boys entered the house.”
 b. daɣal-a l-ʔawla:d-u l-bayt-a
 entered-3SGM DEF-boys-NOM DEF-house-ACC
 “The boys entered the house.”

It has been argued in Mohammed (1989) that the verb fully agrees with its pre-verbal subject because the subject is in Spec-head relation with the verb, and it partially agrees with its post-verbal subject because the subject is not in Spec-head relation with the verb.

With the assumption that incorporated pronouns are object agreement elements, we would predict to have the same alternation with regard to full and partial agreement with objects. Recall that the elements in question appear on all lexical categories. When one of these lexical categories, say a verb or a preposition, governs a syntactic DP, the prediction is to have an agreement element attached to the governor to agree with its complement. However, these predictions are incorrect. The governors do not inflect to agree with their object complements as illustrated by the following examples:

- (32) a. ʔl-ʔawla:d-u raʔaw Zayd-an (Mohammed, 1989, p. 36)
 DEF-boys-NOM saw-3PLM Zayd-ACC
 “The boys saw Zayd.”
 b. ʔal-ʔawla:d-u taħaddaθ-u: ʔila: Zayd-in
 DEF-boys-NOM talked-3PLM to Zayd-GEN
 “The boys talked to Zayd.”

No agreement elements appear on the verb in (32a) nor do they appear on the preposition in (32b) though

they canonically govern the object complement DP *Zayd*. By contrasting the example in (33a) to the one in (31a) and the example in (33b) to the one in (31b), we observe that neither poor agreement with post-verbal object nor rich agreement with pre-verbal objects is manifested in the **object-governor* agreement system.

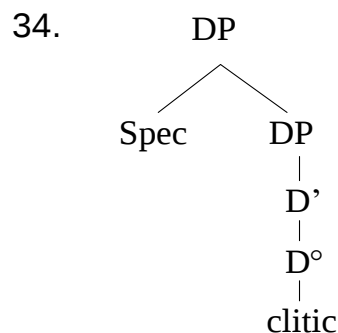
- (33) a. *ʔal-walad-u daḡala-hu l-buyu:t-a
 DEF-boy-NOM entered.3SGM-3SGM DEF-houses-ACC
 “*The boy entered it the houses.”
- b. *ʔal-buyu:t-a daḡala-hum l-walad-u
 DEF-houses-ACC entered.3SGM-3PLM DEF-boy-NOM
 “*The houses the boy entered them.”

Recall that verbs fully agree with their subjects only under Spec-head relation; otherwise only partial agreement is manifested with regard to subject verb agreement. One may expect to see the same restrictions with regard to object agreement. However, these restrictions do not apply to objects as shown by the ill-formed sentences in (33). In (33a), we see poor agreement (gender, person only) between the verb *daḡal-a* and its complement object *l-buyu:t-a* resulting in an ill-formed sentence, though the object is not in Spec-head relation with the verb and therefore partial agreement should be manifested. In (33b), we see another ill-formed sentence with the verb fully agreeing with its object, though the object is in Spec-head relation with the verb and therefore full agreement should be manifested.

Unlike subject-verb agreement elements, which always appear on the verb regardless of the presence or absence of a lexical subject, the so-called “object agreement elements” never co-occur with the lexical object. It is either the lexical object or the object pronoun. The same arguments and judgments are applicable to prepositions, nouns, etc. According to these analyses, the syntactic elements under question behave more like incorporated pronouns than agreement elements.

Cliticization

Clitics are widely analyzed as intransitive determiners, i.e., determiners without an NP complement (Cardinaletti, 1994). This is corroborated by the similarities between the definite articles (la-f, le-m, and les-pl) and clitics (la-3sf, le-3sm, and les-3p) in French and Romance languages in general. Under the DP hypothesis, clitics are considered D’s and therefore treated as heads as shown in (34).



Arabic so-called “enclitic pronouns” have been considered in the literature as heads attached to their governor under linear adjacency (Shlonsky, 1997). Recall that Arabic so-called “pronominal clitics” appear on the heads they are selected by, and that they undergo head-to-head movement and right adjoin to their hosts. Therefore, cliticization in Arabic is local. Arabic does not have a process of “clitic climbing”, whereby the clitic

does not necessarily appear attached to the head by which it is selected, i.e., a movement of the clitic outside the local domain. Clitic climbing is another defining property of clitics typically found in Romance languages (see Monachesi, 1999 and the references mentioned there). The Italian examples in (35) give more illustration.

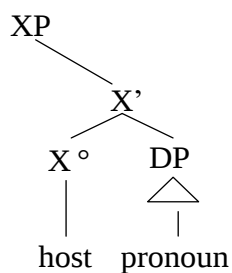
- (35) a. Gianni li vuole vedere (Monachesi, 1999, p. 62)
 Gianni them wants to-see
 b. Gianni vuole vedereli
 Gianni wants to-see-them

Clitic climbing, as can be seen in examples (35a & b), is a long-distance movement and therefore cannot be defined as a simple head-movement as the clitic jumps over at least one head (Ouhalla, 1999). Recall that Romance clitics undergo two-step-movement; first they move as a maximal projection and then as a head. If clitics are taken to be determiners that stand on their own, then it is true that they are a head (i.e., D) and a phrase (i.e., DP) and therefore can move as a head or a maximal projection (Cardinaletti, 1994). Arabic so-called “clitics”, on the other hand, undergo only one step-movement as heads. There is no need for Arabic incorporated pronouns to move as a maximal projection and then as a head, as they always incorporate to the closest c-commanding head above them. It seems that the process of cliticization does not explain the movement manifested by the SA incorporated pronouns.

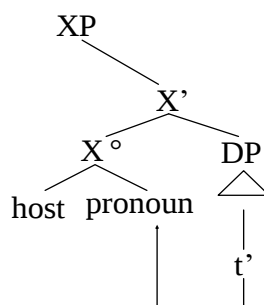
Incorporation

SA incorporated pronouns are always associated with the categories of which they are complements (Fassi-Fehri, 1993). They appear in an argument position in their D-structure, and then they move up and right adjoin their hosts to be morphologically supported as they appear in their S-structure. The tree structures in (36a & 36b) illustrate this further. This structure is based on the configuration in Fassi-Fehri (1993, p. 102).

36a.



36b.



Incorporated pronouns are base-generated as D's, and then undergo head movement to incorporate to the governor directly above them as shown in (36). Under the incorporation analysis, as Fassi-Fehri (1993) clearly shows, pronouns are obligatorily incorporated to their governor unless other requirements ban the incorporation process. Canonical government is a necessary requirement for incorporation to take place. The lexical host must canonically govern the pronoun for the latter to undertake incorporation. For this reason, incorporated pronouns cannot occur at the beginning of the sentence. Head-complement relation between the incorporated pronouns and its governor is another requirement for the former to incorporate to the latter. A pronoun does not incorporate to the exclusive particle *?illa*, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (37) a. *ma: ntaḡab-u: ?illa:-hu (Alansari, 2000, p. 87)

NEG elected-3PLM except-him

“They did not elect but him.”

b. ma: ntaḡab-u: ʔilla: ʔiyyaa-hu

NEG elected-3PLM except -him

“They did not elect but him.”

The ungrammaticality of the example in (37a) can be accounted for by assuming that there is no head-complement relationship between the incorporated pronoun *-hu* and the exclusive particle *ʔilla*. Arabic incorporated pronouns may attach to any head in the structure but are restricted from occurring at the beginning of the sentence and after the exclusive particle *ʔilla*. For an incorporated pronoun to occur at the beginning of the sentence or after *ʔilla*:, it must find a governor to support it. The dummy governor *ʔiyya*: is usually taken in such situations (37b). Thus, the incorporation process is capable of explaining the distribution of incorporated pronouns on verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc.

Conclusion

In this paper, giving a brief description of the nature of clitics and some of the phenomena that may be observed in the study of clitics, it is argued that considering the elements which appear on the right of verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc., as object clitics or even as object agreement elements is inadequate. The Arabic so-called pronominal clitics have some distinctive features which make them behave differently from the better-known type of clitics which is found in Romance languages. They may appear on all lexical categories and some functional ones; they always adjoin their hosts on the right never on the left; only in Standard Arabic and under the person constraint more than one clitic may appear on the same transitive verb; the so-called “clitics” do not manifest overt Case distinctions; finally, they are always attached to the closest head above them and therefore they undergo only one simple head-to-head movement. None of these properties is similar in any way to the Romance type of clitics. By investigating whether verbs, nouns, prepositions agree with their object complements, it has been concluded that there is no AgrO in Arabic. If the syntactic elements in Table 2 do not behave either as clitics or as agreement elements, the only logical option left is to consider them as incorporated pronouns, as they behave more like incorporated pronouns than clitics or agreement elements.

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