

Adjectives in Arabic

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The example in (1a) exemplifies adjectival constructions in MSA, in which a word in an adjectival form follows and modifies a noun. In contrast, (1b) contains a verb following the same noun, while (1c) contains a prepositional phrase following the noun. In both examples, the verb and the prepositional phrase modify the noun in some way. In traditional grammar, the three constructions are analysed as adjectival constructions—adjective in this analysis refers to syntactic function and not morphological form. In this paper, we focus on the first structure, which contains an adjective modifying a noun, and we will use the term ‘adjective’ to refer to the form of the word because we will discuss some examples that contain adjectives but with different syntactic functions. For example, the adjective may function as a predicate in verbless sentences in MSA or in copular constructions, as will be shown later in this paper.

This paper is divided into five sections: The second section discusses the morphological form of words that function as modifiers in MSA. This section shows two categories: adjectives and participles. We mean by adjectives a type of words that are deverbal and may function as modifiers. They differ from participles in their derivation, meaning that they have different forms and may be derived from different verbs. This section will show some similarities and differences in form and semantic meaning between adjectives and participles, as well as examples of both categories. The third section discusses the difference between prenominal and postnominal positions of adjectives. We argue that MSA includes both types of adjectives. However, we provide a new analysis of a structure called ‘unreal adjectives’ in traditional grammar of Arabic and argue that this structure illustrates prenominal adjectives in MSA with other structures. The fourth section deals with attributive adjectives and predicate adjectives. In attributive adjectives, the adjective gives information about the attributes of a noun, while the predicate adjective gives information about the subject of a sentence and is used to complete the clause. This section describes the two types of adjectives in MSA and gives examples of both constructions. The last section in this paper discusses the syntactic analysis of adjectival constructions in MSA. It provides an overview of the framework used in this analysis, Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG). In this section, we discuss the analysis of the two types of adjectives discussed in this paper, namely, attributive adjectives and predicate adjectives. This section will show possible analyses of both types of attributive adjectives, which are prenominal and postnominal adjectives, and also possible analyses of predicate adjectives in MSA.

2. Adjectives Vs. Participles

It is important to distinguish the two categories of participles and adjectives when discussing modifiers in MSA, because both can function as modifiers in MSA. What we mean by adjectives in this regard is words that can modify noun phrases and are not participles, such as *tawīl* ‘tall’, *qawiy* ‘strong’, *ṣuġā* ‘brave’, and *ġabān* ‘cowardly’.

Adjectives differ from participles in MSA semantically and in their temporal and aspectual properties. However, both share important syntactic features—both can function as modifiers of noun phrases and both can function as predicates, requiring a subject and an object. Also, adjectives and participles show the same type of agreement when they function as modifiers or as predicates. They agree in gender, number, case, and definiteness when they modify a noun phrase. The function of adjectives and participles will be discussed in Section 4; the following examples show the agreement between the noun and adjective in (2) and between the noun and participle in (3).

- (2) a. ḡāʔa raġul-un ʔawīl-un.
 come.PFV.3SGM man.3SGM-NOM tall.3SGM-NOM
 ‘A tall man came’
- b. ḡāʔat fatat-un ʔawīlat-un .
 come.PFV.3SGF girl.3SGF-NOM tall.3SGF-NOM
 ‘A tall girl came’
- c. ḡāʔa riġal-un ʔiwāl-un.
 come.PFV.3PLM man.3PLM-NOM tall.3PLM-NOM
 ‘tall men came’

- (3) a. ḡāʔa al-raḡul-u al-ḡārib-u
 come.PFV.3SGM DEF-man.3SGM-NOM DEF-hit-3SGM-NOM
 zayd-in.
 Zayd-GEN
 ‘The man who hit Zayd came’
- b. ḡāʔat al-fatat-u al-ḡāribat-u zayd-in.
 come.PFV.3SGF DEF-girl.3SGF-NOM DEF-hit-3SGF-NOM Zayd-GEN
 ‘The girl who hit Zayd came’
- c. ḡāʔa al-riḡal-u al-ḡāribū
 come.PFV.3SGM DEF-man.3PLM-NOM DEF-hit-3PLM-NOM
 zayd-in
 Zayd-GEN
 ‘The men who hit Zayd came’

Additionally, adjectives and participles are both deverbal, meaning that both are derived from verbal roots. We believe that adjectives in MSA are different from adjectives in the English language and some other languages in that they are not basic in the lexicon and should be analysed as deverbal. In the English language, adjectives can be represented as a separate class in the lexicon on par with verbs and nouns, meaning that they are basic in not being derived from other categories. Additionally, there are no verbal counterparts for many adjectives in the English language. For example, adjectives such as *sad*, *happy*, or *tall* are not derived from other words in the English language. However, there are some adjectives in the English language deriving from verbal or nominal sources, including participles. For example, *helpful*, *beautiful*, *harmful*, etc., derive from *help*, *beauty*, and *harm*, respectively. In contrast, in MSA, we usually find a verbal counterpart for adjectives. This is clear for adjectives such as *tawīl* ‘tall’, *qawīy* ‘strong’, *ṣuḡḡ* ‘brave’, and *ḡabān* ‘cowardly’, which came from the verbs *tāl* ‘to be tall’, *qawīya* ‘to be strong’, *ṣaḡur* ‘to be brave’, and *ḡabuna* ‘to be cowardly’, or from the verbal nouns of these verbs, contrary to Fassi Fehri (1993), which argues that adjectives are different from participles in that they are not deverbal, without constituting a basic lexical category.

In the Arabic language, adjectives and participles can function as modifiers, but there is an important difference between them related to their derivation, namely, verbs differ in the kind of forms that can be derived from them: some verbs yield adjectives only and others may yield both active and passive participles or active participles only, which depends on the semantic meaning of the verb. For example, we can derive an adjective from the verb *marīda* ‘to be sick’, which is *marīd* ‘sick’, but we cannot derive an active or passive participle from this verb. In contrast, we can derive an active participle from the verb *fasada* ‘to be bad’, which is *fāsīd*, but not an adjective. There are more examples of verbs in MSA that yield one or more types of these modifiers, and we believe that MSA does not need to derive adjectives from every verb because participles perform similar semantic and syntactic functions as adjectives.

In addition, adjectives and participles are different in the type of aspect pertaining to each category. Traditional grammarians have listed two differences between adjectives and participles: first, the events denoted by adjectives and participles are different, in that participles describe a situation that is contingent or happening, while adjectives express a situation that is permanent. Second, they analysed active participles as a form similar to the imperfective form of verbs, which is why they named the imperfective form *almudāriʿ*, meaning that it is similar to the active participle form (see Wright et al. (1955), David (1989), and Ebnyaaysh (nd)). They believed that the imperfective form in Arabic fills syntactic functions like nouns, because the imperfective form can replace the active participle without changing meaning. The following examples illustrate this similarity between the imperfective form and the active participle in MSA, in which (4a) contains a verb in the imperfective form and (4b) contains an active participle, but both examples convey the same meaning, the present continuous.

- (4) a. zayd-un yasīru fī al-ṭarīq-i.
Zayd-NOM walk.IPFV.3SGM in DEF-way-GEN
'Zayd is walking in the way'
- b. zayd-un sāʔir-un fī al-ṭarīq-i.
Zayd-NOM walk.ACT.PTCP.3SGM in DEF-way-GEN
'Zayd is walking in the way'

We should understand the present continuous sense as being common to the two examples above, but this is not true in every context, and we should clarify two points: first, we argue that the active participle does not indicate the time reference of the sentence in (4b) because nominal sentences in MSA are always in the present tense even if they have no participles, as shown in (5a), where the comment in this example is a prepositional phrase and the time reference of the sentence is the present. In contrast, we analyse nominal sentences in MSA as containing a deleted copula that denotes a present tense. Second, there is a great difference between imperfective forms and active participles with respect to their aspectual interpretations. The imperfective form in MSA is ambiguous between two aspects, continuous and habitual (see Comrie (1976)), while the active participle has one meaning, which is continuous. The example in (4b) indicates one type of continuous, which is progressive, while that in (5b) indicates nonprogressive.

- (5) a. zayd-un fī al-bayt-i.
Zayd-NOM in DEF-house-GEN
'Zayd (is) in the house'
- b. zayd-un fāʔiz-un fī al-musābagat-i.
Zayd-NOM winner-NOM in DEF-competition-GEN
'Zayd is the winner in the competition'

Additionally, Fassi Fehri (1993) claims that active participles are usually dynamic or processive, whereas adjectives are usually stative. This entails that dynamic verbs form active participles, while stative verbs form adjectives. Fassi Fehri (1993) provides some examples supporting his claim, such as the adjectives *kariim* 'generous', *hasan* 'nice', and other similar adjectives which come from stative lexical roots; these roots do not form active participles, meaning that we cannot say *kārim* or *hāsīn*. In contrast, dynamic verbs like *ʔakal* 'ate' or *šarīb* 'drank' form active participles like *ʔākil* 'eating' and *šārib* 'drinking', but they do not form adjectives. We believe that there is similarity between stative verbs and adjectives on the one hand and between dynamic verbs and active participles on the other. However, this does not mean that it is not possible to form an active participle from stative verbs; there are many examples of active participles that are formed from stative verbs. For example, stative verbs like *ʔalim* 'knew', *karih* 'hated', *ʔarād* 'wanted', and other similar verbs can form active participles (*ʔālim*, *kārih*, and *murād*, respectively).

3. Prenominal Vs. Postnominal

Languages may differ in the position of adjectives. In some languages, adjectives appear in prenominal position, preceding the noun, while in other languages they appear in postnominal position, following the noun. However, a given language may allow both postnominal and prenominal adjectival constructions with some differences. The English language is an example of such languages, and we claim that MSA is another. In the English language, both examples below are acceptable:

- (6) a. We should find a responsible person.
 b. we should find the person responsible.

Sadler and Arnold (1994) adduce differences between the two types of adjectival constructions: prenominal adjectives show a characteristic that is timeless, while postnominal adjectives show a temporary property of the noun. This means that in example (6a), a responsible person is always responsible, meaning that he acts responsibly, while example (6b) shows a temporary state of the person who is responsible for a particular action.

We believe that prenominal and postnominal structures are possible in MSA, but they are different from their English counterparts in that the differences between them are more obvious. Before we discuss these differences, we should mention that traditional grammarians did not agree about the prenominal adjectival construction and suggested a different analysis for it. We will start with the traditional analysis and then explain our view.

In traditional grammar, there are two types of adjectives; both are postnominal, because traditional grammarians held that adjectives must follow nouns in Arabic. They thus divided postnominal adjectives into two types, an analysis we will argue against in this paper. The first type is the normal adjectival construction, where the adjective follows the noun, as shown in (7a). The second type, shown in (7b), was analysed in traditional grammar as containing a special type of adjective termed an *unreal* adjective. In this example, the adjective *tawil* 'tall' was analysed as modifying the noun *raḡul* 'man' in a different way. It is clear that the adjective here modifies the noun *šaʿr* 'hair', but because this adjective agrees with the first noun in case marking, which is nominative, it was analysed as modifying the first noun.

- (7) a. ḡāʾa raḡul-un ṭawīl-un.
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM
 'A tall man came'
 b. ḡāʾa raḡul-un ṭawīl-un šaʿr-u-hu.
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM hair-NOM-3SGM
 'A man with long hair came'

The following examples in (8) and (9) compare real adjectival and unreal adjectival constructions in traditional grammar, where the adjective in (8a) carries nominative case marking, that in (8b) accusative case marking, and that in (8c) genitive case marking. These changes in case marking show that adjectives in MSA usually agree with the nouns that precede them in case marking.

- (8) a. ḡāʾa raḡul-un ṭawīl-un.
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM
 'A tall man came'
 b. raʾay-tu raḡul-an ṭawīl-an.
 come.PFV.1SGM man-ACC tall-ACC
 'I saw a tall man'
 c. marrar-tu bi-raḡul-in ṭawīl-in.
 come.PFV.1SGM man-GEN tall-GEN
 'I met a tall man'

Similarly, there is agreement in case marking between the adjectives and the nouns preceding them in the following examples in (9), which is why traditional grammarians assumed that adjectives

in this kind of structures are postnominal and not prenominal.

- (9) a. *ğāʔa rağul-un ʔawīl-un šaʕr-u-hu.*
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM hair-NOM-3SGM
 ‘A man with long hair came’
- b. *raʔay-tu rağul-an ʔawīl-an šaʕr-u-hu.*
 come.PFV.3SGM man-ACC tall-ACC hair-NOM-3SGM
 ‘I saw a man with long hair’
- c. *marrar-tu bi-rağul-in ʔawīl-in šaʕr-u-hu.*
 come.PFV.3SGM man-GEN tall-GEN hair-NOM-3SGM
 ‘I met a man with long hair’

We argue that this construction illustrates prenominal adjectives rather than postnominal. There is some evidence supporting this argument: first, the semantics support the adjectives in this construction as modifying the following nouns and not the preceding nouns. This means that the adjective *long* in all three examples modifies the noun *hair*, not the noun *man*. Second, as shown above, the adjective should agree with the modified noun in gender and number, and in this structure the adjective agrees in gender and number with the following noun, not the preceding noun. The following examples illustrate the agreement between the adjectives and the following nouns in gender and number in this structure:

- (10) a. *ğāʔa rağul-un ʔawīlat-un yadu-hu.*
 come.PFV.3SGM man.M-NOM tall.F.SG-NOM hand.F.SG.NOM-3SGM
 ‘A man with a long hand came’
- b. *ğāʔa rağul-un ʔawīltāni yadā-hu.*
 come.PFV.3SGM man.M-NOM tall.F.DU-NOM hand.F.DU-NOM-3SGM
 ‘A man with long hands came’
- c. *ğāʔa rğāl-un kabīr-un ʔanfu-hu.*
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM big.M.SG-NOM nose.M.SG-NOM-3SGM
 ‘A man with a big nose came’

In (10a), the adjective is singular and feminine and the following noun is also singular and feminine, while the preceding noun is masculine; in (10b), the adjective is dual and the following noun is also dual, while the preceding noun is singular; and in (10c), the adjective is singular and the following noun is also singular.

Traditional grammarians (see Alandalusi (N.D.) and Alaqili (N.D.)) argued that this structure is postnominal based on two pieces of evidence that do pose problems for our argument. The first is the agreement in case marking between the preceding noun and the adjective, as shown in (9) above. The second is the agreement in definiteness between the adjective and the preceding noun, as shown in the following examples. Both examples in (11) show that the adjective agrees in definiteness with the preceding noun, not the following noun.

- (11) a. ḡāʾa raḡul-un ṭawīl-un šaʿr-u-hu.
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM hair-NOM-3SGM
 ‘A man with long hair came’
- b. ḡāʾa al-raḡul-u al-ṭawīl-u šaʿr-u-hu.
 come.PFV.3SGM DEF-man-NOM DEF-tall-NOM hair-NOM-3SGM
 ‘A man with long hair came’

However, we argue that our evidence, the semantic meaning and the agreement in gender and number, are more important. We believe that the agreement in case marking between the noun and the adjective is important, but there are some adjectival constructions in MSA that do not show agreement in case marking between the adjective and the noun (see Fehri (1999) and Al Mahmoud(2014)). For example, a construct state construction in MSA can contain an adjective that modifies a noun, as shown in the following examples:

- (12) a. ḡāʾa ṭawīl-u al-yad-i.
 come.PFV.3SGM tall-NOM hand-GEN
 ‘(a man) with a long hand came’
- b. ḡāʾa ʾakbar-u walad-in.
 come.PFV.3SGM old-NOM boy-GEN
 ‘The oldest boy came’

In both examples, the adjectives modify the following nouns and carry nominative case marking, while the nouns carry genitive case marking because they are the second part in a construct state construction. Both examples are similar to our examples of prenominal adjectival constructions, and we must assume that the adjectives in both examples modify the following nouns because there is no other choice. Importantly, we argue that agreement between the adjective and the noun in case marking is not necessary for assuming that the adjective modifies the noun. That is, the syntactic function of adjectives does not have to be that of a modifier but may be another syntactic function, as we will see in the syntactic analysis. We thus believe that the semantic meaning should be separated from the syntactic analysis.

4. Attributive Vs. Predicate Adjectives

There are two different types of adjectives, attributive and predicate adjectives. In the first type, the adjective is part of a noun phrase, and the postnominal and prenominal adjectival constructions illustrate this type in Arabic. This type of adjective is called *attributive* because it gives information about the attributes or qualities of nouns. In the second type, which is the predicate adjective, the adjective is used to give information about the subject of a sentence and to complete the clause. Both types of adjectives are found in the Arabic language and also in the English language. In the English language, most adjectives can be used as both attributive and predicative adjectives. In the attributive adjectival construction, the position of adjectives in the English language is usually before the noun while the adjective is located after a verb such as *be*, *seem*, *look*, etc. in the predicate adjectives. The following examples illustrate the adjectives *black* and *gloomy* in both structures:

- (13) a. A black dog. (ATTRIBUTIVE)
- b. A gloomy day. (ATTRIBUTIVE)
- c. The dog is black. (PREDICATE)
- d. The weather is gloomy. (PREDICATE)

In MSA, both types exist; we discussed two kinds of attributive adjectives in the previous section, namely, prenominal and postnominal adjectives. As for predicate adjectives in MSA, they may occur after a linking verb or after the subject in equational sentences. The predicate adjective can occur without a verb when the tense of the sentence is the present, otherwise it must occur after a verb. The following examples show a predicate adjective with a present time reference with and without a copula and a predicate adjective with a past and future time reference with a copula:

- (14) a. al-bayt-u ḡamīl-un.
DEF-house-NOM beautiful-NOM
'The house (is) beautiful'
- b. al-bayt-u yakūnu ḡamīl-an.
DEF-house-NOM be.IPFV.3SGM beautiful-ACC
'The house is beautiful'
- c. al-bayt-u kāna ḡamīl-an.
DEF-house-NOM be.PFV.3SGM beautiful-ACC
'The house was beautiful'
- d. al-bayt-u sa-yakūn-u ḡamīl-an.
DEF-house-NOM FUT-be.IPFV.3SGM beautiful-ACC
'The house will be beautiful'

In example (14a), the predicate adjective follows the subject, and the sentence is verbless while in (14b), a copula in the imperfective form is inserted between the subject and the predicate adjective. Both examples have the same meaning and the appearance of the copula in the present tense is thus optional. In contrast, if the tense is past or future, the copula is obligatory, as shown in examples (14c) and (14d) respectively.

We believe that there is no great difference between attributive and predicate adjectives in semantic meaning. Both modify a noun, which is the preceding noun in the case of the attributive adjective and the subject in the case of the predicate adjective. Therefore, the same adjectives in MSA can be used in both structures. However, there is a difference between the two types in the agreement between the adjective and the noun in MSA. An attributive adjective, as discussed above, agrees with the noun in gender, number, definiteness, and case marking if it is a postnominal adjective. In contrast, as the predicate adjective agrees with the subject in gender and number only, this type of adjective is similar to the prenominal adjectival construction discussed above. The following examples show the differences in agreement between the attributive adjectives and predicate adjectives in MSA:

- (15) a. ḡāʔa al-raḡul-u al-karīm-u.
come.PFV.3SGM DEF-man-NOM DEF-generous-NOM
(ATTRIBUTIVE)
'The generous man came'
- b. al-raḡul-u karīm-un. (PREDICATE)
DEF-man-NOM generous-NOM
'The man (is) generous'
- c. raʔaytu bayt-an ḡamīl-an. (ATTRIBUTIVE)
see.PFV.1SGM house-ACC beautiful-ACC
'I saw a beautiful house'
- d. al-bayt-u bāta ḡamīl-an. (PREDICATE)
DEF-house-NOM become.PFV.3SGM beautiful-ACC
'The house became beautiful'

The examples in (15) show the differences in agreement between attributive adjectives, namely, postnominal adjectives, and predicate adjectives. The examples in (15a) and (15b) show that an

attributive adjective must agree in definiteness with the noun while this is not so for predicate adjectives. The examples in (15c) and (15d) show that the adjective and the noun must carry the same case marking in the case of attributive adjectives while the case marking may be different in the case of predicate adjectives. Importantly, the examples in (15) show that the same adjective can be used in both positions, meaning that the same adjective can be used as an attributive adjective and a predicate adjective.

5. Syntactic Functions

This section is divided into two subsections: the first is an overview, where we give information about the analysis of adjectival constructions in the LFG framework. We show in this subsection the difference between the analysis of this structure in the traditional grammar of Arabic and the analysis in the LFG framework. Also, we explain the difference between *governable grammatical functions* and *modifiers* and present the analysis of adjectival constructions in LFG. In the second subsection, we discuss the analysis of adjectives in MSA. We show the analysis of the three types of structures discussed above, namely, the two types of attributive adjectives, prenominal and postnominal, and the predicate adjectives.

5.1 Overview of LFG

The traditional grammar of Arabic posits a syntactic function for adjectives called *alnaʿt* 'adjective'. The analysis of adjectives in this view focuses on the case marking, which follows the case marking of the noun. This is why in traditional grammar the prenominal adjective is not possible. Generally, there are two types of functions, essential and nonessential. The first includes necessary functions that cannot be omitted while the second includes unnecessary functions that may be omitted without making the sentence ungrammatical. However, there are different opinions about the two types, though in general the first includes functions that carry nominative case marking and the second includes functions that carry accusative case marking. The adjective can carry all three types of case marking, but as this is not a necessary function, it falls within the second type (see Alaqili (nd), Ebn-yaaysh (nd), Alandalusi (ND), and other traditional grammatical books).

In a modern theory of syntax like LFG, a similar idea of functions is used, but there are some differences in how functions are classified into categories. The syntactic functions are classified into two main groups, which are *governable grammatical functions* and *modifiers*. The first group includes functions that are governed or subcategorized by the predicate. The governable grammatical functions in LFG are subject, object, complement, and oblique (the object can be semantically restricted or unrestricted, and the complement can be closed or open). In contrast, the second group involves grammatical functions that are not subcategorized by the predicate. Modifiers modify their phrases, and this group includes all types of adjunct, which can be closed or open (see Dowty (1982), Bresnan (2001), Dalrymple (2001), and Falk (2001)).

Phrases can have an unlimited number of modifiers or adjuncts, and therefore LFG represents these modifiers as members of a set at functional structure (f-structure). In this case, the connection between modifiers that appear in the set and the phrases that they modify should be indicated by functional annotations on constituent structure (c-structure) rules. In this paper we focus on one type of modifiers, adjectival modifiers, and will show the analysis of this type within the LFG framework in the following lines.

The following examples (16a) and (16b) show simple adjectival constructions in the English language, where the first example contains one adjective and the second two.

(16) a. Saudi man.

b. Tall Saudi man.

Both examples above are represented in the two f-structures in (17a) and (17b).

Both f-structures show functions from ATTRIBUTES to VALUES. The f-structure in (17a) shows that the value of the attribute PRED is *man*, meaning that this is a noun phrase, as will be shown in the c-structure. The attribute ADJ, which is an abbreviation of 'adjunct', has a value that is represented as a set. The adjectival modifier *Saudi* is treated as a member of this set. Additionally, the f-structure in (17b) is different in that it has two members in the set, meaning that there are two adjectives modifying the noun.

- (17) a. $\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED 'man'} \\ \text{ADJ } \left\{ \left[\text{PRED 'Saudi'} \right] \right\} \end{array} \right]$
- b. $\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED 'man'} \\ \text{ADJ } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \left[\text{PRED 'tall'} \right] \\ \left[\text{PRED 'Saudi'} \right] \end{array} \right\} \end{array} \right]$

The lexical entries of the three words in our examples above are:

(18) *man* N (↑PRED) = 'MAN'

(19) *Saudi* A (↑PRED) = 'SAUDI'

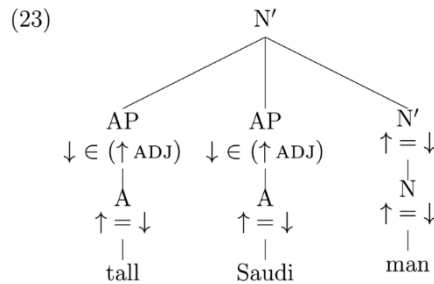
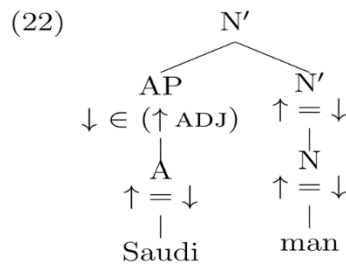
(20) *tall* A (↑PRED) = 'TALL'

We can use these lexical entries to put constraints on the f-structures. For example, we can add more information under any word in the lexical entries, in which case it should appear in the f-structure. We can add constraints on the gender, number, case marking, etc.

The second face in the presentation of the LFG framework is the c-structure. LFG is like other syntactic theories that show phrasal information using phrase structure rules. The rule that allows adjective is shown in (21); this rule allows any number of adjectives to be at the N' level.

(21) $N' \rightarrow \begin{array}{c} AP^* \\ \downarrow \in (\uparrow ADJ) \end{array} \quad N'$

The c-structure rule in (21) generates the c-structures of both examples in (16), and these c-structures are shown below, respectively:

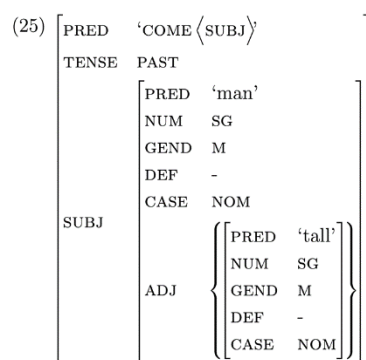


5.2 The analysis of adjectival structures in MSA

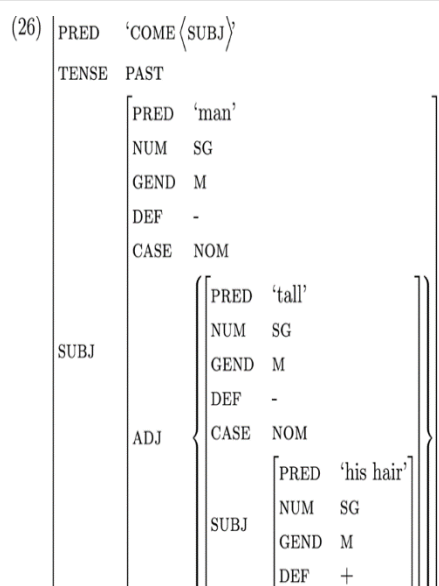
In this subsection we discuss the analysis of adjectives in MSA. We have discussed attributive adjectives and predicate adjectives in MSA and have divided attributive adjectives into two types: prenominal and postnominal adjectives. Having discussed three types of adjectival constructions, we will suggest appropriate analyses of these three constructions within the LFG framework. The following examples are repeated to show the three types of adjectives that will be discussed in this section:

- (24) a. $\check{g}\bar{a}ʔa$ $ra\check{g}ul-un$ $\check{t}awil-un$. (POSTNOMINAL)
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM
 ‘A tall man came’
- b. $\check{g}\bar{a}ʔa$ $ra\check{g}ul-un$ $\check{t}awil-un$ $\check{s}a^r-u-hu$.
 come.PFV.3SGM man-NOM tall-NOM hair-NOM-3SGM
 (PRENOMINAL)
 ‘A man with long hair came’
- c. $al-ra\check{g}ul-u$ $karim-un$. (PREDICATE)
 DEF-man-NOM generous-NOM
 ‘The man (is) generous’

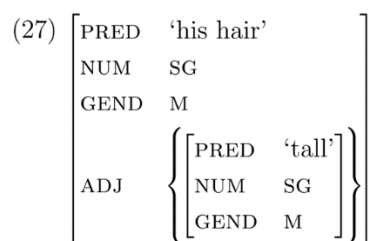
The first example in (24a) shows the normal adjectival structure in MSA, where the adjective follows the noun and agrees with it in gender, number, definiteness, and case marking. There is no problem in analysing this type of adjectives in MSA; the adjective in this example should function as an adjunct. The following f-structure shows the analysis of the whole sentence in (24a). In this f-structure, the noun phrase, which contains the adjective, appears in the embedded f-structure with the value of the attribute SUBJ, meaning that the noun phrase functions as a subject of the main predicate. The adjective *tall* appears in the set that is the value of the attribute ADJ, meaning that it functions as an adjunct. Importantly, the agreement between the noun *man* and the adjective *tall* is shown by the features NUM SG, GEND M, DEF -, and CASE NOM, which appear in the f-structure of the noun and the f-structure of the adjective and indicate that both the noun and the adjective are singular, masculine, indefinite, and nominative.



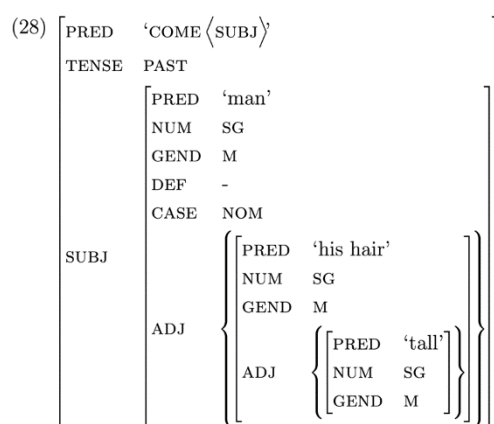
The second structure that will be discussed in this section is that in (24b). We have argued above against the analysis of this structure in traditional grammar, where it is assumed that the adjective appears in postnominal position. We can show this analysis in the following f-structure in (26). If we analyse the adjective *tall* as modifying the noun *man*, we would assume that this adjective functions as an adjunct and should appear in a set inside the f-structure of the noun. As for the noun *his hair*, it is assumed that this noun functions as the subject of the adjective and therefore appears inside the f-structure of the adjective as a value for the attribute SUBJ. We argued above against this analysis because the semantic meaning of this construction does not support this analysis. In other words, the adjective modifies the following noun and not the preceding noun. Also, the adjective agrees in gender and number with the following noun. The analysis in traditional grammar is based on the agreement in case marking and in definiteness between the preceding noun and the adjective. The traditional analysis sought to solve the main problem of the meaning by assuming that this is an unreal adjectival construction.



We suggest that this structure illustrates the prenominal adjectival construction, and thus the analysis of the phrase that contains the adjective should be as shown in (27). This f-structure shows that the adjective functions as an adjunct inside the f-structure of the noun, meaning that we assume that the phrase is a noun phrase that includes the adjective.



However, the problem that should be solved in this analysis is the function of the noun phrase. To solve this problem, we argue that the whole noun phrase functions as an adjunct, and further that this noun phrase which includes the adjective modifies the subject of the sentence. We suggest the analysis in the f-structure in (28) to be the proper analysis of this construction. In this analysis, we solve the semantic and agreement problems in traditional grammar by assuming that the adjective functions as an adjunct, modifying the following noun, and thereby also solve the problem of the relationship between the subject and the following phrase.



The last construction in this section is that in (24c), which contains a predicate adjective. There is more than one possible analysis of this example. We can assume that the main predicate in this example is the adjective, and in this case the preceding noun which is modified by it functions as subject of this predicate. The example is repeated in (29a), with its analysis presented in the f-

structure in (29b).

- (29) a. al-rağul-u karīm-un. (PREDICATE)
 DEF-man-NOM generous-NOM
 ‘The man (is) generous’
- b. $\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{‘GENEROUS’} \langle \text{SUBJ} \rangle \\ \text{TENSE} \quad \text{PRES} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{‘man’} \right] \end{array} \right]$

However, this construction illustrates verbless sentences in MSA, in which the sentence does not contain a verb and has present tense. A copula may optionally appear in this sentence with the same meaning, but it must appear if there is a change in the tense. The following examples illustrate this structure with a copula in the present, past, and future tense:

- (30) a. al-rağul-u yakūnu karīm-an. (PRESENT)
 DEF-man-NOM be.IPFV.3SGM generous-ACC
 ‘The man is generous’
- b. al-rağul-u kāna karīm-an. (PAST)
 DEF-man-NOM be.PFV.3SGM generous-ACC
 ‘The man was generous’
- c. al-rağul-u sa-yakūnu karīm-an. (FUTURE)
 DEF-man-NOM FUT-be.IPFV.3SGM generous-ACC
 ‘The man will be generous’

The copula in (30a), indicating the present tense, is optional in this structure while it is obligatory in (30b) and (30c), where it indicates the past tense in the former and the future in the latter. We argue that all the examples of predicate adjectives should follow the same analysis. There are two possible analyses of copular constructions in the LFG framework: the *single-tier* analysis and the *double-tier* analysis (for more information about both analyses, see Rosén (1996), Dalrymple et al. (2004), and Nordlinger and Sadler (2007)). In the first analysis, the predicate should be non-verbal, meaning that the adjectives in our examples should be analysed as main predicates, and then the f-structure in (29b) should show the analyses of all three examples in (30) with one change in the tense feature to reflect the different time reference of each example. The following f-structures represent the respective analyses of the three examples in (30):

$$(31) \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{‘GENEROUS’} \langle \text{SUBJ} \rangle \\ \text{TENSE} \quad \text{PRES} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{‘man’} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

$$(32) \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{‘GENEROUS’} \langle \text{SUBJ} \rangle \\ \text{TENSE} \quad \text{PAST} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{‘man’} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

$$(33) \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{‘GENEROUS’} \langle \text{SUBJ} \rangle \\ \text{TENSE} \quad \text{FUT} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{‘man’} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

In the second analysis, the copular construction should be analysed as containing a different head, the copula in this case, which here requires two functions: a subject and a complement. There are two possible analyses for the complement, namely, a *closed* or an *open* complement. In the first case we assume that the adjective that is following the copula does not require any function, making it closed while in the second we assume that it requires a subject function and should share the same subject as the main predicate. The following f-structures show both analyses for the three examples in (30):

$$(34) \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{'BE < (SUBJ), (GF)>'} \\ \text{TENSE} \quad \text{PRES/PAST/FUT} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{'MAN'} \right] \\ \text{GF} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{'GENEROUS'} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

$$(35) \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{'BE <(XCOMP)>(SUBJ)'} \\ \text{TENSE} \quad \text{PRES/PAST/FUT} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \boxed{1} \left[\text{PRED} \quad \text{'MAN'} \right] \\ \text{XCOMP} \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad \text{'GENEROUS <(SUBJ)>'} \\ \text{SUBJ} \quad \boxed{1} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

In addition, this analysis can be applied to the verbless sentence that contains an adjective, but in that case, we should assume that there is an omitted copula. However, we suggest that the single-tier analysis is the best analysis for the predicate adjectival construction, whether it contains a copula or not. The main reason for choosing this analysis is because it is a minimal analysis for this structure and avoids the omitted copula in verbless sentences, which must be present in the double-tier analysis.

6. Conclusion

This paper discussed adjectival constructions in MSA. We started by explaining the types of words that are usually used as modifiers in MSA, namely, adjectives and participles, and showed the differences between them. Also, this paper discussed attribute and predicate adjectives in MSA, focusing on three constructions: the first and the second are attributive adjectival constructions, which differ in the position of the adjective. In other words, we showed that the adjective in MSA should be located after the noun, but we argued that the unreal adjectival construction in traditional grammar is a kind of prenominal adjectival construction, in which the adjective is located before the noun. The third structure discussed in this paper is the predicate adjective in MSA. Additionally, we presented a syntactic analysis of the three structures within the LFG framework, concluding that in the prenominal adjectival construction, the adjective modifies the following noun, which functions as subject of this adjective. For the analysis of the predicate adjective, we chose the single-tier analysis in LFG as the appropriate analysis for this structure. This analysis assumes the adjective to be the main predicate in the sentence, and if the copula appears, it will be represented as a feature specifying the tense of the sentence.

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الصفات في اللغة العربية

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الملخص:

يهدف هذه البحث بشكل رئيسي إلى وصف التركيبات الوصفية الرئيسية في اللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة. حيث يساهم في تحليل جديد لبناء صفة في اللغة الفصحى والتي تم تحليلها في القواعد التقليدية كبناء خاص لما بعد الصفة، يسعى بناء الصفة غير الواقعي. نحن نجادل في أنه مثال على الإنشاءات الوصفية السابقة في اللغة العربية الفصحى. نقدم أيضاً تحليلاً جديداً للبناء الأولي، مما يشير إلى أن الصفة تصف الاسم التالي، وهذا الاسم هو الفاعل لهذه الصفة. علاوة على ذلك، نقدم تحليلاً للصفات الأصلية في اللغة العربية الفصحى، سواء مع أو بدون رابط، بحجة أن التحليل أحادي المستوى في القواعد الوظيفية المعجمية هو التحليل المناسب لإنشاءات الصفات الأصلية في اللغة العربية الفصحى. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، توضح هذه الورقة أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين الكلمات الوصفية والكلمات التشاركية، وكلاهما يستخدم ككلمات واصفة في اللغة العربية الفصحى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكلمات الواصفة؛ الصفات؛ النعت من الفعل الثالث؛ القواعد الوظيفية المعجمية.