
Constraints on Double-Object Constructions in Jordanian Spoken Arabic

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Abstract

This article shows that both Modern Standard Arabic and Jordanian Spoken Arabic have double-object constructions. It suggests that double-object constructions in Jordanian Spoken Arabic are governed by semantic constraints. Two classes of verbs that meet these conditions have been identified. The first class comprises verbs whose semantic structure requires the involvement of both the agent and the goal in the implementation of the act. The verbs in the second class lend themselves to further subgrouping; they signify motion into or towards a body or an object.

يبين هذا المقال ان كلا من اللغة العربية الفصحى والعربية المحكية في الأردن تحوي تراكييب تشتمل على مفعولين double-objects، وأن مثل هذه التراكييب تحكمها محددات تتعلق بالمعنى. وبالنسبة للعربية المحكية فان الافعال التي تأخذ مفعولين (بدون حرف جر) يمكن تصنيفها في طائفتين، الاولى تضم أفعالا يتطلب بناؤها المعنوي Semantic Structure اشترك كل من الفاعل agent والمفعول المستهدف goal في انجاز الحدث. أما أفعال الطائفة الاخرى التي تنقسم الى مجموعتين فرعيتين، فتدل على حركة ذات شكل معين يقوم بها الفاعل تجاه المفعول به.

Constraints on Double-Object Constructions in Jordanian Spoken Arabic*

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1. Introduction

White was interested in examining L 1 transfer in the acquisition of double-object complements and preposition stranding by English learners of French as a second language⁽¹⁾. She used adult subjects coming from different language backgrounds (i. e., Chinese, Portuguese, Greek, Tagalog, Polish, Hungarian and Arabic) as controls on the assumption that "... none of them having stranding or the double-object construction in their L1s"⁽²⁾ In this article, we will show that double-object constructions are possible in both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Jordanian Spoken Arabic (JSA)⁽³⁾. Moreover, we will attempt a description of the

* I wish to thank Paul Fletcher, Richard Ingham, Saleh Suleiman and two anonymons reviewers for helpful comments with respect to a number of issues raised in this article. Any errors are, of course, my own.

(1) White, L, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1987: 261 - 285.

(2) *ibid*: 268.

(3) Jordan is characterized by diglossia. JSA is used for everyday oral communication and is sometimes described as the low variety of Arabic. In contrast, MSA is identified as the high variety of Arabic. It is learned by Jordanians after their acquisition of JSA; it also constitutes the meduim of education and formal communication-both oral and written.

constraints that govern these constructions in JSA. Before proceeding with the analysis, let us consider the Arabic versions of White's ungrammatical French sentences (6) and (11) repeated here as (1a) and (2a).⁽⁴⁾

(1) a * Martin montre Pierre le chemin.

b. martin wardza buTruS iTTari:g. (JSA)

Su V Oi Od

Martin showed Peter the way.

c. ara: martinu buTruSa aTTari:qa. (MSA)

V Su Oi Od

showed Martin (NOM) Peter (ACC) the-way (ACC).

'Martin showed Peter the way.'

(4) The letters and symbols used for Arabic forms have the following reading conventions:

- |th| : Voiceless interdental fricative ث
- |Th| : Voiced interdental velarized fricative ظ
- |T| : Voiceless dental velarized stop ط
- |S| : Voiceless alveolar velarized fricative ص
- |g| : Voiced velar stop
- |sh| : Voiceless palatal fricative ش
- |dz| : Voiced palatal fricative ج
- |x| : Voiceless uvular fricative خ
- |R| : Voiced uvular fricative غ
- |H| : Voiceless pharyngeal fricative ح
- |9| : Voiced pharyngeal fricative ع

(2) a. Jenn donna Marie une fleur.

b. Hanna a9Ta marjam warde. (JSA)

Su V Oi Od

‘John gave Mary a flower.’

c. a9Ta Hanna marjama wardatan. (MSA)

V Su Oi Od

gave John (NOM) Mary (ACC) a-flower (ACC).

‘John gave Mary a flower.’

Thus, we have shown, contrary to White’s assumption, that the Arabic equivalents of the French ungrammatical sentences are well-formed. That is, the verbs *wardza/ara*: ‘show’ and *a9Ta* ‘give’ can be used in the double-object complement construction. The article proceeds as follows. In section 2, I shall provide further evidence illustrating that both JSA and MSA have a set of dative verbs that can subcategorize for [NP PP] and [NP NP] constructions. Section 3 shows that syntactic criteria cannot account for dativization in JSA. It is argued that double-object verbs are governed by constrained semantic criteria. Two types of verbs that meet these specific criteria are identified. The first type comprises verbs whose semantic structure requires the involvement of both the agent and the goal in the implementation of the act. The verbs in the second class lend themselves to further subgrouping; they signify motion into or towards a body or thing. This section concludes with a summary of the arguments made in this article.

2. *Subcategorization*

Jordanian Spoken Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic as well have a set of verbs that can pair with two internal

arguments in the frames [NP PP] and [NP NP]⁽⁵⁾. Compare:

(3) a. sa:mi ba:9 ikta:b la salma. [NP PP] (JSA)

NP VP NP P NP

'Sami sold a book to Salma'.

b. ba:9a sa:mi: kita:ban li salma. [NP PP] (MSA)

VP NP NP P NP

sold Sami (NOM) a - book (ACC) to Salma.

'Sami sold a book to Salma'.

(4) a. sami ba:9 salma ikta:b. [NP NP] (JSA)

NP VP NP NP

'Sami sold Salma a book .

(5) Arab grammarians tend to suggest that double-object verbs include a subcategory of verbs whose complements hold a subject-predicate relationship. Consider:

a. da9a sa:mi ibnahu sa:liman. (MSA)

called Sami son-his Salim.

'Sami called his son Salim.'

b. sa:mi samma ibnu sa:lim. (JSA)

'Sami called his son Salim.'

For more details, see Ibn Hisham, *Shuthuur Al-Thahab fi Ma'rifat Kalaam Al-Arab*, ed. by Moh'd Mohyi Al-Din Abdul-Hameed, Cairo: Al-Matba'a Al-Tijariyya Al-Kubra, 1957: 357. I excluded such verbs from the analysis on the ground that the second NP (i.e., salim (an)) is not a second object but an object complement. This view is held by linguists who analysed similar constructions in languages other than Arabic. For instance, see Quirk, et al, 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, London: longman.

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- b. *ba:9a sa:mi salma kita:ban.* [NP NP] (MSA)
 VP NP NP NP
 sold Sami (NOM) Salma (ACC) a-book (ACC).
 ‘Sami sold Salma a book.’
- (5) a. *sa:mi shara kta:b la salma.* [NP PP] (JSA)
 NP VP NP P NP
 ‘Sami bought a book for salma.’
- b. *ishtara sa:mi kita:ban li salma.* [NP PP] (MSA)
 VP NP NP P NP
 bought Sami (NOM) a-book (ACC) for Salma.
 ‘Sami bought Salma a book.’
- (6) a. **sa:mi shara salma ikta:b.* [NP NP] (JSA)
 NP VP NP NP
 ‘Sami bought Salma a book.’
- b. ** ishtara sa:mi: salma kita:ban.* [NP NP] (MSA)
 VP NP NP NP
 bought Sami (NOM) Salma (ACC) a-book (ACC).
 ‘Sami bought Salma a book.’

In (3) and (4) above, the verb **ba:9/ba:9a** ‘sell’ subcategorizes for the [-NP PP] frame (cf. 3a & b) and the [-NP NP] frame (cf. 4a & b). On the other hand, the verb **shara/ishtara** ‘buy’ in (5) and (6) pairs with a PP complement only. The differences

between JSA and MSA are not always very clear due to the diglossic nature of Arabic. El-Yasin (1985), for instance, argued that JSA is an SVO language while MSA is a VSO language. Such a difference is beyond the scope of this paper. Having shown that both MSA and JSA have double-object constructions, I shall now attempt a detailed description of the constraints on these constructions in JSA⁽⁶⁾.

3. Dativization Constraints in Jordanian Spoken Arabic

Why does **ba:9** subcategorize for the [NP NP] frame while **shara** does not? Are the constraints syntactic or semantic or do they arise from other sources? To attempt answers to these questions let us consider the JSA dative constructions in light of relevant constraints suggested to account for the same phenomenon in English.

3.1 Syntactic Constraints

Randall proposed that dativizable verbs in English have two obligatory internal arguments, whereas nondativizable verbs have optional PP arguments⁽⁷⁾. Some of her data are repeated below as (7) and (8). With verbs in (7), she suggested that the PP argument is obligatory and thus the verbs tell, give,

(6) What concerns us here is that both JSA and MSA have double-object constructions. At this stage, I have not fully examined the constraints on double-objects in MSA: it may turn out that some or all of the proposed constraints in this paper are also applicable to MSA.

(7) Randall, J, **Indirect Positive Evidence: Overturning Over-Generalizations in Language Acquisition**, IN: Indiana University Linguistics Club, 1987. Also see, Randall, J, **Linguistics**, 1990: 1381 - 1406.

show, bring, send, and lend can alternate (i. e., occur in [NP PP] and [NP NP] constructions), whereas the PP argument is optional in (8) and hence the verbs report, explain, recite, deliver, dictate and contribute can subcategorize for the [NP (PP)] frame and cannot alternate.

- (7) a. * Agamemnon told the news.
b. * Pablo gave his painting.
c. * Gertrude showed the recipe.
d. * Romeo brought the posies.
e. * Cressida sent the book.
f. * Joan lent six warriors.
- (8) a. Agamemnon reported the news.
b. Pablo explained his painting.
c. Gertrude recited the recipe.
d. Romeo delivered the posies.
e. Cressida dictated the letter.
f. Joan contributed six warriors.
- (8) a. Agamemnon reported the news.
b. Pablo explained his painting.
c. Gertrude recited the recipe.
d. Romeo delivered the posies.
e. Cressida dictated the letter.

f. Joan contributed six warriors.

At this stage, it is worth noting that Randall's judgments on sentences (7d-f) are not confirmed by many native speakers of English who do not think that the omission of the goal argument in these sentences renders them ungrammatical. It seems that this type of evidence led Pinker to describe abstract syntactic representations as "... colorless, odorless and tasteless".⁽⁸⁾ Moreover, he cited counterexamples. Some of his examples are repeated below (with slight modification) as (9) and (10). They show, respectively, that the obligatory to -NP is not always a condition for dativization and that the optional to-NP may permit dativization.

- (9) a. She entrusted her child to the daycare centre. [NP PP]
b. * She entrusted her child. (i.e., to -NP is obligatory)
c. * She entrusted the daycare centre her child. [NP NP]
- (10) a. Sam asked me a question. [NP NP]
(cf. Sam asked a question (to Joan)) (i. e., to -NP is optional)
b. Irv wrote her a letter. [NP NP]
(cf. Irv wrote a letter (to Joan)) (i. e., to -NP is optional)

White pointed out that the for - NP complement is always optional, however, this does not prevent many for - datives from taking double - objects⁽⁹⁾.

(8) Pinker, S, *Learnability and Cognition: The Acquisition of Argument Structures*, Mass: MIT. 1989: 35.

(9) White, L, *McGill Working Papers in Linguistics*, 1984: 1 - 19.

(11) a. Sami bought a book (for Salma).

b. Sami bought Salma a book.

(12) a. Sami purchased a book (for Salma).

b. * Sami purchased Salma a book.

So far, Randall's proposal has failed to account for the dative alternation in English. Notwithstanding, we can test it on the Arabic data. If this proposal is correct, the goal argument should be obligatory in the case of **ba:9** and optional in that of **shara**. Consider:

(13) sa:mi ba:9 ikta:b.

'Sami sold a book.'

(14) sa:mi shara ikta:b.

'Sami bought a book.'

As is clear, the PP complement is optional in (13) and (14): yet, **ba:9** alternates but **shara** does not (cf. (4) and (6) above). However, one can still argue that data based on two verbs may not be that representative. The criterion should be given more chances to prevail. Thus, more verbs will be tested.

(15) a. * sa:mi a9Ta ikta:b⁽¹⁰⁾.

(10) The verb a9Ta 'give' may pair with an optional PP complement if it can be recovered from the context. Consider:

sa:mi a9Ta hiSSa (la Tullabu).

Sami gave a lesson (to students - his).

'Sami gave a lesson to his students.'

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- * Sami gave a book.
- b. sa:mi a9Ta salma ikta:b.
 ‘Sami gave Salma a book.’
- (16) a. * sa:mi wazdzah kala: mu.
 Sami addressed speech - his.
 * Sami addressed his speech.
- b. * sa:mi wazdzah iTTulla:b kala:mu.
 Sami addressed the students kala:mu speech-his.
 * Sami addressed the students his speech.
- (17) a. sa:mi sallam il-baHith.
 ‘Sami handed over the research (to the teacher).’
- b. sa:mi sallam il-usta:z il-baHith.
 ‘Sami handed over the teacher the research.’
- (18) a. sa:mi wadda likta:b (la salma).
 ‘Sami sent the book (to salma).’
- b. *sa:mi wadda salma likta: b.
 ‘Sami sent Salma the book.’

In (15), and (16) the PP complement is obligatory. However, the verb in (15) alternates, whereas in (16) it does not. On the other hand, the goal arguments in (17) and (18) are optional; however, **sallam** alternates but **wadda** does not. Thus, the syntactic proposal fails to account for the dative shift in JSA over a wide range of verbs. In effect, Hassan observed that the

concept of transitivity in Arabic does not have a syntactic correlation; it has its basis in the lexical meaning of the act denoted by the verb.⁽¹¹⁾

3.2 Semantic Constraints

Two types of semantic constraints will be suggested, viz., 1) broad-range constraints and 2) narrow-range constraints. Below is a specification of each set.

3.2.1 Broad-Range Semantic Constraints

Pinker⁽¹²⁾ and Gropen, et al.⁽¹³⁾ observed that the semantic structure for the double-object dative verb in English would be:

(19) X causes Y to have Z

They argued that this semantic structure has a syntactic representation which links a causal agent argument to the subject, a possessor argument to the indirect object and a possession argument to the direct object. To proceed with the analysis, we wish to pose this question: Is it the case that double-object verbs in JSA occur in constructions where the goal argument becomes the "prospective possessor" or "benefactive recipient" of the referent of the direct object? Of course, possession need not be physical: it can be abstract as well. I will argue that this general criterion is basic but does not always guarantee dativization. Let us start with examples that support the general semantic criteria or the 'broad-range' rules⁽¹⁴⁾. The

(11) Hassan, T, *Majallat Al-Lugha Al-Arabiyya*, 1986: 306, 325.

(12) Pinker, S, 1989.

(13) Gropen, et al, *Language*, 1989: 203 - 257.

(14) Pinker, S, 1989. See also Gropen, et al, 1989.

verbs naggal 'dictate', na:wal 'hand', in addition to ba:9 'sell' in (3) & (4) above denote the indirect object 'possessor' of the direct object and hence they dative. Consider:

(20) a. sa:mi naggal il-giT9a la salma. [NP PP]

'Sami dictated the passage to Salma.'

b. sa:mi naggal salma il-giT9a. [NP NP]

'Sami dictated Salma the passage.'

(21) a. sa:mi na:wal likta:b la salma. [NP PP]

'Sami handed the book to Salma.'

b. sa:mi na:wal salma likta:b. [NP NP]

'Sami handed Salma the book.'

On the other hand, the following verbs do not alternate though Salma eventually became the "possessor" or "benefactive recipient" of the direct object (also see *shara / ishtara* 'buy' in (5) & (6) above). Compare:

(22) a. sa:mi bana be:t la salma. [NP PP]

'Sami built a house for Salma.'

b. *sa:mi bana salma be:t. [NP NP]

'Sami built Salma a house.'

(23) a. Sa:mi dza:b Tannu:ra la salma. [NP PP]

'Sami brought a skirt to Salma.'

b. * sa:mi dza:b salma Tannu:ra.' [NPNP]

'Sami brought Salma a skirt.'

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- (24) a. sa:mi dafa9 di:na:re:n la salma. [NP PP]
 ‘Sami paid two dinars to Salma.’
 b. * sa:mi dafa9 salma di: na:re:n. [NP NP]
 ‘Sami paid Salma two dinars.’
- (25) a. sa:mi nagga Tannu:ra la salma. [NP PP]
 ‘Sami chose a skirt for Salma.’
 b. * sa:mi nagga salma Tannu:ra.
 ‘Sami chose Salma a skirt.’

How can we interpret this conflicting evidence? Oehrle suggested that semantic criteria are not sufficient to account for the dative shift in English⁽¹⁵⁾. Similarly, Pinker⁽¹⁶⁾ and Gropen, et al.⁽¹⁷⁾ were not quite satisfied with the broad semantic criteria: in effect, they supported them by ‘narrow-range’ constraints and morphophonological criteria. The ‘narrow-range’ rules specify certain subclasses of verbs with similar meaning structures for dativization. In this connection, it may be suggested that these ‘narrow-range’ rules are open - ended; so far Gropen, et al. (ibid) and Pinker (ibid) have identified nine subclasses. An earlier work by Green proposed five subclasses for the *for*-datives only.⁽¹⁸⁾ Moreover, these rules are perceived

(15) Oehrle, R, *The Grammaticality Status of the Dative Alternation*, Ph.D. Dissertation, MIT, 1976.

(16) Pinker, S, 1989.

(17) Gropen, et al, 1989.

(18) Green, G, *Semantic and Syntactic Regularity*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974.

as both language and dialect-specific, and perhaps, some of them might appear as idiolect-specific. The 'narrow-range' rules vary from language to language and they "...tell a speaker what kinds of events, among those that are cognitively construable as involving causation of possession change, are licensed by the language to be constructed in that way for the purposes of rule application"⁽¹⁹⁾.

Now let us reconsider our data. As we have seen, double-object verbs like a9Ta 'give', sallam 'hand over', ba:9 'sell', naggal 'dictate', and na:wal 'hand', on the one hand and nondativizable verbs wadda 'send', wadzdzah 'address', shara 'buy', bana 'build', dza:b 'bring', dafa9 'pay', and nagga 'choose' on the other, share the same broad semantic structure. Obviously, all of them denote the referent of their indirect object as the "prospective possessor" or the "benefactive recipient" of the referent of their direct object. But still, we can look for differences between a verb like a9Ta from the first subgroup and a verb like wadda from the second subgroup. In the subsequent analysis, we shall attempt a 'narrow-range' semantic classification similar to that suggested for English verbs by Pinker and Gropen, et al.

3.2.2 Narrow-Range Semantic Constraints

3.2.2.1 Involvement in the Act

I wish to claim that verbs like a9Ta which subcategorize for both frames are interpreted differently from verbs like wadda which pair with a PP complement only. My argument is as follows:

(19) Gropen, et al., 1989: 243. Also see Pinker, S, 1989.

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1. The semantic structure of a9Ta requires that both the agent and the goal should enter into a specific arrangement or agreement, not necessarily conscious, where both of them become **involved** in the implementation of the act. Otherwise, the action will not be carried out naturally. How can Sami give Salma a book, for instance, if Salma does not take part in the act? Suppose Sami holds the book and says: "Salma! I want to give you this book" and Salma stretches out one of her hands or both to take the book, or at least indicates acceptance verbally by saying: "OK, Sami! Put it over there." However, if Salma refrains by giving no physical or verbal indication of acceptance, even saying "Sorry! I don't want it" yet, Sami puts it on the table near her, then we cannot truthfully say that Sami gave Salma the book⁽²⁰⁾. The notion of involvement was implicitly touched on by Ibn Al-Sarraj, an Arab grammarian who lived in the tenth century⁽²¹⁾. He suggested that 'a9Ta: abdullahi zaidan dirhaman' (i. e., Abdullah gave zaid a dinar) means that Abdullah gave and Zaid took. Now consider wadda 'send': Sami can send the book to Salma while she is, say abroad: she does not have to participate in the act. In other words, the act of 'sending' can be carried out independent of Salma's involvement. The act can be implemented quite

(20) However, the recipient's involvement may be forced by some higher authority, in which case we could say:

sa:mi a9Ta salma likta:b RaSbin 9anha.

Sami gave salma the book against will-her

'Sami gave Salma the book against her will.'

(21) Ibn-Al-Sarraj, *Al-Ussul fi Al-Nahw*, Vol. I, Ed. by Abdul-Hussein Al-Fatli, Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf, Matba'at Al-Nu'man, 1973: 221.

naturally whether Salma is willing or unwilling to receive the book and whether the agent, Sami, has an authority to impose the act or not.

The direct involvement of the agent and the goal in the implementation of a certain act may be represented by the following notation:

(26) Agent <—> Goal

The specific semantic feature of the verb outlined above is very important for dativization. It is part of the internal semantic structure of the verb. If a verb lacks this feature, it will not dativize even if the agent and the goal wish to consciously 'violate' this specific constraint and arrange for the goal's involvement in the act. Compare:

(27) a. sa:mi wadda likta:b la salma ba9id ma hijji Talbatu.

Sami sent the-book to Salma after PERFECTIVE PAST she requested it.

'Sami sent the book to Salma after she had requested it.'

b. *sa:mi wadda salma il-hta:b ba9id ma hijji Talbatu.'

'Sami sent Salma the book after she had requested it.'

Below are more illustrative examples where the verb naturally needs involvement of both the agent and the goal in the act.

(28) a. sa:mi wardza Salma likta:b.

b. *sa:mi wardza salma likta:b bas hijji ma: sha:fatu.

Sami showed Salma the book but she (NEG) saw it.

'Sami showed Salma the book but she didn't see it.'

(29) a. salma Ta9mat ibinha laHmeh.

Salma fed son - her meat.

‘Salma fed her son meat.’

b. *Salma Ta9mat ibinha laHmeh bas huwwi ma: akalha.

Salma fed son - her meat but he (NEG) eat it.

‘Salma fed her son meat but he did not eat it.’

An interesting illustrative example is the alternating verb gabbaTh ‘pay by hand’ which can semantically relate to dafa9 ‘pay’ in (24) above. The only difference is that gabbaTh necessitates payment by hand where both the agent and the goal should be involved in the act. Compare:

(30) a. sa:mi gabbaTh di:na:re:n la salma. [NP PP]

Sami paid-by-hand two dinars **to** Salma.

‘Sami paid two dinars **to** Salma.’

b. sa:mi gabbaTh salma di:na:re:n. [NP NP]

Sami paid-by-hand Salma two dinars.

‘Sami paid Salma two dinars.’

(31) a. sa:mi dafa9 di:na:re:n la salma.

‘Sami paid two dinars **to** Salma.’

b. *sa:mi dafa9 salma di:na:re:n.

‘Sami paid Salma two dinars.’

In contrast, the verbs in the following sentences do not alternate; they do not meet this specific condition, i. e., the direct

participation of the agent and the goal in the implementation of the act. However, all of them do meet the broad semantic criteria discussed in (3.2.1) above. Compare:

(32) *sa:mi katab salma maktu:b.

‘Sami wrote Salma a letter.’

(33) *sa:mi 9imil salma ka9keh.

‘Sami made Salma a cake’.

(34) *sa:mi Hadzaz salma maHall.

‘Sami reserved Salma a seat’.

It is interesting to observe at this stage that on examining Gropen, et al. ’s list of subclasses where ‘narrow-range’ rules apply, we find that Arabic equivalents of "verbs signifying acts of type of communicated message " can dativeize⁽²²⁾. These subclasses include verbs like give a9Ta, hand ‘na:wal’, tell ‘xabbar’, show ‘wardza’, ask ‘sa?al’ and teach ‘9allam’. It seems that these verbs require direct and possibly active involvement or attention of both the agent and the goal.

2. Since both the agent and the goal have an explicit role to play in the implementation of the act in the [NP NP] construction, then the goal argument should have some sense of agentivity. Put differently, dativeizable verbs in JSA can be semantically related to an implied monotransitive construction where the goal in the double-object construction can assume an agentive function in the monotransitive

(22) Gropen, et. al, 1989.

construction. Ibn Hisham⁽²³⁾ and Ibn Al-Sarraj⁽²⁴⁾ suggested that the first object (i.e., Oi) of one group of verbs in Classical Arabic behave as subject (fa:9il) (in meaning) to the second object (i.e. Od). To make this point clearer, let us compare the (a) and (b) members of each pair of the following sentences:

(35) a. sa:mi ba:9 salma likta:b.

Su V Oi Od

'Sami sold Salma the book.'

b. salma sharat likta:b.

Su V Od

'Salma bought the book'.

(36) a. sa:mi wardza salma likta:b.

Su V Oi Od

'Sami showed Salma the book'.

b. salma sha:fat likta:b.

Su V Od

'Salma saw the book.'

The claim that a double-object verb can be semantically related to a monotransitive makes the causal relation between the subject and the indirect object more evident. On this analysis, the dative construction implies the existence of an

(23) Ibn Hisham, 1957: 357.

(24) Ibn Al-Sarraj, 1973: 211.

embedded monotransitive verb⁽²⁵⁾. Consider:

(37) a. salma akkalat il-walad ka9ik.

Su V Oi Od

Salma caused-eat/fed the-boy cake.

‘Salma fed the boy cake.’

b. il-walad akal ka9ik.

Su V Od

‘The boy ate cake.’

So far, I have argued that double-object verbs in JSA require active involvement of both the agent and the goal in the natural implementation of the act. Moreover, I claimed that the causal interpretation of double-object constructions could be captured by an underlying structure with an embedded verb. In effect, the causal interpretation, I shall suggest, has its very clear manifestation in the morphologically marked causatives (eg.. sharrab/ sharraba ‘caused-drink’, which is derived from shirib/ shariba) in both JSA and MSA, respectively. Is that all? What about double-object verbs like taxx ‘shoot’ and Tharab ‘beat’ where no apparent active involvement of the goal is likely to take place? This may motivate suggesting a separate subclass for such verbs.

3.2.2.2 Motion into / towards Body / Thing

The verbs indicating motion into/towards a body or thing

(25) Oehrle, R. 1976.

may be classified into either verbs of ballistic motion (e.g., taxx 'shoot') or verbs of steady motion (e.g., Ta9an 'stab')⁽²⁶⁾. These verbs have one important feature in common: they can be replaced by a verb of a more general nature, i.e., Tharab ('beat', 'hit', 'strike', 'blow', and 'kick') and can semantically relate to a monotransitive metaphorical construction with the verb akal 'eat'.

1. Ballistic Motion

This subclass of verbs signifies instantaneous causation of ballistic motion. Gropen et al.'s⁽²⁷⁾ list includes verbs like throw, toss and kick. On examining the list of verbs that take the [NP NP] construction in JSA we find that taxx 'shoot', sha:t 'kick' and Tharab 'beat' can be included here. Compare:

(38) sa:mi taxx/ Tharab salma xams Tla:g.

Sami shot/beat Salma five bullets.

'Sami shot five bullets at Salma.'

(26) An anonymous reviewer suggested that these verbs tend to invoke a cognate direct object which repeats the meaning and sometimes the form of the verb.

sa:mi Tharab salma Tharib.

Sami beat Salma beating

'Sami did beat Salma'.

It is worth noting that the cognate object **Tharib** and the like are referred to as 'absolute objects' by Arab grammarians. Below is an example of the 'absolute object' from the Holy Qur'an (Nisaa: 164):

"..wa **kallama** allahu mu:sa **takli:ma**: (my emphasis)

and spoke God Moses speaking

"And to Moses God spoke direct".

(27) Gropen, et. al. 1989.

(39) sa:mi Tharab salma shallu:t.

Sami kicked Salma a kick.

‘Sami gave Salma a kick.’

It seems that the semantic equivalents of verbs like throw ‘rama’ and toss ‘zatt’ do not alternate in JSA because these verbs do not require that the object in motion should necessarily hit or reach the goal, a critical minimum involvement in the act, if any, to meet the shift requirement. That is, it seems that ‘involvement in the act’ may sometimes imply attachment’ between the theme and the goal. This claim may be supported by the fact that the double-object construction is ungrammatical if the object in motion does not hit or reach the goal. Compare:

(40) a. *sa:mi taxx salma Talag bas ma: Sa:bha.

Sami shot Salma a bullet but (NEG) hit her.

‘Sami shot Salma a bullet but he missed her.’

b. sa:mi taxx 9a salma talag bas ma: Sa:bha.

Sami shot **at** Salma a bullet but (NEG) hit her.

‘Sami shot a bullet at Salma but he missed her.’

The metaphorical verb akal ‘eat’ (i.e., get or receive, but not through one’s mouth) can be used as an unmarked mono-transitive for the verbs of this subclass. Compare (41) and (42) below with (38) and (39), respectively.

(41) salma aklat xams Tla:g.

Salma ate five bullets.

‘Salma was shot five bullets.’

(42) salma aklat shallu:t.

Salma ate a kick.

‘Salma got kicked.’

2. Steady Motion

This subclass of verbs involves the use of a tool or an object (which collocates with the verb in form or meaning) in a steady and unreleased motion into or towards a body or an object. The list includes verbs like **Ta9an** ‘stab’, **Razz** ‘jab’ and the general verb **Tharab**. Compare:

(43) sa:mi Ta9an/ Tharab salma sikki:n.

Sami stabbed/beat Salma a knife.

‘Sami stabbed Salma with a knife.’

(44) sa:mi Razz/Tharab salma ibreh.

Sami jabbed/beat Salma a needle.

‘Sami gave Salma an injection.’

(45) sa:mi Tharab salma xamis 9uSi.

Sami beat Salma five sticks.

‘Sami beat Salma with a stick five times.’

Again notice how the verb akal can be used (as an embedded verb) in a monotransitive construction.

(46) salma aklat sikki:n (cf. **Ta9an** in (43) above).

Salma ate a knife.

‘Salma was stabbed.’

(47) *salma aklat ibreh.* (cf. **Razz** in (44) above).

Salma ate a needle.

'Salma was injected.'

(48) *salma aklat xamis 9uSi*

Salma ate five sticks.

'Salma was beaten with a stick five times.'

So far, I have argued that both JSA and MSA have double-object constructions. Further, it has been suggested that double-object verbs in JSA are governed by constrained semantic criteria. Two classes of verbs that meet these specific semantic conditions have been identified. The first class comprises verbs whose semantic structure requires the involvement of both the agent and the goal in the implementation of the act. The verbs in the second class lend themselves to further subgrouping; they signify motion into or towards a body or an object.

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