ON THE DERIVATION OF THE CONSTRUCT STATE DP[1]

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0. Introduction

Classical Arabic has a genitive construction labeled in Semitic linguistic literature the Construct State. The Construct State construction contains an overtly case-marked genitive phrase following the head noun. The salient properties of the Construct State construction are summarized in (1).

(1) a. It consists of two members, X and Y, the first of which is the head.

b. X may take neither the definite determiner nor nunation [an affix *–n* traditionally assumed to be the indefinite determiner in Classical Arabic], and Y may take either.

c. X may be assigned nominative, accusative, or genitive case, while Y may be assigned only genitive case (Aboudi, 1987).

Two examples of the Construct State construction in Classical Arabic are given in (2) and (3).

(2) kasar-tu 'qlām-a l-mudrris-i θ-θalāθat-i

broke-1S pencils-Acc the-teacher-Gen the-three-Gen

'I broke the teacher's three pencils.'

(3) qābal-tu 'ibnat-a l-mudīr-i hāðihi

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met-1S daughter-Acc the-manager-Gen this

'I met this daughter of the manager.'

The structure in question is *'qlāma lmudrrisi* 'the teacher's pencils' in (2), and *'ibnata lmudīri* 'the manager's daughter' in (3). As (2) and (3) show, the head noun (possessed) precedes the genitive phrase (possessor). Moreover, any modifier of the head noun, a numeral in (2) and a demonstrative in (3), obligatorily occurs after the genitive phrase. Assuming that demonstratives and numeral phrases occupy a Spec position within a D(eterminer) P(hrase), the examples in (2) and (3) seem prima facie to contradict the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) outlined in Kayne (1994).

In this paper I address three questions. Firstly, how to allow the possibility that demonstratives and numeral phrases may freely occur to the right of their associated heads in the Construct State DP? Secondly, how the possessor is assigned a Genitive case? Thirdly, given (1b.), why the possessed surfaces obligatorily without a determiner? I argue that adopting a Minimalist approach is the only way these questions can be satisfactorily answered.

I will show that modifiers of the possessed obligatorily occurring lower than the possessor is due to a raising movement first proposed in Ritter (1991) for an analogous construction in Hebrew, and thus eliminating the possibility that specifiers can occur on the right in the Construct State DP. Contra Ritter (1991), however, I propose that the motivation for the possessed to raise is for the sake of the position to which it moves, supporting, hence, Lasnik's (1999) Enlightened Self Interest proposal. Thus, I provide a different account of the raising of the possessed than that suggested by Ritter (1991). Specifically, I will discuss the raising facts in the Construct State DP in light of the

Minimalist framework outlined in Chomsky (1993), developed in Chomsky (1995) and Lasnik (1999), and extended and revised in Chomsky (1998 and 1999). I will argue that the possessed undergoes an overt movement to adjoin to a functional category, and that the possessor undergoes a covert movement whereby it enters into the checking domain of the possessed. Moreover, I maintain that the reason why the possessed obligatorily surfaces without a determiner is due to economical considerations. And that the definiteness reading that is always available for the Construct State DP is due to a null definite determiner occupying the Spec of DP.

This paper is organized as follows. In section 1, I discuss the observed linear order of the Construct State DP and previous accounts of it, showing that it doesn't contradict the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) proposed in Kayne (1994). In section 2, I provide a Minimalist account of the raising facts in the Construct State DP. In section 3, I address the issue of the possessed obligatorily having neither the definite nor the indefinite determiner. Section 4 will be the conclusion.

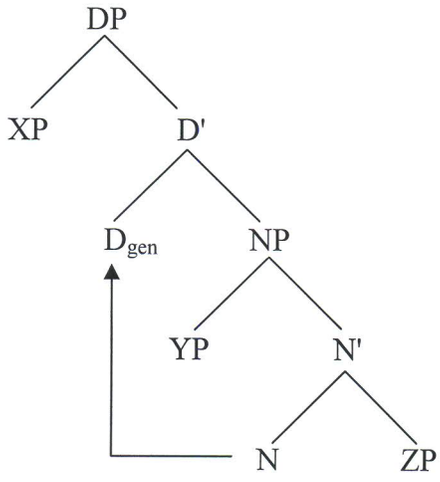
1. The Structure of the Construct State DP

1.1. Ritter (1991)

Ritter (1991) analyzes the Construct State construction in Hebrew (analogous to that in Classical Arabic) as a DP headed by phonetically null determiner $D_{gen(itive)}$ that assigns a Genitive Case to the possessor. She proposes such a structure as that in (5) for such a Construct State construction as that in (4). Consider (4) and (5).

(4) šir ha-cipor
song the-bird
'The bird's song.'

(5)



The Construct State construction in Hebrew, as exemplified in (4), has the same properties as those of the Construct State construction in Classical Arabic given in (1) except that the indefinite determiner is not available for nouns in Hebrew. Ritter (1991) proposes that the possessed *šir* 'song', N^0 in (5), undergoes a head movement, and that its landing site is D_{gen} in (5). She argues that this head movement serves to identify the functional head of the noun phrase, which would not be visible otherwise. Furthermore, she claims that the reason why the definite determiner cannot appear as the first element in a Construct DP is that this position is filled by the abstract case assigner D_{gen}. Since the definite determiner cannot assign a Genitive Case, or any case for that matter, Ritter argues that D_{gen} and the definite determiner are in complementary distribution.

The Construct State is also found in some Celtic languages like Welsh. Consider (6).

(6) golau´r lleuad (Sadler, 1998)

light-the moon

'the light of the moon.'

In (6) *'r* 'the' is a genitive marker. The same phenomenon does exist in a Semitic language, viz. Akkadian. Consider (7) and (8).

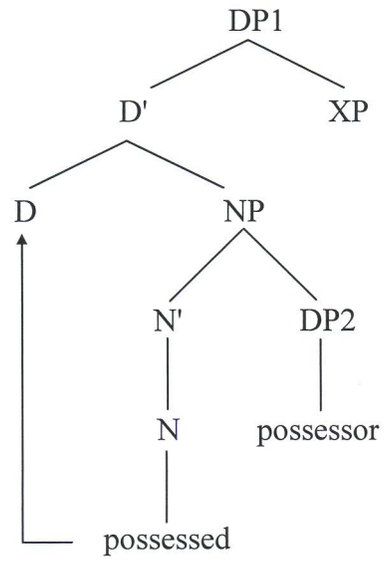
(7) bēl bītim (Buccellati, 1997)
master-Con house-Gen
'master of the house.' (*bēlum* 'master', *bītum* 'house')

(8) šar šarrī (Buccellati, 1997)
king-Con kings-Gen
'king of kings.' (*šarrum* 'king')

1.2. Kaplan (1993)

An analysis of the Construct State DP in Classical Arabic is proposed in Kaplan (1993). Based on the fact that any modifier of the possessed in the Construct State DP obligatorily occurs after the possessor, Kaplan (1993) posits the structure in (9) to capture the observed linear order of the Construct State DP. Consider (9), and (2) and (3) reproduced here as (10) and (11) respectively.

(9)



(10) kasar-tu 'qlām-a l-mudrris-i θ-θalāθat-i

broke-1S pencils-Acc the-teacher-Gen the-three-Gen

'I broke the teacher's three pencils.'

(11) qābal-tu 'ibnat-a l-mudīr-i hāðihi

met-1S daughter-Acc the-manager-Gen this

'I met this daughter of the manager.'

Kaplan (1993) adopts the same analysis of the raising of N^0 to D^0 proposed in Ritter (1991). Furthermore, he proposes that the Construct State DP in Classical Arabic is a strictly head-initial construction, with specifier positions assumed to be on the right. This later proposal is motivated by the obligatory occurrence of any modifier of the possessed on the right of the possessor. For example, the numeral phrase *θθalāθati* 'the three' in (10) and the demonstrative *hāðihi* 'this' in (11) which modify the possessed are not permitted to occur in any position other than on the right of the possessor. The motivation of Kaplan's analysis is justified. Ernst (1991), for instance, proposes that

demonstratives and classifier phrases, e.g. numeral phrases, do occur in Spec position. Assuming with Ernst (1991) that numeral phrases and demonstratives are in Spec position, the observed linear order of the Construct State DP containing such items seems to contradict the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) first proposed in Kayne (1994), elaborated in Chomsky (1995), and adopted in Kawashima and Kitahara (1996) and Epstein *et al* (1998). Furthermore, admitting specifiers to occur to the right of their associated heads would create undesirable asymmetry in Classical Arabic having specifiers freely occurring on the right and left of their associated heads. Why does such a structure as that in (9) pose a problem? I answer this question in the following section.

1.3. The LCA and the Construct State DP

Before answering the question above, the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) is to be defined. Consider the definitions in (12) proposed in Kayne (1994).

(12) i. d(X) = the set of all overt head terms of X

ii. d <X, Y> = the set of all ordered pairs {<a, b>} such that a∈X and b∈Y

iii. Let S be a set of ordered pairs $\{<X_i, Y_i>\}$ for $0<i<n$, then d(s) = the union for all i, $0<i<n$ of $d<X_i, Y_i>$

iv. A_x = the set of all ordered pairs of terms of X such that the first asymmetrically c-commands the second.

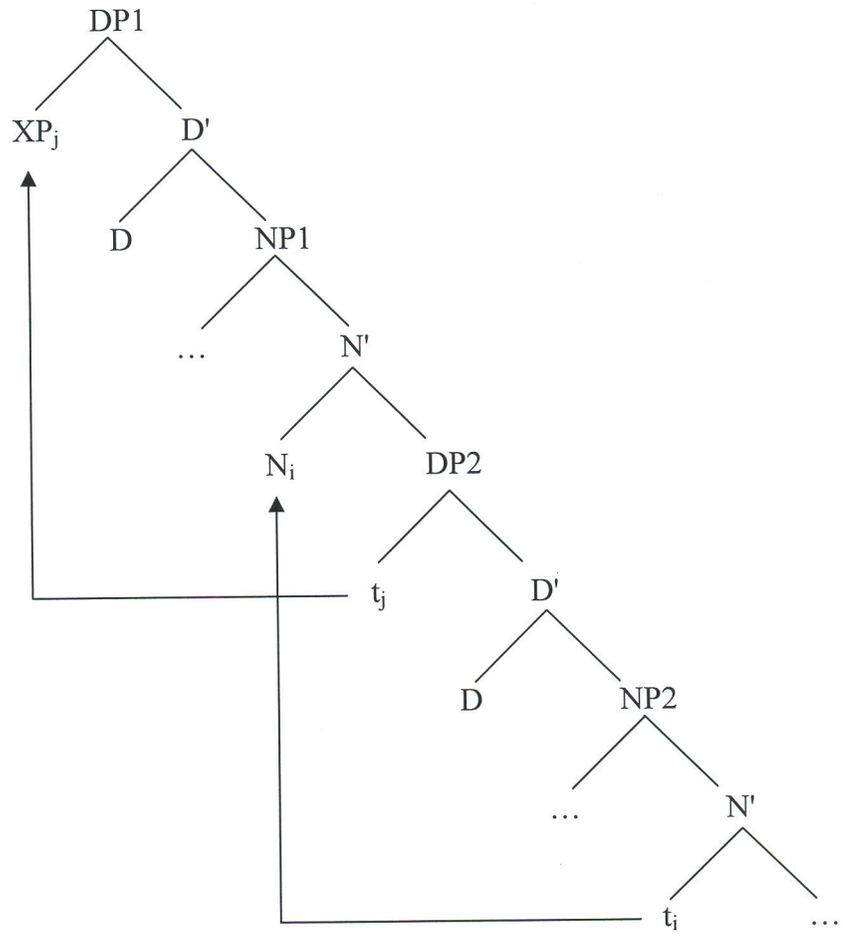
Given the definitions in (12), the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) is formulated as in (13) (cf. Kawashima and Kitahara 1996: 261).

(13) Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA)

For a phrase structure Σ, $d(A_\Sigma)$ is a linear ordering of $d(\Sigma)$.

The leading idea of the LCA (cf. Kayne 1994: 6; Kawashima and Kitahara 1996: 261) is that the syntactic relation asymmetrical c-command imposes a linear ordering of terminal elements bearing phonetic features, and that any phrase marker that violates it is barred. Now, if we consider the structure in (9), we can easily figure out that this structure violates the LCA. Given (9), suppose that the terminal element of the NP is *a*, that of the specifier of the NP is *b*, and that of the specifier of the DP is *c*. Given the LCA, d(A) = <*a*, *b*>, <*c*, *a*>, <*c*, *b*> which is a linear ordering of the terminal elements in (9). So in (9) XP asymmetrically c-commands everything dominated by NP. Given the LCA, asymmetric c-command maps to precedence. So XP in (9) should precede the head to which it is a sister, namely D^0. This problem can be solved if we assume that N^0 originates in a position lower than its modifier and then raises to its surface position. Specifically, we can propose that demonstratives ad numeral phrases, and any other modifier for that matter, originates as the Spec of a lower XP, and that the possessed originates as the head of a projection YP that is dominated by X' of XP. By this we can assure that d(A) doesn't contain <*c*, *a*> or <*c*, *b*> or both of them anymore, eliminating thus the illegitimate ordered pairs of d(A) of (6). Specifically, I propose the structure in (14) below to accommodate my proposal. In (14), the modifiers of the possessed originate in the Spec of DP2, and the possessed originates as the head of NP2. Consider (14).

(14)



I turn in the following section to addressing raising of the possessed in Construct State DP from a Minimalist point of view.

2. An Economy Approach

In order to provide a high level of clarity here, basic Minimalist concepts and procedures that are incorporated in the analysis have to be outlined. It should be noted, however, that a thorough and comprehensive account of such concepts and procedures is beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, I will be concerned here solely with the core ideas. This task is done in the following section 2.1, which will be followed by my own analysis of the Construct State DP in section 2.2.

2.1. The Minimalist Program

Having as point of departure the conclusion that the only linguistically significant levels are the interface levels (Chomsky 1998: 27), linguistic expressions in the Minimalist framework are defined as the optimal realizations of the interface (PF, LF) conditions, where optimality is determined by the principles of derivational economy. These principles guide the computational system to select the optimal derivation(s) from a set of competing derivations (cf. Hornstein 1995; Kitahara 1995). According to Chomsky (1998: 12), Universal Grammar (UG) provides a set of features (linguistic properties) and operations C_{HL} (the computational procedure for human language) that access the set of features to generate expressions. Basic aspects of these operations are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Select. According to Chomsky (1995: 225), the computational system C_{HL} maps some array of lexical choices to a linguistic expression. This array must be a numeration, i.e. a pair of a lexical item and the number of times this item is selected from the lexicon. Thus, the computational system C_{HL} selects a lexical item for only one time. This lexical item is then introduced into the derivation by the operation Select, which adds it to the set of syntactic objects generated. In other words, a derivation makes a one-time selection of a lexical array from the lexicon, then map the lexical array to expressions, dispensing with further access to the lexicon. In this way the Inclusiveness Condition (Chomsky 1999: 2), which bars introduction of new elements (features) in the course of the computation, is respected. Lexical items, though, are drawn freely from the lexicon throughout the formation of a sentence, and thus a level of Deep Structure is no longer necessary. Chomsky (1995: 237) assumes that it is in the

numeration that Case and ϕ-features of nouns are specified, whether by the lexical entry (intrinsic features) or by the operation that forms the numeration (optional features).

Merge. The computational system C_{HL} must include a second procedure that combines syntactic objects that are formed by the distinct application of Select to lexical items (Chomsky 1995: 226). The operation Merge takes two syntactic objects (α, β) and form K(α, β) from them. The operation Merge(α, β) is asymmetric, projecting either α or β, the head of the object that projects becoming the label of the complex formed. If α projects, we can refer to it as the target of the operation (Chomsky 1995: 246).

Agree. The operation Agree establishes a relation (agreement, Case-checking) between a lexical item α and a feature F in some restricted search space (Chomsky 1998: 14). So, for a syntactic object K with label LB(K), LB(K) is the only element of K that is immediately accessible to a language L, so it must be the element that activates Agree, by virtue of its uninterpretable features: these constitute a *probe* that seeks a matching *goal* within the domain of LB(K). The relation match is taken to be identity (Chomsky 1999: 4). Matching of probe-goal induces Agree, eliminating uninterpretable features that activate them.

Move. The operation Move establishes agreement between α and F, and merges P(F) to αP, where P(F) is a phrase dominated by F (perhaps but not necessarily its maximal projection) and αP is a projection headed by α. P(F) becomes SPEC-α (Chomsky 1998: 14).

I turn now to the structure of DP. In the following section I sketch briefly an analysis of the derivation of DP proposed in Pesetsky and Torrego (2000).

2.2. Pesetsky and Torrego (2000)

In their analysis of the structure of DP, Pesetsky and Torrego (2000) argue that D is identical to C in bearing *u*T (uninterpretable features) and ϕ-features, but that it is different from C in taking a category other than TP as its complement. They maintain that such a head would be unable to delete *u*T within its maximal projection, and therefore would always need some external head to delete its *u*T features. They note, however, that their analysis of DP conflicts with a standard syntax for English possessive DPs. A DP that contains a possessor is perfectly acceptable as the subject of a sentence, and is perfectly acceptable as the possessor of a larger DP. They wonder why the internal syntax of English DPs that contain a possessor does not affect the external syntax of such DPs. They claim that the presence of a possessor inside DP might affect its external syntax if the possessor phrase is the specifier of the highest head of the larger DP – i.e. if it is the specifier of D. According to this view, possessive *'s* belongs to the same category as *the* and *a*. On the other hand, if *'s* (along with *the* and *a*) is the highest head of DP, problems arise. In particular, the assumption that *'s* is the highest head of DP (i.e. D) conflicts with their view that movement is feature-driven.

They suggest two analyses with regard to the feature of *'s* that might cause the possessor DP to move to its specifier position.

First, if the feature driving movement to the specifier of *'s* is *u*T, they have then to posit an instance of *u*T on *'s* that has the EPP (Extended Projection Principle) property. (By the Match Condition, the possessor must also bear *u*T.) As a result, *u*T on *'s* would be marked for deletion within DP by the raising of the possessor. If D and C are the same category, we expect the deleted *u*T feature on D to disappear once DP is

complete. Consequently, if *'s* is an instance of D, DP should not behave like a category whose head bears *u*T once DP is merged into a higher structure. So movement of this DP to Spec, TP should be impossible.

Second, the possessor is attracted by some other feature on *'s* (*u*F). This will have the advantage of abandoning the assumption that *u*T on D has the EPP property. Consequently, even if the possessor were to mark *u*T on D for deletion, *u*T would be able to remain *alive* after the DP cycle is complete. However, *u*F would not remain alive, since *u*F, by hypothesis, would have the EPP property. This too leads to an incorrect result if *'s* is an instance of D.

A DP containing a possessor would be a DP that does not bear *u*F on D once the DP cycle is finished. Consequently, a DP containing a possessor should be unable to function as a possessor of a higher DP. But this result is also shown to be wrong. Therefore, they drop the assumption that *'s*, *the*, *a* are the highest head of DP. They propose that *'s*, *the*, and *a* are not instances of D, but belong to a category they call R ("*ar*ticle"). RP is the complement of D, which is null in English. They maintain the common view that possessors occupy the specifier of *'s*: The possessor is attracted to *'s* by some feature on *'s* with the EPP property. Whether this feature is *u*T or *u*F remains unclear.

In the following section I give another reason why the possessed can take neither the definite nor the indefinite determiner.

2.3. Defective attraction

Consider the Construct State construction in (15).

(15) r'ēt-u zūjat-a l-ħākim-i t□-t□ēbat-i

saw-1S-Nom wife-Acc the-governor-Gen the-kind-Gen

'I saw the governor's kind wife.'

The Construct State DP *zūjata l-ħākimi* 'the governor's wife' in (15) is derived in the following way. *zūjata l-ħākimi* 'the governor's wife' is introduced into the derivation by the operation Select. The definite determiner *al* 'the' and the NP *ħākim* 'governor' merge to form the DP *l-ħākim* 'the governor.' The target of this Merge operation is D=*the* because it projects DP. But what is the motivation of the overt raising of the possessed proposed earlier? According to Chomsky (1995: 233), one of the two properties of a strong feature is that it triggers an overt operation before Spell-out. So we can conclude that the overt raising in the Construct State DP is triggered by a strong feature. We can propose, further, that there are uninterpretable features, mainly Case, that constitute a *probe* that seeks for a *goal* within its domain. So an Agree operation is motivated, but the more complex operation Move takes place. On Minimalist assumptions, Merge and Agree, or a combination of the two, preempt Move. I argue here, following Lasnik's (1999) Enlightened Self-Interest, (16) below, that the raising of the possessed is for the sake of the position (target) to which the possessed moves. I justify this claim below.

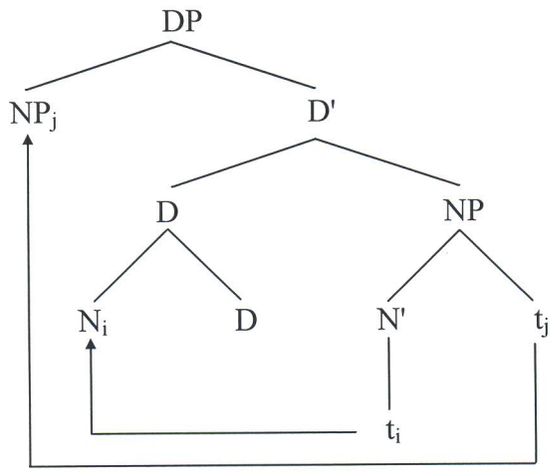
(16) Enlightened Self-Interest

Movement of α to β must be for the satisfaction of formal requirements of α or β.

To accommodate all of the previous assumptions into one analysis, I propose the following analysis.

First, Case and ϕ-features are properties of the functional head D. This functional head is a defective category (or segment)[2]. Therefore, it cannot attract the features of the NP. What happens is that in order for the attraction to take place, the defective category D has to be adjoined by another category. This adjunction process takes place when the possessed N raises to adjoin to D. This is exactly the Enlightened Self-Interest type of movement. The following step is the covert raising of the possessor NP to the Spec of DP. This raising will allow it to be in the checking domain of the head of DP. The Genitive Case of the possessor NP is then checked by features of D^0 + N^0. The identity matching relation then holds between the adjoined N^0 and [Spec, DP]. This match induces Agree, and the uninterpretable features that activate the operation are eliminated, so the derivation converges. For ease of exposition, consider the structure in (17).

(17)



[2] The distinction between category and defective category (or segment) is not novel. It was introduced by May (1985) and adopted in Chomsky (1986) and Kayne (1994).

This analysis also accounts for both English and Welsh (cf. 6) data. In English, we argue that *'s* has *u*T features but it cannot attract the features on the possessor NP; the possessor NP raises overtly to adjoin to *'s*, and then the possessor NP raises covertly to [Spec, DP] and its features will be marked to deletion by *'s*. Similarly, in Welsh we argue that *'r* is a defective attractor and must be supported by another category in order to mark the features on the possessor NP for deletion.

The proposed movement respects the Minimal Link Condition proposed in Miyagawa (1993). It doesn't cross a position that contains an unchecked morphological feature that is the same in type as the feature associated with the moved feature (cf. Miyagawa 1993).

3. Why can't the possessed have a determiner?

I will assume, following Lyons (1999), that a Construct State DP is always definite even if the possessor is indefinite. Consider (18).

(18) 'ištarēt-u manzil-a 'amīrat-in
bought-1S house-Acc princess-Gen
'I bought a princess' house.'

In (18) the reading of the Construct State DP *manzila 'amīratin* 'princess' house' is definite although the possessor *'amīratin* 'princess' is indefinite. This definite reading is argued to be inherent in such structures like the Construct State in Classical Arabic. But how is this definite reading imposed? Given the previous assumption that the possessed N^0 is adjoined to G^0 and that the possessor NP is raised covertly to merge to GP and

becomes [Spec, GP], the simplest assumption is that the possessed N^0 carries only enough material for convergence, namely only the lexical head N^0. So the DP, if one is introduced into the derivation, is not needed because N^0 can converge. Chomsky (1995: 262), for instance, supposes that if the subject raises to [Spec, IP], the simplest assumption would be that only the formal features of the head involved in feature checking raise to this position, leaving the rest of the DP unaffected. And he formulates the Condition in (19).

(19) F carries along just enough material for convergence.

So an operation Move seeks to raise just F (= feature). Whatever else is raised is only through "generalized pied-piping." So in the case of the possessed N^0, the minimal syntactic object that is necessary for convergence is the head N^0. But what about the definite reading available for the Construct State DP? I would like to argue that there is a null definite determiner in the Spec of the matrix DP. This assumption will account for the fact that the Definiteness of the Construct State DP is not associated with only one of the two elements of the Construct State DP, but rather with both of them.

4. Conclusion

I have shown in this paper that the observed linear order of the constituents of the Construct State DP in Classical Arabic has a hierarchical structure that doesn't violate the Linear Correspondence Axiom proposed in Kayne (1994). Furthermore, I have argued that the raising of the possessed N is for the sake of the position to which it raises, supporting, hence, Lasnik's (1999) Enlightened Self-Interest proposal. I have

claimed that the reason why the possessed N is not allowed to take either the definite or the indefinite is that the possessed N is raised alone without an determiners for economical considerations, supporting, hence, a similar condition formulated in Chomsky (1995). I have also proposed that the definite reading that is always available for the Construct State DP even if both of its elements are indefinite is due to the presence of a null definite determiner occupying the Spec of higher DP.

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