Announcements

• Reminder: HW3 is due this Wed in class, or by 5pm via e-mail.
• You should be making a list of references for your ADPA by now, if you haven’t done that already. Spend the weekend doing some reading on your dialect, particularly on the phonology and morphology. Once we finish the syntax part of the class, you can start working on that as well.
• Good job overall on the midterm! The average score term is 189.5/200. The median score is 193/200. Thanks for your good work!

Syntax and semantics

• Syntax is the study of phrase and sentence structure in human language. Semantics deals with issues of meaning.
• We will start first by looking at the syntax and semantics of phrases in Arabic (mainly noun and verb phrases), and then move on after that to talk about the syntax and semantics of sentence structures.
• Before we do that, let us briefly introduce some of the fundamental concepts of syntax.

Grammaricality

• Syntax determines grammaticality. The same set of words can be grammatical if combined according to the syntactic rules of the language, and ungrammatical if arranged differently. (Remember ‘*’ means ‘ungrammatical’.)

  The silly man hit the nice woman.
  *Silly hit man the nice woman.

  الطالب يذهبون إلى الصف كل صباح.
  *الصف يذهبون للطلاب كل صباح.

• Syntax provides us with a set of combinatorial rules that allows us to string words in together in certain ways, but not others.

Ambiguity

• Syntactic strings can also be ambiguous.
  Mary saw the man with the telescope.
  Visiting relatives can be a nuisance.

 Grammaricality

• Notice that grammaticality does not depend on meaning. Meaningless strings of words sound grammatical to us, while meaningful strings can be ungrammatical.

  Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.
  *I will in the office for you wait.

  شورية البطاطس تجلس في المكتبة وحدها.
  *نكلم سوف عن معلق.

• Syntactic strings can also be ambiguous.
  Mary saw the man with the telescope.
  Visiting relatives can be a nuisance.
Embedding

• Syntax also allows us to embed a unit of type A within another unit of type A, giving rise to embedded structures (of potentially infinite length).
  - John hates war.
  - Mary believes that John hates war.
  - Harry claims that Mary believes that John hates war.
  - Etc.
• Similar facts hold in Arabic and all other languages we know of.

Sentences are made of constituents

• To explain these facts and others, a theory of syntax is built on certain assumptions.
• A sentence is not a mere sequence of words; rather, every sentence has a syntactic structure.
• The key unit to understanding syntactic structure is that of a constituent.
• Let’s see what this means.

Constituency

• Consider the following sentence:
  The linguist has drawn a tree.
• If I ask you to divide the sentence into two units, where would you draw the line?
• Right:
  (1) The linguist | has drawn a tree.

Substitution test for constituency

• If a string of words can be replaced by one word and the result is a grammatical sentence while preserving the original meaning, then it must be that this string of words comprises a “constituent”.

(2) a. [The linguist] has drawn a tree.
   ✓ He has drawn a tree.
   b. The linguist has drawn [a tree].
   ✓ The linguist has drawn it.
   c. The [linguist has drawn] a tree.
   *The ???
   d. [The linguist] has drawn a tree.
   * ??? drawn a tree.
   e. [The linguist has drawn] a tree.
   * ??? tree.
   f. The linguist [has drawn a tree].
   The linguist has. [In response to “Who has drawn a tree?”]
### Substitution test for constituency

(3) a. [The tall boy] ate the burrito.
   √ He ate the burrito.
   b. The tall boy ate [the burrito].
   √ The tall boy ate it.
   c. [The tall boy] ate the burrito.
   ∗??* the burrito.
   d. The tall boy [ate the burrito].
   √ The tall boy did (so). *(In response to: "Did he eat the burrito?")
   e. The tall boy ate the burrito [in the classroom].
   The tall boy ate the burrito there.
   f. The tall boy ate [the burrito in the classroom].
   ∗The tall boy ate it. *(The sentence may look ok, but we changed the meaning)

### Movement test for constituency

• If a string of words can be moved together in a sentence keeping the same meaning intact, then this string of words comprises a "constituent":

(4) a. We will hold the meeting [in Sam’s office].
   In Sam’s office we will hold the meeting.
   b. We will hold [the meeting in Sam’s office].
   ∗The meeting in Sam’s office we will hold.

### Stand-alone test (using answers to questions)

• If a string of words can stand alone as an answer to a question, then it is a constituent, e.g.,

Q: What did John eat?
A: The whole pizza. /*The whole.

Q: What did John do?
A: Eat the whole pizza. /*Eat the.

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### Substitution test in Arabic

- [الطفل الطويل]أكل [ساندوتش الفلامنجو].
  وأكل ساندويتش الفلامنجو.
  - الطالب الطويل أكل [ساندوتش الفلامنجو].
  - الطالب الطويل أكل [ساندوتش الفلامنجو].
  - الطالب الطويل أكل [ساندوتش الفلامنجو].
  - الطالب الطويل أكل [ساندوتش الفلامنجو].
  - الطالب الطويل أكل [ساندوتش الفلامنجو].

### Movement test in Arabic

- ندرس صف [اللسانيات العربية] في بداية Rوس.
  - ندرس صف [اللسانيات العربية] في بداية Rوس.
  - ندرس صف [اللسانيات العربية] في بداية Rوس.

### Stand-alone test in Arabic

- ماذا فعل على؟
  ∗كل عصير البرتقال.
  - إذا فعل على؟
  ∗أكل نصف البيتزا.

- أيت سفه بعدي الصف؟
  ∗إلى المكتبة.
Phrase structure: Heads and complements

- Once we determine that a string of words is a constituent, the next step is to determine its syntactic category.
- For this, we draw a distinction between a **head** and a **complement**.
- The head is the central word in a string, the one that requires other elements to be there. The complement is the part of the string that is there because of the head.
- The head and the complement together form what we call a **phrase**, and the type of the whole phrase is named after the head.

Phrases in Arabic

- حفلة للموسيقى العربية
- يدرس الفيزياء
- في البيت
- مشغول بالواجب

Modifiers and Determiners

- There are some elements that may occur optionally in phrases such as adjectives for nouns and adverbs for verbs. These are called **modifiers**.
  - The *Russian* plane came *late*.
- Articles, demonstratives, and possessive pronouns belong to the category of **determiners**.

Roadmap

- In the rest of this class, we focus on the syntax and semantics of the noun phrase in Arabic (both in CA and the dialects).
- On Wednesday, we discuss the verb phrase.
- Next week, we talk about the syntax and semantics of sentences.
### The syntax and semantics of noun phrases in Arabic

There are three major issues related to the syntax and semantics of noun phrases in Arabic that we discuss today:

- **Marking definiteness and indefiniteness on a CA noun.**
- **Agreement between a noun and its modifying adjectives.**
- **The construct state.**

### Marking (in)definiteness on Arabic nouns

- **CA marks indefiniteness via tanwiin**, a strategy that is not quite common in MSA because of the tendency to drop tanwiin and other case makers.
- **Grammatical (and semantic) definiteness is marked on Arabic nouns via one of three ways:**
  - The definite article
  - Suffixation of a possessive pronominal
  - The first noun in the addition

### The definite article

- **The definite article** is used to mark a noun as **definite/specific**, especially after this noun has been mentioned before.

  - عدي صفي في علم اللسانيات العربية. أذهب إلى
  - للفتين في الأسبوع: الاثنين والأربعاء.
  - شاهد رجل في الشارع، كان الكلب
  - يجري والرجل يجري وراءه.
  - كان في مدرستي الثانية، زكى أحمد.

- **The definite article is also used to indicate **uniqueness.**

  - النمسا، القمر، السماء، الأرض
  - الشرق الأوسط، الأمم المتحدة
  - الحرب العالمية الثانية (World War II)

- **The definite article is also used to refer to substances, e.g.,**

  - هذا قميص من القطن

### The definite article

- **Proper nouns** (i.e., names of persons, countries, cities, etc.) are inherently definite, and hence do not normally take the definite article.

  - أحمد، فاطمة، فاطمة
  - مصر، سوريا، فرنسا، أمريكا

- **Some proper nouns, however, do appear with the definite article.**

  - العراق، السودان، البرازيل
The definite article

• The definite article is also used with certain time expressions.

الغد، الساعة الليلية، إلى المكتبة، سأذهب.
الليلة، المكتبة، سأذهب.
سنا dissert إلى مكتبة الدع

• The definite article is also used generically, to refer to a general class, rather than to a particular set of individuals.

الواجبات يحبون، لا، الطلاب.
الطلاب لا يحبون الواجبات.
لا، الطلاب مشغولون دائمًا بالعمل.
الاستاذ مشغولون دائمًا بالعمل.
الغد، إلى، سنسافر.
الغد، إلى، سنسافر.

• When participles are used generically, they also appear with the definite article.

فقط، العربية، يتكلمون، في.
في، العربية، يتكلمون.
في، العربية، يتكلمون.
في، العربية، يتكلمون.

• The definite article is typically used with the المصدر, whether it is used specifically or generically.

لا أعرف مالا سافع بعد التخرج.
(Smoking is harmful to health.)
(Smoking is harmful to health.)
(Smoking is harmful to health.)
(Smoking is harmful to health.)

• Nouns are also made definite by suffixation of a possessive pronoun.

كتبه، أخي، دراستنا، تخزهم.
كتبه، أخي، دراستنا، تخزهم.
كتبه، أخي، دراستنا، تخزهم.
كتبه، أخي، دراستنا، تخزهم.

• When suffixed with a possessive pronoun, the مصدر of a Pattern I transitive verb is often ambiguous.

كتبت، سعيدا، زيارة.
كتبت، سعيدا، زيارة.
كتبت، سعيدا، زيارة.
كتبت، سعيدا، زيارة.

Definiteness by pronominal suffixation

• As you know, the non-final noun in an إضافة is semantically definite (though crucially without being grammatically marked with the الـ), as long as the final noun is definite.

وصف العربية، رئيس البرتغال.
وصف العربية، رئيس البرتغال.
وصف العربية، رئيس البرتغال.
وصف العربية، رئيس البرتغال.

Modification by adjectives

• Noun phrases may also have modifying adjectives, which, generally speaking, typically occur after the noun.

• Adjectives agree with their nouns in number, gender, definiteness, and case.
Noun-adjective agreement

Adjective agreement is $\pm$human-sensitive

• Adjective agreement is sensitive to whether the noun is $+$human or $-$human.
  
  • Adjectives of $+$human nouns show strict agreement in both gender and number.

‘Stylistic’ exceptions

• There is a tendency by some writers to mark adjectives for plural agreement with $-$human nouns, for stylistically elevated writing reasons.

The dual is well-behaved

• Notice that adjective agreement in the dual is NOT sensitive to the $\pm$human distinction.

Noun-adjective agreement in EA

• ‘Deflected’ agreement in noun-adjective structures is still observed in today’s Arabic dialects, but strict agreement in such contexts is also attested.
Varying agreement with some collective nouns

- Interestingly, some [+human] collective nouns may get either strict agreement (as in CA) or deflected agreement (unlike CA), as in the case of the word `ناس` (= ‘people’).
  
  كان فيه ناس كثير في الحفلة.
  كان فيه ناس كثير في الحفلة.

Next class agenda

- Finishing the discussion of Arabic noun phrases: 

- The Arabic verb phrase. Read Holes’ rest of chapter 6, pp. 215-245.