
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Syntax of Comitative Structure in Standard Arabic: A Minimalist Approach

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| ABSTRACT

This paper investigates comitative structures in Standard Arabic from a Minimalist perspective. The main aim is to find generalizations that describe and explain comitative structures. Specifically, the objectives are to distinguish comitative structures from coordinative structures and to analyze comitative structures from syntactic and semantic perspectives. We reach the following results: first, there is a difference between /wa/ in coordination and /wa/ in comitative structures. Second, comitative structures can be symmetric and asymmetric. In the symmetric comitative structures, the concomitate object is an argument and obligatorily agrees with DP₁ in terms of the [\pm animate] feature. In the asymmetric comitative structures, the concomitate object is an adjunct and optionally agrees with DP₁ in terms of the [\pm animate]. In our analysis of comitative structure, we propose the complex DP, headed by /wa/. The difference between the two types of comitative structures is that the derivation of the symmetric one happens at the level of complementation; in contrast, the asymmetric one is merged in the adjunct position. Another significant finding is that the verb is not always the one that assigns the accusative Case. The major significance of this study is that it gives a distinction between comitative and coordinative structures, distinguishes between two types of comitative structures, and analyses the structure in the light of the DP hypothesis and the Minimalist program.

| KEYWORDS

Comitative structure, Concomitate Object, the Minimalist Program, Accusative Case, Standard Arabic

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1. Introduction

Comitative Structure (henceforth CS)¹ has always been investigated in the context of adjuncthood² in Arabic and other languages. CS raises a series of syntactic and interpretative problems. As for the syntactic issues, we discuss two main topics: (1) the 'assignment' or the so-called checking of the accusative Case of the concomitate object (hereafter CO) and (2) the syntactic position where CO is merged. As for interpretative issues, it is mainly investigated in the distinction between CS '*binjat ?al-ma?ijja*' and Coordination '*binjat ?al-?atf*' (Kayne, 1994; Larson & Vassiliva, 2001; Peter & Lakove, 1994 among others). In this paper, I provide a Minimalist account of all the problems aforementioned.

Contrary to previous accounts, we will show that CO is not always an adjunct; that is, it can be part of the argument structure of the verb. Based on this observation, we will show that there are two asymmetric structures of CO with which the [\pm animate] feature plays a vital role in distinguishing between the two structures. CS is merged with the subject in the same thematic domain when

¹This paper was the subject of discussion and observations by a group of people in the laboratory *Team of Arabic Linguistics and Linguistic Preparation*, whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude for their suggestions, especially my supervisor Mohammed Rahhali and the following researchers: Mohammed Et-tary, Taoufik Elatifi, Nada Chahboune, Chaimae Keiji, and Khadija Khoua. Nevertheless, all errors are my own.

² See Camacho (2000) and McNally (1993).

the structure is symmetric. Moreover, we argue that the [ACC] feature is valued in the Determiner Phrase (DP); indeed, the verb does not play a role in checking the feature.

The paper is organized as follows: In the first section, we define CS and show how it is realized in Standard Arabic (SA) and some languages. In the second section, we distinguish between CS *'binjat ʔal-maʕijja'* and Coordination *'binjat ʔal-ʕatf'*. Section 3 explores the characteristics of CS, while section 4 argues for the existence of two structures for CO (i.e., symmetric and asymmetric). In the final section, we analyze all the characteristics of CS in the light of the DP hypothesis, where I adopt the proposals of Zhang (2007c), Zhang and Hornstein (2001, 2014), and some ideas of Kayne's (1994).

2. The Structure of the Concomitate Object: Definition and Realizations

CO is defined as the structure with two necessary DPs for a given event. These two DPs can be compatible or incompatible in terms of the feature [\pm animate]. Consider the following examples:

- 1) **A.** tazamanati ʔal-intixabat-u wa ʔal-zaʕiḥat-a
Coincided the-elections-NOM and the-pandemic-ACC
'The elections coincided with the pandemic.'
B. ʕistajqaḍati l-ʕumm-u wa ʕurax-a r-raḍiʕi
Woke up the-mother-NOM and scream-ACC the-baby
'The mother woke up, and the baby screamed.'

In (1A), both /ʔal-intixabat-u/ *the elections* and /ʔal-zaʕiḥat-a/ *the pandemic* are obligatory arguments for the verb /tazamanati/ *coincided*. More importantly, both arguments share the feature [+animate]. On the contrary, we find that the arguments /l-ʕumm-u/ *the mother* and /ʕurax-a/ *scream* do not agree in terms of the [\pm animate] feature, even though they share the same event. Indeed, whereas the former possesses the [+animate] feature, the latter has the [-animate] feature.

CS is only realized when a functional item is present. This characteristic is present in SA and other languages as well. The only distinction between the languages is the nature of the functional item. Consider the following illustrations:

- 2) John conferred **with** Bill.
3) **A.** naʕaḥa **wa** r-rifaq-a
succeeded and the-comrades-ACC
'Lit. He succeeded and the comrades.'
B. naʕaḥa **maʕa** r-rifaq-i
succeeded with the-comrades-GEN
'He succeeded with the comrades.'
C. naʕaḥa Moḥammad-un **wa** r-rifaq-u
succeeded Mohamed-NOM and the-comrades-NOM
'Lit. Mohamed succeeded and the comrades.'

Some languages, such as English in (2), use one type of functional item that expresses CS; this item is the preposition *with*. Other languages, such as SA in (3A) and (3B), can employ two distinct functional items to express the same structure; these are /wa/ *and* and /maʕa/ *with*.

Note that there are some languages like SA (see, e.g., 3A and 3C) and Chamorro³ (see, e.g., 4 below), which use the same functional item to express both comitative and coordinative structures:

- 4) ma'pos si Juan yan si Maria
left ART Juan and/with ART Maria
'Juan and Maria left/ Juan left with Maria.'
(Topping, 1973, p. 146, as cited in Stassen, 2003, p. 782)

The functional items /wa/ (e.g., 3A, 3C) and /yan/ (e.g., 4) express coordinative and comitative meanings. One important question is, does the same functional item imply one unified structure or two different ones? In the next section, and in parallel with showing the characteristics of CS, we will prove that we have two distinct structures, syntactically and interpretively.

³ Chamorro is an Austronesian language spoken in the Philippine.

3. Comitative and Coordinative Structures: An Asymmetry

In the preceding section, we stated that a group of languages, including SA, uses the same functional item in both CS and Coordinative structures. The use of the functional item raised an important question: Does the use of the same functional item result in uniform syntactic properties? In the following subsection (3.1.), we answer this question before we list the characteristics of CS in the rest of the subsections.

Both CS and Coordinative structures share the appearance of /wa/ between the two DPs, as seen in (3B, 3C) above.⁴ However, and as seen in many syntactic phenomena, just because a functional item is used in two situations does not mean that the two situations share the same syntactic and interpretive properties. The first difference between the two structures is in terms of the Case that is hosted on the DP. For illustration's sake, consider the following examples:

- 5) A. Juriba _[DP1] ʔa-ʃʃaj-**u** _[DP2] wa l-ħalib-**a**
 drink.PASSIVE the-tea-NOM and the-milk-ACC
*'We drank tea and milk.'*⁵
- B. ʃaraba idris-**u** wa jasir-**un** / *jasir-**an**
 drink.3S.M Idriss-NOM and Yasir-NOM / *Yasir-ACC
 ʔaʃ-ʃaj-**a** wa l-ħalib-**a** / *l-ħalib-**u**
 the-tea-ACC and the-milk-ACC / *the-milk-NOM

In CS, DP₂ always possesses the [ACC] feature, regardless of the Case hosted by DP₁ (see, e.g., 5A). However, as shown in (5B), both DPs must share the same Case in Coordinative structures. If DP₁ has a nominative Case (e.g., idris-u) and DP₂ has an accusative Case (e.g., jasir-an), the sentence becomes ill-formed.

The second difference between CS and Coordinative structure is that the former can drop its subject while the latter cannot. Let us look at the following examples:

- 6) A. ruqib-a wa l-ʃamil-**a**
 monitored and the-agent-ACC
'Both the agent and him were monitored.'
- B. *ruqib-a wa l-ʃamil-**u**
 monitored and the-agent-NOM
'Both the agent and him were monitored.'
- C. *aʒi w xu-k Moroccan Arabic
 come and brother-your
'Lit. Come and your brother.'
- D. aʒi mʃa xu-k Moroccan Arabic
 come with brother-your
'Come with your brother.'

The ungrammaticality of (6B) shows that it is not possible to drop the subject in Coordinative structures (the same holds for Moroccan Arabic as well, see, e.g., 6C).⁶ The grammaticality of (6A) shows that it is possible to drop the subject in CS.

The third difference between CS and Coordinative structure is the fact that the former can have both of its DPs separate from each other. The phenomenon is summarized in the so-called secondary predicate. To clarify, consider the following examples:

- 7) A. ʒa:ʔ-a l-ʃid-u_i mutazaminan [e_i wa l-ʃuʔlat-a]
 came the-Eid-NOM coincided and the-holiday-ACC
'Eid coincided with the holidays.'
- B. *[kitab-an mufid-an]_i qaraʔt-u [e_i wa riwajat-an]
 book-ACC useful-ACC read-1P and novel-ACC
'I read a useful book and novel.'

⁴ For more on the structure of Coordination in the Arabic language, see Rahhali (1989) and Al-Khalaf (2015). See also Kane (1994) and Zhang (2008b).

⁵ Note that the sentence in Arabic is in the passive.

⁶ Moroccan Arabic is not as rich as SA in terms of the functional items that would realize CS. In Moroccan Arabic, this structure is only achieved with the preposition /mʃa/ with. On the contrary, SA has two functional items, as shown in the first section of the paper.

In (7A), it is possible to separate the two DPs from each other by /mutzaminan/ *coincided*. The ungrammaticality of (7B)⁷ shows that coordinative structures demand that the two DPs must be adjacent to each other. We have talked about the three syntactic characteristics of CS. Now, let us move on to the difference between CS and Coordinative structure in terms of interpretation. Consider the following examples:

- 8) **A.** inḍamma Taha wa ḡḡajx-a maḡan ila l-muḡaskari
 joined Taha and Cheikh-ACC with in the-camp
'Taha joined the Cheikh in the camp.'
- B.** inḍamma Taha **ʔal-bariḡa** wa ḡḡajx-u **ʔal-jawm** ila l-muḡaskari
 joined Taha the-yesterday and Cheikh-NOM the-today in the-camp
'Taha joined the camp yesterday, and the Cheikh joined the camp today.'
- C.** iḡtakaf-a Taha **fi l-manzil** wa Mohammad **fi l-maktaba**
 sat Taha in the-house and Mohammed in-the-library
'Taha sat at home, and Mohammed sat in the library.'
- D.** *iḡtakaf-a Taha **fi l-manzil maḡa** Mohammad **fi l-maktaba**
 sat Taha in the-house with Mohammed in the-library

(8B) is an example of a Coordinate structure. We notice that the two DPs can be different in terms of place. In (8C), the Coordinative structure's DPs are different in terms of time. If we apply the same thing to CS, the sentence is ill-formed (see, e.g., 8D). Indeed, the two DPs can't be different in terms of place and time. This hints that they are probably derived from one complex DP, which we will see in detail later. To summarize, CS imposes that the event must happen at the same time and place. Another characteristic we have talked about is the fact that the Coordinative structure in (8B) has two readings: (1) Taha and the Cheikh joined the camp at one time, and (2) Taha and the Cheikh joined the camp at different times (i.e., yesterday and today, respectively). This shows that while CS has one collective reading (see, e.g., 8D), Coordinative structures have both distributive and collective readings, which induces semantic ambiguity. To explore this further, let us look at the following examples:

- 9) **A.** ḡaḡala l-baḡiḡu wa ḡaḡiq-a-hu ḡala alf dirham
 received the-researcher and friend-ACC-his on thousand dirham
'The researched and his friend received one thousand dirhams.'
- B.** ḡaḡala l-baḡiḡu maḡa ḡaḡiq-i-hi ḡala alf dirham
 received the-researcher with friend-GEN-his on thousand dirham
'The researcher received with his friend one thousand dirhams.'
- C.** ḡaḡala l-baḡiḡu wa ḡaḡiq-u-hu ḡala alf dirham
 received the-researcher and friend-NOM-his on thousand dirham
'The researcher and his friend one thousand dirhams.'

In (9A, 9B), the CS reading only accepts a collective one: both the researcher and his friend got one thousand dollars. In (9C), the Coordinative structure has both collective and distributive readings. The latter reading is as follows: the researcher got one thousand dollars, and the friend got one thousand dollars; that is, each of them got a separate one thousand dollars. The following table shows the differences between CS and Coordinative structure:

10)

| | Comitative Structure | Coordinative Structure |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Syntactic Differences | The two DPs do not have to agree in Case. | The two DPs must agree in Case. |
| | The subject can be removed in CS. | The subject cannot be removed. |
| | The two DPs can be separate from each other (Secondary Predicate). (See section 4) | The two DPs must be adjacent to each other. (See section 4) |
| | In transitive structures with verbs of comparison, the second internal argument is obligatory. | In transitive structures, the second internal argument is always optional. |
| Interpretive Difference | (a) The two DPs must share the same event in time and place. | (b) The two DPs do not have to agree in time and place. |

⁷ There are other structural differences that we ignore here because they fall outside the scope of our research.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | Consequence of (a) : CS can only have a collective reading. | Consequence of (b) : Coordinative structures can have distributive and collective readings, inducing semantic ambiguity. |
|--|--|---|

This section observed differences between CS and Coordinative structure, which showed that these structures are not symmetrical. This syntactic and interpretive asymmetry leads us to conclude that the functional item /wa/ *and* used in CS is not the same as the one employed in the Coordinative structure. The /wa/ *and* used in CS has a behavior that is close to the preposition *with*, especially in how they check the Case of their complements.⁸ Another major conclusion is that the two /wa/'s in SA are ambiguous.

4. The Characteristics of the Comitative Structure in Standard Arabic

First, CS in SA has two DPs, which are separated by either /wa/ (of CS) (see, e.g., 11A) or the preposition /mafa/ *with* (see, e.g., 11B).

- 11) **A.** daxala l-walad-u wa l-umm-a ila l-manzil-i
entered the-boy-NOM and the-mother-ACC to the-house-GEN
'The boy and the mother entered the house.'
- B.** daxala l-walad-u mafa l-umm-i ila l-manzil-i
entered the-boy-NOM with the-mother-GEN to the-house-GEN
'The boy entered with the mother to the house.'

The second characteristic that we can see above is that the second DP with the functional item /wa/ *and* (see, e.g., 11A) is marked in the accusative Case. On the contrary, in 11B, the second DP is marked in the genitive Case. Let us look at the third characteristic in the following examples:

- 12) **A.** ḍaharati n-natizat-u_i [mutazaminat-an [e_i wa l-ḥtiḏaḏ-a]]
appeared the-result-NOM alongside-ACC and the-protest-ACC
'The results appeared with the protests.'
- B.** [ʔa-mafa Messi]_i taḥaḏada Barcelona [e_i ʔam mafa Dembele]?
Q-with Messi deal Barcelona or with Dembele
'Did Barcelona make a deal with Messi or Dembele?'

One thing that is interesting about CS in SA (and other languages as well) is its freedom of distribution. As shown in (12), the first DP can separate itself from the functional item and CO, whose unification forms [wa DP₂]. For example, in (12A), the first DP /n-natiza/ *result* separates itself from [wa l-ḥtiḏaḏ]. In (12B), the first DP *Barcelona* is separated from [with Messi].

let us go back to the work of traditional Arab grammarians (henceforth TAG). We will find that they have identified, in addition to the characteristics mentioned above, a set of characteristics that distinguishes CO from others. The observations of the TAG can be summarized in four points. First, CO may be found only in intransitive structures and its unaccusative and unergative variants (see, e.g., 13A below).⁹

- 13) **A.** ṣada l-ʔasir-u (wa damar-a l-waṭani)
came back the-hostage-NOM and destruction-ACC the-home
'Lit. The hostage came back and the destruction of the country.'
- B.** kajfa ḥaluk-a (wa l-ʔuṭruḥat-a)
how state-ACC and the-thesis-ACC

⁸ This issue (of whether /wa/ in CS and Coordinative structure are similar) was raised by Rahhali during series of presentations in *the Laboratory of Arabic Linguistics and Linguistic Preparation*. Our proposal of the asymmetry is supported by the fact that other coordinative items such as /θumma/ *then*, /bal/, and /fa/ have the same characteristics. However, /wa/ of CS is the only one that is different from all of them in terms of syntax and interpretation.

⁹ See Al-Astrabadi (1978, p. 618) and Ibn Yaeesh (n.d., p. 48). A group of grammarians considered the noun that comes after /wa/ and marked in the accusative is actually part of a Coordinative structure (see e.g., i below).

i. qaraʔt-u l-kitab-a wa r-riwayat-a
read-1S the-book-ACC and the-novel-ACC
'Lit. I read the book and the novel.'

For more on types of intransitive verbs and their analysis in SA, see Hajaj (2022).

'Lit. *How are you and the thesis?*'

Second, they state that CO is always an adjunct and does not affect the argument structure, as shown in the parentheses (see, e.g., 13 above). Third, they observe that CO appears in both verbal and verbless sentences (see, e.g., 13 above). The last characteristic noted by TAG is the fact that CO is marked in the accusative in CS (see, e.g., 13 above).

Nevertheless, there are many theoretical and empirical issues with some points discussed by TAG.¹⁰ Let us discuss these inadequacies step-by-step. First, empirical evidence shows that CO can actually appear in transitive structures. Consider the following examples:

- 14) A.** qaran-a l-ʔustad-u l-maqalat-a wa l-ʔuʔruħat-a
 compared-3S.M the-professor-NOM the-article-ACC and the-thesis-ACC
 'Lit. *The professor compared the article and the thesis.*'
- B.** *qaran-a l-ʔustad-u_i l-maqalat-a_j
 compared-3S.M the-professor-NOM the-article-ACC
 '**The professor compared the article.*'
- C.** qarana l-maqalatajni / l-maqalati
 compared-3S.M the- two articles the-articles
 'Lit. *He compared the two articles / the articles.*'
 '*He compared between the two articles / the articles.*'

The predicate /qarana/ *compared* demands the obligatory presence of two internal arguments; these are /l-maqalata/ *the article* and /l-ʔuʔruħata/ *the thesis* (see, e.g., 14A). Dropping the internal argument deems the sentence ill-formed (e.g., 14B). The only way to solve the ungrammaticality of the sentence is by having the internal argument appear in dual or plural forms.¹¹ One way to explain this is by referring to the theta theory (Chomsky, 1981a). Consider the following principle (Chomsky, 1981a; see also Haegeman, 1994, pp. 44-65):

15) Theta Criterion

- Each argument is assigned one and only one theta role.
- Each theta role is assigned to one and only one argument.

Thus, the reason why (14B) is ill-formed can be summarized in the following theta-grid:

qarana: verb

| 1 DP | 2 DP | 3 DP |
|---------|---------|---------|
| i | j | ? |

Indeed, in the case of (14B), there was a thematic role that was not assigned to its argument. One major conclusion is that the structure (14) is not a Coordinative one. If it were, we would be able to drop the second internal argument. Compare (14), which is CS, with the Coordinative structure below:

- 16)** ʔakal-a l-xubz-a (wa zzajt-a)
 ate-3S.M the-bread-ACC and oil-ACC
 '*He ate bread with oil.*'

In (16), we can optionally drop the second internal argument, which further strengthens our proposal that CS and Coordinative structure are entirely different, syntactically and interpretively.

As for their proposal that CO is always an adjunct, empirical data shows otherwise:

- 17) A.** tanayam-a Taha wa zawʔat-a-hu

¹⁰ We should note that the theoretical framework adopted by TAG is different from the one we adopt here (i.e., the Minimalist approach). We leave these theoretical differences aside.

¹¹ For more on transitive verbs, see Siloni (2015) and Hajaj (2018).

harmonize-3S.M Taha and wife-ACC-his
'Lit. *Taha harmonized and the wife.*' *Taha sang with the wife.*'

B. * tanayam-a Taha
harmonize-3S.M Taha

C. tanayam-a:
harmonize-3.DUAL
'*They were in harmony.*'

18) A. *waj tfaraq-t-i **Moroccan Arabic**
Q separate-2S
'Lit. *Did you separate?*'

B. waj tfaraq-t-i mʃa Mohammed **Moroccan Arabic**
Q separate-2S with Mohammed
'*Did you separate from Mohammed?*'

/tanayam/ *harmonized* and /tfaraq/ *separate* are considered verbs where two entities must participate in the action. Let us look at the examples in detail. In (17A), the CO /zawʒatahu/ *his wife* is obligatory in the sentence, shown by the ungrammaticality of (17B). The obligatoriness of CO goes back to the nature of the predicate/verb. Verbs that demand the participation of two entities will dictate the existence of two internal arguments, *Taha* and *his wife*, respectively. Indeed, although the verb /tanayama/ *harmonized*, in (17), is syntactically intransitive, it is thematically transitive. Now, let us turn to MA data in (18). It also supports our proposal that CO is obligatory in these instances.

Another inadequacy faced by TAG is their claim that it is the verb that always 'marks' the CO in the accusative.¹² Let us look at the following examples:

19) kajfa ʃal-u-ka wa l-bard-a
how state-NOM-2S.M and the-cold-ACC
'*How are you with the cold?*'

If the verb always assigns accusative to CO, how do we explain verbless sentences that do not have a verb in the first place?¹³ In (19), the sentence does not contain a verb; therefore, one question that arises is, who assigns the accusative case to CO? TAG realized this problem; consequently, they proposed that it is /kana/ that assigns the accusative Case. Therefore, (19) is actually realized as follows:¹⁴

20) kajfa jakunu ʃal-u-ka wa l-bard-a
how is state-NOM-2S.M and the-cold-ACC
'*How are you with the cold?*'¹⁵

Nevertheless, the idea of *taqdir* (see footnote 14) is not a strong argument. Consider the following example:

21) A. kanat ʔas-sanat-u ʔal-maʔdijat-u murhiqat-an
is the-year-NOM the-previous-NOM exhausting-ACC
'*Last year was exhausting.*'
B. * kanat ʔas-sanat-u ʔal-maʔdijat-u wa murhiqat-an
is the-year-NOM the-previous-NOM and exhausting-ACC

¹² See Ibn Sarraj (1996, p. 209), Ibn Yaeesh (n.d., p. 49), and Al-Astrabadi (1978, p. 619). There are, indeed, other irregular proposals that are adopted by syntacticians concerning the CO assigner. For example, Ibn Sarraj reports that Abu Al-Hassan states that CO is marked in the accusative due to the fact that the preposition /maʃa/ *with* is dropped, a case that is similar to adverbials. He also reports that Ibnu Zajaj considers CO to be assigned by a covert verb. For more on this issue, see Ibn Sarraj (1996, p. 209) and Ibn Yaeesh (n.d., p. 49).

¹³ Fassi Fehri (1993) and Benmamoun (2000) hypothesize that the verbless sentences has a copular verb, which is not phonologically pronounced. Rahhali (2010) uses the Minimalist approach in order to argue against the existence of a copular verb since it is not syntactically active. We adopt Rahhali's (2010) conception that there is no verb in verbless sentences.

¹⁴ TAG came up with the idea of *taqdir* in order to solve problems related to the assignment of Case. The idea of *taqdir* is as follows: when a sentence is pronounced, we assume that there is another similar structure in meaning; therefore, when somebody thinks of sentence A, it is like they said sentence B. When we talk about the assignment of the accusative Case, *taqdir* was used. Just because we do not see the verb, it does not mean it is not there since we can have structures like (20) that are similar in meaning and do possess a verb. For more on this issue, see Levin (2019).

¹⁵ See Ibn Yaeesh (n.d., p. 49) and Ibn Sarraj (1996, p. 209).

The copular verb /kana/ marks /murhiqat-an/ *exhausting* in the accusative in (21A). However, the sentence becomes ill-formed once we insert /wa/ *and* before CO in (21B). If the copular verb /kana/ was the accusative assigner, why is the insertion of /wa/ create an ill-formed sentence?

Our proposal is strengthened theoretically by the so-called Burzio's Generalization, whose conception is as follows:

22) Burzio's Generalization

All and only the verbs that can assign a θ -role to the subject can assign accusative Case to an object.
(Burzio, 1986, p. 178)

To understand this generalization further, consider the following examples:

- 23)** *ṣaqaṭ-a l-waraq-u (wa t-tina)*
 fell-3S the-leaf-NOM and the-fig
'The leaves fell with the fig.'

The verb *fell* in (23) does not assign a theta role to its subject because the subject's theta role is assigned in the complement position of the verb. Since the verb cannot assign a theta role to its subject, the verb cannot assign the accusative Case, as per Burzio's Generalization. Consequently, /l-waraq-u/ *the leaves* will move to [Spec, vP] and/or [Spec, TP] in order to check the [EPP] (or Edge feature; Chomsky, 2005). Notice how even if the verb *fell* is an unaccusative verb, CO is still marked in the accusative, strengthening our proposal that accusativity here has nothing to do with a covert copular verb or an overt verb, as seen in (23). The following points summarize the characteristics of CS in SA:

- (a) It has two DPs separated by either /wa/ *and* or /maʕa/ *with*.
- (b) In the CS structure with the functional item /wa/ *and*, the second DP is marked in the accusative.
- (c) The first DP can be separated from the functional item and CO (i.e., [e_i wa DP₂]).
- (d) If CS appears with the verbs of comparison, the structure is transitive.
- (e) Verbs that indicate the participation of two entities demand two internal arguments, one of which is CO.
- (f) The verb does not assign an accusative Case to CO.

Taking all of the things considered in the section, we conclude the following main points. CO can appear in transitive structures, it can be an internal argument, and the verb is not solely responsible for marking it in accusative Case. One question remains, how do we derive CS, taking into account all of these characteristics? We answer this question after arguing that there are two (distinct) Comitative Structures (i.e., symmetric and asymmetric), which is the topic of the next section.

5. The Symmetric and Asymmetric Comitative Structures

Based on what we have seen in section 4, we deduce that there are three characteristics of asymmetry for CS. Let us compare symmetric and asymmetric Comitative Structures:

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 24) A. | *tazamana l-ʕid-u *(wa l-ʕuṭlat-a) coincided the-Eid-NOM and the-holiday-ACC | Symmetric Structure |
| B. | *qurinat baris-u *(wa mjunix) compared Paris-NOM and Munich | Symmetric Structure |
| C. | mata ʔar-razul-u (wa zawʒat-a-hu) died the-man-NOM and wife-ACC-his 'Lit. <i>the man died and the wife.</i> ' | Asymmetric Structure |

The difference between symmetric and asymmetric structures is as follows. The former includes verbs of comparison and participation, while the latter does not. One main consequence is that the [wa DP₂] is obligatory when the verb is that of comparison and participation (see, e.g., 24A, 24B). If we look at 24B, for example, the deletion of [wa [DP₂ mjunix]] deems the sentence ill-formed. On the contrary, other verbs do not demand a second internal argument; subsequently, the [wa DP₂] is optional. In 24C, the absence of [wa [DP₂ zawʒatahu]] does not affect the grammaticality of the sentence. It is clear that verbs of comparison and participation (and collectivity) assign two theta roles to their arguments (i.e., c-selection). The only way to save (24A, 24B) is if we have the following structure:

- 25) A.** taʕafaḥa ʔar-razul-an
 shook hands the-man-DUAL
'The two men shook hands.'
- B.** taqaranati l-kutub-u
 compared the-book-P

'The books were compared.'

Based on (25), the verbs always demand a plural internal argument(s), be it in CS (see, e.g., 24) or simply one internal argument, which can either be in dual or plural form (see, e.g., 25A and 25B, respectively). These verbs of comparison and participation always assign the roles of agent (for the external argument) and theme. Another difference between symmetric and asymmetric CS can be illustrated in the following examples:

- 26) A.** tazamana ʔal-ʕid-u wa l-ʕuṭlat-a / * l-walad-a **Symmetric CS**
 coincided the-Eid-NOM and the-holiday-ACC the-boy-ACC
'Eid coincided with the holiday.'
*'Lit. *Eid coincided with the boy.'*
- B.** qurinat Mariam-u wa Buthainat-a / *l-ʔzmiṣat-a **Symmetric CS**
 compared Mariam-NOM and Buthaina-ACC the-university-ACC
'Mariam was compared with Buthaina.'
*'Lit. *Mariam was compared with the university.'*
- C.** mata r-raʔul-u wa ʔawʔat-a-hu / aḏana l-faʔri **Asymmetric CS**
 died the-man-NOM and wife-ACC-his call the-Fajr
'The man died with his wife.' / *'The man died with the Fajr call of prayer.'*

In symmetric comitative structures (see, e.g., 26A and 26B), the direct object and the CO must agree in terms of the [\pm animate] feature. The contrary happens in (26C), where it is optional for the direct object and CO not to agree in terms of the [\pm animate] feature.

To clarify, let us discuss (26A). The subject *Eid* must agree with DP₂ *the holiday* in [-animate], which is a consequence of the nature of the verb, which is of participation. Indeed, since *Eid* is not in the plural form, it will not satisfy the semantic properties of the predicate; consequently, a second theta role will need to be assigned to another internal argument, which is, in (26A), the DP₂ *the holiday*. The same applies to (26B), except there must be agreement in the [+animate] feature.¹⁶

The fourth characteristic is summarized in the following examples:

- 27) A.** taṭabaqat l-ʔiftiraḏu wa t-taʔribata / l-ʔifriḏ-an / *ʔal-ʔftiraḏ
 matched the-hypothesis and the-experiment/the-hypothesis.DUAL / the-hypothesis
'The hypothesis matched with the experiment.'
'The two hypotheses matched.'
*'Lit. *the hypothesis matched.'*
- B.** taṭabaqa l-ʔiftiraḏ-at
 matched the-hypothesis-P
'The hypotheses matched.'
- 28)** ʔanna Mohammd-un / ʔar-rizal-u (wa l-ʔamahir)
 sang Mohammed-NOM / the-men-NOM.P and the-masses.P
'Mohammed sang with the men.'
'Mohammed sang with the masses.'

Based on (27) and (28), we can see that the difference between symmetric and asymmetric comitative structures is the fact that the former is limited in the [+plural] feature. The symmetric structure only accepts internal arguments in the dual/plural forms (see, e.g., /l-ʔifriḏan/ *two hypotheses* and /l-ʔiftiraḏat/ *hypotheses* in 28A, 28B) or two arguments (i.e., the subject /l-ʔiftiraḏu/ *the hypothesis* and the CO /t-taʔribata/ *the experiment* in, e.g., 24A). If the [+plural] feature is not present in the symmetric CS, the sentence is deemed ill-formed, as shown in (27A) for /ʔal-ʔftiraḏ/ *the hypothesis*.

¹⁶ During the activities of the laboratory of *Team of Arabic Linguistics and Linguistic Preparation*, Rahhali (personal communication, December 22, 2021) said that the [\pm animate] that we used is not necessary to distinguish between the two comitative structures. He provided the following example in order to argue for his position:

- i. tawafaqati l-hukumat-u wa ʔ-ʔaʕba
 agreed the-government-NOM and the-people-ACC
'The government agreed with its people.'

At first glance, this seems as a counterevidence. Indeed, *the government* disagrees with the people in terms of the feature [\pm animate]. However, once we take a deeper look at the example, it turns out that it does not contradict our proposal. Semantically speaking, and in this example, it is not that *the government* agreed with *the people*, but it is that their two ideologies coincided. Therefore, both of these internal arguments agree in terms of the [-animate] feature. Another interpretation is that the people in the government agreed with the citizens. In this situation, they will both agree in the [+animate] feature.

In 28, the CS's arguments show complete freedom in terms of the feature of number. The argument may bear [+singular] feature (e.g., *Muhammed*) or [+plural] (e.g., *men*) without affecting its grammaticality.

Notice also that CO becomes an adjunct if the argument of the verb of comparison is in the dual or plural form (see, e.g., 27A). However, CO becomes another (obligatory) internal argument if the first internal argument is singular (e.g., /ʔal-ʔftiraðu/ *the hypothesis*); that is, the DP₂ CO and the argument of the verbs of comparison in the plural form are in complementary distribution. The major conclusion is that the symmetric comitative structure's DP₁ and DP₂ are both included in the same domain, which explains why the DP₂ is always obligatory in this type.

The following table shows a distinction between symmetric CS and asymmetric CS:

29)

| | Symmetric CS | Asymmetric CS |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| First Characteristic | Its verb is that of comparison and participation. | Other verbs |
| Second Characteristic | [wa DP ₂] is obligatory. | [wa DP ₂] is optional. |
| Third Characteristic | There must be agreement between the two internal arguments regarding the [\pm animate] feature. | Agreement is optional. |
| Fourth Characteristic | The [+plural] feature plays an obligatory role in this type of structure. | The [+plural] feature is not restricted in this type of structure. |

To sum up, the syntactic and interpretive differences between symmetric and asymmetric comitative structures show that they, subsequently, have different syntactic analyses. While the symmetric CS is analyzed in terms of complementation, the asymmetric CS will be analyzed in terms of adjuncthood. The following section will deal with this.

6. The Syntax of Comitative Structures

So far, our paper has dealt with the description of CS in SA. This section will explain the characteristics mentioned in the previous sections in a uniform fashion. We adopt Kayne's (1994) proposal that the two DPs in the symmetric comitative structures are joined in one complex DP, which will take the form in (31) below:

30) [DP₁ [D [DP₂]]]

31) John_i is friends [e_i with Bill].

However, we do not agree with Kayne's (1994) proposal that comitative and coordinative structures are derived in a uniform way. Indeed, Kayne (1994) and Larson and Vassilieva (2001) assumed that the complex DP (30) can derive both CS and Coordinative structure and that the D head can host both /wa/ *and* and /maʕa/ *with*. If we adopt their proposal, we will disregard many differences distinguishing CS from the Coordinative structure. The first thing that their proposal fails in is that comitative and coordinative structures differ in terms of the Case of DP₂. Let us look at the following examples:

- 32) **A.** qadima Mohammad-un wa xalid-un / *qadama wa xalid-un
 came Mohammed-NOM and Khaled-NOM/ came and Khaled-NOM
 'Mohamed came with Khaled.'
 'Lit. He came and Khaled.'
- B.** taʕafaħa wa r-razul-a
 shook hands and the-man-ACC
 'He shook hands with the man.'

In (32A), we see that the DP₁ *Mohammed* in the Coordinative structure needs to have the same Case as DP₂ *Khaled* (i.e., both are in the nominative Case). In (32B), the DP₂ is always marked in the accusative, regardless of the nature of the DP₁'s Case. Another thing that weakens their proposal is how they can explain why it is possible for DP₁ to be dropped in the CS (see, e.g., 32B) while it is not possible to do the same in the Coordinative structure (see the ungrammaticality of, e.g., 33A). Moreover, let us consider these examples:

- 33) **A.** ʕada l-ʔasir-u mutaʕaniq-an wa umm-a-hu
 came the-hostage-NOM hugging-ACC and mother-ACC-his
 'The hostage came back with his mother while hugging her.'
- B.** *Mohammad-un naʕaħa wa xalid-un

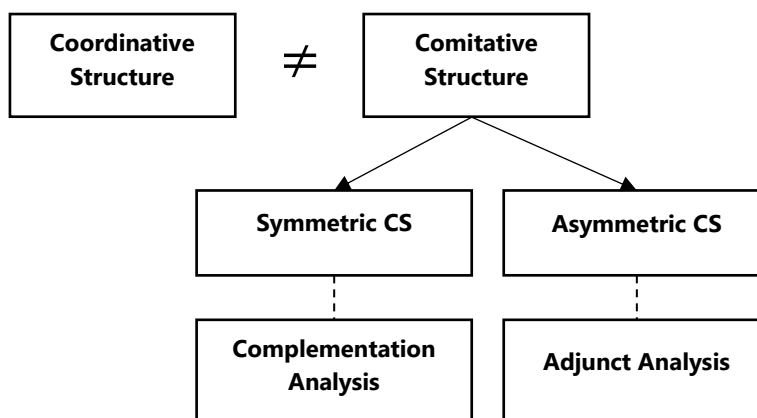
Mohammed-NOM succeeded and Khaled-NOM

Kayne (1994) and Larson and Vassileva (2001) do not explain why we can separate DP₁ *the hostage* from the DP₂ [*wa ummahu*] in comitative structures that contain two predicates (i.e., *came* and *hugging*, see, e.g., 33A). However, it is impossible to separate DP₁ from DP₂, as shown in the ungrammaticality of (33B), whereby *Mohammed* is no longer adjacent to *Khaled*.

Therefore, unlike the previous proposal, we adopt Zhang's (2007c) proposal, who states that CS is syntactically different from the Coordinative structure. In addition to that, we propose that the same CS derives two different structures: the complementation structure, which will derive the symmetric structure, and the adjunct structure, which will derive the asymmetric structure.

The following figure illustrates our analysis:

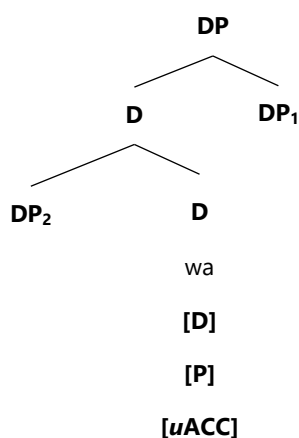
34)



5.1 Symmetric Comitative Structure and the Complementation Structure

In order to avoid the problems that face the previous proposals, we propose that symmetric CS has the following tree representation:

35)



The structure (35) shows as follows: the complex DP contains DP₁ as its specifier while DP₂ is the complement of the head D, which hosts the functional item */wa/ and*. The head D includes three main features: the categorical feature [D], the [+plural] feature, and the uninterpretable feature [+ACC], which will eventually be checked against that of the D in DP₂.

Joining DP₁ and DP₂ under one complex DP is justified. This justification is the fact that CS has the DP₂ CO and the argument of the verbs of comparison in the plural form in complementary distribution. Since the two are in complementary distribution, they belong to the same syntactic domain. This explains why CO is obligatory when DP₁ is singular in a structure containing these types of verbs.

Let us now talk about each feature and why it is needed in the analysis. As for the [D] feature, it allows the complex DP to accommodate the c-selection of the verbs of participation, which selects DPs. Consider the following examples:

36) A. taşafaħa r-rizal-u
shook hands the-men-NOM
'The men shook hands.'

B. taşafaħa l-walad-u wa l-bint-a

shook hands the-boy-NOM and the-girl-ACC
'The boy and the girl shook hands.'

The agent role that is assigned to the DP *the men* is the same one that is assigned to the complex DP *the boy and the girl*, which hosts [DP₂ *the boy*] as its specifier and [DP₁ *the girl*] in its complement position.¹⁷ This also explains why DP₁ and DP₂ must agree in [±animate]: the complex DP comprises one theta role of agenthood; consequently, the DPs inside the complex DP must share agenthood meaning (i.e., [±animate]).

Let us move on to the [+plural] feature. It is important in the sense that this feature is present in the head D of the complex DP. Consider the following examples:

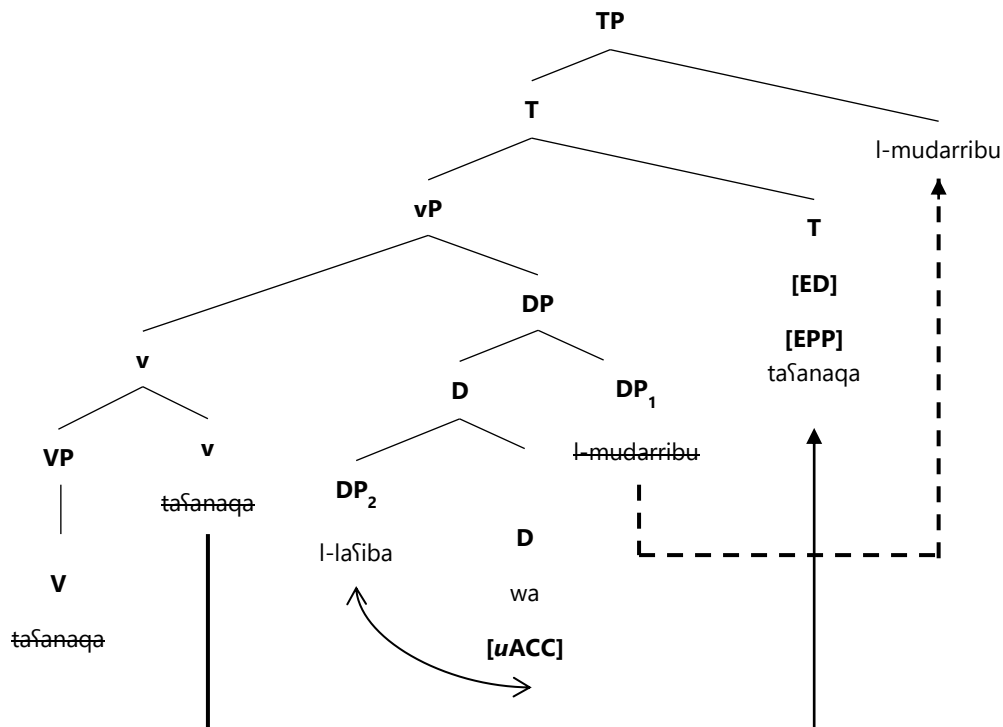
37) taṣanaqa l-mudarrīb-u wa l-laṣīb-a
 hugged the-coach-NOM and the-player-ACC
'The coach and the player hugged.'

The [+Plural] feature responds to the requirement that verbs of participation should have a plural entity, which is, in our case, the whole complex DP. Therefore, it does not matter the number of features that DP₁ and DP₂ have. For example, in 37, the DP₁ *the coach* and the DP₂ *the player* have [+singular] features. Both cannot satisfy the [+plural] feature in the D head of the complex DP. In other words, we said that the verbs of participation require their entity to be in the plural, but both the DPs do not have the [+plural] feature. This shows to us that it is the whole complex DP which satisfies the number featural specification of the verb of participation. This also indicates the obligatoriness of CO when DP₁ is in the singular.

The feature we discuss is the [+ACC] one, also hosted on the D of the complex DP. This feature is valued in the complement position of the D head, which hosts the CO. This valuation satisfies head-complement relations, which are considered local (Chomsky, 1995). Note that this valuation/checking of the [+ACC] feature holds for both verb and verbless sentences. Let us consider the following example and then provide a tree representation that explains both (37) and (38):

38) l-mudarrīb-u taṣanaqa wa l-laṣīb-a
 the-coach-NOM hugged and the-player-ACC
'The coach and the player hugged.'

Let us now look at the tree representation for (38):

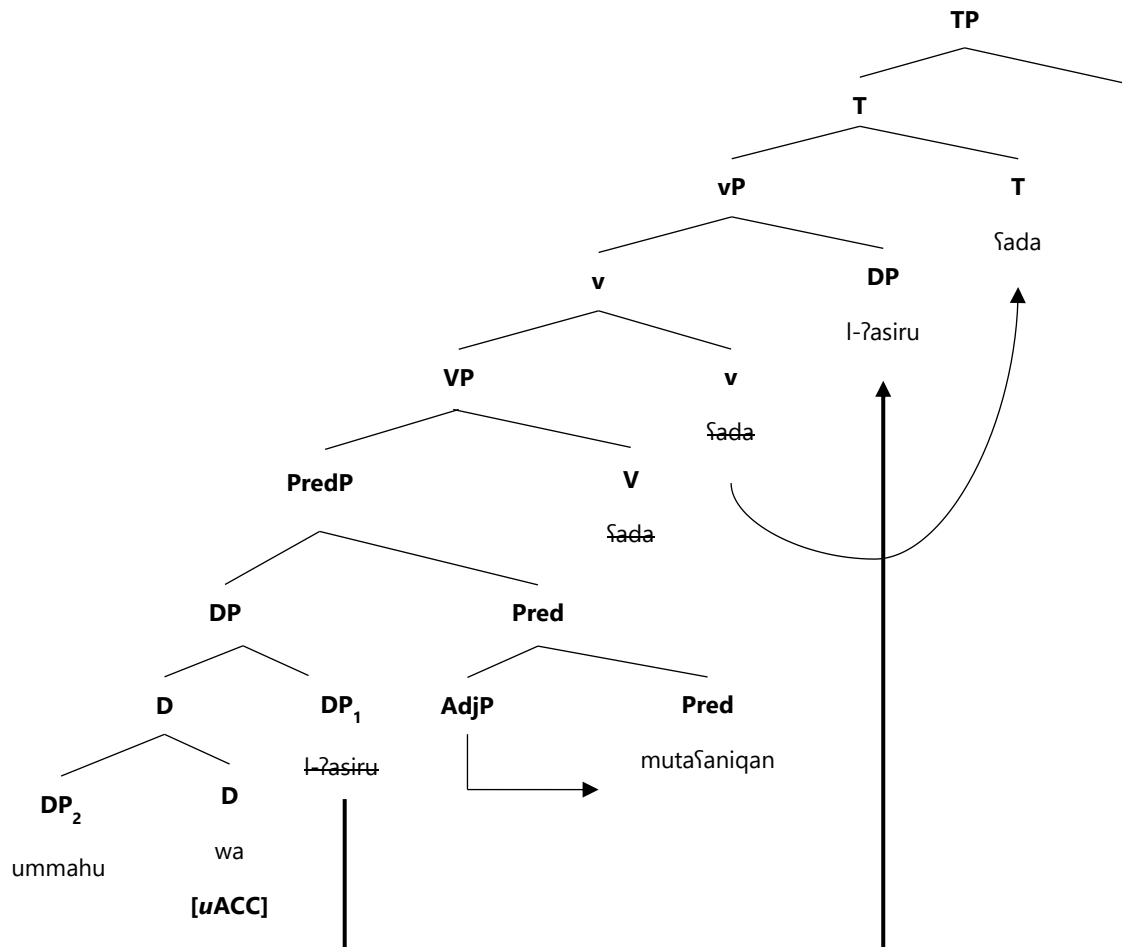


¹⁷ The idea that the whole complex DP receives the theta role of agenthood is not theoretically problematic. Indeed, we cannot assume that the verb selects one theta role in a situation where we have *the men* and two theta roles when we have two entities (i.e., *the boy and the girl*). Our analysis provides uniformity of theta assignment of the verb. Moreover, if the two examples are syntactically similar since we said they are in complementary distribution, they should also be semantically similar.

Let us explain (39) in detail. The complex DP is situated in [Spec, vP]. This is the position where the DP receives the theta role of agent from the predicate *hugged*, which also defines the [+animate] feature for both the DPs that are situated in the complement and specifier position of the head D. After the movement of the verb from v to T, the [+ACC] feature of DP₂ is checked against [+ACC] of D. Notice that the [+NOM] feature of DP₁ is not checked yet; therefore, the DP₁ will move to [Spec, TP] in order to check it. This leads us to an important point. The only difference between (37) and (38) is that, in the latter, the DP₁ stays in the specifier of the complex DP. In (38), the DP₁ moves to [Spec, TP]. This means that the [NOM] feature can either be checked in-situ or in [Spec, TP].¹⁸

Let us discuss now the tree derivation of the following sentence:

- 39) A. ζ ada l- ζ asir-u_i muta ζ aniq-an [_e_i wa umm-a-hu
 came back the-hostage-NOM hugging-ACC and mother-ACC-his
 'The hostage came back with his mother while hugging her.'
 B.



As we can see in (40), the derivation of CS by DP₁ movement is clearly seen. We see that DP₁ can be separated from [wa DP₂] in secondary predicate structures, as we can see in (40). The tree representation above shows how CS is derived when we have two predicates in the same sentence. First, we see that the complex DP is situated inside the small clause, which is called PredP and is headed by Pred. This head hosts /muta ζ aniqan/ *hugging*, the predicate that denotes the meaning of participation. Second, inside the complex DP, DP₂'s accusative Case is valued by the head D. Third, the subject /l- ζ asiru/ moves from [Spec, complex DP] to [Spec, vP] so that it receives its theta role from the verb (Hornstein, 2001, 2004). Since the matrix clause does not contain the subject, the subject /l- ζ asiru/ checks its [ED] and [NOM] features in [Spec, vP] (i.e., in-situ) by T. Fourth, the reason why it is DP₁ that moves and not DP₂ has to do with Attract Closest Principle (Chomsky, 1995), which entails that the Probe needs to attract the closest Goal to it, which is DP₁. Another principle that explains why DP₂ cannot move is Greed, which states the following idea:

¹⁸ The idea that the [+NOM] feature can be checked in-situ or in [Spec, TP] has been discussed by Rahhali (2003).

40) Greed

Move raises α only if morphological properties of α itself would not otherwise be satisfied in the derivation. (Chomsky, 2015, p. 239)

Indeed, the DP₂ has already checked its Case feature; therefore, it should not move to another position to check the Case again.¹⁹ Our analysis of asymmetric CS is also supported by the fact that PRO is a replacement of the copy of DP₁, and this copy is a result of the movement of the argument (Hornstein, 2001, 2004).²⁰

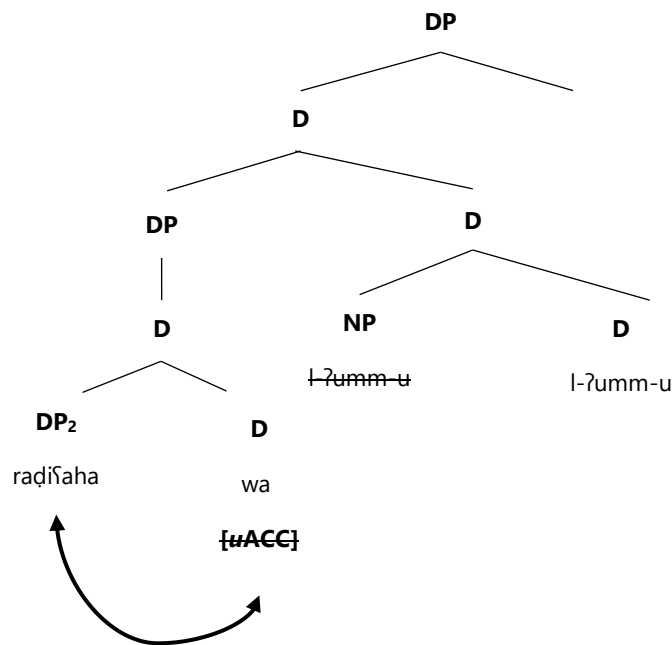
5.2 Asymmetric Comitative Structure and Adjuncthood

Let us recapitulate what distinguishes symmetric from asymmetric CS (see section 4). We said that in asymmetric structures, the DP₂ CO is an adjunct, does not have to agree with DP₂ in the feature [\pm animate], and is marked in the accusative (i.e., similar to symmetric CS) as shown in the following example:

- 41) γ istajqaḍti l- γ umm-u wa raḍiḥ-a-ha / wa ranin-a l-hatifi
 woke up the-mother-NOM and baby-ACC-her /and ringing-ACC the-phone
 'The mother woke up with the baby.' / 'The mother woke up with the ringing of the phone.'

All the characteristics are met in (42). First, we can drop the CS and the baby/and the ringing of the phone. Second, the two DPs might not agree in the feature aforementioned: mother agrees in [\pm animate] with the baby and does not agree with the ringing of the phone. Finally, the CO the baby and ringing are both marked in the accusative Case. We propose the following tree representation for (42):

42)



In (43), the CO is also positioned in DP₂, as seen with the symmetric CS. The only difference is that the complex DP is merged in the adjunct position and to the left of the DP₁ the mother.

One interesting property of asymmetric CS is that the complex DP does not have a specifier. However, one thing symmetric and asymmetric CS share is the procedure of checking the [ACC] feature, and this checking happens whether in verbal (see, e.g., 42) or verbless sentences (see, e.g., below):

¹⁹ In our analysis of CS, we focused on [wa DP₂] whereby the DP₂ is a CO that is marked in the accusative Case. This kind of structure is not really different from the one that has /maḥa/ with, except in two characteristics. Let us consider this example in order to explain them:

- i. maḥa umm-i-hi za:ʔa (la maḥa uxt-i-hi)
 with mother-GEN-his came.3S.M not with sister-GEN-his
 Lit. 'With his mother he came, not with his sister.'

The first characteristic is concerned with Case. The DP is marked in the genitive and checked by the preposition. The second property is the focalization of [maḥa DP₂].

²⁰ Hornstein (2014) argues against the PRO theory due to the many theoretical problem it faces (see also Damir, 2015).

- 43) kajfa ha:lu f-ʃaʃb l-ʔukrani wa l-qaʃf-a
 how state the-people the-Ukrainian and the-bombing-ACC
 'How are the people of Ukraine dealing with the bombing?'

7. Conclusion

This paper investigated comitative structure in Standard Arabic using the Minimalist approach. We reached the following findings: first, we showed a difference between /wa/ of coordination and /wa/ in comitative structures. Second, we observed two types of comitative structures, symmetric and asymmetric. In the symmetric comitative structures, the concomitate object is an argument and must agree with DP₁ in terms of the [\pm animate] feature. In the asymmetric comitative structures, the concomitate object has more freedom: it is an adjunct and does not have to agree with DP₁ in terms of the [\pm animate]. Third, we proposed the complex DP, headed by /wa/, to explain all the properties of the comitative structure. The only difference between symmetric and asymmetric structures is that the derivation of the former happens at the level of complementation whereas the latter is merged in the adjunct position. Fourth, the complex DP analysis explains both the properties of the concomitate object and its feature checking, whose checker is not the verb. Finally, and theoretically speaking, this analysis responds to the Minimalist restrictions on the derivation of complex DP; that is, it shows how symmetric comitative structures are derived locally. Some of the research limitations are that we did not dive deeper into the properties of coordination. We also did not explain why comitative structures with the preposition /maʃa/ *with* can be focalized while such a case is not possible with /wa/. Suggestions for further research include analyzing comitative structures in Moroccan Arabic and other Arabic dialects to find out the differences and similarities between SA and its dialects.

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