Nominal Constructions in Modern Standard Arabic With Reference to English

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate nominal constructions of modern standard Arabic in terms of their types, their patterns and selectional restrictions and compare them with their counterparts in English so as to arrive at points that will be productive for pedagogical and translation purposes. The analysis of the data focuses on morphsyntactic processes to see in order to show the constructions morphologically as one word nominal or syntactically as a group of nouns in nominal positions. The objective of this study is to provide an account on a specific syntactic structure with special reference to English, in efforts to promote the importance of modern standard Arabic studies as an appropriate mean to better understand the standard and formal form of a language. The study concludes with the investigation as well as the main conclusions reached and offers a suggestion for further studies.

Key words: Nominals, Noun Phrase, Syntax, Morphology, Predicative, Copula

INTRODUCTION

Nominal Constructions in Modern Standard Arabic is very important area in linguistics field because stand for the main part of clauses or sentences in the production and constructions indication. The study aims at investigating the types, the patterns and the restrictions of building a structure with nominal so as to be easier and understood for those who are interested in translation fields or the pedagogical purposes especially in English. The analysis of the data focuses on morphsyntactic processes in order to show the constructions morphologically as one word nominal or syntactically as a group of nouns in nominal positions. The objective of this study is to provide an account on a specific syntactic structure with special reference to English, in efforts to promote the importance of modern standard Arabic studies as an appropriate mean to better understand the standard and formal form of a language. The study concludes with the investigation as well as the main conclusions reached and offers a suggestion for further studies.

Semantically, Arabic differs in aspect of noun morphology. When there is a change in the inflection or derivation it showsand functions then with inflection in the sentence 'morpho- syntax' taking into account the noun derivation. It is worth to mention that the process of morphology and syntax in Arabic distinct considerably from that of English. The study provides a general overview of nominal construction in modern standard Arabic. A descriptive study that seeks to lay out the varying range of nominal construction in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and compare them to those found in English. The objective of this study is to provide an account

on a specific syntactic structure in efforts to promote the importance of studies as an appropriate mean to better understand the standard and formal form of a language.

Statement of the Problem

Nominal constructions in modern standard Arabic has not been tackled too much by scholars and linguists. Thus, in translation of such constructions, there will be difficulties to build a suitable structure for the addressee because of the lack of the construction of nominals viz. modern standard Arabic that is used too much in every day medium.

Methodology

This study will be interesting for translators and foreign languages because after the procedures, they will be awareness of Arabic nominal constructions with reference and contrast to English. Modern Standard Arabic is a branch of Semitic language in which distincts morphologically and syntactically characteristics.

MAJOR STUDIES ON NOMINALS

The concept nominal refers to a noun, noun phrase or to any element acting like a noun. According to (Richard, 2017), Nominals occurs in the subject or the object of a sentence, or in the predicate position, which follows a linking verb and explains what the subject is. The nominal is a construction which differs in the form of a noun or a noun phrase. However, in modern standard Arabic, the construction of a

nominal follows singularity and plurality numbers whether these nouns are regular or irregular or collectives. Some structures have gender distinctions. Some linguists such as, Aboudi (1985), Borer (1996), Mohammad (1991), Hazout (2000), Fassi-Fehri (1993) among many others analyse the construct in Arabic while (Ayob 1985, Mohammed 1988, Ouhala, 1994) assign in the analysis of the data the parallel structure to the structure of a clause.

NOMINAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN MODERN STANDARD ARABIC

Nominals in Arabic consists of a noun which can be the head of a clause with non-verbal element. This noun is followed by another constituent which completes or describes the noun head. The constitute is one of the part of speech that reports the initial or the noun head. Some linguists analyse the nominal construction structurally either in term of subject or a topic of the sentence. Modern standard Arabic is morphologically rich. From phonology point of view a derived noun is formed through fixed root with morphology rules which can be known as the process of 'morphophonemic'. Moreover, this process can be applied like rules to various kinds of construction nouns. From (LearnArabicOnline.com, 2003-2010a), the formation of nouns in Arabic can be shown in the following:

1. Gerund (ism masdar) names the action denoted by its corresponding verb.
   e.g. mansoor ' the helped'.
2. Active participle (ism alfail) entity that enacts the base meaning i.e. the general actor. e.g. Katib 'writer'
3. Hyperbolic participle (ism almubulagha) a structure that adds extra meaning to the base noun overstatement. So it modifies the actor with the meaning affect the purposes. e.g.: qawam 'strength'
4. Passive participle (ism almafuwl) The meaning of this kind of nouns based on the object. e.g.: mawood: 'Promised'
5. Resembling participle (alsifa almushabaha) This theoretically takes the meaning of Active and Passive Participles. e.g.: jamel ul-soora 'Nice look'.
6. Tool noun (ism alalah) A structure that refers the base meaning i.e. instrument used to set the action. e.g.: qalam 'pen'.
7. Location noun (?sm al-tharf) any noun that refers or performs through place or time reference. e.g.: manbaa 'source'.
8. Comparative and superlative (ism altafdhil)- an element that overhead the nature of the meaning. e.g.: kbar 'greater'.

Categories of Nominal Constructions in Arabic

The counterparts of Arabic nominals is broader than in other languages. Some Arabic adjectives and adverbs, are transacted as nominals. Furthermore, nominlas in Arabic can be constructed from other verbs or nouns. A nominal that is derived from the verb is the basic construction one. Arabic nouns can be categorized based several dimensions. A name

is categorized for a human, thing, and place, product, normally used to distinguish one from another. Nouns can show species a class or groups or even one thing, either individually, or in a context.
- A person: Ahmed, Fatima = (insan) human
- An animal: (asfoor) = bird
- A thing: kitab= book

These lexical items can be simples or complexes. It is clear that to define the simple lexical item in a nominal syntagm such is the case for the verbal syntagm, it is necessary to clear all nominal affixes. The Arabic noun is characterized by:

(1) - The acceptance of "the" (al) (bayt-- al-bayt) House – the house.
(2) - The acceptance of the short vowel, assigned by the presence (before the name) of one of ' *al-*jar*'* prepositions or a complement of name: (fawqa albayt-i)' above the house'-GEN.
(3) - The acceptance of an appellative. e.g.: daktoor 'Doctor'.
(4) - The acceptance of at-tanwin nominal accent. e.g.: tawilun 'tall'
(5) - The acceptance of diminution (be diminutive) nuhair (small river.) the diminutive morpheme modifies the vocalic morphology of lexical item; so we have: (invariable morphology.) the morpheme grammatical takes the six short vowels
(6) - The acceptance of predicate. Bahirul altawiil 'a long river'.

(1), (2) (4) and (5) are affixative nominal morphemes, which are agglutinated to the noun, and form with it a new and one written form. As we take for example the noun: (insan) 'human', it is an undefined noun, its graphemes and their short vowels constitute its morphology. If another homograph does not exist, it does not justify the absence of short vowels for the considered morphology. Another characteristic is present; it is common between names and verbs. It is the interrogative morpheme. These affixations are syntagmatics.

Through the derivational process, nominals in Arabic divide into:
1. Nouns without derivation:
   This kind of a noun can be stand by its self. Consider the following:
   asad
   lion. singular noun
   'Lion'
   An example of a non-derived, static noun is/asad/which means 'lion' not originated from other parts of speech. This noun is static because there is no any derivation process from other parts of speech i.e. it stands alone.
2. Derivation nouns:
   Nouns from this are derived from other nouns or verbs. Consider the following example:
   Mudaris
   Teacher. Singular. Noun
   This nominal construction is an example of a derived noun because is derived from the verb ' 'daras-a' refers to 'He taught' in English equivalent.

Nominal Constructions in Subject Positions

a.   al- tulab-u ijtazu al-imtihnat-a l-amaa
      the-students.M 1st -nom passed the exams-acc the-gneral
      "The students passed the general exams."

b.   al-fatayat-u yaakulna l- tufahaat-a
      the-girls. F 3rd -nom eat the- apple
      'The girls eat apples.'

In examples above the nominals occur in the subject position as a preverbal where they are construed as topics by some grammarians such as (Bakir 1980; Fassi- Fehri 1993; Ouhalla and others. According to Bakr, 1980, there is agreement of such construction between subjects and verbs:

Baida-u zahra-un raat-ha.
Baida- N zahra- N saw.3sg
'Baida, Zahra saw her.'

Properties of nominal constructions in modern standard Arabic

A.   Definiteness of Arabic Nominal Constructions
      Definiteness in Arabic is characterized by affixation, the prefix (al-) in Arabic marks definiteness, as in:

al-walad
DEF-boy
'the boy.'

B.   The second property of nominal constructions is the genitive case According to Abdullatif et. al., (1997) and Alrajhi (2011) genitives in Arabic are marked by (-i). The following examples are from MSA where the genitive marker (-i) is attached to the noun phrases.

(a)   sayarat-u-n fi Sh -shari-i
      Car-FS-NOM-INDEF in DEF-street-M-GEN
      'A car in the street.'

(b)   amam-u al-dari-i
      in front-NOM DEF-house.MS-GEN
      'In front of the house.'

According to Alkhazy (2016:19) there are two main constituents make up a nominal sentence in Arabic. First, *almubtda* a nominal that occurs in the subject position which equals subject position in English. It characterized by carrying the nominative case as in 'alwaladu' inr the following example:

al-walad-u dhalki-un
the- boy. Msg. NOM Clever- NOM
" The boy is clever."

The second main constituent is called alkhabar, the predicate (report) which completes, adds or gives the information to the sentence. This constitute can be a single word, phrase, or a complete sentence, for example the report dhalki-un in the following is carries the nominative Alkhazy(2016:23):

al-walad-u dhalki-un
the- boy. Msg. NOM Clever- NOM
" The boy is clever."

Copular Clauses

The main class of nominal construction can be found in clauses with. The predicate part of clause is without verb, as in:

alsayab shairun-un iraqi-un
Al- Sayyab poet-N Iraqi-N
'Al- Sayyab is an Iraqi poet.'

According to (Fassi-Fehri 1982; Eid 1991; Matthews, 1991, Plunkett 1993; Mohammad 1998), a structure like above termed Copular clauses. The following example shows the pronoun with the initial subject:

Amjed-un huwwa dhaki-un.
Amjed. Msg-nom pronoun clever-nom
'Amjed is clever.'

NOMINAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH

Nominal constructions in English are shown through the noun or noun phrases. Syntactically, they occupy different positions in a clause or a sentence. (Richard, 2017:1). Leech states that "nominal constructions as a noun phrase occupy a position among nouns or noun phrases or between them. The following example illustrates:

A large piece of a cake.

The nominal construction in a above example makes a sense to say that 'large' is a modifier of 'a piece of cake'.

Quirk et al.(1973) classify nominal into six groups:

1.   That clause
2.   Subordinate interrogative clauses
3.   Subordinate exclamative clauses
4.   Nominal relative clauses
5.   To - infinitive clauses and – ing clauses.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE AND ANALYSIS

According to theoretical sections that mentioned above, Arabic nominal construction can be divided into topic and attribute. A topic is either single word (1) or phrase(2), whereas attribute nominal is either single word (3), phrase(4) or sentence(5) A nominal sentence can contain a verbal sentence with different forms:

1.   Jwad-un thaki-un
      Jwad-NOM clever- NOM
      "Jwad is clever".

2.   **Madkhal-u u kuliat al tarbiya** wasii.
      Entrce-NOM the- College. N the education Wide
      "The entrance of the college of education is wide".

3.   Alsayaratu **Jamilatun.**
      The Car. NOM nice. NOM
      "The car is nice."

4.   Alrajul **tawilul qama.**
      The Man tall size
      "The man is tall in size".

5.   i.   Alwaladu **yaqra.**
            The boy read.3sg
            "The boy reads".

      ii.   alwalad **yaqrau sariaan**.
            The- boys. Pl Read.3 pl. quickly- ACC
            "The boy reads quickly."

      iii. almudaris-u **yashrahu aldarsa**.
            The – Teacher-NOM teach.3sg The lesson. ACC
            "The teacher explains the lesson."

iv. al mudir u yamnah al talbu almumiziin al jawaizz.
     The director- NOM give 3sg the student clever gifts
     "The director gives gifts to distinguished students."

Discussion

In accordance with the procedures of the given data of the practical part of the present study, the following topic of the discussion:

In (1) the nominal construction Jawad is a single word and stands in subject position whereas in (2) the nominal construction **Madkhal kuliat al tarbiya** which consists of three nouns and form as a phrase. Syntactic speaking, the first two sentences the nominls are constructed without verbs and this structure can be called topic nominal sentence. If we translate them to English the copular (is) should be insert to give the correct meaning to English construct.

Conversely, nominals can also be occurred attributively. The examples in (3and 4) the nominals " **jamilatun"** as single word occurred attributively**.** Moreover, the construct nominal **"tawilul alqama**" used attributively as a phrase.

The (5) sentence(s), we can see different forms of nominal constructions which contain verbs. In (5i) Alwaladu **yaqra** the structure forms of Noun + Verb. Consequently, sentence (5ii) "alwalad **yaqrau sariaan",** the structure is Noun + Verb + Adjective.

The form in (5iii). almudarisu **yashrahu aldarsa**. Verb +Noun

Finally the nominal in (5 iv) "almudiru yamnah **altulbu almumiziin aljawaizz"**. The construct is Verb + Noun + Adjective + Noun.

The genitive noun case refers modifies the noun, so the construction like this with two nominal in one structure should be ordered fixed. No other element can intervene or lineage. The structure will be always the head noun then modifier. Moreover, The construction such this labeled ' construct state' takes supplementary form. In this structure, the noun phrase will stand alone without definiteness markers because of the modification of the noun head. The modifier occupies genitive case position:

a. markaz-u   madina- ti
    Centre-NOM -gentive-indefinite
    'a City Centre'
b. markaz-u   -l-madinat-i
    Centre- NOM the City- genitive
    ' The City Centre.'

Examples above show that the head noun is *makaz*. This head takes a case ending. It does not have a definite article, nor an indefinite suffix. The genitive modifier, *madina* 'city', does take a definiteness marker.

RESULTS

It is worth mentioning that the nominal construction in Arabic shows the determiners, possessive and number. A case plays a vital role in the construction of beside the gender, but no independent head.

CONCLUSIONS

Building on the results, the study concludes that nominal construction is an important to be understood for those who required a foreign language. The study has arrived to a conclusion that the nominal structures in Arabic differs from that of English because of the structures of two unrelated languages. Through the literature review that we have presented and data analysis, the construction of nominals in Arabic and English seem to be different in morphology, syntax and semantics. This is because the two languages are related to different branches (Indo-European and Semitic Languages). The classifications of the nominal construction are presented the static nouns with distinct uses. The noun behave like gerunds in English in case of having a verb. Some nominal constructions are recognized through the verbs like mudaris' teacher' from the base *darsa* ' taught'

Moreover, bases can assign accusative case in which verbal bases can have a verb head. Because all bases have the division and many of the features of nouns.

The nominal sentence is composed of two constituents: *almubta,* the initial noun phrase, and *allkhaba,* the predicate. The two constituents are always assigned the nominative case, and agree in terms of number, gender, and definiteness.

Finally, the understanding of nominals aspect as a grammatical category helps the translators and learners of a foreign language the awareness of the uses and the production morphologically, syntactically and semantically in target language i.e. English. Classifying the nominal constructions in Iraqi Arabic Dialect is an important research is not considered yet. Therefore, the researchers suggest to be studied.

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