Against Multiple Agreement – Evidence from Standard Arabic

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Abstract
This paper provides evidence, based on the Case properties of verbless copular clauses in Standard Arabic (SA), against the Multiple Agreement Hypothesis proposed for languages such as Japanese (Hiraiwa, 2001), English (Chomsky, 2005b; Radford, 2006), and SA double-accusative structures (Al-Horais, 2013). It argues that the mismatch in Case value between the two nominal constituents – the DP "subject" and the DP or AP predicate - of verbless copular clauses is incompatible with the claim that a single probe can simultaneously agree with more than one goal. Rather, the Case phenomenon within the copular contexts considered appears to be consistent with, and follows from, an Agree relation between a single active probe and a single active matching goal. Some SA copular clauses which include a modal-like negative element - *laysa* - will also be used to address the key issue under investigation.

Key Words: agree, goal, multiple agree, probe, ɷ-features

1. Introduction

The facts of copular structures are not new. The structures exist in many languages and have been the focus of analysis in several studies (Baker, 2003; Bailyn, 2001; Bowers, 2001; Adger & Ramchand 2003). For practical considerations of space, scope and relevance, the studies cited cannot be adequately discussed in this introduction. Also, the author will not review previous approaches to the syntax of verbless structures in SA, referring the reader to chapter three of Benmamoun (2000) and to Benmamoun (2008) who includes a discussion of some of these earlier studies on the topic.

Rather, the author's aim is to provide a theoretical contribution by attempting an analysis of such structures within an Agree-based approach where it is argued that one probe Agrees with one goal only. The Multiple Agreement Hypothesis (MAH) has been proposed for English (section 2.1), for double-nominative structures in Japanese (section 2.2), for double-accusative 'Exceptional Case Marking' (ECM) structures in SA (section 2.3), but not, to the author's knowledge, for copular sentences in SA. Hence, it is important to test its applicability in the context of SA copular structures and explore the significance and wider implications of the results in future research.

The focal point around which the present study revolves is that multiple agreement relation between an active probe, such as (C)omplementizer or T(ense), and more than one active goal makes incorrect predictions about Case feature valuation, whereas agreement relation between a single active probe and a single active goal results in proper Case valuation.

2. Literature Review

The proposed analyses based on the Multiple Agreement Hypothesis for English, Japanese and SA are reviewed below.

2.1. Multiple Agreement Hypothesis

The Multiple Agreement Hypothesis (MAH) proposed in Chomsky (2001, 2005b) allows simultaneous agreement to take place between a probe and more than one goal. That is, when a probe locates the first active matching goal, it continues searching down for another active matching goal and undergoes simultaneous multiple agreement with both of them. Consider how Agree applies in the derivation (2) of the sentence in (1). Interpretable features are shown in boldface, and uninterpretable features are shown in italics (Radford, 2006, p. 194):

1. There were awarded several prizes.
2.
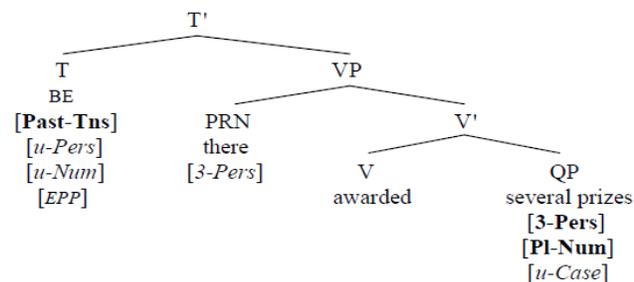
The head BE serves as an active probe by virtue of its uninterpretable ω-features of person and number; it locates *there* which is an active goal by virtue of its uninterpretable person feature and it also locates the QP several prices which is also active given its uninterpretable Case feature. In accordance with MAH, the probe BE agrees with both goals *there* and *several prices* in the ω-feature of 3rd person. As a result, the person feature on BE is valued as 3rd person[i]. Given MAH, BE also enters into an Agree relation with several prizes resulting in valuing the number feature on BE as plural. At the same time, the Case feature of several prizes is also valued nominative by the T(ense) probe hosting BE. The EPP feature of T triggers the movement of *there* to Spec-T, and all the uninterpretable features are consequently deleted as marked by strike through (Radford, 2006,194):

(3)
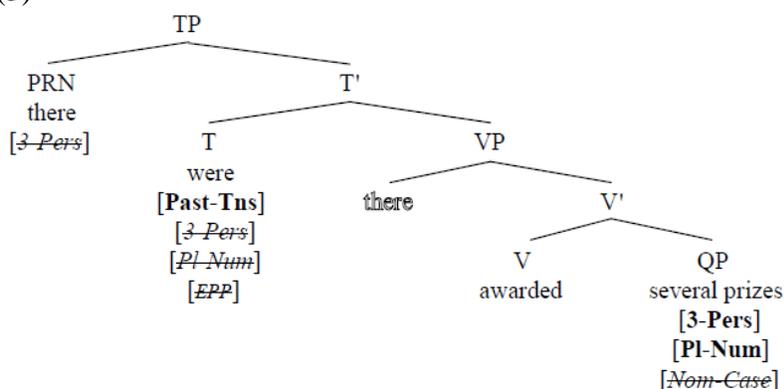
2.2. Multiple Nominative NPs in Japanese

A number of researchers (such as Tkezawa, 1987; Hiraiwa, 2001; Niinuma, 2000; and Ura, 2000) have observed that Japanese allows the occurrence of more than one NP in the nominative Case in a single sentence. This is illustrated by the following examples (example (a) is from Takezawa, 1987, p. 24) where both the subject and the object NPs are marked nominative:[ii]

(4)
(a)   John-ga   nihongo-ga   wakaru
        John-NOM Japanese-NOM understand
        "John understands Japanese."

(b)   Zoo-ga   hana-ga   nagai[iii]
        Elephant-NOM nose-NOM long
        "It is the elephant that has a trunk."

(c)   Yoko-ga   ha-ga itai
        Yoko-NOM teeth hurt
        "It is Yoko who has a toothache."

(d)   Aiko-ga tensuu-ga ochi-ta
         Aiko-NOM mark-NOM drop-past
         "It is Aiko's mark that has dropped."

These researchers claim that the source of nominative Case of both the subject and the object is T, a claim which is supported by the fact that such double nominative NPs are attested in tensed clauses (Niinuma, 2000). Under Hiraiwa's (2001) Multiple Agreement approach, T is endowed with a [+multiple] ɷ-feature and therefore when it locates both matching goals, the T probe undergoes multiple agreement with the two active goals simultaneously. Agree between T and both the subject and the object NPs is thus seen as a single operation resulting in their nominative Case valuation in a single simultaneous application.

In addition to Multiple Agree, Hiraiwa (2001) also assumes a Multiple Move whereby the two goals undergo simultaneous movement from their base position to multiple specifiers of the probe, viz., the agreeing head.

2.3. Multiple Agree in Embedded Small Clauses in SA

Adopting Hiraiwa's Multiple Agree approach and the notion of feature inheritance (Chomsky, 2008), Al-Horais (2013) provided an account of the agreement in Case and ɷ-features between the subject and the nominal predicate of SA small clauses (SCs). His account is also based on the following five premises: First, "the categorial status of the maximal projection that dominates the subcategorized SC constituents must be TP" (Al-Horais, 2013, p. 335). Second, since the "tense [of the SC] depends on the semantics of the tense of the main clause" (ibid), T of the SC is 'anaphoric', not 'non-anaphoric' (Landau, 2004). Third, under feature inheritance, matrix $v*$, not C, is taken to be the source of accusative Case matching on the two goals. Fourth, having inherited uninterpretable features from the matrix $v*$, T is now able to serve as a probe. Fifth, the agreement in ɷ-features between the two goals is assumed to be a reflex of Agree in the sense that the unintepretable ɷ-features of the predicate that can either be an AP or a DP are valued by ɷ-features of the subject.

Accordingly, Al-Horais proposed that the Case property of embedded SA SCs result from a single T probe simultaneously agreeing with two goals, the subject and the predicate within the SCs. The result of Agree between T and the two matching goals is valuing accusative Case on both goals. The following examples illustrate the Agree process (examples 43 and 50 in Al-Horais, pp. 333, 337; the gloss is slightly modified):

 (5)
(a)   ḥasib-tu   l-fatayat-a   muçallimat-i-n
         thought-1[st]P the-girls-3rd PF-ACC teachers-3rd PF-GEN-Nun
         "I thought the girls were teachers."

(b)   ʔaçdad-tu   Mariam-a   ðakiyya-t-a-n
        consider-1stP Mary-3rd SF-ACC intelligent-3rd PF-ACC
        "I consider Mary intelligent."

While these sentences display subject-predicate agreement, a problem, arises when a complementizer C is used to introduce the SC:

(6)

(a)   ḥasib-tu   ʔanna [al-fatat-a   muçalima-t-u-n]
        thought-1stP that   the-girl-3rd SF-ACC teacher-3rd SF-NOM-Nun
        "I thought that the girl was a teacher."

(b)   ʔaçdad-tu   ʔanna [Mariam-a   ðakiya-t-u-n]
        consider-1stP that   Mary-3rd SF-ACC intelligent-3rd PF-ACC
        "I consider Mary intelligent."

        The C *ʔinna* appears between the verb and the complement. Note that the DP subject and the predicate of the SC complement realize different Cases, accusative and nominative, respectively. Under Multiple Agree, they should surface with the same Case value; it is not clear why Case inheritance fails between $v*$ and T in these examples. Also, it is not clear if the notion of feature inheritance and MAH adopted by the author are restricted to SC structures or he is making a stronger proposal for the syntactic analysis of sentences in SA.

        As the present work focusses primarily on evidence from verbless copular clauses, SC construction will not be discussed further, noting in passing this empirical problem with an analysis based on Multiple Agree and feature inheritance. In terms of structure, it is desirable to propose that SCs and simple verbless copular clauses of the form [DP DP/AP/PP] be analyzed as Nominal Phrases (4.2 below), a Predicate Phrase (PredP) in other works (Bowers, 1993; Bailyn, 2001 and Baker, 2003) which is a subject-predicate structure. The author will not pursue such an analysis in this context, however.

        Recall from section (2) the proposal that in an Agree-based notion of syntax, there is a possibility where one probe can establish a relation with more than one goal under the MAH. The proposal may seem applicable to SA as well in a manner similar to Japanese (section 2.2 above); this possibility is discussed below.

3. MAH and SA Copular Clauses
As discussed above, according to MAH (Chomsky, 2001, 2005b cited in Radford, 2006:191), an active probe such as T can simultaneously probe two active goals leading to valuation of ɷ-features on T and nominative Case on both DPs.

        Can MAH be extended to verbless copula clauses in SA so that an active T probes and agrees with two matching goals? Or alternatively, can an active C(omplementizer) probe and simultaneously agree with two DP goals? That is, in line with MAH, T or C would locate the first DP, continue searching for the second DP and, when it locates both DPs, Agree applies between

T/C as a single operation. In this way, T/C multiply agrees with, and values the nominative Case of, DP_1 and DP_2. The answer appears to be negative; as will be argued below, nominative Case in SA is not valued as a reflex of multiple ѡ-feature valuation on T.

The notion that T undergoes multiple agreement with both DP goals in SA verbless copula clauses may seem plausible at first.[iv] After all, as noted in the literature on verbless clauses, such clauses have a present tense interpretation with T heading the TP projection. The construction denotes "a state located in the present tense" (Fassi Fehri, 1993, p. 152). To obtain a past and a future interpretation an overt verbal copula form is needed (see section 3.1 below). In addition to agreeing in Case, being nominative, the two pillars of the construction also agree in person, gender and number.

Consider the verbless copular clauses in the following examples from SA. The subject DP^v and the predicate DP in (a-d) agree in ѡ-features and Case, both being nominative, and likewise the subject DP and the predicate adjective in (e-h) agree in the relevant ѡ-features and Case, also both being nominative:

(7)
(a)   al-walad-u tilmiið-u-n
        the-boy-NOM student-NOM-Nun
        "The boy is a student."

(b)   al-ʔawalaad-u talaamiið-u-n
        the-boys-NOM student-pl-NOM-Nun
        "The boys are students."

(c)   al-bint-u tilmiiða-t-u-n
        the-girl-NOM student-fem-NOM-Nun
        "The girl is a student."

(d)   al-banaat-u tilmiiðaa-t-u-n
        the-girls-NOM student-pl-fem-NOM-Nun
        "The girls are students."
(e)   al-walad-u ðakiyy-u-n
        the-boy-NOM smart-NOM-Nun
        "The boy is smart."

(f)   al-ʔawalaad-u ʔðkiyyaaʔ-u-n
        the-boys-NOM student-pl-NOM-Nun
        "The boys are smart."
(g)   al-bint-u ðakiyya-t-u-n
        the-girl-NOM smart-fem-NOM-Nun
        "The girl is smart."
(h)   al-banaat-u ðakiyyaa-t-u-n
        the-girls-NOM smart-pl-fem-NOM-Nun
        "The girls are smart."

As previously noted, there is no verbal element at all in these sentences, with each consisting of two core constituents, viz., the subject and the predicate The temporal interpretation encoded in the verbless construction illustrated above is the present tense, hence the instantiation of T head which projects a TP.

Although, unlike SA, Japanese has no ɷ-features, the presence of T and the facts of agreement between the subject and the complement in nominative Case[vi] bear a prima facia resemblance to the Japanese data, and seem to argue in favour of MAH with a single T probing and agreeing with two goals. For example, a possible structure for the verbless copular sentence (7a) would be as in (8), essentially an SC structure where T selects a DP complement whose specifier is occupied by the initial DP.[vii] Since this is only a tentative diagram, I return to a revised structural analysis of verbless copular sentences in section 4.2 below. Under Multiple Agree, T multiply agrees with, and values the Case on, the two goals accessible to it. Multiple Agree is indicated by the Agree arrows.

(8)
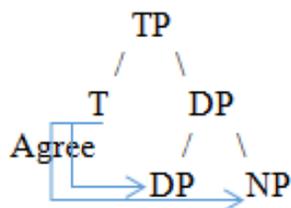
According to MAH, after T locates the first[viii] goal, it continues searching for the second goal within its c-command domain and agrees with both the subject *al-walad-u* and the predicate *tilmiið-u-n* valuing their nominative Case. However, this assumption is problematic in a number of respects which should become apparent in the following discussion.

3.1. Evidence from Verbal Copular Clauses

The first serious challenge for MAH comes from data containing an overt copula verb. In the following examples, there is a verbal copula in the past tense *kaana* 'was' (a & c) and future *sayakuunu* 'will be' (b & d), joining the subject and the non-verbal predicate:

(9)
(a)   kaana al-rajul-u muhandis-a-n
         was the-man-NOM engineer-ACC-Nun
         "The man was an engineer.
(b)   sa-yakuunu al-rajul-u muhandis -a-n
         will.be the-boy-NOM engineer-ACC-Nun
         "The boy will be a student."
(c)   kaana al-rajul-u tawiil-a-n
         was the-man-NOM tall-ACC-Nun
         "The man was tall."
(d)   sa-yakuunu al-walad-u tawiil-a-n
         will-be the-boy-NOM tall-ACC-Nun
         "The boy will be tall."

Comparing these examples with the examples of verbless copular clauses, note the change in the Case of the predicate DP *muhandis-a-n* 'an engineer' and the predicate AP *tawiil-a-n* 'tall' from nominative to accusative. Note also the mismatch in the Case feature between the subject DP and the predicate, the former being nominative while the latter being accusative.

The head T position in the copular-containing examples above is occupied by past tense *kaana* and by the future tense *sayakuunu*. The structural analysis of verbal copulas will be provided and discussed in section (4.1).

If MAH is on the right track, the subject and the predicate should realize the same nominative Case since the hypothesis allows an active T to probe two matching goals.[ix] This is an incorrect prediction as evidenced by the ungrammaticality of the following sentences:

(10)
(a)   *kaana al-rajul-u muhandis-u-n
         was the-man-NOM engineer-NOM-Nun
         "The man was an engineer."

(b)   *sa-yakuunu al-rajul-u muhandis-u-n
         will-be the-man-NOM engineer-NOM-Nun
         "The man will be an engineer."

(c)   *kaana al-rajul-u tawiil-u-n
         was the-man-NOM tall-NOM-Nun
         "The man was tall."

(d)   *sa-yakuunu al-walad-u tawiil-u-n
         will-be the-boy-NOM tall-NOM-Nun
         "The boy will be tall."

The next section will attempt to provide further evidence against the Multiple Agree model by considering verbless copular constructions initiated by a complementizer.

3.2. Evidence from Root Verbless Copular Clauses with a Matrix C
         Another argument against MAH comes from a copular construction introduced by a main C *ʔinna* that serves to mark declarative force and finiteness (Rizzi, 1997; Radford, 2006): 'C' in the gloss for the following examples is an abbreviation for complementizer.

(11)
(a)   ʔinna al-bayt-a kabiir-un
         C the-house-ACC student-NOM
         "The house is big."

(b)   *ʔinna al-bayta-a kabiir-an
         C the-house-ACC big-ACC
         "The house is big."

It is clear from the Case morphology that the subject does not receive the same Case value as the predicate. Under MAH, the C *ʔinna* should establish a relation between the two goals, *al-bayt-a* and *kabiir-un* valuing both as accusative, a prediction that is not borne out. The contrast between the two sentences (a-b) indicates that the two pillars of the clause (i.e., the topic DP and the comment DP) are matched with different probes, not with a single probe contrary to the prediction made by MAH. An explicit analysis in terms of regular Agree (involving one probe per goal will be provided in section 4.3.

3.3. Evidence from Copular Clauses Negated by Laysa

The Case features of nominals in this type of copular construction points in the direction of an analysis in terms of Agree theory by independent probes rather than by a single probe. These clauses are not nominal but, rather, copular sentences where *laysa* is not only a negative marker but is also a copular element. They have a verb-like negative modal *laysa* in initial position as shown below:

(12)
(a)   laysa al-jaww-u ḥaar-a-n
        not the-weather-NOM hot-ACC-Nun
        "The weather is not hot."
(b)   laysa al-walad-u ðakiyy-a-n
        not the-boy-NOM smart-ACC-Nun
        "The boy is not smart."

Note that the subject DP realizes nominative whereas the predicate realizes accusative Case. In fact, T here is not allowed to establish an Agree relation with the predicate as shown below. The predicate is not allowed to carry nominative Case morphology suggesting that it should be matched with a different probe.

(13)
(a)   *laysa al-jaww-u ḥaar-u-n
        not the-weather-NOM hot-NOM-Nun
        "The weather is not hot."

(b)   *laysa al-walad-u ðakiyy-u-n
        not the-boy-NOM smart-NOM-Nun
        "The boy is not smart."
The facts can be explained under the one-probe-per-one goal agreement relation in a straightforward manner. The T head is responsible for Nominative Case valuation via the Agree operation, whereas accusative Case is valued by the head *Nom* (section 4.4 below).[x] This shows that the predicate nominals *ḥaar-a-n* and *ðakiyy-a-n* get their accusative Case valued by a different probe, namely *Nom*, and once this Case has been valued and deleted, the Case-valued nominal goals (the adjectives) become inactive for Agree with T. I address this matter together with schematic structure in section (4.4) by positing separate probes within the standard Agree process.

In short, then, the evidence presented in this section based on root copular clauses introduced by a C, verbal copular clauses and negative copular clauses argues in favour of matching two different goals with two different heads for Agree purposes. MAH, the notion that a single T can simultaneously probe and multiply value nominative Case on more than one nominal goal, does not seem to be applicable. The following section is devoted to an analysis in terms of standard Agree of the constructions discussed above.

4. Agree: One Probe per Goal

Chomsky (2000, 2001) proposed the operation 'Agree' as a means to value and consequently eliminate uninterpretable features, such as agreement (person, number and gender, also called ɷ-features). Agree establishes a relationship between an active probe (with uninterpretable ɷ-features of person, gender and number) and a goal with interpretable matching features in the c-command domain of the probe. As a result, the uninterpretable ɷ-features of the probe are valued by the matching interpretable features of the goal.
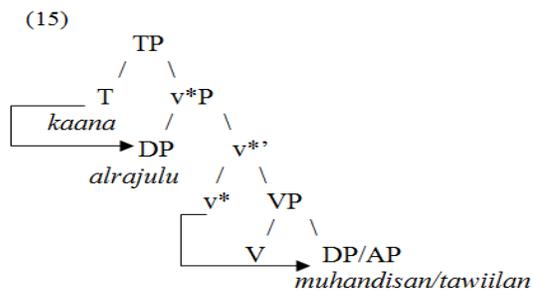
Following Chomsky's (2000) Agree theory, I assume that Case features on nominals and ɷ-features on T/C in SA are uninterpretable features that acquire their value in the derivation. In the next sections, I provide explicit structural representations for the clauses discussed above, and argue for a unified account of their Case properties in terms of the usual one-probe-per-goal Agree process.

4.1. Verbal Copular Clauses

Recall from the discussion above of the overt copular construction that while the subject realizes nominative Case, the predicate realizes accusative Case. Given the presence of a verbal copular form, it is plausible to posit a structure that includes a *vP* complement selected by T. Accordingly, T values the nominative Case of the subject and *v* values the accusative Case of the predicate in line with the one-probe-per-goal Agree theory. Thus, the sentences in (12) repeated below receive the structure illustrated in (15):

(14)
(a)   kaana al-rajul-u muhandis-a-n
          was the-man-NOM engineer-ACC-Nun
          "The man was an engineer."
(b)   kaana al-rajul-u tawiil-a-n
          was the-man-NOM tall-ACC-Nun
          "The man was tall."

(15)

```
            TP
           /   \
         T      v*P
       kaana   /   \
           → DP      v*'
        alrajulu    /  \
                 v*    VP
                 /  \
                V  → DP/AP
                   muhandisan/tawiilan
```

As indicated by the arrows, Agree with the T probe results in nominative Case valued on the goal subject DP, whereas Agree with v* results in accusative Case valued on the goal predicate DP or AP. Once the Case on the predicate is valued accusative by v*, and consequently is inactivated for further Agree with the T *kaana*, it cannot subsequently receive a nominative Case value from T as we saw from the ungrammaticality of:

(16)

        *kaana al-rajul-u muhandis-a-n
        was the-man-NOM engineer-ACC-Nun
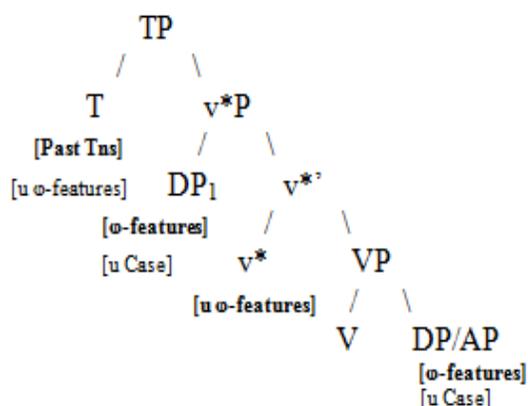   "The man was an engineer.

Thus, as argued above, Case in SA, in contrast with Japanese, cannot be valued under Agree with a single goal contra MAH.

        The structure claims that T does not project a specifier and that the subject DP *alrajulu* originates internally within v*P as an argument and remains in situ.[xi] That is to say, T in SA carries no Edge Feature (EF) and therefore does not project a structural specifier. As a result of T lacking a movement-triggering EF, the subject remains in the specifier of v*P with its Case valued through Agree with T now occupied by *kaana*.

        Another key assumption made in the above structure is that the copular form kwn "BE" in its consonantal root shape moves from its original position under V to T through the intermediate step of moving to the light *v*.[xii] This is a plausible assumption given that SA is a verb raising language, an operation which derives the unmarked verb-initial order in the language. In this connection the verbal copular behaves like a main verb in undergoing verb-raising to T from a lower V position in the clause.

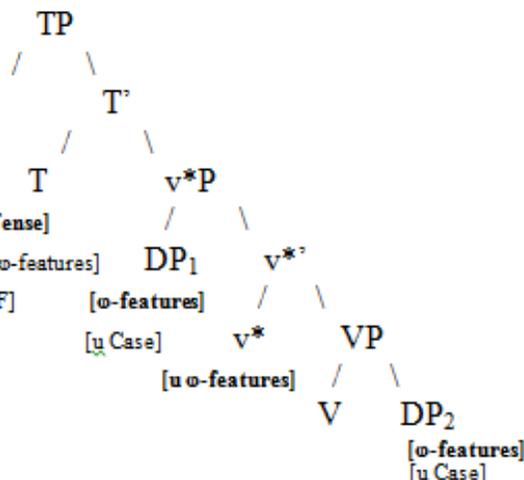   In the following structure for SA verbal copulas, interpretable ω-features of person and gender on the subject DP and the predicate DP/AP are shown in bold and uninterpretable features of Case on subject and predicate together with uninterpretable ω-features on T and *v* are shown in italics. Note that T lacks EF, hence there is no specifier projection, and the subject remains in its thematic position internal to v*P:

(17) SA: T lacks EF; DP_1 'subject' remains in situ.

```
                TP
              /    \
           T          v*P
        [Past Tns]   /    \
      [u ⍵-features]  DP₁      v*'
                  [⍵-features]  /   \
                  [u Case]   v*      VP
                          [u ⍵-features]  /   \
                                    V     DP/AP
                                        [⍵-features]
                                        [u Case]
```

In contrast to the structure above for SA, the following structure illustrates the addition of the EF on T generally assumed for English, hence the TP projection. It is this EF feature on T that triggers the internal merge (displacement) of the goal subject to the T specifier as a way of valuing the EF feature on T:

(18) English: T carries EF; movement of DP_1 to Spec T is obligatory.

```
             TP
           /    \
              T'
            /    \
         T          v*P
      [Tense]      /    \
    [u ⍵-features]  DP₁      v*'
    [EF]       [⍵-features]  /   \
            [u Case]   v*      VP
                    [u ⍵-features]  /   \
                              V     DP₂
                                  [⍵-features]
                                  [u Case]
```

The crucial feature responsible for the contrast between the structures in (17) and (18) is the EF feature (Extended Projection Principle EPP feature). EF is a property of T which, when missing from T, the subject remains in situ. Conversely, when EF is present on T subject raising to Spec T is obligatory.

4.2. Verbless Predicative Copular Clauses Are NomP Projections

For the verbless predicative copular clauses introduced in section 3, I adopt a derivation where both the subject DP and the predicate are generated in a predicational Nominal Phrase (NomP) following Alazzawie (2016). This predicational relationship is mediated by the

functional head Nom occupied by the pronominal clitic *–n*.[xiii] For instance, sentence (19) would have the structure schematized in (20): (This example and its structure in (20) below are taken from Alazzawie, 2016: P. 158)

(19)

      al-walad-u   tilmiið-u-n
      the-boy-NOM student-NOM-Nun
      "The boy is a student."

(20)
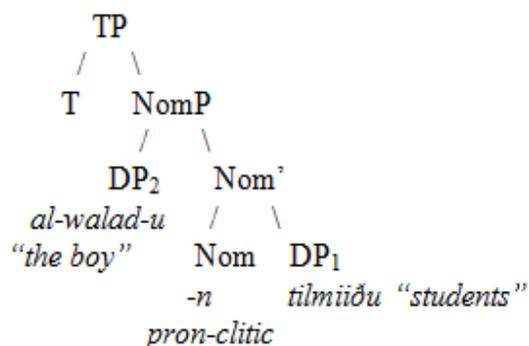
The present tense T serves as a probe and looks for a goal to value its, number and gender features. Since, T c-commands DP_2 *al-walad-u*, and DP_2 is active on account of its uninterpretable Case, DP_2 can serve as a goal for the probe T. The same pattern of Agree relation holds between the pronominal clitic-containing probe Nom and the lower DP *tilmiið-u-n*, i.e., DP_1. DP_1 is probed by Nom, which has unvalued agreement features, values its agreement features with DP_1 and deletes the unvalued Case feature of DP_1; (the DP has unvalued Case features qualifying it to serve as a goal). The unvalued φ-features on the probes are assigned the same 3rd person singular values as those on the goals through Agree. The unvalued Case features on the probes are assigned a nominative value and consequently delete. The mechanism is the same via Agree where two heads value each goal independently.[xiv] The presence of DP_2, the intervening active goal *al-walad-u*, blocks the possibility of multiple Agree, and therefore multiple Agree for SA is rejected on the grounds of empirical evidence. This proposal has the advantage of unifying copular sentences with a matrix C under the same analysis (see section 3.3 below).

      Given the assumption made earlier that T has no EF feature triggering raising of the subject to the specifier of T, DP_2 remains within NomP.
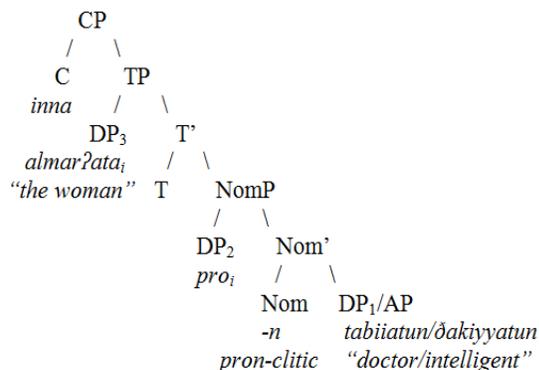
4.3. Root Verbless Copular Clauses with a Matrix C– the Case of ʔinna
Now let us turn to sentences featuring the root C *ʔinna*, such as (21). See also (11) above:

(21)   ʔinna al-marʔat-a tabiid-at-un/ðakiyy-at-u-n
       C the-woman-ACC doctor-fem-NOM-fem-nom-nun
       "The woman is a doctor/intelligent."

The author assumes a left-dislocation analysis along the lines of Edwards (2006) and Adger and Ramchand (2003). Presenting arguments in support of a base-generation analysis will take us too far afield. The issue is discussed and defended in Soltan (2007) in the context of subject-verb word order in the language. Verbless sentences also display properties typically associated with left-dislocation such as resumptives and co-reference dependency into islands. I, therefore, adopt a base-generation analysis rather than displacement. More specifically, the sentence has the structure represented below[xv] (adapted from Alazzawie, 2016, p. 158):

(22)

```
                        CP
                      /    \
                    C        TP
                  inna     /    \
                       DP_3       T'
                   almarʔata_i   /  \
                   "the woman"  T     NomP
                                    /    \
                                 DP_2     Nom'
                                 pro_i   /    \
                                      Nom     DP_1/AP
                                      -n      tabiiatun/ðakiyyatun
                                  pron-clitic  "doctor/intelligent"
```

The structure incorporates a number of assumptions related to the position of DP_3, DP_2, the nature of the relationship between the two DPs, and the nature of the constituent labelled NomP.[xvi] A detailed exploration of these issues obviously lies beyond the scope of this paper. For the present, a brief note on their properties is in order, after which feature valuation via Agree will be discussed shortly in this section.

    The proposed analysis treats DP_3 *al-marʔat-a* as a discourse topic externally merged (base-generated) in the TP specifier position, rather than a subject. Note that DP_3 follows the C *ʔinna*, it cannot precede it:

(23)   *al-marʔat-a ʔinna tabiid-at-un

Since the accusative DP_3 appears after C, it is reasonable to assume that it is generated at the edge or periphery of the TP complement. Suppose it is generated via the operation of External Merge (base-generated) in the 'surface subject' position in Spec T, and suppose that a pronominal subject pro, in co-reference relation with DP_3, is generated in Spec NomP, the thematic domain of the predicate.

    The actual subject is the null *pro* under DP_2 in the specifier of NomP with which DP_3 is co-referential. NomP, equivalent to PredP in other analyses (Bowers, 2001, Adger and Ramchand, 2003 and Ohalla, 2005), constitutes a complete predication (subject-predicate relationship). Evidence that *pro* is indeed the subject comes from clitic left-dislocation in the language (Soltan, 2007)), that is, sentences in which the null *pro* receives phonetic spell out, for instance, within PPs:

(24) (Adapted from Soltan 2007, p. 109)
(a)   ta-jibu   çala al-walad-i   el-sala-t-u
          3sgfem-must on the-boy-DAT the-pryer-fem-NOM
          "The boy has to pray."

(b)   Ɂinna al-walad-a ta-jibu   çalay-**hi** el-salat-u
          C the-boy-ACC 3sgfem-must on-**him** the-pryer-fem-NOM
          "The boy, he has to pray."

A resumptive pronoun obligatorily surfaces suffixed to the preposition in (b). This resumptive is taken to licence a null argument related to DP_3 *al-marɁat-a* in structure (22) above.[xvii] Under this analysis, DP_3 is base-generated as a left-dislocated/topicalized DP in the specifier of TP, with the postverbal null *pro* argument in the specifier of NomP.

The unvalued Case feature on the goal DP_3 is valued as accusative through Agree with the C probe *Ɂinna*, valuing in the process the probe's abstract ɷ-features. Agreement between *Ɂinna* and DP_3 is invisible in the sense that it has no overt phonetic shape, but becomes visible through pronominal cliticization as *Ɂinna-hu* 3rd person masculine singular.[xviii] The unvalued Case feature of the predicate DP_1/AP is also valued through Agree with Nom which hosts the pronominal clitic *–n* [Nunation, SA Tanween], valuing the latter's ɷ-features. Adopting a proposal by Chomsky (2001) that PRO receives null Case by Agree with a non-finite c-commanding T, I would like to suggest that the unvalued Case feature of the null subject pro is also valued nominative by Agree with the probe T, conversely valuing T's ɷ-features as well. Recall that a present tense interpretation is encoded in this construction (it is interpreted as describing a present state of affairs) which points to a TP projection.

It should be clear that the data are completely at odds with Multiple Agree as neither *Ɂinna* nor T can agree with the complement, the reason being that the complement had its Case feature already valued nominative by Agree with Nom inside the NomP projection and thus has become inactive or invisible for Agree with higher probes. Rather, contrary to MAH, Agree between *Ɂinna* and only DP_3 must take place in the standard fashion (one probe per goal) as evidenced in the morphologically overt Case mismatch between DP_3 and the predicate DP_1/AP.
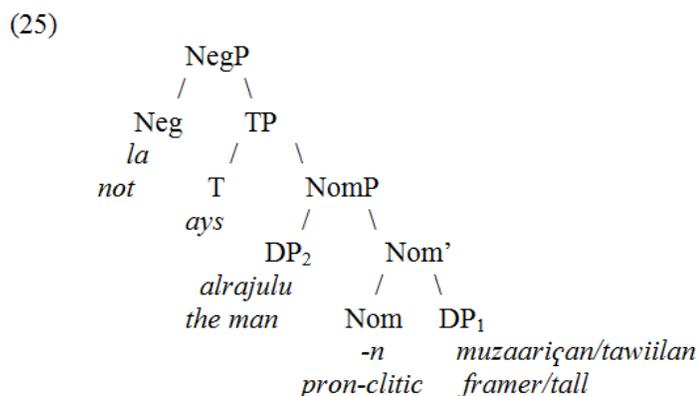
A further operation triggered by the affixal nature of Nom raises the head of the predicate, left-adjoining it to Nom to support the suffix *–n*.
In the following section, I hope to further refute Multiple Agree by drawing on data from negated copular clauses that are inconsistent with the prediction of the Multiple Agree hypothesis.

4.4. Neg-containing Copular Clauses – the Negative copula Laysa

It has been observed (Wright, 1898; and Ouhalla, 1993) that *laysa* is in fact a fusional morpheme, consisting of the negative element *la* and a copula *ays* in the present tense. Therefore, *laysa* in these clauses is not only a negative marker but also includes a copular modal. Given this blended morphological structure, a plausible analysis of the *laysa*-containing sentence

in SA would be to suppose that *la* originates as the head Neg of NegP (Negative Phrase),[xix] while the *ays* portion originates in T.

The assumption made here is that NegP in SA dominates TP which includes a NomP structure (but see Benmamoun, 2000 for a different proposal for negation in Moroccan Arabic; see also note 10 for a light *v* proposal). This is shown in (25):

(25)

```
                        NegP
                       /    \
                    Neg      TP
                    la      /  \
                    not    T     NomP
                          ays   /    \
                             DP₂      Nom'
                          alrajulu   /    \
                          the man   Nom    DP₁
                                    -n     muzaariçan/tawiilan
                              pron-clitic  framer/tall
```

As in the copular clauses discussed above, T selects NomP. As suggested before, there is a probe-goal agreement relation between Nom and the predicate resulting in mutual feature valuation in the regular fashion. There is also the regular probe-goal agreement relation between T and the "subject" DP_2, resulting in mutual feature valuation. I assume that the negative element *la* is inert in the sense that it has no uninterpretable ɸ-features to be valued, and therefore remains inactive, not being able to serve as a probe.

The rest of the derivation is presumably handled in the morpho-phonological component. For example, recall from the previous discussion that the predicate head undergoes movement to Nom as a consequence of the affixal property of Nom. Given the affixal property of the copular element *ays*, it also undergoes movement to the Neg position occupied by *la*, forming the complex [Neg+T], hence being spelled out as *laysa*. The assumption made here is that although *la* is inactive for Agree, it is a strong head and, therefore, can attract (i.e., it can trigger the movement of *ays* to attach to it.[xx]

Once again, an Agree relation is permissible between the T probe *ays* and the active goal DP_2 *al-rajul-u* (with an unvalued Case feature) but the same Agree relation is not permissible between the same T probe and the nominal goal *muzaariçan/tawiilan* which has already valued its Case feature through Agree with another matching probe, namely, Nom.

In conclusion, the data presented constitute convincing evidence against Multiple Agree, and in favour of the regular mechanism of Agree within the local search domain of the probe. In the following example, *laysa* must agree fully with the thematic subject *pro*, and hence *pro* is spelled out as 3rd person masculine plural *–uu*:

(26)
(a)   al-muçallim-un   lays-uu fi-l-madras-at-i
         the-teachers-NOM not-3p in-the-school-fem-GEN
         "The teachers are not at school."

(b)   *al-muçallim-un   laysa fi-l-madras-at-i

The Case of the DP *al-muçallim-un* here is valued under the same probe-goal Agree relation with the null C being the probe.

To summarize, the notion of Multiple Agree might at first seem applicable to SA, however further investigation of data drawn from (verbal) copulas reveal serious complications for this notion on account of Case feature mismatch. In each example, it is only the higher DP, the "subject", which agrees with C, T, and Neg, not the complement; in fact the complement must not agree in Case with the higher DP in direct conflict with the claim of multiple agreement.

Under the NomP proposal laid out above, there are two different probes C and Nom establishing Agree relation with the topic and the predicate DPs respectively, with the result of nominative and accusative valuation of the respective DPs. For the probe T occupied by *kaana* (a) or by *laysa* (b), and for the probe C occupied by *ʔinna* in (c), to hold an Agree relation with a given goal, such as the predicate nominal, no other potential goal, such as the subject DP, should intervene. The presence of an intervening goal induces what is referred to as Defective Intervention (DI) effects (Chomsky ibid), resulting in ungrammatical sentence:

(27)
(a)   *kaana al-walad-u tilmiið-u-n/ðakiyy-u-n
         the-boy-NOM student-NOM-Nun/smart-NOM-Nun
         "The boy was a student/smart."

(b)   *laysa al-rajul-u muzaariç-u-n/tawiil-u-n
         not the-man-NOM farmer-NOM-Nun/tall-NOM-Nun
         "The man is not a farmer/tall."

(c)   *ʔinna al-walad-a tilmiið-an/ðakiyy-a-n
          that the-boy-ACC student-ACC/smart-ACC-Nun
          "The boy is a student/smart."

The predicative goal is inactive for Agree with the probes and the Agree relation fails. As noted above, the probes *kaana*, *laysa* and *ʔinna* cannot attempt to probe down in the structure to find another goal. As a result, the derivation crashes.

5. Conclusion
On the basis of the Case properties of nominals within verbless copular constructions in SA, the author rejects an analysis in terms of Multiple Agree proposed by others for Japanese and English. As shown, these Case properties are incompatible with an analysis of the

construction that assumes the Case value to be a reflex of multiple Agree. Rather, the properties can be handled in a principled way in terms of the regular Agree theory whereby an active probe agrees with one active goal in its c-command domain.

While the argument against MAH is restricted to SA copular structures dealt with in this paper, a stronger claim can be made against MAH in syntactic analysis in general. The latter is a viable claim. Future work will revisit all the constructions cited in this paper that have been analyzed in terms of MAH and show how a one-probe-per-goal analysis is able to account for such facts.

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[i] See Chomsky (2001) for the idea that expletive *there* carries uninterpretable Case feature.

[ii] The following abbreviations are used: NOM: Nominative, ACC: Accusative, DAT: Dative, Nun: Nunation, C: Complementizer, NomP: Nominal Phrase, T: Tense, P: Person, F: Feminine, S: Singular.

[iii] I would like to thank Dr. Yumi Alabadi for her help with the Japanese examples (b-d).

[iv] To my knowledge, an analysis of such SA sentences in terms of MAH has not been proposed. I have, therefore, chosen a hypothetical MAH-based analysis of such sentences and have proceeded to criticize such an analysis. This might be seen as a key weakness of the current work.

[v] The term subject is used here in the sense of a discourse topic rather than an actual subject. The initial DP is functionally a topic, and the construction is known in SA Grammar as Topic-Comment (Plunkett 1993; Fassi Fehri 1993).

[vi] Several researchers (Mohammad, 2000; Ouhalla, 1994 and Soltan, 2007), essentially dealing with SVO type sentences, have proposed a default Nominative Case for preverbal DPs. To account for the Case properties of predicate copular clauses with no overt verb, the standard Agree operation, rather than default Case, will be adopted.

[vii] Benmamoun (2008) also assumes that copular clauses lack a VP structure dominating NP/AP/PP.

[viii] "First goal" or second goal has no theoretical bearing as linear order is irrelevant to Agree. Given the structure in (8), both DP and NP have the same hierarchical status, which is what really matters here.

[ix] This might be considered an unfair argument because once the structure includes an overt verbal copular, we should expect morpho-syntactic consequences such as different Case-marking.

[x] An anonymous AWEJ reviewer suggested an alternative proposal according to which the accusative Case on the nominal predicate is assigned by the head v (the light v). The proposal is supported by an authoritative body of Arabic grammatical tradition which treats *laysa* as a verb-like particle and groups it with *kaana* under the heading *kaana wa aʔkhawaatihaa* "the *kaana* class".

[xi] This is in essence, the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis adopted by a number of researchers (Koopman and Sportiche, 1991; Kitagawa, 1986; Kuroda, 1988).

[xii] This two-step local head movement operation is dictated by the affixal nature of the relevant heads and by the Head Movement Constrain of Travis (1984).

[xiii] See Alazzawie (2016) on the status of –*n* as a pronominal clitic, and for an extensive discussion of NomP structure. The addition of the consonant suffix –n to Nominal categories before the Case morphology is termed *tanween* 'nunation' in SA. Obviously, there is no *tanween* 'nunation' in contexts where the predicate is a PP, as in the following sentence (1):

1. al-taalib-u   fi   l-madrasat-i
   the-student-nom in   the-school-GEN
      'The student is at the school.'

In such locative contexts, an implicit existential nominal copula '*maujuud-u-n/mustaqir-u-n/ kaaʔn-u-n*' "existing", or its *tanween 'nunation'*, can be posited in Nom. Note that the *tanween* 'nunation' is forced to be lexicalized on the posited existential Nom. This view is also adopted in several works in Arabic grammatical traditions.

[xiv] An empirical fact that the proposed analysis does not address has to do with adjective agreement. As it stands now, the analysis does not make it clear how adjectival predicates show the same phi-features as the subject DP.

[xv] An alternative analysis is to adopt the CP Split Hypothesis (Rizzi, 1997) which suggests that CP can be split into distinct projections, including a Force Phrase, Focus Phrase, Topic Phrase and Finiteness Phrase. Under this hypothesis, *ʔinna* would be merged in the Force head position with DP$_3$ merged in the specifier of Topic Phrase. This proposal will not be pursued here, however.

[xvi] For full details on NomP, see Alazzawie (2016).

[xvii] The view that resumptives license a null argument referred to in the literature as little pro has been advanced by many researchers; see for example Soltan (2007) for arguments that subject and object left-dislocation force the overt realization of resumptives and null *pro*.

[xix] The NegP analysis dates back to Pollock (1989) where a null Neg head was posited for English with *not* acting as the specifier of NegP, which has become the standard analysis of negation. For the analysis of negation in SA, see Benmamoun (2000), Ouhalla (1993), and Soltan (2007).

[xx] On the head strength parameter, see Chomsky (1995) and Radford (2006, p. 99).