• The relative marker in Arabic dialects. Published in December 2005 issue of ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE STUDIES, a refereed journal, Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University.

Abstract: According to the grammars of Arabic dialects the relative marker ?illi only occurs following a definite head noun. However, based on data from Brustad (2000), the relative marker ?illi is also found to occur following an indefinite head noun in Egyptian, Moroccan, Syrian, and Kuwaiti Arabic. Brustad (2000) accounts for this new occurrence via the semantics of individuation; I suggest that her solution is relatively problematic and sometimes ad-hoc. Basically, I claim that a solution based on the hierarchy of individuation does not work. I further propose that there are two phonologically identical but syntactically different ?illis: the first one generates for definiteness, and the other is only created by overgeneralized analogy.
Optionality and minimalism: the case of direct object resumption in Arabic. Published in the proceedings of the 4th International Conference of the Faculty of Al-Alsun- Minia University on 'preserving linguistic and cultural identity at the age of globalization'. 2006.

Optionality and minimalism: the case of direct object resumption in Arabic

Since minimalism, the latest generativist syntactic theory, assumes that the sole motivation for movement is the checking of formal features, there is no place for optionality; it is banned on the grounds that it is against economy principle, a tenet of the minimalist theory. The question that arises is how to account for the optionality observed in some Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) structures where there is optional gap-resumption alternation. The case in point here is the case of the emergence and absence of the resumptive pronoun (RP) in direct object relatives. The observed optionality in this case, however, is missing in the case of indefinite direct object relatives where an RP attaches to the verb obligatorily.

This study offers a fresh analysis of MSA optional cases relevant to direct object relatives. I will argue that the optionality observed in the case under study is not a case of true optionality and that the gap and resumption alternation observed emanates from separate numerations. Since resumption has something to add to the LF, resumption plays a 'support' role in avoiding ambiguity.
AN ECONOMY-BASED VERSUS RICHNESS-BASED ACCOUNT OF NON-OVERTNESS OF SUBJECTS IN ARABIC SUBJECT RELATIVES

In many languages, called pro-drop languages (e.g. Modern Standard Arabic, Irish, and Hebrew), the pre-verbal or post-verbal subject position is not filled. In these languages, the subject position within the relative clauses is left phonologically vacant. I assume that pro-drop phenomenon in matrix clauses and the non-overtness of the subject position within relative clauses are related and they can be given a unified account. The main argument for leaving the subject position unfilled was explained in the literature along the lines of agreement and richness, or in other terms, licensing and identification. I reject the accounts of null subjects within relatives based on these arguments, and argue that an economy-based approach to null subjects can provide better explanation of Modern Standard Arabic data.
An OT approach to loanword adaptation in Cairene Arabic.

AN OT APPROACH TO LOANWORD ADAPTATION IN CAIRENE ARABIC

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Abstract: Cairene Arabic (CA) elects epenthesis rather than deletion as a strategy for adapting loanwords. This paper tackles the reasons why this occurs as well as the different aspects of vowel epenthesis in loanwords within the framework of the most recent phonological endeavor, Optimality Theory (OT) (McCarthy and Prince, 1993; Prince and Smolensky, 1993) and the subsequent relevant literature. This research specifically focuses on loanwords introduced into CA from English. It is shown that OT neatly accounts for vowel epenthesis in loanwords in CA, proving that the attested optimal forms are the result of the conflict between faithfulness and markedness constraints. It is also proven that loanwords are modified according to the productive phonological processes of CA as represented in L1 constraints.