

## **The Semantics of the Nominative and the Accusative Experiencer in Arabic.**

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### **Abstract**

*The present paper is concerned with highlighting the importance and significance of the semantic-syntactic interface for the expression and interpretation of linguistic structures. This interface is represented by the correlation of role archetypes like agent, patient and experiencer and grammatical relations like subject and direct object. This study is conducted within the framework of Langacker's model of cognitive grammar theory which asserts the indispensability of this interface for any satisfactory analysis of linguistic constructions. This functional approach is intended to be reactionary to formal approaches which advocate the autonomy of syntax from semantics. Thus in formal theories, some syntactic issues like grammatical relations are identified and characterised with no reference to semantic considerations. By contrast, cognitive grammar regards grammatical relations and syntactic aspects like case markers as notionally grounded. Thus their identity and description follow the cognitive psychology principle of figure/ground organization. Thus the subject usually corresponds to an entity that is the focus of attention or the most important participant in a*

certain structure while the direct object specifies a less prominent participant. This is due to the fact that the direct object usually represents an entity that is affected by the entity specified by the subject.

A second objective of this study is to emphasize the crucial and pivotal role of construal for the semantic and syntactic structure of linguistic expressions. Construal simply means the expression of a situation in alternate ways for specific purposes. The use of this principle results in the choice of some elements or entities of a situation as more salient than others. These salient entities are assigned specific role archetypes and grammatical relations that are conformed to the construal of a situation.

Thus in

1. *sa8ida*      *?aħmadu*      *liru?yatik*

became happy    Ahmed      to see you

2. *?as8adat*      *ru?yatuk*      *?aħmada*

made happy      seeing you      Ahmed

We find that the experiencer role, specified by the NP Ahmed in both sentences, receives the nominative case marking in 1 and the accusative in 2. It is also noticed that the semantic features of the verbs in 1 and 2 are dissimilar. This is ascribed to the fact that the conceptual organization of the elements in each situation determines the syntactic aspects in linguistic constructions such as case endings and verb form. The Experiencer role has been selected as it represents a wide range of human conceptual, emotional and perceptual interactions.

**Keywords:** Cognitive grammar - Semantic-syntactic interface - Case markers - Experiencer.

## 0. Introduction

This paper investigates the strong relationship between syntax and semantics or the aspects of the syntactico-semantic interface which are quite important for a satisfactory analysis of linguistic constructions. This is achieved through highlighting the correlation between the experiencer role and its case marking when it is in the nominative and the accusative cases. Case marking represents a pivotal issue in Arabic which has three cases; the nominative, the accusative and the genitive. The

scope of the current paper is confined to the assignment of the first two cases to the experiencer role. These cases are regarded as two opposing entities from a grammatical perspective, and it is one of the objectives of this paper to find out whether the difference between them is semantically grounded. The experiencer role is selected to be the focus of this study as it represents and covers a wide range of human emotional, mental and perceptual interactions.

The paper is divided into the following sections. Section one sheds the light on some theoretical tenets and principles upon which the data analysis is based. Section two presents an overview of some relevant studies that focus on the link between the experiencer and its case marking in some other languages. Section three is concerned with the characterization of grammatical relations in Arabic. This provides us with some necessary background information that will be benefited from in the following section. Section four outlines three experiential areas in terms of which the linguistic structures are to be analysed . The first part of this section presents certain lists of experiential predicates, whereas the second part deals with the actual analysis. Section five represents the conclusion which includes the results that have been reached.

## **1. Theoretical threads**

### **1.1. Cognitive abilities**

This paper is conducted within Langacker's model of cognitive grammar (1991;1999). This theory does not regard language as self-contained but as a system that should be scrutinized and studied within the framework of cognitive processing. Humans are endowed with some essential cognitive capacities which are associated with the use of language. Langacker (1991:291) states that we are able to

- i) establish symbolic associations between conceptual and phonological structures; ii) impose figure/ground organization on a scene; iii) construe a conceived situation in alternate ways (e.g. from different perspectives, or by according special prominence to different substructures).

Langacker notes that the first ability corresponds with forming symbolic units. A symbolic unit is a term that is subsumed under grammar and the lexicon. Thus when one, for example, chooses a certain grammatical morpheme, this is meant to represent or symbolize a specific conceptual structure. To illustrate this point, let's consider the following sentences

1.  $\text{\textcircled{d}arraba}$      $\text{zaydun}$      $\text{\textcircled{8}amran}$

hit            Zayd        Amr

Zayd hit Amr

2.  $\text{\textcircled{d}arraba}$      $\text{\textcircled{8}amrun}$      $\text{zaydan}$

hit            Amr        Zayd

Amr hit Zayd

In (1), the NP /zaydun/ is the subject and is assigned the nominative case ending as it designates the most prominent participant in this interaction. This is due to the fact that this NP refers to the individual who affects another one that is less prominent. Syntactically, the NP / $\text{\textcircled{8}amran}$ / is the object and is assigned the accusative case ending. In (2), the roles of the NPs in (1) are reversed because the conceptual content and the meanings associated with them are quite the opposite. This proves the point that even the seemingly syntactic elements such as case endings are meaningful and notionally grounded.

Ability (ii) is linked with grammatical relations within sentences, thus the figure usually corresponds with the subject whereas the ground, the less prominent participant, designates the direct object. Finally, ability (iii) is crucial for the semantic description of a linguistic expression which depends on how a scene is construed and interpreted. The difference in meaning between (1) and (2) is, therefore, attributed to the reversed roles of the same participants. In other words, the arrangement of the conceptual content of the elements in (1) and (2) is echoed by the structure of the linguistic elements in these sentences. Linguistic meaning does not reside in the conceptual content alone because language users are capable of construing one situation in alternate ways for specific purposes. Construal has diverse dimensions, some of which are:

### **a. Prominence**

One type of prominence is dependent on having an entity as a cognitively salient participant. In relational predications containing verbs and adjectives, there are variant interactions between conceived entities or participants. One of these is selected as the focus of attention or in Langacker's terminology (1999:7) "an expression imposes a particular profile on the conceptual base."

### **b. Profiling**

It is a fundamental element in a predication, i.e. the semantic structure of a linguistic expression. Langacker likens it to a window through which a viewer visualizes the part of a scene specified by the scope of a predication. Profiling plays an integral part in the identification and characterisation of grammatical relations. Construal reflects the active role of the language user. Thus if a speaker wishes to show that an individual is volitionally involved in an emotional experience with another entity, he may say

3. istamta8a ?aḥmadu bi-lqiṣṣati

enjoyed Ahmed the story

Ahmed enjoyed the story

The NP /?aḥmad/ refers to the active participant in this emotional interaction. That is why it is selected as the subject and has the nominative case marking. By contrast, if the NP Ahmed is portrayed as being emotionally affected by the NP /?alqiṣṣatu /, we may have a sentence like

4. matta8at -lqiṣṣatu ?aḥmada

pleased the story Ahmed

The story pleased Ahmed

The NP /?aḥmad/ is the object and is assigned the accusative case ending. In (3) and (4) the NP /?aḥmad/ has the experiencer role.

## **2.1. The Network Model**

This represents one of the major tenets of cognitive grammar. It postulates that lexical and grammatical items are polysemous and have an array of senses. These diverse senses form a network

whose nodes are interconnected by different types of relations. Some senses are schematic relative to others, thus, for example, the noun *ring* can be perceived as having the schematic value ‘circular entity’. It can be further instantiated by more specific senses like circular object or circular piece of jewellery.

Another sort of relationship is extension by which senses extend from others. The nodes of a grammatical network, for instance, exhibit variant degrees of cognitive salience one of which is singled out as the category prototype. Thus the subject has as its prototype an NP specifying an initiator or a doer of an action. Some other less salient senses extend from the prototype. Therefore an entity designating an instrument or an experiencer can be used as the subject. Langacker notes that a prototype is a node that is accorded special cognitive salience. Some of the factors contributing to this salience are that it is the first recalled sense or that it could be activated independently of a context.

### **3.1. Nominal vs Relational Predications**

In cognitive grammar, predications are dichotomized into nominal and relational. Nominal predications are represented by nouns which profile things. Langacker (1991: 20) uses the term thing in a technical sense to identify “a region in some domain”. With regard to count nouns, the profiled region is further conceived of as being bounded. The lexical class of nouns is a complex category comprising individual nouns functioning as nodes in a network. Some nodes are schematic relative to others, thus physical objects are schematic to others referring to abstract entities.

On the other hand, relational predications include verbs, adjectives and prepositions. Relational predications are further classified into temporal and atemporal corresponding to verbs at one pole and adjectives and prepositions at the other. The incorporation of time is an essential factor for characterising temporal predications while it is excluded in atemporal types. Another difference is based on the mental scanning of both temporal and atemporal predications i.e. between sequential vs summary scanning. In sequential scanning, as in

5. The boy crossed the road

The event taking place is conceptualised as evolving through a sequence of stages. Each of them leads to the following in a dynamic fashion and the contents of the scene change from one stage to the other. It is similar to watching a cinema film. Langacker (1999:10) notes that the category of verbs profiles a process that is defined as “a relationship that evolves through time and is scanned sequentially along this axis”. By contrast, in summary scanning, the phases of the situation develop in a cumulative fashion. Once the scanning is done, we are able to construct a unified whole i.e. a gestalt which is similar to looking at a static picture as in

6. Our house is across the road

Atemporal relations are distinguished on the grounds of the nature of profiling their focal participants. Thus an adjectival phrase like a red rose profiles a relation between the NP rose (the focal participant) and a colour space region. On the contrary, a preposition profiles a relation between two focal participants as in

7. The cat is in the house

This is an instance of the container image schema in which an entity, i.e. the cat is contained within the limits of the other, namely the house.

Verbs are considered as relational predications because they designate interconnections between entities. An entity is used technically to refer to any thing examined for analytic purposes. Consequently, it could be a thing or a relation. Normally, a relationship involves one or more focal participants displaying an asymmetry of their characterisation. Thus one of them is assumed to have more prominence than the others. Thus in

8. The boy hit the cat

The verb hit indicates a relation between two participants represented by the NPs the boy and the cat. The first participant the boy is cognitively more salient because he exerts force and control over the other participant the cat.

## 2. Some relevant studies

The link between the experiencer role and grammatical relations such as the subject and the object and more specifically their case marking has been dealt with in many studies. Some of these are Filip's (1996) and Dabrowska's (1994; 1997). Filip states that Czech has tripartite division of case marked arguments: the nominative, the accusative and the dative. The dative is the typical representative of the experiencer. The Czech experiencer can be assigned any of the aforementioned cases. The nominative experiencer in Czech corresponds with the subject and the accusative experiencer usually occupies the direct object position. The dative is the case used basically to refer to the indirect object.

Filip's suggested analysis of the relation between the experiencer in Czech and its case marking is based on Dowty's (1991) proto-agent and proto-patient properties of the arguments occurring with experiential predicates. According to Dowty (1991:572) the properties, in terms of which thematic or semantic roles are identified, are determined by entailments of the verbs occurring with them. The proto-agent role properties are

- a. Volitional involvement in the event
- b. Sentience (the ability to sense) and/ or perception
- c. Causing change of state in another participant
- d. Movement (relative to another stationary entity)
- e. Independent existence of the event

By contrast, the proto-patient role properties proposed by Dowty are

- a. Undergoing a change of state
- b. Incremental theme (with telic verbs like *build* and *write* indicating achievement)
- c. Causally affected by another entity
- d. Stationary relative to another entity
- e. Dependent existence on the event specified by the verb.



Filip (1996:140) states that “the nominative experiencer exhibits more proto-agent properties than the accusative and the dative which entail proto-patient features”. The second element in her analysis pertains to what she terms the causal event structure. Accusative experiencer predicates are causal. The referent of the nominative is the cause of the denoted change of the experiencer’s psychological state as in

9. He                      confused              me              with his story  
nominative              experiential      accusative  
cause                      predicate              experiencer

The dative experiencer predicates are classified along the benefit-harm scales as dative experiencer arguments typically denote the beneficiaries or maleficiaries as in

10. I gave a present to her  
beneficiary

11. I took the money from her  
maleficiary

Filip notes that the experiencer with benefit or harm predicates indicates lack of control over his/ her state. Such a proto-patient property prevents the experiencer from being encoded in the nominative case.

After this overview of Filip’s account of the case marked arguments referring to the experiencer role, it is noted that she employs general features like proto-agent and proto-patient properties to differentiate the nominative from the accusative or the dative experiencer. This does not actually help in explaining the nature of the diverse types of experiences in which an individual is engaged. She does not mention the basis on which the presence or absence of such properties depends. She uses them as if they are already existent and her task is to attach them to the arguments occurring with experiential predicates.

Filip assumes that in a causal event structure the NP in the nominative case causes the experiencer's psychological change. However, she does not specify the exact nature of this change and whether it is emotional, mental or sensory. This account also is not quite useful in determining whether the argument encoded in the nominative case is intentionally involved in this psychological change or not. Thus in

12. I frightened him

13. Darkness frightened him

The referent of the pronoun I is most probably intentionally involved in frightening him, whereas in 13 this is not applicable to darkness.

Dabrowska (1994; 1997) conducts her research within the framework of cognitive grammar to examine the semantics of Polish cases. In her description of the semantic aspects of the case marking of the experiencer, Dabrowska (1997:19) employs some terms like "personal sphere and sphere of awareness". The former is an open-ended category that comprises the belongings, objects, facts and persons that are intimately linked with a target person. The latter term represents a region in one's personal sphere. It includes all mental experience predicates. In Polish, an experience can be expressed by the nominative, the accusative or the dative which is the best exponent of the experiencer. Dabrowska (1994:1029) claims that the nominative experiencer indicates "the participant's agent like features such as active, volitional and controlled involvement in an interaction. By contrast, the dative experiencer highlights one's internal state of mind, affectedness by another entity or lack of control over an action". The accusative experiencer refers to the one who undergoes a change of psychological state due to an agent's action. Dabrowska holds the view that construal is the determining factor of whether to use the nominative or the dative case marking of the experiencer. The nominative form foregrounds the participant's active part in the interaction and backgrounds his sphere of awareness. On the other hand, the dative construal foregrounds the sphere of awareness and highlights the experiencer's passive role.

If we consider the following examples

14. ?inza8ga        -rragulu

became upset    the man

The man became upset

15. fakkara    -rragulu    fi -l ?amri

thought    the man    about the matter

The man thought about the matter

We find that the NP /?arragulu/ in both sentences is an experiencer and is encoded by the nominative case as it specifies the subject. Unlike Dabrowska's assumptions, It is quite clear that in 14 the experiencer does not necessarily exhibit volitional and controlled involvement. Being upset is, in many if not all cases, caused by an external stimulus. In 15, the experiencer's sphere of awareness is the focal foregrounded element and it is assigned the nominative case ending. In other words, Dabrowska tends to use too general claims that leave many instances unaccounted for. Furthermore, Dabrowska's proposed sphere of awareness, which is related to the dative experiencer, is confined to mental experiences. This means that there is a need for more spheres to cover, for example, emotional and sensory experiences which are not less important than mental interactions. Both Filip and Dabrowska focus on the case marking of the experiencer role and disregard its relation with the predicate and the other arguments occurring with it. I assume that this relation is of prime importance and its nature will be comprehended when we consider the semantic aspects of such relations. Such relations function as enabling tools which help us understand, interpret and differentiate between linguistic structures. These semantic aspects determine the form of the experiential predicate and the cases assigned to the arguments in sentences. All these points are dealt with in the succeeding parts.

### **3. The characterization of grammatical relations in Arabic**

Arabic has three cases: the nominative, the accusative and the genitive. The nominative is typically assigned to the subject. Al- hammaadi (1997: 86) defines the subject as "the nominal in the nominative case that is preceded by a verb in the active voice. It specifies the entity that performs or is described by the action." Thus in

16. ?akala -lwaladu tamran  
 ate the boy: SUBJ date: OBJ

The boy ate date

17. waqa8a -lḥa:ʔiṭu

fell the wall

The wall fell

The NPs /ʔalwaladu/ and /ʔalḥa:ʔiṭu/ are assigned the grammatical relation of the subject because the criteria for its definition are applicable to both of them. In 16, there is another NP which is assigned the grammatical relation of the object. Al-hammaadi (1997:92) identifies it as “the nominal in the accusative case specifying the entity that is acted upon.” This characterisation is adequate for the NP /tamran/ as it specifies the entity that is eaten. The genitive case marker is attached to an object of preposition or NPs showing possession or close connection between two things as in

18. fataḥ-tu ba:ba-lfaṣli bi-lmufta:ḥi  
 opened I the door of the classroom with the key

I opened the door of the classroom with the key

The NPs /ʔalfaṣli/ and /ʔalmufta:ḥi/ are in the genitive case. The former represents a possessive while the latter refers to an object of a preposition.

It is noted that case marking is an indispensable dimension of the definition of grammatical relations in Arabic. Thus, Bateson (1967) and Beeton (1968) outline that the role played by nouns in an Arabic sentence is usually indicated by its grammatical case. Traditional grammarians hold the view that case forms determine and distinguish the meanings between the subject and the object. Thus in

19. ɖaraba zaidun 8amran  
 hit Zaid: NOM Amr: ACC

Zaid hit Amr.

We are able to identify the NP /zaidun/ as the subject because it has the nominative case marker /u/ or *ḍamma*. The meaning of such sentences would be obscure and we would not know the hitter and the one that is hit without case marking. *ʔiṣṣāb* is the term used for case marking in Arabic. According to *lisan ʔalʔarab* (an Arabic dictionary), it literally means “the clarification of meaning and intent” . It should be borne in mind that a ditransitive verb in Arabic is said to have two objects and not a direct and an indirect object as in English.

Hassaan (1973:191) proclaims that syntax provides a set of conditions that constitute what he terms "the syntactic context". This context aims at revealing the meanings of syntactic structures. One of these, namely the structure condition indicates that the subject should be an NP preceded by a verb. He elsewhere (1983:118) asserts that those features in addition to agreement, order and the nominative case marking are the defining elements of the subject. This displays that contemporary linguistic characterization mainly follows the traditional grammarians' line of argument which is formal in nature.

It is notably evident that this characterization is in syntactic terms. This is justified on the grounds of regarding these relations as syntactic functions because their identification is based on such notions like grammatical position, agreement and case marking. Such conditions attain cross-linguistic validity, bearing in mind differences between languages with regard to word order and case marking. It is also clear that the criteria employed by traditional grammarians are still retained in contemporary linguistic accounts of this issue. It seems that many linguists consider this as an intellectual heritage that should be preserved.

Some linguists like Yakout (1985) think that a universal characterization of grammatical relations is doomed to failure. His assumption is based on the observation that Chomsky's identification of the subject and the object in terms of dominance is invalid for Arabic. Similarly, the characterization of the subject in Arabic in terms of case marking is invalid for English. I agree with him with regard to the invalidity of syntactic considerations for a universal characterization. However, I believe that a

universal description is still possible as long as it is based on conceptual grounds as will be explained later.

Another related issue concerns the identification of the object. Hamaasa observes that transitivity is determined by the lexical entry of a verb. He (1996:117) also notes that “a transitive verb in addition to the feasibility of a nominal to be acted upon determine the nature and the presence of an object”. It has to be admitted that this is usually but not always the case. Thus, the object with verbs like /ʔaḏḥaka/ ‘to make one laugh’, /ʔabka/ ‘to make one cry’, /ʔama:ta/ ‘to put one to death’ and /ʔaḥya/ ‘to give life to’, which are transitive in nature, may be deleted. This is done for the sake of conveying specific meanings. Thus in

20. ‘wa ʔannahu huwa ʔaḏḥaka wa ʔabka wa ʔannahu huwa ʔama:ta wa /ʔaḥya’ (Sura 53, verse 43-44)

The object which could be the NP /ʔanna:sa/ ‘people’ is deleted because the emphasis is on restricting these actions to God. The explicit mention of the direct object in this case is unnecessary. This displays that such semantic aspects- like the purpose for which an expression is used for – determine its structure. This, in turn, proves that it is not merely a matter of fixed structural elements like the presence of a transitive verb. As for the second condition, I would argue that it is not always valid.

Thus in

21. qaraʔtu      kita:ban

read I      a book

I read a book

22. ʔuḥibbu      - ssafara

like I      traveling

I like traveling

Neither /kita:ban/ nor /ʔassafara/ is acted upon.

Moreover, there is a set of verbs which is used either in double object structures or with an object and an object of preposition. Some of such verbs are /ʔa8ʔa/ ‘to give’ and /ʔarsala/ ‘to send’.

Thus in

23. ʔa8ʔay-tu        -rragula        ma:lan  
gave I            the man        money

I gave the man some money

24. ʔa8ʔay-tu ma:lan li-rraguli  
gave I money to the man

I gave money to the man

In 23, the verb /ʔa8ʔa/ is used in a double object construction with two objects, namely the NPs /ʔarragula./ and /ma:lan/. Another variant of this construction is in 24 in which the NP /ʔarraguli/ is an object of preposition. The difference between 23 and 24 in syntactic terms lies in the use of the preposition /li/ ‘to’. According to a cognitively based analysis, these sentences differ in the way they are construed. In 23, the man’s possession of the money is highlighted, while in 24, the focus is on the money given. In other words, only a functional perspective can offer an appropriate explanation of differences in meaning of such constructions.

#### **4.1. Experiential predicates**

According to neurological studies, there are some areas of the brain that are involved in language processing such as Broca’s and Wernicke’s areas . In a similar fashion, I propose three more abstract areas which will facilitate my attempt to examine, analyse and interpret the linguistic structures containing experiential predicates. They are: the emotional, the mental and the sensory areas. The predicates included in each area are further subdivided into those taking the nominative or the accusative experiencer. It should be borne in mind that the following lists are not exhaustive, but they include some of the most frequently used predicates in each of the aforementioned areas.

Table.1.a

Emotional experiential predicates taking the nominative experiencer			
?istamta8a	to enjoy	?asifa	to regret
fariḥa	to be glad	?iṭma?anna	to feel assured
sa8ida	to be happy	ta8a:ṭafa	to sympathise with
ḥazina	to be sad	baka	to weep
qaliqa	to be perturbed	tamanna	to hope
tawattara	to be tense	taḍayaqa	to be annoyed
?aḥabba	to love	kariha	to hate
xa:fa	to be frightened	naddima	to repent
ḍaḥika	to laugh		



Table 1.b

Emotional experiential predicates taking the accusative experiencer	
mattaṣa to make one enjoy	?aḏḥaka to make one laugh
fariḥa to make one glad	ṭam?anna to assure
?asṣada to make one happy	?abaka to make one cry
?aḥzana to sadden	ḍa:yaqa to annoy
wattara to make one tense	?aqlaqa to perturb
ḥabbaba to render loveable	
?axa:fa to frighten	

Table 2.a

Mental experiential predicates taking the nominative experiencer	
fakkara to think	?indahaša to be amazed
šaddaqa to believe	ta?ammala to contemplate
taŏakkara to remember	šakka to doubt
nassiya to forget	8alima to know
tana:sa to feign to forget	fahima to understand
?iqtana8a to be persuaded	
taḥayyara to be perplexed	
?adraka to perceive	

Table2.b

Mental experiential predicates taking the accusative experiencer	
ŏakkara to remind	?adhaša to amaze
?ansa to make one forget	šakkaka to make one doubt
?aqna8a to persuade	fahhama to make one understand
ḥayyara to perplex	

Table 3.a

Sensory experiential predicates taking the nominative experiencer	
raʔa	to see
samiḡa	to hear
lamasa	to touch
taḡawwaqa	to taste
ṡamma	to smell

Table 3.b

Sensory experiential predicates taking the accusative experiencer	
ʔara	to make one see
ʔasmaḡa	to make one hear
ʔaḡa:qa	to make one taste
ʔaṡamma	to make one smell

## 4.2. The analysis

Let's consider and analyse the following sentences which include some experiential predicates in table 1.a

1.a. ?istamta8a      -lwaladu      bi-lmanzari  
enjoyed            the boy            the view

The boy enjoyed the view

2.a. fariḥa            -lwaladu      bi-lhadiyati  
was glad            the boy            about the present

The boy was glad about the present

3.a. ?aḥabba        -lwaladu      madrasata-hu  
loved                the boy            school    his

The boy loved his school

4.a. kariha            -lwaladu      ga:ra-      hu  
hated                the boy            neighbour his

The boy hated his neighbour

5.a. tamanna        -lwaladu      -nnaga:ḥa  
hoped for            the boy            success

The boy hoped for success

The predications in 1.a-5.a. are profiled by the predicates /?istamta8a/, / fariḥa /, /?aḥabba/, /kariha/ and / tamanna/. In each of the preceding examples we find a relational predication involving an interaction between two arguments occurring with an emotional experiential predicate. The first argument i.e. the NP /?alwaladu/ specifies a nominative experiencer that functions as the subject in the five sentences. The second argument, represented by the NPs /?almanzari/, /?alhadiyati/, /madrasatahu/, /ga:rahu/ and /?annaga:ḥa/, refers to the object of the emotional experience, i.e. the one or the thing being enjoyed, loved or hated. Syntactically this NP is either an object of preposition as in 1.a -2.a. or an object as in 3.a-5.a.

The nominative experiencer is selected as the subject as it more prominent or salient than the other argument. This prominence is attributed to the fact that it is the experiencer's emotional area that we are concerned with. Through the scrutiny of the preceding instances, It is worth noting that sentience (the ability to sense) and involvement are two major characteristics of the experiencer. It is also evident that volition is a feature that is attached to the experiencer, but is exhibited with varying degrees. Thus with /ʔaḥabba/, /kariha/ and /tamanna/ the volition degree is stronger than with /ʔistamtaḡa/ and /fariḥa/. The chief reason is that when one loves, hates or hopes for something to happen, he/she is likely to choose and decide to do this willingly. However, when one enjoys or is glad about something, volitional involvement may be displayed with a less degree. The object of experience itself may, in many cases, bring about the emotional state of being enjoyed or glad about something. Thus in 1.a, the experiencer may have enjoyed the view because it was a wonderful one. Similarly, in 2.a, the referent of the NP/ʔalwaladu/ may have been glad about the present for it was an interesting one.

Extension from the prototype of the subject is another element that is related to the degree of volition and control displayed by the nominative experiencer. Thus in 3.a- 5.a, the meaning of the nominative experiencer is equivalent, to a great extent, to the prototypical sense of the subject referred to earlier. The experiencer in these sentences is conceived of as the initiator of the emotional experience. In 1a-2.a, this degree is not as strong as in 3.a-5.a. However, the experiencer functions as the subject because the predicates /ʔistamtaḡa/ and /fariḥa/ necessitate the presence of a participant who is able to enjoy or be glad about something.

In the following relational predications

1.b. mattaḡa	- lmanḡaru	-lwalada
made one enjoy	the view	the boy

The view made the boy enjoy the view

2.b. farraḥat	ʔalhadiyatu	-lwalada
made one glad	the present	the boy

The present made the boy glad

3.b. ḥabbabat           ʔalmdrasatu   -lwalada fi:-ha  
made one love    the school       the boy    at it

The school made the boy love it

4.b. karraha           -lga:ru           -lwalada fi:-hi  
made one hate    the neighbour    the boy    at him

The neighbour made the boy hate him

we notice that there are two NPs in every sentence. The NP designating the experiencer is in the accusative case and an object. The other NP refers simultaneously to the cause of the emotional experience and the subject. The predications are profiled by the predicates / mattaḡa/, / farraḥat/, /ḥabbabat/ and / karraha/. Before proceeding with the analysis, I would like to note that each of the predicates in 1.a -4.a and those in 1.b- 4.b are morphologically derived from the same root. Thus, for instance, the verbs /ʔaḥabba/ ‘loved’ and / ḥabbaba/ ‘made one to love’ are derived from the verb root / ḥabab/. The point to be asserted in this respect is that construal is the determining factor in the choice of a specific form of the verb. Thus in 1.b –4.b the causative form of the verbs is used because the emotional experiences expressed in these examples are construed as being instigated by a stimulus.

Now I continue the analysis by examining the relationship between the participants in these emotional interactions. The NPs /ʔalmanḡaru/, /ʔalhadiyatu/, /ʔalmdrasatu/ and /ʔalga:ru/ refer to the entities that bring those experiences into being. Being the stimuli for these experiences, those entities are more salient than the referent of the NP /ʔalwalada/. This NP represents the experiencer which is assigned the accusative case. The participants occupying the subject position have the feature of control over the experiencer, but the feature volition is not feasible for them as they designate inanimate object. The only participant that may display volition is specified by the NP /ʔalga:ru/. It is true that the experiencer in these sentences is emotionally acted upon, but it retains its sentience and involvement characteristics.

With regard to the mental area, let's consider the following instances which include some of the predicates in table 2.a.

1.c. fakkara                      -lwaladu      bi-lʔamri  
thought                      the boy      of the matter

The boy thought of the matter

2.c. taʔammala                      -lwaladu      -lmanʒara li- waqtin    ʔawi:lin  
contemplated                      the boy      the view    for time    long

The boy contemplated the view for a long time

3.c. taðakkara                      -lwaladu      ʔufu:lata-hu  
remembered                      the boy      childhood his

The boy remembered his childhood

4.c. nassiya                      -lwaladu      -lmaw8ida  
forgot                      the boy      the appointment

The boy forgot the appointment

5.c. tana:sa                      -lwaladu      -lmaw8ida  
feigned to forget                      the boy      the appointment

The boy feigned to forget the appointment

In these sentences, the participants are represented by a nominative experiencer functioning as the subject and an object of experience. In 1.c, the object of experience is specified by an object of preposition, while it is expressed by an object in 2.c-5.c. The predicates /fakkara/, /taʔammala/, /taðakkara/, /nassiya/ and /tana:sa/ profile the relational predications. In 1.c- 5.c, the experiencer is characterized as being involved, sentient and the initiator of the mental experience. In other words, the experiencer is cognitively more salient than the object of experience.

Volition and control over the experience, as explained earlier, may be entailed with different degrees. Thus the experiencer, in 1.c, 2.c and 5.c, shows a greater degree of the two attributes than in 3.c and 4.c. This is evident when we examine the meanings of the verbs /nassiya/ and /tana:sa/ which

are derived from the same root. In 4.c, when one forgets something, this may be due to certain circumstances that make him forget his appointment. However, in 5.c, the experiencer deliberately feigns to forget the appointment.

By contrast, if we look at these examples

1.d. ḏakkarat   ʔa ṣṣu:ratu   -lwalada   bi- ṭufu:lati-hi

reminded   the photo   the boy   of childhood his

The photo reminded the boy of his childhood

2.d. ʔansa                   -lla8ibu           -lwalada   -lmaw8ida

made one forget   the playing   the boy   the appointment

Playing made the boy forget the appointment

3.d. ʔaqna8a   -ssi8ru           -lwalada   bi-ššira:ʔi

persuaded   the price           the boy   to buy

The price persuaded the boy to buy

4.d. ʔadhaša   -lxabaru           -lwalada

amazed   the news           the boy

The news amazed the boy

we find that they have an accusative experiencer represented by the NP /ʔalwalada/ and the cause or the stimulus of the mental experience which designates the subject in sentences 1d- 4d. The predicates in these examples are causative. Initiation of and control over the mental experience are the two main factors that promote the NPs in the nominative case to occupy the subject position. Volition can not be attached to the stimuli of these experiences as these NPs refer to inanimate entities. The NP /ʔalwalada/ designates the one who is mentally affected by the stimulus, therefore it is less prominent. This justifies its use as the grammatical object. In 1.d, 2.d and 3.d, the NPs /ṭufu:latihi/, /ʔalmaw8ida/ and /ʔaššira:ʔi/ represent the object of experience.

Table 3.a contains sensory predicates which can be inserted in sentences such as the following

1.e. raʔa           -lwaladu   -lqiṭṭata



saw        the boy     the cat

The boy saw the cat

2.e. sami8a    -lwaladu   -lḥadi:θa

heard       the boy     the conversation

The boy heard the conversation

3.e. lamasa    -lwaladu   -lḥa:ʔiṭa

touched    the boy     the wall

The boy touched the wall

4.e. ḍa:qa      -lwaladu   - ṭṭa8a:ma

tasted      the boy     the food

The boy tasted the food

5.e. šamma    -lwaladu   -lwardata

smelled    the boy     the rose

The boy smelled the rose

This type of predicates, unlike the two preceding types, entails a physical contact between the experiencer and the object of experience. This contact has various forms. It may be visual as in 1.e, auditory as in 2.e or relating to the senses of touch, taste or smell as in 3.e – 5.e.

In each of these predications, there are two arguments that accompany the sensory predicate. The former is represented by the NP /ʔalwaladu/ and specifies the nominative experiencer. The latter designates the object of experience. The experiencer is assigned the grammatical relation of the subject as it refers to the individual that initiates and controls these experiences. Volition is highly manifest in 3.e- 5.e, but it is not necessarily the case in 1.e- 2.e. Thus one may see a cat accidentally because it passes in front of him. Similarly, one may unintentionally hear a conversation because it coincides with his presence in the place where it is made. Being less salient than the experiencer, the NP specifying the object of experience occupies the object position.

It is worth noting that the use of these sensory predicates can be extended to cover more abstract domains. Thus we may encounter sentences such as

1.f raʔay-tu            -l8aḏa:ba        kullah-u

saw I                the anguish    all of it

I saw all the anguish

2.f šammam-tu        ra:ʔiḥata        xiya:natin

smelled I        a smell        of treachery

I smelled a smell of treachery

3.f ḏuq -tu            ḥala:wata        -nnaga:ḥi

tasted I            sweetness    of succses

I tasted the sweetness of success

The predicates /raʔa/, /šamma/ and /ḏa:qa/ are used figuratively in these examples. In 1.f- 3.f, There two participants which are represented by an experiencer and an object of experience. The attached subject pronoun /tu/ ‘I’ refers to the experiencer, while the NPs /ʔal8aḏa:ba/, / ra:ʔiḥata xiya:natin/ and / ḥala:wata -nnaga:ḥi/ specify the objects of experience which occupy the object position. These NPs are employed in a metaphorical sense because they are portrayed as concrete entities that can be seen, smelled and tasted. Metaphors, within cognitive grammar, are not a special case of language use but are ubiquitous and pervasive in every day language. In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is accorded a significant prominence and is associated with the imaginative side of thought. Ungerer and Schmid (1997) believe that metaphors are cognitive instruments utilised to think about things. They further note that their basic logic lies in our conception that abstract entities are perceived via the configuration of concrete objects. Thus, for instance, anguish would be likened to a visible object so as to assert the great suffering of the one undergoing this experience.

To resume our analysis, let’s examine the following sentences including the sensory predicates cited in table 3.b

1.g. ʔara:-ni            -lwaladu        - lqiṭṭata

made me see      the boy      the cat

The boy made me see the cat

2.g. ?asma8a-ni      -lwaladu      - lḥadi:θa

made me hear      the boy      the conversation

The boy made me hear the conversation

3.g. ?ða:qa-ni      -lwaladu      - tṭa8a:ma

made me taste      the boy      the food

The boy made me taste the food

4.g. ?ašamma-ni      -lwaladu      -lwardata

made me smell      the boy      the rose

The boy made me smell the rose

In 1.g – 4.g, There are four causative and ditransitive verbs, i.e. having two objects. The former, referring to the experiencer, is specified by an attached first person pronoun, whereas the latter designates the object of experience and is represented by the NPs /?alqittata/, /?alḥadi:θa/, /?aṭṭa8a:ma/ and /?alwardata/. The NP /?alwaladu/ is the cause or the stimulus of the sensory experience in which an experiencer is engaged. The participant, representing the stimulus, is more prominent than the two other ones, and this justifies its use as the subject. With causative experiential verbs, the stimulus may be inanimate as in nearly all the preceding analysed sentences, or animate referring to human beings as in 1.g –4.g. The main difference between these two types of stimuli pertains to their features. Thus, in 1.g –4.g above, volition and control over the experiencer are the main attributes of the participant represented by the NP /?alwaladu/. In all the examples including causative verbs, except for 4.b whose stimulus is a human being, the feature volition is lacking because the initiators of these experiences are inanimate entities.

## **Conclusion**

After this account, the following results have been reached.

1. Construal, i.e. the expression of a situation in alternate ways for specific purposes plays a crucial and pivotal role for the semantic and syntactic structure of linguistic expressions. This explains the use of structures involving nominative experiencers opposed to those having accusative experiencers.
2. The difference between the nominative or the accusative case markers is ascribed to cognitive aspects relating mainly to the conceptual arrangement of the elements within linguistic expressions. This is contrary to the popular belief that this difference is based on formal syntactic grounds.
3. Construal does not only affect the nature of the relationship between the participants in experiential predications but also the form of the verb as well. We have seen that the verbs utilized in the analysis have various forms; the intransitive, the transitive and the causative. Many of the verbs taking the nominative and the accusative experiencer within one experiential area are derived from the same root as with /sa8ida/ and /?as8ada/ in the emotional area, /nassiya/ and /?ansa/ in the mental area and /sami8a/ and /?asma8a/ in the sensory area.
4. The meaning of the subject, whether it refers to the experiencer or the stimulus, extends from the prototypical sense of this grammatical relation. This sense specifies the initiator or the doer of an action. In the present study, actions are in most cases employed in a figurative sense. This is justifiable on the grounds that the paper focuses mainly on the emotional and mental part of a human being. It has been found that even with sensory predications abstract associations and meanings can be conveyed.
5. With regard to the features of the nominative experiencer, some preceding studies such as Dabrowska's and Filip's assert the volitional involvement of the experiencer whenever it is assigned this case. However, it has been proved that not all nominative experiencers exhibit this attribute. Therefore, it is preferable to deal with it not in an absolute manner but only when it is adequate.
6. In tables 1.a and 2.a, the experiential predicates are used either intransitively or transitively. All the verbs in table 1.a, except for /?aḥabba/, /kariha/ and /tamanna/, are used intransitively, i.e. with

the prepositions /bi/ or /maḡa/ ‘with’, /min/ ‘from’, /ḡala/ ‘at’ . Thus we say /ʔistamtaḡa bi/, /taḡa:ṭafa maḡa/, /qaliqa min/ and /ḡazina ḡala/. In this case, the object of experience is an object of preposition. In table 2, some verbs are transitive such as / taḡakkara/, / nassiya/, /ʔadraka/ and /ḡalima/ , while others are intransitive like / fakkara /, / ṡakka / as they are followed by the preposition /fi/, or /ʔindahaṡa / and /taḡayyara/ which occur with the preposition /min/. It has been stated before that, in terms of cognitive grammar, the use of a certain grammatical morpheme is meant to represent or symbolize a specific conceptual structure. Thus, for instance, the occurrence of a preposition with a verb is to convey a specific cognitive configuration which is reflected by linguistic structures. To clarify this, let’s examine the following figures which stand for the three areas. Each of the emotional and the mental areas is delineated by interior and exterior boundaries. The interior of both areas comprises transitive verbs taking objects, whereas the exterior consists of intransitive verbs with which prepositions are used. The sensory area has only an interior as its verbs are transitive.

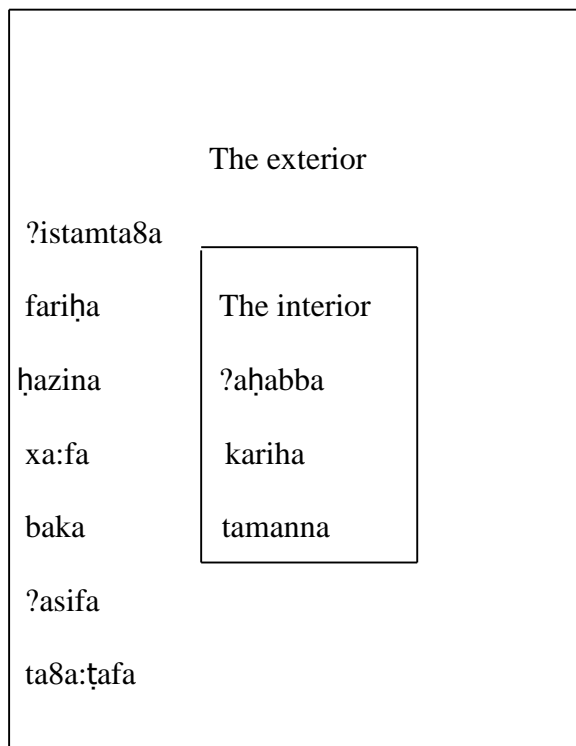


Figure 1. the emotional area

The verbs included within the interior of this area are transitive and the object of experience, occurring with them, is represented by an object. The lack of a preposition intervening between the experiencer and his object of experience implies a figuratively direct contact between them. Their relation is quite strong that the experiencer draws his object of experience onto the interior of this area. By contrast, the presence of a preposition that precedes the object of experience with the intransitive verbs reflects the nature of the relation between the two participants. The object of experience, in this respect, has an external existence and lies outside the limits of the experiencer's emotional area. The preposition, in such instances, is conceived of as the tool that links the two separate entities. The difference between the two cases can be exemplified by this pair of sentences

?aḥabba	-lwaladu	?axa: - hu
loved	the boy	brother his

The boy loved his brother

ta8a:ṭafa	-lwaladu	ma8a ?axi:- hi
sympathised	the boy	with brother his

The boy sympathized with his brother

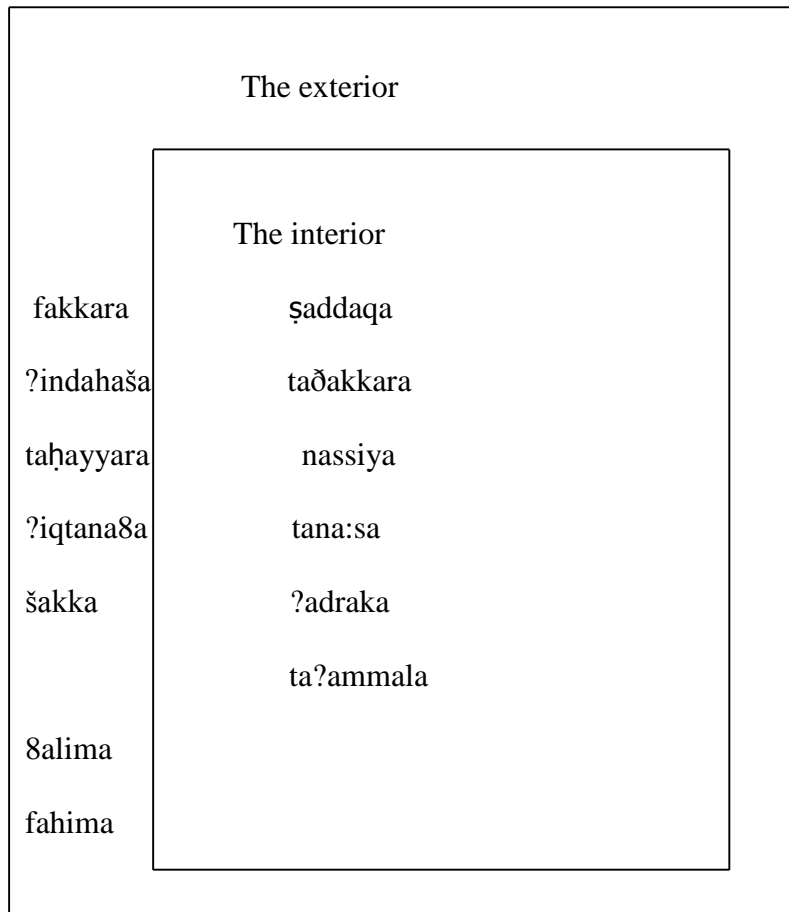


Figure 2. the mental area

The same explanation for the absence or the presence of a preposition within a predication including a mental predicate remains adequate. Unlike the emotional area, the interior of the mental area contains more verbs than its exterior. The interior verbs are transitive, while the exterior ones are intransitive. The need for a figuratively direct contact between the experiencer and his object of experience is highlighted when transitive verbs are used. This is due to the fact that when one believes, perceives, knows or understands something, this thing should be drawn onto his mental area. Only then the meanings associated with the verb will be fulfilled. This is true even with verbs such as /nassiya/ and /tana:sa/. To forget something, according to Oxford advanced learner's dictionary, literally means "to be unable to remember something that has happened in the past or information that you knew in the past". The meaning of this verb implies that the forgotten thing had a previous presence within one's mental area. As for the second verb, if one feigns to forget something, he/she pretends not to remember a thing in spite of the fact that it exists inside his mental area. The

prepositions required by the use of intransitive verbs in this area retain their function as a link between an experiencer and an object that resides outside his mental area.

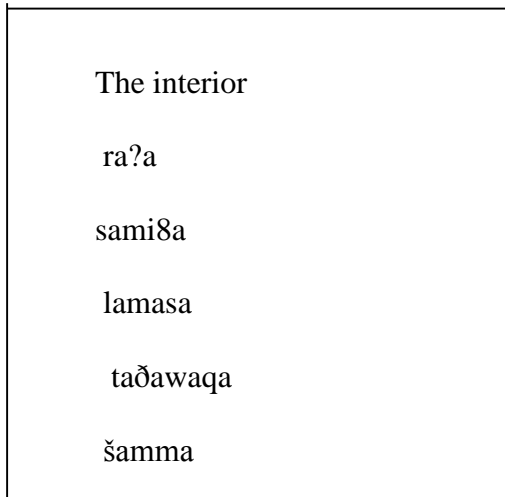


Figure 3. the sensory area

This area does not have an exterior because the meaning of the verbs referring to the five senses necessitates an actual physical contact between an experiencer and his object of experience. This justifies the use of the transitive form of the verbs.

### Transliteration symbols

همزة	ʔ
ب	b
ت	t
ث	θ
ج	g
ح	ħ
خ	x
د	d
ذ	ḏ
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	ř
ص	ṣ
ض	ḏ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ



ع	8
ج	g
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y

### Short vowels

a - i – u

### Long vowels

a: - i:- u:

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