

The Relationship between Agreement and Morphological Case: Evidence from Arabic*

Rashid Al-Balushi

Sultan Qaboos University

This paper argues for the dissociation between agreement and structural Case, based on data from Standard Arabic (SA) and the Omani variety of Arabic (OA), and makes two claims in this regard. First, agreement is related to morphological case (m-case) in two ways: 1) agreement deputizes for m-case when m-case is absent (either because m-case is not realized or because the DP is not overt); and 2) the agreement affixes (subject vs. object) reflect the case values (Nom vs. Acc) that DPs surface with. This applies to structural and lexical as well as default case types, thus indicating lack of connection to arguments. Second, using data from OA, whose DPs do not bear m-case and verbs bear full agreement with both arguments, it will be argued that the proposed relationship between agreement and m-case, where agreement deputizes for m-case in the morphological component, helps in θ -role assignment.

Key words: structural Case, lexical case, default case, morphological case, agreement

1. Introduction

Agreement in terms of ϕ -features has been argued to be the licenser of structural Case (George & Kornfilt 1981, Chomsky 1981, 2001, Schütze 1997). Despite this standard view, several authors have argued that ϕ -agreement does not license structural Case (Carstens 2001, Tanaka 2005, Alboiu 2006, Bobaljik 2008, Al-Balushi 2011). The surveyed Standard Arabic (SA) data will show that agreement does not license Case, since Case is licensed in the presence of defective agreement (between functional categories and arguments), and not licensed when agreement is complete.¹ The examined data also show that complete agreement appears on the relevant governor (verb or copula or particle) only when morphological case (m-case) is absent, either because m-case is not morphologically realized, which is the case of Omani Arabic (OA), or because the m-case-realizing DP does not surface; that is, when the DP is not overt.

Since this behavior of agreement is not contingent on the type of case that a DP bears, it is argued that agreement is not related to structural Case. In other words, if

* I would like to thank the editors of *Concentric: Studies in Linguistics*, as well as the anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper.

¹ Structural/abstract Case may be licensed by tense (Chomsky 1980, Pesetsky & Torrego 2001, 2004), mood (Aygen 2002), or verbal Case (Al-Balushi 2011, 2016). There have been other approaches to Case (e.g., Marantz 1991, McFadden 2004, Sitaridou 2006, Baker 2015, Levin 2015, Sheehan & van der Wal 2015). It has yet to be established whether any of these approaches is extendable to SA and OA, a task that goes beyond the scope of this paper. Here, 'Case' is reserved for structural Case, and 'case' for lexical and default case.

agreement (morphology) can reflect and deputize for the m-case that represents all three case types (structural, lexical, and default) in the same way, as (1)–(3) below show, then agreement may not be related to structural Case, as is standardly assumed, but rather to m-case, since there are differences between the three case types. While structural Case is *checked* on arguments (subjects and objects), which have [Case] features, by functional heads (T^0 and v^0), lexical case is *assigned* by lexical elements (particles, copulas, *believe*-type verbs) to non-arguments (topics and nominal and adjectival predicates), which have no [Case] features in narrow syntax; lexical case is Acc in SA. Unlike structural Case, which indicates a thematic relation between the Case-checking head and the argument DP, lexical case does not indicate such a relation. Default case is *obtained* by non-arguments when they reach PF without an m-case specification as a result of not being in the scope of lexical case assigners (Schütze 2001, Soltan 2007); default case is Nom in SA (Mohammad 1990, 2000, Ouhalla 1994). In (1), the subject, which receives structural Nom Case, is represented by the subject agreement, *-ū*, and the object, which receives structural Acc Case, is represented by the object agreement, *-hunna*. In (2), the topic (of the predicate *nājih-īn* ‘successful (PL.M)’), which surfaces with default Nom case (Al-Balushi, to appear) is represented by the same subject agreement morphology as in (1), *-ū*, indicating that it is Nom that controls agreement, not thematic nor grammatical relations. In (3), the topic (of the predicate *nājih-ā-t-un* ‘successful (PL.F)’), which surfaces with lexical Acc case assigned by *ʔinna* (Al-Balushi 2016), is represented by the same object agreement morphology as in (1), *-hunna*, despite the absence of thematic and grammatical relations between *ʔinna* and the topic; more on this relationship in Sections 3 and 4.

(1) SA

kallam-ū-hunna.

PST.talk-3.PL.M-3.PL.F²

‘They (M) talked to them (F).’

(2) SA

kān-ū nājih-īn.

PST.be-3.PL.M successful-PL.ACC

‘They (M) were successful.’

² I use the following abbreviations: ACC: accusative; COMP: complementizer; DL: dual; EMPH: emphatic; ENER: energetic; F: feminine; FUT: future; GEN: genitive; IMPF: imperfective; IMPR: imperative; IND: indicative; JUSS: jussive; M: masculine; MOD: modality; NEG: negative; NOM: nominative; PL: plural; PASS: passive; PRON: pronominal element; PST: past; SG: singular; SUB: subjunctive; 1: 1st person; 2: 2nd person; 3: 3rd person.

(3) SA

ʔinna-**hunna** nājih-ā-t-un.

COMP-3.PL.F successful-PL-F-NOM

‘They (F) are successful.’

The absence of m-case (in OA) is problematic for the Case Filter, which states that lexical DPs must have Case (Chomsky 1981). Moreover, since the Case Filter is a PF-requirement, DPs have to bear m-case. It is also problematic for the Visibility Condition (Aoun 1979), since DPs need abstract Case and its morphological manifestation, m-case, to be visible at LF for θ -role assignment.³ In the absence of m-case, OA will be argued to utilize agreement. Unlike SA, whose verbs carry incomplete subject agreement and no object agreement, the OA verbs carry full subject and object agreement. Therefore, agreement will be argued to deputize for m-case in the morphological component, which helps to assign θ -roles to the relevant arguments. A survey of various constructions in SA shows that the verb must realize full agreement with the arguments that are not overt and those that cannot bear m-case (like CPs and PPs).

The next section argues that agreement does not license Case in SA and OA. It also provides arguments that pre-verbal DPs in OA are topics. This indicates that the complete agreement in OA in both orders is not the licenser of Case, since it appears when there is a lexical subject (VSO order) and when there is no lexical subject (SVO order). Section 3 presents SA data to show that the agreement affix (subject vs. object) reflects the type of m-case (Nom vs. Acc) that represents structural, lexical, and default case types. Section 4 presents OA data that show that agreement is complete with both arguments in the absence of m-case marking (i.e., the same pattern observed in SA), which might help in θ -role assignment. Section 5 presents an apparent counterargument. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2. Background

2.1 Agreement does not license Case in SA

I assume with Sībawayhi (1990:278) and Soltan (2007:50–61) that pre-verbal DPs in SA, like *ʔal-mudarris-ā-t-u* ‘the female teachers’ in (4), are not subjects, but rather topics that are base-generated in their surface position, which is Spec, TopP (Topic Phrase, Rizzi 1997); the subject is a post-verbal *pro* merged in the canonical subject

³ It is noteworthy that the current proposal is not contingent on any particular conception or view of θ -roles and θ -role assignment.

position, Spec, vP.⁴ Also, I assume with Chomsky (2001) that incomplete agreement is defective, hence unable to value [Case] on the goal.

(4) SA

ʔal-mudarris-ā-t-u katab-na *pro* r-risāla-t-a.
 the-teacher-PL-F-NOM PST.write-3.PL.F the-letter-F-ACC
 ‘The female teachers, they wrote the letter.’

Thus, full agreement in the SVO order, as in (4), does not count as subject agreement with *ʔal-mudarris-ā-t-u* since *ʔal-mudarris-ā-t-u* is a topic that receives default Nom case at PF (for Case Filter purposes). The grammaticality of (5)–(6), where a lexical Nom-marked subject (VSO order) obtains in the presence of defective ϕ -agreement, indicates that ϕ -agreement is not the feature that licenses the subject (via Case) in SA because agreement is incomplete (in [Person] and [Gender], as in (5), and in [Person], as in (6), but never in [Number]).

(5) SA

*katab-na/ kataba-t l-mudarris-ā-t-u r-risāla-t-a.
 PST.write-3.PL.F/ PST.write-3.SG.F the-teacher-PL-F-NOM the-letter-F-ACC
 ‘The female teachers wrote the letter.’

(6) SA

ħaḍara n-nisāʔ-u.
 PST.come.3.SG.M the-women-NOM
 ‘The women came/have come.’
 (Al-Hashimi 2006:98)

Similarly, object agreement in SA is not allowed, as (7) shows, further supporting the view that ϕ -agreement is not involved in the licensing of structural Case.

(7) SA

*qaraʔ-na r-rajul-u l-jarāʔid-a.
 PST.read-3.PL.F the-man-NOM the-newspapers.F-ACC

⁴ The claim that pre-verbal agentive DPs in SA are topics is also based on the fact that while participles are grammatical in the S-participle-O order (SVO), they are ungrammatical in the participle-S-O order (VSO). This is because the participle, an adjectival category, does not license structural Nom Case on a subject in the post-participle position. By contrast, the topic in the pre-participle position avails itself of the default case mechanism (Al-Balushi, to appear).

Now the fact that complete agreement obtains in the absence of a lexical subject, as in (4), and defective agreement obtains in the presence of a Nom-marked overt subject, as in (5)–(6), indicates that agreement is inert in the syntax in SA, as argued in Al-Balushi (2011, 2016).

As for OA, agreement in terms of ϕ -features ([Person], [Number] and [Gender]) between the verb and both the subject and object is complete, as (8) shows. Although this prompts the extension of the standard view of Case licensing (Case as a reflex of ϕ -feature valuation, Schütze 1997, Chomsky 2001), I will argue that structural Case in OA is not licensed by agreement. Example (8) also shows that, like those of the other modern (regional) dialects of Arabic, OA DPs do not bear m-case suffixes.⁵

(8) OA

katb-**in-ha** l-banāt r-rəsālah.
 PST.write-**3.PL.F-3.SG.F** the-girls.NOM the-letter.F.ACC
 ‘The girls wrote the letter.’

First, if subject agreement were the feature responsible for licensing the [Case] feature on the subject in (8), this agreement is expected to appear only when there is a lexical subject, as in (8), which is the VSO order. As (9) shows, however, the same complete subject agreement appears on the verb in the absence of the lexical subject. This indicates that agreement has another function, as will be argued in Sections 3 and 4. Here, I assume that pre-verbal DPs in OA are like their SA counterparts in being topics (not subjects). Section 2.2 will provide arguments for this assumption.⁶ Therefore, though complete, agreement in OA is inert in the syntax; that is, it does not license Case.⁷

(9) OA

ʔəl-banāt katb-**in-ha** *pro* r-rəsālah.
 the-girls.NOM PST.write-**3.PL.F-3.SG.F** the-letter.F.ACC
 ‘The girls, they wrote the letter.’

⁵ Therefore, the OA nominals will appear with the same Case or case values like their SA equivalents.

⁶ For a response to previous analyses of the relevant agreement facts in SA as well as to the view that the post-verbal and pre-verbal DPs are transformationally related, see Soltan (2007:36–50).

⁷ The claimed link between agreement and structural Case has also been questioned in different languages, e.g., Kannada (Agbayani & Shekar 2007), most Niger-Congo languages (Baker 2010), languages with context-sensitive agreement systems like Georgian and Nishnaabemwin (Béjar 2003:178–179), and Bantu (Carstens 2005).

Second, structural Case in OA may not be licensed by agreement since agreement does not license Case in SA either. This argument is based on an ancestral relationship between OA and Classical Arabic (CA), which is the direct ancestor of SA. Benmamoun & Hasegawa-Johnson (2013) argue that the modern dialects of Arabic are descendants of CA (the language of the Holy Qurʾān), and that they share the same syntactic system, including clause structure. Besides, Wilmsen (2016) argues that the Omani varieties of Arabic share the same ancestor with the language of the Holy Qurʾān, CA.⁸ Thus, the assumed ancestral relationship between SA and OA could indicate that agreement does not license structural Case in OA.

2.2 Pre-verbal DPs in OA are topics

Like their SA counterparts, pre-verbal DPs in OA are base-generated topics, for several reasons. First, example (8), which is the VSO structure, is a neutral statement of an event, so-called ‘thetic reading’. By contrast, example (9), which is the SVO structure, introduces an individual and comments on it, so-called ‘categorical reading’ (Kuroda 1972, Basilico 1998). Thus, (8) and (9) do not convey the same interpretation, indicating that they are not likely to have the same structure or be transformationally related. This is further supported by the fact that a pre-verbal DP may not be indefinite non-specific, as (10) shows. By contrast, a post-verbal DP may be indefinite non-specific, as (11) shows. This indicates that the two positions do not make a movement chain (Barss 1986), since movement chains allow reconstruction, which does not obtain here, suggesting the lack of a transformational relation between the pre-verbal and post-verbal positions.

(10) OA

*riggāl zār-na.
 man.NOM PST.visit.3.SG.M-1.PL

(11) OA

zār-na riggāl.
 PST.visit.3.SG.M-1.PL man.NOM
 ‘A man visited us.’

It should be noted, however, that indefinite topics are allowed in (at least) two contexts in SA as well as in OA. These are when the sentence expresses bizarre/odd information (Fassi Fehri 1993), and when the pre-verbal DP is modified (Mohammad

⁸ See Ferguson (1959) for an alternative view.

2000). The OA sentences in (12)–(13) are the equivalents of the relevant SA data, respectively. Obviously, none of these conditions applies to (10). This means that pre-verbal DPs and post-verbal ones are not related transformationally, since while there is no restriction on the indefiniteness of the latter, the indefiniteness of the former is restricted to special contexts.

(12) OA

baqrah tkallmi-t.
 cow.NOM PST.spoke-3.SG.F
 ‘A cow spoke.’

(13) OA

walad *(ṭwīl) ga.
 boy.NOM tall.NOM PST.come.3.SG.M
 ‘A tall boy came.’

Second, that the pre-verbal DP occupies an A-bar position is shown by the fact that, like left-dislocated elements (which occupy A-bar positions), it can be associated with either the agent or the theme, as (9) and (14) respectively show.

(14) OA

ʔəl-ʔəmtəhān ʕadd-ū-h ṭ-ṭəllāb.
 the-test.NOM PST.pass-3.PL.M-3.SG.M the-students.NOM
 ‘The test, the male students passed it.’

Third, when a post-verbal DP in a coordinate structure is spelled out pre-verbally, it must be resumed by a pronoun in the coordinate structure, as (15)–(16) show. Since the coordinate structure is an island for movement, *Ahmad* may not have moved. In other words, *Ahmad* must have been merged in its surface position in (16), indicating lack of movement from the post-verbal position.

(15) OA

sār-ū [Ahmad w Talal].
 PST.leave-3.PL.M Ahmad.NOM and Talal.NOM
 ‘Ahmad and Talal left.’

(16) OA

Ahmad sār/ sār-ū [***(huwwo)** w Talal].
 Ahmad.NOM PST.leave.3.SG.M/ PST.leave-3.PL.M **he** and Talal.NOM
 ‘Ahmad, he and Talal left.’

Fourth, assuming that the claim that Neg⁰ is higher than T⁰ in SA (Fassi Fehri 1993:87, Soltan 2007:185) is extendable to OA, (17) shows that the pre-verbal DP is higher than Spec, TP. As (18) shows, the Neg particle may not precede the pre-verbal DP, topic, to derive the same meaning.⁹ Given these arguments, I contend that the pre-verbal DP in OA is a topic, merged in Spec, TopP.

(17) OA

[_{TopP} ?əl-mdarrs-ā-t [_{NegP} **mā** ba-y-kitb-in-ha *pro*
the-teacher-PL-F.NOM NEG FUT-IMPF-write-3.PL.F-3.SG.F
r-rəsāla-h]].
the-letter-F.ACC
‘The female teachers, they will not write the letter.’

(18) OA

*[_{CP} **mā** [_{TopP} l-mdarrs-ā-t ba-y-kitb-in-ha *pro*
NEG the-teacher-PL-F.NOM FUT-IMPF-write-3.PL.F-3.SG.F
r-rəsāla-h]].
the-letter-F.ACC
‘The female teachers, they will not write the letter.’

Having shown that agreement does not license Case in both varieties of Arabic, the next two sections argue that agreement has another function, one in which it is related to m-case, not Case.

3. Agreement and m-case in SA

3.1 Agreement and m-case of structural Case

The data in this section show that ϕ -agreement both reflects and deputizes for the m-case (Nom vs. Acc) that represents structural Case in the morphological component (leading to PF). Data from SA embedded clauses, passives, and imperatives are reviewed to show that if a DP is not overt (hence m-case marking is absent), the verb must realize full agreement with it. If the DP is overt (hence m-case is realized), the verb carries either defective or no agreement with it. This complementary distribution relation between agreement and m-case indicates that the two elements may have the same function.

⁹ Example (18) is grammatical, but with another meaning, one where the topic is in the scope of negation. The Neg particle has moved in the Comp domain to the left of the topic. Thus the present translation is ‘it is not the female teachers who will write the letter (someone else will)’, *mā* being also a constituent negation particle (Ouhalla 1993).

The following data will also show that verbs with argument CPs and PPs, which cannot realize m-case, as well as verbs with DP arguments that cannot carry m-case (like *pro* and overt pronouns in Arabic), realize the ϕ -specification relevant to those XP arguments. Following Uriagereka's (2006) proposal that CPs are personless, I will assume that they are also genderless and numberless; I will also assume this to be true of PPs. Therefore, verbs with CP and PP arguments are expected to realize the default agreement specification, that is, 3rd person, singular, and masculine, the unmarked features (Noyer 1992, Harley & Ritter 2002, among many others). That clausal arguments receive structural Case (for LF visibility) has been argued in the traditional grammar of Arabic (Sībawayhi 1990) as well as in Delahunty (1983), Massam (1985), Chomsky (1986), Plann (1986), Bošković (1995), Tsai (1995), Picallo (2002), Lee (2005), Uriagereka (2006, 2008:108–109), and Al-Balushi (2016); see Stowell (1981) for the opposite view. Also, Kempchinsky (1991:237) argues that “the PP [which also receives the GOAL thematic role] will receive accusative Case, violating the Case Resistance Principle (Stowell 1981)”. She argues that there is no way for the PP to avoid being Acc Case-marked, if (following GB-theoretic syntax), Case must be assigned at Surface Structure.

Also, contexts with pronominal DP subjects will provide further evidence that agreement reflects and deputizes for m-case when the latter does not surface, because pronouns (overt and *pro*) do not bear m-case. We have already seen this with *pro* subjects, as in the SVO structure in (4) above, since *pro* is phonetically null. This is also true of sentences with overt pronouns in SA, which, unlike their English counterparts, do not carry m-case, as (19) shows.¹⁰

¹⁰ Though uncommon, sentences like (19) with overt pronouns are grammatical, the overt pronoun being optional. When in a coordinate structure, the pronoun is obligatory, as (i) shows. Without the pronoun, (i) may sound grammatical to some Arabists. In this case, however, *wa* would not be the conjunctive *wa*, but rather the *wa*-of-simultaneity (*wāw-u-l-maṣiyyah*), and the sentence would have a different meaning. Also, as the Qurʾānic verse in (ii) shows, a post-verbal pronominal subject is licit in the presence of full subject agreement. Even if the pronoun in (ii) is allowed or required for emphasis, it still co-occurs with full subject agreement on the verb.

(i) SA
 ḏahab-ū [*(hum) wa ʔixwān-u-hum] ʔila l-madrasat-i.
 PST.go-3.PL.M they.M and brothers-NOM-their to the-school-GEN
 ‘They (M) and their brothers went to the school.’

(ii) SA
 ʔimmā ʔan tu-lqiy-a, wa ʔimmā ʔan na-kūn-a **nahnu** l-mulqīn.
 either COMP 2-throw-SUB, and or COMP 1.PL-be-SUB **we** the-throwers.ACC
 ‘The magicians said: oh (Moses) either you throw (what you have), or we will be the throwers.’
 (The Holy Qurʾān, 7:115)

(19) SA

qābal-ū hum l-mudarris-ā-t-i.
 PST.meet-3.PL.M they.M the-teacher-PL-F-ACC
 ‘They (M) met with the female teachers.’

In what follows, I present a set of constructions to support the proposed relationship between agreement and the m-case that represents structural Case. I assume with Soltan (2007) that SA does not exhibit A-movement.

The main verb in (20), a typical control construction, realizes defective subject agreement with the external argument, since this can carry m-case, and default agreement with the internal argument, since CPs have the default ϕ -specification. The features 3rd person, singular, and masculine have no morphological realization. Similarly, the embedded verb carries no agreement with the embedded overt DP object. Since the embedded subject is *pro*, which cannot bear m-case, the verb carries the relevant subject agreement morphology (-na, marking 3.PL.F) with it. That this approach to the relationship between agreement and m-case is on the right track is shown by the fact that more defective subject agreement on the main verb is allowed, as (21) shows. In contrast, the embedded verb may not realize incomplete agreement, as (22) shows, since *pro* cannot bear Nom m-case.

(20) SA

[_{TP} hāwala-t l-banāt-u_i [_{CP} ?an ya-ktub-na *pro*_i
 PST.try-3.SG.F the-girls-NOM COMP IMPF-write-3.PL.F
 r-risāla-t-a]].
 the-letter-F-ACC
 ‘The girls tried to write the letter.’

(21) SA

hāwala l-banāt-u_i [?an ya-ktub-na *pro*_i
 PST.try-3.SG.M the-girls-NOM COMP IMPF-write-3.PL.F
 r-risāla-t-a].
 the-letter-F-ACC
 ‘The girls tried to write the letter.’

(22) SA

*hāwala-t l-banāt-u_i [?an ta-ktub-a/
 PST.try-3.SG.F the-girls-NOM COMP 3.SG.F-write-SUB/
 ya-ktub-ū *pro*_i r-risāla-t-a].
 IMPF-write-3.PL.M the-letter-F-ACC

The ECM construction in (23) reveals the same m-case and agreement pattern. Assuming that the embedded clause is a CP as argued in Al-Balushi (2016), *ḍanna* ‘believe’ carries defective agreement ([Gender] and [Person] only) with the m-case-realizing lexical subject, but it carries default agreement with the CP complement, which encodes default ϕ -features (by assumption). The embedded verb carries full agreement with the *pro* subject, and no agreement with the DP object. The DP *ṭ-ṭullāb-a* ‘the students’ is an argument of neither predicate in this construction. It is a topic, which receives lexical Acc case from *ḍanna* ‘believe’, leaving the structural Acc Case licensed by matrix v^0 to the CP argument. The topic occupies the embedded Spec, TopP position and is co-indexed with a *pro* subject in the embedded post-verbal position. In support of the proposed relationship between agreement and m-case, the main verb of (23) may bear more defective subject agreement, as (24) shows, but the embedded verb may not, as (25) shows.

(23) SA

[_{TP} ḍanna-**t** l-mudarris-**ā-t-u** [_{CP} ṭ-ṭullāb-a_i
PST.believe-**3.SG.F** the-teacher-**PL-F-NOM** the-students-**ACC**
katab-**ū** *pro*_i r-rasāʔil-a]].
PST.write-**3.PL.M** the-letters.**F-ACC**

‘The female teachers believed the male students to have written the letters.’

(24) SA

[_{TP} ḍanna l-mudarris-**ā-t-u** [_{CP} ṭ-ṭullāb-a_i
PST.believe-**3.SG.M** the-teacher-**PL-F-NOM** the-students-**ACC**
katab-**ū** *pro*_i r-rasāʔil-a]].
PST.write-**3.PL.M** the-letters.**F-ACC**

‘The female teachers believed the male students to have written the letters.’

(25) SA

*[_{TP} ḍanna-**t** l-mudarris-**ā-t-u** [_{CP} ṭ-ṭullāb-a_i
PST.believe-**3.SG.F** the-teacher-**PL-F-NOM** the-students-**ACC**
kataba *pro*_i r-rasāʔil-a]].
PST.write-**3.SG.M** the-letters.**F-ACC**

Since SA does not exhibit A-movement, it does not have a typical raising construction of the type found in languages like English (Mohammad 2000). Nonetheless, SA has equivalent raising predicates which select clausal complements, as in (26). Unlike the control and ECM predicates in SA, *yabdū* ‘seem’ does not take an external argument. This is shown by the fact that when there is a pre-verbal DP in the sentence, as in (27), *yabdū* (unlike the other verbs in SA) does not realize full

agreement with it, suggesting the absence of a *pro*. Thus, *yabdū* has one argument, the CP, and can license one Case value, Nom (Al-Balushi 2011:222–229). Since CPs have the default ϕ -specification, the verb is expected to realize default agreement (3.SG.M), which is the case. Also, the embedded verb carries full subject agreement with the *pro* subject, *-na* (3.PL.F), and no agreement with the lexical DP object. *l-banāt-a* in (26), which occupies the embedded Spec, TopP, is assigned lexical Acc case by *ʔanna*, which occupies Force⁰. Also, *ʔal-banāt-u* in (27) is in the matrix Spec, TopP without a case assigner, which makes it surface with default Nom case. That *yabdū* in (26)–(27) agrees with the CP argument rather than with *ʔal-banāt-u/l-banāt-a* ‘the girls’ is evidenced by the fact that it may not carry feminine agreement morphology, as (28)–(29) show.

(26) SA

[_{CP} *yabdū* [_{CP} *ʔanna* *l-banāt-a* *ʔakal-na* *pro* *ʔ-ʔaʕām-a*]].
 seem.3.SG.M COMP the-girls-ACC PST.eat-3.PL.F the-food-ACC
 ‘It seems that the girls ate the food.’

(27) SA

[_{CP} *ʔal-banāt-u* *yabdū* [_{CP} *ʔanna-hunna* *ʔakal-na* *pro*
 the-girls-NOM seem.3.SG.M COMP-3.PL.F PST.eat-3.PL.F
ʔ-ʔaʕām-a]].
 the-food-ACC
 ‘The girls, it seems that they ate the food.’

(28) SA

**ta*-*bdū* [*ʔanna* *l-banāt-a* *ʔakal-na* *pro* *ʔ-ʔaʕām-a*].
 3.SG.F-seem COMP the-girls-ACC PST.eat-3.PL.F the-food-ACC

(29) SA

**ʔal-banāt-u* *ta*-*bdū* [*ʔanna-hunna* *ʔakal-na* *pro* *ʔ-ʔaʕām-a*].
 the-girls-NOM 3.SG.F-seem COMP-3.PL.F PST.eat-3.PL.F the-food-ACC

This way, the complement CP behaves like passive subjects, which are merged as internal arguments, but receive Nom Case. These characteristics of *yabdū*, being able to license Nom Case through realizing the default agreement specification and having a non-DP argument, will prove available in another construction in SA, namely the P-passive.

SA has two passive patterns, as in (30) and (32). The verb in (30) realizes defective agreement ([Person] and [Gender] only) with the lexical DP subject, which can bear m-case. In (31), since the subject is *pro*, the verb carries full subject agreement (*-na*, 3.PL.F) with it. This view of the observed pattern of m-case and

agreement is further supported by the passive construction in (32). Here the passive verb is followed by a preposition, which makes a PP with the internal argument, which appears with Gen Case, being inaccessible for Case checking by the verb/ T^0 . Thus it cannot receive Nom Case, though T^0 has a Nom [Case] feature that must be licensed, to avoid a crash. However, like CPs and unlike DPs, the PP cannot carry m-case.

(30) SA

quriʔa-t ʃ-ʃuhuf-u.
 PST.PASS.read-3.SG.F the-newspapers.F-NOM
 ‘The newspapers were read.’

(31) SA

quriʔ-na *pro*.
 PST.PASS.read-3.PL.F
 ‘They (F) were read.’

(32) SA

qubiḍa [ʃala l-liʃʃ-ā-t-i].
 PST.PASS.arrest.3.SG.M on the-thief-PL-F-GEN
 ‘The female thieves were arrested.’

Therefore, the verb realizes default agreement with the PP since the PP has the default ϕ -specification. The proposal that the DP *l-liʃʃ-ā-t-i* ‘the female thieves’ belongs in the PP is further supported by the fact that when it is not overt (hence a *pro*), it is the preposition and not the verb that carries full agreement with it, thus reflecting the Gen m-case. This can be seen in the contrast between (33) and (34).

(33) SA

qubiḍa [ʃalay-hinna *pro*].
 PST.PASS.arrest.3.SG.M on-3.PL.F
 ‘They (F) were arrested.’

(34) SA

*qubiḍ-na *pro*.
 PST.PASS.arrest-3.PL.F

The view that the verb in the P-passive construction has no *pro* subject, which means that the PP is the subject, is supported by the fact that (like *yabdū*) the verb carries default agreement in the SVO order, as (35) shows. The SVO order is characterized by full agreement on the verb, but only when there is a *pro*.

(35) SA

ʔal-liṣṣ-ā-t-u qubiḍa ʕalay-hinna.
the-thief-PL-F-NOM PST.PASS.arrest.3.SG.M on-3.PL.F
‘The female thieves, they were arrested.’

The verb in (36)–(37), the SA canonical 2nd person imperative, realizes no agreement with the lexical DP object (which can carry Acc m-case), but full subject agreement with the pronominal subject, which cannot bear m-case whether null or overt, respectively. The sentence (37) shows that even if the pronoun subject can reveal the ϕ -content of *pro*, the verb must realize full subject agreement, since the pronoun does not bear m-case.

(36) SA

ʔu.ktub-na-Ø *pro* l-wājib-a.
IMPR.2.write-PL.F-JUSS the-homework-ACC
‘You (PL.F) write the homework!’

(37) SA

ʔu.ktub-na-Ø /*ʔu.ktub-ī-Ø ʔant-unna l-wājib-a.
IMPR.2.write-PL.F-JUSS/ IMPR.2.write-SG.F-JUSS you-PL.F the-homework-ACC
‘You (PL.F) write the homework!’

A well-known fact about SA, a *pro*-drop language, is that it does not usually require an overt pronominal subject in 2nd person imperative structures, which makes (37) sound unusual. Nonetheless, the overt pronoun is required when the intended function is emphasis, that is, to mean the addressee and not someone else. Regardless of the intended discourse function, the 2nd person pronoun can appear overtly in the imperative construction. Now, if full subject agreement were not there to deputize for m-case (for the Visibility Condition purposes, as proposed in the next section), it would have disappeared in the presence of the overt pronoun subject, a property of the VSO order in SA, but it is obligatory despite the presence of the pronoun, as (37) shows. This is because the pronoun does not realize Nom m-case in SA, in line with the current proposal.

SA has another imperative pattern, one which can also be used for 3rd person, as in (38)–(41). In (38)–(39), with a pronominal subject, the same pattern of subject and object agreement is observed. The verb carries no agreement with the lexical DP object, but full subject agreement, *-na* (PL.F), with the pronominal subject. As for (40)–(41), the verb carries defective agreement with the lexical DP subject (no [Number] agreement), and no agreement with the lexical DP object, since both can

bear m-case. This predicts that full subject agreement may not co-exist with subjects that carry Nom m-case, a fact illustrated by (42)–(43).

(38) SA

li-ta-ktub-**na**-Ø *pro* l-wājib-a.
 IMPR-2-write-**PL.F**-JUSS the-homework-ACC
 ‘You (PL.F) write the homework!’

(39) SA

li-ta-ktub-**na**-Ø ?ant-**unna** l-wājib-a.
 IMPR-2-write-**PL.F**-JUSS you-**PL.F** the-homework-ACC
 ‘You (PL.F) write the homework!’

(40) SA

li-ya-ktub-Ø ?ixwān-**u**-ka l-wājib-a.
 IMPR-IMPF-write-**3.SG.M**-JUSS brothers-**NOM**-your the-homework-ACC
 ‘Have your brothers write the homework!’

(41) SA

li-**ta**-ktub-Ø l-banāt-**u** l-wājib-a.
 IMPR-**3.SG.F**-write-JUSS the-girls-**NOM** the-homework-ACC
 ‘Have the girls write the homework!’

(42) SA

*li-ya-ktub-**ū**-Ø ?ixwān-**u**-ka l-wājib-a.
 IMPR-IMPF-write-**3.PL.M**-JUSS brothers-**NOM**-your the-homework-ACC

(43) SA

*li-ta-ktub-**na**-Ø l-banāt-**u** l-wājib-a.
 IMPR-2-write-**PL.F**-JUSS the-girls-**NOM** the-homework-ACC

The surveyed data show that agreement is fully realized (in [Person], [Number], and [Gender]) only when m-case is absent, thus supporting the claim that the distribution of agreement is related to m-case. Here, I assume that defective agreement is similar to the lack of agreement in that both require the presence of m-case. For Chomsky (2001), both lack of agreement and defective agreement (in terms of ϕ -features) may not result in valuing [Case] on the goal.

3.2 Agreement and m-case of lexical and default case types

This section presents data from SA to support the claim that agreement holds the same relationship (that it has with the m-case of structural Case) with the m-case of lexical and default case types. Basically, agreement deputizes for and reflects the

m-case specification that a DP carries, regardless of whether the DP is an argument or a non-argument.

Topics and predicates, which are never in the scope of structural Case checking categories, always surface with default Nom case (Al-Balushi 2012), as in (44). The exception is when they are in the scope of lexical case assigners.

(44) SA

ʔaʔ-ʔullāb-**u** mujtahid-**ūn**.
the-students-**NOM** hardworking-**PL.NOM**
‘The male students are hardworking.’

When (44) is in the scope of the copula *kāna*, as in (45), the predicate surfaces with lexical Acc case. Also, when (44) is in the scope of the particle *ʔinna*, as in (46), the topic surfaces with lexical Acc case (Al-Balushi 2016). The topic remains with default Nom with *kāna* (Al-Balushi, to appear), and the predicate remains with default Nom with *ʔinna*.

(45) SA

kāna ʔ-ʔullāb-**u** mujtahid-**īn**.
PST.be.3.SG.M the-students-**NOM** hardworking-**PL.ACC**
‘The male students were hardworking.’

(46) SA

ʔinna ʔ-ʔullāb-**a** mujtahid-**ūn**.
COMP the-students-**ACC** hardworking-**PL.NOM**
‘The male students are hardworking.’

Now, when the lexical DP topic in (45)–(46) does not surface, it is represented with the following agreement pattern on *kāna* and *ʔinna*, respectively.

(47) SA

kān-**ū** mujtahid-**īn**.
PST.be-**3.PL.M** hardworking-**PL.ACC**
‘They (M) were hardworking.’

(48) SA

ʔinna-**hum** mujtahid-**ūn**.
COMP-**3.PL.M** hardworking-**PL.NOM**
‘They (M) are hardworking.’

Since *-ū* and *-hum* stand for a topic (*ṭ-ṭullāb* ‘the male students’) in (47) and (48), it may not be that *-ū*, which is a subject agreement morpheme, is agreement and *-hum*, which is an object agreement morpheme, is a clitic, since there is no reason for why there should be a difference. To make sense of these facts, I will say that *-ū* (subject agreement) is the agreement affix with *kāna* because *kāna* is followed by a Nom-realizing DP (default Nom), whereas *-hum* (object agreement) is the agreement affix with *ʔinna* because *ʔinna* is followed by an Acc-realizing DP (lexical Acc). And since agreement is argued here to reflect and deputize for m-case (when the relevant lexical DP is not overt), the relevant agreement affix is different depending on the m-case that the relevant DP bears. Examples (49)–(52) show that *-ū* replaces a subject argument and *-hum* replaces an object argument in SA. This shows that the expected agreement affix on the governor is conditioned by the m-case (not structural Case) that the agreed-with DP should realize when it is overt.

(49) SA

qaraʔa ṭ-ṭullāb-**u** l-kitāb-a.
 PST.read.3.SG.M the-students-NOM the-book-ACC
 ‘The male students read the book.’

(50) SA

qaraʔ-**ū** *pro* l-kitāb-a.
 PST.read-3.PL.M the-book-ACC
 ‘They (M) read the book.’

(51) SA

Ṣāqaba l-muṣallim-u ṭ-ṭullāb-**a**.
 PST.punish.3.SG.M the-teacher-NOM the-students-ACC
 ‘The male teacher punished the male students.’

(52) SA

Ṣāqaba-**hum** l-muṣallim-u.
 PST.punish-3.PL.M the-teacher-NOM
 ‘The male teacher punished them (M).’

Likewise, the following data show the same pattern, namely that agreement represents the m-case values realized by the relevant non-argument DPs. *Kāda*, which belongs to a class of verbs known as verbs-of-appropinquation by traditional grammarians of Arabic (Wright 1898:106–108), behaves like *kāna* in that it is followed by a Topic-Predicate structure, and never followed by a canonical subject (Hasan 1960:615). Thus the DP following *kāda* is a topic that bears default Nom, as in (53). This predicts that when the Nom-realizing topic is not overt, the agreement on

(57) SA

ʕāqaba l-ʔābāʔ-**u** l-banāt-**a**.
 PST.punish.3.SG.M the-fathers-NOM the-girls-ACC
 ‘The fathers punished the girls.’

(58) SA

*ʕāqab-**ū-hunna** l-ʔābāʔ-**u** l-banāt-**a**.
 PST.punish-**3.PL.M-3.PL.F** the-fathers-NOM the-girls-ACC

(59) OA

ʕāqb-**ū-hin** l-ʔābāʔ l-banāt.
 PST.punish-**3.PL.M-3.PL.F** the-fathers.NOM the-girls.ACC
 ‘The fathers punished the girls.’

(60) OA

*ʕāqab l-ʔābāʔ l-banāt.
 PST.punish.3.SG.M the-fathers.NOM the-girls.ACC

Full agreement holds the same relationship with the m-case of lexical and default case types; that is, the agreement morphemes are obligatory in the absence of the m-case-realizing DPs, topics in this case. Otherwise, ungrammaticality results, as (61)–(64) show.

(61) SA

*kāna mujtahid-**īn**.
 PST.be.3.SG.M hardworking-PL.ACC

(62) SA

*ʔinna(-**hu**) mujtahid-**ūn**.
 COMP(-3.SG.M) hardworking-PL.NOM

(63) SA

*kāda [ʔan ya-rsub-**ū**].
 PST.be.about.3.SG.M COMP IMPF-fail-3.PL.M

(64) SA

*ḏanna(-**hu**) l-muʕallim-u [*pro* mujtahid-**īn**].
 PST.believe.3.SG.M(-3.SG.M) the-teacher-NOM hardworking-PL.ACC

The SA and OA data examined so far show that agreement does not surface in full unless m-case is absent, irrespective of the case type, structural, lexical, or default, and that full agreement with a DP (argument or non-argument) and the m-case of that DP may not be realized in the same structure. This suggests a relationship between agreement and m-case, namely that they may have the same function.

4. Agreement and m-case in OA

The data and discussion in the previous section have shown that agreement on the verb reflects and deputizes for m-case in SA (and OA), irrespective of the type of case involved, in the same way. This might thus provide a means for satisfying the Case Filter and the Visibility Condition in a language with no m-case but with complete ϕ -agreement with arguments, like OA.

Assuming Chomsky (1980), who took m-case to be indicative of abstract Case, the absence of m-case presents a problem for the standard Case theory, which assumes that Case is a universal property of DPs (Chomsky & Lasnik 1977, Vergnaud 1982, 2008).¹² Although the statement of both the Case Filter and the Visibility Condition makes reference to Case, not m-case, they, in essence, refer to m-case. This is because Chomsky (1981:49) assumes the Case Filter to be a filter in the PF-component, thus referring to the phonetic manifestation of Case, which is m-case. Lasnik (2008:35) also concludes that the Case Filter is a PF requirement. Since it is m-case and not abstract Case that is (phonetically) salient at PF, it is the former that enables the computational system to assign the relevant θ -roles to the right arguments.¹³ Indeed, Aoun (1979) argues that the PF-component disregards items with no Case; thus Case here is understood to refer to m-case. Therefore, both constructs invoke m-case, and so some other mechanism must satisfy the two constructs (Case Filter and Visibility Condition) in the absence of m-case.¹⁴

Following standard thought, I will assume that subjects and objects in OA have [Case] features in narrow syntax, which are valued as Nom and Acc by T^0 and v^0 , respectively. However, they do not realize the relevant m-case suffixes at PF (required by the Case Filter and the Visibility Condition), as the surveyed data will show. To avoid an impasse, full agreement will be argued to stand for m-case. The implication of m-case realization for the DPs, which is visibility at LF, is achieved by agreement,

¹² While this is the prevalent pattern crosslinguistically, some languages witness cases of mismatch between abstract Case and m-case. Legate (2008) shows that when an abstract Case value has no morphological representation (m-case) of its own, it is represented in the morphological component by an elsewhere m-case morpheme. Along the same lines, Al-Balushi (2013) shows that non-singular DPs in SA have no Acc case morphology, and so surface with the Gen m-case suffixes of the DPs that encode the same number and gender features. Despite this mismatch, the predominant state of affairs is assumed.

¹³ Chomsky (1981:117) states the following:

Aoun (1979) notes that there is a certain parallelism between θ -role and Case, the former a property of the LF-component and the latter essentially a property of the PF-component, an idea that he explores further in this paper and in Aoun (1980). Intuitively, NPs are identified by Case in PF-representation and by θ -role in LF-representation.

Thus 'Case' is meant to refer to its morphological manifestation, m-case.

¹⁴ This is not to say that the absence of m-case indicates the absence of abstract Case, but rather to say that there should be some means by which abstract Case can be detected and recognized, like m-case, or agreement, as in the present account.

which is fully realized by the verb, with both the subject and the object, and in a specific order. In other words, structural Case is licensed and the recipient of a certain θ -role is known by the position of its agreement in relation to the verb root. This differs substantially from the view that ϕ -agreement between arguments and Case-checking heads licenses structural Case (Schütze 1997, Chomsky 2001) since Case is checked in narrow syntax, but agreement is argued here to be a morphological, not syntactic, operation, a claim also made in Bobaljik (2008). That agreement is not the licenser of structural Case has been shown by the fact that agreement holds the same relationship with the m-case of all the three case types.

The following data support the claim that agreement in OA does what m-case does in SA, namely satisfying the Case Filter, and hence the Visibility Condition. Unlike SA, which is well-known for its rich m-case morphology as well as defective subject agreement and lack of object agreement, as (65)–(67) show, OA lacks m-case morphology but exhibits rich subject and object agreement, as (68)–(70) show, in line with the current proposal. OA DPs mark dual, but the verbs do not.

(65) SA

qābala l-mudarris-**u** l-mudarrisa-t-**a**.
 PST.meet.3.SG.M the-teacher-NOM the-teacher-F-ACC
 ‘The male teacher met with the female teacher.’

(66) SA

qābala l-mudarris-**ān** l-mudarrisa-t-**ayn**.
 PST.meet.3.SG.M the-teacher-DL.NOM the-teacher-F-DL.ACC
 ‘The two male teachers met with the two female teachers.’

(67) SA

qābala l-mudarris-**ūn** l-mudarris-ā-t-**i**.
 PST.meet.3.SG.M the-teacher-PL.NOM the-teacher-PL-F-ACC
 ‘The male teachers met with the female teachers.’

(68) OA

qābal-**ha** lə-mdarris lə-mdarrsa-h.
 PST.meet.3.SG.M-3.SG.F the-teacher.NOM the-teacher-F.ACC
 ‘The male teacher met with the female teacher.’

(69) OA

qābl-**ū-hin** lə-mdarrs-ēn lə-mdarris-t-ēn.
 PST.meet-3.PL.M-3.PL.F the-teacher-DL.NOM the-teacher-F-DL.ACC
 ‘The two male teachers met with the two female teachers.’

(70) OA

qābl-**ū-hin** lə-mdarrs-īn lə-mdarrs-ā-t.
 PST.meet-3.PL.M-3.PL.F the-teacher-PL.NOM the-teacher-PL-F.ACC
 ‘The male teachers met with the female teachers.’

Given this version of Case theory (Aoun 1979, Chomsky 1981, Vergnaud 2008), the computational system assigns the agent θ -role to the DP *l-mudarris-u* in (65) since it bears the Nom m-case suffix *-u*, and the theme θ -role to the DP *l-mudarrisa-t-a* since it carries the Acc m-case suffix *-a*. As for (71) below, the morphology of the verb (passive, lacking v^0 , Chomsky 1995) indicates that it does not project an external argument and license structural Acc Case (unaccusative, Burzio 1986), which in turn prompts the computational system to assign the theme θ -role to the available argument, despite the Nom m-case that it carries.

(71) SA

qūbila-t l-mudarrisa-t-u.
 PST.PASS.meet-3.SG.F the-teacher-F-NOM
 ‘The female teacher was met (with).’

When m-case is absent, as in (68)–(70), the computational system must resort to some other mechanism to identify which argument receives which θ -role, as long as the Case Filter and the Visibility Condition are on the right track. Therefore, I argue that the computational system utilizes agreement on the verb. Thus, at LF, the argument whose agreement suffix is closer to the verb root receives the external θ -role and the one whose agreement comes next receives the internal θ -role, as (72)–(73) show. The opposite order of agreement morphemes in the verbal complex is illicit, as (74)–(75) show, despite the free word order of OA, as (76)–(78) show.

(72) OA

qar-**ū-hin** l-ʔawlād l-qəṣaṣ.
 PST.read-3.PL.M-3.PL.F the-boys.NOM the-stories.F.ACC
 ‘The boys read the stories.’

(73) OA

katb-**inn-oh** l-banāt l-wāgib.
 PST.write-3.PL.F-3.SG.M the-girls.NOM the-homework.M.ACC
 ‘The girls wrote the homework.’

(74) OA

*qar-**hin-ū** l-ʔawlād l-qəṣaṣ.
 PST.read-**3.PL.F-3.PL.M** the-boys.NOM the-stories.F.ACC

(75) OA

*katb-**oh-inn** l-banāt l-wāgib.
 PST.write-**3.SG.M-3.PL.F** the-girls.NOM the-homework.M.ACC

(76) OA

katb-**inn-oh** l-wāgib l-banāt.
 PST.write-**3.PL.F-3.SG.M** the-homework.M.ACC the-girls.NOM
 ‘The girls wrote the homework.’

(77) OA

ʔəl-banāt katb-**inn-oh** l-wāgib.
 the-girls.NOM PST.write-**3.PL.F-3.SG.M** the-homework.M.ACC
 ‘The girls, they wrote the homework.’

(78) OA

ʔəl-wāgib katb-**inn-oh** l-banāt.
 the-homework.M.NOM PST.write-**3.PL.F-3.SG.M** the-girls.NOM
 ‘The homework, the girls wrote it.’

Thus the order of agreement morphemes in the verbal form is not determined by the word order in the sentence. Apparently, the order is pre-determined by the canonical word order of the language. Al-Balushi (2012) argues that SA is essentially a VSO language and that it resorts to the SVO order to convey the deictic interpretation with present tense (imperfective form) verbs, as well as for topicalization purposes. Present tense verbs in the VSO order convey generic readings, as the contrast between (79) and (80) shows. That VSO is the canonical word order of SA has been proposed in Bakir (1980), Farghal (1986), and Soltan (2007).

(79) SA

ʔəl-ʔaṭfāl-u yu-šāhid-ū-n *pro* t-tilfāz-a.
 the-children-NOM IMPF-watch-3.PL.M-IND the-TV-ACC
 ‘The children are watching TV (now).’

(80) SA

yu-šāhid-u l-ʔaṭfāl-u t-tilfāz-a.
 IMPF-watch.3.SG.M-IND the-children-NOM the-TV-ACC
 ‘The children watch TV (usually).’

When the verb realizes one agreement morpheme, it is always the subject agreement and never the object agreement, as (81) and (82) show. It is noteworthy that the structure with one agreement morpheme (SA-like) is rare (marked) in OA and is more likely to be accepted by educated people and younger generations, since SA is the language of education and media in Oman.

(81) OA

qar-ū l-ʔawlād l-qəṣaṣ.
 PST.read-3.PL.M the-boys.NOM the-stories.F.ACC
 ‘The boys read the stories.’

(82) OA

*qar-in l-ʔawlād l-qəṣaṣ.
 PST.read-3.PL.F the-boys.NOM the-stories.F.ACC

The fact that OA verbs carry subject and object agreement in sentences with transitive verbs might correlate with the fact that in ditransitive structures, subject agreement may be followed by either the indirect object agreement or the direct object agreement, as (83)–(84) respectively show, but never with the agreement of both internal arguments, as (85) shows.

(83) OA

ʕaṭē-nā-hin lə-ktāb.
 PST.give-1.PL-3.PL.F the-book.ACC
 ‘We gave them (F) the book/We gave the book to them (F).’

(84) OA

ʕaṭē-nā-h l-banāt.
 PST.give-1.PL-3.SG.M the-girls.ACC
 ‘We gave it (M) to the girls.’

(85) OA

*ʕaṭē-nā-kum-ūh/-oh/-h.
 PST.give-1.PL-2.PL.M-3.SG.M/-3.SG.M/-3.SG.M

Thus, unlike its SA counterpart, in (86), which can bear the agreement affix of the external argument as well as those of both internal arguments, the OA ditransitive verb *ʕaṭā* ‘give’ cannot carry the agreement of both internal arguments. When *ʕaṭā* ‘give’ bears agreement with the indirect object, the direct object is either an overt DP, as in (83), or an agreement morpheme suffixed to the pronominal element *ʔiyyā*, as in

(87).¹⁵ When *ʕaṭā* carries agreement with the direct object, the indirect object is an overt DP, as in (84). In at least one OA variety (spoken in southern Oman), the indirect object may also be an agreement morpheme suffixed to the prepositional element *ḥāl*, as in (88).

(86) SA

ʔaʕṭay-nā-kum-ūh.
 PST.give-1.PL-2.PL.M-3.SG.M
 ‘We gave it (M) to you (PL.M).’

(87) OA

ʕaṭē-nā-kum ʔiyyā-h/ ʔiyyā-ha/ ʔiyyā-hom/ ʔiyyā-hin.
 PST.give-1.PL-2.PL.M PRON-3.SG.M/ PRON-3.SG.F/ PRON-3.PL.M/ PRON-3.PL.F
 ‘We gave it (M)/it (F)/them (M)/them (F) to you (PL.M).’

(88) OA

ʕaṭē-nā-h ḥāl-kum/ ḥāl-ha/ ḥāl-hom/ ḥāl-hin.
 PST.give-1.PL-3.SG.M to-2.PL.M/ to-3.SG.F/ to-3.PL.M/ to-3.PL.F
 ‘We gave it (M) to you (PL.M)/to her/to them (M)/to them (F).’

The only case when *ʕaṭā* ‘give’ can carry the agreement of both internal arguments is when the construction is passive, as (89) shows; that is, when it does not bear subject agreement.

¹⁵ Wilmsen (2013) argues that *ʔiyyā* performs more than one function in SA and other Arabic dialects. Besides being a pronominal object marker with demonstrative functions, it expresses contrast and emphatic reflexivity as well as two degrees of distal deixis. This shows that *ʔiyyā* is not a typical pronoun, hence the behavior observed in (87), as well as in (i)–(iv). As (i)–(ii) show, *ʔiyyā* may co-occur with the direct object DP, but only preceding it, as a demonstrative would do. As (iii)–(iv) show, *ʔiyyā* may not take part in the DP+PP complement frame of *ʕaṭā* ‘give’. This indicates that it is not a typical pronoun; *-hom* suffices for this purpose.

(i) OA

ʕaṭē-nā-hin ʔiyyā-h (lə-ktāb).
 PST.give-1.PL-3.PL.F PRON-3.SG.M the-book.ACC
 ‘We gave them (F) this/that book.’

(ii) OA

*ʕaṭē-nā-hin lə-ktāb ʔiyyā-h.
 PST.give-1.PL-3.PL.F the-book.ACC PRON-3.SG.M

(iii) OA

ʕaṭē-nā-h lə-ktāb ḥāl-hom.
 PST.give-1.PL-3.SG.M the-book.ACC to-3.PL.M
 ‘We gave the book to them (M).’

(iv) OA

*ʕaṭē-nā-h lə-ktāb ḥāl-ʔiyyā-hom.
 PST.give-1.PL-3.SG.M the-book.ACC to-PRON-3.PL.M

(89) OA

ʔin-ʕaʔ-**inn-oh**.

PST.PASS-give-**3.PL.F-3.SG.M**

‘It (M) was given to them (F).’

As (90) shows, the direct object agreement in this passive structure may also be suffixed to the pronominal element *ʔiyyā*. Similarly, the indirect object agreement in this passive structure may also be suffixed to the prepositional element *hāl*, as in (91).

(90) OA

ʔin-ʕaʔ-**in** ʔiyyā-**h**.

PST.PASS-give-**3.PL.F** PRON-**3.SG.M**

‘It (M) was given to them (F).’

(91) OA

ʔin-ʕaʔ-**it** hāl-**hom**.

PST.PASS-give-**3.SG.F** to-**3.PL.M**

‘It (F) was given to them (M).’

This shows that an OA verb has two slots for agreement markers. It can carry either subject and object agreement, as in simple transitive structures, (68)–(70), or subject and either indirect or direct object agreement, as in active ditransitive structures, (83)–(84) and (87)–(88), or indirect object and direct object agreement, as in the passive voice ditransitive structure, (89). I leave the theoretical implications of this fact, as well as its related questions, for another occasion.

Thus the lack of agreement with the direct object in (83) and the indirect object in (84) despite the absence of m-case may be attributed to a general constraint which bans the realization of the agreement morphology of more than two arguments in the verbal complex in OA. As (87)–(88) show, an alternative is available where the agreement of both internal arguments may be spelled out, albeit on two different elements, the verb and a pronominal element or the verb and a prepositional element.

Like intransitive verbs, as in (92), passive transitive verbs carry subject (internal argument) agreement, as (93)–(94) show. The passive morphology indicates that the root is followed by the agreement morphology of the available argument, the internal one.

(92) OA

sār-ū l-ʔawlād.
 PST.leave-3.PL.M the-boys.NOM
 ‘The boys left.’

(93) OA

t-ṣaffʕ-ū l-ʔawlād.
 PST.PASS-slap-3.PL.M the-boys.NOM
 ‘The boys were slapped.’

(94) OA

ʔin-qar-in l-qəṣaṣ.
 PST.PASS-read-3.PL.F the-stories.F.NOM
 ‘The stories were read.’

This interaction between θ -roles and agreement is vividly shown in (95), where subject agreement immediately follows the verb root, and then comes the agreement with the internal argument, though the element that is interpreted as receiving the theme θ -role comes early in the sentence (left-dislocated element).

(95) OA

ʔəl-ʔawlād ʕarbi-t-hum ʔumm-hum.
 the-boys.NOM PST.beat-3.SG.F-3.PL.M mother.NOM-their
 ‘The boys, their mother beat them.’

The proposed relation between full agreement and m-case also holds in OA in default and lexical case contexts. As the contrast between (96) and (97) shows, the copula must carry full subject agreement with the topic, which surfaces with default Nom but does not bear m-case. As for the Comp element *ʔinn*, it should be noted that it is not used in main clauses in OA. It is only used in embedded clauses, as (98) shows, and must realize full object agreement with the topic *t-ʔallāb* ‘the students’ which receives lexical Acc from *ʔinn*.¹⁶

¹⁶ In fact, one OA variety allows *ʔinn* in this context to realize defective agreement, *-uh*, which marks 3rd person, singular and masculine. I have no explanation for this. It might have to do with the fact that *ʔinn* is only licit in embedded clauses in OA. It might also be that *-uh* is the appropriate agreement morpheme here if *ʔinn* establishes agreement with the entire Topic-Predicate structure, a clause that represents a proposition, rather than with the topic only. Also, (99), where *ʔinn* appears with no agreement morphology, might seem acceptable to some speakers of OA, but this is only because of the influence of SA (through the educational system and the media) on the new generations of OA speakers.

(96) OA

kān-ū ʔ-ʔəllāb məgtihd-īn.
 PST.be-3.PL.M the-students.NOM hardworking-PL.ACC
 ‘The male students were hardworking.’

(97) OA

*kān ʔ-ʔəllāb məgtihd-īn.
 PST.be.3.SG.M the-students.NOM hardworking-PL.ACC

(98) OA

[_{TP} nə-ʔraf [_{CP} ʔinn-**hum** [_{TopP} ʔ-ʔəllāb məgtihd-īn]]].
 1PL-know COMP-3.PL.M the-students.ACC hardworking-PL.NOM
 ‘We know that the male students are hardworking.’

(99) OA

*[_{TP} nə-ʔraf [_{CP} ʔinn [_{TopP} ʔ-ʔəllāb məgtihd-īn]]].
 1PL-know COMP the-students.ACC hardworking-PL.NOM

To conclude, if m-case is absent, as in the case of OA, the computational system utilizes agreement on the verb to assign the right θ -roles. Full agreement on the verb deputizes for m-case on the DP arguments, and so satisfies the Case Filter. The position of agreement in relation to the verb root determines which argument receives which θ -role, which satisfies the Visibility Condition. Rejecting this proposal means that the Case Filter, which Chomsky (1981:49) assumes to be a filter in the PF-component, may be satisfied in narrow syntax, without a phonetic (m-case) indication. This would also mean that the Visibility Condition may be satisfied in narrow syntax; that is, LF does not have to utilize the phonetic (m-case) clues at PF. This proposal indicates that different languages satisfy the Case Filter, hence the Visibility Condition, in different ways. Therefore, it seems that satisfaction of the Case Filter is mainly important for satisfying the Visibility Condition. Indeed, Chomsky (1981:337–338) states that the Case Filter is LF-motivated in the sense that it follows from the θ -criterion.

The proposed relationship between agreement and m-case is further shown by (100), where the CP occupies the topic position. Since the ϕ -specification assumed for CPs is 3.SG.M, the main verb is predicted to realize the default agreement features (3.SG.M). This prediction is borne out by the facts. If this prediction were wrong, the main verb, *sahhal* ‘facilitate’, would have appeared with the non-default agreement specification, *sahhl-ū*, (given *ʔ-ʔəllāb* ‘the students’), since OA verbs carry full agreement in the SVO order, but this is not the case.

(100) OA

[kōn (ʔinn) ʔ-ʔallāb qar-ū l-ktāb qabəl
 being COMP the-students.ACC PST.read-3.PL.M the-book.ACC before
 l-ħəṣṣah] saħhal/ *saħhl-ū d-dars.
 the-class.GEN PST-facilitate.3.SG.M/ PST-facilitate-3.PL.M the-lesson.ACC
 ‘That the students read the book before the class made the lesson easier.’

It is noteworthy that the full object agreement morpheme (object marker) in SA may have the status of a clitic because, unlike its OA counterpart, it does not co-occur with lexical DPs, as (101) shows.

(101) SA

ʕāqaba-t-**hum** l-muʕallima-t-u (*ʔ-tullāb-a).
 PST.punish-3.SG.F-3.PL.M the-teacher-F-NOM the-students.M-ACC
 ‘The female teacher punished them (M).’

The fact that the full object agreement on the verb in OA co-occurs with lexical objects, as in (68)–(70), suggests that it is not a clitic. This supports the present claim that it is agreement, realized for the sake of reflecting and deputizing for m-case, thus marking the DP which should receive the theme θ -role. Despite (101), I will assume that the object markers in SA can be analyzed as agreement rather than clitics. This is because, like subject agreement markers, they seem to be in complementary distribution with m-case. Even if it turns out that the object markers in SA are clitics, they still carry out the same function of making arguments visible at LF. Either way, they are phonetic realizations of the ϕ -features ([Person], [Number], and [Gender]) of the internal argument. Crosslinguistically, object markers/clitics have been analyzed as agreement in Franco (1993), Sportiche (1995), Roberts (2000), Yamada (2006), Franks (2009), and Ormazabal & Romero (2013).

Finally, it should be noted that while all the modern (colloquial) dialects of Arabic do not mark m-case (Benmamoun 2000:164, Watson 2002:4, Ryding 2005:166), they all mark full subject agreement in the presence of the DP subject, in both orders. The following data are from Palestinian Arabic (PA).

(102) PA

le-wlād gar-**u** ktāb.
 the-boys.NOM PST.read-3.PL.M book.ACC
 ‘The boys read a book.’
 (Mohammad 2000:110)

(103) PA

gar-**u** le-wlād ktāb.
 PST.read-**3.PL.M** the-boys.NOM book.ACC
 ‘The boys read a book.’
 (Mohammad 2000:110)

(104) PA

*gara le-wlād ktāb.
 PST.read.**3.SG.M** the-boys.NOM book.ACC
 (Mohammad 2000:111)

(105) PA

*le-wlād gara ktāb.
 the-boys.NOM PST.read.**3.SG.M** book.ACC
 (Mohammad 2000:111)

Despite the absence of object agreement on the verb in this and other Arabic dialects, I think the proposal advanced in this paper for OA is still extendable to them. Basically, the availability of full subject agreement on the verb is sufficient indication for the computational system that this is the element that should receive the agent θ -role, even in the VOS order. The theme θ -role is thus assigned to the other argument, with which there is no agreement on the verb. Therefore, Arabic has no dialect that marks m-case and full subject agreement as well as full object agreement; SA marks m-case and has defective subject and object agreement, and OA (as well as the other modern dialects of Arabic) lack m-case but mark full subject agreement; OA seems to be the only Arabic variety that marks full object agreement in the presence of the object. However, there is one “standard” Arabic dialect that marked full subject agreement together with m-case. This is discussed in the next section.

5. An apparent counterargument

One of the claims of this paper is that full (subject and object) agreement on verbs and m-case on DPs carry out the same function, namely satisfaction of the Visibility Condition, at least in Arabic. This means that there should be no language or Arabic variety with both elements, m-case and full agreement in the VSO order, by economy. Nonetheless, assuming that UG can avail itself of all the possible options, there can be a language that has both m-case and full agreement.¹⁷ Speaking for Arabic, there

¹⁷ This also implies that there should be no languages with poor m-case and poor agreement, but there are such languages, like English. Not claiming a principled account, LF visibility in English may be argued to be satisfied by sticking to a rigid word order. Nonetheless, languages like Dutch, which

actually used to be such a dialect; examples (106)–(111) are among the remaining examples of this extinct variety of Arabic; examples (106)–(107) are from the Holy Qurʾān; example (108) is a ḥadīṯ (Prophet Muhammad’s speech); examples (109)–(111) are from poetry. In (106)–(108), the verb carries plural masculine agreement with the plural masculine post-verbal subject. In (109), the verb carries dual inflection with the dual subject (coordinate of two), as well as singular masculine inflection with the object. In (110), the verb bears plural feminine agreement with the DP *l-yawānī* ‘the ladies’ in the post-verbal position. *l-yawānī* does not bear Nom m-case for phonological reasons (-u, Nom m-case, not being able to follow -ī). The same applies to *ʔahlī* ‘my family’ in (111) where the verb carries both subject and object agreement.¹⁸

(106) SA

wa ʔasarr-ū n-najwā l-laḏīna ʔalam-ū ...
 and PST.conceal-3.PL.M the-talk.ACC the-who.PL.M.NOM PST.wrong.do-3.PL.M
 ‘Those who wrong-do (the wrong-doers) conceal their private counsels ...’
 (The Holy Qurʾān, 21:3)¹⁹

(107) SA

ṯumma ʕam-ū wa ʕamm-ū
 then PST.lose.sight-3.PL.M and PST.lose.hearing-3.PL.M
 kaṯīr-un min-hum.
 many-NOM from-them
 ‘Then many of them became blind and deaf.’
 (The Holy Qurʾān, 5:71)

exhibit little agreement and m-case marking but allow scrambling, and ones like Icelandic, which have m-case and a rigid word order, would have to be thoroughly examined before determining how they satisfy visibility at LF. These issues are left for other occasions.

¹⁸ The name of this dialect is “ʔakal-ū-ni l-barāyīṯ”, glossed as ‘ate-3.PL.M-1.SG.M the-fleas’ (meaning ‘the fleas devoured me’), and its first documentation appeared in Sībawayhi (1990:39). It acquired this name probably because this was among the most peculiar examples of this pattern (full subject agreement in the VSO order). Already in use in pre-Islamic times, this was the dialect of the tribes of *Ṭayʔ* (Wright 1898:294) as well as *ʔuzd Šanūʔah* (from which many Omani tribes are descended) and *bal-Hāriṯ*. Like SA but not OA, object agreement does not co-exist with lexical DP objects in this dialect.

¹⁹ Regarding “21:3”, ‘21’ refers to the number of the *sūra* (chapter) in the Holy Qurʾān, and ‘3’ refers to the number of the verse in that *sūra*.

(108) SA

ya-taṣāqab-**ū-na** fī-kum malāʔikat-**un**
 IMPF-rotate-**3.PL.M-IND** in-you angels-**NOM**
 bi-l-layl-i wa malāʔikat-**un** bi-n-nahār-i ...
 at-the-night-**GEN** and angels-**NOM** at-the-day-**GEN**
 ‘Angels come to you in succession by night and day ...’
 (Al-Buxāri 2001:264–265)

(109) SA

wa qad ʔaslam-**ā-hu** mubṣad-**un** wa hamīm-**u**.
 and MOD PST.abandon-**3.DL-3.SG.M** foreign-**NOM** and friend-**NOM**
 ‘And he was already let down by strangers and friends.’

(110) SA

raʔay-**na** l-yaḡwānī š-šayb-**a** lāha
 PST.see-**3.PL.F** the-ladies-**NOM** the-hoariness-**ACC** PST.appear.3-**SG.M**
 bi-ṣāriḍ-ī.
 in-cheek-**GEN-my**
 ‘The ladies saw hoariness appear on my cheeks (saw me getting old).’

(111) SA

ya-lūm-**ū-na-nī** fī ištirāʔ-**i**
 IMPF-blame-**3.PL.M-IND-1.SG** in purchase-**GEN**
 n-naxīl-i ʔahl-ī.
 the-palm.trees-**GEN** family-**NOM-my**
 ‘My family blame me for buying palm-tree gardens.’

Though very few, these examples represent a standard variety of Arabic that exhibited full agreement with subjects in the VSO order (seen in the colloquial Arabic varieties, which do not exhibit m-case) and m-case (seen in SA, which does not exhibit full agreement with canonical subjects).

I refer to this variety as ‘standard’ because, like the mainstream one, SA, it is used in the Holy Qurʔān and the Prophet’s speech, as well as in poetry. Also, it is a standard variety because the DPs appear with m-case (in various morphosyntactic positions), and the imperfective verbs appear with the relevant indicative suffixes, as in (108) and (111). Furthermore, it is not a colloquial dialect because its verbal system includes the dual verbal form, as in (109), which has disappeared in the modern/colloquial varieties of Arabic. In other words, although this variety is like OA in showing full subject agreement in the VSO order, it is not a colloquial one since the DPs exhibit m-case, a property unattested in any of the colloquial varieties of Arabic.

Also, if ϕ -agreement were the licenser of structural Case, it is this variety that one would expect to prevail and become the standard one, but this is not the case.

One question that arises in the context of this extinct variety is what full agreement was doing if m-case satisfied the Case Filter and the Visibility Condition. Unfortunately, I do not have a good answer to this question. One problem is that there is not enough data from this variety to judge on the function that full agreement carried out. Nonetheless, as (108) and (111) show, there is a PP-complement that separates between the verbs and their subjects. This could mean that unconventionally free word order prevailed in this variety, which called for an additional mechanism for interpretation, hence full agreement. Readers of the Holy Qurʾān can see that common word orders include DP-objects preceding subjects, as in (106), PP-complements preceding subjects, as in (108), PP-complements preceding DP-complements, as in (112), and adjuncts preceding DP-complements, as in (113). (114), from the Prophet’s speech, shows that a direct object may precede an indirect object in the DP+DP complement frame of a double object verb.

(112) SA

ʔið ya-tanāzaʕ-ū-na bayna-hum ʔamr-a-hum ...
 when IMPF-dispute-3.PL.M-IND among-them affair-ACC-their
 ‘When they disputed among themselves about their affair ...’
 (The Holy Qurʾān, 18:21)

(113) SA

la-na-ttaxið-anna ʕalay-him masjid-ā ...
 EMPH-1.PL-make-ENER on-them mosque-ACC
 ‘We verily, shall build a place of worship over them ...’
 (The Holy Qurʾān, 18:21)

(114) SA

la-ʔu-ʕṭiy-anna r-rāyat-a rajul-an ya-ftaḥ-u
 EMPH-1.SG-give-ENER the-flag-ACC man-ACC IMPF-open.3.SG.M-IND
 Allāh-u ʔalā yad-ay-hi ...
 God-NOM on hand-DL.GEN-his
 ‘I shall give the flag to a man by whose hands God will achieve victory ...’
 (Al-Buxāri 2001:1301)

In this regard, Holes states the following:

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), or Modern Literary Arabic (MLA) [which are other labels for SA], is the modern descendant of Classical Arabic, unchanged

in the essentials of its syntax but very much changed, and still changing, in its vocabulary and phraseology (Holes 2004:5).

Thus, it seems that full agreement was also needed for visibility/interpretation purposes. I leave this here. The facts presented in this section show that although there could be an Arabic variety with both m-case and full agreement, such a variety is declared redundant (given the present-day common word orders of SA), hence extinct.

6. Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have shown that agreement is not related to the licensing of structural Case, but rather to the realization of m-case, in the sense that agreement reflects and deputizes for the m-case that a given DP, argument or non-argument, would realize if overt, as shown by the data in Sections 3 and 4. Thus agreement is not related to structural Case, but rather to m-case, hence inert in narrow syntax.

One implication of this relationship is the satisfaction of the Visibility Condition in the absence of m-case. In OA, where lexical DPs do not carry m-case, the verb carries full agreement with both the subject and the object, in a specific order in the verbal complex. If the argument is a CP or a PP, which, by assumption, encodes the default ϕ -specification (3.SG.M), the verb carries similar (default) agreement as the morphological reflex that structural Case checking on the relevant XP has taken place. If the DP argument is pronominal, whether overt or null, the verb carries full agreement with it as a sign that Case was licensed, since even overt pronouns do not bear m-case in SA.

Thus agreement represents m-case, both being morphological operations (phenomena), relevant for PF, and therefore LF interpretation. In other words, the verb realizing full agreement is equal to the DP realizing m-case. This is further shown by the fact that the Arabic variety that realized both full agreement and m-case is no longer spoken. The situation in OA also contrasts with that in Niuean, which has no ϕ -agreement morphology (Haji-Abdolhosseini, Massam & Oda 2002) but has a robust Case system (Seiter 1980), thus somewhat similar to SA.

The current proposal also shows that verbs can satisfy requirements usually satisfied by DPs, at least in *pro*-drop languages. Like the Case Filter and the Visibility Condition in the present account, the EPP requirement (which is claimed to be satisfied by DP movement to Spec, TP, Chomsky 1981) has been claimed to be satisfied by the verb when it moves to T⁰. Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (1998:517) argue that “assuming that verbal agreement has the categorial status of a pronoun in

pro-drop languages, V-raising checks the EPP feature the same way XP raising does in non-*pro*-drop languages”. EPP has also been proposed to be satisfied by the realization of agreement on the verb (Benmamoun 2000, Aoun, Benmamoun & Choueiri 2010:44).

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[Received November 26, 2017; revised May 7, 2018; accepted May 28, 2018]

Department of English Language and Literature
Sultan Qaboos University
Muscat, OMAN
Rashid Al-Balushi: rash5222@squ.edu.om

語法一致性與構詞格之關係探討：以阿拉伯語為例

拉施德·艾爾-巴路施

蘇丹卡布斯大學

關鍵詞：結構格、詞彙格、缺省格、構詞格、語法一致性