

A Minimalist Approach to Agreement in Arabic

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Abstract

Starting from the observation that there is interaction between the richness of verbal agreement and the licensing of consistent null subjects, the current paper aims to provide a fresh account for the agreement asymmetries found in Standard Arabic. The link between rich agreement and null subjects has been virtually ignored by the previous studies on agreement in Standard Arabic. This fresh account is based on the theory of null subjects and agreement articulated recently by Holmberg (2008). This theory takes the rich agreement to result from incorporation of a null subject pronoun in T as a direct result of Agree in the sense of Chomsky (2001). Evidence from Standard Arabic, a consistent null subject language, proves that the richness of agreement is always tied to the presence of a null pronominal subject.



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