English Literature and Language Review
ISSN(e): 2412-1703, ISSN(p): 2413-8827
Vol. 2, No. 10, pp: 105-120, 2016
URL: http://arpgweb.com/?ic=journal&journal=9&info=aims

Noun Phrase Structure in Zahrani Spoken Arabic

Al zahrani Salih * Taif University, Taif, Saudi Arabia

Al Zahrani Mohammad Taif University, Taif, Saudi Arabia

Abstract: This paper describes noun phrases in Zahrani Spoken Arabic (ZSA). A noun phrase is shown to contain different structures. It may have a simple structure containing a noun, a pronoun or a noun with a modifier like adjectives, numerals, quantifiers or demonstratives. It may also have a complex structure in which it consists of more than one adjective or more than one modifier. The word order of any noun phrase is connected to the semantic category of the adjective. The agreement system in NPs depends on the position of the adjective (or the modifier) with its head noun.

Keywords: Zahrani Spoken Arabic; Syntax; Description; Noun phrase; Structure.

1. Introduction

This paper provides a basic description of noun phrases in Zahrani Spoken Arabic (henceforth ZSA). Like in Modern standard Arabic (Bahloul, 2008; Cantarino, 1975; Fassi Fehri, 1993; Mohammad, 1989;1990;2000; Ryding, 2005; Wright, 1859), a noun phrase in ZSA contains a noun stem or pronoun as its head. It can be formed by a noun with modifiers such as adjectives, numerals, quantifiers or demonstratives. A noun phrase may also have a complex structure to be contained more than one adjective or more than one modifier, as will be illustrated in the following sections. By discussing these points, other related issues such as word order and agreement will be dealt with.

Before moving to the next section, it is important to state that ZSA has not been studied before apart from (Alzahrani, 2015). On the other side, other Saudi dialects received some linguist's attention and have been under their focus of studies. Among those works, Sieny (1972) who has carried out one of the common works on the syntax of urban HA. Margaret (1975) is a comprehensive work in the grammar of HA. Ingham (1994) is considered to be one of the main sources on the description of NA. Bardeas (2005) has narrowed her focus on Makkah dialect as the heart of HA. Al Barrag (2007) has discussed 'Relative Clauses in HA. Alzahrani (2008) has studied the morphology of negation MSA but with more focus on the HA. Alzahrani (2009) focuses to document Faify Arabic by describing its basic clause structure and its negation. Al Barrag (2013) has studied noun phrases in HA under the theory of DM.

2. Noun Phrases

A noun phrase in ZSA contains a noun stem or pronoun as its head.[1] It can be definite or indefinite, determined by the presence or absence of the definite article /*al-*/.[2] A definite noun phrase is marked with /*al-*/ whereas an indefinite noun phrase is marked by the indefinite suffix marker /*-un*/.

(1) a. *al-ba:b*
DEF-door.SGM
'the door'
b. *ba:b-un*
door.SGM-INDF
'a door'

Therefore, a noun phrase can be formed by a noun alone, a noun with modifiers (as described in the following section), or by a pronoun.

Like MSA, noun phrases in ZSA can include modifiers such as adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, demonstratives and relative clauses. These modifiers can occur before and after the head noun as will be illustrated in the following subsections.[3]

[1] Some adjectives with nominal reference function as nouns. For more details, see Al zahrani, 2015.
[2] See (Al zahrani, 2015), for more details about the definite article /*al-*/ as a prefix which is only considered a definiteness marker.

*Corresponding Author

2.1. Adjectives

Adjectives usually come after the noun in ZSA. Adjectives in postnominal position agree with the noun in gender, number and definiteness.[4]

(2) a. *bint* *ħurr-ah*
girl.SGF good-SGF
'a good girl'
b. *al-bint* *al-ħurr-ah*
DEF-girl.SGF DEF-good-SGF
'the good girl'

(3) a. *ʤabal* *kibi:r*
mountain.SGM big.SGM
'a big mountain'
b. *al-ʤabal* *al-kibi:r*
DEF-mountain.SGM DEF-big-SGM
'the big mountain'

The above examples show full agreement between the nouns *bint* 'girl' and *ʤabal* 'mountain' and the adjectives *alħurrah* 'good' and *alkibi:r* 'big'. Both nouns are singular and modified by singular adjectives. Also, the gender of the head noun controls the gender of the modifier (the adjective). Human reference and non-human reference show no difference in regard to agreement with singular adjectives. So, the noun has to have full agreement with the adjective regardless of its reference.

However, there are some exceptions in the plural. With animate plural nouns, adjectives agree in gender, number and definiteness with the nouns they modify. On the other hand, adjectives modifying the plurals of inanimate nouns are treated as feminine singular. That is, inanimate plural nouns trigger trigger the feminine singular on adjectives Note the following examples:[5]

(4) a. *al-bana:t* *al-ħilwa:t*
DEF-girl.PLF DEF-beautiful-PLF
'the beautiful girls'
b. *al-mudarris-i:n* *al-ħaðˁr-i:n*
DEF-teacher-PLM DEF-present-PLM
'the present teachers'

(5) a. *as-sajjar-a:t* *al-gidi:m-ah*
DEF-car.PLF DEF-old-SGF
'the old cars'
b. *al-ʔaʕla:m* *al-gidi:m-ah*
DEF-flag.PLM DEF-old-SGF
'the old flags'

In example (4) above, it is seen that both *albana:t* 'the girls' and *almudarrisi:n* 'the teachers' are modified by *alħilwa:t* 'beautiful' and *alħaðˁri:n* 'present', where they show full agreement in gender, number and definiteness. On the other hand, example (5) shows no agreement except with definiteness. Inanimate nouns are always modified by a feminine singular adjective regardless of gender or number, consequently the inanimate plural nouns *assajjara:t* 'the cars' and *alʔaʕla:m* 'the flags' in (4) are modified by the feminine singular adjective *algidi:mah* 'old'.[6]

Interestingly, adjectives also occur in prenominal position in ZSA where they do not agree fully with the noun. This structure is found in MSA and Hebrew and is known as adjectival construct state (Al Barrag, 2013). It is argued that this structure combines the features of adjectives and nominal construct state (Al Sharifi and Sadler, 2009; Kremers, 2003;2005). Both regular adjectives and superlative adjectives can appear prenominally. However, unlike MSA,[7] this kind of adjectival construct state is less productive in ZSA and limited to idiomatic phrases.[8] Examine the following examples:

---

[3] Relative pronouns appear only after the noun (Al zahrani, 2015).
[4] ZSA does not have case marking.
[5] See (Al zahrani, 2015), for more details about inflection on adjectives.
[6] Masculine dual nouns take masculine plural adjectives as modifiers if they refer to humans and feminine dual nouns take feminine plural adjectives as modifiers when they refer to humans (Al zahrani, 2015). However, when the referents are non-human, both masculine and feminine dual nouns are modified by feminine singular adjectives (Al zahrani, 2015).
[7] In MSA adjectival construct state can contain any regular adjective (Bardeas , 2010 ; Fassi Fehri, 1999; Kremers, 2003). whereas it is limited in other Semitic languages such as Hebrew.
[8] This process is not common even in other Saudi dialects such as HA (Al Barrag, 2013).

(6)

a. *su:d* *al-widʒi:h*
black.PLM DEF-face-PLF
'the badly-behaved people'

b. *χuðˁr* *al-dʒiba:l*
green.PLM DEF-mountain-PLM
'the grassy mountains'

c. *manku:ʃ* *aʃ-ʃaʕr*
curly.SGM DEF-hair-SGM
'the curly hair'

d. *tˁawi:l* *allias:n*
tall.SGM DEF-tongue-SGM
'talkative'

e. *tˁawi:l* *lias:n*
tall.SGM tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

f. *tˁawi:l-at* *allias:n*
tall-SGF DEF-tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

g. *tˁawi:l-at* *lias:n*
tall-SGF tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

By looking at the above examples, it is clearly noted that there is gender and number agreement between the adjectives and the modified nouns as in (6b,c,d,e) although some adjectives do show only gender agreement as in (6a,f,g). In construct state, however, there is no agreement in definiteness, hence, the following examples are ungrammatical:

(7)

a. **as-su:d* *al-widʒi:h*
DEF-black.PLM DEF-face-PLF
'the bad-behaviour people'

b. **al-χuðˁr* *al-dʒiba:l*
DEF-green.PLM DEF-mountain-PLM
'the grassy mountains'

c. **al-manku:ʃ* *aʃ-ʃaʕr*
DEF-curly.SGM DEF-hair-SGM
'the curly hair'

d. **atˁ-tˁawi:l* *allias:n*
DEF-tall.SGM DEF-tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

e. **atˁ-tˁawi:l* *lias:n*
DEF-tall.SGM tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

f. **atˁ-tˁawi:l-at* *allias:n*
DEF-tall-SGF DEF-tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

g. **atˁ-tˁawi:l-at* *lias:n*
DEF-tall-SGF tongue-SGM
'the talkative'

On the other hand, pronominal adjectives may occur in the superlative (or elative) form. They occur in "genitive construct" (Alzahrani, 2015). This form only appears in the masculine singular form therefore agreement is coincidental, as shown in these examples:

(8)

a. *ʔakbar* *sajjara-ah*
biggest.SGM car-SGF
'the biggest car'

b. *ʔakbar* *dʒamal*
biggest.SGM camel-SGM
'the biggest camel'

c. *ʔakbar* *sajjar-a:t*
biggest.SGM car-PLF

'the biggest cars'

d. *ʔakbar* *ʤima:l*
biggest.SGM camel-PLM
'the biggest camels'

Interestingly, plural nouns inflect for definiteness but there is no adjective agreement. Singular nouns, however, never inflect for definiteness. Note the following examples:

(9)
a. **ʔakbar* *al-sajjara-ah*
biggest.SGM DEF-car-SGF
'the biggest car'

b. **ʔakbar* *al-ʤamal*
biggest.SGM DEF-camel-SGM
'the biggest camel'

c. *ʔakbar* *as-sajjar-a:t*
biggest.SGM DEF-car-PLF
'the biggest cars'

d. *ʔakbar* *ʤima:l*
biggest.SGM DEF-camel-PLM
'the biggest camels'

2.2. Numerals

Numerals and adjectives show a similar structure and they behave similarly. That is, they can occur both before and after the head noun. Consider the following examples:

(10)
a. *aʃ-ʃahr* *as-sa:ti:*
DEF-month-SGM DEF-six-PLM
'the sixth month'

b. *al-bint* *as-sa:biʕ-ah*
DEF-girl. SGF DEF-seven-PLF
'the seventh girl'

c. *as-sajjar-a:t* *as-sabʕ-ah*
DEF-car-PLF DEF-seven-PLF[9]
'the seven cars'

Like adjectives, postnominal ordinal and cardinal numbers agree in gender and definiteness with the modified nouns. In example (10)a), the modifier *assa:ti*: 'the sixth' agrees with the definite singular masculine noun *aʃʃahr* 'the month' in both gender and definiteness. Similarly, the modifier *assa:biʕah* 'the seventh' shows gender and definiteness agreement with the singular feminine noun *albint* 'the girl' in (10)b), and *assabʕah* 'the seven' agrees fully with the feminine plural noun *assajjara:t* 'the cars' in (10)c). Numbers can appear prenominally as well and, as with adjectives, they do not show agreement. Note the following examples:

(11)
a. *sa:dis*[10] *ʃahr*
sixth.PLM month.SGM
'the sixth month'

b. *sa:biʕ* *bint*
seventh.PLM girl.SGF
'the seventh girl'

c. *sabʕ* *sajjar-a:t*
seven.PLM car-PLF
'seven cars'

d. *sabaʕ-at* *sajjar-a:t*
seven-PLF car-PLF
'seven cars'

It can be seen in the above examples that the ordinal numbers *sa:dis* 'the sixth' and *sa:biʕ* 'the seventh' do not agree with the nouns *ʃahr* 'month' and *bint* 'girl'. Thus, prenominal numerals have a single default form (masculine) regardless of the gender of the noun (11)a, b).

[9] Cardinal numbers like *sabʕah* 'seven' are inherently plural.
[10] It is noted that ZSA uses *assa:ti:* 'the sixth' as an ordinal number but this is unacceptable for the cardinal number.

On the other hand, ZSA has two different forms for cardinal numbers. For example, the number 'seven' may be *sabʕ* 'seven' which does not agree with the feminine plural noun (e.g., *sajjara:t* 'cars') or *sabaʕat* 'seven' which carries the feminine gender agreement marker /*-at*/.[11]

Furthermore, an indefinite prenominal cardinal number must not be followed by a definite noun (12)a). However, in ZSA, it is possible to see both a cardinal number and the following noun definite, as in (12)b). On the other hand, unlike cardinal numbers, an ordinal number such as *sa:dis* 'the sixth' in (12)c) can be followed by a definite noun. However, it is not acceptable to have a definite ordinal number followed by an indefinite noun as in (12)d), nor is it acceptable to have both the ordinal number and the following noun definite, as in (12)e).

(12)
a. **sabʕ/ sabaʕ-at* *as-sajjar-a:t*
seven.PLM/F DEF-car-PLF
'seven cars'
b. *as-sabʕ* *as-sajjar-a:t*
DEF-seven.PLM/F DEF-car-PLF
'the seven cars'
c. *sa:dis* *aʃ-ʃahr*
sixth.PLM DEF-month.SGM
'the sixth of a month'
d. **as-sa:dis* *ʃahr*
DEF-sixth.PLM month.SGM
'the sixth month'
e. **as-sa:dis* *aʃ-ʃahr*
DEF-sixth.PLM DEF-month.SGM
'the sixth month'

Unlike MSA, ZSA does not have any restrictions on agreement between cardinal numbers and the modified nouns. That is, both feminine and masculine forms of cardinal numbers occur freely regardless of the gender of the following noun. Note the following examples:

(13)
a. *χams* *raʤa:ʤi:l*
five.PLM man.PLM
'five men'
b. *χams-at* *raʤa:ʤi:l*
five-PLF man.PLM
'five men'
c. *χams* *naχla:t*
five.PLM palm tree.PLF
'five palm trees'
d. *χams-at* *naχla:t*
five-PLF palm tree.PLF
'five palm trees'

The above examples show that there is variation in the agreement of cardinal numbers and the modified nouns. For example, *χam* 'five' in (13)a) agrees fully with *raʤa:ʤi:l* 'men'. However, this is not obligatory agreement since the following example (13)b) shows *χamsat* 'five' in the feminine form modifying the same masculine plural noun *raʤa:ʤi:l* 'men'. Thus, it can be said that these forms are used freely in ZSA. The same forms (*χams* and *χamsat* 'five') are also used freely with the feminine plural noun *naχla:t* 'palm trees' in (13)c, d).

2.3. Quantifiers

All quantifiers in ZSA occur prenominally followed by a noun or a noun phrase as the complement in construct state.[12] There are a range of quantifiers which differ according to the meanings they express: for example, totality (14a), majority (14b) or minority/partiality (14c), as shown in the following examples:

(14)
a. *kull* *al-bana:t*
all DEF-girl.PLF
'all the girls'
b. *ʔakθar* *al-bana:t*
most DEF-girl.PLF
'most of the girls'

[11] In MSA, this agreement is not acceptable.
[12] There are some exceptions where they appear postnominally as will be illustrated below.

c. *baʕðˁ* *al-bana:t*
some DEF-girl.PLF
'some girls'

The above examples illustrate quantifiers[13] followed by a plural noun. This does not imply that they cannot also go with singular nouns. For example, *kull* 'every' can be used with an indefinite singular noun, as shown below:

(15)
a. *kull* *bint*
every girl.SGF
'every girl'
b. **ʔakƟar* *bint*
most girl.SGF
'most of the girl'
c. **baʕðˁ* *bint*
some girl.SGF
'some girl'

Thus *kull* 'every' is used as the first term in a construct phrase followed by a singular indefinite noun to convey the meaning of 'every/each'. If the following noun is definite and singular, the meaning is 'all' instead of 'every'. Note the following examples:

(16)
a. **kull* *al-bint*
all DEF-girl.SGF
'all the girl'
b. *kull* *al-ba:b*
all DEF-door.SGM
' the whole door'
c. *kull* *ða:-maʕ-ak*
all DEM.that.SGF_with-2SGM.POSS
'all that (with you)'
d. *kull* ða:k
all DEM.that.SGF
'all that'

Note that the singular definite noun *albint* 'the girl' (16a) cannot be modified by *kull* 'all'. However, *alba:b* 'the door' in (16b) does accept this quantifier. Thus, I suggest that *kull* 'all' can be used with a definite singular noun if the reference is non-human but not when the reference is human. It can also be followed by a pronoun, as in (16c,d). Sometimes, *kull* 'every' is used as an indefinite noun with nunation[14] to express a meaning of totality that includes every individual (17)a). The definite article can be prefixed to convey the same meaning (17)c). Examine the following example:

(17)
a. *kull-un* *maka:n-ah*
everyone-INDF position-3SGM.POSS
'everyone, stay in his position'
b. **kull* *maka:n-ah*
everyone position-3SGM.POSS
'everyone, stay in his position'
c. *al-kull* *maka:n-ah*
DEF -everyone position-3SGM.POSS
'everyone, stay in his position'

ZSA uses *ʤami:ʕ* 'all' as another quantifier which must be followed by a plural noun. Consider the following examples:

(18)
a. *ʤami:ʕ* *al-bana:t*
all DEF-girl.PLF
'all the girls'
b. *ʤami:ʕ* *al-wirʕa:n*
all DEF-boy.PLM
'all the boys'

[13] All the quantifiers will be described separately in the following sections.
[14] See (Al zahrani, 2015), for details and more examples about nunation.

c. *ʤami:ʕ* *as-sajjar-a:t*
all DEF-car.PLF
'all the cars'
d. *ʤami:ʕ* *al-abwa:b*
all DEF-door.PLM
'all the doors'

In all the examples above, *ʤami:ʕ* 'all' is followed by definite plural nouns. *ʤami:ʕ* 'all' can also be followed by an indefinite plural noun or a genitive noun, which is plural.

(19)
a. *ʤami:ʕ* *bana:t* *ad-di:r-ah*
all girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'all the village's girls'
b. *ʤami:ʕ* *wirʕa:n* *ad-di:r-ah*
all boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'all the village's boys'
c. *ʤami:ʕ* *sajjar-a:t* *ad-di:r-ah*
all car.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'all the village's cars'
d. *ʤami:ʕ* *abwa:b* *al-be:t*
all door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'all the house's doors'

The second type of quantifiers are those that are used to express a majority, such as *kaθi:r* 'most' or *ʔakθar* 'most of',[15] which can be used with definite plural nouns (20) as well as indefinite nouns in a genitive phrase (21)). Consider the following examples:

(20)
a. *ʔakθar* *al-bana:t*
most DEF-girl.PLF
'most of the girls'
b. *ʔakθar* *al-wirʕa:n*
most DEF-boy.PLM
'most of the boys'
c. *ʔakθar* *as-sajjar-a:t*
most DEF-car.PLF
'most of the cars'
d. *ʔakθar* *al-abwa:b*
most DEF-door.PLM
'most of the doors'

(21)
a. *ʔakθar* *bana:t* *ad-di:r-ah*
most girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'most of the village's girls'
b. *ʔakθar* *wirʕa:n* *ad-di:r-ah*
most boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'most of the village's boys'
c. *ʔakθar* *sajjar-a:t* *ad-di:r-ah*
most car.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'most of the village's cars'
d. *ʔakθar* *abwa:b* *al-be:t*
most door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'most of the house's doors'

On the other hand, *kaθi:r* 'most' is accompanied by the preposition *min* 'of' with a definite plural noun to mean a greater quantity of something and/or some people (22). It can also be followed by an indefinite noun in a genitive phrase (23)).

(22)
a. *kaθi:r* *min* *al-bana:t*
most of DEF-girl.PLF
'most of girls'
b. *kaθi:r* *min* *al-wirʕa:n*

[15] See (Al zahrani, 2015), for more details about adjective inflections.

most of DEF-boy.PLM
'most of the boys'

c. *kaθi:r min as-sajjar-a:t*
most of DEF-car-PLF
'most of the cars'

d. *kaθi:r min al-abwa:b*
most of DEF-door.PLM
'most of the doors'

(23)

a. *kaθi:r min bana:t ad-di:r-ah*
most of girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'most of the village's girls'

b. *kaθi:r min wirʕa:n ad-di:r-ah*
most of boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'most of the village's boys'

c. *kaθi:r min sajjar-a:t ad-di:r-ah*
most of car-PLF DEF-village-SGF
'most of the village's cars'

d. *kaθi:r min abwa:b al-be:t*
most of door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'most of the house's doors'

In addition, *ʔaθar* 'most' can be used as a noun, where a pronoun suffix is attached to it, as shown below:

(24)

a. *ʔakθr-hunnah bana:t ad-di:r-ah*
most-3PLF girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'most village girls'

b. *ʔakθr-hum wirʕa:n ad-di:r-ah*
most-3PLM boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'most the village's boys'

c. *ʔakθr-əha: sajjar-a:t ad-di:r-ah*
most-3SGF car.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'most the village's cars'

d. *ʔakθr-əha: abwa:b al-be:t*
most-3SGM door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'most the house's doors'

The above examples demonstrate that the attached pronoun suffixes must agree in gender and number with the noun.[16] However, there is no definiteness agreement. Note the following examples:

(25)

a. *ʔakθr-hunnah al-bana:t*
most-3PLF DEF-girl.PLF
'most of the girls'

b. *ʔakθr-hum al-wirʕa:n*
most-3PLM DEF-boy.PLM
'most of the boys'

c. *ʔakθr-əha: as-sajjar-a:t*
most-3SGF DEF-car.PLF
'most of the cars'

d. *ʔakθr-əha: al-abwa:b*
most-3SGF DEF-door.PLM
'most of the doors'

The third type of quantifiers in ZSA is used to express a limited number, a non-specific number, or partiality. *baʕðˁ* 'some' is used in various structures as shown below.

(26)

a. *baʕðˁ al-bana:t*
some DEF-girl.PLF
'some of the girls'

b. *baʕðˁ al-wirʕa:n*

[16] See (Al zahrani, 2015), for more details about gender and number inflections on adjectives. It is noted that the non-human reference has only the third singular feminine agreement marker as a suffix pronoun regardless of its gender and/or number.

some DEF-boy.PLM
'some of the boys'

c. *baʕðˁ as-sajjar-a:t*
some DEF-car.PLF
'some of the cars'

d. *baʕðˁ al-abwa:b*
some DEF-door.PLM
'some of the doors'

In the above examples, *baʕðˁ* 'some' is followed by a definite plural noun. Interestingly, unlike MSA (Ryding, 2005), ZSA does not show any example where the following noun is singular.

(27)

a. **baʕðˁ al-bint*
some DEF-girl.SGF
'some of the girl'

b. **baʕðˁ al-wirʕ*
some DEF-boy.SGM
'some of the boy'

c. **baʕðˁ as-sajjarah*
some DEF-car.SGF
'some of the car'

d. **baʕðˁ al-ba:b*
some DEF-door.SGM
'some of the door'

However, indefinite plural nouns following *baʕðˁ* 'some' occur in a construct state phrase. Examine these examples:

(28)

a. *baʕðˁ bana:t ad-di:r-ah*
some girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'some of the village's girls'

b. *baʕðˁ wirʕa:n ad-di:r-ah*
some boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'some of the village's boys'

c. *baʕðˁ sajjar-a:t ad-di:r-ah*
some car.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'some of the village's cars'

d. *baʕðˁ abwa:b al-be:t*
some door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'some of the house's doors'

Suffix pronouns can be attached to *baʕðˁ* 'some' to represent a noun phrase. These suffix pronouns must agree in gender and number with the referent.[17] Saying that does not mean that other quantifiers do not have the same feature. So, this can be applied to other quantifiers as well (see, e.g., (24) and (25) above). Note the following examples:

(29)

a. *baʕðˁ-hunnah bana:t ad-di:r-ah*
some-3PLF girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'some of them the village's girls'

b. *baʕðˁ-hum wirʕa:n ad-di:r-ah*
some-3PLM boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'some of them the village's boys'

c. *baʕðˁ-əha: sajjar-a:t ad-di:r-ah*
some-3SGF car.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'some of them the village's cars'

d. *baʕðˁ-əha: abwa:b al-be:t*
some-3SGF door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'some of them the house's doors'

[17] The non-human referent in examples (29c,d) and (30c,d) requires the third singular feminine marker (as a suffix pronoun), where it does not show any agreement.

(30) a. *baʕðˁ-hunnah* *bana:t*
some-3PLF girl.PLF
'some of them, girls'
b. *baʕðˁ-hum* *wirʕa:n*
some-3PLM boy.PLM
'some of them, boys'
c. *baʕðˁ-əha:* *sajjar-a:t*
some-3SGF car-PLF
'some of them, cars'
d. *baʕðˁ-əha:* *abwa:b*
some-3SGM door.PLM
'some of them, doors'

Interestingly, it is possible to see *baʕðˁ* 'some' with an indefinite noun although it is not in a genitive phrase.

(31) a. *baʕðˁ-hunnah* *bana:t* *wa* *baʕðˁ-hum* *wirʕa:n*
some-3PLF girl.PLF and some of-3PLM boy.PLM
'Some of them (are) girls and some of them (are) boys.'

2.3.1. Postnominal Quantifiers

Quantifiers, which appear prenominally, can also occur postnominally. In this position, however, they require the suffix pronoun—that is, the suffix pronoun is not optional. Examine these examples:

(32) a. *al-bana:t* *baʕðˁ-hunnah*
DEF-girl.PLF some of-3PLF
'the girls, some of them'
b. *al-wirʕa:n* *baʕðˁ-hum*
DEF-boy.PLM some of-3PLM
'the boys, some of them'
c. *as-sajjar-a:t* *baʕðˁ-əha:*
DEF-car.PLF some of-3SGF
'the cars, some of them'
d. *al-abwa:b* *baʕðˁ-əha:*
DEF-door.PLM some of-3SGF
'the doors, some of them'

(33) a. *bana:t,* *baʕðˁ-hunnah*
girl.PLF some of-3PLF
'girls, some of them'
b. *wirʕa:n,* *baʕðˁ-hum*
boy.PLM some of-3PLM
'boys, some of them'
c. *sajjar-a:t,* *baʕðˁ-əha:*
car-PLF some of-3SGF
'cars, some of them'
d. *abwa:b,* *baʕðˁ-əha:*
door.PLM some of-3SGF
'doors, some of them'

In the above examples, it can be seen that the noun, which is modified by the quantifier, can be definite as in *albana:t* 'the girls' or indefinite as in *bana:t* 'girls'.

It is not necessary for the noun, which comes before the quantifier, to be in construct state when the noun is indefinite. It should be stated clearly that other quantifiers can occur postnominally, too. Examine the following examples:

(34) a. *al-bana:t* *baʕðˁ-hunnah*
DEF-girl.PLF some of-3PLF
'the girls, some of them'
b. *al-bana:t* *kull-hunnah*
DEF-girl.PLF all-3PLF
'the girls, all of them'
c. *al-bana:t* *ʤami:ʕ-hunnah*
DEF-girl.PLF all-3PLF

'the girls, all of them'

d. *al-bana:t* *ʔakθr-hunnah*
DEF-girl.PLF most of-3PLF
'the girls, most of them'

2.4. Demonstratives

Demonstratives can function as noun modifiers or as substitutes of nouns (Alzahrani, 2015). In this section, we deal with them as noun modifiers where they can appear prenominally and postnominally. Consider the following examples:

(35)
a. *ðulla:* *al-bana:t*
DEM.these.PLM/F DEF-girl.PLF
'These are the girls.'
b. *ðulla:* *al-wirʕa:n*
DEM.these.PLM/F DEF-boy.PLM
'These are the boys.'
c. *tijah* *as-sajjar-a:t*
DEM.this. SGM/F DEF-car.PLF
'These are the cars.'
d. *tijah* *al-abwa:b*
DEM.this. SGM/F DEF-door.PLM
'These are the doors.'

(36)
a. *ðulla:* *bana:t* *ad-di:r-ah*
DEM.these.PLM/F girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF
'These are the village's girls.'
b. *ðulla:* *wirʕa:n* *ad-di:r-ah.*
DEM.these.PLM/F boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF
'These are the village's boys.'
c. *tijah* *sajjar-a:t* *ad-di:r-ah.*
DEM.this.SGM/F car-PLF DEF-village-SGF
'These are the village's cars.'
d. *tijah* *abwa:b* *al-be:t.*
DEM.this.SGM/F door.PLM DEF-house.SGM
'These are the house's doors.'

(37)
a. *ðulla:* *bana:t*
DEM.these.PLM/F girl.PLF
'These are girls.'
b. *ðulla:* *wirʕa:n*
DEM.these.PLM/F boy.PLM
'These are boys.'
c. *tijah* *sajjar-a:t*
DEM.this.SGM/F car-PLF
'These are cars.'
d. *tijah* *abwa:b*
DEM.this.SGM/F door.PLM
'These are doors.'

The above examples show *ðulla:* 'these' as the only plural form which is used for both genders. However, if the reference is non-human, the feminine singular form *tijah* 'this' is used. It is noted that the following noun can be either definite (35)) or indefinite (36) and (37). When it is indefinite, it may appear in construct state (36) or as a clause complement (37). Note also that all the demonstratives in the above examples can be seen coming before the nouns the nouns with no changes. In the following examples, the demonstrative pronoun comes after the noun:

(38)
a. *al-bana:t* *ðulla:*
DEF-girl.PLF DEM.these.PLM/F
'These girls...'
b. *al-wirʕa:n* *ðulla:*
DEF-boy.PLM DEM.these.PLM/F
'These boys...'
c. *as-sajjar-a:t* *tijah*
DEF-car-PLF DEM.this.SGM/F

'These cars....'

d. *al-abwa:b* *tijah*
DEF-door.PLM DEM.this.SGM/F
'These doors....'

(39)
a. *bana:t* *ad-di:r-ah* *ðulla:*
girl.PLF DEF-village-SGF DEM.these.PLM/F
'These village's girls...'
b. *wirʕa:n* *ad-di:r-ah* *ðulla:*
boy.PLM DEF-village-SGF DEM.these.PLM/F
'These village's boys...'
c. *sajjar-a:t* *ad-di:r-ah* *tijah*
car-PLF DEF-village-SGF DEM.this.SGM/F
'This village's cars...'
d. *abwa:b* *al-be:t* *tijah*
door.PLM DEF-house.SGM DEM.this.SGM/F
'This house's doors...'

(40)
a. **bana:t* *ðulla:*
girl.PLF DEM.these.PLM/F
'These girls...'
b. *wirʕa:n* *ðulla:*
boy.PLM DEM.these.PLM/F
'These boys...'
c. **sajjar-a:t* *tijah*
car.PLF DEM.this.SGM/F
'These cars...'
d. **abwa:b* *tijah*
door.PLM DEM.this.SGM/F
'These doors...'

These examples, where the demonstrative pronoun occurs postnominally, illustrate a difference in syntactic structure, too. In (35)), (36) and (37), they function as subjects and the following nouns are the predicates (Alzahrani, 2015). However, examples (38), (39) and (40) show incomplete sentences where the demonstratives are part of the subject noun phrase. Interestingly, (40)) is unacceptable because the noun is indefinite and not in construct state.

2.5. Complex Noun Phrases

Noun phrases may have more than one modifier. Saying that means some changes may or may not take place regarding the ordering of these modifiers as will be illustrated below.

2.5.1. More than one adjective

Nouns can be modified by two or more postnominal adjectives[18] where they must have a certain word order depending on the semantic category of the adjective.[19] Consider the following examples:

(41)
a. *as-sajjarah* *as-su:da* *al-ħilwah*
DEF-car.SGF DEF-black.SGF DEF-nice.SGF
'the nice black car'
b. *??as-sajjarah* *al-ħilwah* *as-su:da*
DEF-car.SGF DEF-nice.SGF DEF-black.SGF
??'the nice car, the black'

By looking at the above examples, one can say that the colour of the car is one of the characteristics included in the meaning of "nice". Therefore, the two different adjectives have two different levels where the first adjective *assu:da* 'the black' is adjoined to the noun first. Then, the second adjective *alħilwah* 'the nice' is adjoined to the noun phrase *assajjarah assu:da* 'the black car' at a higher level. Consequently, the combination of *assajjarah assu:da*: 'the black car' entails the meaning that *assajjarah* 'the car' is *ħilwah* 'nice'. Having said that, it is noted

[18] Prenominal adjectives are limited in ZSA (Al zahrani, 2015).
[19] Shlonsky (2004) listed the ordering preferences in which he notes that Arabic and Hebrew show that the preferred order of adjectives is the opposite to English.

that in ZSA in most cases the colour term comes before the quality.[20] This means that adjectives in ZSA have the following adjectives order:[21]

(42) Nationality - Colour - Form - Size - Quality - Quantity

The following examples are given to check the validity of the above ordering:

(43)
a. *ar-raʤʤa:l* *az-zahra:ni:* *atˁ-tˁawi:l*
DEF-man.SGM DEF-Zahrani.SGM DEF-tall.SGM
'the tall Zahrani man'
b. *??ar-raʤʤa:l* *al-tˁawi:l* *az-zahra:ni:*
DEF-man.SGM DEF-tall. SGM DEF-Zahrani.SGM
??'the tall man, Alzahrani'

(44)
a. *al-be:t* *al-aħmar* *al-kibi:r*
DEF-house.SGM DEF-red.SGM DEF-big.SGM
'the red big house'
b. *??al-be:t* *al-kibi:r* *al-aħmar*
DEF-house.SGM DEF-big.SGM DEF-red.SGM
?? 'the big house, the red'

(45)
a. *as-saudi* *al-aswad* *atˁ-tˁawi:l*
DEF-Saudi.SGM DEF-black.SGM DEF-tall.SGM
'the tall black Saudi'
b. *??as-saudi* *atˁ-tˁawi:l* *al-aswad*
DEF-Saudi.SGM DEF-tall.SGM DEF-black.SGM
'the tall black Saudi'

(46)
a. *al-mirbʕ-a:t* *al-kibi:r-ah* *al-ħilwah-ah*
DEF-square-PLF DEF-big-SGF DEF-nice-SGF
'the nice big squares'

b. *??al-mirbʕ-a:t* *al-ħilwah-ah* *al-kibi:r-ah*
DEF-square-PLM DEF-nice-SGF DEF-big-SGF
'the nice big squares'

(47)
a. *al-mirbʕ-a:t* *al-kibi:r-ah* *al-ʕaʃr-ah*
DEF-square-PLF DEF-big-SGF DEF-ten-SGF
'the ten big squares'
b. *al-mirbʕ-a:t* *al-ʕaʃr-ah* *al-kibi:r-ah*
DEF-square-PLM DEF-ten-SGF DEF-big-SGF
'the ten big squares'

(48)
a. *mujat* *al-bi:r* *ħilwah* *wa* *kiθi:r-ah*
water.SGF.GEN DEF-well.SGF nice.SGF and plenty.SGF
'The well's water (is) plenty and nice.'
b. *mujat* *al-bi:r* *kiθi:r-ah* *wa* *ħilwah*
water.SGF.GEN DEF-well.SGF plentiful.SGF and nice.SGF
'The well's water (is) plenty and nice.'

(49)
a. *atˁ-tˁa:wil-ah* *as-sau:da* *al-midawar-ah* *aθ-θigi:la-ah*
DEF-table-SGF DEF-black. SGF DEF-round-SGF DEF-heavy-SGF
'the heavy round black table'
b. **atˁ-tˁa:wil-ah* *as-sau:da* *aθ-θigi:la-ah* *al-midawar-ah*
DEF-table-SGF DEF-black.SGF DEF-heavy-SGF DEF-round-SGF
'the heavy round black table'

[20] MSA and other Saudi dialects show the same ordering as well.
[21] This is the opposite ordering to the one that was suggested by Laenzlinger (2000).

The above examples show that an alternative word order, as shown, is accepted by some native speakers. However, the first order given for each example is the preferred word order. Examples (47)b) and (48)b) show two different acceptable orderings, which are exceptions in ZSA because they are the only acceptable examples with opposite orderings. Note, however, that unlike all the other examples, (49)b) is not grammatical.

2.5.2. More Than One Modifier

When a noun phrase contains more than one modifier, there is a preferred ordering. This ordering differs according to the position of the modifiers. Prenominal modifiers have the opposite ordering to postnominal modifiers (Fassi Fehri, 1999).[22] Consider the following examples:

(50)

a. *kull* *ʔawwal* *ʕaʃr* *duʤa:ʤ-a:t* *kuba:r*
every first.M ten.PLM/F chicken-PLF big.PLF
'every first ten big chickens'

b. *ha:ði:* *ʔawwal* *ʕaʃr* *duʤa:ʤ-a:t* *kuba:r*
DEM.this.SGM first.M ten.PLM/F chicken-PLF big.PLF
'these first ten big chickens'

c. *kull* *ha:ða* *ad-duʤa:ʤ*
all DEM.this.SGM DEF-chicken-PLF
'all these chickens'

d. *kull* *ha:i:* *al-χams* *duʤa:ʤ-a:t*
all DEM.this.SGF DEF-five.SGF chicken-PLF
'all these five chickens'

e. *kull* *ha:i:* *al-χams* *ad-duʤa:ʤ-a:t*
all DEM.this.SGF DEF-five.PLM DEF-chicken-PLF
'all these five chickens'

f. *kull* *ha:i:* *al-χams* *ad-duʤa:ʤ-a:t* *al-kabi:r-ah*
all DEM.this.SGF DEF-five.PLM DEF-chicken-PLF DEF-big-SGF
'all these five big chickens'

g. *??ha:i:* *kull* *al-χams* *ad-duʤa:ʤ-a:t*
DEM.this.SGF all DEF-five-PLM DEF-chicken-PLF
'These are all the five chickens.'

The noun phrases in (50)) illustrate the ordering of prenominal modifiers. As mentioned earlier, the order is different with adjectives that usually appear postnominally. A change in the ordering as in (50)g) results in a meaningful equational sentence (see (Alzahrani, 2015), for more details about equational sentences). The ordering in (51) was suggested by Fassi Fehri (1999). The same is true of ZSA.

(51) Q - DEM - Ord - Card - N – ADJ

(52) DEM - ADJ - N

Interestingly, prenominal adjectives in ZSA do not accept the above modifiers in (51), except with the demonstratives. Therefore, I suggest that (52)) is a more straightforward possible ordering in ZSA where the only difference is that the adjectives occur prenominally. Note the following examples:

(53)

a. *ha:ði:* *χuðˤr* *al-ʤiba:l*
DEM.this.SGM green.SGM DEF-mountain-PLF
'these green mountains'

b. **kull* *ʔawwal* *ʕaʃr* *χuðˤr* *al-ʤiba:l*
every first.M ten.PLM/F green.SGM DEF-mountain-PLF
'every first ten green mountains'

c. **ha:ði:* *ʔawwal* *ʕaʃr* *χuðˤr* *al-ʤiba:l*
DEM.this. SGM first.M ten.PLM/F green.SGM DEF-mountain-PLF
'these first ten green mountains'

d. **kull* *ha:i:* *χuðˤr* *al-ʤiba:l*
all DEM.this.SGF green.SGM DEF-mountain-PLF
'all these five mountains'

e. **kull* *ha:i:* *ʤiba:l* *al-χams*
all DEM.this.SGF five.PLM DEF-FIVE.SGF
'all these five mountains'

[22] Fassi Fehri (1999) summarises the order of modifiers in MSA. I suggest that ZSA has the same ordering based on the data I have.

f. **kull* *ha:i:* *al-χuðˤr* *al-χams* *al-ʤiba:l*
all DEM.this.SGF DEF-green.SGM DEF-five.PLM DEF-mountain-PLF
'all these five big mountains'

g. **ha:i:* *kull* *χuðˤr* *al-ʤiba:l*
DEM.this.SGF all green.SGM DEF-mountain-PLF
'These are all green mountains.'

All quantifiers can also appear postnominally, where the ordering is also fixed but in the reverse order of prenominal modifiers, as shown in the following examples:[23]

(54) a. *ad-duʤa:ʤ-a:t* *al-ʕaʃr* *al-ʔawla* *kull-ah*
DEF-chicken-PLF DEF-ten.PLM/F DEF-first.M all-3SGF
'all the first ten chickens'

b. *ad-duʤa:ʤ-a:t* *al-ʕaʃr* *al-ʔawla* *ha:i:* *kull-ah*
DEF-chicken-PLF DEF-ten.PLM/F DEF-first.M DEM.this.SGF all-3SGF
'all these first ten chickens'

c. *ad-duʤa:ʤ-a:t* *al-ʕaʃr* *al-ʔawla* *al-kabi:r-ah* *ha:i:*
DEF-chicken-PLF DEF-ten.PLM/F DEF-first.M DEF-big-SGF DEM.this. SGF
'these first ten big chickens'

d. *ad-duʤa:ʤ* *haða* *kull-ah*
DEF-chicken-PLF DEM.this.SGM/F all-3SGF
'all these chickens'

Therefore, the suggested ordering of postnominal modifiers is as follows:

(55) N - ADJ - Card - Ord - DEM - Q

3. Conclusion

This paper offered a description of the phrase structure of noun phrases. A noun phrase consists of a noun that may be modified with adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, demonstratives and relative clauses, occurring prenominally or postnominally. It can consist of a noun alone or a pronoun. Postnominal adjectives show full agreement (gender, number and definiteness) with the head noun when it is singular and animate or inanimate, and they show full agreement with plural head nouns if they are animate. Inanimate plural nouns are modified by feminine singular adjectives. This applies to dual nouns, too. Definiteness agreement always applies. The default form of prenominal adjectives is the masculine plural form which modifies nouns of any number or gender. They show no agreement on definiteness because they are always indefinite.

Numerals can be seen prenominally or postnominally. Postnominal numerals, both ordinal and cardinal numbers, show agreement in gender and definiteness with the modified noun. On the other hand, prenominal numerals do not show the same agreement. Instead, prenominal ordinal numbers have only one default form (the masculine) regardless of gender. Ordinal numbers are always indefinite and must be followed by definite nouns.

Cardinal numbers have two different forms. They may or may not agree in gender with the nouns they modify and they may agree in definiteness. However, definite nouns cannot follow indefinite cardinal numbers. Thus, agreement between cardinal numbers and the modified nouns is not obligatory. I suggest that ZSA does not have any limitations on agreement between cardinal numbers and their modified nouns. Hence, they can be used freely.

Quantifiers occur prenominally and postnominally and are unmarked. They express different meanings: totality *kull* 'all', majority *ʔakθar* 'most', and minority/partiality *baʕðˤ* 'some'. There are some limitations in ZSA between using quantifiers and the definite nouns which follow. For example, *kull* 'all' is only used with definite singular nouns if the reference is non-human. So, mean *kull* cannot go with human singular nouns if they are definite. This does not apply to plural nouns. Quantifiers can be followed by pronouns. Some quantifiers have pronoun suffixes agreeing in gender and number with the noun. Quantifiers must have the suffix pronoun attached to them if they occur postnominally.

Demonstratives are also used prenominally followed by definite or indefinite nouns. They can be used postnominally with no changes.

Nouns which are modified by two or more postnominal adjectives must follow a certain word order depending on their semantic category (nationality- colour- form- size- quality- quantity). When there is more than one modifier, the ordering depends on their position with regard to the head noun.

[23] Relative clauses only occur postnominally after the modifiers.

References

Al Barrag, T. (2007). Relative Clauses in Hijazi Arabic, (Unpublished master's thesis). The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Al Barrag, T. (2013). Noun phrases in urban Hijazi Arabic: A distributed morphology approach (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Al Sharifi, B. and Sadler, L. (2009).'The adjectival construct in Arabic'. *The LFG09 Conference.*Cambridge, UK.

Alzahrani, M. (2008). Morphology of negation in modern standard arabic and spoken Hijazi Arabic (Unpublished master's thesis). The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Alzahrani, S. (2009). Faify Arabic: Clause structure and negation (Unpublished master's thesis). The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Alzahrani, S. (2015). Topics in the grammar of zahrani spoken dialect (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia.

Bahloul, M. (2008). *Structure and function of the Arabic verb.* Routledge: New York.

Bardeas, S. M. (2005). The Pronominal Forms in Questions in Makkan Arabic (Unpublished master's thesis). The University of York. UK.

Bardeas, S. M. (2010). The Syntax of the Arabic DP (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The University of York. UK.

Cantarino, V. (1975). *Syntax of modern Arabic prose.* Indiana University Press for the International Affairs Center: Bloomington.

Fassi Fehri, A. (1993). *Issues in the structure of Arabic clauses and words.* Kluwer: Dordrecht, Netherlands.

Fassi Fehri, A. (1999). Arabic modifying adjectives and DP structure. *Studia Linguistica,* 53(2): 105–54.

Ingham, B. (1994). *Najdi Arabic Central Arabian.* John Benjamins: Amsterdam.

Kremers, J. M. (2003). The Arabic noun phrase: A minimalist approach (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands.

Kremers, J. M. (2005). Adjectival constructs in Arabic. *Linguistische Berichte,* 203: 331–48.

Laenzlinger, C. (2000). More on adverb syntax. In A. Alexiadou & P. Svenonius (Eds.). *Linguistics in Potsdam,* 6: 103–32.

Margaret, O. (1975). *Saudi Arabic Urban Hijazi Dialect Basic Course.* Foreign Service Institute: Washington, D.C.:

Mohammad, M. (1989). The sentential structure of Arabic (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Mohammad, M. (1990). The problem of subject-verb agreement in Arabic: Towards a solution. In M. Eid (Ed.), Papers from the first annual symposium on Arabic linguistics. *Perspectives on Arabic linguistics,* 1: 95–125.

Mohammad, M. (2000). *Word order, agreement, and pronominalization in Standard and Palestinian Arabic.* John Benjamins: Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A reference grammar of modern standard Arabic.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.

Shlonsky, U. (2004). The form of Semitic noun phrases. *Lingua,* 114(12): 1465–526.

Sieny, M. E. (1972). *The syntax of urban Hijazi Arabic (Sa'udi Arabia).* Librairie du Liban: Beirut, Lebanon.

Wright, W. (1859). *A grammar of the Arabic language (Vols. 1-2). [Translated from the German of Caspari and edited with numerous additions and corrections by W. Wright, LL.D.] Revised by W. Robertson Smith and M. de Goeje (3rd ed.).* Librairie du Liban: Beirut, Lebanon.