

Arabic ways to be Gendered

Arabic varieties (including the standard language) have an amazing system of Gender marking: the so-called 'natural/sex' (interpretable) gender plays only a marginally productive role, compared to the non-sex gender, which is often interpretable and inflectional, rather than just idiosyncratic/lexical, or purely 'formal'.

The latter meaningful gender patterns have been rather neglected or poorly treated in the literature, despite their important relevance for both typology and theory. The list of these non-sex interpretable patterns includes (but is far from being limited to) the following 'gendered' constructions:

1. *Singulative* expressions, in which a 'feminine' suffix forms a single nP denoting a *discrete unit* entity from a kind base;
2. *Plurative* expressions, in which a gender morpheme forms a group or a *collection individual* from a plurality of individuals;

In both (1) and (2), the constructed nP denotes a countable *integrated whole*;

3. Gendered *diminutives* and *augmentatives* can express 'intensive' decrease or increase in *Size*, 'excessive' *Evaluativeness*, etc ...

From the point of view of grammar, it is worth noting that (a) some genders are best treated as *classifiers*, whereas (b) others are rather *modifiers*.

Second, they are placed at various levels of the grammatical architecture, namely *lower* or *higher* than NumP.

Third, various '*doubling*' phenomena occur in the grammar, including the co-occurrence of a plural with a plurative (or a singulative), a plural with another plural, a double gender, a double augmentative/diminutive, etc.

These descriptive phenomena make it unrealistic to postulate a 'complementary distribution' analysis between these various functors, which are devoted to various complex expressions of quantity, shape integrity, and/or size. Our account depends on an architecture in which the co-occurrence of such functors is expected, and in fact borne out.

Some references. Armostaike, S. & M. Wiltschko 2012. Many ways to be gendered. *The Canadian Linguistic Association*. Borer, H. 2005. *Structuring Sense*. OUP. Doetjes, J. 2012. Count/mass distinctions across languages. In *Semantics*. De Gruyter. Fass Fehri, A. 2012. *Key Features and Parameters in Arabic Grammar*. JB. Mathieu, E. 2012. Flavors of division. *LI* 43. Mous, M. 2008. Number as an exponent of gender in Cushitic. La Trobe Univ.