

Grammaticalization of the Nouns ʔum 'mother' and ʔabu 'father' in North Jordanian

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Abstract

This paper examines the grammaticalization of the nouns ʔum 'mother' and ʔabu 'father' in Jordanian Arabic.

Jordanian Arabic undergoes grammaticalization where speakers begin to change the usage of lexemes and end up changing content lexemes to grammatical ones. The first author recorded 9 interviews in various areas of Irbid Governorate in north Jordan. Another source included 10 episodes of a series called foug essada 'over plain' as the actors are native speakers of Jordanian Arabic. A qualitative analysis was carried out for both sources. The results of the study showed that the item ʔum has a lexical meaning of "mother", while the item ʔabu has the lexical meaning of "father". The results also showed that both items have gone through the grammaticalization process and now serve as prepositional modifiers. Both items are used in new contexts, losing their canonical lexical-semantic content and classical category as nouns. Finally, the results showed that item ʔum underwent phonological reduction, while item ʔabu did not undergo this mechanism.

Keywords: Grammaticalization, ʔum, ʔabu, extension, desemanticization, decategorization, phonological reduction, nouns.

التصريف النحوي للاسمين um (الأم) و ?abu (الأب) في اللهجة العربية الشمالية الأردنية

المستخلص

تبحث هذه الورقة في الإنحاء اللغوي للاسمين "أم" و "أبو" باللغة العربية الأردنية. تخضع اللهجة الأردنية إلى الإنحاء اللغوي حيث يبدأ المتحدثون في تغيير استخدام المفردات وينتهي بهم الأمر إلى تغيير محتوى الكلمة لتصبح أداة قواعدية. سجل الباحث الأول 9 مقابلات في مناطق مختلفة من محافظة إربد شمال الأردن. تضمن مصدر آخر 10 حلقات من مسلسل بعنوان "فوق السادة" يكون الممثلين هم متحدثون أصليون للغة العربية الأردنية. تم إجراء تحليل نوعي لكلا المصدرين. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن كلمة "أم" لها معنى معجمي واحد في اللهجة الأردنية هو "الوالدة"، كما أن كلمة "أبو" لها معنى واحد في اللهجة الأردنية هو "الوالد". أظهرت النتائج أيضاً أن كلا الكلمتين قد خضعتا لعملية الإنحاء اللغوي وتعملان الآن كحروف جر. وتم ذلك من خلال استخدام كلا الكلمتين في سياقات جديدة، مما أدى إلى فقدان المعنى الدلالي المتعارف عليه كأسماء. أخيراً، أظهرت النتائج أن كلمة "أم" خضعت لعملية الاختزال الصوتي، بينما لم تخضع كلمة "أبو" لعملية الاختزال الصوتي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أم، أبو، النصوص الجديدة، التغيير الدلالي، تحول التصنيف، الاختزال الصوتي، أسماء.

1. Introduction

Grammaticalization has motivated scholars to study it from theoretical and empirical perspectives. Heine (2003) views grammaticalization as a misleading concept that can sometimes be understood as linguistic theory; he also describes it as a process that requires some kinds of implications, and this process explains the emergence and development of grammatical forms in language. Moreover, McMahon (1994: 160) defines grammaticalization as "[w]ords from major lexical categories, such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives become minor, grammatical categories such as prepositions, adverbs, and auxiliaries, which in turn may be further grammaticalized into affixes."

Furthermore, while the term 'primary grammaticalization' is used to describe the earlier pattern of a lexical item, the term 'secondary grammaticalization' is used to describe the latter form of grammaticalization (e.g., Traugott: 2002: 26-27, Norde: 2012: 76). See the following example:

E.g., In primary grammaticalization, the verb *Willan* (to want/wish) in Old English becomes *will* in Modern English. In secondary grammaticalization, the verb *will* in Modern English is cliticized into the short form 'll'. (Norde: 2009: 135).

Jordanian Arabic (JA) undergoes grammaticalization where speakers begin to change the usage of lexemes and end up changing content words to grammatical ones. In this phenomenon, a typological synchronous survey is carried out to understand the semantic, morphological, and phonological levels of grammatical content changes of lexical nouns ʔum 'mother' and ʔabu 'father'.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the nouns ʔum and ʔabu have not been studied within the framework of grammaticalization theory in Arabic. So, it's worth discussing. We first begin by examining the use of these items as lexical ones in JA. We then examine their transformation into grammaticalized items that perform functions unrelated to their canonical use as lexemes in the dialect.

Section (2) presents an overview of the relevant literature on the grammaticalization of nouns in Arabic, particularly in JA. Section (3) provides a background to JA and a detailed description of the corpus that was created for this work. Section (4) deals with the use of the nouns ʔum and ʔabus lexical nouns. Section (5) shows that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu can be used as grammaticalized items. In this section, the nouns ʔum and ʔabu are grammaticalized to serve as prepositional modifiers, losing their substantive meaning as parents, and all other grammaticalization processes of the items ʔum and ʔabu are reviewed.

2. Literature review

The grammaticalization of lexical items has been studied in several societies and several languages (Brems: 2007; Kiparsky: 2012; Auwera and Krasnoukhova: 2021; Lehman: 1991; Lehman:2020). Arabic literature is rich in studies of lexical items. For example, Alkayed (2021) conducts a study on the nouns *ʃikil* 'shape' and *omir* 'age' in JA. Hence, the noun *omir* in North JA is not pronounced as AlKayed (2021) mentions, it is pronounced as ʕumur or ʕumr . The data were collected through the T.V. series called *Jaltah* 'stroke' and

interviews. Results of the study showed that the noun *ʃikil* 'shape' was used 100 times as a lexical noun and was used 200 times as an evidential particle when grammaticalized. The same was found for the noun *ʃumur* 'age' which was used (60) times as a noun and (140) times as a negative polarity item when grammaticalized. Through grammaticalization, the word *ʃikil* underwent the processes of semantic bleaching and decategorization to become an evidential particle. Moreover, it underwent phonetic reduction, causing it to lose its stress. The word *ʃumur* also has undergone when grammaticalization. It has undergone semantic bleaching and decategorization; it lost its original meaning and became an object of negative polarity. In addition, it lost its noun features since it cannot be pluralized. On the phonetic level, the word lost its stress. Finally, the results showed that the words *ʃikil* and *ʃumu* underwent three stages of grammaticalization: semantic bleaching, decategorization, and phonetic reduction.

In his research on the discourse marker *hasa* 'now' in JA, Alkayed (2021) investigates the grammaticalization of the word *hasa* to become a discourse marker including its functions. It is worth noting that the word *hasa* in JA is pronounced as *hassa*. The research was based on 500 tokens of *hasa* 'now,' which were collected from Jordanian radio programs, face-to-face communication, and interviews with native JA speakers. The results showed that the word *hasa* 'now' evolved from the phrase *hay ilsaʕah* 'this hour' through grammaticalization. The results also indicated that the word *hasa* was developed into a lexical adverb to serve different functions. Finally, results showed that *hasa* leads the listener to possible interpretations of utterances, a matter that helps them achieve optimal relevance.

One of the most recent studies is by AlShawashreh et al., (2021) examining the changes of the verb *gal* meaning 'to say' between MSA and YES. The study is limited to the Jordanian Arabic dialect Irbid (JADI). The study draws on a corpus of 250,000 words. According to the study, the verb *gal* to say has a main lexical function in JADI. It is used to introduce direct or indirect speech. The verb also introduces other three functions which are: expressing the speaker's mental state, signaling indirect evidentiality, and revealing the speaker's incredulity towards the accompanying utterance through those three functions, one or more of the verb properties are lost, a matter which is related to grammaticalization process in which the verb lost its content meaning to become an incredulity marker. The verb is semantically bleached, phonologically reduced, and decategorized. The study relates such verb changes to pragmatic inference and (inter) subjectification. The study also shows the directionality of the grammaticalization process to be implemented from propositional (through textual) to expressive functions.

In his synchronic study on discourse markers, Jaradat (2021) investigates the discourse markers *ma*, *hu*, and *mahu* in JA in the domain of grammaticalization. The study argues that the discussed discourse markers are grammaticalized. The study proposes that grammaticalization covers the development of the discourse markers discussed simply because these discourse markers exhibit

the processes of grammaticalization such as desemanticization, phonetic erosion, and paradigmaticization. Moreover, discourse markers are not separated from the sentence; so, they are built into the grammar of the sentence and can affect its meaning. The study concludes that discourse markers cannot be examined alongside grammar.

Jarrah et al., (2019) present a study on the discourse functions of the wh-word *fu*: 'what' in Jordanian Arabic (JA). The study attempts to analyze all possible tokens. The study is based on a natural corpus. Analyzing the tokens, it was found that the wh-word *fu*: 'what' in Jordanian Arabic (JA), in addition to functioning as an interrogative operator, exclamative particle, and relativizer, has developed a discourse function and it is used as a Discourse-Linker which links questions with the previous discourse. At the syntactic level, results showed that the syntactic position is a key issue to decide grammaticalization as shown in the word *fu*: when it is moved to the left periphery; it is subject to the grammaticalization process.

Alshboul et al. (2009) discuss grammaticalization in JA and Standard Arabic (SA). The work discusses the grammaticalization mechanisms, approaches, and directionality in both JA and SA. The paper is divided into three sections: desemanticization or generalization, phonological processes, and morphosyntactic processes known as decategorization.

The results showed that the three future forms of JA (*ba-*, *Ha-* and *ta-*) emerged from full lexical items (*bad(di.)*, *ra(a)ħa*, and *ħatta*). The results also showed that future forms in JA and SA have undergone two processes: desemanticization or bleaching and phonological reduction. In the dimension of the future elements (habituation and inference), it is found that JA and SA have the same change mechanisms.

Surveying the literature review, it is noticeable that grammaticalization as the main topic has motivated many scholars in JA to discuss it. Furthermore, the researchers found that there is not a single study that has examined the lexical items *ʔum* and *ʔabu* in terms of the grammaticalization theory. Thus, such a study will fill a gap in the literature.

3. Sociolinguistic Background and Corpus

Grammaticalization theory is vital in a diglossic society such as Jordan in which lexical dynamicity is high and needs to be highlighted. JA developed over a vast period as a separate descendent of Classical Arabic (CA). During this ongoing development, many linguistic changes took place and as a result, many lexemes lost their content meaning in one way or another and now became grammatical markers, a matter which will be the focus of the present study.

JA is divided into four main dialects: Urban (spoken by city dwellers, more precisely it is widespread in the northern governorate of Jordan), Rural (spoken by residents of villages and rural areas; it is the dialect of Northern Jordan), Bedouin (spoken by Bedouins outside towns and villages; it is the dialect of southern and southeastern Jordan), and Ghourani (spoken by the Northern and Southern Ghour of Jordan).

Since the researchers are native speakers of JA, the present study depends on the intuition of the researchers in addition to real-life examples. The present study depended on a multi-model approach to collect the required data. Data were collected between June and August 2021. Researchers followed the 'snowball technique' (Milroy and Milroy: 1977), in which researchers relied on a friend of a friend to collect their data. In the present study, mobile phones were used to record (9) interviews totaling 335.02 minutes conducted by friends from Yarmouk University who were asked to conduct interviews with their friends from different areas who were asked to talk about themselves on several topics: memories, dreams, old days, school days, habits and traditions, fashion, local politics, death, social relationships, marriage, etc. The many topics chosen enabled respondents to speak freely about many things; in this way, the researchers could collect spontaneous data from each interview, making the interviews more realistic (Labov: 1984). Interviews helped the researchers extract the aspects that describe the language, such as word order, noun derivation, definite and indefinite articles, verb inflection, demonstratives, and much more (Anon, 1998).

In addition, a series called foug essada 'over plain' was chosen as another sample for the present study because the actors are JA native speakers. The episodes selected for the present study were ten; each lasted fifteen minutes. The total time for all episodes was 150 minutes. Because the series was found on YouTube, the researchers used headphones to listen to the series and attempted to pick up on the contexts that included ʔum and ʔabu. Once a grammaticalized item ʔumor ʔabu was found, the whole utterance is taken as an example.

The qualitative analysis showed as many examples as possible for the two grammaticalized items ʔum and ʔabu. It started with the original meaning of the items and then introduced the grammaticalized examples.

4. ʔum 'mother' and ʔabu 'father' > Lexical Items

In this subsection, the items ʔum and ʔabu are introduced to see how they behave from a semantic and morpho-syntactic point of view. The items ʔum and ʔabu are categorized as lexical items relating to actual female and male parents, respectively. In the following examples, it is illustrated that the items ʔum and ʔabu have in common the meaning of parents of humans as in (1.a,b) and the meaning of parents of animals as in (2.a,b):

1. ʔum and ʔabu > actual parents of humans

(a) ʔil-walad bi-rðʕaʕ min ʔumm-uh

the-boy Pres-breastfeed from mother-his

'The child breastfeeds from his mother'

(b) ʔabu:-j rawwaħ min if-juyul

Father-my PST-come back from the-work

'My father came back from work'.

(2) ʔum and ʔabu > actual parents of animals

(a) ʔil-bisseh btirðʕaʕ min ʔumm-ha:

the cat Pres-breastfeeding from mother-her

'The cat breast feeds from her mother'.

(b) fu: hu: lhajwa:n illi ʔabu:-h li-ħma:r wu ʔumm-uh li-ħsa:n?

What is the-animal whose father-his the-donkey and mother-his the-horse

'What is the animal whose father is a donkey, and his mother is a horse?'

As illustrated in the above examples, young humans and animals are breastfed by the mother as in examples (1.a) and (2.a). In addition, paternity is discussed in examples (1.b) and (2.b). This means that although mother and father have different roles in the child's life, they share the responsibility of caring for that child, whether that child is human or animal. This argument provides evidence that the lexical items ʔum and ʔabu are used for humans and animals sharing the notion of parenthood.

The lexical item ʔum contains the semantic item woman although it is not mentioned, as in the example: Pat's mother (Saeed: 2016: 30). The lexical item father also contains the semantic item man; the same example could be used with the noun father: Pat's father. As a result, the lexical items mother and father are clusters, even though one is feminine and the other masculine. Sáenz (1999) argues that the referents of the lexical items mother and father have more responsibility. Both share responsibility in the five idealized cognitive models (ICMs) proposed by Lakoff (1987). Although the models semantically lack further relations, they are necessary for further domains of the mother category, such as metaphor and metonymy. Furthermore, they are necessary to compare how the item mother deviates from its prototypical position on radial categories by using it with complex expressions such as adoptive mother, stepmother, etc. (Saeed: 2016). The five ICMs are enlisted as follows and are also discussed in the next subsection dealing with the linguistic changes of the item ʔum in the grammaticalization process:

1. The birth model: the mother gives birth to her children.
2. The nurturance model: the mother takes care of her children.
3. The marital model: the mother is typically married to a father.
4. The genetic model: the mother supplies part of the genetic material to her child.
5. The genealogical model: the mother is the child's closest female ancestor.

The association of the mother category with the child category might raise some objections. One of them is the affection area, where the mother affects her children through her feelings. Another domain is the home domain; traditionally, the mother stays at home to take care of her children. Next is the area of protection where the mother protects her children because she loves them more than anything. Another area is that the mother guides her children. Another domain is the discipline domain; the mother imposes rules on her children so that none of them will break those rules. The last area is the area of responsibility, where the mother is legally responsible for her children (Sáenz: 1999).

Furthermore, the lexical items ʔum and ʔabush are not only semantic features but also some morpho-syntactic functions with other nouns in the dialect; therefore, the nouns ʔum and ʔabu have the same position in an utterance. Additionally, they appear in dative and constructive state:

3. ʔum and ʔabu >subject position:

(a) $\text{ʔum-mi: ra:ħat ʕa s-su:g}$
Mother-my go-Pst to the-market
'My mother went to the market.'

(b) $\text{ʔabu:-j ra:ħ ʕa s-su:g}$
Father-my go-Pst to the-market
'My father went to the market.'

The above examples (3.a,b) show that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu behave syntactically like other nouns concerning their distribution. They hold the subject position in nominal utterance. This shows that these items are used as lexical nouns.

4. ʔum and ʔabu >predicate position:

(a) $\text{ʔani ba-ħib ʔumm-j}$
I Pres-love mother-my
'I love my mother.'

(b) $\text{ʔani ba-ħib ʔabu:-j}$
I Pres-love father-my
'I love my father.'

The previous examples show that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu occur as predicates in the form of the object of the verb 'love'. The examples show that suffixes are attached to the nouns ʔum and ʔabu , which function as possessive pronouns; such pronouns are used to define the subject and the object. Finally, the use of the nouns ʔum and ʔabu in the predicate form confirms that they are lexical nouns that share the same characteristics when used as predicates.

Another special feature is the dative. Common nouns like ʔum and ʔabu occur in the dative when preceded by a preposition, as in examples (5-6) below:

(5) $\text{warze:t ij-faha:deh la ʔumm-i}$
show-Pst-I the-certificate to mother-my
'I showed the certificate to my mother.'

(6) $\text{warze:t ij-faha:deh la ʔabu:-j}$
show-Pst-I the-certificate to father-my
'I showed the certificate to my father.'

The examples above show that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu are in dative cases. The dative indicates the action the recipient is receiving (Hering et al., 2013). JA is like English; it is based on word order. In the examples, there are two objects; whilst the first object ij-faha:deh 'certificate' is a direct object, the nouns ʔum and ʔabu are indirect objects; since they are indirect objects and preceded by a

preposition which is 'la-' 'to', they are in dative cases. Being that said, it is clear that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu share the same features in the dative case.

Another morpho-syntactic feature to discuss is the genitive. In Arabic, there are no special genitive particles like in English (Rubin 2004: 75). Instead, there is a constructive state in which a noun serves as the possessor preceded by another noun. The nouns ʔum and ʔabu can also appear in a constructive case serving as possessors when they are preceded by a noun. The possessed noun appears first and the possessor noun appears second. The possessed noun can take any case or be of any gender. Consider the nouns ʔum and ʔabu demonstrated in examples (7-8):

(7) $\text{ʔil-walad fa:gid ʔana:n ʔumm-uh}$
the-boy missing passion mother-his
'The boy is missing his mothers' compassion'.

(8) $\text{ʔabu l-waladmari:tʃ}$
Father the-boy sick
'The boy's father is sick.'

The examples above show the constructive state for the nouns ʔum and ʔabu . The nouns ʔum and ʔabu are the possessors, so they appear after nouns, but they are related to the possessed nouns. Both nouns ʔum and ʔabu are used in the same way in the constructive case, a matter which tells that they are used in the genitive case as lexical nouns.

Another important feature that could be addressed is definiteness. Nouns can be used with a definite article or without a definite article. In JA, the definite article *al-* 'the' is used with nouns as illustrated in examples (9.a, b). For the indefinite article, nouns stand without articles as given in examples (10.a, b):

9. ʔum and ʔabu > definite nouns:

(a) $\text{ʔil-ʔum illi bitrabbi mij illi bitxallif}$
the-mother who raise-Pres not who give-Pres birth
'The mother is the one who raises, not the one who gives birth.'

(b) $\text{ʔil-ʔabu ʔʔsan min ibn-oh}$
the-father better than son-his
'The father is better than his son.'

10. ʔum and ʔabu > indefinite noun:

(a) $\text{ʔumm-uk dakto:rahʔ}$
Mother-your doctor?

'Is your mother a doctor?'

(b) ʔabu:-k usta:ðʔ

Father-your teacher?

'Is your father a teacher?'

The examples in (9.a,b) express that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu have the article *al-* as a definite article, whereas in examples (10.a,b) they are indefinite since they do not have the definite article *al-*. This might be another syntactic piece of evidence that the nouns ʔum and ʔabu are used as lexical nouns.

The final feature that shows the nouns ʔum and ʔabu are used as lexical items in certain contexts is the numbering. The nouns ʔum and ʔabu appear in an utterance in the singular, dual and plural forms as illustrated in examples (11.a, b, 12.a, b, and 13.a, b):

11. ʔum and ʔabu > singular
(a) ʔumm-i na:jmeh
mother-my sleep-Pres
'My mother is sleeping.'
(b) ʔabu:-j na:jim
father-my sleep-Pres
'My father is sleeping.'
12. ʔum and ʔabu > dual
(a) ʔil-ʔumme:n na:jmat
the-mother-s sleep-Pres
'The two mothers are sleeping.'
(b) ʔil-ʔabbe:n na:jmi:n
the-father-s sleep-Pres
'The two fathers are sleeping.'
13. ʔum and ʔabu > plural
(a) ʔil-ʔummaha:at na:jmat
the-mother-s sleep-Pres
'The mothers are sleeping.'
(b) ʔil-ʔa:bba-ha:t na:jmi:n
the-father-s sleep-Pres
'The fathers are sleeping.'

To make things clear; in JA the noun ʔum is pluralized in the form of the 'the sound feminine plural' by adding the suffix $-\text{a:t}$ to the singular noun to be pluralized (AL-Khateeb: 2010). The above examples show that the noun ʔabu is also pluralized but in the masculine plural tone. The nouns ʔum and ʔabu share the same features in the singular, dual, and plural forms.

5. The Linguistic changes of ʔum 'mother' and ʔabu 'father' in the Grammaticalization Process

In the process of grammaticalization, the lexical items ʔum and ʔabu have evolved into grammatical entities in certain contexts, in addition to their canonical use as lexical items. To see this development, the items ʔum and ʔabu are discussed under the four mechanisms: extension, desemanticization, decategorization, and phonological reduction. Regarding phonological reduction, Heine and Kuteva (2007: 42) claim that a phonological erosion is usually the last to appear in grammaticalization mechanisms and that this is not a prerequisite for grammaticalization to take place." Based on the previous argument, extension, desemanticization, and decategorization are considered obligatory mechanisms for an item to be grammaticalized, while phonological reduction is an optional one. Consider the following arguments of the items ʔum and ʔabu :

As proof of the extension, the items ʔum and ʔabu are used in new contexts. They are used with places, cars, and things like clothing as shown in examples (14-17):

(14) $\text{ʔij-ʔa:riʕ ʔabu bina:ʔa:t kba:r}$
the-street father building-s big
'The street with big buildings.'

(15) $\text{ʔis-sa:hah ʔum su:r ʕa:li}$
the-yard mother wall high
'The yard with a high wall.'

(16) $\text{ʔis-sijja:rah ʔum tabbo:n kabi:r}$
the-car mother trunk big
'The car with a big trunk.'

(17) $\text{ʔiz-zalameh ʔabu badleh zarqa}$
the-man father suit blue
'The man with blue suit'.

Examples (14-17) show that items ʔum and ʔabu are used to refer to things unrelated to their canonical lexical usage as male/female parents of humans or animals. In example (14) the item ʔum is used with the noun 'street' which is neither human nor animal but an inanimate noun. Also, in example (15), the item ʔum is used with the noun yard that is also inanimate. Thus, example (16) is an extension of the use of the item ʔum ; the example shows that the item ʔum is used with the noun car, so the item ʔum is used in new contexts with a new semantic relationship.

More about the extension is shown in example (17); the example shows that although the item ʔabu is used with the noun 'man', it has a different semantic meaning than the meaning of the lexical item ʔabu and his child; it is used to describe the possessum, not the possessor.

The argument above shows that the items ʔum and ʔabu in JA are used in new contexts with different meanings. They are used in a sense away from the five ICMs proposed by Lakoff (1987). The meaning of the items mother and father no more refers to responsibility, discipline, home, and protection. The argument also shows that the items ʔum and ʔabu are used in humans but in a new sense.

Another mechanism that follows extension is desemanticization. Eckardt (2002) maintains that the meaning of content words is more concrete, tangible, precise, related to real things, properties, and activities than derived grammaticalized or function words. The examined items, ʔum and ʔabu , lost some aspects of their meaning in the grammaticalization process. To discuss this point, consider examples (18-19):

(18) $\text{ʔil-marah ʔum ʔija:r binni}$
the-woman mother scarf brown
'The woman with a brown scarf.'

(19) $\text{ʔiz-zalameh ʔabu ʔawa:rib kba:r}$
the-man father mustache big

'The man with a big mustache.'

Using the previous examples, it is shown that the items ʔum and ʔabu have lost their classic semantic meaning; for example, instead of having a relationship with a child, they are related to inanimate nouns such as scarf and mustache. In example (18) the item ʔum is used to describe the scarf that the woman is wearing, and in example (19) the item ʔabu says that the man has a large mustache. This means that the canonical meanings of the items ʔum and ʔabu have evolved to serve new meanings and lose the canonical ones; it seems obvious that the meanings of the items ʔum and ʔabu are semantically bleached out. Instead of referring to feminine and masculine lexical nouns denoting female/male referents, the items ʔum and ʔabu mark possessiveness as a grammatical entity rather than concrete or tangible.

Morpho-syntactically, grammaticalized items transform their lexical functions into others. The items ʔum and ʔabu change their lexical functions as nouns to serve as prepositional modifiers embedded in the prepositional phrases. Prepositional phrases are defined as: "a prepositional phrase is a phrase consisting of a preposition followed by a prepositional complement which is characteristically a noun phrase or a wh-clause or V-ing clause" (Quirk and Greenbaum: 1973: 143). Consider examples (18-19) below:

(18) $\text{ʔil-ʔurfah ʔum saguf madhu:n}$
the-room mother-PREP-MOD ceiling paint-ed
'The room with the painted ceiling.'

(19) $\text{ʔil-beit ʔabu tʕa:bge:n}$
the-house father-PREP-MOD floor-two
'The house with two floors.'

The previous examples show that the items ʔum and ʔabu have lost their lexical category as common nouns and now function as prepositional modifiers to modify the following noun phrases. In this case, they are related to the possessor and clarify the possessum. They are positioned in the prepositional noun phrase and occupy the preposition place, which means that they are more dependent on the neighboring constituent rather than being independent as in the canonical traditional use.

Additionally, the prepositions ʔum and ʔabu have lost their properties as canonical lexical nouns. As already mentioned in section (4.2.1.1), an Arabic noun accepts the definite article *al-* 'the' to become a definite noun. In definiteness, the prepositions ʔum and ʔabu cannot have the definite article *al-*; they stand as prepositional modifiers only in the indefinite form, which means that they lost one of their properties as nouns. To illustrate this point, consider examples (20.a,b) compared to examples (21.a,b):

20. (a) $\text{ʔil-ʔum bitdarris ibin-ha}$
the-mother teach-Prs son-her
'The mother teaches her son.'

(b) $\text{ʔil-ʔabu bihtam bi-bn-oh}$

The-father care-Prs with-son-his
'The father cares with his son.'

21. (a) ?il-yurfah ?um saguf madhu:n
the-room with ceiling paint-Pst
'The room with a painted ceiling.'

(b) ?il-beit ?abu tʔa:bg-e:n
the-house with floor-two
'The house with two floors.'

The previous examples illustrate that the lexical items ?um and ?abu accept the definite article al- as shown in (20.a, b). In the constructive state, ?um and ?abu do not accept the definite article al- since the definite article al- is used in JA with nouns. It occupies the first position in the constructive state. In example (21.a), the preposition ?um describes the room with a painted ceiling, and in example (21.b), the prepositional modifier ?abu describes the noun house with two floors. That said, the prepositional modifiers ?um and ?abu cannot occur in the constructive states as constructive possessors. This gives another piece of evidence that the words ?um and ?abu are decategorized from lexical items to prepositional modifiers.

As for the dative case, the prepositional modifiers ?um and ?abu cannot appear in the dative since they are prepositional modifiers used as prepositions. Consider the examples (22.a,b) for dative nouns, and (23.a,b) for prepositional modifiers:

22. (a) ruħt ʔala ?um-mi
go-Pst-I to mother-my
'I went to my mother.'

(b) ruħt ʔala ?abu:-j
go-Pst-I to father-my
'I went to my father.'

23. (a) ruħt ʔala l-yurfah ?um saguf ʔa:li
go-Pst-I to the-room with ceiling high
'I went to the room with a high ceiling.'

(b) ruħt ʔala l-be:t ?bu saguf ʔa:li
go-Pst-I to the-house with ceiling high
'I went to the house with a high ceiling.'

Examples (22.a,b) show that the lexical items ?um and ?abu are dative. The verb rah which means 'go' is an intransitive verb that does not require an object. It is followed by the preposition 'to', followed by the noun ?um in (22.a) and followed by the noun ?abu in (22.b). As with examples (23.a, b), the examples required a noun to complete the dative. Then the prepositional modifiers ?um and ?abu followed the nouns to function as prepositional modifiers modifying the following nouns.

The item ?um can appear pluralized when functioning as a lexical item and as a prepositional modifier. Consider the examples (24.a, b) below:

24. (a) ʔumm-aha:t ʔil-binte:n ra:ħin ʕala is-su:q
mother-Plr the-girl-two go-Pst to the-market
'The mothers of the two girls went to the market.'
(b) ʔiʕ-ʕte:n ʔummat ʔuðˁa:fir tˁawi:leh
the-two-chicken-s mother-s-PREP-MOD fingertip-s long
'The two chickens with long fingertips.'

Example (24.a) above illustrates that the lexical item ʔum is in the plural form even though it is used with a dual noun that is binte:n 'two girls. That is, there is no agreement between the dual subject and the plural preposition. For example (24.b), the prepositional modifier ʔum is also used in the plural to modify the dual noun ʕa:ʕa:t 'chickens. The previous argument showed no difference between the item ʔum as a lexical item and as a prepositional modifier.

Further investigation is done to see how the prepositional modifier ʔabu is used with plural nouns. The investigation revealed that the prepositional modifier ʔabu does not occur in its plural form with plural nouns. Instead, it is replaced by the phrase illi-ilhum 'who have'. To show the misuse of the noun ʔabu, example (25.a) is marked with a star, whereas in (25.b), it is replaced by the wh-clause:

25. (a) *iz-zulum ʔabba:t if-jawa:rib
(b) iz-ulum illi ilhum if-jawa:rib
the-men wh-have-PREP-MOD mustaches
'The men who have mustaches.'

As shown above, the prepositional modifier ʔabu in example (25.a) has no plural form; hence, it is replaced by another prepositional phrase, namely illi ilhum 'who have' as shown in example (25.b). The previous argument shows that although the items ʔum and ʔabu are prepositional modifiers, there is a difference between them; while the prepositional modifier ʔum has a plural form, the prepositional modifier ʔabu has no plural form and is replaced by the prepositional phrase illi ilhum.

The previous assertion agrees with Woidich (1996) who argues that some items in Egyptian Arabic are decategorized to function as prepositions such as xaʕm 'nose' and fum 'mouth'. In the prepositional phrase, the items xaʕm and fum combine with the prepositional phrase 'in front' to serve as prepositions.

In another context, the item ʔum goes through another grammaticalization process, which is secondary grammaticalization. Secondary grammaticalization is a grammaticalization process in which a lexical item is grammaticalized to another lexical item (Traugott: 2002). In this process, the item ʔum is grammaticalized to serve as an adjective in the meaning of 'main' under certain conditions when used in compound nouns. In this case, the item ʔum loses its gendered usage as feminine and refers to either feminine or masculine. In addition, it is obligatory that the noun and the adjective in the compound noun be definite; so, they have the definite article al-. also, the item ʔum does not appear in its dual or plural form, it only appears in its singular form. Consider the examples (26.a, b, c) below:

26. (a) ruħ-t ʕa f-ʕarikah l-ʔum
Go-Pst-I to the-company the-mother
'I went to the main company.'
- (b) ʒibt it-telfizjo:n min il-masnaʕ l-ʔum
Bring-Pst-PRN the-television from the-factory the-mother
'I brought the television from the main factory.'
- (c) il-masa:niʕ il-ʔum mawʒu:deh ib-ʕamma:n
the-factory-s the-mother find-Pst in Amman
'The main factories are found in Amman.'

The examples (26.a,b, c) show that the item ʔum as an adjective is used in the singular with both feminine and masculine nouns. While example (26.a) shows the use of the adjective ʔum in its singular form as a singular feminine adjective with the singular feminine noun ʕarikah 'company', example (26.b) shows that the adjective ʔum is used in its singular form with the singular masculine noun masnaʕ 'factory'. Additionally, in example (26.c), the adjective ʔum is used in its singular form with the plural noun masaniʕ 'factories.' The aforementioned examples show that in certain contexts the item ʔum is decategorized from being used as a lexical noun to be used as a lexical adjective when referring to the meaning of 'main' in compound nouns. Also, the adjective ʔum cannot be pluralized; so, it appears in its singular form. Finally, the adjective ʔum is used for both masculine and feminine nouns. This shows that the item ʔum is being decategorized from a lexical noun to a lexical adjective.

The final mechanism that enriches this discussion is phonological reduction. By bee and Pagliuca (1985) argue that further extension of a word's meaning leads to more frequent uses, a matter that automatically leads to phonological reduction. To uncover this point, consider the examples (27.a, b) that compare the lexical item ʔum with the prepositional modifier ʔum in the plural form:

27. (a) il-ʔummaha:t ra:h-in jimʕin
the-mother-Plr go-Pst-they walk-ing
'The mothers went in a walk.'
- (b) iftare:-t bitʕa:g-a:t ʔum-ma:t il-xams le:r-a:t
Buy-Pst-I card-Plr mother-Plr the-five Jordan dinar-Plr
'I bought five Jordanian Dinars cards.'

In example (27.a) above, the lexical item ʔum is pluralized as ʔummaha:t, while in (27.b), the prepositional modifier ʔum is pluralized as ʔumma:t. The deletion of the syllable /ah/ in (27.b) is considered a phonological reduction. For the item ʔabu, it has not undergone phonological reduction since its canonical lexical plural is ʔa: baha:t, and it does not appear in the plural form when grammaticalized.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, the items ʔum and ʔabu have a lexical meaning. The item ʔum has the lexical meaning of 'mother', and the item ʔabu has the lexical meaning of 'father'. Both items were grammaticalized in JA. They are extended to be used in new contexts. They are also desemanticized by losing their semantic sense of parenthood. While the item ʔum is decategorized as a prepositional modifier in some contexts and to serve as an adjective in the sense of 'main' in others, the item ʔabu only serves as a prepositional modifier when grammaticalized. Finally, the item ʔum was subjected to phonological reduction, while the item ʔabu was not subjected to any kind of phonological reduction.

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