ABSTRACT

This study explores and analyzes the system of negation in Yemeni Arabic (YA) and the syntactic aspects that interact with negation in different contexts. The phenomenon is tackled within the generative grammar framework, in particular the recent minimalist trends in the linguistic theory. It throws light on one of the significant linguistic patterns in YA, which has not been discussed yet. Interestingly, this study has two values: first, it presents detailed descriptive data, which might be considered as a valuable contribution to the field of linguistics of Arabic. Second, it offers very reasonable analyses and explanations to this pattern in question.

This study is mainly concerned with the discussion of three significant aspects of negation in YA. First, I describe the different ways of expressing sentential negation in YA and its strategy by means of negative markers or negative quantifiers. Then, I throw some light on the problems of previous accounts, in particular Benmamoun (2000) and provide novel analyses and proposals. Second, I investigate the ways of scope taking and reach a conclusion that negation determines its scope by word order. I provide various arguments based on empirical evidence and emphasize the positions where the scope of negation is determined overtly to strengthen my claims. Third, I describe and analyze the behavior of NPIs in YA. I discuss some of the previous accounts and demonstrate their inadequacies to account elegantly for the phenomenon. Then, I attempt to establish a novel account through appealing to both syntax and
semantics in order to dispense with the issues and shortcomings in the earlier works. The significance of this study lies in being the first one that brings four dialects of YA into its scope, providing novel linguistic data, establishing new proposals that might work not only for YA but also for dialectal Arabic in general.