

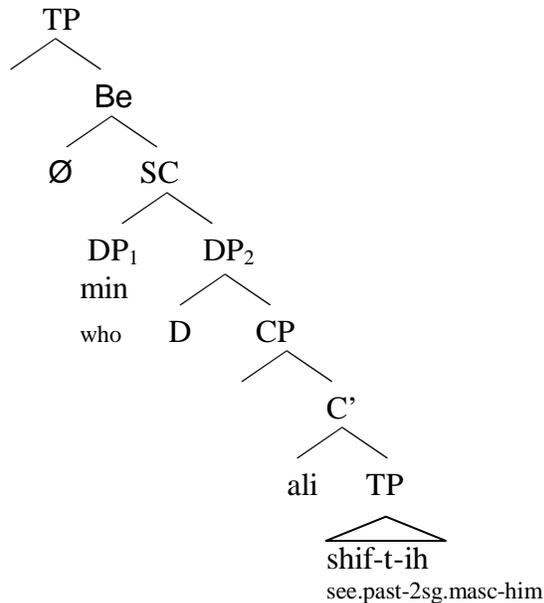
The Wh-ali-construction in Turaif Arabic The Abstract

In this paper, I investigate the wh-ali-constructions in Turaif Arabic spoken in Saudi Arabia, a heretofore uninvestigated dialect. What is interesting in this construction, as the example below shows, is that the wh-item appears next to a complete sentence headed by the element ‘*ali*’:

- (1) *min ali shif-t-ih?*
 who C see.past-2sg.masc-him
 “Who is the one that you saw?”

In this paper, I will argue that the wh-ali-construction should be analyzed as the following tree shows:

(2)



From the tree, we see that the wh-ali-construction is formed from a Small Clause, SC, with two DPs, DP₁ and DP₂. DP₁ is the subject of the Small Clause and DP₂ is a predicate. The wh-item *min* ‘who’ in (2) is the subject and is not moved from within the DP₂

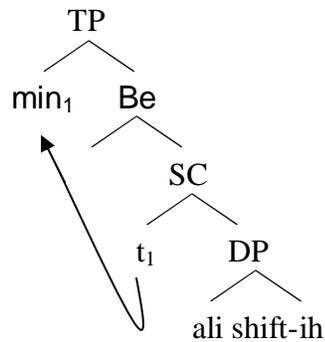
predicate. The predicate, DP_2 , contains a silent D with its CP complement headed by the complementizer ‘*ali*’. This complementizer ‘*ali*’ selects for a full TP as its complement. The small clause is the complement of a potentially null copula. In supporting this analysis, I will investigate the complementizer system, relative clauses and verb-less sentences from which I will show that the wh-item *min* ‘who’ in (1) is a subject and that the *ali*-string is a DP predicate.

In this paper, I have reached several analytical conclusions. First, I have shown that ‘*ali*’ in the wh-*ali*-construction is a complementizer. As supporting evidence of my argument, I have shown that ‘*ali*’, like other complementizers used in Turaif Arabic, is selected by certain predicates; and that it never co-occurs with other complementizers in the same clause. Moreover, I have shown that ‘*ali*’ obligatorily appears with relative clauses when the head of the relative clauses are interpreted as definite. From that I conclude that the element ‘*ali*’ is not simply a complementizer. Since it only occurs with relative clauses headed by a definite DP, it must be an agreeing complementizer. The ability of the *ali*-string to be conjoined with other DPs and to function as the complement of a preposition led me to conclude that the string containing the complementizer *ali* has the distribution of a DP. That is, the string containing ‘*ali*’ is a free relative clause composed of a silent D^0 and its CP complement (Kayne 1994). Moreover, after I have investigated the properties of the verbless sentences in Turaif Arabic, I have shown that the wh-construction with ‘*ali*’ has the same subject-predicate inversion property of these verbless sentences. From that I have concluded that the wh-construction with ‘*ali*’ is a copular clause, the subject of which is a wh-item that moves to specTP. My analysis predicts that

this wh-*ali*-construction is immune to islands because the wh-item is base generated outside the *ali*-clause. This prediction turns out to be correct. To express it differently, I argue for the following:

- (3) min [DP *ali shif-t-ih*]?
 who C see.past-2sg.masc-him
 “Who is the one you saw?”

(4)



From the tree, one sees that the subject of the wh-*ali*-construction is moved from its base position as the subject of a small clause to specTP.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 1. 2., pinpoints some syntactic facts about the dialect under discussion. Subsection 1. 3. discusses the complementizer system in Turaif dialect; there, I will argue that the element ‘*ali*’ is a complementizer. Section 2 provides a descriptive account of the relative clause in Turaif Arabic through which it will be shown that the *ali*-string in the wh-*ali*-construction is a free relative clause. Verb-less sentences will be discussed in Section 3. There, it will be shown that the construction with the element ‘*ali*’ has the properties of verb-less sentences. The wh-*ali*-construction will be

discussed under Section 4; and it will be shown that the wh-element of this construction is a subject of a verb-less sentence. I then show how the island properties of the wh-allocation construction follow from my analysis. Section five concludes the paper by outlining descriptive and theoretical conclusions and remaining puzzles.