SPLITTING THE CP DOMAIN OF
STANDARD ARABIC CLAUSAL STRUCTURE

Abdulkhaliq Alazzawie[i]
Department of Foreign Languages
College of Arts and Sciences
University of Nizwa
Nizwa, Oman

Abstract:

This paper argues that the CP (Complementizer Phrase) clause structure of standard Arabic shows a split in all clausal stages in the sense of Rizzi (1997, 2004). In Rizzi's system, there is a Finiteness (Fin) node dominated by a Topic (Top) node which is dominated by a Focus (Foc) node. The Foc node is dominated by another Top node which is in turn dominated by the Force node heading the entire clausal structure - the Force Phrase (ForceP). The present work seeks to establish such a parallel articulation of the left periphery of the clause in Standard Arabic as comprising such functional categories as Topic, Focus and Finiteness, highlighting in the meantime the role of Topics in 'higher predication' in the clause structure of Standard Arabic. The proposed decomposed CP of Standard Arabic will be motivated by data from sentences displaying the Sbject-Verb-Object (SVO) order, specifically topicalized/clitic left-dislocation structures. These constructions provide evidence for a decomposed CP and for the correlated Topic and Focus interpretation at the interface level.

Keywords: split CP, force marker, fin head, edge feature, left periphery

1. The Theoretical Framework: Split CP Hypothesis

This section reviews what has come to be widely known as the Split-Complementizer Phrase (Split-CP) hypothesis. Work by Luigi Rizzi (1997, 2004), Cinque (1999, 2002), and Aoun et al. (2010), to name but a few, have suggested that the CP layer of clause structure should be split into a number of separate functional projections to accommodate elements surfacing on the left periphery of the clause. For example, a complementizer (C) is re-analyzed as a Force marker heading a Force Phrase (ForceP), the reason being that a complementizer plays a role in specifying the force[ii] of it!s clause (Chomsky 1995), viz., whether it is declarative, interrogative, comparative, imperative, adverbial or exclamatory. Similarly, topicalized and focused constituents are analyzed as distinct Topic Phrases (TopP) and Focus Phrases (FocP) headed by a Topic marker (Top) and a Focus marker (Foc) respectively. Thus, each head in

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[ii] Rizzi (1997), following Chomsky (1995), terms this the "force" of the clause.

the structure may project a Specifier (Spec) position. The split of CP into several projections is diagrammed in (1):
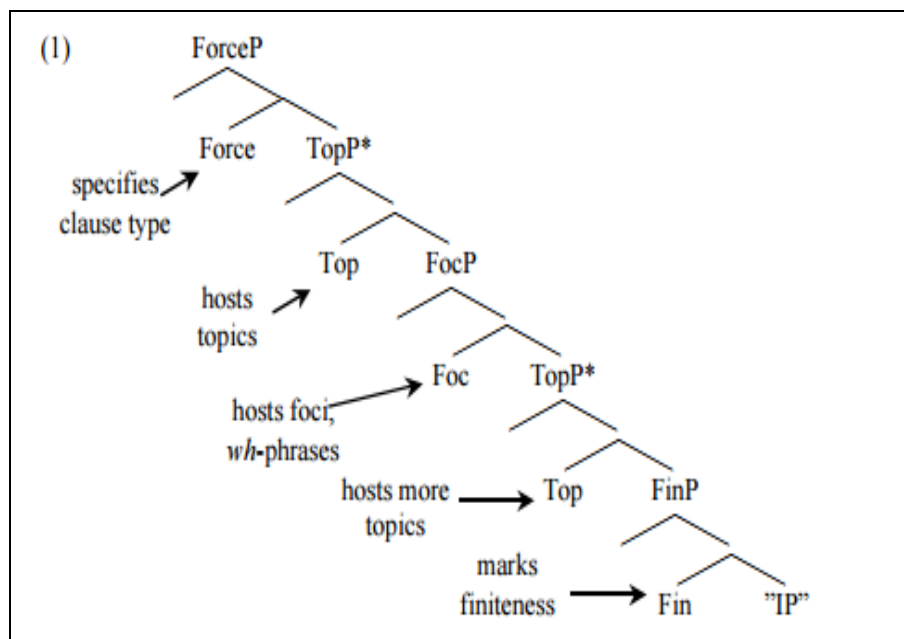

Figure 1: The Split CP projections proposed in (Rizzi, 1997, p. 297)
Source: Paul Hagstrom 2001, CAS LX 523 Syntax II

It is hypothesized that the above multi-layered functional projections host semantically and pragmatically relevant elements, such as topicalized/left-dislocated and focalized phrases, which end up at the clause periphery. Thus, ForceP, which marks the force of the clause, serves as the landing site for elements such as complementizers and relative pronouns. Topic and Focus are two dimensions or 'articulations' of the sentence, which are related to the information flow. Rizzi's Topic-Focus articulation is the syntactic representation of Topic-Comment and Focus-Presupposition (Chomsky 1972; Lyons 1977). The concept of Topic in the Topic–Comment contrast refers to what the sentence is about, whereas Comment refers to what the sentence says about the topic. In addition to encoding discourse-related concepts, such as topic and focus, which Rizzi terms 'the Topic-Focus System'; Rizzi (ibid.) observed that the left periphery also contains information about selectional relations, namely the local restrictions that an item imposes on its complements. For example, the verbs, *believe*, *ask* and *know* can select different clause types – declarative, interrogative, and either declarative or interrogative respectively.

Worth noting is the asterisk in the structure proposed by Rizzi, indicating that Topic is a recursive category. This results in multiple topics since the complement of Top head can in turn be another Topic-Comment structure, followed by Topic-Comment structure, and so on (see Rizzi 1997, for details). FinP at the bottom of the structure, through the head 'Fin', expresses the specification of finiteness and the non-finiteness pointing to inflection inside the IP/TP projection (Rizzi, 1997, p. 284). As such, FinP relates to agreement and inflectional features of the lower IP domain.

A central claim of the Split-CP hypothesis is that constituents of the clause left periphery serve as the interface between thematic domains within TP and discourse structure

in the upper projections. In Rizzi's words (1997: 283) complementizers act as "the interface between a propositional content (expressed by the IP) and the superordinate structure (a higher clause or, possibly, the articulation of discourse, if we consider a root clause)". Therefore, CP system acts as an interface and expresses at least two kinds of information. One information is facing the outside (information about the clause type) and the other is facing the inside (Rizzi 1997: 203) as it comprises information about finiteness (FinP), which is embedded under C.

According to Rizzi, the element *che* 'that' in Italian is a Force head projecting a ForceP. The evidence for this comes from topicalization and left dislocation, where *che* precedes the Topic *il tuo libro*, as in (2), from Rizzi (1997, p. 288):

(2)   Credo *che* <u>il tuo libro</u>, loro lo apprezzerebbero molto
        believe that the your book they it appreciate much
        `I believe that they would appreciate your book a lot'.

The infinitival *di*, however, follows the Topic, also from Rizzi (1997: 288):

(3)   Credo, <u>il tuo libro</u>, *di* apprezzarlo molto
        believe the your book for appreciate-it much
        `I believe to appreciate your book a lot'.
        A tree for a sentence such as (2) would look like (4):
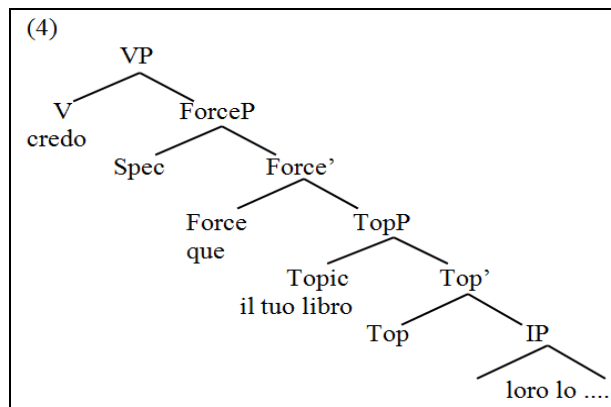
[VP credo [ForceP [Force' [Force que [TopicP Topic il tuo libro[TopicP' [Top [IP loro lo]]]]]]]]

In what follows, a range of phenomena in standard Arabic (SA) will be surveyed, involving left-dislocation structures that provide empirical evidence for the Split-CP.

2. Topic versus Subject

Either the verb or the 'subject' can be in initial position in SA. Sentence (5) is verb initial and sentence (6) is 'subject' initial:

(5)   VSO sentence: 3MS = third person singular, NOM = nominative, ACC = accusative, P = plural.

šariba   al-ʔawlaad-u   al-ḥaliib-a
darnk-3MS   the-boys-NOM   the-milk-ACC
'The boys drank the milk.'

(6)   SVO sentence
        al-ʔawlaad-u   šarib-uu   al-ḥaliib-a
        the-boys-NOM   darnk-3MP   the-milk-ACC
        'The boys, (they) drank the milk.'

The sentence in (5) is the basic, unmarked and more discourse neutral subject-predicate construction from which the marked sentence in (6) is derived. Also noticeable is that, while in (5) morphological agreement on the verb is partial, showing only person and gender with number missing, in (6) the agreement appears full in person, number and gender.

Another factor that cannot be overlooked is that the initial underlined DP is linked to a pronominal subject (section 2.2.). This pronominal (small pro) is suppressed because of the pro-drop parameter operative in Arabic[iii]. Also, worth noting is the fact that the construction in (9) is referred to as Topic-Comment in early Arabic grammatical treaties wherein the Comment portion is analyzed as having its own subject. In the last twenty years (Fassi-Fehri 1993, Plunkett 1993) Topic-Comment has been labeled as Left-dislocation (LD), a widespread phenomenon in Standard Arabic[iv]. Following these authors, Topic-Comment structures are analyzed here as LD. Accordingly, sentence (6) results from subject dislocation, that is dislocating the underlined DP from the internal subject position into the left periphery of the clause, (to be discussed in some more detail below).

As these authors have observed, the initial DP must be definite; an indefinite initial DP produces an ungrammatical sentence:

 (7)   SVO sentence with an indefinite (INDEF) initial DP
        *ʔawlaad-u-n   šarib-uu   al-ḥaliib-a
        boys-NOM-INDEF darnk-3MP   the-milk-ACC
        'Boys drank the milk.'

By contrast, an indefinite subject DP in VSO word order is acceptable:

(8)   VSO sentence with an indefinite subject DP
        šariba   ʔawlaad-u-n   al-ḥaliib-a

[iii] It is well-known that Arabic is a pro-drop language with the subject being a null pro (see for example, Fassi-Fehri 1993, Soltan 2007 and Aoun et al (2010)

[iv] The type of Left-dislocation found in Standard Arabic is generally referred to as Clitic-Left-Dislocation (CLLD). The construction shows a number of properties, among them the definiteness of the left-most DP, its co-reference relationship with a resumptive pronoun, and the fact that this relation can hold across an island (Plunkett 1993, Soltan 2007 and Aoun et al 2010).

darnk-3MS   boys-NOM-INDEF   the-milk-ACC
'Boys drank the milk.'

The contrast between the sentences in (7-8) indicates that the pre-verbal and the post-verbal positions are distinct; that they are located in different layers in the clause structure; and that they are not related derivationally through A-movement.

2.1 Categorical and Thetic Distinction

From a categorical-thetic perspective, Soltan (2007) points out that the pre-verbal DP of the SVO order in (6) receives categorical interpretation where a particular entity is selected and some feature is attributed to it. This reading is typically associated with the topic (A-bar position) of the discourse. Thus, the sentence in (6) is said to express "the categorical judgment" (Kuroda 1972, p. 154) which "consists of two separate acts" (ibid.). Interpreted in this way, the preverbal DP is the presupposed act; it is the Topic of the statement to which the mind and emphasis are directed, so that the second act of predicating the relevant property can be applied to it. The relevant property being that of *šaribu al-ḥaliib* 'drinking milk' is expressed in the subsequent statement/the comment part.

Associated with this difference, is the observation that the indefinite and non-specific bare nouns *ʔawlaad-u-n* cannot topicalize. This follows from the presupposed informational discourse nature of the entity of a categorical reading; the children must, in the first act, be presented as known to the participants before some property is attributed to them in the second act.

The plausibility of analyzing the sentence initial pre-verbal DP as a Topic/clitic left-dislocated DP can be further argued for on the basis of its linkage to both subjects (6 above) and non-subject positions, as shown below:

(9)   Pre-verbal DP linked to object of a verb
        al-ḥaliib-u   šariba-**hu**   al-ʔawlaad-u
        the-milk-NOM   darnk-**3MS**   the-boys-NOM
        'The milk, the boys drank it.'

(10)   Pre-verbal DP linked to genitive object position
        al-ʔawlaad-u   jaaʔa   ʔab-u-**hum**
        the-boys-NOM   arrived-3MS father-NOM-**their**
        'The boys, their father arrived.'

The fact that the pre-verbal DPs *al-ḥaliib-u* and *al-ʔawlaad-u* are resumed by a resumptive pronoun in the comment part containing the thematic domain argues for their status as topics rather than subjects. In the ordinary non-dislocated/non-topicalized subject-predicate clause of the VSO order, the actual subject appears post-verbally without a resumptive pronoun, as shown in (11) below:

(11)   Ordinary non-dislocated VSO sentence:
        jaaʔa   ʔab-u (***hum**)   al-ʔawlaad-u

arrived-3MS father-NOM the-boys-NOM
'The boys' father arrived.'

Note that the presumptive pronoun in (10) must be lexicalized; it cannot be phonetically null, as shown below:

(12)   *al-ʔawlaad-u   jaaʔa   ʔab-u
         the-boys-NOM   arrived-3MS father-NOM
        '*The boys, father arrived.'

This is the sort of data supporting an analysis of the initial DP in terms of topic rather than a subject (Alazzawie 1990, Fassi Fehri 1993, Soltan 2007; see also Rizzi 2006).

Having introduced the internal structure of the split CP of Rizzi (1997), Arabic clauses of the SVO word order will now be discussed in terms of its tenants. Within the split CP hypothesis adopted here, the topic DP would be merged in the Spec-Top position.

2.2 Arabic SVO Clauses

At first sight, it would appear that the pre-verbal DP (underlined) in the example below is merged in Spec-C within the traditional unsplit CP analysis:
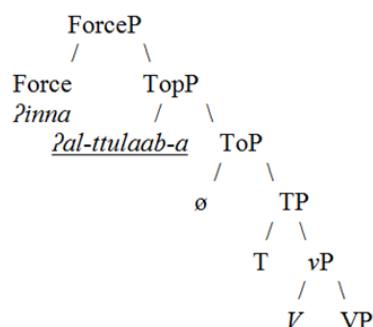
(13)

> ʔal-ttulaab-u   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
> the-students-NOM   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC
> 'The students are writing the lesson.'
> [CP ʔal-ttulaab-u [C ø [TP [T [VP [V ya-ktib-uu-na] l-dars-a]]]]]

However, the problem posed by this analysis is that a sentence containing a matrix complementizer can co-occur with the underlined DP, as in (14) below: (C abbreviates complementizer in the glosses.)

(14)
a.   ʔinna ʔal-ttulaab-a   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
        C   the-students-ACC   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC
        'The students are writing the lesson.'
b.   *ʔal-ttulaab-u ʔinna y-aktib-uu-na l-dars-a

The underlined DP obviously follows the complementizer; it cannot precede it, as the contrast between (a) and (b) shows; and so cannot be in the specifier of CP. Therefore, there must be a head position to accommodate *ʔinna* and another position to accommodate the underlined DP. Within the Split-CP projections outlined above, this would suggest more than one type of projection above TP; specifically, a ForceP headed by the force marker *ʔinna* and a TopP headed by a Topic marker (Top symbolized by ø), as in the following structure:

(15)

```
              ForceP
             /      \
         Force       TopP
         ʔinna       /   \
              ʔal-ttulaab-a   ToP
                         /   \
                       ø      TP
                             /  \
                           T     vP
                                /  \
                               V    VP
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      The underlined DP is merged in the Spec-Top position, and is associated with a pronominal *pro* in Spec VP, while *ʔinna* is merged in the head Force position. The merger of *ʔinna* marks declarative clause type as a default type (Rizzi 1997; Cheng 1997), and adds to the assertive interpretation of the proposition at the interface level.

2.3 Top is Endowed with an Edge Feature

One way of describing the Topic phenomenon is to suppose that the head [Top = ø] carries an edge feature [EF] which requires the merger of the Topic DP in Spec-Top. It is in this position that the underlined DP is interpreted as being a Topic of the sentence through co-indexation with *pro* in the thematic VP domain. It is useful to recall that Arabic is a null subject language, hence the non-overtness of subject pronouns. As can be seen, the Topic DP shows definiteness effects and is followed by a Comment, itself contains a subject-predicate string, constituting 'a complete predication'. The Topic is interpreted as co-referential with the pronoun in subject position of the lower predication. In view of the characteristics of LD/Topicalization discussed in (section 2), the fact that the DP *ʔal-ttulaab-u* is resumed by a subject pronoun indicates its status as a dislocated subject on a par with dislocated non-subjects. As discussed in section (2), subject dislocation applies to sentences from which a subject DP is dislocated in initial position. The dislocated subject *ʔal-ttulaab-u* is interpreted as co-referring with the subject pronoun in the same way as dislocated non-subjects are interpreted as co-referring with non-subject pronouns in the lower predication or Topic-Comment construction (Fass-Fehri 1993, Plinkett 1993 and Soltan 2007).

      The fact that only definite DPs can be topicalized can be attributed to a discourse topic feature associated with the head Top which can only be valued by merging a definite DP in its specifier position. If this is the case, it follows that an indefinite DP is banned from surfacing in the specifier of Top as it contradicts the inherent semantic effects of this position. In this connection, Cinque (1990) and Rizzi (1997) proposed that left dislocated DPs in English and Italian are found in the clause periphery. In the same vein, Chomsky (2001) suggested that the periphery of the clause, that is 'phase edges' are the positions where the so-called "surface semantics" arise. This includes discourse topics, focus, given information and other interpretive effects. The proposal is empirically supported by left-dislocation structures in Standard Arabic. The discourse function interpretive effects of the initial DP is the result of appearing in the edge position of Top. For instance, the Topic discourse property

of _Ɂal-ttulaab-u_ indicates that the DP is actually merged in Spec-Top. This is shown in the preceding example (13), repeated below for ease of reference:

(16)

      <u>Ɂal-ttulaab-u</u>   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
      the-students-NOM 3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC
      'The students are writing the lesson.'

It is by virtue of being in this position that the relevant DP is assigned special emphasis/thematization effects, assuming that the Topic feature is realized on the Top functional head. The discourse, semantic and pragmatic effects of _Ɂal-ttulaab-u_ result from merging the DP in Spec-Top to license the Topic feature on the head of TopP. Alternatively, the peripheral Topic feature on the head Top forces the merger of the DP in its specifier position that co-refers with either a subject or a non-subject resumptive in the lower domain.

2.4 Spec-Top is an A'-position

As concerns the nature of the Spec-Top position, I adopt the view that it is an A'-position since it is hosting left-dislocated elements in the language, and the reason being that left-dislocation is an A'-dependency (Cinque 1990; Rizzi 1997; Aoun _et al_. 2010). Extraction possibilities from Arabic support this conclusion:

(17)
a.   maaða kataba al-taalib-u
        what wrote the-student-NOM
        'What did the student write?'

b.   *maaða al-taalib-u kataba
        what the-student-NOM wrote

It should be pointed out again (see the discussion of sentences 3-6 in section 2) that the DP _al-taalib-u_ is the subject of the sentence in (17a), and that the sentence has the thetic form of a single chain. On the other hand, the same DP is treated as a left-dislocated topic in (17b), rather than a subject, and that the sentence corresponds to the categorical form of two chains. As such, the DP represents the pre-suppositional discourse topic part of a Topic-Comment structure, and is related to a _pro_ that functions as the actual subject of the comment part.

In light of what has been said, the difference between the two sentences can be captured under the assumption that sentence (17a) configures a subject in an A-position, hence allows movement across the subject. By contrast, sentence (17b) configures a left-dislocated Topic in an A'-position; this position being Spec-Top (section 2.2) under the present analysis, hence disallows movement[v].

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[v] See Soltan (2007) for further discussion.

Before closing this section, it should be noted that Rizzi's (1997) framework of articulated CP receives significant support from the Arabic data, as it allows for the interaction between syntax – the formal component - and the functional component of information structure. Rather than being an extra-linguistic level, discourse information is integrated into the formal structure, and both components are considered part and parcel of the language system.

2.5 Non-referential (NONREF) Topic
Rizzi (1997) and Haegeman (2000) maintain that topicalized phrases land in the specifier of TopP. In matrix contexts, Standard Arabic allows the force head to be lexically filled by *Ɂinna*, which marks a declarative assertive 'clausal Type' (Rizzi 1997, citing Cheng 1991). On this view, sentence (18) would have the bracketed structure given below; C stands for complementizer:

(18)   A Force clause marker *Ɂinna* in a matrix context selecting a DP Topic
        Ɂinna l-ttulaab-a   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
        C the-students-ACC3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC

        [ForceP [Force Ɂinna [TopP l-ttulaab-a [Top ø [FinP ya-ktib-uu-na l-dars-a]]]]]

As the above sentence includes no FocP, it is split into three projections, namely a ForceP, TopP and a FinP. *Ɂinna* is a force head, marking the declarative force of the sentence; *l-ttulaab-u*, the so-called 'subject' of the clause has been inserted in Top. Thus, a TopP node is necessarily projected as the complement of the Force node to host the topic. As discussed in the previous section, note that it is resumed by the pronominal *–uu* with which the topic is co-referential. Also, as pointed out in (2.3), the Top head carries an edge feature which allows it to have a specifier to harbor the DP *l-ttulaab-u*. In this position, the DP enters into a higher predication relation with the TP, and it is interpreted as a discourse topic at the interface (Rizzi, 1997, p. 287).

Another variant of (18) is also attested in the language wherein the Force head selects a non-referential pronominal (NONREF) as its Topic. This possibility is illustrated by the following example. The NONREF, given in bold-face, appears suffixed to *Ɂinna*, forming the complex *Ɂinna-**hu*** :

(19)
        Ɂinna-**hu**   [y-aktib-u   l-ttulaab-u   l-dars-a]
        C-NONREF   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-students-NOM the-lesson-ACC
        'It is the case that the students are writing the lesson.'

As indicated above, within the split-CP hypothesis, the Force head serves to mark 'clause type' (Rizzi, 1997, p. 283), (i.e., marked as belonging to a certain type). Since the element *Ɂinna* serves this function of encoding the force of its clause, it is reasonable to assume that it is merged in the Force head position to signal a declarative finite clause type.

Its Force status is further bolstered by the fact that it "can be selected … by a higher selector" (Rizzi, 1997, p. 283), the higher selector in (20) being the underlined verb:

(20)

<u>Salim</u>-tu ʔinna l-ttulaab-a   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
knew-I C   the-students-ACC   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC
'I knew that the students are writing the lesson.'

As for the status and structural position of the pronominal clitic -*hu*, I assume it is a NONREF Topic merged in the Spec-Top position to the right of Force within the Split-CP cartography. The occurrence of this Topic is only licensed by the insertion of the Force marker *ʔinna* in the Force head position. Presumably, in the morphological component, the NONREF Topic adjoins onto Force, resulting in the composite [Force *ʔinna-**hu***]:

(21)
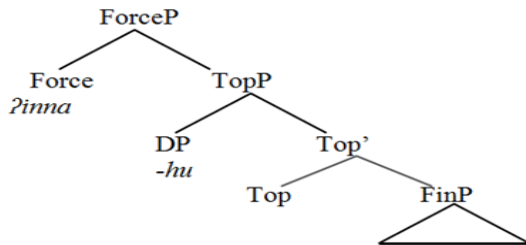
2.6 Position of Top in Relation to Force

The question that arises is where topics are positioned in relation to Force within the clause. Rizzi (1997) maintains that ForceP is always the highest projection in a split CP analysis. However, the following examples, with ForceP being positioned under TopP, run counter to the order of projections assumed by Rizzi (1997):

(22)

<u>ʔal-ttulaab-u</u>   ʔinna-<u>hum</u>   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
the-students-NOM   C-they   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC

(23)

<u>ʔal-ttulaab-u</u>   ʔinna <u>ʔabaʔ-a</u>-hum   y-aktib-uu-na   l-dars-a
the-students-NOM   C-fathers-ACC-their   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-lesson-ACC

The sentences configure two Topic projections – one hosting the lexical underlined DP *ʔal-ttulaab-u* and another hosting the pronominal -*hum* suffixed to the Force head *ʔinna*. This is the situation in (22). In (23), on the other hand, the two projected Topics are the two underlined lexical DP's *ʔal-ttulaab-u* and *ʔabaʔ-a-hum*. This raises interesting questions regarding the nature of these functional projections, their number and their specific order of

embedding within the clause. Their number appears to vary and their order is not fixed, but rather seems to be flexible. The number of Topics and the variation in position of Force relative to Topic is further bolstered by example (24) with structure (25):

(24)

Ɂinna	Ɂal-ttulaab-a	Ɂabaʕ-u-hum	y-aktib-uu-na	l-dars-a
C	the-students-ACC	fathers-NOM-their	3-write-MP-IND(icative)	the-lesson-ACC

(25)   [ForceP [Force Ɂinna [TopP l-ttulaab-a [Top ø [TopP Ɂabaʕ-u-hum [FinP ya-ktib-uu-na l-dars-a]]]]]]

(24)   shows that the Force-Topic order can be reversed, which may suggest optional movement of the Force head, ending up at the front of the overall sentence. (24) also illustrates that Standard Arabic allows more than one constituent to occupy a topic position in a single clause.

The bracketed VSO sentence above can occur as a matrix sentence without a lexically filled Force head without an overt complementizer *Ɂinna*:

(26)   VSO root sentence without *Ɂinna*
         y-aktib-u   l-ttulaab-u   l-dars-a
         3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-students-NOM   the-lesson-ACC
         'The students are writing the lesson.'

Although *Ɂinna* is not merged in (26), to maintain consistency, it is plausible to posit that the left periphery still splits into ForceP with a null Force head, as stated in assumption (27):

Assumption (27)
         Force is projected even if there is no overt head (e.g. in main clauses).

This null Force marker, introducing declarative main clauses is the null counterpart of *Ɂinna*, since *Ɂinna* is also used to introduce main clauses. It is symbolized below as [Force ø]. The projection also includes FinP above TP, as shown in the tree and bracketed representations (28):

(28)

```
                              ForceP
                             /      \
                        Force        FinP
                         ø          /    \
                              Fin        TP
                                       /    \
                                            T'
                                          /    \
                                       T        vP
                                              /    \
                                           v        VP
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[ForceP [Force Ø [FinP [Fin [TP [T [vP ya-ktib-u l-ttulaab-a l-dars-a]]]]]]]

Some evidence in support of claiming that declarative main clauses can be introduced by a null Force head comes from conjunction possibilities. For example, the declarative main sentence in (26) can be conjoined with an interrogative sentence as in (29):

(29)   Conjunction Test
        y-aktib-u   l-ttulaab-u   l-dars-a   walaakin   hal
        3-write-MS-IND(icative)   the-students-NOM   the-lesson-ACC   but   Q
        sa-y-astawib-uu-hu
        FUT-3-understand-3MP-it
        'The students are writing the lesson but will they understand it?'

Given the standard conjunction constituency test according to which only constituents of the same category can be conjoined, the first conjoined sentence must also be a ForceP; and since it does not contain an overt Force marker, it must be headed by a zero clause type Force marker, as assumed in structure (28). Thus, coordination supports the structural analysis that main sentences are ForceP's headed either by an overt or a null head which marks the force of the sentence. More generally, the proposal put forth in regards to Standard Arabic clause structure is the following:

(29)   All canonical (VSO order) sentences and all sentences with pre-verbal DP's (SVO order) are ForceP's.

In the above structure, ForceP and FinP are the two main projections which Rizzi (1997, pp. 296-297) termed the Force-Finiteness system. As outlined in the preceding section, in Rizzi's system there is a FinP functional projection whose head, Fin, marks the clause as finite or nonfinite. This projection is below FocP but above TP. As Rizzi argues, the element *for* in overt-subject infinitives in English serves as a nonfinite Fin head.

3. Interrogative *hal* and *ʔa-* are Force heads

Interrogative main clauses are also introduced by a Force head, as the following examples illustrate:

(30)   Interrogative main clauses introduced by a Force head: *hal* and *ʔa-* below glossed as Q
a.   <u>hal</u>   y-aktib-u   l-ttulaab-u   l-dars-a
Q   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-students-NOM the-lesson-ACC
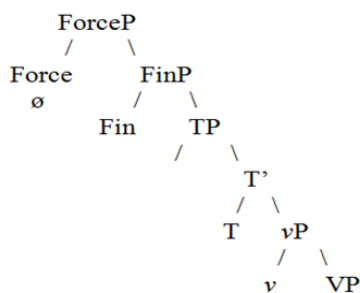'Are the students writing the lesson?'
b.   <u>ʔa</u>-y-aktib-u   l-ttulaab-u   l-dars-a
Q   3-write-MP-IND(icative)   the-students-NOM the-lesson-ACC
'Are the students writing the lesson?'

The interrogative force of the overall sentences in (30) is attributed to the fact that the sentences are ForceP's headed by the independent element *hal* and the prefixal *ʔa-* carrying an interrogative force feature. The elements *hal* and *ʔa-*, being Force markers, specify the clause type in terms of structure, discourse and pragmatic functions, and also dictate the fact that another functional head, such as Top, is allowed (Rizzi, 1997). Under this view, see also Cheng (1997), the insertion of *hal* or *ʔa-* in Force serves to identify the clause as interrogative. This is configured in the following example where the presence of Top forces topicalization of *l-dars-a* 'the lesson'(printed in boldface):

(31)

hal   **l-dars-a**   y-aktib-u-hu   l-ttulaab-u
Q   **the-lesson-ACC**   3-write-MP-IND(icative)-it the-students-NOM
'Are the students writing the lesson?'

The sentence assumes force, topic and finiteness meanings and functions, where meanings and functions have to be syntactically represented and differentiated. If the analysis is on the right track, the left periphery area of SA clauses should not be a single position; rather, it should be decomposed according to the functions observed in the data.

4. *laqad* is a Fin head

Contrasted with the *hal*-clause, which dictates a Top sub-head as an option, the *laqad*-clause disallows a subordinate Top:

(32)
a. *laqad **l-dars-a**   y-aktib-u-na-hu   l-ttulaab-u
    the-lesson-ACC   3-write-MP-IND(icative)-it   the-students-NOM

b. **laqad* **l-ttulaab-u**   y-aktib-u-na   l-dars-a
    the-students-NOM 3-write-MP-IND   the-lesson-ACC

The observed ungrammaticality can be explained as follows: the element *laqad* is a Fin head as shown in the bracketed structure below (FinP will be developed in the following section):

(33)   [FinP [Fin *laqad* [TP [T [vP kataba l-ttalib-u l-dars-a]]]]]

      Fin specifies or selects a particular clause structure, specifically a topicless TP, hence lacking a TopP projection. In other words, the TP is immediately surmounted by Fin, and does not include a Top head carrying a Top edge feature, such that the Top feature needs to be satisfied by the merger of a topic phrase[vi].

      To sum up, it has been argued in favor of the finer structure proposed by Rizzi (1997) that the upper layers of Arabic clauses show sub-parts – namely, Force, Top, and Foc. While Foc is systematically projected in both SVO and VSO sentences, the latter two, viz., Top and Foc, are projected only in sentences containing topicalized and/or focalized elements. In the spirit of Rizzi's work, the following section proposes a Finite Phrase (FinP) as a fourth functional projection between TP and FocP.

4.1 Finite Phrase (FinP)

As pointed out by Rizzi (1997), Fin is the functional head that selects the inflectional projection (IP/TP). The presence of FinP in the clausal domain of Arabic can be justified on the basis of existential sentences with the pro-form *hunaak* 'there':

(34)

      kaana   hunaaka   rajul-u-n   fi l-bayt-i
      PERF-be3MS   there   man-nom-INDEF   in the-house-GEN
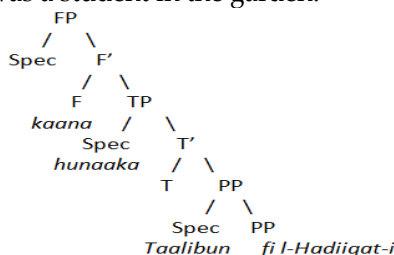   'There was a man in the house.'

      Note that the copular *kaana* appears to the left of the pro-form *hunaaka*. It is widely accepted that Head movement (Travis 1984) is responsible for this reordering. Accordingly, the auxiliary verb *kaana* raises to Fin from its base position under V inside VP, through little *v*, to T inside TP, and subsequently adjoining the whole complex to Fin, deriving the VSO order.[vii]

[vi] I am assuming that T(ense) in SA lacks a Top feature, and therefore, it does not project Spec-T. This assumption makes TP an illegitimate domain for discourse Topics. For a discussion of the edge feature/Extended Projection Principle (EPP) and its extension from T to the core functional categories: *T, v* and *C*, see Chomsky (2000).

[vii] Using existential sentences involving *hunaaka*, Aoun *et al.* (2010:70-71) argue for the presence of an F functional head above IP/TP which serves to 'focalize the verb'. This F node also serves as a landing site for the verb:

kaana   hunaaka   Taalib-u-n   fi l-Hadiiqat-i
PERF-be3MS   there   student-nom-INDEF   in the-garden-GEN
'There was a student in the garden.'

```
            FP
          /    \
      Spec     F'
              /   \
             F     TP
          kaana  /    \
             Spec     T'
          hunaaka   /    \
                   T      PP
                        /    \
                    Spec     PP
                 Taalibun   fi l-Hadiiqat-i
```

There is some further evidence for a FinP based on the following sentence, where the verbal modal element *qad* must precede the verb:

(35)

       qad   y-aktubu   l-risaalat-a
       may   3-write   the-letter-ACC
       'He may be writing the letter.'

The element *qad*, not only must precede the verb, but it must also precede the negative element *laa*, as shown by the following contrast:

(36)
a.   qad laa   y-aktubu   l-risaalat-a
       may not   3-write   the-letter-ACC
       'He may not be writing the letter.'

b.   *laa qad y-aktubu   l-risaalat-a
       not may 3-write   the-letter-ACC

This suggests that the modal *qad* is higher than TP in the structure, and it would fit readily into the finer CP structure under the assumption that *qad* is merged in Fin or perhaps in another functional head such as Mod(al), heading a separate functional projection above TP[viii].

Another argument that *qad* serves as a Fin head marking its clause as finite can be developed on the basis of the following sentences:

(37)
a.   qad salay-tu <u>fi l-masjid-i</u>
       did pray-I   in the-mosque-DAT
       'I did pray in the mosque.'

b.   (ʔinna) <u>fi l-masjid-i</u>   qad salay-tu
       Foc   in the-mosque-DAT did pray-I

c.   *qad <u>fi l-masjid-i</u>   salay-tu

The topicalized underlined PP <u>fi l-masjid-i</u> can be positioned between *ʔinna* and its TP complement (37b), but not between *qad* and its TP complement (37c). This is in line with the view that *qad* is a Fin head (structure 28), *ʔinna* is a Force head as proposed in (21) , and Topics are positioned between the two projections.

AS the structure shows, the auxiliary verb *kaana* occupies the highest head in Aoun et al.'s (2010) organization of the split-CP periphery.
[viii] For a discussion of the element *qad* as it relates to tense, aspect and modality, see Bahloul (1994).

Similarly, the following contrasts support the proposal that *qad* occupies the head Fin position:

(38)

(a)   qad y-ajuud-u   al-baɣiil-u   yawman
        may 3-contribute-INDIC   the-stingy-NOM   one day

(b)   yawman   qad y-ajuud-u   al-baɣiil-u
        one day   may 3-contribute-INDIC   the-stingy-NOM

(c)   ʔinna al-baɣiil-a   qad y-ajuud-u   yawman
        the-stingy-ACC   may 3-contribute-INDIC   one day

(d)   *qad yawman   y-ajuud-u   al-baɣiil-u
        may one day 3-contribute-INDIC the-stingy-NOM

(e)   *qad   al-baɣiil-u   y-ajuud-u   yawman
        may   the-stingy-NOM   3-contribute-INDIC one day

The underlined elements have been topicalized and thereby end up positioned after a phonetically null C (the case of yawman in example b), and after *ʔinna* (the case of al-baɣiil-a in example c), resulting in grammatical sentences. In contrast, the topicalized elements are positioned after *qad*, with the result that the sentences are ungrammatical in (d-e). This is consistent with the proposal that *ʔinna* occupies the Force position, and that the underlined Topics are merged in the specifier of the Topic projection in the Split-CP analysis as displayed in structures (15, 21 and 28). The contrasts noted also provide evidence in support of treating *qad* as being merged in the head Fin position.

4.2 Subjunctives Clauses: Evidence for FinP
Additional empirical evidence for positing FinP in the clause structure of Standard Arabic comes from subjunctive or irrealis clauses. Such clauses are marked by the element *ʔan* (boldfaced and glossed as *to*) in the following examples:

(39)

(a)   ʔuriidu **ʔan**   y-ataʕallam-a   l-walad-u   l-sibahat-a
        I-want**to**   3IMPERF-learn-SUBJ   the-boy-NOM   the-swimming-ACC
        'I want for the boy to learn swimming.'

(b)   ʔuriidu l-sibahahat-a   **ʔan**   y-ataʕallam-a-ha   l-walad-u
        I-want the-swimming-ACC**to**   3IMPERF-learn-SUBJ-it   the-boy-NOM
        '*I want, swimming, for the boy to learn it.'

(c)   ʔinna l-sibahat-a   ʔuriidu **ʔan**   y-ataʕallam-a-ha   l-walad-u
        Force the-swimming-ACCI-want   **to**   3IMPERF-learn-SUBJ-it   the-boy-
        NOM
        'Swimming, I want the boy to learn it.'

(d)   *ʔuriidu **ʔan** l-sibahat-a   y-ataʕallam-a-ha   l-walad-u
        I-want **to**   the-swimming-ACC   3IMPERF-learn-SUBJ-it   the-boy-NOM
        '*I want to, swimming, the boy learn it.'

The data supports analyzing *ʔan* in infintives as serving the function of a non-finite Fin head, and also support analyzing the finite *ʔinna* as a Force head. The underlined DP <u>l-sibahat-a</u> originates as the complement of the verb, whereas it is merged as a Topic after the matrix verb *ʔuriidu* in (b), and after *ʔinna* in (c). In other words, it can be positioned between the matrix verb and its complement, between *ʔinna* and its complement, but not between the infinitival *ʔan* and its TP complement, as (d) shows. In light of Rizzi's (1997) Split-CP system, the conclusion to be drawn is that *ʔinna* is a Force head since it precedes the Topic, *ʔan* is a Fin head since it follows the Topic, and Topics are merged between Force and Fin.

4.3 Arabic ʔan and Italian de

The Arabic infinitival *ʔan* occupying Fin is similar to *di* in Italian discussed in Rizzi (1997; 2001: 288) in that a Topic cannot follow it. In this regard, Rizzi argues that the infinitival *di* is found in Fin, since it follows the topic, as in (40), from Rizzi:

(40)   Credo, il tuo libro, di apprezzarlo molto
        believe the your book for appreciate-it much

Another possibility also exists which is the merger of the infinitival markers *ʔan* and *di* in T instead of Fin. However, the possibility of merging the negative element *laa* 'not' (italicized in the example below) between *ʔan* and the verb argues against this possibility:

ʔuriidu l-sibaḥahat-a   **ʔan** *laa* y-ataʕallam-a-ha   l-walad-u
I-want the-swimming-ACC **to** *not* 3IMPERF-learn-SUBJ-it   the-boy-NOM
'*I want, swimming, for the boy not to learn it.'

It should be noted that Rizzi (2001: 287) allows for having a single conflated head in CP. He states "[w]e may think of Force and Finiteness as two distinct heads closing off the complementizer system upward and downward respectively (and perhaps coalescing into a single head in the simple cases)".

According to Rizzi, the finite complementizer *che* in Italian occupies the Force position but the infinitival *di* occupies Fin position. Rizzi provides evidence for this proposal from topicalization and left dislocation. The data show that *che* precedes the Topic, as in (42a), whereas *di* follows the Topic, as in (42b), both from Rizzi (1997: 288):

(42)
a.   Credo che il tuo libro, loro lo apprezzerebbero molto
       believe that the your book they it appreciate much
        `I believe that they would appreciate your book a lot'.
b.   Credo, il tuo libro, di apprezzarlo molto
       believe the your book for appreciate-it much
        `I believe to appreciate your book a lot'.

As we saw above, the Arabic infinitival complementizer *ʔan* in (39) is similar to Italian infinitival complementizer *di* in (42b) in that a topic cannot follow it. It also parallels *di* in that a topic can also precede it, as shown above.

5. Focus Phrases (FocP)

Rizzi and Haegeman also argue that focused phrases occupy the specifier position of the FocP layer. The following sentence contains both a topicalized DP *l-ttulaab-a* and a focused DP *maaða*:

(43)   ʔinna l-ttulaab-a   maaða y-aktib-uu-na
         C the-students-ACCwhat   3-write-MP-IND(icative)

The preposed DP *maaða* is an interrogative focused phrase – [+wh] phrase, and occurs to the right of (following) the topicalized phrase, suggesting that it occupies a specifier position within the FocP domain. It cannot occur to the left of Top as shown:

(44)
a.   *ʔinna maaða l-ttulaab-a   y-aktib-uu-na
         C   what   the-students-ACC   3-write-MP-IND(icative)
b.   *maaða l-ttulaab-a   y-aktib-uu-na
         What   the-students-ACC   3-write-MP-IND(icative)

Topics and focused phrases seem to come between Force and Fin, providing evidence for splitting CP into independent projections. Structurally, the sentence splits into four separate projections, with ForceP at the top, FinP at the bottom and TopP and FocP "sandwiched" between the two nodes, as shown in simplified bracketed form in (45):

(45)   [ForceP [Force ʔinna [TopP l-ttulaab-a [Top ø [FocP maaða [Foc ø[FinP ya-ktib-uu-na]]]]]]

It seems plausible to conclude that the wh-expression *maaða* moves to the specifier position of FocP. In this connection, Rizzi (1997: 299) maintains that a interrogative constituent "ends up in Spec of Foc in main questions." If *l-ttulaab-a* were in spec-FocP, the fact that it precedes the interrogative expression in (43) would be unaccounted for. Given Rizzi's proposal that ForceP is the topmost projection, the unacceptable positioning of a focused expression or topicalized expression above ForceP is predicted:

(46)
a.   *maaða ʔinna   l-ttulaab-a   y-aktib-uu-na
         What C   the-students-ACC   3-write-MP-IND(icative)
b.   *l-ttulaab-u   maaða ʔinna y-aktib-uu-na
         the-students-NOM what   C   3-write-MP-IND(icative)
c.   *l-ttulaab-u   ʔinna maaða y-aktib-uu-na

the-students-NOM C   what 3-write-MP-IND(icative)

5.1 Assertor la is a Foc head

There is also another relevant aspect of the Focus/Fin dimension that should be considered. This is illustrated in sample sentence (47):

(47)   ʔinna kitaab-a-ka   la-ʔaqraʔa-an-hu
        C   book-acc-your Foc-read-Assert-it
        'Your book, I will certainly read it.'

Two elements appear in (47) - both *ʔinna* and *la* are assertive and emphatic, adding increased confirmatory interpretation of the event at the interface. As *ʔinna* is a force marker, it sits at the beginning and, therefore, the whole clause falls within its 'sphere of influence' in terms of structure and discourse functions. As a consequence, the clause is typed as declarative and a Top head with an edge feature is forced to have a specifier. This in turns allows the merger of the DP *kitaab-a-ka* 'your book' in its Spec and the merged DP to be interpreted as the Topic of 'higher predication' as noted earlier (cf. sections 2.3, 2.5) in association with the resumptive pronoun *–hu*.

Turning to the second element *la*, its use and function is to add confirmation to the claim and focus on the event expressed in the sample sentence. For instance, to emphasize a contradiction of a statement, *la* is used to stress the verb.[ix]

Given its role and function in the clause, it is reasonable to suppose that *la* is a Foc head. Granting that this is correct, the above sentence (47) would be assigned the structure in (48), omitting internal structure of FinP for ease of exposition:

(48)
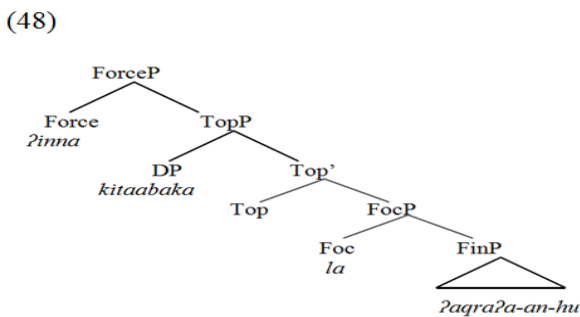
Further discussion is required to explain that *la* can occupy Foc position in the structure but ends up prefixed onto the verb to form the verbal complex *la-ʔaqraʔa-an-hu*. The conventional answer is that the verb moves out of its normal position first to Fin (not shown in the structure to save space), and finally to Foc by force of the Head Movement operation

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[ix] An example of the same emphasis in English is the use of the auxiliary , as in the following example (emphasis in bold):
Speaker A: "I don't believe he works very hard."
Speaker B: "Yes, he **does** work hard."
In this context, **does** is pronounced with emphasis in spoken English, similarly to *la* before the verb in Arabic.

(see 4.1). This movement adjoins the verb to the right of Foc, resulting in *la* being prefixed in the composite unit thus amalgamated.

5.2 La Foc is a strong head

The question is why in V-to-v-to-Fin-to-Foc process should the verb move to Foc in assertive declarative clauses with a focus interpretation? An answer is available in terms of strength (Chomsky 1995), whereby Foc is a strong head in assertive declarative clauses, as such attracting the verb *ʔaqraʔa-an-hu* to move in the manner shown by the arrow below:

(49)
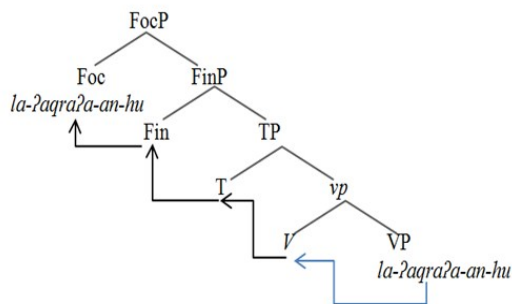
It can also be said that the affixal nature of the assertorial Foc triggers the V to Foc movement to provide it with a verbal host.

While Foc in the above example does not project a specifier, it necessarily projects one in the example below:

(50)   ʔinna kitaab-a-ka   la-Aliy-u-n   yaqraʔa-anna-hu
         C   book-acc-your Foc- Ali-NOM-Nunation read-Assert-it
         'Your book, Ali will certainly read it.'

Being a focused phrase, the DP *Aliy-u-n* occupies the Spec position within FocP, just as the topicalized phrase *kitaab-a-ka* occupies the Spec position within TopP in the Split CP system. The interpretive effects at the interface of the two phrases are of discourse Topic and discourse Focus respectively, as discussed and exemplified in the preceding sections.

An interesting aspect of the sample sentences deserves discussion. As is apparent from the surface order of the sentence in (50), the element *la* is realized as a prefix on the focused DP *Aliy-u-n* forming the complex *la-Aliy-u-n*. However, in terms of structure the relevant DP is positioned in the specifier at the front, i.e., left of Foc when in fact it is expected to follow (appear to the right of) the Foc *la* in surface structure. How can this discrepancy be resolved? Foc movement to Top, being an instance of the usual head-to-head operation, provides the answer, whereby Foc ends up positioned in front of the DP, as expected. If so, the sentence in (50) involves the following: Top (a topicalized DP); Foc; a focused DP; and Foc-to-Top movement. As a consequence, the sentence is assigned the structure exemplified below, with movement represented by the dotted arrow:

(51)

```
              TopP
             /    \
      alkitab-a    Top'
                  /    \
               Top      FocP
                ∧      /    \
               Aliy-u-n     Foc'
                           /    \
                         Foc     TP
```
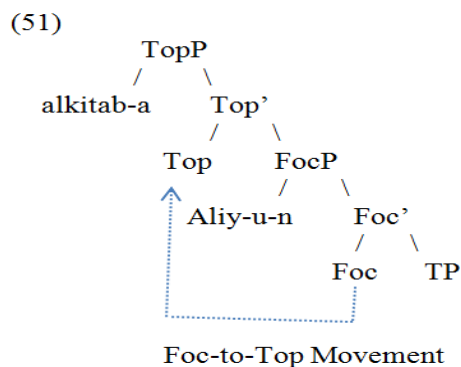
Foc-to-Top Movement

After being first merged in the head Foc position, *la* moves into the head Top position in TopP, thereby ending up in front of *Aly-u-n*. The question to ask at this point is why *la* should move from Foc to Top. The trigger of this movement is presumably found in the assertorial nature of *la*. Having an emphatic, assertive property and function, *la* modifies the entire set of constituents in the clause. In this way, Top is an eligible position for the expression of this assertive intent and meaning because it is in the higher position in the structure. The meaning is paraphrasable as 'I assert the truth of the proposition expressed in the sentence that …'

6. Conclusion

The chief aim of this work has been to consider a number of distinctive and prevalent constructions in SA in light of the insights that the Split-CP Hypothesis provides. Rizzi's (1997) structure provides considerable insight into the nature of SA clausal structure. Throughout, the focus has been on the view that splitting the CP domain into a ForceP, TopicP, and FinP is essential for the proper characterization of the range of constructions considered in this paper. By the Topic-Criterion and the Focus-Criterion (Rizzi 1997), topicalized/left-dislocated and focused elements are forced to merge in Spec-Top and Spec-Foc, respectively to receive topic and focus interpretation at the interface. Given that such distinct semantic and discourse functions are assumed by the categories of the left periphery in SA clauses, it is reasonable to posit more varied positions, as articulated in the Split-C system.

About author
Abdulkhaliq Alazzawie holds a PhD in Linguistics from Simon Fraser University in Canada. He is currently teaching at the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Nizwa, Sultanate of Oman. His publications include "Against Multiple Agreement", "Yamawwad: A Discourse and Pragmatic Marker in Iraqi Arabic" and "An Agree-based Account of Standard Arabic Nominal Clauses".

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