Grammaticalisation of ʔelħi:n in Haili Arabic—From Propositional Item to Discourse Particle: Split CP Investigation

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Abstract—This paper explores the linguistic properties of a discourse variant of the temporal adverb ʔelħi:n, used in Haili Dialect of Najdi Arabic (HA). Maintaining the characteristic of co-occurring clause-initially, and examining lexical/discoursal articulated structures, ʔelħi:n has developed a conventionalized discourse use, turning its morphology into a discourse particle that expresses a degree of speaker’s attitude. ʔelħi:n has undergone a process of grammaticalisation, with morphosyntactic consequence: changing its phrasal status to a head one. Evidence supporting this direction derives from intervention effects (Rizzi, 2006). ʔelħi:n inhabits movement of head-items in syntax. The immediate consequence of this morphosyntactic change has direct impact on the syntax of ʔelħi:n: occurring clause-initially and its phonology: being unable to bear high tone, unlike its temporal adverb counterpart. Implementing cartographic mechanisms, Rizzi’s (1997) Split CP System, and holding to observations that inherently focused material wh-phrase left ‘why’ merges in a position c-commanded by ʔelħi:n, it is established that the discourse instance of ʔelħi:n first merges at a discourse head, instantiating a discourse projection, PrtP, whence it semantically wide-scoops the propositional-TP. Constituents preceding ʔelħi:n are then argued to move and remerge at some Spec of a discourse phrase, C-TopP (Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007). Mapping the CP-layer of HA, the PrtP headed by ʔelħi:n maintains a rigid order in syntax with respect to CP-items, which makes a possible, initial mapping to the left periphery of HA, calling for scrutiny of more structure.

Index Terms—grammaticalisation, split CP, discourse particle, temporality, movement

I. INTRODUCTION

The syntax and semantics of the lexical item representing the temporal interpretation ‘at the moment’, the cross-linguistic variant of the English instance of now, having a discourse semantic import in some contexts, has been intensively investigated, implementing a range of theoretical and formal approaches (Aijmer, 2002; Brinton, 1996). Investigating the semantics of now, in particular, corpus of collocations where now occurs, Bolinger (1989) argues that now in some environments functions as a discourse marker formatted for change of topic in the ongoing discourse. Stenström (1990) establishes that now that bears a high tone is evidence that it functions as a temporal adverb, while the instance of now without a high tone functions as a discourse particle. Building on the consensus that high tone is a criterion to distinguish the use of now, Hirschberg & Litman (1993) investigate the use of now using syntactic and prosodic feature-based strategies as a criterion to draw a distinction between the temporal function and the discourse function of now. One of the facts their research raises is that discourse now maintains low tone that the temporal now. Another fact they raise is that, in most, but not all cases, there is a correlation between occurring clause-initially and functioning as a discourse particle. From this, then, it follows that the discourse now co-occurs with items expressing past-tense adverbs like then (Schiffrin, 1987; Aijmer, 2002). Further, Fraser (1990, p. 388) distinguishes the use of now in (1) below from other uses, where he argues that being separated by a phonological pause, now in (1) is a separate tone unit, hence a prosodic account to the argument that now in (1) is a discourse particle, in particular, Focus marker.

(1) John left. Now, Mary was really frightened.

Aijmer (2002) provides further the data in (2), in which now in Speaker B’s utterance contains discourse now, functioning as a continuation or elaboration of what has just been said about John in Speaker A’s utterance.

(2) Speaker A. That man speaks extremely good English.

Speaker B. Now he comes from a village in Mongolia.

Recent research on now has focused on the grammaticalised status of now, arguing that now has developed a discourse functional rather than a temporal interpretation. With respect to this, Aijmer (2002), following Bolinger (1989), further maintains that now in English has grammaticalised, having a multifunctionality property, in which it has developed a discourse function, in particular, a topic change device. Jarrah et al. (2020, p.6), using a huge range of corpus data, establish that the Jordanian variant of now, ʔilʔac:n functioning as a deictic temporal adverb, has developed a discourse function, facilitating the speaker-hearer communication, which can bear the meaning of phrases like at this point/given this.
This property of now seems to be cross-linguistic. For instance, in addition to its function as a temporal adverbial, the French variant maintenant functions as a discourse marker that creates a contrast between a previous and a current content of an utterance (Bertin, 2001). Hebrew also manifests this discourse property of now. Consider the extract in (3) below, from Gonen et al. (2015, p.73).

(3) Speaker A: Aval anaxnu asinu et ze beyaxad
   ‘But we did it together.’
   Ve-hitya atsnu etsel orex din ma osim shlav
   ‘And we consulted with a lawyer what to do at each stage.’
   Kdey sheshu lo ʔafsid
   ‘So that he wouldn’t lose.’

Speaker B: ken
   ‘yes.’

Speaker A: kdey sheyitxalek be’emet xetsi
   ‘so that it would really be split 50-50.’
   Axshav gam asur haya lanu lehera’ot beyaxad
   ‘Now we weren’t allowed to be seen together either.’
   Ki hi yaxla lehagid hu bogged bi
   ‘because she could say he’s cheating on me.’
   Vegam hu lo haya mekabel klum
   ‘and also, he wouldn’t get anything

Gonen et al. (2015) investigate the Hebrew now variant, axshav, maintaining that it occurs clause-initially in Speaker A’s second utterance in (3), functions as discourse marker which helps a discourse shifting device. This, they argue, is associated with two observations; axshav is deaccented at the phonological interface and is used at the beginning of a discourse fragment in syntax, where the speaker wants to introduce a new topic to the ongoing conversation.

Given this background on the discourse-related now, with special focus on (i) the grammaticalisation status of the discourse-related now and (ii) the tendency of the discourse-related now to occur clause-initially and (iii) the phonological property of discourse-related now not bearing high tone, i.e., discourse-related now is deaccented, the current research will be an investigation to the syntactic item now ʔelħi:n, used in Hali Arabic, spoken in Saudi Arabia. Using generative cartographic assumptions, the current paper will take up the issues stated in (i), (ii) and (iii) into consideration, linking the discourse function of discourse now, to its syntactic position and its morphological and morphosyntactic statuses, with an account to its possible grammaticalisation status and discourse interpretation.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 touches upon the syntactic and interpretive properties of ʔelħi:n, including its temporal and discoursal marking as well as the syntactic positions it occupies. Section 3 sets an investigation to the morphosyntax and syntax of the discourse instance of ʔelħi:n, showing that the discourse instance of ʔelħi:n is an output of grammaticalisation of temporal instance counterpart, highlighting on a set of consequences like developing a head status in syntax, restricting to clause-initial positions and becoming unable to bear high tone. Section 4 provides a cartographic analysis, showing that it merges in a fixed position in a CP-layer, heading PrtP in syntax, with a discourse feature, whence it scopes over the TP it c-command. Section 5 concludes the paper.

II. SEMANTIC DISTRIBUTION OF ʔELĦI:N: TEMPORAL AND DISCURSAL INTERPRETATIONS

Before taking up the issue highlighted above, the relevant data shall be displayed, which the analyses ahead will address, including some basic assumptions related to marked/unmarked word order in HA, as this will be crucial in terms of sentential and discoursal statuses of the sentences under analysis. To start with, used in its lexical meaning, the linguistic item ʔelħi:n ‘now’ is categorized as a Temporal adverb, expressing present time, with Temporal value ‘at the moment’, as in (4) below.

(4) ʔelħi:n qaʕid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʕ lhaluh
    now Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass alone
    ‘Firas is watering the grass alone at the moment.’

The proposition expressed by (4), presenting the state of affairs that Firas is watering the grass at the utterance time, is discourse-neutral, not being associated to any discourse value, or extra-sentential expression, hence, VSO pattern (Ouhalla, 1994, 1997, 2003, 2016; Shlonsky, 2000’ Ouhalla & Shlonsky, 2002; Jarrah 2017; Jarrah & Abusalim 2021). The subject DP, therefore, being discourse bound, not bearing any information structural value like Focus or Topic, remains at its first merge position, Spec vP, while the lexical verb moves to T due to rich agreement (Ouhalla, 1994, 1997). I therefore represent the scenario in (4) in the schemata in (5) below, in which v, which incorporates V, which in turn contains the lexical verb j-esqi, moves and re-merges at T (Ouhalla, 1994, 1997), while the Asp-marker qaʕid first merges at T’ (Chomsky, 1999, 2000, 2001).

(5) [CP TP ʔelħi:n [TP T qaʕid v+V j-esqi [VP Firas [VP ʔez-zerʕ]]]]
    AdvP Asp 3SG.M-go.PRS Firas DEF-grass
    ‘Firas is watering the grass at the moment.’
At first glance, being T-related, the syntactic position the adverb ʔelħiːn (what we henceforth term T-ʔelħiːn) fills is expected by theory, Spec TP, where tense is expressed, which is also dedicated in syntax for T-related items like Temporal adverbs (and other locative PPs, triggered to move to Spec TP for reasons like [EPP]). Consider the occurrence of ʔelħiːn in the data in (6).

(6) a. ʔelħiːn tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
PRT ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
w hu tˤanʃ-uk qebul ʔems
while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
‘You asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before (I am upset that you did so).’

b. *ʔelħiːn tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
now ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
w hu tˤanʃ-uk qebul ʔems
while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
Intended meaning: ‘You now asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before.’

Unlike the scenario of (4), the data in (6) demonstrate that the occurrence of the clause-initial ʔelħiːn has a discourse function, rather than temporality marking, where evidence is derived from the observation that in (6b) ʔelħiːn doesn’t correlate with the propositional content of (6) above, the past-T-adveials ʔems ‘yesterday’ and qebul ʔems ‘before yesterday’.

Consider now (4), repeated below as (7) with the same syntax, in which ʔelħiːn occurs clause-initially, but with entirely different semantic distribution and interpretation.

(7) ʔelħiːn qaʔid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʃ ʔalahu
PRT Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass alone
‘Firas is watering the grass alone at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

The interpretive, semantic distribution ʔelħiːn adds to the proposition in (7) is no longer temporal, but discourse related, i.e., encoding a certain degree of surprise at something that the speaker doesn’t like, in the sense of Cuenca (2013), which is widely referred to in the literature of discourse particles as speaker negative attitude towards the proposition (Coniglio 2008). Under this view, in par with the propositional content of (6) above, the clause in (8) below is therefore a felicitous continuation of the speaker’s discourse in (7), but infelicitous of the one in (4).

(8) w ʔint qil-t rah t-saʔid-uh
PRT 2SG.M say.PST.2SG.M FUT 2SG.M-help.PRS-3SG.M
‘While you said you would help him (I am upset that you haven’t helped him).’

The interpretive property of ʔelħiːn in (7), then, is discourse-related (what we henceforth term D-ʔelħiːn). This discoursal status of ʔelħiːn in (7) and also in (6) is further captured by the fact that the clause has a speaker negative attitude discourse particle wa, which functions as a discourse-organizer, activated in the second conjunct (continuation) of the clause.

What is more, the syntax of D-ʔelħiːn is constrained in that it can only occur clause-initially. With respect to this, consider the clauses in (9), in which the D-ʔelħiːn co-occurs with the variant expressing temporality (T-ʔelħiːn, henceforth).

(9) a. ʔelħiːn (ʔelħiːn) qaʔid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʃ
PRT now Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
‘Firas is watering the grass at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

b. ʔelħiːn ʔelħiːn (qaʔid) j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʃ
PRT now Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
‘Firas is watering the grass at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

c. *ELHII:NI ʔelħiːn qaʔid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʃ
PRT now Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
‘Firas is watering the grass at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

d. *ʔelħiːn ʔelħiːn qaʔid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʃ
now PRT Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
Intended meaning: ‘Firas is watering the grass at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

e. ELHII:NI ʔelħiːn qaʔid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʃ
now PRT Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
‘It is AT THE MOMENT that Firas is watering the grass (I am upset he is doing so).’

Notice in passing that progressiveness is marked by the Asp-marker qaʔid can be achieved by the D-ʔelħiːn (9a,b), that is, one can do Aspectuality. As we can see, D-ʔelħiːn is allowed only clause-initially (9a,b), as the ungrammaticality in (9d) confirms. This restriction, however, can be remedied if and only if one phonological-semantic condition is met: that the item that precedes the D-ʔelħiːn be contrastively stressed (9e). Notice also that D-ʔelħiːn cannot be stressed by all means (9d). Given these observations and facts, including the fixed positions the D-ʔelħiːn and T-ʔelħiːn maintain in syntax, the following section will explore such phenomena, addressing the pieces of inquiry raised earlier, recapitulated here: (i) the grammaticalisation status of the discourse-related now; (ii) the tendency of discourse discourse-related now
to occur clause-initially and (iii) the phonological property of discourse-related now not bearing high tone PF-interface, (Chomsky, 2000, 2001). This will require focusing on morphological-syntactic statuses of D- jelhi:n, linking that to the interface systems’ conditions and constraints in the syntax of D- jelhi:n. I examine the morphological and morphosyntactic distribution of D- jelhi:n with respect to the clause and the clause internal constituents.

III. MORPHOSYNTAX AND SYNTAX OF D-JELHI:N

A. Morphosyntax: Case of Grammaticalisation of D-Jelhi:n

In pre-generative approaches to investigating the syntax discourse particles, contributions had always confronted the observation that many discourse particles had counterpart syntactic categories, from which they would have developed historically and with which they co-occur but with different syntactic properties and semantic values, depending on the content of the proportional content of the associate clause (Coniglio & Zegrean, 2010; Biberauer & Sheehan, 2011; Biberauer et al., 2014; Hack, 2014; Bayer & Struckmeier, 2017). This had always resulted in its being difficult to determine a unified categorial status of such items.

As a consequence of this, it was stipulated that discourse particles fit into other syntactic categories like adverbs (Cardinaletti, 2011). For instance, they would maintain fixed rigid order in syntax like adverbs (Büring & Hartmann, 2001). In generative enterprise, with considerations of movement as a fundamental process of natural language, and with more focus on the functionality property of discourse particles, rather than lexicality, discourse particles, in comparison with their adverbial counterparts, seemed to display sign of intervention effects when item with head status move across them in syntax (Biberauer & Sheehan, 2011; Biberauer et al., 2014; Hack, 2014; Bayer & Struckmeier, 2017; Trotzke & Mayol, 2021). Consider the data below, from Bayer & Obenauer (2011, p. 1-3).

(10) a. Der MASC  ist vielleicht SÜSS.
   ‘This one (e.g. coffee) is perhaps sweet.’
   b. Vielleicht ist der SÜSS.
   ‘Perhaps, this one is sweet.’
   c. DER ist vielleicht süß!
   ‘This one (e.g. a cute little dog) is sweet’
   d. Vielleicht ist DER süß!
   ‘My God, how sweet it is!’
   Intended meaning: ‘My God, how sweet it is!’

While it moves crossing the finite verb ist to the left periphery when it is categorized as an adverb (10b), Vielleicht is frozen in place when it functions as a discourse particle (10d). Such phenomenon has since arisen the assumption that discourse particles don’t move; they are immobile in syntax (Struckmeier, 2014; Bayer & Trotzke, 2015; Jarrah & Alshamari, 2017; Alshamari, 2017a, b; Bayer & Struckmeier, 2017). Further, as an implication to the theory of movement and categorization, captured by the observation that typical adverbs move but discourse markers counterparts don’t, it was then argued on empirical groundings that adverbs and their derived discourse particles are entirely immobile. Empirical evidence like intervention sensitivity in (10), then, is attributed to another syntactic consequence of the development the discourse particles have undergone; i.e. being sensitive to head movement. This fact follows, on empirical groundings, if discourse markers have a morphosyntactic head status (Coniglio, 2008; Bayer & Obenauer, 2011; Bayern, 2012; Struckmeier, 2014; Bayer & Trotzke, 2015; Alshamari, 2017a,b; Jarrah, 2019; Holmberg et al., 2019).

These facts go in line with current research on discourse particles, the assumption that multifunctionality of an item, including discourse function, is sign of a gramaticalised status of this item (Fraser, 1996). Current approach to research on discourse particles has argued that discourse particles are output of grammaticalisation, an assumption which has resulted in the widely held assumption that grammaticalisation is a criterion to distinguish discourse particles from other lexical counterparts, like the usual suspect, adverbs (Traugott, 1995; van Baar, 1996; Aijmer, 2002; Biberauer et al., 2014; Zimmermann, 2011; Biberauer & Sheehan, 2011; Biberauer et al., 2014; Hack, 2014; Bayer & Struckmeier, 2017). The set of data below is from Hack (2014, p.55-57), investigating the semantic-change that has occurred to the Italian lexical item po, functioning as an adverb (11a), after which it has grammaticalised into a Tense marker (1b), and later as a wh-question marker (1c).

(11) a. Amor se fesh pa na berta
   Amor himself make.3SG PA a trick
   ‘Then, Amor plays a trick on us.’
   b. Al vegn PA he come.3SG PA
   ‘He will come.’
   c. Can compr-i *(pa) n liber?
   when buy.3pl-SCL PA a book
‘When are they going to buy a book?’

With grammaticalisation being taken up as a characteristic of discourse particles, the formal characterization of discourse particles is translated into the fact that discourse particles show decrease in lexical meaning and increase in grammatical meaning (Hopper & Traugott, 2003). As an implication to the semantics-syntax interface of discourse particles, current generative practice on discourse particles argues that a lexical element that undergoes a grammaticalisation process turning into a discourse particle maintains into a syntactic head, with discourse value (Haegeman, 1993; Roberts & Roussou, 1999; Congilio & Zegrean, 2010; Hack, 2014; Bayer & Trotzke, 2015; Bayer & Struckmeier, 2017; Biberauer et al., 2014). Extending this logic to D-ʔelħi:n, the generalization we can now formulate is that D-ʔelħi:n is a grammaticalised form of the T-ʔelħi:n, the D-ʔelħi:n is a discourse particle that doesn’t move in syntax, being frozen in place where it first merges and which has a discourse feature expressing the structural information UPSET. Having proposed that D-ʔelħi:n is characterised as a grammaticalised discourse particle, it is now plausible to implement Rizzi’s (2006) intervention effects to account for the headedness property of the D-ʔelħi:n. I elaborate on this issue in the next sub-section.

B. The Syntax of D-ʔelħi:n: Headedness Status

Recall in section 2, in (9e) repeated below as (12), that no items, be it lexical or functional, can precede the D-ʔelħi:n unless it carries contrastive stress and is introduced by a discourse marker zad, functioning as contrastive topic, in the sense of Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007).1

(12) ʔELĦI:N zad ʔelħi:n qaʕid j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʕ
now CT PRT Asp 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
‘It is AT THE MOMENT that Firas is watering the grass (I am upset he is doing so).’

In par with the adverb movement in (12), consider the following data, involving movement of the clause internal arguments.

(13) a. FIRAS zad ʔelħi:n ʔelħi:n qaʕid j-esqi ʔez-zerʕ
FIRAS CT PRT now Asp 3SG.M-water DEF-grass
‘FIRAS is watering the grass at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

b. ʔEŻ-ZERʕ zad ʔelħi:n ʔelħi:n qaʕid j-esqi-h Firas
DEF-GRASS CT PRT now Asp 3SG.M-water-3SG.M Firas
‘THE GRASS, Firas is watering it at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

c. ʔQAʕID zad ʔelħi:n ʔelħi:n j-esqi Firas ʔez-zerʕ
Asp CT PRT now 3SG.M-water Firas DEF-grass
Intended meaning: ‘AT THE MOMENT, Firas is watering the grass (I am upset that he is doing so).’

d. ʔJ-EʕSQI zad ʔelħi:n ʔelħi:n qaʕid Firas ʔez-zerʕ
3SG.M-water CT now Asp Firas DEF-grass
Intended meaning: ‘It is WATERING THE GRASS that Firas is doing at the moment (I am upset that he is doing so).’

Deduced from the scenario in (12) and (13) is the fact that the items that move across to the left periphery, crossing D-ʔelħi:n to Spec C-TopP- the T-adverb (12), the subject DP (13a) and the object DP (13b), have phrasal status. From this it follows that those head items, the aspectual marker (13c) and the lexical verb (13d) cannot. This would follow from the fact that D-ʔelħi:n is head, causing intervention effects to movement of the items of the same morphosyntactic status, i.e., inhibiting movement of head items.

Having outlined all the characteristics of that emerge from its interaction of D-ʔelħi:n with the clause-internal constituents in the clause, and having determined the categorial status of it, it is now relevant to launch the analysis task, adopting Rizzi’s (1997) split CP system.

IV. CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: D-ʔELĦI:N INSANITIES PRTP IN THE CP DOMAIN

The morphological, morphosyntactic and syntactic characteristics of the D-ʔelħi:n that we have explicated so far are in line with a widespread assumption in the literature of grammaticalisation approach that items that develop functional properties are, hence, discourse particles, and turn syntactically into heads that instantiate discourse related projection and that the relevant grammaticalised item is the morphological realisation of the relevant discourse feature hosted by the discourse head. In the following subsection, the syntax of the D-ʔelħi:n is examine, by adding more articulated material in the clause, attempting to detect the exact position the D-ʔelħi:n occupies that could eventually map the left periphery of HA with respect to D-ʔelħi:n.

A. D-ʔelħi:n First Merges in a CP-Layer

1 Merger of zad in (12) and its lack in (9e), while in both cases the dislocated AdvP ʔELĦI:N is contrastively stressed, might be due to the assumption that in (9e) expresses Contrastive Focus rather than Contrastive Topic.

2 The contrastively stressed items are here argued to function as contrastive topic, which in syntax need to move to the left periphery, to the Spec position of C-TopP headed by the CT particle zad, following Alshamari and Holmberg (2019a, b).
Following Munaro and Poletto (2003, 2005), who propose that the grammaticalised discourse particle *po*, discussed in sub-section 3.1, instantiates a particle phrase, which they notate as PrtP, with the head Prt (cf. Bayer & Trotzke, 2015), represented in (14) below.

(14) PrtP
    |   |
    | XP Prt'
    |   |
    |   Prt  

This state of affairs has been widely entertained. Following this generative cartographic enterprise, for instance, Paul (2009) assumes a CP-position for the grammaticalised discourse particle *ou*, encoding speaker/hearer’s attitude ‘warning a reminder’. Given this line of logic and the assumptions formulated above, it is now argued that the D-*ʔelħi:n* heads a discourse phrase, PrtP, taking semantically wide scope over the clause it is merged in. Consider (6a), repeated below in (15) but containing a wh-phrase *le* ‘why’ splitting off D-*ʔelħi:n* from the propositional-TP.

(15) ʔelħi:n *le* tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
      why T ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
      w hu tˤanิf-uk qebul ʔems
      while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
‘Why did you asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before (I am upset you did so).’

It should be stressed here that D-*ʔelħi:n* maintains a fixed relative order with respect to *le*; *le* cannot precede D-*ʔelħi:n*. Though, if ever postulated, if this happened, the occurrence of D-*ʔelħi:n* could have had only temporal interpretation, hence, the occurrence of *ʔelħi:n* would have been an occurrence of T-*ʔelħi:n*, never an occurrence of D-*ʔelħi:n*, as the data in (16) below demonstrate (of course we cannot think of an instance of D-*ʔelħi:n* following *le*; since D-*ʔelħi:n* cannot bear high tone D-*ʔelħi:n*).

(16) a. *le* ʔelħi:n tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
    why T ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
    w hu tˤanิf-uk qebul ʔems
    while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
‘Why did you asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before (I am upset you did so).’

b. *le* ?ELĦI:N tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
   why T ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
   w hu tˤanิf-uk qebul ʔems
   while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
‘Why did you asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before (I am upset you did did).’

c. *le* ?ELĦI:N tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
   why PRT ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
   w hu tˤanิf-uk qebul ʔems
   while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
Intended meaning: ‘Why did you asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before (I am upset you did so).’

d. *le* ?ELĦI:N tˤalab-t-uh xidmah ʔems
   why PRT ask.PST-2SG.M-3SG.M help yesterday
   w hu tˤanิf-uk qebul ʔems
   while he ignore.PST.3SG.M-2SG.M before yesterday
Intended meaning: ‘Why did you asked him for help yesterday while he ignored you the day before (I am upset you did so).’

It is now time to lay the theoretical groundings of the facts raised in (16) in the sub-section below. Then, some implications and further consequences being imposed on the theory we follow here will be formulated.

B. Cartographic View on D-*ʔelħi:n*: Rizzi’s (1997) Split CP

Given that a wh-phrase is inherently focussed (Rizzi, 1997) and using *le* as a diagnostic in the spine of the structure to detect the syntax of D-*ʔelħi:n*, we can notice that the D-*ʔelħi:n* surfaces to the left, being c-commanded by, the wh-phrase *le*, which in Najdi Arabic moves to Spec FocP (Ouhalla, 1997; Alshamari, 2017a,b), an observation which provides empirical evidence that the D-*ʔelħi:n*, being split off the TP domain, is at a CP-layer. I represent this scenario in (17) below.
Further, given the facts and assumptions provided so far that D-ʔelḥi:n is derived from of and a grammaticalised discourse particle form of the T-ʔelḥi:n adverb counterpart, and following the consensus that discourse particles are immobile in syntax (Struckmeier, 2014; Struckmeier, 2017; Alshamari, 2017a,b), I follow Hack’s (2014) argument that discourse particles first merge at CP, not involving internal movement. Hence, D-ʔelḥi:n first merges at the PrtP in the CP domain of HA syntax. Given this logic, (9) above, which witnesses an occurrence of D-ʔelḥi:n c-commanding an occurrence of T-ʔelḥi:n, is represented in (18) below.

In par with this logic, the instances of the contrastively stressed constituents that precede D-ʔelḥi:n in (13), re-merging at the Spec position of the C-TopP head, morphologically realised as the discourse particle zad which is endowed with the contrastive topic feature [C-Top], in a Spec head configuration Ouhalla (1997) following Chomsky (1995). I represent the case of the subject DP in (13a) in (19) below.
This means that D-ʔelħi:n has its fixed position in syntax with respect to the other discourse items in the CP-layer, whence it semantically wide-scopes over the proposition expressed by the TP. TP-internal constituents that appear preceding D-ʔelħi:n, including the instance of T-ʔelħi:n, turn out to have moved for another pragmatic interpretation. As the scenario in (19) shows, there is good evidence to believe that the other pragmatic interpretation the moving items receive is C-topic, where evidence is provided by the fact that they bear contrastive stress and the fact that they seem to hold a spec head relation with the C-Topic particle zad (Alshamari & Holmberg, 2019a,b). In all the cases we have scrutinized, this means that if a constituent moves out of the TP that happens to have been wide-scoped by D-ʔelħi:n, this constituent, derivationally speaking, would have been narrow-scoped by D-ʔelħi:n as part of the propositional content expressed by the whole TP, before movement was initiated. Movement processes, intervention effects and immobility of the D-ʔelħi:n but lack of this immobility with respect to the T-ʔelħi:n all invoke inquiries about what governs the rules in universal grammar across language, in terms of movement theory and discourse particles literature. This of course triggers further investigations on hopefully new set of data.

V. CONCLUSION

In this paper, it is argued that the discourse particle D-ʔelħi:n is derived from the temporal counterpart adverb variant, having undergone a grammaticalisation process, with the consequence that it has developed a discourse value, encoding a certain speaker attitude. Examining the left periphery of HA and scrutinizing more articulated discourse-related structure, it is shown that D-ʔelħi:n merges clause-initially, has developed a head status, is not candidate for bearing high tone at the PF-interface, contra the characteristics of the its temporal adverb counterpart. Using the occurrence of a wh-phrase leif ‘why’, which occupies Spec FocP in Rizzi’s (1997) CP-system, it is shown that the D-ʔelħi:n first merges at a fixed CP-layer, heading a PrtP, and is immobile in its syntactic position, whence it semantically wide-scopes over the propositional-TP domain. From the syntactic behaviour of the TP-internal constituents that appear past D-ʔelħi:n, which all bear constative stress, it appears that these constituents move out of the TP domain after TP, containing the TP-internal constituents, has been widely-scoped by D-ʔelħi:n, the moment at which the TP-internal constituents move to get a contrastive topic interpretation, at the Spec of C-TopP headed by the C-Top marker zad.

REFERENCES

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