

## The Wh-ali-construction in Turaif Arabic

### 1. Introduction

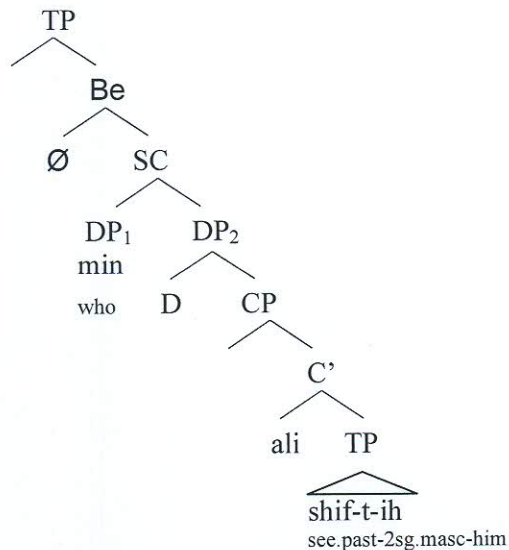
#### 1. 1. The wh-ali-construction in Turaif dialect

This paper investigates 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, DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>. DP<sub>1</sub> is the subject of the Small Clause and DP<sub>2</sub> is a predicate. The wh-item *min* 'who' in (2) is the subject and is not moved from within the DP<sub>2</sub> predicate. The predicate, DP<sub>2</sub>, contains a silent D with its Complement Phrase, CP, headed by the complementizer '*ali*'. This complementizer '*ali*' selects for a full Tense Phrase, 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.

The next subsection, 1. 2., pinpoints some syntactic facts about the dialect under discussion. Subsection 1. 3. discusses the complementizer system in Turaif dialect; here, 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. Here, 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-*ali*-construction follow from my analysis. Section five concludes the paper by outlining descriptive and theoretical conclusions and remaining puzzles.



## 1. 2. Introduction to Turaif dialect

The data being investigated here is all from Turaif Arabic spoken in northern Saudi Arabia. Some citizens of Kuwait, Bahrain, as well as Qatar also speak the dialect. Almost 5 million people speak Turaif Arabic. Although it is a dialect of Arabic, speakers of Turaif Arabic who have never been taught standard Arabic find it difficult to understand standard Arabic if they are exposed to it. The dialect has two common word orders, SVO and VSO.

(3) shaf-aw                      al-mdars-een                      aT-Taalib                      VSO  
see.past-3pl.masc. the-teacher-masc-pl the-student.masc.sg  
“The teachers saw the student.”

(4) al-mdars-een                      shaf-aw                      aT-Taalib                      SVO  
the-teacher-masc-pl see.past-3pl.masc. the-student.masc.sg  
“The teachers saw the student.”

In the above two sentences, the subject *al-mdarseen* ‘the teachers’ can appear before or after the verb without any change in the interpretation as the English translation shows. Informally, if everything in (3) and (4) is produced in the same pitch, they are both neutral informative statements; nothing is being focused or topicalized. However, the SVO order can also be used when focusing or topicalizing elements. Thus, (4) above can also be pronounced with extra high pitch on *al-mdarseen* ‘the teachers’:

(5) AL-MDARS-EEN shaf-aw                      aT-Taalib                      SVO  
the-teacher-masc-pl see.past-3pl.masc. l the-student.masc.sg  
“The teachers, they saw the student.”

In SVO order, (5), in addition to the high pitch, there is a short pause after the subject.

Turaif Arabic has full agreement between the subject and the verb whether the subject appears pre-verbally or post-verbally. This is something not found in Standard Arabic, where the verb fully agrees with the subject *only* when the subject precedes the verb.

Standard Arabic:

- (6) raʔ-a/\*u                      al-mudars-uun              aT-Taalib  
       see.past-3sg.masc/3pl.masc the-teaher-mascu.pl the-student.masc.sg  
       “The teachers saw the student.”
- (7) al-mudars-uun              raʔ-u/\*a                      aT-Taalib  
       the-teaher-mascu.pl see.past-3pl.masc/3sg.masc the-student.masc.sg  
       “The teachers saw the student.”

Turaif Arabic:

- (8) shaf-\*(aw)              al-mdars-een              aT-Taalib  
       see.past-3pl.masc. the-teacher-masc-pl the-student.masc.sg  
       “The teachers saw the student.”
- (9) al-mdars-een              shaf-\*(aw)              aT-Taalib  
       the-teacher-masc-pl see.past-3pl.masc. the-student.masc.sg  
       “The teachers saw the student.”

We see that in (6) where the plural subject follows the verb, the verb obligatorily bears the 3sg.masc-agreement clitic in the form of *-a*. Thus, the 3pl.masc-agreement clitic *-u* is never used in this case; whereas when the subject precedes the verb, (7), the verb bears the 3pl.masc-agreement clitic in the form of *-u* and that the clitic 3sg.masc *-a* is not used. In other words, in Standard Arabic, there is partial agreement between the subject and the verb in the VSO order and full agreement between the subject and the verb in the case of SVO order. (8) and (9) give an idea of the agreement issue in Standard Arabic and the way it differs from Turaif Arabic.

Since my claim is that the *wh-ali*-construction is formed out of verb-less sentences and that it contains a free relative clause with ‘*ali*’ functioning as a complementizer, I need to



investigate the complementizer system, relative clauses and verb-less sentences. The following subsection addresses the complementizer system. Relative clauses and verb-less sentences are addressed in sections 2 and 3 respectively.

### 1. 3. The Complementizer System

In this subsection, I introduce the complementizer system in Turaif Arabic. The main motivation behind this section is to provide evidence for considering the element '*ali*' as a complementizer. First, consider simple embedded clauses:

- (10) ?ataqid      [\*(in) jibriil qara                      ak-ktaab]  
       think.pres.1sg. C J.      read.past.3sg.mas the-book.masc.sg  
       "I think that Jibriil read the book."
- (11) farhan [\*(li?an) jibriil qara                      ak-ktaab]  
       happy      C      J.      read.past.3sg.mas the-book.masc.sg  
       "I am happy that Jibriil read the book."
- (12) ghariibah [\*(in) jibriil qara                      ak-ktaab]  
       strange      C J.      read.past.3sg.mas the-book.masc.sg  
       "It is strange that Jibriil read the book."

It can be seen in (10) that the verb *?ataqid* 'think' selects for a CP complement headed by the complementizer *in* whose presence is obligatory at the left edge of the clause. Other predicates like the adjectives *farhan* 'happy' and *ghariibah* 'strange' in (11) and (12) also select for CP complements headed by the complementizers *li?an* and *in* and both complementizers appear at the left edge of the clause. If we use a DP as the complement of the verb *?ataqid* or the predicative adjectives *farhan* or *ghariibah*, the sentences will be ungrammatical; which shows that these predicates select for CPs and not for DPs:

- (13) \*?ataqid                      jibriil  
       think.pres.1sg.masc J.  
       "I think Jibriil."

- (14) \**farhan jibriil*  
happy. J.  
“I am happy Jibriil.”
- (15) \**ghariibah jibriil*  
strange J.  
“It is strange Jibriil.”

We see in (13)-(15) that using merely DPs as complements of the verb or the adjectives renders the sentences ungrammatical. This is expected given that these predicates select for CPs. Interestingly, the predicate adjectives like *farhan* or *ghariibah* can also select for clauses headed by the element ‘*ali*’:

- (16) *farhan* [*\*(ali) jibriil qara* ak-*aktaab*]  
happy. C J. read.past.3sg.mas the-book.masc.sg  
“I am happy that Jibriil read the book.”
- (17) *ghariibah* [*\*(ali) jibriil qara* ak-*aktaab*]  
strange C J. read.past.3sg.mas the-book.masc.sg  
“It is strange that Jibriil read the book.”
- (18) *firiḥ-na* [*\*(ali) shif-na-ak*]  
glad-we C see.past-we-you  
“We were glad to see you/ that we see you.”
- (19) *al-ḥamd li-laah* [*\*(ali) ma mit*].  
the-praise to-Allah C not die.past.2sg.masc  
“Thanks to Allah that you did not die.”
- (20) *kwayyis* [*\*(ali) jib-t-ha*].  
great C bring.past.-2sg.mascu-her  
“It is great that you brought it.”

Comparing (16) and (17) where *farhan* and *ghariibah* select for the element ‘*ali*’ with (11) and (12) where the same elements *farhan* and *ghariibah* select for the complementizer *liḥan* and *in* immediately suggests that the element ‘*ali*’ is a complementizer. Examples (18)-(20) show that the element ‘*ali*’ appears with a number



of adjectives like *farhan* and *ghariibah*.

A second supporting piece of evidence for ‘*ali*’ as a complementizer is that it is in complementary distribution with other complementizers:

- (21) al-ḥamd li-laah [\*(in-ih) ma mit].  
 the-praise to-Allah C-he not died  
 “Thanks to Allah that he did not die.”
- (22) al-ḥamd li-laah [ali(\*in-ih) ma mit].  
 the-praise to-Allah C C-he not died  
 “Thanks to Allah that he did not die.”
- (23) kwayyis [\*(in-k) jib-t-ha].  
 great C-you bring.past.-2sg.mascu-her  
 “It is great that you brought it.”
- (24) kwayyis [ali(\*in-k) jib-t-ha].  
 great C C-you bring.past.-2sg.mascu-her  
 “It is great that you brought it.”

Thus, we see from (22) and (24) that the complementizer ‘*ali*’ never co-occurs with the complementizer *in*. This is expected since both elements, ‘*ali*’ and ‘*in*’ are selected by the higher adjectival predicates and presumably occupy the same position.

It is important to note that not all predicates select for the same complementizer. The verb *ʔataqid* ‘think’ selects for the complementizer *in* but not for the complementizer ‘*ali*’:

- (25) ʔataqid [in /\*ali jibriil qara ak-ktaab]  
 think.pres.1sg.masc C C J. read.past.3sg.mas the-book.masc.sg  
 “I think that Jibriil read the book.”

This is not surprising given that cross-linguistically different predicates select for

different complementizers. For instance, in English, 'think' selects for the complementizer 'that' but not for the complementizer 'for'. In other words, the fact that 'ali' occurs with the predicate *kwayyis* 'great' but not with *ʔataqid* 'think' is an expected property of a complementizer.

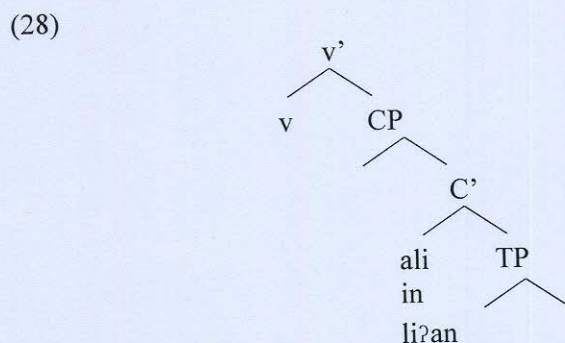
Given that the element 'ali' is a complementizer selecting for a TP, the following shows that this element appears with TPs that have tense and negative elements in them:

- (26) *kwayyis* [*\*(ali)* *ma raḥ tijiiba-ha*].  
           great           C not fut. bring.past.-2sg.mascu-her  
           "It is great that you will not bring it."

We see that the complementizer 'ali' occurs with a negation. A more detailed picture of (26) is:

- (27) *kwayyis* [<sub>CP</sub> *\*(ali)* [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>NegP</sub> *ma* <sub>AspP</sub> *raḥ tijiiba-ha*]].  
           great           C           not           fut. bring.past.-2sg.mascu-her  
           "It is great that you will not bring it."

Putting together the data in this section suggests the following analysis:



As the tree shows, the element 'ali' is the head of the CP just like other complementizers, *in* and *liʔan*. Recall the sentence in (1):



- (29) min [ali [<sub>TP</sub> shif-t-ih?]]                      wh-ali-construction  
Who C see.past-2sg.masc-him  
‘Who is the one that you saw?’

In (29) we have an element '*ali*' followed by a TP. Recall above that the '*ali*' we see in the embedded clause also selects for a TP. Thus, this suggests that we are dealing with the same element.

Having shown that the element '*ali*' is a complementizer, in the following section, I now investigate relative clauses where '*ali*' also appears.

## 2. Relative clauses

Another of my basic claims is that the ‘*ali*’ clause in the wh-*ali*-construction is a free relative clause. In this section, I will investigate the structure of relative clauses from which I will show that the ‘*ali*’ clause in the wh-*ali*-construction is a free relative clause. To begin, it is important to mention that definite DPs have a definite article, whereas indefinite DPs do not. The following is a list of definite nouns with their indefinite counterparts:

(30) Definite versus Indefinite nouns in Turaif Arabic

Definite Nouns		Indefinite Nouns	
a. al-walad	“the boy”	a’. walad	“a boy”
b. al-faas	“the axe”	b’. faas	“an axe”
c. al-bint	“the girl”	c’. bint	“a girl”
d. as-sayyarah <sup>1</sup>	“the car”	d’. syyarah	“a car”
e. aT-Tayyarah	“the plane”	e’. Tayyarah	“a plane”

<sup>1</sup> The definite article 'al-' is always fully assimilated to a following alveolar.

We see in the definite nouns, (30) a-e, the definite article ‘*al-*’ always precedes the NPs. In contrast, the indefinite nouns, (30) a’-e’, are not marked. As the English translation shows, a DP is interpreted as indefinite without the presence of any overt article. In other words, Turaif Arabic does not have an overt article for expressing indefiniteness<sup>2</sup>. Interestingly, in a relative clause, when the head of the relative clause is interpreted as definite, the complementizer ‘*ali*’ appears.

- (31) ar-rajaal                    [\*(ali) qabl-t-*ih*]                    saafar  
the-man.masc.sg            C   meet.past-1sg.mascu-him travel.past.3sg.masc  
“The man that I met traveled.”
- (32) rajaal                    [\*(ali) qabl-t-*ih*]                    saafar  
man.masc.sg.indef.        C   meet.past-1sg.mascu-him travel.past.3sg.masc  
“A man that I met traveled.”

We see from (31) that the element '*ali*' is obligatorily present in relative clauses when the head is interpreted as definite. In contrast, '*ali*' is obligatorily absent in relative clauses when the head of the relative clause is interpreted as indefinite as in (32).

Moreover, there is a subject-non-subject asymmetry with regard to the presence of the resumptive pronoun inside the relative clause headed by '*ali*'.

<sup>2</sup> Speakers sometimes optionally use the indefinite suffix marker *in* which follows the noun for marking indefiniteness.

(i) *rajaal-in*    *twiil*                    *zaar-na*  
man-indef tall.3sg.masc visit.past.3sg.masc-us  
‘A tall man visited us’

The *in* suffix occurs when the indefinite is emphasized or when it is followed by certain modifiers like adjectives or relative clauses.



- (33) ar-rajaal [ali (\*hu) qabal-ni] saafar Subject  
the-man.masc.sg C he meet.past.3sg.mascu-me travel.past.3sg.masc  
"The man that met me traveled."
- (34) ar-rajaal [ali qabl-t-(\*ih)] saafar DO  
the-man.masc.sg C meet.past-1sg.mascu-him travel.past.3sg.masc  
"The man that I met traveled."
- (35) rajaal [ali (\*hu) qabal-ni] saafar Subject  
man.masc.sg.indef. C he meet.past.3sg.mascu-me travel.past.3sg.masc  
"A man that met me traveled."
- (36) rajaal [ali qabl-t-(\*ih)] saafar DO  
man.masc.sg.indef. C meet.past-1sg.mascu-him travel.past.3sg.masc  
"A man that I met traveled."

In case of the relativized subject example (33) and (35) the resumptive pronoun is always absent. However, the verb always agrees with the subject. In contrast, it is always present when the relativized noun is non-subject as in (34) and (36).

In the next subsection, I investigate the relative clauses in depth, but before doing so, observe that there are other types of relative clauses in Turaif Arabic:

- (37) wish ma shif-t jib.  
what *ma* see.pres.2sg.masc bring/buy.pres.2sg.mascu  
"Whatever you see buy."
- (38) kil ma zirti-ni aquul-ak as-sir  
when *ma* visit.2sg.mascu-me tell.pres.1sg.-you the-secret.  
"Whenever you visit me, I (will) tell you the secret."

In (37) and (38), it can be seen that relative clauses in Turaif Arabic can also be formed by using wh-elements like *wish* 'what' and quantifiers like *kil* 'every' followed by *ma*. At this point, I will leave these forms for future research. But, I include them here to give broader perspective of the relative clauses in Turaif Arabic.



## 2. 1. Definite Relative Clauses

As noted, if the head of the relative clause is definite, that is to say if the definite article 'al-' precedes the noun, the presence of the complementizer 'ali' is obligatory. As a matter of fact, all nouns in the canonical DP positions can be relativized as the following shows:

- (39) Subject:  
 ar-rajaal      [\*(ali) shafi-ni]      saafar  
 the-man.masc.sg C see.past.3sg.mascu-me travel.past.3sg.masc  
 "The man that saw me traveled"
- (40) Embedded subject:  
 ar-rajaal      [\*(ali) thkar-aw      in-\*(ih)<sup>3</sup> maat]      hayy  
 the-man.masc.sg C mention.past-3pl.masc C- he die.past.3sg.masc alive  
 "The man that they mention that he died is alive."
- (41) Direct Object:  
 ar-rajaal      [\*(ali) qabl-t-\*(ih)]      saafar  
 the-man.masc.sg C meet.past-1sg.mascu-him travel.past.3sg.masc  
 "The man that I met traveled."
- (42) Embedded direct object:  
 ar-rajaal      [\*(ali) fakart-u      in-kam      qablt-uu-\*(h)]      hina  
 the-man.masc.sg C think.past-3pl.mascu C- you.mascu.pl meet.past-3pl.masc-him here  
 "The man that you thought that you met him is here"
- (43) Oblique object:  
 ar-rajaal      [\*(ali) ti-kalam-t      maʕ-\*(ih)]      zaari-ni  
 the-man.masc.sg C sg.talk.past-1sg. with-him visit.past.3sg.masc-me  
 "The man that I talked to visited me"

Again, from all the definite relative clauses above, except in the case of the relativized subject, one sees the obligatory presence of the element 'ali' and the resumptive pronoun.

Here are the templates of definite relative clauses:

<sup>3</sup> The pronominal clitic surfacing onto the complementizer *in* in the embedded clause is a DP-like element which is obligatorily appears when the complementizer *in* is not followed by an overt DP.



(44)

- a. al NP [CP ali [TP V-RP]] non-subject relativized noun  
 b. al NP [CP ali [TP V]] subject relativized noun

As the templates indicate, the definite article 'al-' and the element 'ali' are always present in definite relative clauses. In addition, in cases where the relativized noun is a non-subject noun, a resumptive pronoun obligatorily appears inside the relative clause, whereas, this resumptive pronoun is always absent in cases where the relativized noun is a subject.

## 2. 2. Indefinite Relative Clauses

In indefinite relative clauses, the element 'ali' is obligatorily absent, and as in definite relative clauses, this type of relative clause is formed out of all canonical DP positions:

- (45) Subject:  
 rajaal [(\*)ali) (\*hu) shafi-ni] saafar  
 man.masc.sg C he see.past.3sg.mascu-me travel.past.3sg.masc  
 "A man saw me traveled"
- (46) Embedded subject:  
 rajaal [(\*)ali) thkar-aw in-\*(ih) maat] hayy  
 man.masc.sg C mention.past-3pl.masc C- he die.past.3sg.masc alive  
 "A man they mentioned that he died is alive."
- (47) Direct Object:  
 rajaal [(\*)ali) qabl-t-\*(ih)] saafar  
 man.masc.sg C meet.past-1sg.mascu-him travel.past.3sg.masc  
 "A man I met traveled."
- (48) Embedded direct object:  
 rajaal [(\*)ali) fakart-u in-kam qablt-uu-\*(h)] hina  
 man.masc.sg C think.past-3pl.mascu C- you.mascu.pl meet.past-3pl.masc-him here  
 "A man that you thought that you met him is here"

- (49) Oblique object:  
 rajaal [(\*)ali ti-kalam-t maʕ-\*(ih)] zaari-ni  
 man.masc.sg C sg.talk.past-1sg. with-him visit.past.3sg.masc-me  
 "A man I talked to visited me"

The following are the templates for indefinite relative clauses:

(50)

- a. e<sub>D</sub> NP [CP Ø [TP v-RP]] non-subject relativized noun  
 b. e<sub>D</sub> NP [CP Ø [TP v]] subject relativized noun

After investigating headed definite and indefinite relative clauses, next I will turn to the headless relative clause or the "free" relative clause as it is sometimes referred to.

### 2. 3. Free relative clauses

Although the heads of free relative clauses do not have phonological content, they pattern like definite relative clauses. Crucially, there is an obligatory presence of the complementizer 'ali'. In addition, free relative clauses have to have resumptive pronouns in the non-subject positions:

- (51) raḥ azuur [DP\*(ali) shafi-ni].  
 will visit.pres.1sg C see.past.3sg.mascu-me  
 "I will visit the one that saw me."

- (52) tikalamt maʕ [DP\*(ali) shaaf-ak]  
 talk.past.1sg with C see.past.3sg.mascu-you  
 "I talked to the one that saw you."

- (53) raḥ azuur [DP\*(ali) shift-\*(ih)].  
 will visit.pres.1sg C see.past.1sg-him  
 "I will visit the one that I saw."

- (54) tikalamt maʕ [DP\*(ali) shift-ih]  
 talk.past.1sg with C see.past.2sg.mascu-him  
 "I talked to the one that you saw."



Below, I argue that the *ali*-string is a DP<sup>4</sup>, and that it occurs in DP positions.

This *ali*-string functions as the complement of verbs and prepositions; these elements also select for DPs as their complements:

- (55) Darabt [DP ahmad]  
hit.past.1sg.mascu Ahmad  
“I hit Ahmad.”
- (56) Darabt [DP ali shara as-sayyarah]  
hit.past.1sg.mascu C buy.past.3sg.mascu the-car  
“I hit the one that bought the car.”
- (57) tikalamt maʕ [DP ahmad]  
talk.past.1sg with C Ahmad  
“I talked to Ahmad.”
- (58) tikalamt maʕ [DP ali shaaf-ak]  
talk.past.1sg with C see.past.3sg.mascu-you  
“I talked to the one that saw you.”

We see in (55) that the verb *Darab* ‘hit’ selects for a DP complement. The same verb can also select for the *ali*-string (56). The preposition *maʕa* ‘with’ in (57) and (58) selects also for either a DP or the *ali*-string. We conclude that the *ali*-string is a DP.

Moreover, the same *ali*-string can occur with adjectives and demonstrative pronouns which are also elements that normally appear with DPs:

- (59) zari-ni [DP **ali shaaf-ak** at-twiil]  
visit.past.3sg.masc-me C see.past.3sg.masc-you the-tall  
“The tall one that saw you visited me.”

<sup>4</sup> The free relative can not appear with the definite article ‘*al-*’. It only appears with nouns.

(i) \*rah azuur [al ali shift-ih]  
fut. visit.pres.1sg the C see.past.2sg.masc  
“I will visit the one that you saw.”

- (60) zari-ni [DP **ar-rajaal** at-twiil]  
 visit.past.3sg.masc-me the-man the-tall  
 "The tall man visited me."
- (61) [DP haatha **ali shaaf-ak**] akhuyy-ah  
 this.masc C see.past.3sg.masc-you brother-my  
 "This one that saw you is my brother."
- (62) [DP haatha **ar-rajaal**] akhuyy-ah  
 this.masc the-man brother-my  
 "This man is my brother."

From (59) and (60), one sees that the adjective *twiil* 'tall' can occur with the *ali*-string or a DP. Similarly, the demonstrative pronoun *haatha* 'this' can also occur with the *ali*-string or a DP as (61) and (62) respectively show. The fact that the *ali*-string appears as a complement of verbs or prepositions and that it appears with adjectives and demonstrative pronouns strongly suggests that the *ali*-string is a DP.

Further support for considering the *ali*-string as a DP comes from the fact that this string can be conjoined with another DP or a pronoun:

- (63) [[DP ana] w [DP ali shaaf-ak]] safar-na  
 I and C see.past.3sg.mascu-you travel.past-we  
 "I and the one who saw you traveled."
- (64) zirt [[DP ahamad] w [DP ali shaaf-ak]].  
 visit.past.1sg Ahmad and C see.past.3sg.mascu-you  
 "I visited Ahmad and the one who saw you."

In (63), the *ali*-string is conjoined with the pronoun *ana* 'I' in the subject position. And in (64), it is conjoined with the DP Ahmad in the object position. From all these pieces of evidence, I conclude that the free relative clause is a DP.

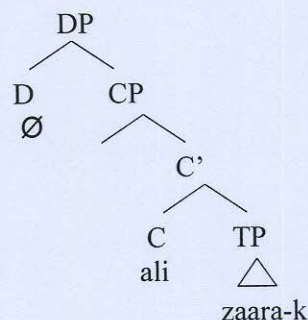


As a matter of fact, the meaning of the *ali*-string is quite broad:

- (65) raḥ aTbakh [CP ali qilt l-i] the thing  
 fut. cook.pres.1sg C tell.past.2sg.masc to-me  
 "I will cook the thing that you told me about."
- (66) raḥ amir [CP ali thikart l-i] the place  
 fut. pass by.pres.1sg C mention.past.2sg.masc to-me  
 "I will go to the place that you told me."
- (67) raḥ azuur [CP ali shaafi-ni] the person  
 fut. visit.pres.1sg C see.past.3sg.masc-me  
 "I will visit the one that you saw me."
- (68) raḥ attbiṣ [CP ali qilt l-i] the person  
 fut. follow.pres.1sg C tell.past.3sg.masc to-me  
 "I will follow the way that you told me."

We see from (65)-(68) that the free relative clause headed by the complementizer '*ali*' is used to refer to different types of identities that denote DPs. Thus, we obtain the following tree from my analysis at this point:

(69)



We see from the tree that the complementizer '*ali*' with its TP complement is selected by a silent D. To summarize the analysis so-far, we say that there are certain predicates that select for CP complements headed by the complementizer '*ali*'. The same complementizer with its TP complement is also used as a complement of a silent D. When an *ali*-CP is the complement of D, it is a free relative clause in Turaif Arabic (c.f. Kayne 1994).

The significance of this is that the string with the element '*ali*' in the above examples is exactly like the *ali*-string in the wh-*ali*-construction:

- |      |                                                                                                        |                              |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (70) | min [ali shif-t-ih?<br>who C see.past-2sg.masc-him<br>"Who is the one that you saw?"                   | wh- <i>ali</i> -construction |
| (71) | Darabt [ali shif-t-ih?<br>hit.past.1sg.mascu C see.past.2sg.mascu-him<br>"I hit the one that you saw." | free relative clause         |

Thus, the *ali*-string in both is the same. How do we know that the '*ali*' in the wh-*ali*-construction corresponds to the complementizer '*ali*' occurring in the relative clause? This is what I show in the next section.

Here are the templates for the free relative clauses:

(72)

- |    |                                 |                              |
|----|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. | $e_D e_{NP}$ [CP ali [TP v-RP]] | non-subject relativized noun |
| b. | $e_D e_{NP}$ [CP ali [TP v]]    | subject relativized noun     |

As the templates indicate, the definite article and the head of the free relative clause are always silent; and that the  $C^0$  '*ali*' is obligatorily present. Moreover, in cases where the relativized noun is a non-subject noun, a resumptive pronoun obligatorily appears inside the relative clause, whereas, this resumptive pronoun is always absent in cases where the relativized noun is a subject.



The descriptive generalizations for the relative clauses analysis can be represented as:

(73)

- |                   |                 |     |     |            |                            |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----|-----|------------|----------------------------|
| a. al             | NP              | [CP | ali | [TP v-RP]] | definite relative clause   |
| b. e <sub>D</sub> | e <sub>NP</sub> | [CP | ali | [TP v-RP]] | free relative clause       |
| c. e <sub>D</sub> | NP              | [CP | Ø   | [TP v-RP]] | indefinite relative clause |

From the templates, we see that the element '*ali*' obligatorily appears with relative clauses when the head of the relative clauses are interpreted as definite. Moreover, free relative clauses pattern exactly like the definite ones in that they require the obligatory presence of the complementizer '*ali*'. This indicates that they have silent heads that are interpreted as definite. This suggests that the element '*ali*' is not simply a complementizer. Since '*ali*' only occurs with relative clauses headed by a definite DP, this strongly suggests that this element is an agreeing complementizer. If it were not, it would appear with an indefinite relative clause. Moreover, the similarity between the definite article *al-* 'the' in a definite noun as '*al-mdaris* 'the teacher' and the complementizer '*ali*' also suggests that '*ali*' is an agreeing complementizer. You might also recall that we previously showed that the element '*ali*' is a complementizer selected by certain predicates but not others. In the following table, I summarize the distribution of the element '*ali*' in Turaif Arabic:

(74) the distribution of the complementizer 'ali' in Turaif Arabic

Free relative clause	Complement CP of a verb	Complement CP of an adj.
<p>a.</p> <pre>       D'      / \     D   CP        / \       C'  TP      / \     ali TP           </pre>	<p>b.</p> <pre>       V'      / \     V   CP        / \       C'  TP      / \     ali TP           </pre>	<p>c.</p> <pre>       AdjP      /  \     Adj  CP         / \        C'  TP       / \      ali TP           </pre>
<p>a. ali shift-ih                      hina          C see.past.1sg.him here          “The one that I saw is here.”</p>	<p>b. firih-na    ali.....          happy-we C          “We were happy that...”</p>	<p>c. kwayyis ali.....          good     C          “It is good that.....”</p>

Under my analysis, the '*ali*' which appears with the wh-*ali*-construction is exactly the same as the one in headless definite relative clauses. In the following section, I will investigate the verb-less sentences; and I show that the wh-*ali*-construction is formed out of verb-less sentences, the predicate of which is a headless relative clause.

### 3. Verb-less Sentences

Having established that ‘*ali*’ is a complementizer surfacing with free definite relative clauses, in this section, I investigate the verb-less sentences arguing that the wh-*ali*-construction is a copular construction. To begin, observe that Turaif Arabic does not have an overt copula in the present tense (as other dialect of Arabic (Eid 1991, Fehri 1993, and Mohammad 2000)).

- |      |                                                                                  |               |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| (75) | saqir al-mdarris<br>Saqir the-teacher.mascu<br>“Saqir is the teacher.”           | present tense |
| (76) | saqir kaan al-mdarris<br>Saqir was the-teacher.mascu<br>“Saqir was the teacher.” | past tense    |



- (77) saqir rah y-kuun al-mdarris<sup>5</sup> future  
 Saqir fut. 3sg.masc-be the-teacher.mascu  
 "Saqir will be the teacher."

We see that in case of the present tense (75), the copula is silent. In contrast, the copula is overt in case of past (76) and the future tenses (77). In the past tense sentence, the perfect copula *kaan* is used. To express the future, the imperfect form of "be" *y-kuun* is used preceded by the future marker *rah*.

It is also possible to invert the order of the subject and the predicate if both are definite:

- (78) al-mdarris saqir  
 the-teacher.mascu Saqir  
 "The teacher is Saqir."
- (79) al-mdarris kaan saqir  
 the-teacher.mascu was Saqir  
 "The teacher was Saqir."

In examples (78) and (79), one sees that the order of the subject Saqir and the predicate *al-mdarris* 'the teacher' is inverted compared to examples (75) and (76). It is important to note that there is no focus meaning at all in either orders.

Just like the definite predicate, the copula in the present tense with the indefinite predicates is silent:

- (80) saqir mdarris present tense  
 Saqir teacher.mascu  
 "Saqir is a teacher."

<sup>5</sup> It is not possible to use the imperfect form of *kaan* "be" in simple nominal predication:

(i) \*Saqir y-kuun al-mdaris  
 Saqir 3sg.masc-is the-teacher  
 "Saqir is the teacher."

- |      |                                                                                              |            |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| (81) | saqir kaan mdarris<br>Saqr was teacher.mascu<br>"Saqr was a teacher."                        | past tense |
| (82) | saqir rah y-kuun mdarris<br>Saqr fut. 3sg.masc-be teacher.mascu<br>"Saqr will be a teacher." | future     |

In (80), one sees that there is no overt copula in the present tense. In (81), in the past tense, the perfect copula *kaan* is used. Moreover, in the future tense, the imperfect copula *y-kuun* is used, (82), preceded by the future marker *rah*.

When the predicate is indefinite as in (80)-(82), the order of the subject and the predicate, is only inverted for focus.

- |      |                                                                       |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (83) | #MDARRIS saqir<br>teacher.mascu Saqr<br>"*A teacher is Saqr."         |
| (84) | #MDARRIS kaan saqir<br>teacher.masc was Saqr<br>"*A teacher is Saqr." |

We see in (83) and (84) that inverting the subject and the predicate gives us a different construction. That is to say, subject-predicate inversion when the predicate is indefinite is used only when the predicate is focused. The predicate in this construction is pronounced with high pitch. I will not consider this construction here since it is a different construction from the construction being investigated in this paper. This is not surprising if we take into consideration that even in languages like English such inversion is impossible when the predicate is indefinite.

After investigating the different syntactic characteristics of the verb-less sentences with definite and indefinite elements here is a table that recapitulates the syntactic



differences between both structures:

(85) Copular subject-predicate inversion:

Definite predicate		Indefinite predicate	
Subject	Predicate	Subject	Predicate
Predicate	Subject	*Predicate	Subject

We see from table (85), that when the predicate of the verb-less sentence is definite, the subject and the predicate can be inverted. In other words, both orders occur. In contrast, when the predicate of the verb-less is indefinite, the subject and the predicate can not be inverted.

Recall that in Section 2 we established that the *ali*-string is a definite DP; it is then expected that the *ali*-string can appear in verb-less sentences:

(86) saqir [DP [CP ali qabal-t-\*(ih) ams]].  
 Saqir C meet.past-1sg.masc-him yesterday  
 "Saqir is the one I met yesterday"

(87) saqir kaan [DP [CP ali qabal-t-\*(ih) ams]].  
 Saqir was C meet.past-1sg.masc-him yesterday  
 "Saqir was the one I met yesterday"

The fact that (86) and (87) are acceptable is not surprising since I showed that the *ali*-string is simply a DP. Given that it is a definite DP, we expect it to be invertable as in an ordinary verb-less sentence:

(88) [DP [CP ali qabal-t-i/\*t ams]] saqir .  
 C meet.past-1sg.masc-him yesterday Saqir  
 "The one that I met yesterday is Saqir"

(89) [DP [CP ali qabal-t-i/\*t ams]] kaan saqir .  
 C meet.past-1sg.masc-him yesterday was Saqir  
 "The one that I met yesterday was Saqir"

(88) and (89) demonstrate that the *ali*-string is not only a DP but it is also a definite one.

If it were not, inversion would not be possible.

Following standard assumptions about the internal structure of copular sentences, Moro (1997), Lewkowicz (1971), (92) below shows how the verb-less sentences are constructed in the syntax bearing in mind that either of the two DPs, Saqir or *al-mdarris*, can raise to TP:

- (90) saqir al-mdarris  
       Saqir the-teacher.mascu  
       “Saqir is the teacher.”

- (91) al-mdarris saqir  
       the-teacher.mascu Saqir  
       “The teacher is Saqir.”

I assume that the underlying structure of the above two examples is:

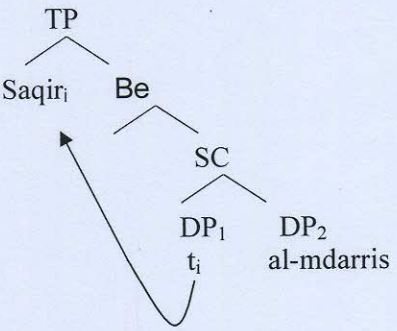
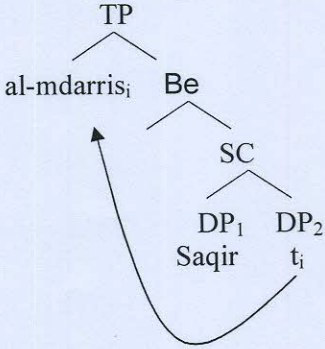
(92)



If DP<sub>1</sub> moves to spec TP, this yields the canonical order; and if DP<sub>2</sub> moves to spec TP, this yields the inverted order.



(93) Canonical and inverted orders in verb-less sentences.

Canonical Order	Inverted Order
<p>a. (=90))</p> 	<p>b. (=91))</p> 

In (93)a, we see that the subject *Saqir* of the predicate *al-mdarris* ‘the-teacher’ is moved to specTP while the predicate remains in situ. In (93)b, the predicate *al-mdarris* is moved to specTP while the subject *Saqir* remains in situ.

After establishing that *ali*-string is a DP that appears in a copula construction, we are now in a position to investigate the wh-*ali*-construction. Thus, the next section centers on the wh-*ali*-construction.

#### 4. The wh-constructions with ‘ali’

##### 4. 1. Wh-questions in Turaif Arabic

Having shown that the wh-*ali*-construction is a verb-less sentence the predicate of which is the free relative clause with the complementizer ‘*ali*’, in this section, I investigate the wh-*ali*-construction and show how this construction behaves syntactically with regard to the different island constraints compared to other wh-constructions in Turaif Arabic.

- (94) sanad [ali shift-ih]  
 Sanad C see.past.1sg-him  
 "Sanad is the one I saw."
- (95) min [ali shift-ih]  
 who C see.past.2sg-him  
 "Who is the one you saw?"

We see from (94) that the *wh*-item in the *wh*-*ali*-construction is in the subject position in comparable with the subject of the verb-less sentence example (95). Moreover, we see that both examples have the *ali*-string as their predicate. Interestingly, the *wh*-*ali*-construction can also be used in the embedded clauses as the following shows:

- (96) saʔalt min ali shaaf-ak.  
 ask.past.1sg.who C see.past.3sg.mascu-you  
 "I asked who saw you."
- (97) tisaaʔalt min ali shaaf-ak.  
 wonder.past.1sg.who C see.past.3sg.mascu-you  
 "I wondered who saw you."

Sentences (96) and (97) show that the *wh*-*ali*-construction can also be used in the embedded clauses as a complement of verbs like *saʔal* 'ask' and *tisaaʔal* 'wonder'. Before giving analysis of these types of questions, I will briefly show the different question strategies used in Turaif Arabic. To begin, let us take a simple sentence:

- (98) shift saqir b-ad-dikaan ams.  
 see.past.2sg.masc Saqir in-the-store yesterday  
 "I saw Saqir in the store yesterday."

To form a *wh*-question from (98), there are three options:

- (99) min shift \_\_\_\_\_ b-ad-dikaan ams?      fronted *wh*-items  
 Whom see.past.2sg.masc in-the-store yesterday  
 "Whom did you see in the store yesterday?"



(100) shift                      min    b-ad-dikaan ams?                      in situ wh-items  
       see.past.2sg.masc whom in-the-store yesterday  
       “Whom did you see in the store yesterday?”

(101) min    *ali* shift-ih                      b-ad-dikaan ams?                      wh-construction with ‘ali’  
       Whom C see.past.2sg.masc in-the-store yesterday  
       “Who is the one that you see in the store yesterday?”

In question (99), we see that the wh-item is fronted leaving a gap behind, whereas in question (100) we see that the wh-item is left in situ. Note the English translation of questions (99) and (100)) compared to question (101) where the element ‘*ali*’ is used. In question (101), the wh-item appears at the beginning of a copula sentence as the gloss shows. Before proceeding to the analysis, I discuss some of the other properties of wh-constructions.

#### 4. 2. Wh-words used in Turaif Arabic

The following list shows the wh-items used in Turaif Arabic with their English counterparts:

(102)

a. min	“who”
b. ween	“where”
c. wish	“what”
d. wishloon	“how”
e. ʕlaam	“what/why”
f. leeh	“why”
g. wish balaa	“what/why”
h. keef	“how”
i. ayy NP	“which NP”
j. mneen	from-where

All the wh-items above are used with wh-*ali*-construction except *leeh* ‘why’:

(103) min *ali* shif-t-ih?                      who + *ali*-string  
       who C see.past-2sg.mascu-him  
       “Who is the one you saw?”





The same wh-phrases above can also be used with wh-ali-construction only when they refer to a DP. In other words, the “why” meaning of these two wh-phrases is not available:

- (112) wish balaa-ah      ali ya-bk-i?  
           what trouble-him C 3sg.mascu-cry.pres.3sg.mascu  
           “What is wrong with the one crying?”                      what + *ali*-string  
           “\*Why is the one is crying?”                                      \*why + *ali*-string
- (113) slaam-ih      ali zir-na-h?  
           slaam-him C visit.past-we-him  
           “What is wrong with the one we visited?”                      what + *ali*-string  
           “\*Why is wrong with the one we visited?”                      \*why + *ali*-string
- (114) \*leeh ali shree-t-it?                                      \*why + *ali*-string  
           Why C buy-past-2sg-it  
           “\*Why is the one that you bought?”

Examples (112)-(114) show that all the wh-items listed previously are used with the wh-ali-construction except *leeh* ‘why’. Thus, the unavailability of the “why” meaning of the wh-phrases *wish-blaa* and *slaam* in (112) and (113) is expected.

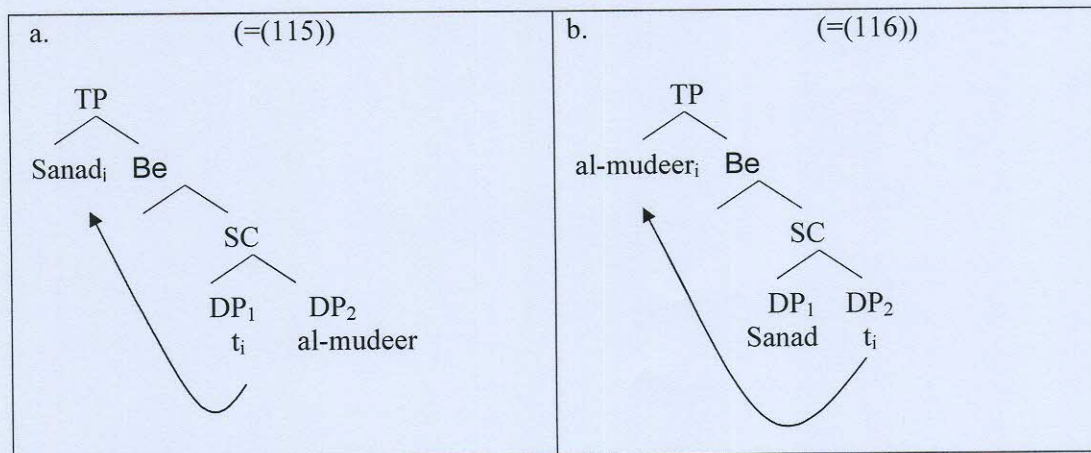
#### 4. 3. Analysis of wh-constructions with ‘*ali*’

Recall the form of the simple copula clause in (115) below. It can undergo subject-predicate inversion when both the subject and the predicate are definite:

- (115) sanad al-mudeer.  
           Sanad the-manager.mascu  
           “Sanad is the manager.”
- (116) al-mudeer                      sanad.  
           the-manager.mascu Sanad  
           “Sanad is the manager.”

As we saw before, these can be analyzed as:

(117)



In (117)a, we see that the subject *Sanad* of the predicate *al-mudeer* ‘the-teacher’ is moved to the spec TP while the predicate remains in situ. In (117)b, the predicate *al-mudeer* is moved to the spec TP while the subject *Sanad* remains in situ. The copula wh-construction has the same inversion property:

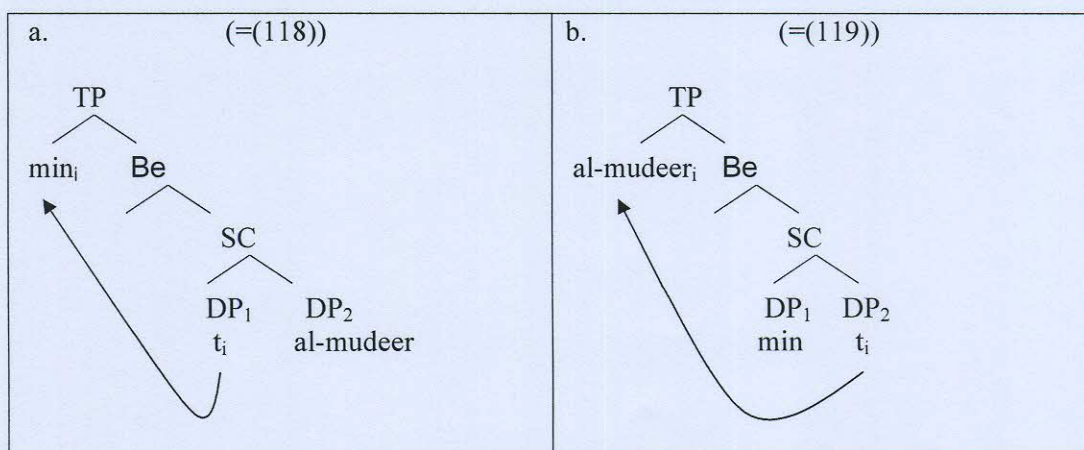
(118) min al-mudeer?  
 who the-manager.3sg.mascu  
 “Who is the manager?”

(119) al-mudeer min?  
 the-manager.3sg.mascu who  
 “The manager is who?”

As we saw before, these can be analyzed as:



(120)



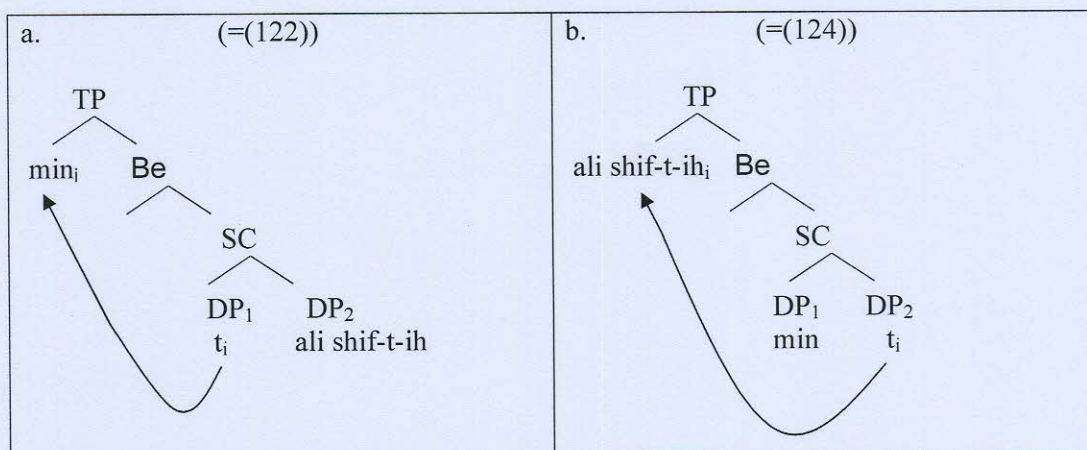
Although I give rather a literal translation in (119), it is not an echo question. In other words, the wh-*ali*-construction patterns like the non-wh-copular construction. Thus, we see from (120) a, the subject of the verb-less sentence, the wh-item *min*, raises to the spec TP. In (120) b, the predicate *al-mudeer* raises to the spec TP.

Crucially, the wh-*ali*-construction is like the copula clause in that its subject and predicate can be inverted:

- |       |                                |                                 |        |                     |
|-------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|---------------------|
| (121) | sanad                          | [ <sub>DP</sub> ali shif-t-ih]. |        | copula clause       |
|       | sanad                          | C see.past-2sg.mascu-him        |        |                     |
|       | “Sanad is the one you saw.”    |                                 |        |                     |
| (122) | min                            | [ <sub>DP</sub> ali shif-t-ih)? |        | wh-ali-construction |
|       | who                            | C see.past-2sg.mascu-him        |        |                     |
|       | “Who is the one you saw?”      |                                 |        |                     |
| (123) | [ <sub>DP</sub> ali shif-t-ih] |                                 | sanad. | copula clause       |
|       | C                              | see.past-2sg.mascu-him          | Sanad  |                     |
|       | “The one you saw is Sanad.”    |                                 |        |                     |
| (124) | [ <sub>DP</sub> ali shif-t-ih] |                                 | min?   | wh-ali-construction |
|       | C                              | see.past-2sg.mascu-him          | who    |                     |
|       | “Who is the one you saw?”      |                                 |        |                     |

As in case of the verb-less sentences (118)-(124), we see that the *wh*-item in *wh*-*ali*-construction can raise to spec TP as in example (122), or it can remain in situ as in example (124). That is to say, this construction is exactly like the verb-less sentence with regard to subject-predicate inversion. This makes sense given that the *ali*-string is a DP:

(125)



Thus, I conclude that the *wh*-construction with '*ali*' is a copula clause in which either the subject or the predicate raises to specTP. This analysis extends to most of the *wh*-*ali*-constructions we looked at before.



## (126) Wh-phrases in the wh-ali-constructions

Canonical order	Inverted order
a. wish [DP ali shree-t-ih]? what C buy.past-2sg.masc-it “What is the thing that you bough?”	a'. [DP ali shree-t-ih] wish? C buy.past-2sg.masc-it what “The thing that you bought is what?”
b. ayy walad [DP ali qabal-t-ih]? which boy.indef. C meet.past-2sg.masc-him “Which boy is the one that you met?”	b'. [DP ali qabal-t-ih] ayy walad? C meet.past-2sg.masc-him which boy.indef “The one that you met is which boy?”
c. keef [DP ali istaʕar-t-ih]? how C borrow-2sg.masc-it “How is the thing that you borrowed?”	c'. [DP ali istaʕar-t-ih] keef? C borrow-2sg.masc-it how “The thing that you borrowed is how?”
d. ween [DP ali shif-t-ih]? where C see.past-2sg.masc-it “Where is the one that you saw?”	d'. [DP ali shif-t-ih] ween? C see.past-2sg.masc-it where “The one that you saw is where?”
e. wish-loon-ih [DP ali jib-t-ih]? what-color-him C bring.past-2sg.masc-it “How is the thing that you brought?”	e'. [DP ali jib-t-ih] wish-loon-ih? C bring.past-2sg.masc-it what-color-him “The thing that you brought is how?”
f. mneen [DP ali jib-t-ih]? from where C bring.past.2sg.masc-it “From where is the thing that you brought?”	f'. [DP ali jib-t-ih] mneen? C bring.past.2sg.masc-it from where “The thing that you brought is from where?”
j. wish balaa-h [DP ali shif-t-ih]? what trouble-him C see.past-2sg.masc-him “What is wrong with him the one that you see?”	j'. [DP ali ya-bk-i] wish balaa-h? C see.past-2sg.masc-him what trouble-him “The one that you see is what is wrong with him?”
h. ʕlaam-ih [DP ali zir-na-h]? what trouble-him C see.past-2sg.masc-him “What is wrong with him the one that you see?”	h'. [DP ali zir-na-h] ʕlaam-ih? C see.past-2sg.masc-him what trouble-him “The one that you see is what is wrong with him?”

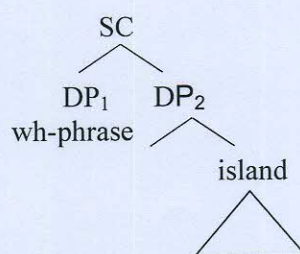
(126) shows that all the wh-phrases that occur with wh-ali-construction have the inversion property. This follows from my analysis. The wh-ali-construction is a predication construction between two DPs. If the wh-phrase can not have a DP meaning, it will not be used in the construction. That is why the wh-phrases *wish-loon* and *ʕlaam* are not used in this construction when they have a “why” meaning. Thus, we can predict which wh-phrases will occur with this construction.



#### 4. 4. Islands

In the analysis presented here the wh-phrase in the wh-ali-construction is not moved from inside the free relative clause. Thus, we expect the wh-phrase in this construction to be immune to islands effects. The gist of island effects can be explained as:

(127)



As (127) shows, the wh-phrase can raise without crossing the island boundary. Consider the wh-ali-construction and a strong island:

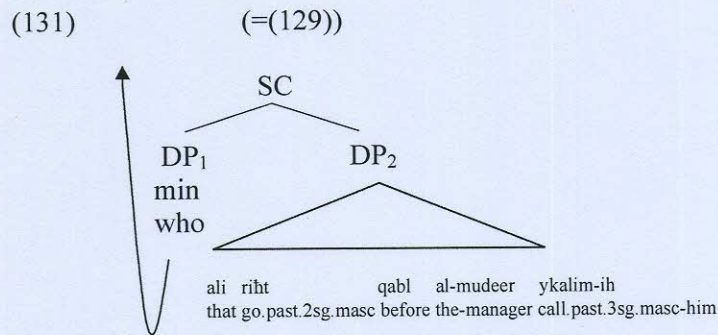
(128) rih-t                      [island qabl    al-mudeer ykalim                      saqir]  
          go.past-2sg.masc           before the-manager call.past.3sg.mascu Saqir  
          "I went before the manager called Saqir."

(129) min [DP ali rih-t                      [island qabl al-mudeer ykalim-ih]]?  
          Who    C go.past-2sg.masc           before the-manager call.past.3sg.mascu-him  
          "Who is that you went before the manager called him?"

(130) \*min<sub>i</sub> rih-t                      [island qabl al-mudeer ykalim-(ih) t<sub>i</sub>]?  
          Who go.past-2sg.masc           before the-manager call.past.3sg.mascu-him by-the-phone  
          "Who did you go before the manager call by phone?"

(128) shows an adjunct before-clause. From (129), we see that the wh-ali-question is grammatical even with an adjunct island. Comparing (129) with the wh-fronting construction in (130), we see that the fronting construction is sensitive to the adjunct island. Observe that the use of the resumptive pronoun *-ih* in the wh-fronting construction does not help in saving the fronting construction. This follows from my analysis of the wh-ali-construction above.





We see that the wh-item in wh-*ali*-construction is moved from the subject position of the small clause as the arrow shows. In other words, the island inside the *ali*-string does not have any effect on the wh-item. This makes sense giving that the wh-item *min* does not originate inside of the island. Consider next a wh-island.

(132) taby                      tʃariff                      [island athaa al-mudeer shaf                      saqir]  
Want.pres.2sg.mascu to know.2sg.mascu                      whether the-manager see.past.3sg.msacu Saqir  
“You want to know whether the manager saw Saqir.”

(133) min [DP ali taby                      tʃariff                      [island athaa almudeer  
Who C want.pres.2sg.mascu know.2sg.mascu                      whether the-manager  
shaf-ih]]?  
see.past.3sg.msacu-him  
“Who is that you want to know whether the manager saw him?”

(134) \*min<sub>i</sub> taby                      tʃariff                      [island athaa almudeer shaf -(ih) t<sub>i</sub>]?  
Who want.pres.2sg.mascu know.2sg.mascu                      whether the-manager see.past.3sg.msacu-him  
“Who do you want to know whether the manager saw in the classroom?”

(132) shows a wh island clause. We see that (133) is grammatical with the existence of the wh-island compared to the wh-fronting construction in (134) which is ungrammatical with or without the use of the resumptive pronoun -ih. This emphasizes that the wh-item in the wh-*ali*-construction is moved from a position outside the *ali*-string. Consider next the wh-*ali*-construction and a Complex Noun Phrase:



- (135) saqir Saddaq                                      qiSSat in fahad khatab-                                      laila.  
       Saqir believe.past.3sg.masc. story that Fahad propose.past.3sg.mascu to Laila  
       “Saqir believed the story that Fahad proposed to Laila.”
- (136) min [DP ali saqir Saddaq                                      qiSSat in-ih      khatab-ha]?  
       min        C Saqir believe.past.3sg.masc. story    that-him propose.past.3sg.mascu-her  
       “Who is that Saqir believe the story that Fahad proposed to her?”
- (137) \*min<sub>i</sub> saqir Saddaq                                      qiSSat in    fahad khatab-(ha) t<sub>i</sub>?  
       min Saqir believe.past.3sg.masc. story    that Fahad propose.past.3sg.mascu-her  
       “\*Who did Saqir believe the story that Fahad proposed to her?”

We observe the grammaticality of (136) despite the existence of the Complex Noun Phrase Constraint which bans extraction from a DP. When this question is compared to the wh-fronting construction in (137), one concludes that the wh-item in the wh-ali-construction is not moved from inside of the island. In other words, it is base generated outside the *ali*-sting. Consider next the wh-ali-construction and a Coordinate Structure Constraint:

- (138) Saqir shaaf                                      [island fahad w laila].  
       Saqir see.past.3sg.masc      Fahad and Laila  
       “Saqir saw Fahad and Laila.”
- (139) min [DP ali Saqir shaaf –[island ih                                      hu w laila]]?  
       Who        C Saqir see.past.3sg.masc-him he and Laila  
       “Who is that Saqir saw him and Laila?”
- (140) \*min<sub>i</sub> Saqir shaaf –[island (ih) t<sub>i</sub>      hu<sup>6</sup> t<sub>i</sub> w laila]?  
       Who Saqir see.past.3sg.masc-him he      and Laila in-the-store  
       “\*Who did Saqir see him and Laila in the store?”

<sup>6</sup> In the dialect whenever a pronoun is conjoined to a noun in the case of an object, a clitic agreeing with the pronoun appears on the verb. Observe that the reverse order is not grammatical:

(i) \*min [DP ali Saqir shaaf laila w hu b-s-suuq?]  
       who        C Saqir see.past.3sg.masc Laila and he in-the-store  
       “Who is the one that Saqir saw Laila with him in the store?”



In (138), we have a clause with a coordinate structure. Again, we see in (139) that the *wh-ali-construction* is grammatical despite the existence of the island compared to the *wh-fronting construction* in (140). The grammaticality of *wh-question* with ‘*ali*’ is explained from my analysis above of this construction. The *wh-item* in this construction never crosses an island boundary as long as it is moved from a position outside the *ali-string*. Consider next the *wh-ali-construction* and a Sentential Subject Constraint:

- (141) [<sub>island</sub> shira saqir l-as-sayyara] Dayaq-ni.  
           buying Saqir to-the-car   bother.past.3sg.mascu-me  
           “Saqir’s buying the car bothered me.”
- (142) wish<sub>i</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> ali [<sub>island</sub> shira saqir l-ih<sub>i</sub>] Dayaq-ni]?  
           What       C       buying Saqir to-it   bother.past.3sg.mascu-me  
           “What is that Saqir’s buying it bothered me?”
- (143) \*wish<sub>i</sub> [<sub>island</sub> shira saqir l-(ih) t<sub>i</sub>] Dayaq-ni?  
           What       buying Saqir to-it   bother.past.3sg.mascu-me  
           “\*What Saqir’s buying it bothered me?”

(141) shows a clause with a sentential subject. In (142), the *wh-ali-construction* is grammatical despite the fact that the *wh-item* is related to something inside of a sentential subject. If we compare this to the fronting construction in (143), we conclude that there is no movement of the *wh-item* from a position inside the *ali-string*. If it were moved from within the *ali-string*, there would be no explanation of what is going on.

#### 4. 5. Superiority effects

Superiority effects provide support for my analysis of *wh-ali-construction*. Consider next multiple *wh-questions*:

- (144) Saqir shara                               sayyarah.  
           Saqir buy.past.3sg.mascu car.indefinite  
           “Saqir bought a car.”

(145) wish shara-(\*h)                      saqir?  
       what buy.past.3sg.mascu Saqir  
       “What did Saqir buy?”

(146) min shara                      wish?  
       who buy.past.3sg.mascu what  
       “Who bought what?”

(144) shows a sentence with a transitive verb *shara* ‘buy’. From (145), we see that the resumptive pronoun *-ih* does not surface in the trace position of the moved wh-phrase. As for (146), just like English, it shows that when the subject wh-item precedes the object wh-item, the sentence is grammatical. This requires the second wh-item in the object position to remain in situ and not move. Consider next a question with a fronted direct object-wh-item:

(147) #wish<sub>i</sub> shara t<sub>i</sub>                      min?<sup>7</sup>  
       what buy.past.3sg.mascu-it who  
       “WHO bought what?”                      (Echo only) provided that *min* has higher pitch  
       “\*What who bought?”

In (147), the DO-wh, *wish*, precedes the subject wh-item, *min*. This question is grammatical only with an echo interpretation. When the speaker produces this question, s/he repeats the exact question uttered by the asker with the same word order except that s/he substitutes the subject with a wh-item. This construction is used when the hearer did

<sup>7</sup> The following two (non)-echo-wh-question word orders are not accepted in the dialect as the dialect does not allow two wh-items to appear initially:

(i) \*wish<sub>i</sub> min shara-(h) t<sub>i</sub>?  
       Who what buy.past.3sg.masc  
       “Who bought what?”  
 (i) \*min wish shara-(h)?  
       who what buy.past.3sg.masc  
       “Who bought what?”



not hear the subject of the question uttered by the asker. The normal response to this question is:

- (148) *wish*<sub>i</sub> *shara* *t*<sub>i</sub>                      *saqir*?                      Higher pitch on *saqir*  
           what buy.past.3sg.mascu-it *Saqir*  
           ‘‘What did *Saqir* buy?’’

In (148), the asker, as a response to the hearer’s question, repeats the question again placing a higher pitch on the subject ‘‘*Saqir*’’, which replaces the wh-word *min* ‘who’ in (147). In other words, (148) is a question and answer at the same time. Consider next the wh-*ali*-construction:

- (149) **wish** [<sub>DP</sub> *ali min* *shara-h*]?  
           what    C   who buy.past.3sg.mascu-it  
           ‘‘What is that who bought it?’’

Linearly speaking, although the wh-item *wish* ‘what’ appears at the beginning of the wh-*ali*-construction preceding the wh-item *min* ‘who’ in (149), the question is still grammatical. Indeed, the grammaticality of this question follows from my analysis of this construction. This is because the wh-item *wish* ‘what’ in (149) in the wh-*ali*-construction is base generated outside the clause with the complementizer ‘*ali*’ and it never moves over the subject wh *min* ‘who’.

In this subsection, I have shown that in Turaif Arabic, just like English, superiority effects arise whenever the object wh-item moves over the subject wh-item. The lack of superiority effects in the wh-*ali*-construction is not surprising; it follows from my analysis of this construction. In other words, the grammaticality of wh-*ali*-construction with the object wh-item preceding the subject wh-item follows if the object wh-item in the wh-*ali*-construction is not moved from the ‘*ali*’ clause.



In a nutshell, in this section, I have shown that the *wh*-item is not moved from inside the free relative clause containing the complementizer '*ali*'. Comparing the *wh-ali*-construction with the *wh*-fronting construction with regard to the different island constraints and the superiority effects, I have shown that the *wh-ali*-construction is insensitive to these island effects. This is not surprising given my analysis of the *wh-ali*-construction.

## 5. Conclusion

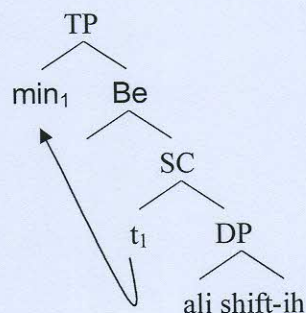
In this paper, I have investigated the *wh-ali*-construction in Turaif Arabic, and I have reached several analytical conclusions. First, I have shown that '*ali*' in the *wh-ali*-construction is a complementizer. As supporting evidence of my argument, I have shown that '*ali*', like other complementizers 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:

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

(151)



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.

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## “The Wh-ali-construction in Turaif Dialect”

In this paper, I investigate a structural aspect of Turaif Arabic spoken in Saudi Arabia. More specifically, I study a wh-movement where the wh-element is followed by a complete sentence headed by the relative element '*ali*'. The main argument of the paper is that this wh-ali-construction is a copular clause of which the wh-element is the subject and the '*ali-string*' is a free relative clause having the same distribution as a DP. The contribution of the paper lies in the fact that it investigates a dialect that is, to my knowledge, heretofore uninvestigated.

"أسئلة "ألي" في اللهجة الطريفية"  
خلف مطلق جدوع الشمري

### ملخص البحث

يقدم هذا البحث تحليلاً نحوياً لنوع من أنواع التراكيب المستخدمة في اللهجة الطريفية، "أسئلة ألي في اللهجة الطريفية" وتكمن أهمية هذا البحث في أنه الأول من نوعه في دراسة هذه اللهجة وبالتحديد دراسة مثل هذه التركيبات النحوية. وبدراسة خصائص العبارة الموصولة المتمم "ألي" وما يتبعها تبين أنها عبارة موصولة حرة مبدوئة باسم غير ظاهر وانها نحويًا تعمل عمل الاسم. وتبين أيضاً أن تركيبية أسئلة "ألي" لها نفس خصائص العبارة الإفعلية. وعلى ضوء ذلك خرج البحث بالنتيجة التالية وهي أن أسئلة "ألي" في اللهجة الطريفية إنما هي جمل ربطية، أداة السؤال فيها عبارة عن الفاعل و"ألي" وما يتبعها عبارة عن الخبر المسند إلى الفاعل. وعلى ضوء ذلك فإن أداة السؤال في هذه الأسئلة نائشة أصلاً في مكان خارج الجمل الإفعلية المبدوئة بألي ومن هناك تتحرك إلى أعلى الجملة عند تكوين السؤال. وعليه فإنه ليس من الغريب أن تكون هذا النوع من الأسئلة ذات مناعة عن موانع التحريك.



“Wh-ali-construction in Turaif Arabic”  
Khalaf M. AlShammiry

Abstract

In this paper, I argue that the wh-ali-construction should be analyzed as a copular clause of which the subject, the wh-item, is the subject and the “ali-string” is a free relative clause. Supporting my claim by the distribution properties of the “ali-string”, I have shown that the free relative clause is a nominal predicate. Thus, the wh-operator in the subject position of the wh-ali-construction is base generated outside the ali-string. From there, it moves to the Comp for forming a question. Thus, it is not surprising when these types of questions are immune to islands.