5

Topic In-Situ Wh-items in Turaif Arabic, TA

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In this paper, I examine two types of wh-constructions in Turaif Arabic, TA, the in-situ wh-construction and the wh-construction in which the wh-item appears in the left periphery of the clause with a resumptive pronoun inside the clause. The insensitivity of both wh-constructions to island constraints Ross (1967) and Cinque (1990), shows that in both constructions the wh-item is base generated in its surface position. Compared to in-situ wh-item, I argue, under the Minimalist Approach Chomsky (1993, 1995, 2000) that the wh-item in the wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun is an instance of topicalization. My argument is supported by a number of semantic differences between the two wh-constructions, among those are scope, superiority effect and the position of the focused subject. I conclude this paper by hypothesizing the existence of a speculative stage before the syntax in which the wh-item splits into two separate syntactic elements, a wh-item and a resumptive pronoun, **Splitting Hypothesis**. In that stage, I assume that both the wh-item and the reusmptive pronoun come together as one block from the numeration; the wh-item checks the Topic Feature and the resumptive pronoun checks the phi-features on the verb. The contribution of the paper lies in the fact that it investigates a dialect that is, to my knowledge, heretofore uninvestigated; and it adds to our understanding of the semantic role the in-situ wh-items play in the syntax.

 Introduction: Languages vary concerning the strategies that they apply to form wh-constructions. In a language like English, for instance, the wh-item is always fronted and never left it in-situ; whereas in a language like Chinese or Japanese, the wh-item

stays in situ; on contrast, a language like French has the option of leaving the wh-item in-situ or fronting it:

English:
1.a. Who did you see?
  b. *You saw who?

Mandarin Chinese:
2. a. hufei mai-le   shenme (nei)
     hufei buy-perf. What   PRT
    "What did Hufei buy?

  b. *shenme hufei mai-le   (nei)
     what   hufei buy-perf. PRT
    "What did Hufei buy?

French:
3.a. qui as-tu   vu?   Boskovic (2000)
    Who did you see?

  b. tu as vu   qui?
    You saw who?

We see in (1ab) that in English only fronting of the wh-item is accepted. In the Chinese wh-questions, the grammaticality of (2a) shows that the wh-item *shenme* "what" always remains in situ. Compared to (1a) and (2a), in (3ab) in French, we see that there are two options for forming questions; either by fronting the wh-item *qui* "who" or by leaving it in-situ. In this paper, I investigate two types of wh-questions in Turaif Arabic, (henceforth TA); in-situ-wh-item and wh-item that surfaces in the left periphery of the clause with a resumptive pronoun inside the clause. See the following data from TA.

4.a. Laila shaaf-at   min?
     Laila saw-3psf. who
    "Who did Laila see?

  b. min$_i$ shaafit-ih$_i$ Laila?
    who saw-3psf-him Laila
    Who did Laila see?

We see in (4a) above that the wh-item *min* "who" is left in-situ; whereas in (4b), the wh-item appears in the left periphery of the clause with a resumptive pronoun surfacing inside the clause. Because both wh-constructions are insensitive to island constraints, I take the wh-item in both constructions to be base generated in their surface positions.   Compared to in-situ wh-item, I argue, under the Minimalist Approach Chomsky (1993, 1995, 200), that the wh-item in this wh-construction is an instance of topicalization. My argument is supported by a number of semantic differences between the two wh-constructions, among those are scope, superiority effect and the position of the focused subject in the left periphery of the clause. I conclude this paper by hypothesizing the existence of a speculative stage before the syntax in which wh-item split into two separate syntactic elements, a wh-item and a resumptive pronoun, Splitting Hypothesis. In that stage, I assume that both the wh-item and the reusmptive pronoun come together as one block from the numeration; the wh-item checks the Topic Feature and the resumptive pronoun checks the phi-features on the verb. My assumption goes with the essence of Minimalist Program (1993 and subsequent work) economy; base-generation is more economical than movement.

The rest of the paper is divided into 5 sections. Section 2 introduces the different wh-constructions used in TA and highlights the intonational and semantic differences among them. Section 3 presents some of the findings of the previous works done on in-situ wh-constructions. Section 4 is divided into two parts, one discusses the island-(in)sensitivity of both the in-situ wh-constructions and the wh-constructions in which the wh-items appear in the left periphery of the clause with resumptive pronouns; and the other part discusses the semantic differences, scope and superiority effect, between both wh-constructions. The position of the focused subject is discussed in section 5. I will argue that the wh-construction in the left periphery of the clause with the resumptive pronoun is an instance of topicalization. I will conclude by hypothesizing a splitting stage before the syntax in which the wh-item and the resumptive pronoun come as one block; the former checks the topic feature and the latter checks the phi feature on the verb. Section 6 concludes the paper by outlining descriptive and theoretical conclusions and remaining puzzles.

Questions in Turaif Arabic:

Yes/No questions: As in French, Cheng and Roorych (2000), TA makes use of intonation to mark yes/no questions:
5. shaaf-at   laila ali.   Non-raising intonation
    see.past.2sg.f Laila Ali

"Liala saw Ali."

6. shaaf-at   laila ali?   Raising intonation
   see.past.2sg.f Laila Ali
   "Did Liala see Ali?"

Semantically speaking, we see from the English gloss of (5) and (6) that intonation plays a role in how syntactic structures are interpreted in TA. Although both strings, in (5) and (6) have the same words with the same word order, (5) with non-raising intonation is interpreted as an informative statement; whereas (6) with raising intonation is interpreted as a yes/no question. Now let us turn to wh-questions in TA.

Wh-questions: In TA, there are four different types of wh-constructions; wh-constructions with fronted wh-items, wh-questions with in-situ wh-items, wh-constructions in which the wh-items surface in the left periphery of the clause with a resumptive pronoun inside the clause; and finally wh-constructions with "*alli*" in which the wh-items appear in the left of "*alli*" string[1]. Anyhow, TA has four wh-constructions which vary with regard to intonation and context in which they are used.

7. MIN$_i$ shaafat t$_i$ laila?   fronted wh-question (higher pitch on *min*)
   Whom see.past.2sg.f Laila
   "WHOM did Laila see?"

8. shaafat   laila min?   in-situ wh-question (non-raising intonation)
   see.past.2sg.f Laila whom
   "Whom did Laila see?"

9. min$_i$ shaafat-ih$_i$ laila?   wh-question with a RP (raising intonation)
   Whom see.past.2sg.f-him Laila
   "Whom (among them) did Laila see?"

10. min$_i$ alli shaafat-ih$_i$ laila?   "*alli*" wh-question
    Whom C see.past.2sg.f-him Laila
    "Who is the one that Laila saw?"

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[1] Although it will not affect the conclusions I came up with in AlShammiry (2009), it is worth mentioning that in that paper because of the lack of data at that time, I claimed that wh-construction with resumptive pronouns do not exist in TA.

In (7), compared to the wh-item in-situ wh-construction in (8), we see that the fronted wh-item *min* "who", as the English glosses show, is focused and receives more pitch than the rest of the elements. In (9), we see that the wh-item *min* "who" is in the left periphery of the clause with a resumptive pronoun surfacing inside the clause; this wh-construction is uttered with raising intonation. Finally, in (10), the wh-item *min* "who" appears in the left periphery of the clause with "*alli*" string to its right; I will not say anything more about this wh-alli-construction since I have devoted a separate paper for this wh-construction (the reader is referred to Al-Shammiry 2009 for more details). Now, semantically speaking, when uttering (7) and (8), the speaker or the hearer do not have a pre-established set of people in minds. It is just the speaker inquires about the person who Laila saw. On contrast, in (9), both the speaker and the hearer have a pre-established set of people in minds. For instance, the speaker knows that there are three people in the list that might have been seen by Laila, Khalid, Saad, and Fareed and he wants to know who exactly among them Laila saw. Before providing pieces of evidence of my claim, that the wh-item in the wh-construction with a resumptive pronoun is base generated in that position and it is a topic, in the next section, I present some of the findings of the previous works in the literature done on in-situ wh-constructions.

Previous Accounts of In-Situ Wh-Constructions: Within the Government and Binding Theory, the GB, Chomsky (1973) and Huang (1982) among others assume that in-situ wh-item in Chinese and Japanese in its surface structure undergoes covert wh-movement in the LF component. That is to say, wh-movement in Chinese and English do not differ except with the level in which the movement takes place. In English, the movement takes place in the syntax, SS, whereas in Chinese it takes place in the LF. According to Haung (1982) LF movement is not subject to Subjacency. In other words, the SS movement and the LF movement are two different operations subject to different principles.

On contrast, Baker (1970) proposes a non-movement analysis in which she proposes a question morpheme that directly binds wh-in-situ. In later work, following Baker's, Cheng (1991), Li (1992) and Aoun and Li (1993), and Watanabe (1991, 1992) among others propose that languages like Chinese and Japanese do not have wh-movement at all; rather, the wh-item takes its scope through a quantificational element, the null operator, con-indexed with the in situ wh-item, (See a similar account by Pesetesky's (1987, 1993), Unselective Binding). In this case, the wh-item is a variable bound by the null operator.

Moreover, Cheng (1991), Aoun and Li (1993) and Wahba (1984) among others argue that other languages like French and Egyptian Arabic seem to have optional

movement. For instance in Egyptian Arabic Wahba (1984) claims wh-item is either moved or left in-situ. As far as wh-scope is concerned, she adds that wh-scope in Egyptian Arabic is a result of wh-movement, a movement that is island-sensitive. On contrast, in-situ wh-items do not move in SS, they move covertly at LF; and this LF movement is island-insensitive. As for wh-questions with a resumptive pronoun, she proposes that the resumptive pronoun is just a spell-out of the trace that left behind.

Within Minimalist Program, Chomsky (1993), where SS level is eliminated and LF is maintained, optionality is not a choice anymore; only the most economical option wins. Movement is driven by strong features and features can be strong or weak in a certain language. As for wh-constructions, Chomsky proposes that the movement of the wh-item is driven by the need to check formal features, the Q-feature. In a language like English, the Q-feature in the clause-initial position is strong, thus, the wh-item must move to check the feature before spell-out. In languages like Chinese and Japanese, an over operator, the wh-particle, checks the Q feature; thus, the wh-item stays in situ. Cheng and Roorych (2000) studying French data propose that Q feature is checked by an intonation morpheme; a null morpheme that is exhibited in yes/no question. Lassadi (2003, 2005) studying wh-questions in Egyptian Arabic argues that Egyptian Arabic favors wh-in-situ strategy. She proposes that Egyptian Arabic has two focus morphemes; the information focus morpheme and the contrastive focus morpheme and it is the focus feature which triggers wh-movement in Egyptian Arabic. She proposes the same thing for French language.

Chomsky (2005) proposes that Q- feature is always universally strong. In other words, all interrogative clauses have strong wh-features and the wh-item must move to the clause-initial position before spell-out; this movement creates a chain between the head and the tail. In certain languages like English, the wh-item moves to clause-initial position, the head, where the strong Q-feature is checked before the spell-out stage. So, the head in English is spell-out. The same movement occurs in languages like Chinese, Japanese and French where the wh-item remains in situ. The difference is that what is spell-out in these languages is the tail rather than the head compared to English. In those languages, the wh-in-situ is bound by a Q-operator which also binds all the wh-items that have not moved in the syntax.

To sum up, I can say that the main argument of Chomsky (1993 and 1995) and others is that in the in-situ wh-construction, there is an Q-operator, null or overt, base generated in the left periphery of the clause that takes care of checking the Q-feature and binds all in-situ wh-items.

After reviewing the literature, Following Cheng and Roorych (2000), I assume that the TA has no optional wh-movement; and that Q feature in TA is checked by an

intonation morpheme; it is an intonation morpheme that is comparable with the intonation morpheme found in yes/no questions. As for the wh-constructions with a fronted wh-item, I assume, following Lassadi (2003, 2005), that the wh-item is fronted for focus reason (see also the analysis of focus provided by Zubizarreta (1998) and Belletti (2002). Next section is divided into two parts; in the first part, using the different island constraints Ross (1967) and Cinque (1990), I will show that, compared to the wh-construction with the fronted wh-item and a gap, the wh-construction with in-situ wh-item and the wh-construction with wh-item in the left of the clause with a resumptive pronoun in surfacing inside are both insensitive to islands. This insensitivity to islands supports my claim of the base generation nature of the wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun. More importantly, in the second part, using scope, superiority and the position of the focused subject, I will show that, compared to the wh-item in the in-situ wh-construction, the wh-item with the resumptive pronoun is a topic; that is to say, the wh-item is base generated in the clause-initial position and never moved from inside the clause. I will conclude by hypothesizing that there is a splitting stage in which the wh-item and the resumptive pronoun come from the numeration as one block and split in the syntax. The wh-item checks the Topic feature and the resumptive pronoun checks the phi-feature on the verb.

Analysis of in-situ Wh-Items: Against Movement Analysis:

Wh-items and Island Constraints: As in English, fronted wh-questions in TA are sensitive to islands. Consider the following wh-constructions and a strong island:
11. safar-t   [$_{island}$ qabl ma al-mudeer   yqaabil   saqir]
   travel.past-2sg.masc before   the-manager meet.past.3sg.mascu Saqir
  "I traveled before the manager met Saqir."

12. a. *min$_i$ [$_{DP}$ safar-t   [$_{island}$ qabl ma al-mudeer   yqaabl t$_i$]]?
      who   travel.past-2sg.masc before   the-manager meet.past.3sg.mascu
     "Who did you travel before the manager met?"

   b. [$_{DP}$ safar-t   [$_{island}$ qabl ma al-mudeer   yqaabl   min]]?
       travel.past-2sg.masc before   the-manager meet.past.3sg.mascu who
      "Who did you travel before the manager met?"

   c. min$_i$ [$_{DP}$ safar-t [$_{island}$ qabl ma al-mudeer   yqaabl-ih$_i$]]?
      travel.past-2sg.masc before   the-manager meet.past.3sg.mascu-him
     "Who did you travel before the manager met?"

(11) shows an adjunct before-clause. From (12a), we see that fronted wh-question is sensitive to the adjunct island. Comparing both in-situ wh-construction in (12b) and the wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun in (12c) to the fronted wh-construction in (12a), we see that both wh-constructions are insensitive to the adjunct island. This shows that the wh-items in both the in-situ wh-construction and the wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun are base generated and not moved from inside the clause. Consider next wh-constructions with the wh-island clause.

13. taby   tʕariff   [$_{island}$ athaa   al-mudeer   qaabal saqir]
     want.pres.2sg.mascu   to   know.2sg.mascu   whether   the-manager meet.past.3sg.msacu Saqir
   "You want to know whether the manager met Saqir."

14. a. *min$_i$ taby   tʕariff   [$_{island}$ athaa   al-mudeer   qaabal t$_i$]
      who   want.pres.2sg.mascu   to   know.2sg.mascu   whether   the-manager meet.past.3sg.msacu
      "*Who did you want to know whether the manager met?."

    b. taby   tʕariff   [$_{island}$ athaa   al-mudeer   qaabal min?
        want.pres.2sg.mascu   to   know.2sg.mascu   whether   the-manager meet.past.3sg.msacu who
      "*Who did you want to know whether the manager met?."

    c. min$_i$ taby   tʕariff   [$_{island}$ athaa   al-mudeer   qaabal-ih$_i$?
       who   want.pres.2sg.mascu   to   know.2sg.mascu   whether   the-manager meet.past.3sg.msa-him
      "*Who did you want to know whether the manager met?"

(13) shows a wh-island clause. We see that both wh-constructions in (14b) and (14c) are grammatical with wh-island compared to the fronted wh-construction in (14a). Again, this emphasizes that the in-situ wh-item and the wh-item with the resumptive pronoun are not moved from inside the clause. Consider next the wh-constructions and a Complex Noun Phrase:

15. Saddaq   saqir qiSSat in fahad khatab-   laila.
     believe.past.3sg.masc. Saqir story   that Fahad propose.past.3sg.mascu to Laila

"Saqir believed the story that Fahad proposed to Laila."

16. a. *min$_i$[$_{DP}$ Saddaq   saqir qiSSat in   fahad khatab t$_i$]?
        who   believe.past.3sg.masc. saqir story   that Fahad propose.past.3sg.mascu
      "*Who does Saqir believe the story that Fahad proposed?"

    b. [$_{DP}$ Saddaq   saqir qiSSat in   fahad khatab   min]?
        believe.past.3sg.masc. saqir story   that Fahad propose.past.3sg.mascu who
       "*Who does Saqir believe the story that Fahad proposed?"

    c. min$_i$[$_{DP}$ Saddaq   saqir qiSSat in   fahad khatab-ha$_i$]?
       who   believe.past.3sg.masc. saqir story   that Fahad propose.past.3sg.mascu-
her
      "*Who does Saqir believe the story that Fahad proposed?"

In (15), we have a clause with a Complex Noun Phrase. We observe the
grammaticality of (16b) and (16c) despite the existence of the Complex Noun Phrase
Constraint which bans extraction from a DP. When (16b) and (16c) are compared to
the wh-fronting construction in (16a), one concludes that the wh-items in (16b) and
(16c) are not moved from inside of the island. In other words, it is base generated
outside the wh-constructions. Consider next the wh-constructions and a Coordinate
Structure Constraint:

17. qaabal   Saqir [$_{island}$ fahad   w   laila].
    meet.past.3sg.masc Saqir   Fahad and Laila
   "Saqir met Fahad and Laila."

18. a. *min$_i$ qaabil t$_i$ saqir hu w   laila]]?
        who meet.past.3sg.masc Saqir he and Laila
      "*Who did Saqir meet and Laila?"

    b. qaabil   min saqir hu w   laila]]?
       meet.past.3sg.masc who Saqir he and Laila
     "*Who did Saqir meet and Laila?"

    c. min$_i$ qaabil-ih$_i$ saqir hu w   laila]]?
       who meet.past.3sg.masc-him Saqir he and Laila

"Who did Saqir meet and Laila?"

In(17), we have a clause with a coordinate structure. Again, we see in (18b) and (18c) that the wh-constructions are grammatical despite the existence of the island compared to the wh-fronting construction in (18a). The grammaticality of wh-question in (18b) and (18c) is explained if we assume that the wh-items in the above two wh-constructions are not moved from inside the clause. The wh-items in those wh-constructions never cross an island boundary as long as they are not moved from a position inside the clauses. Consider next the wh-constructions and a Sentential Subject Constraint:

19. [$_{island}$ muqaabalat saqir l-laila]   zaʕal   Fahad.
          meeting   Saqir to-the-Laila upset.past.3sg.mascu Fahad
        "Saqir's meeting Laila upset Fahad."

20. a. *min$_i$ [$_{island}$ muqaabalat saqir l t$_i$] zaʕal   Fahad?
         who   meeting   Saqir to   upset.past.3sg.mascu Fahad
      "*Who did Saqir's meeting upset Fahad?"

    b. [$_{island}$ muqaabalat saqir l-min]   zaʕal Fahad?
            meeting   Saqir to-the-who upset.past.3sg.mascu-me
          "*Who did Saqir's meeting upset Fahad?"

    c. min$_i$[$_{island}$ muqaabalat saqir l-ha$_i$]   zaʕal   Fahad?
         who   meeting   Saqir to-the-her upset.past.3sg.mascu Fahad
      "*Who did Saqir's meeting upset Fahad."

(19) shows a clause with a sentential subject. In (20b) and (20c), the wh-constructions are grammatical despite the fact that the wh-item is related to something inside of a sentential subject. If we compare those to the fronting wh-construction in (20a), we conclude that there is no movement of the wh-item from a position inside the clause in (20b) and (20c). If they were moved from within the clause, there would be no explanation of what is going on.

In this part, using different island constraints, I have shown that, compared to the fronted wh-item, the wh-construction with the wh-item in the left periphery of the clause and a resumptive pronoun surfacing inside the clause, like the in-situ wh-item, is insensitive to island. I conclude that in this wh-construction both the wh-item and the resumptive pronoun are base generated in their surface position; that is to say, the wh-item in this construction is never moved from inside the clause.

In the second part, using scope, superiority and the position of the focused subject, I will show that, compared to the wh-item in the in-situ wh-construction and the behavior of topics in TA, the wh-item with the resumptive pronoun is a topic; that is to say, the wh-item is base generated in the clause initial position and never moved from inside the clause.

In-situ wh-items and Scope: The difference in scope interpretation between the in-situ wh-item and wh-item with resumptive pronouns is a second piece of evidence of my analysis of the wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun as a topic. See the following two English sentences:

21. Everyone liked one of these candidates.
22. What did everyone like?

In (21), both interpretations, individual and distributive readings, are available; everyone scopes over one of these candidates and one of these candidates scopes over everyone. In (22), the movement of the wh-item to the left periphery of the clause does not prevent the quantifier from scoping over the wh-item; both interpretations are available. The same finding turns to be true for the fronted wh-item in TA. See the following two questions:

23. kill   waahid shaaf   rajaaleen.
    every one   see.past.3sg.mas two men
   "Everyone saw two men."

24. min$_i$ kill   waahid shaaf t$_i$?
    who every one   see.past.3sg.mas
   "Who did everyone see?"

In (23), both interpretations, individual and distributive readings, are available; kill waahid "everyone" scopes over rajaaleen "two men" and rajaaleen "two men" scopes over kill waahid "everyone". In (24), the movement of the wh-item min "who" to the left periphery of the clause does not prevent the quantifier kill waahid "everyone" from scoping over the wh-item; both interpretations are available. Now, let us examine in-situ wh-constructions.

25. kill   waahid shaaf   min?.
    every one   see.past.3sg.mas who
   "Who did everyone see?"

26. min$_i$ kill   waahid shaaf-ih$_i$?

who every one   see.past.3sg.mas-him
"Who did everyone see?"

In (25), where the wh-item stays in situ, the question has individual and distributive readings; in this question *kill waahid* "everyone" scopes over the wh-item *min* "who" and the wh-item *min* "who" scopes over *kill waahid* "everyone". On constrast, in (26), where the wh-item appears in the left periphery of the clause with the resumptive pronoun inside the clause, there is only one reading availabl in which the wh-item *min* "who" scopes over kill waahid "everyone". The same finding turns to be true for topics in TA.

27. kill   waahid shaaf   rajaaleen
     every one   see.past.3sg.mas two men
   "Everyone saw two men."

28. rajaaleen$_i$, kill   waahid shaaf-hum$_i$.
     two men every one   see.past.3sg.mas-them
   "Two men, everyone saw them."

In (27), where the noun *rajaaleen* "two men" stays in situ, the sentence has individual and distributive readings; in this question *kill waahid* "everyone" scopes over *rajaaleen* "two men" and *rajaaleen* "two men" scopes over *kill waahid* "everyone". On contrast, in (28), where *rajaaleen* "two men" appears in the left periphery of the clause with the resumptive pronoun *hum* "them" inside the clause, there is only one reading available in which *rajaaleen* "two men" scopes over *kill waahid* "everyone". The similarities between the two in-situ wh-constructions, in (25) and (26) and the two statements in (27) and (28) supports my analysis of the wh-item with the resumptive pronoun. the wh-item in this wh-construction is not moved from inside the clause; it is base generated in that position. Consider next the wh-constructions and superiority effects.

In-Situ Wh-items and Superiority Effects: Superiority effects provide another support for my analysis of the in-situ wh-constructions with resumptive pronouns. English shows superiority effects:

29. a. Who$_i$ t$_i$ bought what?
    b. *What$_y$ who$_i$ t$_i$ bought t$_y$?

We see in the grammatical wh-question in (29a), the trace of the moved wh-item who c-commands the wh-item in the object position what. Compared to (29a), we see in the ungrammatical wh-construction in (29b), the trace of the moved wh-item who c-

commands the trace of the moved wh-item what. As in English, TA wh-constructions with fronted wh-items and a gap induce superiority effects.

30. a. min$_i$ t$_i$ shaara   wish?
       who   buy.past.3sg.mas what
     "Who bought what?

   b. *wish$_y$ min$_i$ t$_i$ sharaa t$_y$?
       what who   buy.past.3sg.mas
     "*What who bought?"

We see that in the grammatical wh-construction in (30a), the trace of the moved wh-item *min* "who" c-commands the wh-item *wish* "what"; compared to (30a), in the ungrammatical wh-construction in (30b), the trace of the moved wh-item *min* "who" c-commands the trace of the moved wh-item *wish* "what". Now, let us investigate the sensitivity of wh-construction with resumptive pronouns to superiority effect.

31. wish$_y$ min$_i$ t$_i$ shaaf-ih$_y$?
     what   who   see.past.3sg.mas –it
   "*What did who see?

We see that in (31) despite the fact that the object wh-item *wish* "what" precedes the subject wh-item *min* "who", that is to say, the trace of the subject wh-item *min* "who" c-commands the resumptive pronoun *ih* "him" in the object position; the wh-construction is still grammatical.. The grammaticality of this wh-construction is not surprising if we assume that the object wh-item *wish* "what" is base generated in its surface position and not moved from inside the question. Not surprising, topics preceeding wh-items in the left periphery of the TA clause with a resumptive pronoun surfacing inside the clause do not induce superiority effect.

32. ar-rjaal$_y$ min$_i$ t$_i$ shaafi-hum$_y$?
     the-men who   see.past.3sg.mas-them
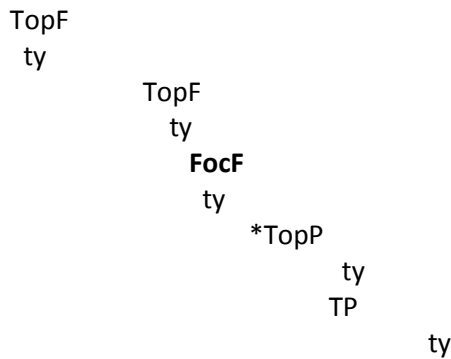   "As for the men, who saw them?

We see that in (32) the noun *ar-rjaal* "the men" as a topic appear in the left periphery of the clause before the subject wh-item *min* "who" and the resumptive pronoun *hum* "them" surfaces inside the clause in the object position c-commanded by the wh-item *min* "who". The similarity between (31) and (32) supports my analysis of the

wh-item with the resumptive pronoun; the wh-item in this wh-construction is a topic base generated in that position.

In this subsection, I have shown that in TA, just like English, superiority effects arise whenever the subject wh-item in the left periphery of the clause c-commands the trace of the moved wh-item in the object position. The lack of superiority effects in wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun is not surprising. It follows from my analysis of this construction. In other words, the grammaticality of wh-constructions with the object wh-item preceding the subject wh-item is explained if we assume that object wh-items in those wh-constructions are base generated and never moved from inside the clause. In the next section, I study the position of the focused subject as a final piece of evidence supporting my analysis of the wh-constructions with resumptive pronouns.

The Position of the Focused Subject: The fourth piece of evidence that supports my analysis of the wh-constructions with the resumptive pronoun as a topic comes from the position of the focused subject in the clause of TA. In my work AlShammiry (2007), I argued that the clause in TA has the following structure:

33.

```
        TopF
         ty
               TopF
                ty
                  FocF
                   ty
                      *TopP
                              ty
                      TP
                                ty
```

As the tree in (33) shows, following Rizzi (1997), the clause in TA has one and only one focused element in its left periphery; however, topics can iterate; and the position of the focused element is always below topics in the left periphery of the clause in TA Arabic. See the following:

34. a. saqir$_i$, ALI, qaabil-(ih$_i$).   Higher pitch on the subject ALI
       Saqir ALI meet.past.3sg.mas-him
      "As for Saqir, ALI (not Fahad) met him."

b. *ALI, saqir$_i$, qaabil-ih$_i$.
   ALI Saqir meet.past.3sg.mas-him
   "*As for Saqir, ALI (not Fahad) met him."

In (34a), we see that the focused element *Ali* is preceded by the topic element *Saqir* in the left periphery of the clause. The ungrammaticality of (34b), compared to (34a) shows that the only acceptable word order is the order in which the focused element *Ali* appears to the right of the topic element *Saqir*, (Yateem 1997 argues the same for focused subjects in Gulf Arabic). Now, let us investigate wh-constructions.

35. *min$_i$ ALI qaabal t$_i$?
    WHO ALI meet.past.3sg.masc
    "WHO did ALI meet?"

36. *min$_i$ ALI qaabal-ih$_i$?
    who ALI meet.past.3sg.masc-him
    "who did ALI meet?"

Recall that I have assumed that the fronted wh-item with a gap is fronted for focus reason and the periphery of the clause has one and only one focused item; thus, the ungrammaticality of (35) is not surprising; we see that there are two focused elements, the wh-item *min* "who" and the focused subject *ALI*. In (36), although the wh-item *min* "who" is higher than the focused element *ALI*, the wh-construction is still grammatical; this is not surprising if we take into consideration my analysis of the wh-item with the resumptive pronoun; this wh-item is a topic rather than a focus.

In this section, comparing the wh-constructions with resumptive pronouns and the in-situ wh-constructions to wh-constructions with gaps with regard to the different island constraints, I have shown that the wh-constructions with resumptive pronouns are insensitive to islands. Moreover, investigating scope, the superiority effects and the position of the focused subject, I have shown that the wh-item in the wh-construction with the resumptive pronoun is base generated in its surface position in the left periphery of the clause and never moved from within the clause. These findings support my analysis of the wh-item in the wh-construction the resumptive pronoun, as a topic.

In a nutshell, showing that the wh-item in the wh-construction with the resumptive

pronoun is an instance of topicalization base generated in its surface position in the left periphery of the clause, and for economy consideration, I conclude by hypothesizing that wh-item in this wh-construction is split into two separate syntactic elements, a wh-item and a resumptive pronoun, **Splitting Hypothesis**, a stage right before the syntax. In this speculative stage, I assume that the wh-item checks the topic feature in the left periphery of the clause after shedding off or casting the D features on the form of a resumptive pronoun; this resumptive pronoun takes care of checking the D features on the verb. So, it is at this stage, where the resumptive pronoun becomes a variable bound by the wh-item.

Conclusion: In this paper, I have investigated the wh-construction with resumptive pronouns in Turaif Arabic, and I have reached two analytical conclusions. First, I have shown that the wh-item in this wh-construction is base generated in the left periphery of the clause. As supporting evidence of my argument, I have shown the wh-construction with resumptive pronoun is insensitive to islands. Second, through studying scope, superiority effect, and the position of the focused subject, I have shown that the wh-item in this wh-construction behaves like topics. From these two findings, I have concluded that the wh-item in this construction is an instance of topicalization. With this finding in mind, and for economical consideration, I have hypothesized a splitting stage in which the wh-item in this wh-construction is split into two separate syntactic elements, a wh-item and a resumptive pronoun, **Splitting Hypothesis**; it is a stage right before the syntax. In this speculative stage, I have assumed that the wh-item checks the topic feature in the left periphery of the clause after shedding off or casting the D features on the form of a resumptive pronoun; this resumptive pronoun takes care of checking the D features on the verb. So, it is at this stage, where the resumptive pronoun becomes a variable bound by the wh-item. I admit that there are a number of questions left unanswered at this stage. The first question that someone might ask is what the consequences of this speculative stage on the syntax are. Then, could this proposal be extended to all types of constructions with resumptive pronouns in which the resumptive pronouns are originally assumed to be as saving device for surmounting some syntactic violations, ECP, and resumptive pronouns surfacing in relative clause Kroch (1982), McClosky (1990), Shlonsky (1992), Sharvit (1999) Aoun, Choueiri and Hornstein (2001) , and Cassandre (2002) among others. These questions and more are left for future work.

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