



- (5) ams        **mar**    bi-l-MAKTABAH **tara** **vedī**-h        Firas    ʃaf        Dilara.  
 yesterday S<sub>Top</sub> in-the-library        C<sub>Top</sub> F<sub>Top</sub>-3SM Firas    saw.3SM Dilara  
 ‘As for yesterday, in the LIBRARY, Firas, he saw Dilara.’

Licensing the C-topic by  $\phi$ -agreement is excluded here where it is a PP. Instead, it is licensed by the spec-head relation. These particles thus provide striking evidence of the generality of F&H’s typology of topics and the associated theory of the structure of the C-domain. They also provide support for the theory of agreement, movement, and locality in Chomsky (2001, 2008) and Miyagawa (2010), with one or two modifications. In this light, the employment of  $\phi$ -agreement to express topicality is not surprising. What is surprising is rather that it has taken so long to find the empirical evidence that this is actually happening.

The fact that some of the topic particles are  $\phi$ -marked under long-distance Agree is consistent with a model where the Top head has unvalued  $\phi$ -features, making it a probe, and an inherently valued Topic feature (S-, C-, or F-topic), while the topicalized XP, the goal, has an unvalued Top/Foc feature (not the other way around, as in, for example, Miyagawa 2010). In the case of *tara* in (2) and *vedī* in (3), the particular topic interpretation is a result of Agree, valuing the  $\phi$ -features of the probe (the particle) and the [Top/Foc] of the goal (the object in (2) and (3)). The Agree relation is subject to locality. Note the word order in (2) and (3): the object has moved past the subject, by hypothesis to the edge of vP. If it doesn’t, the subject can be probed and have its [Top/Foc] feature valued, the object can’t.

- (6)        **vedī**-h        Firas        ʃaf        l-kurah,  
 PRT-3SM    Firas        saw.3SM    Def-ball    .  
 ‘Firas, he saw the ball.’

The non-agreeing F-topic particle *tigil* in (4) has a valued [F<sub>Top</sub>] feature. We assume that it, too, has  $u\phi$ -features probing for a matching goal, but with no overt exponent of  $\phi$  marking the relation, the valuation of the goal requires movement to the spec of F-Top. In Miyagawa’s (2010) terms, the agreement in (2) and (3) and the movement in (4) are two alternative ways to “keep a record of the topic relation for the interfaces”.

As expected, given the findings of F&H, the F-topic is recursive.

- (7)        Firas    Dilara    **vedī**-h        ʃaf-ah  
 Firas    Dilara    PRT-3SM    saw.3S.F  
 ‘Firas, Dilara, he saw her.’

The word order is fixed: subject>object>particle, and the particle agrees with the subject. The construction supports the hypothesis that the topic XP needs valuation by Agree or movement (the F-Top head is  $\phi$ -valued by the subject, hence doesn’t need the object). With the structure

- (8) [TopP Firas<sub>i</sub> [TopP Dilara<sub>j</sub> [TopP F<sub>Top</sub>- $\phi$  [TP t<sub>i</sub> ... [vP t<sub>j</sub> ... ]]]]],

(7) meets standard conditions on locality: the subject is valued [F<sub>Top</sub>] by Agree with *vedī*, spelled out as  $\phi$ -agreement. The object is valued [F<sub>Top</sub>] by movement to ‘spec of *vedī*’. Since the head of the subject chain c-commands the object chain, there is no intervention problem. The configuration poses a challenge, though, for any theory relying on derivation by a sequence of triggered movements observing locality and the extension condition (as in Chomsky 2001); there is no feature triggering the movement of the subject from specTP (see (6)). It can be derived within the model proposed by Chomsky (2008) where operations within a phase take place freely and simultaneously, with the output evaluated by conditions on locality (‘Move- $\alpha$  with phases’). The phase in this case is the C-phase, including the object at the edge of vP.

**References:** Alshamari, M. 2018. Topic particles in the North Hail dialect of Najdi Arabic. Newcastle U. PhD; Chomsky, N. 2001. Derivation by phase; Chomsky, N. On phases; Frascarelli, M. & Hinterhölzl, R. 2007. Types of topics in German and Italian, in Schwabe & Winkler *On information structure, meaning and form*. Miyagawa, S. 2010. *Why agree? Why move?*