SUBJUNCTIVE CLAUSES AND THE STATUS OF THE PARTICLE *ʔan* IN MODERN STANDARD ARABIC

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I examine subjunctive clauses in Modern Standard Arabic with a special focus on the status of the subjunctive particle *ʔan* which introduces these complements. I make two suggestions. First, I suggest that the subjunctive particle *ʔan* does not head a CP. Rather, it heads a Mood Phrase projected lower than both CP and Topic Phrase. Secondly, I propose that Arabic subjunctive complements are truncated Mood Phrases that lack both a CP and a Topic Phrase. Truncation accounts for the ungrammaticality of topics in subjunctive complements.

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern Standard Arabic (henceforth Arabic) shares one major property with Balkan languages such as Modern Greek and Romanian: it lacks infinitival complements and uses instead inflected subjunctive complements introduced by a subjunctive particle in infinitival contexts[1]. Balkan subjunctive particles have been recently argued to head a Mood Phrase projected lower than CP (see Terzi (1992), Rivero (1994) among many others). In this article, I examine the properties of the Arabic subjunctive particle *ʔan*, and I show that it occupies a position lower than CP which I suggest is the head of a Mood Phrase.

This article is divided into six sections: in section 2, I look at the distribution of subjunctive clauses introduced by the particle *ʔan*. In section 3, I examine the properties of the subjunctive particle *ʔan*. In section 4 I present evidence that the subjunctive particle *ʔan* is lower than the indicative complementizer *anna* (and hence lower than CP). I suggest that it heads a Mood Phrase projected lower than both CP and Topic Phrase. I basically show that there are reasons to think that the subjunctive particle *ʔan* occupies the same position as the negative future particle *lan*, which can be embedded under the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*. In section

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[1] It should be noted that, unlike Balkan languages, Arabic has not undergone a historical loss of infinitives. In fact, Old/classical Arabic did not display infinitives, while Ancient Greek and Old Romanian displayed infinitival complements. Infinitival complements were gradually replaced by finite subjunctive complements introduced by subjunctive particles. The replacement process resulted in a complete loss of infinitives in Modern Greek. In Modern Romanian, infinitives survived in very restricted contexts where they alternate with subjunctives (see Brian (1983) for more details).

5, I suggest that Arabic subjunctive complements are truncated Mood Phrases that lack CP and Topic Phrase. In section 6 I summarize and conclude.

2. THE DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJUNCTIVE *ʔAN*-CLAUSES[2]

Arabic subjunctive clauses are introduced by the particle *ʔan*. These clauses are mainly found in complements of volitional verbs, as in (1), and also in control complements. Such control complements include (i) complements of volitional verbs where the embedded subject is co-referential with the matrix subject, as in (2a), and (ii) complements of obligatory control verbs like *yuqarriru* 'decide' (see (2b)) and *yuhaawilu* 'try' (see (2c)).

(1)   ufaddilu   ʔan   yaktuba   al-walad-u   al-risaalat-a
          prefer.1.S.PRS PRT   write.3.S.SUB the-boy-NOM the-letter-ACC
          'I prefer that the boy write the letter.'

(2)   a.   al-walad-u   yufaddilu   ʔan   yaktuba   al-risaalat-a
              the-boy-NOM prefer.3.S.PRS PRT   write.3.S.SUB the-letter-ACC
              'The boy prefers to write the letter.'
    b.   al-walad-u   qarrara   ʔan   yaktuba   al-risaalat-a
              the-boy-NOM decide.3.S.PST PRT   write.3.S.SUB the-letter-ACC
              'The boy decided to write the letter.'
    c.   al-walad-u   haawala   ʔan   yaktuba   al-risaalat-a
              the-boy-NOM try.3.S.PST   PRT   write.3.S.SUB the-letter-ACC
              'The boy tried to write the letter.'

Other contexts where subjunctive *ʔan*-clauses are found include complements of modal verbs like *yastatii9u* 'can', as in (3a), temporal adjunct clauses, as in (3b), and sentential subjects as in (3c).

(3)   a.   ʔastatii9u   ʔan   ʔabqaa   hunaa
              can.1.S.PRS   PRT   stay.1.S.SUB here
              'I can stay here.'
    b.   Zurtu-haa   qabla ʔan   yusaafira   al-walad-u
              visit.1.S.PST-her   before PRT   travel.1.S.SUB the-boy-NOM
              'I visited her before the boy travels.'
    c.   ʔan   yabqaa   al-walad-u   hunaa qad   yudhaayiqu-haa
              PRT   stay.3.S.SUB the-boy-NOM here   may   bother.3.S.PRS-her
              'That the boy stay here may bother her.'

The subjunctive particle *ʔan* has been analyzed as a complementizer that has the same status as the indicative complementizer *ʔanna* (see Abdul-Ghany (1981)

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[2] Subjunctive *ʔan*-clauses are excluded from the following contexts where Balkan (Romanian and Greek) subjunctive complements are allowed: complements of aspectual verbs like *start*, complement of causative verbs like *make* and (only in Modern Greek) complements of perception verbs like *see* and *hear*.

and Homeidi (1988) among others). The main reason for such a view is that *ʔan* and the indicative complementizer *ʔanna* may never co-occur. In the next section, I will show that the subjunctive particle *ʔan* displays properties not displayed by the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*. In section 4, I will suggest that *ʔan* occupies a position lower than indicative *ʔanna*.

3. THE PROPERTIES OF THE SUBJUNCTIVE PARTICLE *ʔAN*

As just mentioned, the subjunctive particle *ʔan* displays properties that are not displayed by the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*.

First, *ʔan* requires the embedded verb to be marked for the subjunctive mood whereas indicative *ʔanna* does not display such a requirement. Compare (4a) and (4b) below:

(4) a.   ʔufaddilu   ʔan   ya9rifa   al-walad-u   al-haqiiqat-a
          prefer.1.S.PRS PRT   know.3.S.SUB the-boy-NOM   the-truth-ACC
          'I prefer that the boy know the truth.'

    b.   ʔadhunnu   ʔanna al-walad-a   ya9rifu   al-haqiiqat-a
          think.1.S.PRS   that   the-boy-ACC   know.3.S.IND the-truth-ACC
          'I think that the boy knows the truth.'

Secondly, *ʔan* may not be separated from the embedded verb by a pre-verbal DP. Indicative *ʔanna*, however, may (and in fact has to) be separated from the embedded verb by a pre-verbal DP[3]. Thus, the sentences in (5) are ungrammatical because a pre-verbal subject DP (see (5a)) and a pre-verbal object DP (see (5b)) intervene between *ʔan* and the embedded verb. The sentences in (6) show that pre-verbal subject DPs and pre-verbal object DPs are allowed to intervene between the indicative complementizer *ʔanna* and the embedded verb.

(5) a. * ʔufaddilu   ʔan al-walad-u/a$_i$ ya9rifa   pro$_i$ al-haqiiqat-a
           prefer.1.S.PRS   PRT the-boy-NOM/ACC$_i$ know.3.S.SUB   pro$_i$ the-truth-ACC
           'I prefer that the boy know the truth.'

    b. * ʔufaddilu   ʔan al-haqiiqat-a/u$_i$ ya9rifa   haa$_i$ al-walad-u
           prefer.1.S.PRS   PRT the-truth-ACC/NOM$_i$ know.3.S.SUB   it$_i$ the-boy-NOM
           'I prefer that the boy know the truth.'

(6) a.   ʔadhunnu   ʔanna al-walad-a$_i$ ya9rifu   pro$_i$ al-haqiiqat-a
          think.1.S.PRS   that   the-boy-ACC$_i$ know.3.S.PRS   pro$_i$ the-truth-ACC
          'I think that the boy knows the truth.'

    b.   ʔadhunnu   ʔanna al-haqiiqat-a$_i$ ya9rifu   haa$_i$ al-walad-u
          think.1.S.PRS   that   the-truth-ACC$_i$ know.3.S.PRS   it$_i$ the-boy-NOM
          'I think that the boy knows the truth.'

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3   The indicative complementizer *ʔanna* is an accusative case assigner that may not be immediately followed by the embedded verb.

I am assuming here that pre-verbal object DPs and pre-verbal subject DPs are topicalized elements base-generated in an A-bar position (Spec of Topic Phrase) and co-indexed with a resumptive post-verbal pronoun. The resumptive pronoun is overt in the case of topicalized objects, and null in the case of topicalized subjects (see Ouhalla (1991), Plunkett (1993), and Alexiadou and Anagnastopoulou (1998) for the analysis of Arabic pre-verbal subjects as topics).

Thirdly, *ʔan* cannot co-occur with a null copula whereas indicative *ʔanna* can. Null copulas occur with non-verbal predicates, as illustrated in the root clause below:

(7)   al-walad-u   Ø   sa9iid-on
        the-boy-NOM   COP   happy-NOM
        'The boy is happy.'

Clauses involving null copulas cannot be embedded under subjunctive *ʔan*. In fact, subjunctive *ʔan* requires an overt copula marked for subjunctive mood as shown in (8a). However, root clauses involving null copulas can be embedded under indicative *ʔanna* as shown in (8b).

(8)   a.   ʔufaddilu   ʔan   yakuuna   al-walad-u   sa9iid-an
                prefer.1.S.PRS   PRT   COP.SUB   the-boy-NOM   happy.ACC
                'I prefer that the boy be happy.'

        b.   *ʔadhunnu   ʔanna al-walad-a   Ø   sa9iid-on
                think.1.S.PRS   that   the-boy-ACC   COP   happy-NOM
                'I think that the boy is happy.'

To summarize, *ʔan* displays three properties that are not displayed by the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*: (i) it requires the embedded verb to be marked for subjunctive mood, (ii) it may not be separated from the embedded verb by any pre-verbal DP, and (iii) it disallows null copulas. Thus, *ʔan* and *ʔanna* seem to be two complementizers with different properties. In the next section, however, I suggest that subjunctive *ʔan* is lower than the indicative complementizer *ʔanna* (and hence lower than CP). I will present evidence that the subjunctive particle *ʔan* actually occupies the same position as the negative future particle *lan*, which can be embedded under the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*.

4. THE POSITION OF THE SUBJUNCTIVE PARTICLE *ʔAN* AND THE NEGATIVE FUTURE PARTICLE *LAN*

The negative future particle *lan* is clearly lower than the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*. As just mentioned, *lan* can be embedded under *ʔanna*. This is illustrated in (9) below.

(9)   ʔadhunnu   ʔanna al-walad-a   lan   ya9rifa   al-haqiiqat-a
        think.1.S.PRS that   the-boy-ACC NEG.FUT   know.3.S.SUB   the-truth-ACC
        'I think that the boy will not the truth.'

Now, there is evidence that the subjunctive particle ʔan actually occupies the same position as the negative future particle lan. In fact, the three properties just shown to be displayed by ʔan are also displayed by lan.

First, like ʔan, lan requires the verb to be marked for subjunctive mood as shown in (10):

(10)   Lan   ya9rifa   al-walad-u   al-haqiiqat-a
        NEG.FUT   know.3.S.SUB   the-boy-NOM   the-truth-ACC
        'The boy will not know the truth.'

Secondly, as is the case with ʔan, lan does not allow pre-verbal DPs (topicalized subjects and objects) to intervene between it and the subjunctive verb, as shown in (11).

(11)   a.   *Lan   al-walad-u/-a$_i$ ya9rifa   pro$_i$ al-haqiiqat-a
              NEG.FUT   the-boy-NOM/ACC$_i$ know.3.S.SUB   pro$_i$ the-truth-ACC
              'The boy will not know the truth.'

        b.   *Lan   al-haqiiqat-u/-a$_i$ ya9rifa   haa$_i$ al-walad-u
              NEG.FUT   the-truth-NOM/ACC$_i$ know.3.S.SUB   haa$_i$ the-boy-NOM
              'The boy will not know the truth.'

Thirdly, lan is incompatible with a null copula (see (12a)). It always requires an overt copula marked for the subjunctive mood as shown in (12b):

(12)   a.   *Lan   al-walad-u   Ø   sa9iid-an
              NEG.FUT   the-boy-NOM   COP   happy-ACC
              'The boy will not be happy.'
        b.   Lan   yakuuna   al-walad-u   sa9iid-an
              NEG.FUT   COP.SUB   the-boy-NOM   happy-ACC
              'The boy will not be happy.'

Crucially, subjunctive ʔan may not co-occur with the negative future particle lan, as shown in (13).
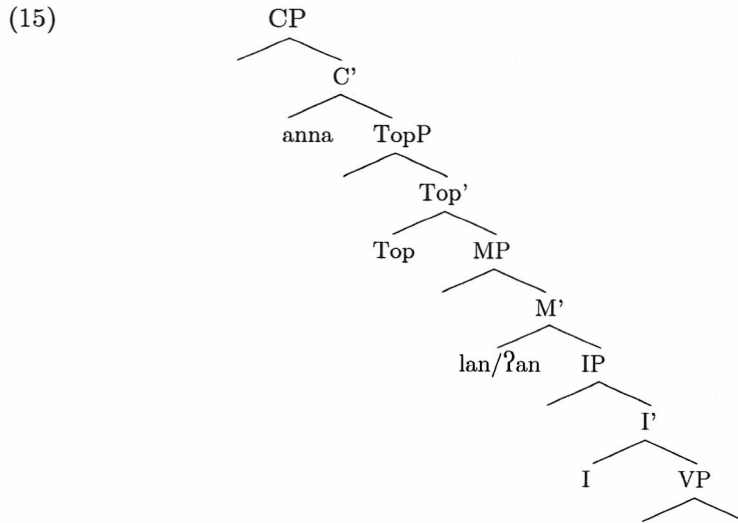
(13) * ʔarjuu   ʔan lan   ya9rifa   al-walad-u   al-haqiiqat-a
        hope.1.S.PRS PRT NEG.FUT   know.3.S.SUB   the-boy-NOM   the-truth-ACC
        'I hope that the boy will not know the truth.'

The ungrammaticality of (13) cannot be due to a semantic incompatibility between the verb yarjuu 'hope' and the future meaning encoded by lan. Evidence that yarjuu

'hope' is semantically compatible with *lan* comes form the fact that both can co-occur when the verb *yarjuu* 'hope' selects an indicative complement, as in (14).

(14) ʔarjuu   ʔanna al-walad-a   lan   ya9rifa   al-haqiiqat-a
      hope.1.S.PRS   that   the-boy-ACC   NEG.FUT know.3.S.SUB   the-truth-ACC
      'I hope that the boy will not know the truth.'

Thus, the fact that *ʔan* is in complementary distribution with the negative future particle *lan*, taken together with the fact that the properties displayed by *ʔan* are also displayed by *lan*, strongly suggests that both *ʔan* and *lan* occupy the same position[4]. If this is true, then subjunctive *ʔan* is not only lower than the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*, but it is also lower than the position of topics (Spec Topic Phrase), given that the word order displayed in embedded *lan*-clauses is: *ʔanna* + topic + *lan* + subjunctive verb. Thus, I would like to suggest that both subjunctive *ʔan* and the negative future particle *lan* occupy the head of a Mood Phrase (MP) dominated by a Topic Phrase. The Topic Phrase is in turn dominated by CP, as shown in (15).

(15)

```
                    CP
                   /  \
                      C'
                     /  \
                  anna   TopP
                        /   \
                          Top'
                         /   \
                       Top    MP
                             /  \
                                M'
                               /  \
                           lan/ʔan  IP
                                   /  \
                                      I'
                                     /  \
                                    I    VP
                                        /  \
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Note that the structure in (15) predicts that topics should be able to precede subjunctive *ʔan* as well as the negative future particle *lan*. In the next section, I will look at topicalization in subjunctive complements.
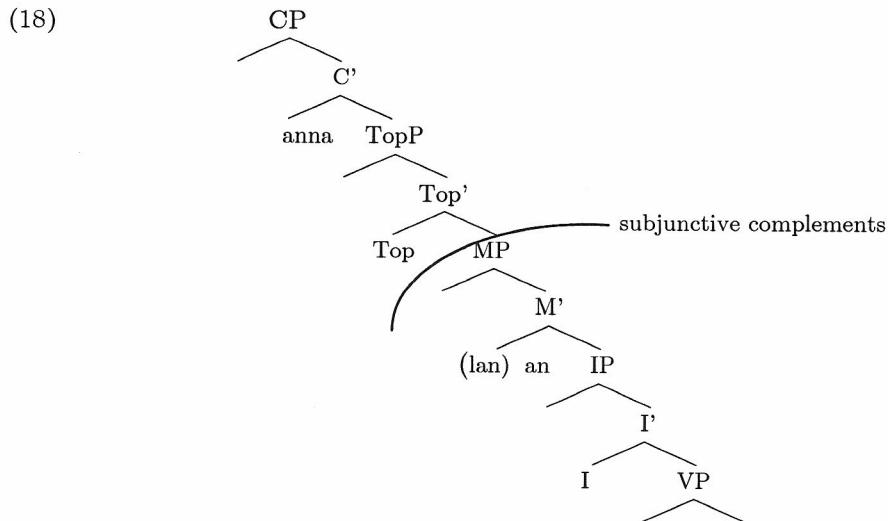
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4   It should be noted that other Arabic particles like future *sa* 'will' and Neg-past *lam* 'did not' also display the three properties displayed by *ʔan* and *lan* with the only difference that they are not subjunctive mood markers.

5. SUBJUNCTIVE COMPLEMENTS AS TRUNCATED MOOD PHRASES

As just mentioned, the structure proposed above predicts that both *lan* and *ʔan* can be preceded by topics. However, whereas the prediction is borne out for the negative future particle *lan*, it is not borne out for the subjunctive particle *ʔan*. As shown in (16a/b) below, *lan* can be preceded by topicalized subjects and objects in root clauses whereas subjunctive *ʔan* cannot (see 17a/b).

(16) a. al-walad-u$_i$ lan   ya9rifa   pro$_i$ al-haqiiqat-a
          the-boy-NOM$_i$ NEG.FUT   know.3.S.SUB pro$_i$ the-truth-ACC
          'The boy will not know the truth.'

      b. al-haqiiqat-u$_i$ lan   ya9rifa   haa$_i$ al-walad-u
          the-truth-NOM$_i$ NEG.FUT   know.3.S.SUB it$_i$ the-boy-NOM
          'The boy will not know the truth.'

(17) a. * ʔufaddilu   al-walad-u/-a$_i$ ʔan ya9rifa   pro$_i$ al-haqiiqat-a
          prefer.1.S.PRS   the-boy-NOM/-ACC$_i$ PRT know.3.S.SUB pro$_i$ the-truth-ACC
          'I prefer that the boy know the truth.'

      b. * ʔufaddilu   al-haqiiqat-a/-u$_i$ ʔan ya9rifa   haa$_i$ al-walad-u
          prefer.1.S.PRS   the-truth-ACC/-NOM$_i$ PRT know.3.S.SUB it$_i$ the-boy-NOM
          'I prefer that the boy know the truth.'

In order to account for the ungrammaticality of topics in subjunctive complements introduced by *ʔan*, one might suggest that these complements are truncated MP clauses that lack both a Topic Phrase and a CP as shown below. As for root *lan-*clauses, and *lan-* clauses embedded under the indicative complementizer *ʔanna*, they are full CPs.

(18)

```
              CP
             /  \
                 C'
                /  \
            anna   TopP
                  /   \
                      Top'
                     /   \
                 Top    MP  ——— subjunctive complements
                       /  \
                           M'
                          /  \
                    (lan) an   IP
                              /  \
                                  I'
                                 /  \
                               I    VP
                                   /  \
```

Of course the truncation analysis suggested here needs further development and motivation. This will be left for further research. I just would like to note before concluding that a truncation analysis of subjunctive complements have been suggested by Rochette (1988) for Romance and by Motapanyane (1990) and Kempchinsky (1997) for Romanian.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have examined subjunctive clauses in Modern Standard Arabic with a special focus on the status of the subjunctive particle *ʔan*. I have made two suggestion: first, I have suggested that the subjunctive particle *ʔan* does not head CP. Rather, it heads a Mood Phrase (MP) projected lower than CP and Topic Phrase. Secondly, I have proposed that subjunctive complements are truncated Mood Phrases that lack CP and Topic Phrase. Evidence that subjunctive *ʔan* is lower than CP and Topic Phrase comes from the fact that the properties that *ʔan* displays are also displayed by the negative future particle *lan* which can be embedded under the indicative compelmentizer *ʔanna*. As for the suggestion that subjunctive complements are truncated clauses that lack a CP and a Topic Phrase, it was made here to account for the fact that subjunctive complements do not allow topicalization.

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RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article, j'examine les propositions subjonctives en arabe standard moderne, particulièrement le statut de la particule subjonctive *ʔan* qui introduit ces compléments. Je fais deux suggestions. D'abord, je suggère que la particule subjonctive *ʔan* n'est pas à la tête de CP, mais plutôt à la tête d'un syntagme modal dominé par le CP et par un syntagme topical. Ensuite je propose que les compléments subjonctifs en arabe sont des syntagmes modaux tronqués auxquels il manque à la fois le CP et le syntagme topical. La troncation rend compte du fait que les topiques ne sont pas grammaticaux dans les compléments subjonctifs.