RESEARCH

Thetical markers within sentence grammar: Evidence from the Arabic thetical marker *ʕad*

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Thetical markers (i.e., words or phrases that have metatextual/metacommunicative functions that relate to the situation in which discourse takes place) are normally viewed as 'non-syntactic phenomena that pose a problem for syntactic analysis (Burton-Roberts 2005)', (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 853). This is because they are supposed not to be restricted to the syntax of the host utterance. In this paper, we bring evidence that challenges this view, arguing that thetical markers can be accommodated within sentence grammar. Firstly, we establish the evidence that *ʕad* in Jordanian Arabic is a thetical marker whose primary function is to provide a comment or supplementary information that also describes the speaker's attitude. Secondly, we show that the variant position of *ʕad* on the surface is a direct result of the movement (or base-generation) of part of the utterance to the Specifier position of the projection headed by *ʕad*. Additionally, the so-called cooptation (a process that redefines lexical words as theticals) is shown to lack solid evidence to take over instead of grammaticalization which is normally affiliated with sentence grammar.

1 Introduction

Discourse markers, as a general umbrella of metatextual/metacommunicative words, are regarded as strong evidence that grammar subsumes levels above syntax (Murphy 1993; Fischer 2010; Urgelles-Coll 2010; Bayer & Obenauer 2011; Jarrah et al. 2019). This is mainly because the role of these expressions is supposed not to be captured using (conventional) sentence grammar. Their functions are by and large discoursal/situational that, among other things, increase text coherence and place the host utterance in a wider perspective that essentially revolves around the speaker-hearer interaction. Their presence is also taken as a supporting argument that discourse has its own components that are *quite* different from sentence components. This alludes to the assumption that discourse should have its own grammar (Kaltenböck et al. 2011, 2019; Kaltenböck & Heine 2014, etc.). For instance, many discourse markers are, as proposed by some, non-syntactic constituents whose occurrence is hard to figure out using syntactic theory that depends on constituency, for the most part (ibid).

In view of this, several proposals have been put forward to demarcate the fundamentals of discourse grammar. One major example in this regard is the so-called thetical grammar which is proposed by Kaltenböck et al. (2011) in order to account for the elements which do not have a contribution to the propositional meaning of the host utterance. For instance, consider the following example:

(1)   a. He put the chair between you and me.

        b. He failed the exam, between you and me.

        c.? Between you and me he put the chair.

        d. Between you and me, he failed the exam.   (Quirk et al. 1985: 1626)

The expression *between you and me* in (1a) is a constituent which is semantically part of the propositional content of its utterance. It is syntactically restricted as shown in (1c). On the other hand, *between you and me* in (1b) is a thetical marker that is syntactically and propositionally independent of its host utterance (see 1d). According to Kaltenböck et al. (2011), the expression *between you and me*, as a thetical marker, is part of a structure consisting of a thetical plus its anchor, i.e., the utterance where the thetical is interpolated. This expression is also positionally mobile. According to Kaltenböck et al. (2011), the mobility of thetical markers pose obvious problems to syntax where linearization is computed according to a set of well-defined conditions that may not predict this mobility. In this connection, several approaches are advanced to account for their presence in their host utterance.

> There are a number of differences among these authors, especially on the question of where exactly theticals are to be located. For most of these authors, theticals are not constituents of any structure but are integrated into the anchor utterance in some kind of "post-syntactic procedure", e.g., via a discourse-governed process of linearization (Dehé & Kavalova 2006) or at the pragmatic level of utterance interpretation (Espinal 1991; Haegeman 1991; Burton-Roberts 1999; Averintseva-Klisch 2008). (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 877)

According to several authors, Thetical Grammar (TG) is reduced to being a structural appendage of Sentence Grammar (SG). On the contrary, Kaltenböck et al. (2011) argue that theticals are indicative of an independent domain of linguistic processing. In other words, TG is promoted to a linguistic domain that is not affected by operations that occur in the sentence domain. In this

regard, the presence of theticals is accounted for through a process called cooptation, "whereby the grammatical resources available in one domain, namely SG, are recruited for designing information units in another domain, i.e. that of TG" (Kaltenböck et al, 2011: 878).

In this paper, we provide evidence that this is not always the case. Thetcials' mobility and their pragmatic functions can be captured through the use of sentence grammar. Although the position of theticals in the utterance is not semantically significant, it is, as we show, pragmatically important, a point which is also neatly accommodated under sentence grammar. Our main evidence comes from ʕad, in Jordanian Arabic (JA),[1] which is proven as a thetical marker, with no propositional/semantic value, that pragmatically contributes to its utterance. Nonetheless, its syntactic position and interaction with its host utterance are readily accounted for using SG. This way, we cast doubt on the controversial issue that the presence of theticals poses problems to SG. This ultimately achieves the desideratum that grammar is a simplified procedure of sentence building and discourse processing as it only resorts to SG. Additionally, we show that cooptation is not warranted and does not constitute evidence against SG nor speak in favor of TG.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 introduces some background information on ʕad. Section 3 provides evidence that ʕad functions as a polite disagreement marker in Jordanian Arabic. Here we show that the position of ʕad (sentence-initially vs. sentence-finally) is subject to the information value of the evidence on which the speaker builds his/her disagreement. Section 4 discusses the theticalization of ʕad which is shown to provide a comment or supplementary information or describe the speaker's attitude. Section 5 presents a syntactic analysis of ʕad showing that SG accounts for the behavior of ʕad. Section 6 discusses the cooptation/grammaticalization of ʕad. Section 7 includes the conclusion of the paper.

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[1] Jordanian Arabic (JA) is a variety of Arabic spoken in Jordan by approximatealy 9 million speakers. See Al-Shawashreh (2016), Jarrah (2017, 2019), among others, for works on several syntactic aspects of Jordanian Arabic.

2 Background

In this section, we first touch on the lexical use of *ʕad* as a verb that literally means *returned*. Afterwards, we focus on its discoursal function that is shown to essentially express the speaker's emotive attitude towards the hearer's respective utterance. Such an attitude is mainly interpreted as an expression of the speaker's disagreement, with the hearer's utterance, which is politely perceived by the hearer. The speaker builds his/her disagreement on evidence which is either already known or new to the hearer, a matter that is proven to delimit the position of *ʕad* in its utterance. *ʕad* is followed by the new evidence whereas it is preceded by the given evidence.

ʕad can be used as a lexical verb in Jordanian Arabic (JA) meaning 'returned', normally followed by another verb as in (2):[2]

(2) ʔiz-zalameh   ʕad   ħaka   maʕ-i:

     DEF-man   return.PST.3SG.M   talk.PST.3SG.M   with-me

     bi-l-mawðˤuːʕ

     in-DEF-subject

     Literally: 'The man returned talking with me about the subject.'

     Idiomatically: 'The man retalked to me about the subject.'

As a lexical verb, *ʕad* can be used in the present or the future tenses. It is also inflected for agreement with its subject, as shown in (3):

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[2] Note here that the verb *radʒaʕ* in JA can also be used as an equivalent to lexical *ʕad*. The choice between them depends on the region where it is spoken (mainly Beduoin vs. non-Beduoin).

(3) ʔil-binit   bitʕu:d/raħ   tʕu:d   tiħki:

DEF-girl   return.PRS.3SG.F/will   return   talk.IMPF.3SG.F

maʕ-i: bi-l-mawðˤu:ʕ

with-me   in-DEF-subject

'The girl returns/will return talking with me about the subject.'

On the other hand, ʕad is often used as a discourse marker with no propositional meaning whatsoever; its dropping does not affect the truth conditionality of its host utterance, as shown in (4).

(4) (ʕad) ʔil-mawðˤu:ʕ   muhim

PRT   DEF-subject   important

'The subject is important (by the way).'

The fact that particle ʕad does not affect the propositional content of its host utterance indicates that it undergoes semantic bleaching. Moreover, particle ʕad is no longer inflectable for its subject. It has a fixed morphological form that is insensitive to its syntactic environment with respect to its subject's φ-content, as witnessed by the following examples:

(5) (ʕad) ʔil-mawa:ðˤi:ʕ   muhimeh

PRT   DEF-subjects.3PL.M   important

'The subjects are important.'

(6) (**ʕad**) ʔil-magalaat   muhimeh

     PRT   DEF-essay.3PL.F   important

     'The essays are important.'

As evidently clear, particle *ʕad* no longer functions as a verb which is a sign of its decategorization. This is also empirically supported by the fact that particle *ʕad* can appear sentence-finally (and to a lesser extent sentence-medially); particle *ʕad* is thus not restricted to one position in the sentence, as is shown in sentence (7).

(7) ʔil-magalaat   (**ʕad**)   muhimeh   (**ʕad**)

     DEF-essay.3PL.F   PRT   important   PRT

     'The essays are important.'

Following Heine et al.'s (2019) definition of discourse markers, we propose that *ʕad* is qualified as a discourse marker being an invariable expression which is syntactically independent from its environment.

In the following section, we discuss the metatextual pragmatic function of *ʕad*, supported by naturalistic examples, taken from a larger corpus of JA.[3]

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[3] The corpus is collected from interviews with 40 Jordanian Arabic speakers, who belong to different age groups and from the two sexes. Every interview lasted at least one hour. The main topics include fashion, daily matters, personal relations, etc. The whole corpus reached approximately half-million words.

3 ʕad as a disagreement marker

One main property of ʕad is that it does not start a discourse or is used as a topic shifter. Some previous discourse is necessary for its presence. We take this as a strong indication that this marker acts essentially as a connective that sticks together different parts of the same discourse. Concrete evidence can be offered that this marker encodes disagreement that is not face-threatening. ʕad's disagreement is not set to evaluate one interlocutor's utterance but brings to the fore some evidence (that is mainly based either on the speaker's interpersonal knowledge with the hearer or on his/her encyclopedic information) that would challenge the occurrence of the relevant utterance. This evidence can either be new or given for the hearer (according to the speaker). Here the discussion of the variable position of ʕad becomes significant. According to our corpus, ʕad normally is followed by the information that the speaker and the hearer are familiar with. On the other hand, ʕad appears sentence-finally when the speaker provides challenging evidence that the hearer may not be familiar with. For instance, consider the following exchange between two friends regarding one's recent picnic.

(8)   Speaker A: ʔimba:riħ   ma-tˤlaʕna: tˤaʃʃeh

                    yesterday   NEG-go.out.3PL.M   outing

                    'Yesterday, we did not go out for a picnic.'

       Speaker B: ʔidʒ-dʒaw   ka:n   ħilu   **ʕad**

                    DEF-weather   be.PST.3SG.M   nice   PRT

                    'The weather was really nice.'

In (8), the fact that yesterday's weather was nice is evidently familiar to both interlocutors. This may imply that Speaker's B utterance is redundant as it brings old information that the hearer is well-aware of. This begs two questions: why this old information is used by Speaker B in the first place and second, why *ʕad* is used alongside this old information. One initial impression is that *ʕad* is an old-information marker. This is right as long as we link the presence of old information with final-*ʕad*. According to our corpus as well as native speakers' judgements, final-*ʕad* is preceded by a chunk of information that is normally shared between the interlocutors. This chunk expresses the speaker's own judgement as a disagreement towards the relevant utterance. For instance, Speaker B mentions the fact that the weather was nice so as to politely voice his disagreement with Speaker A's decision not to go out. This disagreement is established on Speaker B's encyclopedic knowledge that picnicking in Jordan normally happens when the weather is nice. *ʕad* has the effect that this voicing is mitigated resulting in that the hearer's face is not threatened.[4] The hearer understands the speaker's disagreement as a polite attempt to comment on his contribution. Consider the following dialogue as another example that revolves around the submission of one of the interlocutor's brother to a job:

(9)   Speaker A: ʔaxui   ma-gadam-iʃ   li-l-waðiˤifeh

                        bother-my   NEG-apply.PST.3SG.M-NEG   to-DEF-job

                        ʔilli   b-ʃirkit-ku

                        that   in-company-your

                        'My brother did not apply for the job at your company.'

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[4] Our account of disagreement in this paper draws on Goffman's (1955) notion of face and its later developments in Leech (1983) and Brown & Levinson (1987).

Speaker B:	mu:ʔihilat-u	ʕalijeh	ʕad
	credentials-his	high	PRT

'His credentials are high.'

Speaker A:	mirta:ħ	bi-waðˤift-u
	comfortable	in-job-his

'He is comfortable in [his current] job.'

Speaker B voices his disagreement about Speaker A's statement that his brother did not apply for the new job. Now this disagreement is supplemented by evidence which Speakers A and B are both familiar with. Speaker B's utterance is read as follows: I disagree with this statement given the evidence that I have, and this evidence is known to you as well. Speaker B does not only express his disagreement but also brings evidence whose existence mitigates the hearer's face threatening. In these cases, Speaker B's utterance is understood as a regret that Speaker A in his last utterance attempts to alleviate through explaining why this happened despite the evidence that speaker A furnishes.

An additional example of sentence-final ʕad is given in dialogue (10) which revolves around one's refusal to go for a job in the wealthy Gulf region:

(10)   Speaker A: ʔidʒdʒan-i   ʔakθar   min   ʕarðˤ

                    receive.PST.3SG.M-1   several   from   offer

                    ʕala   l-xali:dʒ   wa-ma-rðˤi:t

                    on   DEF-Gulf   and-NEG-accept.PST.1SG

                    'I received several [job] offers from the Gulf, but I did not accept.'

       Speaker B: ʔir-rawa:tib   ʔikθi:r   ʔimni:ħa   **ʕad**

                    DEF-salaries   much   good   PRT

                    'The salaries are pretty good.'

       Speaker A: baʕrif   bas   ka:n   ʕin-di

                    know.1SG   but   be.PST.3SG.M   with-me

                    ðˤuruf   kθi:r

                    circumstances many

                    'I know, but I had many circumstances.'

As shown in the dialogue above, Speaker A informs Speaker B that he did not go to the Gulf (to get a rewarding job). Now, Speaker B voices his disagreement using *ʕad*. This disagreement is shown to be built on evidence that the hearer already knows about, from the speaker's perspective. Speaker A affirms that he already knows this.

On the other hand, *ʕad* can appear sentence-initially. However, it does not mark old evidence but new evidence that the hearer might not be aware of, to the best of the speaker's knowledge. Consider the following dialogue that revolves around one acquaintance's problem:

(11)   Speaker A: ʔiʃ-ʃurtˤa   bijdawru: ʕala   musˤtˤafa

DEF-police   search.PRS.3PL.M   on   Mustafa

'The police are looking for Mustafa.'

Speaker B: **ʕad**   ʔil-muħami   bijɡu-la-k

PRT   DEF-lawyer   say.PRS.3SG.M-to-you

ma-ʔil-u   ʕala:qa

NEG-to-him   relation

'The lawyer says [Mustafa] has nothing to do with it.'

Speaker A: ħata   walaw

Even   though

'Even though!'

Speaker B provides information that Speaker A does not know. Speaker's B statement that the lawyer confirms that Mustafa does not have a relation (with the subject matter under discussion) poses a challenge to Speaker's A statement that the police are looking for Mutsafa. This challenge includes information that Speaker A is not aware of, hence the use of *ʕad* at the beginning of the sentence.

This pairing between the position of *ʕad* and the information structure of the host utterance is also supported by the following example.

(12)   Speaker A: maħallat   ʔil-mala:bis   xasra:neh   bi-ʔirbid

                      stores   DEF-clothes   losing   in-Irbid

                      'Clothes stores are losing [money] in Irbid.'

        Speaker B: **ʕad**   ʔil-baladijeh   gallalat   ʔir-rusum

                      PRT   DEF-municipality   reduced   DEF-fees

                      ʔiða   ma-btaʕrifiʃ

                      If   NEG-know-not

                      'The municipality reduced the fees as you may know.'

        Speaker A: qara:r   munasib   fi-he:k   fatra

                      decision   wise   in-this   period

                      '[This is] a wise decision at this time.'

Speaker B uses *ʕad* at the beginning of her statement expecting that Speaker A is not familiar with this information. This is evident by the use of the expression *ʔiða ma-btaʕrifiʃ* 'if you do not know already' which is used in Arabic as a polite way to update interlocutors' knowledge. Note also that Speaker B challenges Speaker A's statement that clothes stores do not make any profits because the local council reduced the fees which are understood to be the main reason behind this loss. In such cases, *ʕad* functions as an evaluative disagreement marker that invites the hearer to reevaluate his/her decision based on new evidence.

This being the case, ʕad is a disagreement marker that draws on either new information or old information, a matter which is mirrored in the syntactic position it occupies with respect to its accompanying utterance.[5]

4   ʕad as a thetical marker

In view of the discussion above, ʕad can be qualified as a thetical discourse marker following Kaltenböck et al.'s (2011) definition of theticals which are defined as a word, a phrase, a clause, or even a chunk that does not form any syntactic constituent and has no semantic meaning. Firstly, ʕad, as we have shown earlier, does not necessarily contribute to the propositional meaning of its host utterance. It only voices the speaker's disagreement towards the hearer's statement, following some evidence that is shown to be either new or old (to the hearer) according to the speaker's knowledge. This gives rise to the issue that ʕad does not constitute a grammatical argument of any predicate nor does it form any type of constituency with any member of its utterance, something that may account for its optionality in its utterance. Furthermore, ʕad can be interpolated at either periphery of its utterance. This results in its mobility in the utterance. However, this interpolation is, as we show below, licensed by the sentence grammar (SG), contra Kaltenböck et al's (2011) assumption that interpolation and mobility of theticals are hard to be captured through SG. This implies that the occurrence of ʕad

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[5] ʕad can also be used meaning *already*, normally with an emotive attitude of regret or surprise by the speaker. Consider the following exchange:

(i)   Speaker A: ʔil-bank ʔil-ʔahli   ʕamel   quru:sˤ ʃaxsˤijeh   kθi:reh
                 DEF-bank   DEF-Ahli   doing   loans   personal   many
                 'The National Bank is offering a lot of personal loans.'
       Speaker B: **ʕad**   ʔana   sˤurt   ma:xið min   bank   ʔil-qahira
                 PRT   I   already taken   from   bank   DEF-Cairo
                 'I already took [a loan] from Cairo Bank.'

Speaker B's utterance expresses the speaker's regret that he could not apply for loans from the National Bank because he already took one from Cairo Bank. Note here that Speaker B uses ʕad at the beginning of the utterance to indicate that the informational content of his utterance is new to the hearer who does not know this beforehand. This is consistent with our general view of ʕad that its syntactic position is strongly associated with the true informational content of the accompanying utterance (new vs. old).

is licensed by the syntax of its anchor. Our view that *ʕad* being a thetical yet licensed through SG strongly indicates that a thetical marker does not pose a challenge to SG and at the same time is never support of the so-called thetical grammar which is perceived of as an independent domain of grammar that has its own principles.

The first impression for *ʕad* appearing in different positions in the utterance is that its discourse-specific function is not the same in each position it occupies. We show that this impression cannot be pursued. *ʕad* has one syntactic position, whereas its variant positions on the surface result from movement of other members of its utterance. This is inconsistent with many authors who converge on portraying thetical markers as "non-syntactic" phenomena that pose a problem for syntactic analysis (Burton-Roberts, 2005).

Additional evidence that *ʕad* is a thetical marker comes from the fact that it is typically set off from its accompanying utterance by a pause which is associated with a distinct intonation contour. This is consistent with Grenoble (2004) who notes that theticals are "signaled by a higher pitch at the beginning of the thetical and declination throughout" (p. 1972). Likewise, Burton-Roberts (2005: 180) maintains that all theticals "are marked off from their anchors by some form of punctuation in writing or special intonation contour in speech." This is evidence that *ʕad* is prosodically non-integrated into the accompanying utterance.

Additionally, *ʕad* is not semantically part of its utterance but rather concerns the speaker-hearer interaction. *ʕad* , as has been described above, serves to clarify and characterize the evidence on which the speaker builds his/her argument to regret/challenge the hearer's statement based on new/old information; hence *ʕad* has a role in information structure (Taglicht 1984; Brandt 1996). Furthermore, *ʕad,* being a non-propositional marker, does not contribute to the assertive content of its utterance (cf. Potts, 2002). What also supports the idea that *ʕad* is a thetical marker is the

fact that it is not sensitive to negation. In other words, it does not interact with the negation used in the sentence. Further, following Kaltenböck et al (2011), *ʕad* can also be qualified as a thetical marker because it has a mitigating function (i.e., a type of attenuation that can be used to modify illocutionary force. It reduces anticipated negative effects on speech acts; Holmes 1984, cf. Harb 2016, 2020). Although *ʕad* is used to convey a different opinion/perspective, it is still perceived politely. With this being the case, *ʕad* sevres a clear discourse-pragmatic function which helps define it functionally (see Grenoble 2004 for the relation between theticals (or parentheticals in her terms) and pragmatic functions).

This all points to the fact that *ʕad* helps determine the situation of discourse. This determination is executed through main roles. Firstly, *ʕad* contributes to the text organization through providing supplementary information that regerts/challenges the interlocutor's statements and ultimately helps in coherent interpretation of its text. *ʕad* functions as a repair that includes correction which is viewed as a polite disagreement that is sometimes understood to be contrastive reformulation. Consider the following example:

(13) Speaker A:

dʒaːra-naː	abu:	ʔimħamad	tˤafraːn
neighbour-our	father	Mohammad	broke
ʕali-h	djuːun	kθiːr	
on-he	debts	many	

'Our neighbor, Abu Mohammad, is broke; he owes a lot of money.'

Speaker B:	ya	zalameh	**ʕad**	ʔiz-zalameh	muhandis
	O	man	PRT	DEF-man	engineer

	w-ʕind-hum		maħalla:t	kθi:r	ʔi:ða:	ma-btʕarifi-ʃ
	and-they-have		stores	many	if	NEG-know-NEG

'O man! The man is an engineer and they have many stores if you do not know.'

Speaker A:	wallah	tˤajib	li:ʃ	he:k
	by-God	well	why	this

'Oh yeah why is that [he is broke]?'

Speaker B's utterance is meant to reformulate Speaker's A statement which is challenged by the evidence that Speaker B evaluates as new for the hearer. This evaluation is borne out given Speaker A's astonishment realized through the surprise expression *wallah*.

ʕad also evaluates the source of information (SI) with respect to its givenness. ʕad marks the challenging information that is considered by the hearer; it does not come with information that the hearer might not find authentic. When ʕad is used along non-authentic information, it is mainly a source of humour, as shown in the following dialogue:

(14)   Speaker A: mudi:r   ʔil-madarseh   ma-gibil   ʔil-iʕtira:ðˤ

                 principal   DEF-school   NEG-accept   DEF-appeal

                 min   aji   waħad

                 from   any   one

                 'The school principal did not accept the appeal from anyone.'

       Speaker B: ʃikluh   latˤi:f   **ʕad**

                 looking   nice   PRT

                 'He looks nice.'

       Speaker A: btitxawaθ   ʃu: ʕala:qit   ʔiʃ-ʃikil

                 Kidding-you   what   relation   DEF-looking

                 'You must be kidding. What's that to do with the way he looks?'

Additionally, *ʕad* expresses the attitudes of the speaker in that it reflects the speaker's own regret when *ʕad* appears sentence-finally. The disagreement that is encoded by final *ʕad* is understood as the speaker regrets the hearer's choice following old evidence that is already known by the hearer which is supposed to bypass it, as in (9) reproduced here as (15):

(15) Speaker A: Ɂaxu-i   magadam-iʃ   lil-waðiˤifeh   Ɂilli

                  bother-my   apply.3SG.M-NEG   to-DEF-job   that

                  biʃʃirkitku

                  in-company-your

                  'My brother did not apply for the job at your company.'

      Speaker B: mu:Ɂihilatu   ˤalijeh   **ˤad**

                  credentials-his   high   PRT

                  'His credentials are high.'

      Speaker A: mirta:ħ   bi-waðˤift-u

                  comfortable   in-job-his

                  'He is comfortable in [his current] job.'

In view of this, *ˤad* orchestrates the speaker-hearer interaction in that it creates a plane where interlocutors can communicate efficiently through voicing their stands which are in most part challenging or regretting (on the part of the speaker) and defending or surprising (on the part of the hearer). All of this interaction builds primarily on the shared knowledge of the interlocutors, especially when it is related to the preceding discourse. This explicates *ˤad*'s role in discourse setting. In some other cases, the speaker using initial *ˤad* resorts to his/her world knowledge 'beyond that derived from the situation of discourse but presumed to be shared by the interlocutors in justifying the utterance or placing it in a wider context' (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 863).

Following the structural typology of theticals proposed by Kaltenböck et al. (2011), ʕad can be viewed as a formulaic particle. It is a non-compositional information unit. It is morpho-syntactically unanalyzable, tends to be positionally flexible and to express functions that are mostly procedural, and they relate to the situation of discourse rather than to sentence syntax.
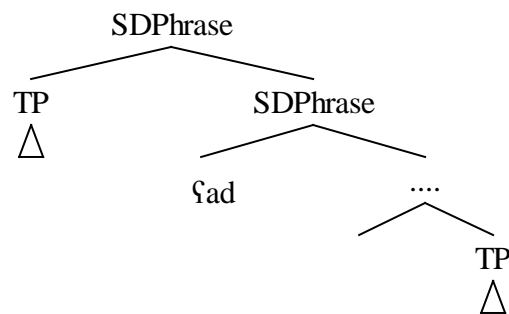
In the following section, we introduce a syntactic analysis of ʕad which among other things accounts for its variant position in its host utterance. The goal of this section is to bring evidence that sentence grammar is an efficient model of sentence structure that elegantly accommodates theticals once the cartographic framework (Rizzi 1997, et seq.,) is enacted.

5   The syntax of *ʕad*

One main advancement in the current syntactic theory is the cartographic approach of syntactic structures, a model that allows functional projections that account for the presence of discourse particles. The first version of this model is Rizzi's (1997) where the canonical CP is split into discrete projections which are sensitive to discourse-interpretive properties of the relevant elements (being a focus or a topic). A further advancement of the CP domain is the postulation of the so-called Speaker Deixis (SD) (Tenny 2000). SDPhrase is projected in the CP domain so as to 'anchor a proposition to a speaker' (as cited in Haegeman 2006: 1662). In other words, once SDPhrase is projected, the propositional content of the utterance is evaluated by the speaker, hence the term *anchoring*. We propose that ʕad is a syntactic head that projects SDPhrase. This is mainly supported by the fact that when using ʕad the speaker evaluates the relevant utterance being old or new, hence the position of ʕad in its sentence. This evaluation is completely anchored by the speaker's interpersonal and encyclopedic knowledge of the hearer and/or the situation. The projection of SDPhrase makes sure that such anchoring is syntactically accomplished.

We propose that *ʕad* occupies the head of SDPhrase irrespective of its surface position in its utterance. This directly begs the question of how the final position of *ʕad* is accounted for. Following our analysis of the utterance that is ended with *ʕad* being an expression of given information, we propose that the whole utterance undergoes phrasal movement to Specifier position of SDPhrase. This movement is motivated under the grounds that given information (i.e. topical information) in Arabic tends to move to/base-generated in the left periphery in Arabic (see Soltan 2007; Jarrah 2019). Under our developed proposal this movement does not target Topic Phrase, a separate layer of articulate CP, but Spec, of SDPhrase which anchors the relevant constituent to the speaker and marks its topicality for both the speaker and the hearer. This is schematically shown in the following tree diagram:
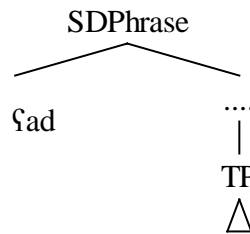
(16)

```
                    SDPhrase
                   /        \
                 TP          SDPhrase
                 △          /        \
                          ʕad         ....
                                     /    \
                                          TP
                                          △
```

On the other hand, when *ʕad* appears sentence-initially, there is no such movement as the utterance expresses new information which is assumed to remain in situ in the Arabic clause structure as long as no contrastive reading is intended (see Moutaouakil 1989; Ouhalla 1997; Jarrah & Abusalim 2020). In such cases, SDPhrase is still projected anchoring the whole

utterance to the speaker. In other words, the fact that the whole utterance expresses new information is evaluated on the part of the speaker. Consider the following schematic representation of new-information utterances.

(17)

```
                    SDPhrase
                   /        \
                ʕad          ....
                              |
                             TP
                             △
```

In either case, *ʕad* has only one position in the sentence, while any variance regarding its position on the surface results from the movement of the utterance to the SPEC position of its projection. In so doing, sentence grammar (represented here by syntactic structures) is deemed to be capable of accounting for the behaviour of thetical markers, and there is no need for a new domain of sentence and discourse processing (i.e., Thetical Grammar) that ultimately complicates grammar.[6] Our analysis of *ʕad* implies that theticals are restricted to the placement rules of SG. The notion that freedom of theticals being non-restricted to SG is important to enable the speaker to present information in the most strategic position of an utterance is not evidence that this placement cannot be captured through the rules of SG. Additionally, *ʕad* under

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[6] Alshamari (2017) explores the use of *ʕad* in North Hail Arabic, proposing that it is a topic marker. Under his analysis, *ʕad* does not normally start nor end its utterance. It is often preceded by one element that is shown to be the topic of the sentence as shown in the following example:
(i)   l-radʒa:l ʕad   Omar   ʃaf-uh
        Def-man   **PRT**   Omar   see.PST.3S.M-him
        'As for the man, Omar saw him.' (p. 27)
l-radʒa:l is argued to be the topic of discourse that 'has been shifted from at an earlier point of the conversation' (p. 26). On the other hand, Sowayan (1982: 58) regards *ʕad*, as an interjective particle predominantly in central areas of Najd.
(ii)   w-la-ʔadri   ʕad   wiʃu   qal
        and-Neg-know.I   PRT   what   said.3SM
        'And I didn't know what he said.'
In Jordanian Arabic, *ʕad* normally appears sentence initially or finally, marking the information type of the relevant utterance.

our proposal is a head, hence a syntactic constituent which is deemed to be the characteristic property of SG, but not TG. Although *ʕad* is shown to be ruled by SG, it still plays an important role in structuring linguistic interaction, being at times more central to the communicative goals of speakers. It attends to the immediate communicative needs of the discourse situation. This casts doubt on the need of Espinal's (1991) three-dimensional syntactic model which is used as an argument in favour of TG. This model permits the speaker to temporarily escape the narrow confines of linearity. *ʕad* 's mobility in positioning and scope assignment are well-captured through SG rules.

This discussion begs the question of the source of *ʕad* being a discourse marker that functions to voice the speaker's polite disagreement and mark the informational content of the utterance with respect to giveness vs. newness. There are two main views that can be embraced in this regard. *ʕad* is a grammaticalized element that is developed from lexical *ʕad* over a period of time, or *ʕad* is a coopted thetical marker with no diachronic history. In the following section, we discuss these two options arguing that although *ʕad* can be qualified as a coopted thetical, its grammaticalization cannot be dismissed.

6 *ʕad* between cooptation and grammaticalization

According to Kaltenböck et al. (2011), most theticals have the same form as "corresponding" forms of SG because they are the result of a cognitive-communicative operation called cooptation defined as "a packaging strategy whereby a clause, a phrase, a word, or any other unit is taken from SG and is coopted (or re-defined) for use as a thetical" (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 875). For example, *really* can be a coopted thetical in (18b), hence it is a unit of thetical grammar.

(18)   a. Bob is **really** a poet. = *unit of SG*

       b. Bob is a poet, **really**. = *unit of TG*

For Kaltenböck et al. (2011), *really* in (18b) no is no longer a prosodic or syntactic part of the clause, and its meaning is neither restricted by the rules of SG but is rather shaped by the situation of discourse , serving (a) to package text segments, (b) to overcome constraints imposed by linearization in structuring texts, (c) to increase text coherence, (d) to place a text in a wider perspective, e.g. by elaborating, providing an explanation, a comment or supplementary information, (e) to interact with the hearer, and/or (f) to describe the attitudes of the speaker.

  However, Kaltenböck et al. (2011) did not explain how *really* is no longer a syntactic part of the clause. The fact that *really* appears at the end of the sentence and has some function relating to the situation of the discourse does not warrant the assumption that SG is unable to account for its presence. For instance, *really* in (18b) can be analyzed analogous to question tags which undoubtedly is part of sentence grammar. According to Kaltenböck et al. (2011), there is no approach based exclusively on conventional syntax of any kind that would be able to offer a satisfactory account for the properties of theticals (p. 876). This is not committal as no proof is provided apart from the claim that the theoretical notions that have been invoked to account for the syntactic behavior of theticals including movement, slifting, extraction, and extraposition are not enough to account for the behavior of theticals. Kaltenböck's et al. (2011) assumption that cooptation appears to be a cognitive operation that involves two different domains of discourse organization is never superior to grammaticalization or movement which is also a cognitive operation that takes place within one and the same domain. The cognitive advantages of

cooptation over movement are not discussed, which is a serious drawback within the TG. Following Kaltenböck et al. (2011), theticals are not constituents of the syntactic structure of the clause and should be integrated into the anchor utterance in some kind of a "post-syntactic procedure", e.g., via a discourse-governed process of linearization (Dehé & Kavalova 2006) or at the pragmatic level of utterance interpretation. For us, the syntactic behaviour of theticals can be easily accommodated under the SG, especially when the cartographic approach of syntactic structures is adopted.

Nothing a priori excludes the possibility that *really* in (18b) develops from *really* in (18a) over a period of time. The question that is important in this regard is whether thetical *really* is used along lexical *really* in the past, an important clue that decides whether *really* is a coopted or grammaticalized discourse marker. This issue is never explored in Kaltenböck et al. (2011). The claim that cooptation is an instantaneous operation whereby a unit of SG is used to serve as a thetical is a stipulation. The property of theticals whose meaning is shaped by its function in discourse (i.e., relates to the entire situation of discourse hence they scope over discourse; cf. Traugott & Dasher 2002) is also ascribed to discourse markers which are viewed as grammaticalized entities in several languages.

7 Conclusion

This paper explores the discourse function of *ʕad* as a polite disagreement marker that expresses the speaker's regret or astonishment of the hearer's previous statement. We have shown that *ʕad* syntactic position in its host utterance is significant as it is strongly tied to the informational type of the utterance. When *ʕad* occurs sentence-initially, it marks information that constitutes new evidence against the hearer's statement. On the other hand, when *ʕad* appears utterance-finally, the information that the speaker provides is given for the hearer to the best of the speaker's

knowledge. In the latter cases, the whole utterance is perceived of as a regret. We have also provided evidence that *ʕad* is a thetical marker following Kaltenböck's et al. (2011) terminology. We have shown, nonetheless, that *ʕad*'s syntactic behaviour can be captured through SG and is never evidence for TG. We also point to some problems that undermine the whole work of thetical grammar whose conceptual presence needs to be backed by empirical evidence, not only drawing on generalized statements with no theoretical power. Additionally, we have argued that cooptation is never evidence for the presence of TG under which no well-backed argument is furnished that coopted markers are not grammaticalized.

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