Documentation of Discourse-related Particles in North Hail Arabic

Alshamari Murdhy Radad[1,2]

[1] Hail University, Hail, Saudi Arabia,

[2] College of Arts, English Language Department

PhD student in Linguistics at Newcastle University, School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, UK, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE17RU

Correspondence: Alshamari Murdhy Radad, PhD student in Linguistics at Newcastle University, School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, UK, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE17RU

Received: November 19, 2015 Accepted: December 3, 2015 Online Published: December 7, 2015

doi:10.5430/elr.v4n4p44 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/elr.v4n4p44

Abstract

The current research investigates a range of discourse particles used in North Hail Arabic, a variety spoken in Saudi Arabia. It delves into their pragmatic functions related to discourse. Investigating 17 discourse particles, the current research argues that they are associated with specific discourse/pragmatics functions: speaker-positive, speaker-negative, evidentiality, and discourse coherence. Additionally, the current research introduces a general syntactic analysis for these particles, assuming that they are heads, associated with discourse features, have their own functional projections and are base-generated in the left periphery. It shows that these particles are different in terms of whether they are able to be resumed by a pronominal clitic or not. For this, the study attributes this behaviour to whether the given particle has a set of Φ-features (phi-features) or not. All in all, the current research is meant to bring these particles to the fore, suggesting them as a rich area for different linguistic domains (i.e., syntax, semantics, pragmatics, etc.).

Keywords: Discourse particles, North Hail Arabic, Resumption, Evidentiality, Coherence

1. Introduction

Varieties of Najdi Arabic show different mechanisms by which speaker's attitudes towards the propositional content of utterances can be expressed (cf. Ingham 1994). One example of this difference lies in the way discourse-related meanings are reflected. For instance, North Hail Arabic (NHA), one dialect of Najdi Arabic, utilizes a wide array of discourse particles (C-particles) that reflect speaker's meanings without contributing to the propositional content of the accompanying clause (cf. Hirschberg & Litman 1993). Such a use is mainly motivated by the issue that C-particles are endowed with a set of discourse interpretive properties which are able enough to deliver speaker's attitudes (Fischer 2006).

C-particles have currently been a fertile source for cross-linguistic research (Schourup 1999). Their semantic scope and interaction with different sentential components have attracted many researchers to work them out, attempting to explore their actual contribution to sentence processing (Fischer 1998, 2000, Stede & Schmitz 2000, Taboada 2006, Strauss & Xiang 2009, Taha *et al* 2014, and Al-Jarrah *et al* 2015). By the same token, C-particles have been increasingly used as clues for underlying sentence structure and left periphery. Their position and syntactic behaviour with core sentential arguments (i.e., subject and object) have been increasingly utilized as a window for how sentences are structured as far as syntax is concerned (Zimmermann 2004, 2011, Haegeman & Hill 2013, and Biberauer et al 2014).

On the other hand, although NHA and other Arabic dialects are rich in such particles, few studies explored or even documented them (see, Alshamari 2015a, b). Motivated by the importance of C-particles as well as the lack of studies dealing with them at the level of NHA, the current paper aims at documenting and partially analysing C-particles used in this Arabic variety. It precisely looks at bringing C-particles used in NHA to the fore, exploring their discourse functions. Furthermore, this research provides a syntactic account of the selected particles within the recent generative reasoning.

The main idea advanced is that, given the pragmatic function of the selected C-particles as well as their interaction with the C domain, I propose that they are C-related particles, instantiating their own projections (Cruschina 2009),

and are syntactically positioned in the speaker-related domain (cf. Sheehan and Biberauer 2011 and Struckmeier 2014), i.e., the left periphery in the sense of Rizzi (1997). In addition, following Aikhenvald (2004), I propose that some NHD discourse particles are first used to express speaker's attitudes towards the propositional content of his/her utterance, and, second are grouped into two categories: evidential particles, speaker's oriented, and coherence particles in the sense of Stede & Schmitz (2000).

The following discussion is organised as follows. Section 2 sketches out the main works related to discourse particles and the dialect I am addressing here. Section 3 analyses the pragmatic functions of the surveyed particles. Some pragmatic and syntactic discussion is inserted in section 4. Section 5 concludes the research, highlighting its contribution and limitations.

2. Literature review

Cross-linguistically, discourse particles in general, (C-particles in this paper), have been central to the linguistic theory due to the fact that they are, interestingly, assumed to be an elusive category. They have developed properties different from other elements- Adv, N, A (Struckmeier, 2014). It is commonplace that such a property has the consequence that discourse particles are an unclear notion in syntax, (Zwicky, 1985), from which their pragmatic functions can be read off. Recently, a huge bulk of research in linguistic theory highlights that C-particles, in fact, interact with the other systems of grammar- pragmatics, semantics and syntax; hence, triggering syntactic analysis to determine their positions (Biberauer *et al*, 2014). For instance, it has been posited that C-particles fall outside of the sentential boundary of the clause, and so, they do not contribute to the propositional content of the utterance, being mainly related to the speaker-attitude (Hirschberg & Litman, 1993; Stede & Schmitz, 2000; Aikhenvald, 2004). Such pragmatic-related properties have motivated many linguist to investigate the positions C-particles occupy in the syntactic structure, adopting modern generative syntactic approaches, mainly Rizzi' (1997) Split CP Hypothesis (Biberauer *et al*, 2014; Hack, 2014; Struckmeier, 2014). For instance, in the modern generative literature, regarding their positions, it has been proposed that C-particles, having a discourse featural make-up, head articulated projections in the C-domain of the clause; that is, they are encoded in syntax and instantiate their own syntactic projections (Biberauer & Sheehan, 2011; Cruschina, 2009). By the same token, significant research stresses that C-particles are considered to be diagnostics for the C-domain exhibited by a given language; hence, the interaction between the lexical-functional domain on the one hand and the discourse-domain on the other is best seen when particles are utilized (Roussou, 2000; Zimmermann, 2004). However, it seems fair to say that there is lack of research on C-particles in dialectal Arabic, despite the richness these dialects maintain. Recent works are advanced by (Alshamari, 2015a, b), which tackle a number of discourse particles in one level of grammar- pragmatics.

3. The particles (Note 1)

3.1 ʕid

ʕid relates some entity to a state of affairs based on presupposed knowledge of the speaker. Using this particle, the speaker gives coherence to the running dialogue. Hence, following Stede & Schmitz (2000), this particle is a discourse-coherence particle. Consider the following sentence:

(1) ʕid Firas nam
Prt Firas slept.3SG.M
'As if Firas slept.'

The speaker says this utterance as a response to an action Firas did. The speaker approximates this state of Firas's to something that is available in the speaker's common ground, i.e., something that Firas usually does. The speaker expresses his attitudes towards the proposition of his utterance. Consider the following dialogues for concreteness:

(2)

Speaker A: ʔl-ʔayam haðɪ ʔldʒaw latˁeef maʔain-uh b-qalb ʔasˁsˁaif
Days these weather cool although-it in-heart the.summer
'These days the weather is cool although it is the middle of summer.'

Speaker B: Laʔin-a b-mantiqah dʒabaliyah. haða naseem ʔaldʒabal
Because-we in-area mountainous this breeze the-mountain
'That is because we are in a mountainous area. This is the mountainous breeze.'

Speaker A: sˤatz ʕid hal-dʒaw b-ribeeʕ
Right Prt Dem-weather in-spring
'Right! As if it is spring.'

(3)

Speaker A: Raħ ʔaqueeb fatrah tˤaweelah w ʔakeed rah iʃtaq luk
FUT leave.I period long and surely FUT miss.I to-you
'I will leave for a long time, and I will surely miss you.'

Speaker B: Xal-na ʔala ʔitisˤal
Keep-us on contact
'Let's keep in touch.'

Speaker A: ʔakeed! ʔana mfaʕil kil ʃabakat atawasˤul ʔalʔidʒtimaʕiyah
Surely! I activating all networks communication social
'Surely! I have activated all the social media.'

Speaker B: Bsˤarahah! Bwudʒu:d hashabakat ʕid-uk maʕ-na
Frankly! With those-communication media Prt-you with-us
'Frankly! With those communications media, it is as if you are with us.'

As shown in dialogue (2), Speaker A expresses his/her feeling towards the status of the weather, being cool, which is not expected given that the utterance time of the clause is in the middle of summer. Having received feedback from his colleague that the cool weather is due to the mountainous breeze, Speaker A, then, approximates the status of the (cool) weather to the most likely resembling entity available in the common ground; that is, spring. The same behaviour is captured in (3), where Speaker B approximates the use of social media (by which she can talk to and see her friend via smart phones with which certain Apps are compatible) with the situation in which her friend is actually present, not away. This so being, ʕid is ***an approximant C-particle*** connecting the propositional content of the adjoining clause to some past discourse the speaker is aware of. This discourse, in turn, must belong to the some entity mentioned in the discourse.

3.2 zad & ʔadʒal

Zad and *ʔadʒal* are best classified as ***negative-attitude particles***. They are used when the speaker expresses his/her negative attitudes towards the propositional content of the accompanying utterance. Consider the following dialogue:

(4)

Speaker A: raħ naʃrab qahwah
Fut drink.we coffee
'We will drink some coffee.'

Speaker B: ʕindhum qahwah bi-l-ħaleeb
have.they.INTRG coffee with-milk
'Do they have coffee with milk?'

Speaker A: La
No
'No.'

Speaker B: Zad/ʔadʒal ma raħ ʔarooħ
Prt/Prt Neg FUT go.I
'Then, I'll not go with you.'

Speaker A: taʕal miʕi ʕala ʔalʔaqal nsoalif
Come.Imprtv with-me al teast chat.we
'Come with me, at least we can chat.'

Speaker A: tˤayib. Zad/*adʒal* ʔatˤlub ʃaːe
Fine Prt/Prt order.I tea
'Fine (I'll come with you) though I will order tea.'

3.3 ʕumr

ʕumr is homonymous with the lexical word *ʕumr*, with a literal meaning *age*. When used as a particle, it has an evidential import emphasising the notion that the propositional content of the accompanying utterance is totally true (cf. Alhaisoni *et al* 2012). When using *ʕumr*, the speaker has concrete, compelling evidence towards the propositional content of his/her utterance of which he/she is certain due to the substantial evidence available. Consider the following sentence:

(5) **ʕumr** Firas ma qal ʃae ʔela sˤar
Prt Firas ASP said.3sg thing RESULTATIVE happened
'Whatever Firas has said would happen, it has happened.'

Sentence (5) is understood as follows: it is evident that up to the utterance time, whatever Firas has said would happen, it has indeed happened, without any exceptions. If *ʕumr* is dropped from sentence (5), it follows that the sentence interpretation becomes of less evidentiality, as the occurrence of the phrase denoting lack-of-solid-evidentiality like *bistiθna baʕd ʔalaħlam* 'except some dreams' can be used.

(6) Firas ma ħalam ħilm ʔela sˤar
Firas ASP dreamed.3sg dream RESULTATIVE came true
(bistiθna baʕd ʔalaħlam)
(except some dreams)
'Whatever dream Firas has dreamed has come true (except some dreams).'

What should be noted here is that *ʕumr* co-occurs with the Aspectual particle *ma* and the resultative particle *ʔela*. *ma* and *ʔela* interact with one another to compose the proposition, while *ʕumr* scopes over the whole proposition to render it highly-evidential. The latter assumption is made because the Aspectual *ma* determines the temporally bounded number of actions *Firas* has performed up to the utterance time (UT) in the sense of Reichenbach (1980). The resultative particle *ʔela* denotes that these actions were, to some extent, true. *ʕumr*, on the other hand, bearing solid evidentiality, takes wide scope over the whole proposition. Hence, it colours the proposition with Solid-Evidentiality reading. This so being, *ʕumr* can be termed ***a solid-evidentiality particle. (Note 2)***

3.4 ʔisim

The particle *ʔisim* is homonymous with the lexical word *ʔisim*, with a literal meaning *name*. *ʔisim*, as a particle, can be seen as an evidential particle. However, it differs from other evidential particles in terms of the amount of evidentiality it expresses. Additionally, observations related to this particle indicate that it has two readings, depending on the proposition it scopes over. First of all, *ʔisim* can be used with a proposition marked with futurity. Consider the following sentence:

(7) ʔisim Firas raħ yalʕab
Prt Firas FUT play.3SG.M
'Firas will most likely play.'

In (7), the clause expresses futurity, and due to *ʔisim*, the speaker emphasises the notion that the propositional content of his/her utterance is totally true, but this emphasis is, though, not dependent on concrete evidence, but rather on the available strong indications which can suffice to affirm the truth value of the proposition. Now compare (7) with (8) below:

(8) ʔisim Firas laʕab
Prt Firas played.3SG.M
'Firas has already played.'

When *ʔisim* is utilized with a proposition marked with perfectivity (past-tense), on the other hand, the speaker emphasises the notion that the propositional content of his/her utterance is totally true, depending on concrete evidence. In fact, this variation shouldn't be surprising since events/actions/states expressed by clauses marked with

perfectivity bear strong evidentiality, which, by theory, entail telicity of such actions etc. (cf. Alhaisoni *et al* 2012). For concreteness, consider the following dialogue:

(9)

Firas: marħaba! raħ ʔaʕti:-k kitab ʕun alnaħu
Hi! FUT give-you book about syntax
'Hi! I will give you a book about syntax.'

Dilara: ʃukran! mumkin ʔaxðh baħd ʔizˁuhur ʕala ʔal-muħazˁarah
Thanks! May take.I-it after the.noon in the-lecture
'Thanks! May I take it afternoon, at the time of the lecture?'

Firas: ʔalħi:n afzˁal. ʔaxaf ʔansa ʔaw ma ʔadʒi
Now better. Afraid forget.I or Neg come.I
'It is better to give it to you now. I may forget to do so, or may not come at all.'

Firas: aw ʔansa ʔaʕti:k-i-yah
Or forget give-you-it
'Or I might forget to give it to you.'

Dilara: bus ma ʔaqdar ʔaʃi:l-uh ʔal-ħi:n. ma miʕ-i ʃantˁah w ʔismi raħ
But Neg can.I carry.I-it now. Neg with-I bag and Prt FUT
ʔaqabl-uk bi-l-muħazˁarah
meet.I-you in-lecture
'But I cannot carry the book now. I don't have a bag and I will already meet you in the lecture.'

Firas: la. ʔism-i qabalt-ik. ʔalħi:n azˁman
No! Prt-I met.I-you. Now better
'I have already met you. It is better now.'
'I am already meeting you. It is better now.'

As clear in (9), Dilara uses *ʔisim* to make it evident that she will take the book from Firas later at the lecture time, based on the strong indications she has available (i.e., she will attend the afternoon lecture which Firas would also attend). However, these indications don't suffice to assure that she would get the book, the reason which motivated Firas to use *ʔisim* with the perfective event (that he was already meeting her). This so being, this particle **is *an evidential particle***.

3.5 sˁaid

The particle sˁ*aid* is homonymous with the lexical word sˁ*aid,* meaning *hunting*. sˁ*aid* is used to connect utterances with their past discourse in a discourse smooth way. Consider the effect of this particle on the translation of the following clause:

(10) sˁaid Firas nam
Prt Firas slept.3SG.M
'(It should be the fact that) Firas slept. '

Sˁaid is used to smoothen the proposition. Based on a state of Firas that the speaker just came to know, the speaker uses Sˁ*aid* as ***a discourse-smooth particle*** to label the proposition as more suggestive than a matter of fact (cf. Stede & Schmitz 2000). Consider now the following dialogue.

(11) Speaker A: Firas qaʕad mitʔaxir w fawat ʔal-ixtibar ʔal-yawm
Firas woke.up.I late.he and missed the-lecture today
'Firas woke up late, and he missed the test today.'

Speaker B: sˤaid-uh kan saharan kil ʔalbariħ
Prt-he Be.Past staying.up whole lastnight
'It should be the fact that he stayed up all last night.'

With (11) in place, it is quite clear that Speaker B attributes Firas's act of waking up late and missing the exam to the assumption that it is likely that Firas stayed up all night; hence, suggestive. In this case, Speaker B allocates Firas some excuses for missing the exam, namely, that Firas stayed up the night for reasons such as studying. Indeed, this is what we mean by discourse-smoothing device.

3.6 kumma

Kumma is used to express a negative attitude; where the speaker, relying on the available concrete evidence, expresses his negative attitude towards the proposition. When using *kumma*, the ultimate results come contradictory although the evidence available for the speaker is dependable. The speaker appears not to be satisfied and is expecting to receive positive feedback etc. Following this line of thought, *kumma* is best categorised as a ***negative-attitudinal particle***. Consider the following dialogue:

(12)

Speaker A1: Firas qaʕad mitʔaxir w taʔaxar ʔala ʔal-ixtibar
Firas woke.up.I late.he and late on the-exam
'Firas woke up late, and he was late to the exam.'

Speaker B: kumma Firas fawat ʔal-ixtibar
Prt-he Firas missed the-exam
''It should be the fact that he missed the exam (hopefully not? Or….!)).'

Speaker A2: ʔaʃwa ixtibar
Prt test
'Fortunately, he sat for the test.'

Speaker A3: i:h li-lasaf
Yes for-sorrow
'Unfortunately, yes.'

Speaker B is informed by Speaker A that Firas woke up late. Speaker B, as a result, expects adverse consequences of this fact, expressing his negative attitude towards his proposition, namely, that Firas *might have missed the exam*. However, Speaker B still hopes to elicit a positive response from Speaker A. Such an elicitation is made clear by retrieving good news (as Speaker A2's response using the positive attitude particle *ʔaʃwa*), or, otherwise, as in Speaker A3's response, the bad news is confirmed.

3.7 dʒeli

dʒeli, like *kumma*, is not derived from any other lexical item in NHA. This particle can be seen as a ***discourse-interrogative particle*** not only for information such as yes/no constructions, but also for some pragmatic functions it bears. Consider the following clause:

(13)

Speaker A: Firas ma qaʕad lilħeen
Firas Neg woke up till now
'Firas hasn't woke up.'

Speaker B: dʒeli Firas nam (ʔasasan)
Prt Firas slept.3SG.M (basically)
'Did Firas sleep? (I thought he didn't)'

The speaker uttering (13) has a previous knowledge that Firas didn't sleep. However, he/she is not informed that the opposite is true, a piece of knowledge accompanied with ***mirativity*** in the sense of Aikhenval (2004). As a result, using *dʒeli* (being clause-initial; scoping over the proposition being asked about), the speaker just expresses his/her

state of affairs being surprised by the fact that he/she had maintained incorrect information. This assumption can be backed up by the assumption that the adverb *asasan* 'basically' can occur with *dʒeli*.

3.8 tsan

tsan is used in cases where an unpleasant event is supposed to occur. This use must be paired with some grounds of given strong indications, when the speaker expresses his/her negative attitudes. Consider the following dialogue:

(14)

Speaker A:	nisi:t	ʔadafayah	ʃaʁalah	w	fi:h	ʕilbat	ʕitˁir	bdʒanb-ah
	forgot.I	the-heater	on	and	EXISTENSIAL	bottle	perfume	next.to-it

'I left the heater on and there is a bottle of perfume next to it.'

Speaker B:	tsan	ʔadafayah	ʔiltamsat	w	ħrigat	ʔal-bait	(*raħ tku:n tamam)
	Prt	the-heater	strike.it	and	burn	the-house	(it will be alright)

'(I am afraid that it will be the case in which) the heater will strike and burn the house.'

In (14), Speaker B uses *tsan*, expecting negative consequences of leaving the heater on while something flammable is left next to it. This can be further clear by the incompatibility of phrases denoting positivity like *raħ tku:n tamam* 'it will be alright' with *tsan*. Accordingly, this particle is a ***negative attitudinal particle***.

3.9 jamaar (Note 3)

jamaar is a speaker-oriented particle, ***a resultative-marker*** used to signal the speaker's attitude against the event at hand, when the speaker voices his/her concern about the result of one situation. j*amaar* is used to introduce a result, one that of an event ending up in an unpredicted, unexpected way, thus, giving a strange result (i.e., anomaly). For instance, consider the following dialogue:

(15)

A:	rabatˁt	ħalq	ʔalħsˁan	w	raħ	ʔax ð-uh	li	l-baetˁari
	tied.I	mouth	the-horse	and	FUT	take-him	to	the-veterinarian

'I tied the horse's mouth closed and will take him to the veterinarian.'

B:	ʃsˁar	int	ṯhib-uh	w	dayem	tʔakl-uh	bnafsak
	What happened	you	love.you-him	and	always	feed.you-him	yourself

'What happened? You love him and always feed him yourself.'

A:	ʔaxir	marrah	madeat	l-uh	l-ʔakil	b-yidi	jamaar	yabi	yʕidˁ-ni
	Last	time	passed	to-him	the-food	with-my hand	Prt	want	bite-me

'Last time I passed him the food with my hand. He wanted to bite me.'

B:	ʁari:b!	ma	kan	yubi	ʔal-ʔakil
	Strange!	Neg	be.PAST	want	the-food

'Strange! Didn't he (intend to) want the food?'

A:	lilʔasaf	la	kan	yħawil	yʕidˁ	bus
	Unfortunately	Neg	be.PAST	try	bite	only

'Unfortunately no; he was trying to bite only.'

In (15), Speaker (A) uses *jamaar* when mentioning the strange event where he/she attempted to feed his horse, an action he/she normally performs. As clear in the above dialogue, it emerges that the speaker gets perplexed of the reaction of the horse. Instead of accepting the food the speaker tried to give, the horse attempted to bite the speaker's hand. This result of feeding the horse is counted as an apparent anomaly from the speaker's perspective. Speaker (A) told Speaker (B) about this confusing reaction of the horse, introducing the perplexed or confusing result with *jamaar*. Accordingly, *jamaar* is used between two discourse segments of which the first one in sequence is the event, and the second one is the result which must be negative (i.e., bad) and surprising at the same time.

3.10 maar(Note)

The discourse-based particle *maar* is used as ***a concessive marker*** connecting two contradictory assumptions. In this use, the speaker is highly sceptical of the sentence containing *maar*. Consider the following dialogue:

(16)

A: ʔal-dʒulus ʔatˁaweel qatil ʔakθar min ʔatadxeen
The-siiting the-prolonged fatal more than the-smoking
'Prolonged sitting is more fatal than smoking.'

B: mu muntˁiqi ʔal-ʔaqal ʔal-dʒulus ma ydamir ʔal-dʒisim min ʔa-daxil
Neg logical. on-the-least the-sittting Neg destroy the-body from the-inside
'This is not logical. At least prolonged sitting doesn't destroy the body internally.'

A: haði ħaqaʔiq w natayidʒ buħuθ
These facts and results research.PL
'These are facts and research findings.'

B: mustaħiil. maar kirsi muri:ħ ysˁi:r ʔaxtˁar min ziqarah
Impossible Prt chair comfortable becomes more dangerious than cigarette
'Impossible! A comfortable chair becomes more dangerous than a cigarette!'

A plausible reading of Speaker's (B's) last utterance, containing *maar,* is that 'although the chair is comfortable, it becomes more risky than smoking!' It should be stressed that this sentence should be accompanied with an ironical tone which signals that the speaker is highly derisive and sceptical of the utterance. This assumption is also corroborated by the use of distinctive adverbs including *mustaħiil* 'impossible'. This being so, it can be suggested that since *maar* signals the logically-derived results, it follows that *maar* can be counted as a ***pejorative concessive marker***.

3.11 ʔaθari

This particle is used when discovering the reason behind an action/fact etc., where such reasons were not expected by the speaker. Consider the following sentence.

(17) ʔaθari Firas nam
Prt Firas slept.3SG.M
'(It was revealed that) Firas slept.'

As the translation in (17) indicates, *ʔaθari* is ***a strong evidential particle*** used by the speaker to identify the real factor/reason/rationale behind an action etc. Consider the following dialogue:

(18)

A: Firas yintizˁir bilmalʕab. raħ ʔalwaqt w maħad bayan
Firas wait.he in-playing field. Went the-time and no one appeared
'Firas was waiting in the playing field (to play a football game). Time was going by, and nobody appeared.'

B: wean ʔilaʕebeen? ridʒaʕ?
Where the-players returned.3SG.M
'Where were the players? Did he return back home, then?'

A: ridʒaʕ w istafsar aθari ilmubarat baʕad yoam
Retuned and inquired Prt the-game after day
'He returned and inquired, though, the game was scheduled to be played the following day.'

3.12 Sˁaħi:ħ & xaṭi:r

These particles share one pragmatic function, that is, ***discourse-coherence***; triggered by the pragmatic presupposition based on the speaker's knowledge and attitudes towards a particular point mentioned in the flow of the discourse. Consider the following dialogue:

(19)

Speaker A: Barcelona ʕindhum mubarat nihaʔiyah assbu:ʕ ʔildʒae
Barcelona have.they game final week next
'Barcelona have a finale next week.'

Speaker B: i:h qwiyah
Yes tough
'Yes, it will be a tough game.'

Speaker A: ma-ni mitʔakid min ʔaltaʃkeelah yaleet tku:n qawiyah
Neg-I sure from the-squad hope Be tough
'I am not sure about the squad. I hope it will be tough.'

Speaker B: Sˁaħi:ħ ʔilmuħtarif ʔildʒideed raħ yalʔab
Prt the-professions player the-new FUT play
'(The good news by the way is that) the new professional player will play this game.'

Speaker C: xaṭi:r yinhazmu:n
Prt deafeated.them
'(Though, it is likely that) they will be defeated.'

Speaker A: leeʃ
Why
'Why?'

Speaker C: ʔaʁlab ʔalaʕibeen ʔalfananeen ma raħ yʃarku:n
Majority the-players the-professional Neg FUT play
'The majority of the best professiona players will not play.'

It can be clearly seen in (19) that S^{ʕ}*aħi:ħ* and *xaṭi:r* are discourse-coherence particles used to introduce information related to the ongoing discourse depending on the presupposed knowledge of the speaker. However, a slight difference holds between them. S^{ʕ}*aħi:ħ* is used to suggest positive attitudes, *xaṭi:r* for negative attitudes.

3.13 tsaif

tsaif is best categorised as ***an negative-attitude-inquisitive particle***, used when the speaker to inquire for more information about something unpleasant he has come to know. Consider the following dialogue:

(20)

Speaker A: Firas nisa ʔaldʒihaz bil-ħadi:qah ʔalbariħ
Firas forgot the-laptop in-the-garden last night
w ma liq-ah ʔalyoum
and Neg found-it today
'Firas forgot the laptop in the garden last night, and he didn't find it today.'

Speaker B: tsaif (wiʃ sawa?)
Prt (what did.he)
'Oh! What consequences will that have! (What did he do?)'

Speaker A: w kan.at wislat ʔalðakirah maʃbu:kah b-uh
and was.it the.USB memory connected in-it
'And the memory card was connected to the laptop.'

In (20), Speaker B shows his/her sorrow for what Firas did, forgetting his laptop in the garden. Optionality of the bracketed phrase suggests that using *tsaif* alone suffices to make Speaker B provide more information on the negative consequences that Firas would encounter. As a result, Speaker A informs Speaker B that, much worse, the memory card was connected with laptop when stolen.

3.14 ʕankin

ʕ*ankin* is used as a ***discourse-positive- attitude particle***, when assigning someone compliments as a result of being amazing. To appreciate this point consider the following discourse:

(21)

Speaker A: Firas taʁarab min kan sˁeʁeer raħ li-dyar kiθi:rah
Firas away since was young went to-countries many
w ʕaʃ θaqafat mixtalfah
and lived cultures various
'Firas has been away since he was young. He has been to many countries and experienced various cultures.'

Speaker B: taʕalam w bana nafs-uh w subar
learned and built himself and patient
'He learned, was patient and self-made.'

Speaker A: ʕankin Firas batˁal
Prt Firas hero
'(I should admit that) Firas is a hero.'

This particle is used only when the speaker shows his positive stand towards the propositional content of his/her utterance.

3.15 fin

This particle is used when the speaker has convincing pieces of evidence that he would succeed in achieving something, winning a game, for instance. Moreover, *fin* colours the proposition it scopes over with the sense of challenging due to the confidence the speaker obtains. What might bear this out is that in other varieties (such as Jordanian Arabic and Hijazi Arabic), lexical means are used instead of the particle *fin* such as (ʔataħada Firas .....) literally meaning (I challenge Firas…). Consider the following dialogue:

(22)

Speaker A: b-kil liʕbah maʕ Firas ʔinhazim korah w sibaq
In-all game with Firas defeated.I football and race
'In every game against Firas he has defeated me; football and race.'

Speaker B: ʃ-baqi liʕbah
Q-remain game?
'What is the next game?'

Speaker A: ʔalqafz
'Jumping.'

Speaker B: Firas qis i:r w int tˁiwi:l
Firas short and you tall
'You are tall but Firas is short.'

Speaker A: fin Firas yufuz hal-marah
Prt Firas win this-time
'I challenge Firas this time.'

This particle can be seen as an ***attitudinal surprizing particle***.

4. Discussion

4.2 Pragmatics

As clearly seen from section 3, NHA has a wide variety of C-particles denoting different but related discourse functions. All of these particles pertain to the speaker's attitude towards the accompanying utterance. They do not contribute (directly) to the propositional content of the utterance but rather reflect speaker's point of views, opinion and attitudes towards the event involved (cf. Ippolito 2007, Fraser 2009, and Fox Tree 2010, among many others). Table (1) below shows the C-particles used in NHA and their concomitant discourse functions:

Table 1. C-particles in NHA and their pragmatic functions

	C-particle	Functions
(1)	*ʕid*	Approximant
(2)	*Zad*	Negative-attitude
(3)	*ʔadʒal*	Negative-attitude
(4)	*ʕumr*	Solid-evidentiality
(5)	*ʔisim*	Strong evidential
(6)	*sʕaid*	Discourse-Smooth
(7)	*kumma*	Negative-attitudinal particle
(8)	*dʒeli*	Discourse-interrogative
(9)	*tsan*	Negative attitudinal
(10)	*jamaar*	Resultative-marker
(11)	*maar*	Concessive marker
(12)	*ʔaθari*	Strong evidential
(13)	*sʕaħiːħ*	Discourse-Coherence
(14)	*xaṭiːr*	Discourse-Coherence
(15)	*tsaif*	Negative-Attitude-Inquisitive
(16)	*ʕankin*	Discourse-Positive- Attitude
(17)	*fin*	Attitudinal Surprizing

Based on Table 1, it can be assumed that these particles vary in terms of their roles. No one of them has the same function, as compared to others. Nonetheless, it can be neatly drawn that there are four types of C-particles in NHA, as far as the surveyed particles are concerned: speaker-positive, speaker-negative, evidentiality, and discourse coherence. Consider the following table (which is an approximate division, not intended to be perfect):

Table 2. Typology of C-particles function in NHA

speaker-positive	speaker-negative	evidentiality	discourse coherence
ʕankin	*kumma*	*ʕumr*	*ʕid*
fin	*dʒeli*	*ʔisim*	*Said*
	tsan	*ʔaθari*	*jamaar*
	mar		*sˁaħiːħ*
	tsaif		*xaṭiːr*
	zad		
	ʔadʒal		

Indeed, table 2 is of key importance because it gives us some underlying clues why such particles are not addressed within any linguistic approach. They are discourse-bound rather than discourse-free. Studies in Arabic linguistics in general and Najdi Arabic in particular have focused on sentences where discourse is neutralized, hence no mention to the particles can be made or even noticed. I leave open the exact discourse-related function of such particles for further research.

4.2 Syntax

As related to the syntactic behaviour of C-particles surveyed throughout this research, it appears that they need a huge work to conduct. Their position, scopal properties, their morpho-syntactic properties along with their relation with other elements of the clause, etc. are important and rich topics for scrutiny and investigation regardless of the syntactic theory used. What can be generalized on these particles is that they are discourse particles heading dedicated projections in the left periphery of NHA clause. This generalization is grounded with the fact that the left-periphery is the domain where discourse is intertwined with semantics and syntax. Due to their discourse-related functions, it is more or less clear that C-particles start out life in the left periphery. The assumption that these particles are heads gushes from their behaviour vis-a-vis the subject and object as well as resumption. Some particles can be resumed by a clitic having the same Φ-fractures of the subject (and even the object under some cases). Consider table 3 (Optional O; prohibited P):

Table 3. resumption and C-particles

Resumption O	Resumption P
ʕankin	*kumma*
fin	*maar*
dʒeli	*tsaif*
tsan	*zad*
ʕumr	*ʔadʒal*
ʔisim	*jamaar*
ʔaθari	*sˁaħiːħ*
ʕid	*xaṭiːr*
sˁaid	

The general account is that these particles have a set of Φ-features which are uninterpretable in the sense of Chomsky (1995 and subsequent work). The clitic, thus, is seen as a by-product of the valuation process established between the given C-particle and the subject or the object. Compare the following sentence with (1) above.

(23) ʕid-uh Firas nam
Prt-him Firas slept.3SG.M
'As if Firas slept.'

However, the precise nature of this valuation is left open for further research. When the particles do not bear any resumptive clitic, it can be assumed that these particles are defective in the sense that they lack Φ-features. Compare the following sentence with (12B) above

(24) *Kumma-uh Firas nam
Prt-him Firas slept.3SG.M
'Unfortunately, Firas slept.'

However, again, the exact nature of this valuation and syntactic behaviour of particles is left open for further research.

5. Conclusion and limitations of the work

5.1 Conclusion

This research is significant not only because it introduces a discourse-related account of the surveyed C-particles in NHA, but also because it highlights them for future research. The main aim was to bring these particles to the fore. It is rather clear that C-particles in NHA have several functions either at the level of discourse building and/or perception. It follows that a study like this cannot be under no circumstances enough to shed light on their behaviour. It was meant to drag researchers' attention to a fecund ground of research and investigation. Hence, any future research can target their pragmatics functions since we are armed with natural tools to underpin how discourse is structured. Furthermore, other line of research can work out their syntactic behaviour which seems far from clear, a matter that imposes itself strongly in the face of interested scholarship. As evident from its title, the current research is grossly speaking a humble attempt to document an area less investigated though rich and worth exploring. My last word is that analysing sentences away from their discourse is like planting without seeds.

5.2 Added value of the current work and contribution to the field

1- Documenting particles that have never been explored.

2- Advocating that C-particles are not arbitrary elements in the language but are built to deliver specific functions, semantics or pragmatics, where other language systems balk.

3- This work is another price of evidence that sentences must be paired with the discourse; separating the sentence from its discourse yields no benefit and even endanger difficulty in understanding sentence processing and interpretation.

5.3 Limitations of the work

1- Though viewed as comprehensive, this work skips over some other C-particles used in Hail Region, Saudi Arabic, either for less frequency or limitedness to certain regions.

2- A fuller pragmatico-syntactic and discourse account of the surveyed C-particles lies beyond the bounds of the current work for its highly-rooted interference with other modules of grammar; hence room for further research.

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Notes

Note 1. It should be made clear that the particles included in this section are not all particles used in NHA. There are some other particles not addressed here since they are being investigated. This research is meant to capitalize on the particles not receiving any attention.

Note 2. It should be noted that there are other uses of this particle in other Arabic varieties such as Jordanian Arabic, including its use as a negative polarity item (cf. Alsarayreh 2012 and Alqassas 2015).

Note 3. All the information in this section (i.e., data, dialogue and discussion etc.) are adopted (slightly modified) from Alshamari (2015b) for which I refer the reader for further details on the variety of uses for this particle.

Note 4. All the information in this section (i.e., data, dialogue and discussion etc.) are adopted (slightly modified) from Alshamari (2015b) for which I refer the reader for further a variety of uses for *maar*.