


Exclamatives are nonsententials: Evidence from Arabic and other languages

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Abstract: Previous studies overlook the fact that exclamatives (Excls) are temporally deictic to the here and now, and they are anchored by the context rather than Tense (i.e., they lack the TP layer), and that they are constructed crosslinguistically as nonclausal projections. This paper provides an overview of the literature and highlights that the clausal type of Excls is not agreed upon, the defining features (e.g., factivity, scalar implicature, and question/answer relations) are highly controversial and cross-linguistically invalid, and previous analyses seem inconsistent, complicated, and inadequate to account for the idiosyncrasies of Excls. Unlike previous studies, the paper claims that Excls as asymmetrical small clauses selected by Excl head. This analysis accounts for the peculiarities and intricacies of the three types of Arabic Excls (i.e., *Wh*-Excls, vocative Excls, and verbal Excls) such as (i) their inflexible word order, (ii) case alternation on the referent, (iii) the presence of spurious prepositions, and (vi) the obligatory presence of some particles and affixes although not semantically required. Since the given peculiarities are not specific to Arabic and are found in other languages and supported by cross-linguistic data, the paper claims that the nonsentential approach is empirically more defensible and conceptually simpler to account for Excls crosslinguistically.

Keywords: Exclamation, syntactic haplogy, morphological templates, case assignment, word order, factivity, scalar implicature

1. Introduction

According to the widespread view (e.g., Ambar, 2002; Brandner, 2010; Castroviejo, 2019; Delsing, 2010; Villalba, 2008), exclamations are linguistic expressions that express the speaker's strong feelings (e.g., surprise, enthusiasm, anger, etc.) or reactions towards some state of affairs as exemplified in (1):

- 1) a. What an amazing house he bought!
b. How beautiful she is!
c. John came!
d. Look, he is coming!

Sentences in (1) can be differentiated as proper exclamatives (Excls) (1a,b) whose syntactic constructions are indicative of their force (i.e., the use of *how* and *what*) and exclamations (1c,d) which can be of any clause type (i.e., declaratives, interrogatives or imperatives) with falling intonation (for a detailed differentiation between Excls and exclamations, see Miró, 2008 and Zevakhina, 2013). Compared with other clause types, Excls are relatively understudied. Apart from limited studies in the seventies (e.g., Elliott, 1974; Grimshaw, 1979; Oomen, 1979), only recently,

Excls have gained some interest. The consequences of being ignored and poorly investigated include the lack of a precise and unique definition as indicated by Moutaouakil (2005:351, cited in Zevakhina, 2013:158) and Cruschina et al. (2015:267), and as a clause type, Excls are “not as unambiguously defined as the major clause types” (Siemund, 2015:706) because they are “not prominent in typological work” (Potsdam, 2011:660), and as a result, “there seems to be no comprehensive research on exclamatives, and each author is working on his own framework” (Oda, 2008:216, cited in Zevakhina, 2013:158).

This paper examines proper Excls in three Arabic varieties, viz., Jordanian Arabic (JA), Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and Classical Arabic (CA) ¹. In these varieties, there are three types of Excls which involve *wh*-phrases (Wh-Excls), a vocative particle (Voc-Excls), or a verbal element (V-Excls), exemplified in (2a-c), respectively:

- 2) a. *ayš* *ha-l-ḥalāwih*
 what **this**-the-beauty
 ‘What a (stunning) beauty!’
- b. *yā la-jamāl-i* *al-ṭabī‘at-i*
 O **PREP**-beauty-**GEN** the-nature-**GEN**
 ‘How beautiful nature is!’
- c. *mā* ‘a ‘lama *Zayd-a-n*
 PTCL know.**EXCL** Zayd-**ACC-N**
 ‘How knowledgeable Zayd is!’

These three Excl types involve several peculiarities such as (i) inflexible word order, (ii) case alternation on the referent (which has genitive and accusative case in (2a,b), respectively, although it has the same thematic role), (iii) the presence of spurious prepositions (i.e., *la-* in (2b)), and (vi) the obligatory presence of some constituents which are not semantically required (i.e., *ha-* in (2a)). The paper shows that the given idiosyncrasies (in addition to other ones to be discussed below) are not present in clauses (i.e., declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives), and they exist also in other languages such as English, Spanish, French, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, and Oceanic languages. This situation leads the paper to reject previous proposals in the literature that argue that Excls are full clauses because such assumptions leave the aforementioned peculiarities unexplainable mysteries. Additionally, previous studies overlook the fact that Excls are always temporally deictic to the here and now, that is, they are tenseless expressions that lack Tense specification because they are anchored by the context of the situation rather than Tense; hence, they lack the TP layer. The paper argues that Excls are not finite clausal projections; they are just small clauses formed of the referent and the property exclaimed about and headed by a functional head that provides the illocutionary force of utterance.

To account for the essential properties of Arabic Excls and to support the argument of their status as nonsententials, this paper provides a general overview and a critical assessment of the essential characteristics of Excls in section (2) which deals with the general structures, defining features, clausal type, and previous analyses of Excls, respectively. Section (3) introduces the different types

¹ For an overview of these varieties, see for JA (e.g., Al-Aqarbeh, 2011; Al-Shawashreh, 2016; El-Yasin, 1985), for MSA (e.g., Alhawary, 2011; Cantarino, 1976; Ryding, 2005), for CA (e.g., Aqeel, 1980; Sibawayh, 1988; Ya’īsh, 2001). The JA variety is selected because it is the mother language of the author. The discussion of the given three varieties is hoped to provide a comprehensive view of Excls in Arabic in general.

of Arabic Excls in detail and highlights how their structures differ from the equivalent finite clauses. Section (4) outlines the new approach adopted in this paper and explains the syntax of Arabic Excls in depth. Section (5) provides the implications of the approach proposed and discusses similar phenomena in other languages. Section (6) summarizes the main arguments and concludes the paper.

2. Excls cross-linguistically

In addition to the use of *wh*-words (*how* and *what* in (1[a,b]) above), a miscellaneous number of constructions and syntactic categories are utilized to form Excls which, unlike clauses, seem to constitute a highly heterogeneous group from a syntactic standpoint. Based on data from 45 languages, Zevakhina (2013) points out that there are five syntactic strategies of Excls, briefly listed in (3a-e):

- 3) a. Subject-verb inversion (in Germanic languages, Estonian, Mandarin Chinese)
e.g., *Did he worry!* (Zevakhina, 2013:164)
- b. Anaphoric adjectives and adverbs (in English, Russian, Mandarin Chinese)
e.g., *It is so hot!* (Zevakhina, 2013:166)
- c. Wh-phrases (in Indo-European languages, Altaic, and Uralic languages)
e.g., *What a big house you have!* (Zevakhina, 2013:157)
- d. Subordinate clauses (in Indo-European and North-Caucasian languages)
e.g., *That he should have left without asking me!* (Zevakhina, 2013:167)
- e. Noun phrases (in Germanic, Romance, Austronesian and Oceanic languages)
e.g., *The amount I spent!* (Zevakhina, 2013:170)

Based on the differentiation highlighted above between Excls and exclamations, the paper argues that the first two strategies are related to exclamations, rather than proper Excls. Subject-verb inversion cannot be considered as an Excl construction because S-V inversion is one of the general properties of interrogatives, and the example given is actually an interrogative (cf. ‘*Did he worry?*’) with a falling intonation. Considering S-V inversion a syntactic property of exclamative wrongly predicts that **How smart is Sally!* is grammatical, and it is a mystery why S-V inversion does not take place despite *wh*-movement. Anaphoric adjectives and adverbs cannot also be considered as an Excl strategy for several reasons. First, the distinction between anaphoric adverbs like *so* and degree adverbs like *very* that “the former can refer to the previous context, whereas the latter cannot” (Zevakhina, 2013:165) cannot qualify such adverbs to be used exclusively as genuine Excls, as the given example in (3b) can be used as a declarative clause as evidenced in its syntax and the role of prosody for determining its speech-act force. Second, as correctly highlighted by the reviewer, adverbs and adjectives cannot be labeled “anaphoric” as they cannot refer to an entity mentioned previously because they lack the Person feature responsible for anaphoricity. Third, the primary criterion for distinguishing *so* from *very* is the presence of ‘scalar implicature’ only in the former (based on Michaelis’ (2001) arguments), and this feature is argued to be cross-linguistically invalid (see section 2.3 for details).

The remaining three strategies to construct Excls cross-linguistically, viz., *wh*-phrases, subordinate clauses and noun phrases, are nonclausal constructions. The main components of *wh*-phrases such as *What a big house you have!* are the referent [DP a big house you have] and the

exclamative pronoun *what*; hence, there is no evidence or need for T node projection (more details in section 4) ². In a similar vein, subordinate clauses and noun phrases function as DPs and need a verbal predicate to form a TP, for example, the Excl in (3c) needs V and T nodes to form the sentence *The amount I spent exceeds 100\$*. This unconventional view³ finds support in (i) the debate in the literature concerning the clausal type of Excls, (ii) the relatively inconsistent analyses of their structure compared with those of clauses, (iii) the debatable defining features of Excls, and (vi) the syntax of Excls in Arabic and other languages, in the following sections, respectively.

2.1 Sentence type

While traditional grammars characterize Excls as a sentence type distinguishable from interrogatives, declaratives, and imperatives (Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001: 168), recent studies disagree on the clause status of Excls whether it is a separate clause type (e.g., Elliott, 1974; Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001; Ono, 2006; Bennis, Corver, & Den Dikken, 1998) or just a derivation of other clause types (e.g., Rosengren, 1997; Zanuttini & Portner, 2000; Miró, 2008; Siemund, 2015). The paper argues that this debate is caused by the fact that Excls have a unique syntax that takes some, but not all, properties one expects to find in clauses. That is, they resemble both interrogatives and declaratives but only partially due to the lack of the TP layer (the projection that differentiates between clausal and non-clausal constructions). Contra previous studies, the paper claims that Excls are non-clausal constructions since they do not have the general properties of clauses. The peculiarities of Excls can support this claim compared to clauses.

Compared with interrogative clauses, Excls have a *wh*-element in the initial position (e.g., 1a,b) but, unlike interrogatives, they show several peculiarities. First, they do not involve subject-verb inversion, consider the ungrammaticality of the Excl in (4a) compared to the interrogative in (4b):

- 4) a. *How strong **is he**!
b. How strong **is he**?

While in interrogative clauses, the verb moves from T to C; consequently, the S-V inversion takes place, the same syntactic mechanism is not possible in Excls simply because there is no T position from which the verb moves to C (the position capable of hosting the moved verb). Second, while the *wh*-phrase stays in situ in echo questions (5a), the same *wh*-phrase must move in Excls, as evidenced in the ungrammaticality of (5b):

- 5) a. He speaks **what languages**?
b. *He speaks **what languages**!

The obligatory movement of *wh*-phrase in Excls indicates that *what languages* does not have the same position as in clauses (i.e., interrogatives such as (5a) or declaratives, e.g., *He speaks five languages*.). Third, while the preposition can be pied-piped along with the DP in both declaratives and interrogatives in (6a,b), the preposition must be stranded in Excls in (6c).

- 6) a. **In a big house** they live.
b. **In which house** do they live?

² Based on a corpus study of 703 tokens of *what*-Excls and 645 tokens of *how*-Excls, Siemund (2015:697) finds that “English Excls typically occur in reduced form lacking an overt verbal predicate, i.e. *What a wonderful journey!* or *How wonderful!*”

³ Cantarino (1976:202, cited in Firanescu, 2003:114) points out that Excls “could be considered independent of any syntactical construction.”

c. **In what a house they live!* (reported by Obenauer, 1994, cited in D' Avis, 2016:161)

The ungrammaticality of (6c) indicates that, unlike the clauses which have the PP as the complement of the verb *live* in the TP domain, the Excl has a different structure in which the preposition and the DP cannot form one constituent. Fourth, Excls can be initiated only with *what* and *how*, but not with other *wh*-words like *why*, *when*, *where*, etc. Villalba (2008:32) highlights that “*why* Excls are lacking universally.”⁴ This property can be straightforwardly accounted for by the non-clausal approach of Excls. While in interrogative clauses, the *wh*-word can vary depending on the moved element within TP to spec-CP, the *wh*-elements are very restricted in Excls because the whole construction is not based on a clausal projection, that is, no possible source of further *wh*-phrases, except *how* and *what* which are the *wh*-version of the AP predicate (i.e., the property exclaimed about). Furthermore, some language-specific requirements are imposed on the exclamative, but not on the interrogative construction, for example, the necessity of the Mood particle in Excls (Ono, 2006). See also Elliott (1974) for more differences between interrogatives and Excls.

Concerning their relevance to declaratives, although in some languages like Japanese, Excls are argued to have a declarative syntax (Yamato, 2010), Excls have syntactic and pragmatic unique properties distinguishable from declaratives. Syntactically, unlike declaratives, Excls can be elliptical (e.g., *How beautiful Sally is!* vs. *How beautiful!*), but declaratives cannot (*Sally is very beautiful.* vs. **Sally.*) (see also Zevakhina, 2013). From a pragmatic standpoint, Excls cannot be used in situations in which a declarative is required. Agreeing with Miró (2008:53), Excls cannot be used “to satisfy the addressee’s need of information or to defend the speaker’s point of view,” that is, they cannot be uttered in narrations or debates. Moreover, Excls cannot be used as answers to questions simply because they are not assertions. The syntactic and pragmatic properties of Excls may suggest that they are not declaratives with a marked intonation.

Based on the arguments above, Excl syntax is distinct from both interrogatives and declaratives because it is non-clausal and cannot have all properties of clauses. Therefore, analyzing Excls to be derived by raising/ merger of an element to/in spec-CP fails to account for the given peculiarities above as Excls are temporally deictic (i.e., they lack the T layer).

2.2 Left periphery

The argument that Excls are not necessarily clausal finds further support in the minimalist accounts of Excls at the left periphery. Analyzing Excls to be CPs causes two undesirable consequences, viz., inconsistency and complication. The main argument in this section is that although different strategies utilized to construct Excls cross-linguistically may require different analyses, it is worth pointing out the following issues: (i) cross-linguistically, the analysis of TPs in interrogatives and declaratives seems more consistent compared with that of Excls (although languages do not have the same mechanism for constructing TPs), (ii) the different strategies (i.e., *wh*-phrases, *that*-clauses and NPs) are not very intricate to the extent that their analyses must be inconsistent and complicated, (iii) no matter how inconsistent and complicated the projections are assumed in C, the unique characteristics of Excls cannot be accounted for satisfactorily, (iv) previous studies overlook the fact that, unlike clauses, Excls are always temporally deictic to the here and now similar tenseless small clauses such as *Me first!* and *Class in session*.

⁴ As suggested by the reviewer, *why* may be ruled out on independent grounds, that is, it maybe lacks the necessary quantification property that may be available with other *wh*-words, such as *how*, *what*.

First, although most, if not all, studies follow Bennis, Corver, & Den Dikken's (1998) argument of the existence of [+EXCL] feature in C that must be lexically realized, they do not agree on the analysis of Excls, that is, they provide different proposals for the features and the phrases involved in Excls (see, e.g., Ambar, 2002; Castroviejo, 2019; Cruschina et al., 2015; Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001, 2008; Honda, 2011; Jónsson, 2010; Ono, 2006; Yamato, 2010). To illustrate, studies disagree on the internal structure of the highest projection and its divisions (mostly argued to be discourse-related projections) at the C level. For example, Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001) argues that Spanish Excls are derived by raising/ merger of an element to/in the specifier of the CP which is divided into three phrases, viz., ForceP, FocusP, and TopicP, represented as follow: [_{Force} V/C/Adv/P/Det/Wh [_{Focus} (A/N/ [+F]) [_{Topic} ...]]], based on the existence of [+EXCL] feature which merges with Force and connects with Focus to generate semantic effects, especially scalar implicature. Ono (2006) and Yamato (2010) argue for different projections, namely, MoodP, FocusP, and FiniteP, for Japanese Excls to account for the order of *no*, *da* and *roo* particles, represented as [_{MoodP} [_{FocusP} [_{FiniteP} [_{IP} ...nante...]][_{Finite} no]][_{Focus} da]][_{Mood} roo]]. A different structure is proposed by Jónsson (2010) for Icelandic Excls in which the WhP and HDegP 'High Degree Phrase' are argued to be headed by Excl (cf. Cruschina et al., 2015).

Concerning the second consequence, the paper claims that analyzing Excls as CPs leads to unavoidable complicated derivations to differentiate between Excls and non-Excls. Apart from oversimplified derivations that represent Excls almost exactly as interrogatives, and consequently, fail to account for the unique syntax of Excls and its peculiarities (cf. Radford, 2009:222-224, and references therein), other derivations seem to involve inevitable complications. For example, Ambar (2002) adopts a split CP approach but with more projections as follows: XP [_{EvaluativeP} [_{Evaluative}' [_{AssertiveP} [_{Assertive}' [_{XP} _{whP} [_{Wh}' [_{FocusP} [_{Focus}' [_{XP} [_{IP}... . However, even with all the claimed projections, it is not clear why, for example, a preposition must be stranded in Excls (e.g., 6c) but not in clauses (e.g., 6a,b) or why the number of *wh*-forms are very restricted in Excls relative to interrogatives crosslinguistically.

In sum, the inconsistency in proposals and complications of derivations are claimed to be triggered by the initial assumption that Excls are TPs. Each study claims several projections in the CP domain which are different from those in other studies in their number, categories, functional heads and features. Furthermore, multiple unavoidable projections are assumed to account for the syntax of Excls which is, the paper claims, simpler and more straightforward than argued in the literature. The inconsistent and complicated projections in C can be easily avoided assuming Excls to be not extensions of a clausal projection as they are always temporally deictic; that is, they are not tensed. The minimalist amount of structure required to analyze Excls should involve the subject (i.e., the referent) and the predicate (i.e., the property exclaimed about) and a functional head in C that codifies the speaker's evaluation and exclamation. Such derivation is more economical in the spirit of Minimalism and has more empirical and theoretical implications, as argued in sections (4) and (5).

2.3 Defining features

The assumption that Excls have a clausal projection equivalent to declaratives and interrogatives leads an inevitable disagreement among researchers regarding the defining features of Excls simply because the basis of differentiation is faulty as Excls are not clausal, that is, what differentiates Excls from clauses is the lack the TP layer in Excls rather than pragmatic properties (bearing in mind that any clause type uttered with falling intonation can be used as an exclamation without a change in its structure). The main features mentioned by the pioneering works of Elliott (1974) and Grimshaw

(1979) and discussed in depth by Zanuttini & Portner (2000), viz., factivity, scalar implicature, and question/answer relations, are highly debatable. Factivity refers to the property that Excls presuppose the truth of their content. As a result, they can only be selected by factive predicates (the contrast between 7a,b) which cannot be negated (7c) since that would lead to incoherence:

- 7) a. He knows how very nice it is to go to the mountains.
- b. *He asked how very nice it is to go to the mountains.
- c. *I don't know how very tall he is. (Zanuttini & Portner, 2000:124-125)

The factivity feature seems controversial cross-linguistically. Yamato (2010:55) points out that “Japanese Excls may not be embedded under factive predicates.” Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001:183) indicates that in Spanish, “the factivity property of Excls is lost in [C-Excls] constructions.” Miró (2006:16) states that “*wh*-Excls in Catalan [...] are not easily introduced by factive verbs.” According to Abels (2010:146) “there are predicates that are classified in present terminology as antifactive by Kiparsky & Kiparsky [1970] and that do appear with embedded *what-a* Excls and *how-very* Excls.” These studies show that Excls are not inherently factive, and the whole argument may fail to make a plausible generalisation.

The second property is scalar implicature. The presupposed proposition conveyed by Excls is at a high point in a scale of contextually determined propositions, for example, *how beautiful Sally is!* indicates that the degree of Sally’s beauty is placed on the top of a scale of different degrees of beauty according to the speaker’s expectations. The argument of scalar implicature involves two widespread notions in the literature, namely, gradeability and emotional affectedness. Gradeability indicates that adjectives used in Excls must be gradable, adjectives like *dead*, *married*, *previous* cannot be exclaimed about (e.g., **How dead he was!*). Although this feature seems attractive and nonnegotiable at first sight, it still has some shortcomings. Gutiérrez-Rexach (2008:121, citing Miró, 2006:118-119) points out adjectives like *dry*, *empty* or *full* can be used in Excls, such as *How empty the cinema was!*, although they denote a closed scale that cannot be widened beyond a specific point, and their “high/extreme degree meaning hardly fits in with the standard Gricean typology of implicated meanings” (Villalba, 2008:15, see also Rosengren, 1997:179, for similar views). The second related notion is emotional affectedness, which denotes that emotions such as surprise and amazement are caused by situations that go beyond the speaker’s expectations. The surprise/ amazement effect cannot account for some contexts like (8):

- 8) What a delicious dinner you have made! (Badan & Cheng, 2015:401)

In this context, the speaker does not imply that s/he is surprised by the taste which s/he does not expect to be delicious. Furthermore, in Mandarin Chinese, surprise cannot be considered as an essential property of Excls even in constructions like ‘*How tall he is!*’ (ibid). In support of this view, Cruschina et al., (2015:12), agreeing with Nouwen & Chernilovskaya (2013), argue that Excls are not always scalar. Brandner (2010:99) points out that the notions ‘extreme degree’ and ‘emotional affectedness’ are hard to define in any precise way and cannot be distinguishing features since they exist in declaratives and interrogatives as well. Agreeing with the previous arguments, the paper claims that emotional affectedness cannot be a defining feature of Excls simply because surprise or amazement are associated with interjections (e.g., *Wow*, *Oh my God*, *Jesus*, etc.) rather than Excls, and the co-occurrence of interjections with Excls to yield this effect is supportive evidence.

The third property is related to question/answer relations. Excls are said to resemble interrogatives since they have a *wh*-word in an initial position, but the former is distinguished from the latter in its inability to be answered or to be used as answers (compared to declaratives). The use of *wh*-elements cannot be considered as a defining feature of Excls because the syntactic strategies to form Excls vary

across languages, and *wh*-Excls are different from clause types syntactically, semantically, and pragmatically. Moreover, the limited ability of Excls to be used as answers is not always true, as the following pair shows:

- 9) A: Why don't we go to Cala S'Alguer? B: What a wonderful idea! (Miró, 2008:50)

Apart from the aforementioned controversial features, the paper argues that there are two defining features of Excls which are related to the nature of Excls as nonsententials. The first is 'evaluation,' that is, "the speaker has an attitude towards the degree expressed and judges it in some way or other. The hearer can agree or disagree with this evaluation" (Brandner, 2010:101). The plausibility of this feature to characterize Excls stems from the claim that all Excls 'always' involve the evaluational attitude component that requires only one type of response from the addressee (i.e., (dis)agreement). Thus, the paper argues that Excls are used by the speaker to express his/her evaluation of a particular situation; more precisely, all exclamative constructions involve the feature [EVAL] which codifies the speaker's appreciation or deprecation of a particular entity, situation or event. This feature goes hand in hand with the agreed upon [EXCL] feature which provides the illocutionary force of the utterance.

The second property is related to referentiality, in Zevakhina's (2013:163) words, "a referent, which might be an object or a situation, should be accessible in discourse" and "identifiable" (Michaelis, 2001:1041). To illustrate, let us consider (10a-c):

- 10) a. Someone/ a man knocked on your door yesterday.
 b. Did anyone call me today?
 c. How generous *someone/*a man/ *anyone is!

Whereas declarative and interrogative constructions allow indefinite/unspecific referents in (10a,b), Excls allow only definite and specific referents, hence, the ill-formedness of (10c) (*a man* has non-generic meaning). The fact that the referent must be identifiable is the direct result of Excls as a tenseless syntactic construction. The identifiability requirement stems from my claim that Excls are nonsententials that have "no Tense node [and must be] situated/anchored in Time by the context of the utterance" (Progovac, 2006:44). Since the context is the only means to provide Time for Excls, the referent must be "one for which a shared representation already exists in the speaker's mind and the hearer's mind at the time of utterance" (Lambrecht, 1996:77-78).

This subsection concludes with the claim that the controversial features (i.e., factivity, scalar implicature, and question/answer relations) cannot be the defining properties of Excls, and the more plausible features are related to evaluation and referentiality. These two features are essential to account for the syntax of Excls since they are associated with the main components of Excls as non-TP constructions, namely, the small clause which involves the subject (i.e., the identifiable referent) and the property ascribed to it (i.e., the exclamative expression) which connects with the [EVAL] and [EXCL] features. This argument, as well as the preceding ones concerning the syntactic strategies, sentence type, and analyses of Excls, pave the way to the non-clausal approach of Arabic Excls.

3. Excls in Arabic

Similar to English in (1a-c), Arabic exclamations are different from Excls based on syntactic formations and pragmatic function; exclamations can be of any clause type uttered with falling intonation, whereas Excls have specific syntactic formulas different from clauses and used exclusively for expressivity and evaluation. Exclamations, called in Arabic *ṣiyaġ attā'ajub*

assamā'yya 'acoustic exclamation formats,' depend on inference, rather than structure, for their interpretation (for a comprehensive view, see Alquraṣī & Almusawī, 2010), as in (11a,b) ⁵:

- 11) a. *kayfa* *fā'al-ta* *hāḍa* (*wa* *'anta* *'ak-ī*)
 how did-you this and you brother-my
 'How did you do this (yet you are my brother)?!'
- b. (*subḥāna* *Allah*) *bayt-u-ka* *jamīl-u-n*
 glorified Allah house-NOM-your beautiful-NOM-N
 'God is glorified; your house is beautiful!'

(11a,b) follow the syntax of interrogatives and declaratives, respectively, and their interpretation cannot be restricted to exclamations out of context. In contrast, Excls do not have the same syntax of clauses and are interpreted as evaluative without the aid of special expressions like *subḥāna Allah* in (11b), that is, their syntax is indicative of their force. Similar to other languages (e.g., see, e.g., Elliott, 1974: 244-245), Jordanian Arabic (JA) utilizes *wh*-elements to form Excls, as exemplified in (12a,b):

- 12) a. *šū* *dāhyeh*
 how cunning
 'How cunning (you are)!'
- b. *ayš* *ha-l-ḥalāwih*
 what this-the-beauty
 'What a (stunning) beauty!'

Only *šū* 'how' and *ayš* 'what' can be used in Excls, other *wh*-forms (e.g., *kayf* 'how,' ⁶ *lawayš* 'why,' *mata* 'when,' *mīn* 'who,' etc.) cannot. *Wh*-Excls involve several peculiarities including, for example, inflexible word order, (ii) the ungrammaticality of including a finite verbal phrase, and (iii) the obligatory presence of the prefix *ha-* which is not semantically required. These idiosyncrasies are not present in clauses.

Additionally, in classical Arabic (CA), Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and JA, Excls utilize another two syntactic strategies. The first strategy which is associated with vocative Excls (Voc-Excls) changes the vocative phrase (VocP) from being used "for calling out and attracting or maintaining the addressee's attention" (Daniel & Spencer, 2009:626) to be utilized for expressivity and evaluation of the referent. This change is reflected in the structure of VocPs, exemplified in (13a) compared with Voc-ExclPs in (13b):

⁵ I use the following abbreviations: ACC: accusative; DUAL: dual; EXCL: exclamative; FEM: feminine; GEN: genitive; MASC: masculine; N: nunation (Arabic indefinite article); NOM: nominative; NW: *nūn alwiqāya* 'preventive n'; PL: plural; PREP: preposition; PTCL: particle; SBJ: subject; SG: singular. In the transliteration, the dot under the letter indicates that the sound is emphatic and pharyngealized; [t], [d], and [s] are the emphatic counterparts of [t], [d], and [s], respectively (for an overview, see, Al-Bataineh, 2019b).

⁶ In contrast with Excl *wh*-word *šū* 'how', the interrogative *kayf* 'how' can be followed by a TP involving an overt verb that can be of any tense. As correctly highlighted by Cantarino (1976:203), "supplying a verb would efface the exclamatory quality and thus the actual character of the phrase". For that reason, *šū* and *kayf* cannot be used interchangeably.

- 13) a. *yā rajul-a-n, ('aqliq al-bāb-a)*
 O man-ACC-N⁷ close the-door-ACC
 'Man, close the door.'

(Al-Bataineh, 2019:19)

- b. *yā la-jamāl-i al-ṭabī'at-i*
 O PREP-beauty-GEN the-nature-GEN
 'How captivating the beauty of nature is!'

Although the vocative particle *yā* heads both constructions, Voc-Excls are distinct from VocPs in several ways. First, unlike VocPs which allow an indefinite vocative such as *rajul* 'a man' in (13a), the entity exclaimed about must be definite and specific; the word *jamāl* 'beauty' in (13b) is definite by annexation to *alṭabī'ati* 'the nature.' Second, the DP after the vocative particle is assigned accusative or nominative-like case⁸, but in Voc-ExclPs, it is marked genitive or accusative. Third, from a semantic standpoint, VocPs and Voc-ExclPs are differentiated based on the presence/ absence of the semantic features [ANIMACY], [EVALUATIVE], and [DEGREE]. While VocPs obligatory have [ANIMACY] feature because they are associated with the addressee (cf. **yā qalamu* 'O pencil', unless the vocative is interpreted metaphorically, i.e., in personification contexts), Voc-ExclPs optionally have the feature simply because both animate and inanimate objects can be exclaimed about. [EVALUATIVE] and [DEGREE] features are obligatorily absent in VocPs but must be present in Voc-ExclPs⁹ explicitly as in (13b) or implicitly as in (14) which exemplifies the necessity of an evaluative element, in this case, *uḍūbat* 'purity', that can be omitted only if inferable from the context:

- 14) *yā l-(uḍūbat-i) al-mā'-i*
 O the-(purity-GEN) the-water-GEN
 'How pure the water is!'

Fourth, while VocPs can be initiated by eight particles in CA or three in MSA, Voc-ExclPs are headed only by *yā* (for further details on MSA VocPs, see Al-Bataineh, 2020, and Alkuwaihes, 2017 for Gulf Arabic Voc-ExclPs). Based on the aforementioned differences, Voc-ExclPs have a unique structure that requires [REFERENTIALITY], [EVALUATIVE], [INANIMACY] and [DEGREE] in order for the expressivity to take place, that is, the absence of one or more these features leads to non-exclamative construction; VocPs or exclamations as in (10a-c) from JA:

- 15) a. *yā salām*
 O peace
 'O goodness!'

⁷ I consider nunation *-n* as a marker of indefiniteness, that is, it is a D equivalent to the definite article *al-* for two reasons. (i) The definite article *al-* and nunation *-n* are in complementary distribution (**al-walad-u-n* 'the a boy'); and (ii) both *al-* and *-n* cannot occur in annexation (i.e., attachment to a pronoun) **al-walad-u-k* / **walad-u-n-k*, or in the construct state like **al-ṣadiiq-a 'amrin* / **ṣadiiq-a-n 'amrin* (Al-Ansari, 1991:740, cited in Al-Bataineh, in press). The abbreviation N is used for the indefinite article *-n* in this paper.

⁸ The nominative-like case (called in traditional grammars *mabnī 'alā aḍḍam*) is different from the regular nominative because the former is a default case assigned only in imperfect checking domains (i.e., when the DP has a null D). See Al-Bataineh, 2020 for more details, and Al-Bataineh & Branigan, 2020 on the internal structure of Arabic DP.

⁹ It is possible to have a VocP involving a DP modified by an adjective having the [EVALUATIVE] feature, e.g., *My sweet/silly son, why do you behave that way?*. The distinction between the VocP *My sweet/silly son* and a Voc-Excl such as *How silly you are!* is that whereas in VocPs the adjective describes a permanent attribute (i.e., denoting an autonomous, acontextual evaluations), in Voc-Excls the adjectives describe a temporary attribute limited to the present time of the speech situation. That is, the [EVALUATIVE] feature in Voc-ExclPs is a context-bound.

b. *yā* *‘ayn-ī* *‘alī-k*
 O eye-my on-you
 ‘That’s absolutely true!’¹⁰

c. *yā* *ksāra*
 O loss
 ‘What a loss!’

The second strategy associated with verbal Excls (V-Excls) demands the use of one of two types of verbal constituents, viz., evaluative verbs or verbal morphological templates. Evaluative verbs include *nī‘ma* ‘how excellent,’ *bi‘sa/ sā‘a* ‘how inferior,’ *ḥabba(ḡā)* ‘how appreciative,’ and *la ḥabba(ḡā)* ‘how depreciative.’ Unlike verbs used in TPs, such as ‘wake up’ in (16a), these evaluative verbs must be sentence initially, hence, the ungrammaticality of (16b), and only in the past tense, notice that the present tense *yu-ḥabbiḡu* cannot be used in (16c) (in addition to other peculiarities to be explained in section 4.3.1):

- 16) a. *Zayd-u-n* *ya-stīḡiḡu* *mubakkir-a-n*
 Zayd-NOM-N 3SG.PRES-wake up early-ACC-N
 ‘Zayd wakes up early.’
- b. **Zayd-u-n* *ḥabbaḡā*
 Zayd-NOM-N liked.this.EXCL
 ‘How appreciative Zayd is!’
- c. *ḥabbaḡā/* **yu-ḥabbiḡu* *Zayd-u-n*
 liked.this.EXCL 3SG.PRES-like.this.EXCL Zayd-NOM-N
 ‘How appreciative Zayd is!’

In addition to evaluative verbs, V-ExclPs utilize three morphological templates, viz., *fa‘ula*, *‘af‘il bi-*, *mā ‘af‘ala*. The exclamative expression (mostly an adjective) changes its morphological form in accordance with these strict templates that act as frames or molds that shape its word structure. In (17a-c) below, *‘ālim* ‘knowledgeable’ does not retain its morphological form in templatic V-ExclPs, instead it is given a shape (in bold) that conforms to the templates *fa‘ula*, *‘af‘il bi-*, and *mā ‘af‘ala*¹¹, respectively:

- 17) a. ***‘aluma*** *Zayd-u-n*
 know.EXCL Zayd-NOM-N
 ‘How knowledgeable Zayd is!’
- b. ***‘a‘lim*** ***bi-Zayd-i-n***
 know.EXCL PREP-Zayd-GEN-N
 ‘How knowledgeable Zayd is!’

¹⁰ This expression is also used ironically as a criticism.

¹¹ The first template is archaic and used only in CA, but the other two are still used in MSA and JA; *mā ‘af‘ala* is more common than *‘af‘il bi-* which restricted only to a handful of fossilized expressions (e.g., JA *‘an‘im wa ‘akrim (bikum)* ‘How excellent and generous you are!’ (see also Alhawary, 2011:322) and (*‘akrim*) *bi-lmhalli* as a response to greetings such as *‘ahlan wa saḥlan* ‘welcome’ (for more interjectional phrases, see Cantarino, 1976:206).

c. *mā* 'a'lama Zayd-a-n
 PTCL know.EXCL Zayd-ACC-N
 'How knowledgeable Zayd is!'

Although these templates are semantically equivalent (i.e., they denote the same property exclaimed about) and followed by the same referent, they show several peculiarities such as (i) the referent has three cases (i.e., nominative, genitive, and accusative case in (17a-c), respectively) although it has the same thematic role, (ii) inflexible word order, (iii) the presence of the spurious preposition *bi-* in (17b), and (iv) the obligatory presence of the meaningless particle *mā* in (17c). These properties are not possible in full clauses. Additionally, in contrast with equivalent verbal forms utilized at the TP level, these templatic forms are constructed according to several conditions that require the exclamative expression to be originally derived from a verb that is triliteral, complete 'non-auxiliary', affirmative, gradable, etc., (for details and illustrative examples, see, Aqeel, 1980:154).

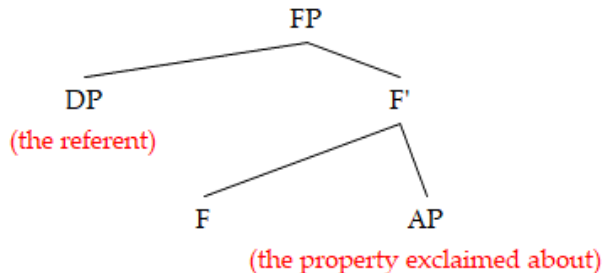
To sum up, this section differentiates between Arabic exclamations and Excls based on syntactic formations and pragmatic functions, and it briefly explains the various syntactic strategies utilized to form ExclPs which include (i) the *wh*-forms in Wh-ExclPs, (ii) the vocative particle in Voc-ExclPs, and (iii) evaluative verbs and morphological templates in V-ExclPs. The next section provides a more in-depth analysis of the syntax of Arabic ExclPs.

4. The syntax of Arabic ExclPs

A satisfactory, plausible analysis of Arabic ExclPs needs to account for several peculiarities and intricacies associated with the different constructions mentioned above. The paper claims that a clausal analysis (criticized in section (2) above) fails to account for these peculiarities and leaves them as unexplainable mysteries. A more plausible approach which analyzes Excls as non-TP constructions is based on the following assumptions:

1- All ExclPs, regardless of their type, start the derivation as a small clause (SC) consisting of the subject (the referent) and a predicate (the property exclaimed about, mostly an adjectival element) and lacking tense inflection. The SC is a projection of a functional head as argued by several researchers (e.g., Adger & Ramchand, 2003; J. Bailyn & Citko, 1999; J. F. Bailyn, 1995; J. Bailyn & Rubin, 1991; Bowers, 1993; Citko, 2006, 2008; Dikken, 2006; Hornstein & Lightfoot, 1987; Svenonius, 1994, cited in Citko, 2011:751), as in (18):

18)



The relationship between the two constituents is predicative; the DP (i.e., the referent) is ascribed a particular property by the AP (i.e., the predicate). This assumption is based on a plethora of studies which indicate that “small clauses are both empirically motivated and theoretically sound” (Citko, 2011:751) as they are prevalent in child language (e.g., *Girl hungry*), and some survive into adulthood, as exemplified in (19):

- 19) a. Car dead./ Battery dead.
 b. This a bargain?!
 c. John tall?!

(Progovac, 2006)

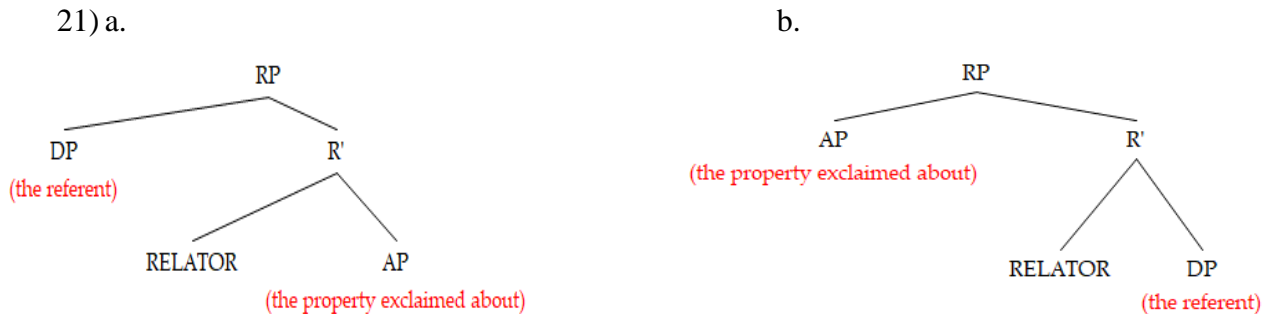
In addition to those used as assertions in (19a) or rhetorical questions in (19b,c), Some SCs are utilized only as Excls such as those in (20a-c):

- 20) a. Oh, you fool!
 b. You idiot!
 c. You nincompoop/dumbass/screwball!

(Potts & Roeper, 2006:183)

These expressive SCs may indicate how ExclPs are initially formed, especially when we consider that such expressions exist cross-linguistically, and they are not restricted to second-person pronouns (see, e.g., Corver, 2008).

2- The predication relationship between the referent and the exclamative expression is asymmetrical as they are mediated by a functional head and also nondirectional in the sense that either the subject or the predicate occupies the specifier position of the functional head, labeled as Relator a la den Dikken (2006), as in (21a,b):

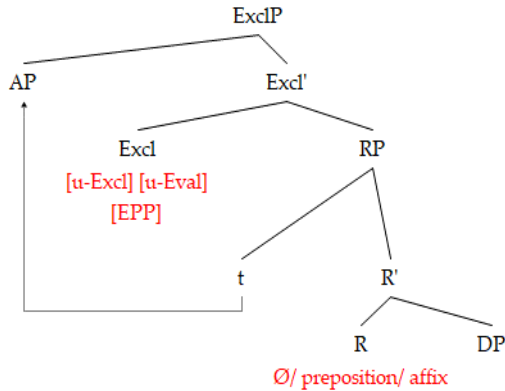


Considering that the initial position of AP in Excls, I claim that the structure in (21b) is the canonical predication structure of ExclPs whereas the one in (21a) is also well-formed and allowed in constructions where the Relator follows the DP (e.g., How smart he **is**!). That is, the choice between either structure is both language-specific and construction-specific. The Relator is “a placeholder for any functional head in the structure that mediates a predication relation between two terms [which can be null or lexicalized as a copula, a preposition or an affix], [and since] Relator is not a designated category; the RP structure represents a syntactic configuration rather than a claim about the lexicon” (den Dikken, 2006:15-16).

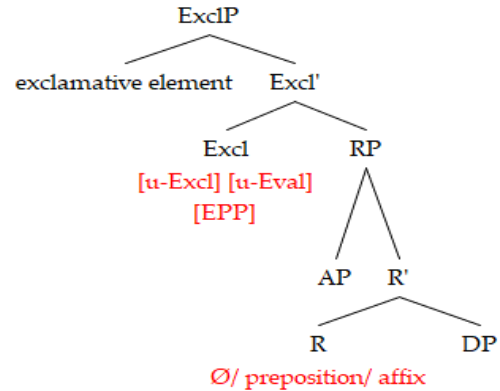
3- The formed RP consists of the referent which must be definite and specific (i.e., accessible and identifiable in the discourse) and the AP which carries the valued features [EVALUATIVE] as it embodies the speaker’s evaluations (i.e., appreciation or deprecation) and [EXCLAMATIVE] as it denotes a property exclaimed about, rather than a regular adjectival modification. The RP is headed by Excl head which has unvalued [EVAL] and [EXCL] (i.e., not determined in advance, and they need to be valued by Agree)¹² and the [EPP] feature which requires it to be extended into an ExclP. This requirement can be satisfied by either internal merge (i.e., by moving the exclamative expression) or by external merge, depending on the type of ExclP, as in (22a,b):

¹² The argument that the features [EVAL] and [EXCL] are bundled in the Excl head in Arabic Excls does not impose the same mechanism to exist in all languages as these features can be either bundled or decomposed into two separate heads (i.e., Excl and Eval) both across languages and language internally.

22) a.



b.



This representation explains the reason why Excls are always used for evaluation (i.e., appreciation or deprecation). Notice that the R can be null or realized as a meaningless prepositional element or an affix in Arabic, and the external merge can be filled by a *wh*-element *šū/ ayš*, vocative particle *yā* or an exclamative particle *mā*, as explained in the following subsections. The given assumptions lead the paper to claim that exclamative constructions are subject to the following condition:

Exclamative Condition

A syntactic object is interpreted as an exclamative if and only if (i) it is a phrasal projection smaller than a sentence (as it lacks Tense, i.e., it is always temporally deictic to the here and now) and (ii) it is an ExclP with an exclamative specifier (i.e., a specifier containing an exclamative element).

As correctly highlighted by a reviewer, the idea of leaving out some layers (e.g., VP and TP) and having projections from the C-field (i.e., ExclP) directly above the predicate is not revolutionary in and of itself. For example, Basilico (2003) projects Topic Phrase (TopP) directly above SC to account for passivization and narrow scope phenomena. O'Neill (2015) argues that not only in tenseless languages but also in tensed languages like English, finite clauses can lack the projection of T in copula amalgam sentences. Borik & Espinal (2019:306) argue that “in all languages, including Russian, there can be nominal arguments of different “sizes”, that is, involving a different “amount” of functional structure on top of the minimal NP projection.”

4.1. Wh-Excls in JA

Wh-Excls demonstrate two intricacies compared with their declarative equivalents, viz., the obligatory presence of the prefix *ha-* which is a demonstrative in declaratives and the inflexible word order. Consider in (23a,b) that declaratives in Arabic have flexible word order (similar perhaps to languages like Cree, see, Al-Bataineh & Abdelhady, 2019:710) and *ha-* ‘this’ is optional, and in (24a,b) only *šū* ‘how’ allows AP *ha*-DP, but *ayš* does not. Notice also that both *wh*-words cannot allow *ha*-DP AP order, as shown in (25).

- 23) a. *zākī* (ha)-l- 'akīl
delicious (this)-the-food
'The food is delicious.'

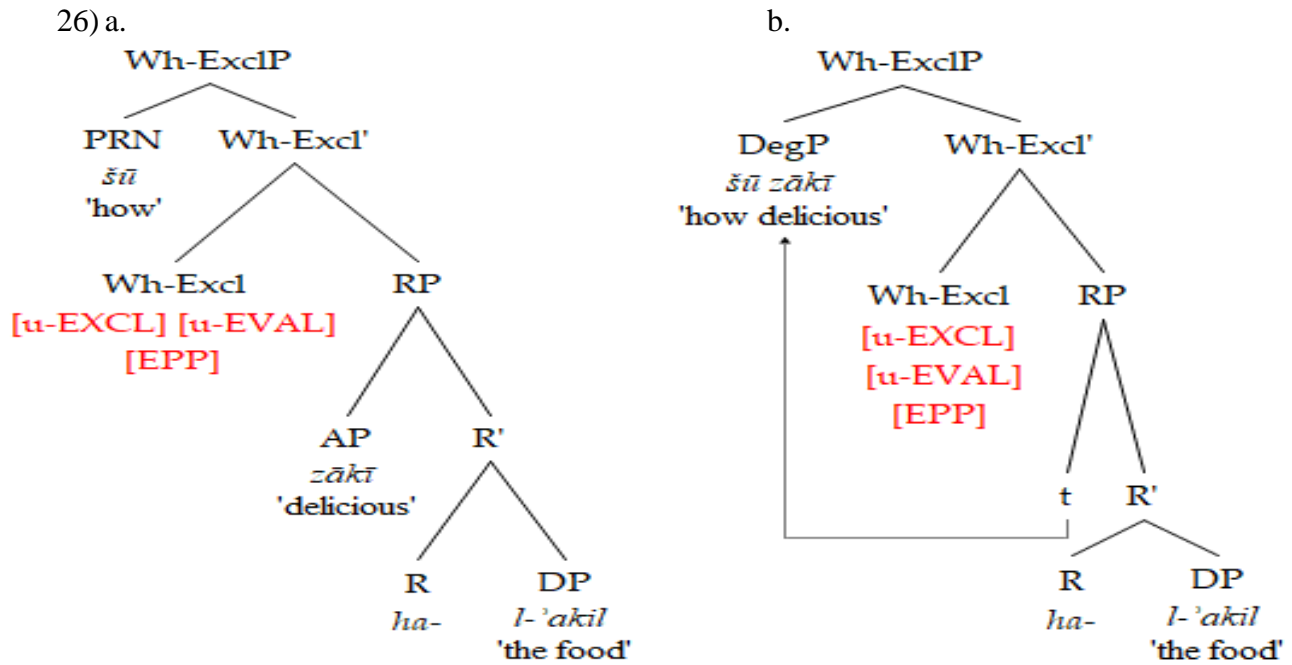
- b. (ha)-l- 'akil zākī
 (this)-the-food delicious
 'The food is delicious.'

- 24) a. šū zākī (*(ha)-l- 'akil)
 how delicious *(PRFX)-the-food
 'How delicious (the food is)!'

- b. *ayš zākī *(ha)-l- 'akil
 what delicious *(PRFX)-the-food
 'How delicious (the food is)!'

- 25) šū/ ayš *(ha)-l- 'akil (*zākī)
 what/ what *(PRFX)-the-food (*delicious)
 'What a (delicious) food it is!'

The flexibility of word order stems from the assumption that declaratives and ExclPs may start as RPs, but they are headed by different functional heads. While RPs in declaratives project further into TP and then to CP, RPs in ExclPs are headed by Excl that requires an exclamative element to be in its specifier position either by external merge or internal merge as in (26a,b), respectively. The two derivations reflect that the AP either can stay in situ if the [EPP] feature is satisfied by external merge of an exclamative pronoun or can move if the exclamative element merges internally with the AP to form DegP 'how delicious' (the constituency of *wh*-AP will be discussed in section 5):



In both structures, Excl serves as a probe which searches for a c-commanded goal to agree with. The only goal is AP 'delicious' due to its valued [EVAL] and [EXCL] features; thus, Excl agrees with it. In consequence of Agreement, the values of the features on AP 'delicious' are copied onto Excl, and the [EPP] feature is satisfied by either merging of PRN *šū* 'how' or DegP *šū zākī* 'how delicious'. The

given representations explain why ExclPs allows only the word order *šū* AP *ha*-DP. Furthermore, the prefix *ha*- is argued to be the lexicalization of R¹³. Analyzing *ha*- as a prefix in R, rather than a Dem, accounts for its obligatory presence in ExclP but not in declaratives. The optionality of Dem *ha*- in declaratives can be supported not only by nominal sentences such as (23a,b) above but also by verbal ones like (27) with an indication of its status as a demonstrative head (for proposals of Arabic demonstratives, see Al-Bataineh, 2019:28-29 and references therein), that is, the referent in declaratives can be either a DP ‘the food’ or a DemP headed by a Dem *ha*- ‘this’:

- 27) *‘ajab-n-i (ha)-l-’akil*
 liked-NW¹⁴-me (this)-the-food
 ‘I liked this food.’

Further support of the status of *ha*- as the lexicalization of R in ExclPs can also be drawn from its form and position. Whereas the Dem *ha*- in declaratives can have the full form *hāṭa* ‘this’, the R *ha*- is always a bound morpheme, and it must precede the DP, in contrast with the Dem *hāṭa* ‘this’ which can either precede or follow the DP. Analyzing *ha*- in R not only explains the obligatoriness of *ha*- and its differences from the regular Dem, but also clarifies other realizations of R (e.g., *dā* in *ḥabbaḍā* ‘how appreciative,’ and the prepositions *la*- in Voc-ExclPs and *bi*- in templatic V-ExclPs, to be explained below).

Regarding the selectional properties of *šū* ‘how’ and *ayš* ‘what.’ Let us reconsider (24a,b) and (25), repeated as (28a,b) and (29):

- 28) a. *šū zākī (*ha)-l-’akil*
 how delicious *(PRFX)-the-food
 ‘How delicious (the food is)!’
 b. **ayš zākī *(ha)-l-’akil*
 what delicious *(PRFX)-the-food
 ‘How delicious (the food is)!’
 29) *šū/ ayš *(ha)-l-’akil (*zākī)*
 what/ what *(PRFX)-the-food (*delicious)
 ‘What a (delicious) food it is!’

(28a,b) show that only *šū* ‘how’ selects an AP which can be followed by an optional *ha*-DP¹⁵, and (29) demonstrates that both *šū* ‘what’ and *ayš* ‘what’ select *ha*-DP which cannot be followed by an AP. That is, when the AP is present, only *šū* ‘how’ is allowed, and when the AP is absent, then there is a choice between *šū* and *ayš*. These facts indicate that the presence of AP determines the choice of the *wh*-form, and its absence gives equal opportunity for both *wh*-forms to be utilized. To account for

¹³ A similar structure exists in Mandarin Chinese in which *zhème/nàme* ‘this.ME/that.ME’ are used with *zěnmē* ‘how’ to form Excls (Badan & Cheng, 2015).

¹⁴ This *-n-* (called in Arabic grammar *nūn alwīqāya* ‘preventive n’, abbreviated here as NW) is obligatorily inserted after the verb only when it is followed by the 1SG.SUB/OBJ/POSS ‘I/ me/ my.’

¹⁵ The possibility of the ellipsis process of *ha*-DP in (24a) above indicates that R in Wh-ExclPs has the two variants *ha*- and Ø. The choice between these two variants depends on the presence of DP, that is, when the DP is present, R is realized as *ha*- simply because it has a suitable host to attach to, but when the DP is elided, it has the null variant. An alternative analysis is to propose that the R has one form *ha*- which must attach to the DP before the ellipsis takes place to avoid a violation of the Stray Affix Filter “Affixes must have phonologically overt hosts” (Lasnik, 1990, 1995, cited in Markman, 2008:371). For arguments for the lexicalization of R as an affix that has “the syntactic function of relating a predicate to its subject”, see den Dikken (2006:31).

these peculiarities, let us first highlight the fact briefly discussed above that *šū* and the AP *zākī* do not always form a single constituent because they can be separated by the copula *kān* ‘was’, as in (30):

- 30) *šū kān zākī ha-l-’akil*
 how was delicious PRFX-the-food
 ‘How delicious (the food was)!’

(30) indicates that *šū* and the AP are not obligatory adjacent. Strangely enough, *šū* and *ayš* must be adjacent to the *ha*-DP as the insertion of the same element between the two constituents leads to ungrammaticality in (31):

- 31) *šū/ ayš *kān ha-l-’akil*
 what/ what *was PRFX-the-food
 ‘*What a food it was!’

To account for the intricate adjacency requirements, I argue that the copula *kān* ‘was’ is a focus particle, rather than an auxiliary verb in V or T simply because Excls are not finite clauses. This argument is based on several pieces of evidence. First, while ‘was’ is allowed for emphasis, its present and future counterparts are not allowed in JA Excls (and also in MSA, see, e.g., Ya’ish, 2001:423-424). Second, unlike canonical *kān* ‘was’, the focus marker *kān* cannot combine with sentential negation because “the location of the negative projection is relative to the projection that carries the temporal information of the clause” (Benmamoun, Abunasser, Al-Sabbagh, Bidaoui, & Shalash, 2013:84, see also Shlonsky, 1997; Soltan, 2007). Consider the contrast between the declarative and the exclamative in (32a,b):

- 32) a. *mā kān-iš zākī ha-l-’akil*
 NEG was-NEG delicious this-the-food
 ‘The food was not delicious.’
 b. *šū *mā kān-*iš zākī ha-l-’akil*
 how *NEG was-*NEG delicious PRFX-the-food
 ‘The food was not delicious.’

Third, the focus marker *kān* has one fixed position between the RP and Excl, that is, it cannot intervene between the two relata of RP as in (33a), but the canonical *kān* can exist between the subject and the predicate in declaratives as in (33b):

- 33) a. *šū zākī *kān ha-l-’akil*
 how delicious *was PRFX-the-food
 ‘How delicious the food was!’
 b. *zākī kān ha-l-’akil*
 delicious was PRFX-the-food
 ‘How delicious (the food was)!’

Fourth, unlike equivalent main clauses in (34a,b), Excls with ‘was’ (actually even without the copula) cannot exist in or with a temporal adverbial clause as in (35a,b), respectively, because “temporal adverbial clauses are derived by movement of a TP-internal operator to the left periphery” (Endo & Haegeman, 2019:11):

- 34) a. *lamma* *kān* *zākī* *l- 'akīl*
 when was delicious this-the-food
 ‘When the food was delicious, [I used to eat more]!’

- b. *lamma* *kunt* *bi-balad-ī* *kān* *zākī* *l- 'akīl*
 when was.1SG.SBJ in-home country-my was delicious the-food
 ‘When I was in my home country, the food was delicious!’

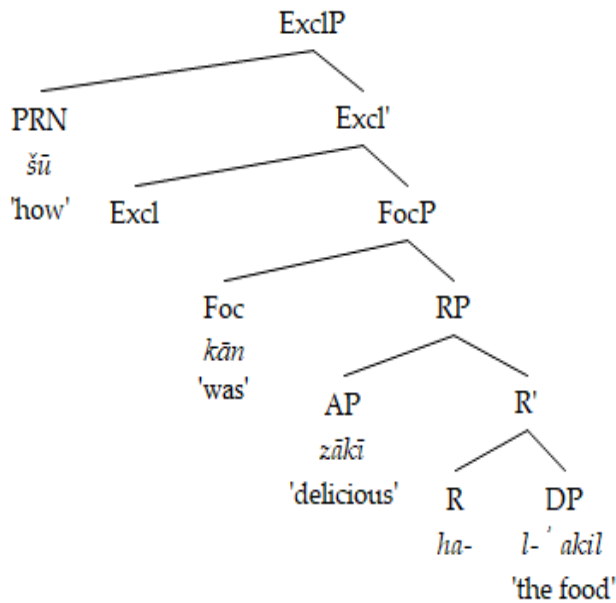
- 35) a. **lamma* *šū* *kān* *zākī* *ha-l- 'akīl*
 when how was delicious PRFX-the-food
 ‘*When how delicious the food was!’

- b. **lamma* *kunt* *bi-balad-ī* *šū* *kān* *zākī* *ha-l- 'akīl*
 when was.1SG.SBJ in-home country-my how was delicious PRFX-the-food
 ‘*When I was in my home country, how delicious the food was!’

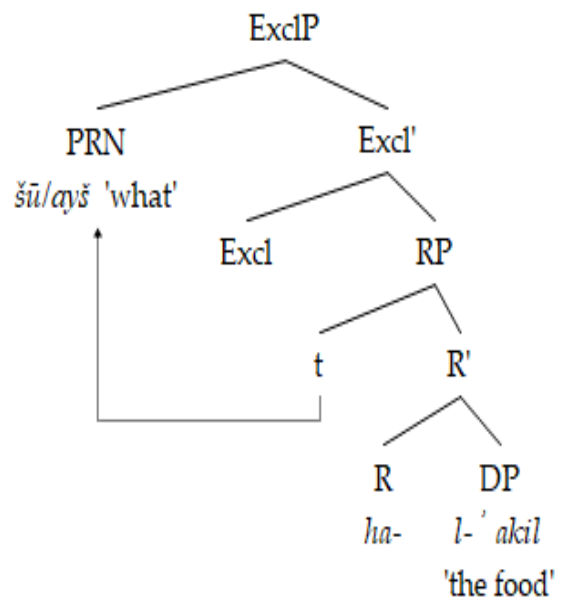
Fifth, the copula in Excls does not affect case assignment; that is, it is deprived of its ability to assign the accusative case to the predicate in nominal sentences. The peculiar syntactic behavior of the focus marker in not assigning case is more apparent in MSA as it is richer in morphological inflections than JA (see, e.g., Ya'ish, 2001:424, for illustrative examples). However, the last issue to consider is that the phi-features carried by the copula *kān* ‘was’ in Excls does not necessarily impose that it is a T element because the phi-features originate in the left periphery, rather than in T (Chomsky, 2001, 2008; Richards, 2007). This view can be supported further by other studies analyzing the copula as focus or topic marker in English (e.g., O'Neill, 2015:210, and the references therein) and as a focus operator in Iraqi Arabic (Bakir, 2019), rather than T. Agreeing with Bakir (2019:126), “the focus operator [in our case *kān* ‘was’] is overtly spelled out with phi features that get valued via agreement with a c-commanded relevant goal [in the given examples, the DP ‘the food’]”. The independency between finiteness and T can be further supported by the fact that “complementizers show subject agreement inflection [...] in a range of language families” (O'Neill, 2015:357).

Returning to the adjacency relations between the two relata in RP exemplified in (28a,b) and (29) above, the derivations in (36) show that the focus operator realized as *kān* ‘was’ can originate between RP and Excl as this position does not affect the structure because the [EPP] feature on Excl is satisfied by the external merge of the exclamative pronoun *šū*, but it cannot originate between the exclamative pronoun *šū/ ayš* ‘what’ and the R’ as it blocks the movement of the exclamative pronoun to spec-ExclP, as shown in (36a,b), respectively (to simplify exposition, the FocP is not shown in (36b)):

36) a.



b.



In (36a), Excl serves as a probe which searches for a c-commanded goal to agree with. The only goal is AP 'delicious'; thus, Excl agrees with it. In consequence of Agreement, the values of the [EVAL] and [EXCL] features of AP 'delicious' are copied onto Excl, and the [EPP] feature is satisfied by the external merge of *šū* 'how'. In (36b), while the [EVAL] and [EXCL] features can be copied on Excl by Agree, the [EPP] feature cannot be satisfied by external merge of an exclamative pronoun as that would yield two exclamative pronouns with the same identity (i.e., the same semantic and syntactic properties); hence, the only way to satisfy the [EPP] feature is by moving the exclamative pronoun from spec-RP to spec-ExclP. Therefore, the projection of FocP is not allowed. This explains not only the obligatory absence of AP in (36b) (and other relevant types of ExclPs discussed below) but also clarifies the adjacency required between the *wh*-elements and *ha*-DP. As argued above, the AP must be adjacent to the DP it associates with, and a syntactic element such as the copula *kān*, an interjection (e.g., *'awāh* 'Ouch!,' *'ihi* 'Hooray!,' or *'uffīn* 'Damn!') or an adjunct cannot intervene between the moved exclamative pronoun and the DP.

4.2.Voc-Excls in MSA

In section (3), a differentiation is drawn between VocPs and Voc-ExclPs based on a number of syntactic properties (i.e., case assignment and selectional requirements) and semantic features (i.e., [REFERENTIALITY], [EVALUATIVE], [ANIMACY] and [DEGREE]). In addition to examples from MSA mentioned above (e.g., 13b, repeated as 37a below), other ones also exist in JA exemplified in (37b):

- 37) a. *yā la-jamāl-i al-ṭabī'at-i*
 O PREP-beauty-GEN the-nature-GEN
 'How captivating the beauty of nature is!'

- b. *yābāy 'a-ḥalāwt-ik*
 O PREP-beauty-your.FEM
 'How irresistibly attractive your beauty is!'

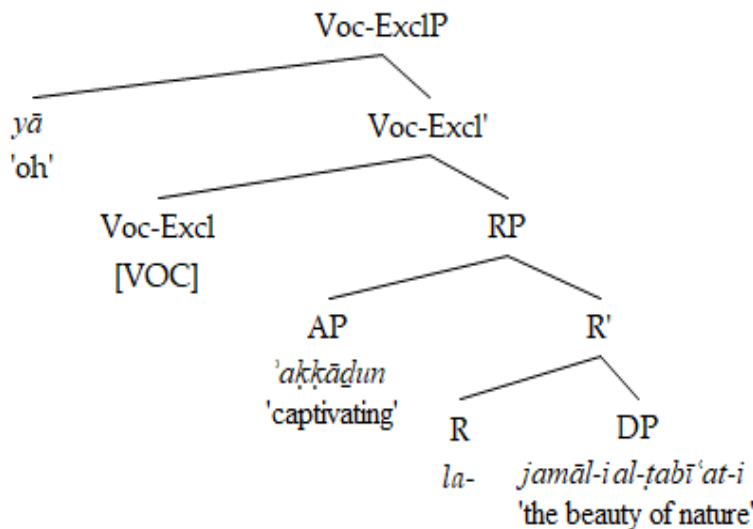
In both varieties, Voc-ExclPs are initiated by a vocative particle (i.e., *yā* and *yābāy*), and the exclamative expression is preceded by a preposition (i.e., *la* and *ʿa*). Apart from the different realizations of vocative particles and prepositions, the two constructions seem syntactically identical, that is, they follow the same pattern (i.e., vocative particle-preposition-DP). To provide a plausible analysis of Voc-ExclPs, two peculiarities need to be clarified, namely, the absence of a predicative AP and the presence of a semantically empty preposition. In other words, two questions raise in these constructions: (i) Why does the presence of AP lead to ungrammaticality? (ii) Why does a preposition exist although it is not semantically required? For reasons of space, the analysis below focuses on MSA, assuming that JA has the same arguments and derivations based on the fact that both have the same order of vocative particle-preposition-DP.

Consider the declarative equivalent of (38) below, and notice that the presence of the same vocative particle *yā* or the preposition *la*- leads to ungrammaticality:

- 38) (**yā*)/ (**la*) *jamāl-u* *al-ṭabīʿat-i* *ʾaḵḵāḍ-u-n*
 O/ PREP beauty-NOM the-nature-GEN captivating-NOM-N
 ‘The beauty of nature is captivating.’

The fact that declaratives cannot be preceded by either the vocative particle or the preposition indicates that the syntax of Voc-ExclPs does not follow the same mechanisms adopted in clauses, that is, an analysis of the AP *ʾaḵḵāḍun* ‘captivating’ cannot be argued to be originated within the TP domain simply because it is obligatory absent in Voc-ExclPs, and the DP cannot be the complement of the preposition because the preposition is not semantically required in declaratives and its presence makes the sentence ill-formed. A straightforward and plausible account of Voc-ExclPs such as (37a) can be argued to be represented as in (39):

39)



Excl serves as a probe and agrees with the goal AP *ʾaḵḵāḍ* ‘captivating’. In consequence of Agreement, the values of the [EVAL] and [EXCL] features of AP ‘captivating’ are copied onto Excl, and the [EPP] feature is satisfied by external merge of *yā* ‘oh’ rather than movement of the AP because Voc-Excl carries the feature [VOC] that requires the specifier of Voc-ExclP to be a vocative particle. After the processes of valuation and agreement take place, the AP gets null spellout by the haplology

rule: an avoidance mechanism that eliminates one of the two identical forms (i.e., phonemic (e.g., Wong, Huang, & Chen, 2018), morphemic (e.g., Faust, 2018), semantic (e.g., Apresjan, 1977) identical elements). This mechanism which is motivated by economy can also be triggered in circumstances in which two forms have identical syntactic features. According to Neeleman & Van de Koot (2006:700) (see, e.g., Wong et al., 2018 for similar views, and Hiraiwa, 2010 for more references):

Given that the spell-out rules relate morpho-syntactic objects to their phonological form, one would expect to find cases in which deletion or suppletion is triggered by syntactic features even though the morphemes affected are not phonologically identical in isolation.

Based on the distinction between the vocative particle in VocPs and Voc-ExclPs summarized in the beginning of this section, and also on the semantics of the particle which denotes exclamation and evaluation, I argue that the features [EVAL] and [EXCL] exist not only in the AP ‘captivating’ but also in the vocative particle as well. Since both *yā* and the AP *’akḵāḍ* ‘captivating’ carry the same features, the haplology process requires deletion (or suppletion as exemplified in the last subsection) of one of the two exclamative expressions. The AP is deleted because the Voc-Excl requires an element with the [VOC] feature in its specifier position (i.e., *yā* ‘oh’). Thus, the derivation in (39) accounts for the obligatory absence of the AP in Excls but not in their equivalent clauses. Moreover, the meaningless preposition *la-* is shown to be the overt realization of R since it is selected by *yā* ‘oh’, and that explains the absence of this preposition in clauses that do not have the same syntax as tenseless Voc-ExclPs. The last issue to be highlighted is that the referent is assigned genitive case if the spurious preposition is present; otherwise, it is marked accusative by the vocative particle which carries the valued [ACC-Case] feature (for alternative analyses of this operation, see Al-Bataineh, 2020, 2019).

4.3.V-ExclPs in MSA

This section explores the two sub-strategies involved in V-ExclPs in Arabic¹⁶, namely, the use of evaluative verbs and the utilization of morphological templates. In contrast with other similar V-ExclPs in Spanish (Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001), for example, which involve the insertion of a verb before the AP, Arabic V-ExclPs require the AP to change its syntactic category to be verbal, although not entirely verbal as the next subsections show.

4.3.1 V-Excls: evaluative verbs

Evaluative verbs can be categorized into two groups according to their complexity: (i) simple verbs (i.e., *nī’ma* ‘how excellent’, *bī’sa/ sā’a* ‘how inferior’) and (ii) complex verbs (i.e., *ḥabba(dā)* ‘how appreciative’, *la ḥabba(dā)* ‘how depreciative’). Both categories show several peculiarities that distinguish them from other verbs in other structures. In addition to their the fixed word order due to the obligatory movement of AP and their phrasal, rather than clausal, nature (as evidenced in the ungrammaticality of the insertion of an auxiliary in T), these categories demonstrate verbal and nominal properties simultaneously which led to a debate among grammarians concerning their

¹⁶ The given discussion below focuses on MSA since it is richer than colloquial varieties in the number of lexical expressions used in V-ExclPs. For example, in JA only the verb *nī’ma* ‘how excellent’ and the template *mā ’af’ala* exist.

syntactic category¹⁷ (for details, see Almasā'īd & Almalḵ, 2015, and references therein). Consider, for example, that *ni'ma* 'excellent' behaves like a nominal as it can be the complement of a preposition in (40a) or a vocative particle in (40b), and it cannot be conjugated (cf. **yan'umu* '3.SG.SBJ in the present tense'):

- 40) a. *mā zayd-u-n bi-ni'ma ar-rajul-u*
 not Zayd-NOM-n PREP-excellent the-man-NOM
 'Zayd is not the excellent man.'
- b. *yā ni'ma almawlā wa yā ni'ma an-naṣīr-u*
 O excellent protector and O excellent the-helper-NOM
 '(Allah is) the most excellent Patron and the most excellent Helper.'
 (Almasā'īd & Almalḵ, 2015:8)

And it also behaves like a verb in carrying number and gender features that agree with the subject, as exemplified in (41a,b), in addition to showing tense (i.e., past tense) and taking an argument:

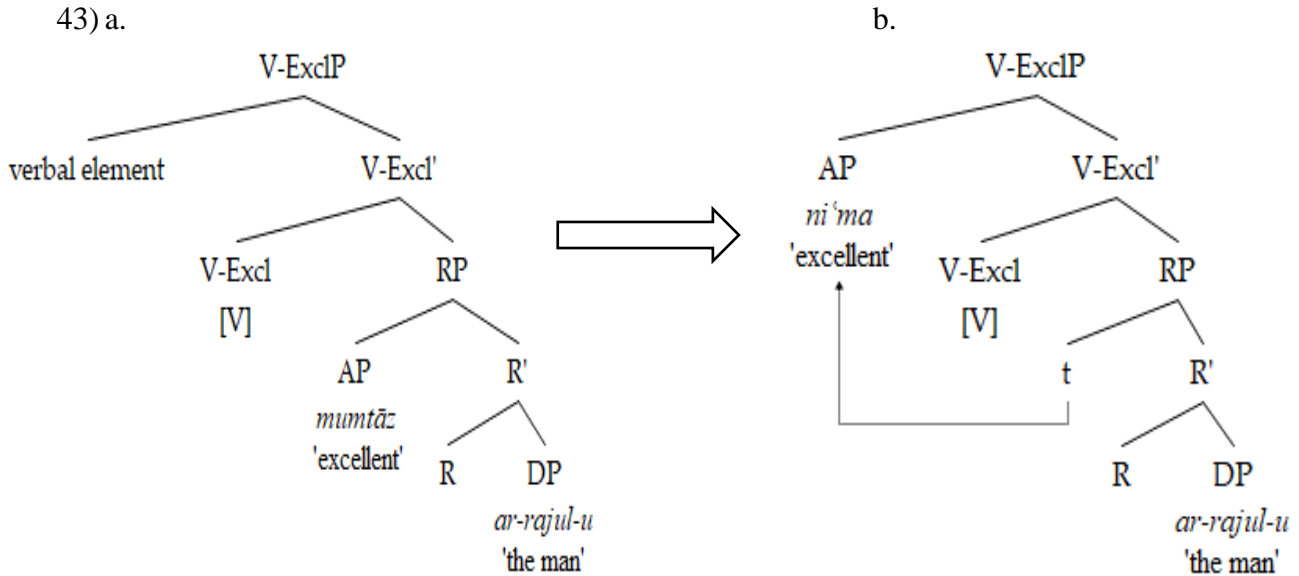
- 41) a. *ni'm-ā rajul-ayn*
 excellent-DUAL man-DUAL.ACC
 'How excellent these two men are!'
- b. *ni'ma-t al-fatat-u*
 excellent-SG.FEM the-girl-NOM
 'How excellent the girl is!'
- (Almasā'īd & Almalḵ, 2015:8)

To account for the given perplexing intricacies of these evaluate verbs¹⁸, the paper argues that the evaluative and exclamative functions of these expressions in ExclPs cause their peculiar behavior. That is, since these verbs are limited to the expressive function, they are supposed to be different from other verbs serving other functions at the clausal level. In brief, arguing that the syntax of V-ExclPs follows that of other types explained above provides a straightforward account for their nominal and verbal properties, obligatory initial position and existence only at the phrasal non-TP level. To illustrate, consider (42) and its derivation in (43a,b):

- 42) *ni'ma ar-rajul-u*
 excellent the-man-NOM
 'How excellent this man is!'

¹⁷ According to Bresnan (1997:3), "mixed categories are very common crosslinguistically ... in many languages mixed category constructions are headed by words which appear to be morphologically ambiguous or neutral between the two categories of the mixed construction. The Italian infinitival noun is an example being either a nominal or a verbal form."

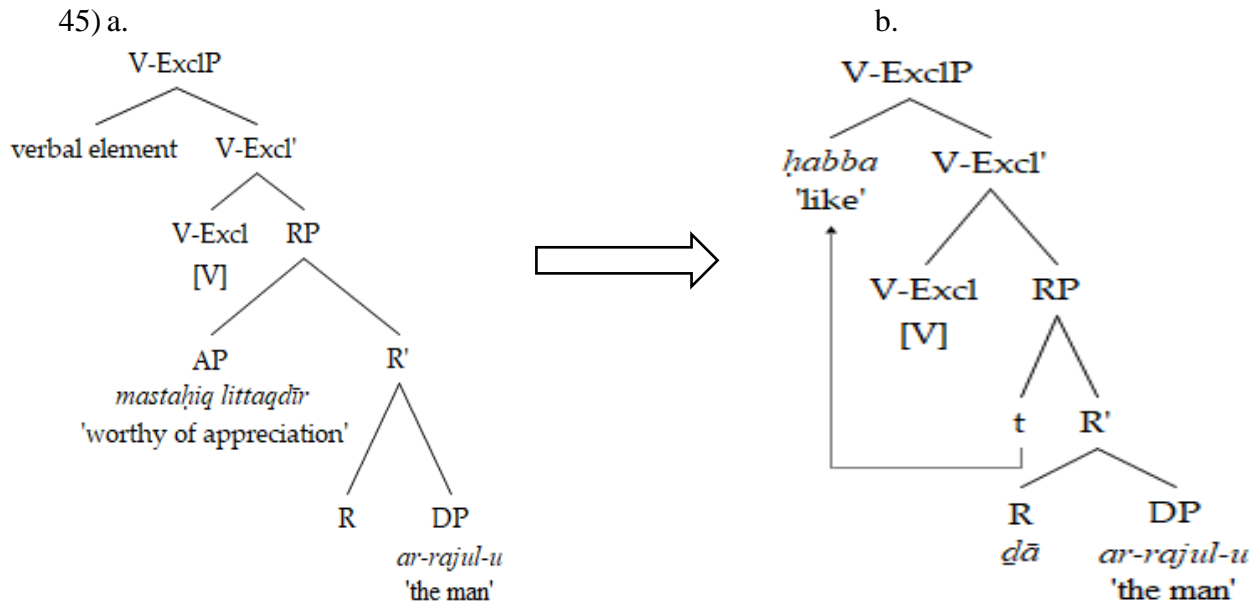
¹⁸ Agreeing with the majority of Arabic grammarians, I consider evaluative expressions in this section and the following one to be verbal, rather than nominal, in nature.



The V-Excl requires a verbal element to be in its specifier position due to its [v] feature. As demonstrated in derivation (43a), the AP (i.e., the exclamative quality ascribed to ‘the man’ which is assumed to be *mumtāz* ‘excellent’ (or any general positive trait that varies depending on the context)) cannot move in its current form and needs to be verbal by a suppletion process that provides a specific verbal form that must be “an overt form that unambiguously spells out the features unaffected by suppletion” (Neeleman & Van de Koot, 2006:706)¹⁹. That is, the adjectival element changes by suppletion to an overt form that retains the [EXCL] and [EVAL] features, and it is verbal at the same time. The verbal form can be either an evaluative verb as in the given example or a form that is molded according to specific morphological templates that express exclamation and evaluation, as discussed in the following subsection. The change from the adjectival *mumtāz* ‘excellent’ to the partially verbal form *ni’mā* ‘excellent’ enables the AP to move to spec-VExclP to satisfy the [EPP] feature on VExcl. The result of this change is a partially verbal expression that has some, but not all, properties of a regular verb (and carries some nominal properties as well). This claim explains why the V-Excl expression *ni’mā* has the peculiarities mentioned above. In a similar vein, the syntax of complex evaluative verbs follows the same derivation. Consider (44) represented as (45a,b):

- 44) *habba-dā* *al-rajul-u*
 liked-PRFX the-man-NOM
 ‘lit: I liked this man (for his good traits). = How appreciated this man is!’

¹⁹ For supportive phenomena from Dutch and MSA, see Neeleman & Van de Koot (2006, and references therein).



The AP *mastahiq littaqdīr* ‘worthy of appreciation’ undergoes the same suppletion process and moves to spec-VExclP for the same reasons explained above. The only difference between these derivations and (43a,b) is that the R head is lexically realized by the optional suffix *-dā* that resembles *ha-* in *wh*-ExclPs in the sense that it cannot be analyzed as a demonstrative because it cannot follow the DP ‘the man’ (**ḥabba alrajuluḏā*), and it cannot be in the full form (**ḥabba ḥāḏa*). Further evidence of its position in R is that it cannot be associated semantically with the evaluative verb since neither the lexical entry of the *ḥabba* ‘liked’ requires *-dā* nor it is affected by its presence. The attachment of *-dā* to the evaluative verb is syntactically triggered, that is, unlike *ha-* which needs a nominal host, *-dā* needs a verbal host. However, the last point to be mentioned is that in these constructions, the DP is marked nominative by default due to the absence of any case assigner. This phenomenon is not limited to Arabic; it also exists in other languages such as Icelandic and Hindi in which “nominative is preferable as the less marked case [in] an imperfect checking domain” (Woolford, 2003:542-543).

4.3.2 V-Excls: morphological templates

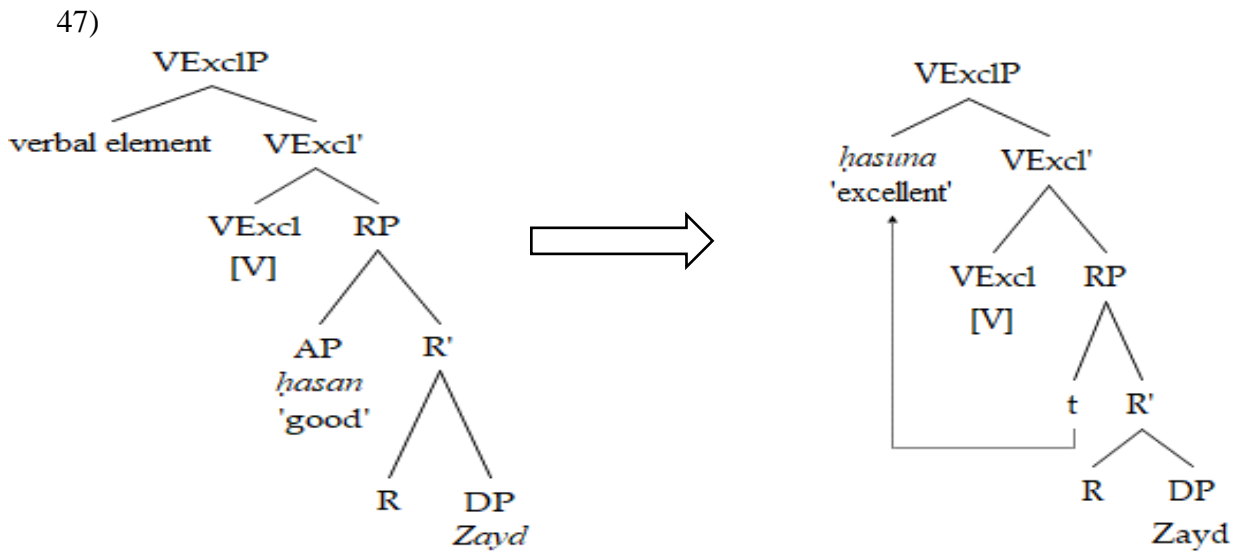
This strategy demands that APs be formed according to specific morphological templates, namely, *fā’ula*, *’af’il bi-*, *mā ’af’ala* which act as frames or molds that shape the word structure of the property exclaimed about. Consider the change of the morphological form of *ḥasan* ‘good’ in the exclamative constructions in (46a-c):

- 46) a. *ḥasuna* *Zayd-u-n*
 excellent. EXCL Zayd-NOM-n
 ‘How excellent Zayd is!’
- b. *’ahsin* *bi-Zayd-i-n*
 excellent. EXCL PREP-Zayd-GEN-n
 ‘How excellent Zayd is!’

c. <i>mā</i>	<i>'aḥsana</i>	<i>Zayd-a-n</i>
PTCL	excellent. EXCL	Zayd-ACC-N
'How excellent Zayd is!'		

Notice that the change of the morphological form of *ḥasan* 'good' does not correlate with a change in the meaning of the exclamative, that is, the three templates have the same function of providing the expressive meaning of 'how excellent Zayd is!'. Regarding the categorial status of these templates, grammarians disagree whether they are verbal or nominal because these templates share the syntactic properties of verbs and nouns simultaneously. To illustrate, the template *mā 'af'ala* in (46c) is verbal because it shows tense (i.e., past tense), takes arguments (i.e., *mā* as subject and *Zayd* as object), demonstrates transitivity (i.e., it assigns accusative case to its complement *Zayd*) and requires *nūn alwiqāya* 'preventive -n' (explained in footnote (14) above) if followed by first-person singular pronoun (*'a'lama-n-ī* 'taught-n-me' vs., **mu'allim-n-ī* 'teacher-n-my'). At the same time, this template shows several nominal properties; it can be used in the diminutive form; the middle vocalic sound of its trilateral root changes into a semivowel (e.g., the middle [a] vowel in *qāma* 'stand' changes to [w] in the Excl *mā 'aqwama* 'how straight!' although no change takes place in the verb *'aqāma* 'make stand'); and it has one fixed form that does not conjugate (for further details, see, e.g., 'Abū Albarkāt Al'Anbārī, 1982:126-148).

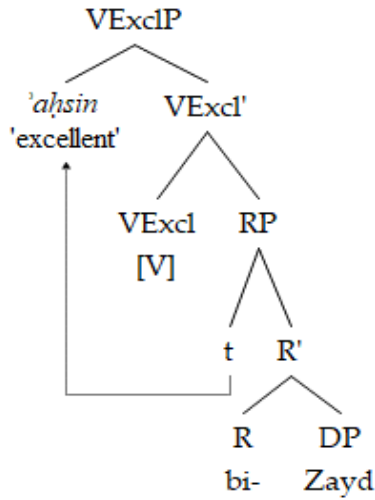
The peculiarities above stem from the fact these templates are used exclusively in Excls which have syntactic structures distinct from clauses; that is, these templates are not fully verbal because they do not originate in V and, consequently, associated with little *v* like other verbs in TPs. However, the approach adopted in this paper may account for their mysterious behavior. (46a) may have the representation in (48a,b):



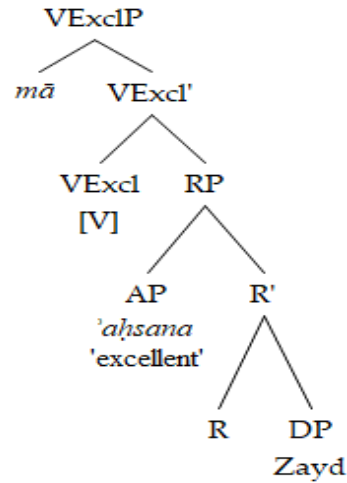
As discussed in the previous subsection, the VExcl requires a verbal element to be in its specifier position due to its [V] feature. The AP *ḥasan* 'good' cannot move in its current form and needs to be verbal by a suppletion process that retains the [EXCL] and [EVAL] features and the semantics of the AP. The verbal form is molded according to the morphological template *fa'ula* that changes the adjectival *ḥasan* 'good' to the partially verbal form *ḥasuna* 'how excellent'. This change enables the AP to move to spec-VExclP to satisfy the [EPP] feature on VExcl. The result of this change is a partially verbal expression that has only some of the syntactic properties of a regular verb (and

simultaneously some nominal properties). In a similar vein, the other templatic forms in (46b,c) have the representations in (48a,b), respectively:

48) a.



b.



(48a) shows that the AP *ḥasan* 'good' changes into *'aḥsin* 'excellent' according to the templatic form *'af'il bi-* for the reasons given above, and the meaningless preposition *bi-* is shown to be the realization of R. In support of this derivation, *'aḥsin* which looks like an imperative verb allows only the spurious preposition *bi-*, rather than the semantically required one *'ilā* 'to', and it does not agree with the addressee, as the contrast between the declarative and exclamative constructions show in (49a,b), respectively ²⁰:

49) a. *yā rijāl-u, 'aḥsin-u 'ilā Zayd-i-n*
 Oh men-NOM do good-3PL.MASC to Zayd-GEN-N
 'Oh men, do good to Zayd.'

b. *yā rijāl-u, 'aḥsin-*u bi-Zayd-i-n*
 Oh men-NOM do good-*3PL.MASC PREP-Zayd-GEN-N
 'Oh men, how excellent Zayd is!'

The representation in (48b) follows the same syntax like in (48a) except for the presence of the particle *mā* in spec-VExclP which prevents the movement of AP *'aḥsana* 'excellent'. This derivation triggers two related questions: how does the external merge of the particle *mā* satisfy the [V] feature on VExcl? Why does the AP *ḥasan* 'good' undergo suppletion despite the merge of *mā*? The answer to these questions lies in the categorial status of both the particle and the AP. I argue that both are mixed/hybrid expressions due to the different syntactic features they carry. The particle has [WH] and [V] features, and the AP has [V] and [N], simultaneously. To illustrate, consider the two syntactic behaviors of the particle in (50a,b), and notice that in (50a) it has [WH]; hence, it cannot assign case to the following DP, whereas in (50b) it assigns accusative case to the DP 'the sky' (and the AP 'beautiful' gets accusative case by concord with DP) due to its [V] feature:

50) a. *mā 'ajmal-u as-samā 'i*
 what most beautiful-NOM the-sky-GEN
 'What is the most beautiful object in the sky?'

²⁰ Other arguments that differentiate between the imperative form and the exclamative one are overlooked here due to space (see, e.g., Ya'ish (2001:420) for arguments related to responses and conditional clauses).

- b. *mā* 'ajmal-*a* as-samā'-*a*
 PTCL beautiful. EXCL-ACC the-sky-ACC
 'How beautiful the sky is!'

The same element *mā* has nominal and verbal features simultaneously as evidenced in its status as a *wh*-phrase in (50a); hence, it does not affect case assignment of the Construct State construction, and as a transitive particle which assigns the accusative case to the DP in (50b). The hybrid nature of *mā* shows that it has the semantics of 'how' and the syntax of a transitive verb in the sense that "the two categories are folded together and overlaid as a single [...] head" (Bresnan, 1997:6). For the same element to have both nominal and verbal properties is common in other Arabic constructions as well. Consider how the nominal *salb* 'depriving' in (51) requires two VP constituents and assigns the accusative case to both of them:

- 51) *salb-u* *zayd-i-n* *ar-rajul-a* *maal-a-hu*
 depriving-NOM Zayd-GEN-N the-man-ACC money-ACC-his
 "Zayd's depriving the man of his money" (Fassi Fehri, 1993:247)

Similar to *mā*, the AP is also a mixed element, that is, it has both [V] and [N] features as evidenced in its morphological form that resembles a transitive verb and a superlative form of an adjective, and also in its syntactic behavior as an adjective that is marked accusative by the particle *mā* and as a verb by taking two arguments; the particle *mā* as a subject and the following DP as an object. However, analyzing *mā* as a transitive particle required by the [V] feature on VExcl deviates from the traditional view that *mā* means 'something (that caused Zayd to be excellent).' The analysis of *mā* as a particle rather than an indefinite noun is based on two pieces of evidence. First, agreeing with 'Abū Albarkāt Al'Anbārī (1982:128-129), the exclamative construction does not mean that the referent has the quality exclaimed about due to the influence of 'something,' that is, the referent and the quality ascribed to it are not involved in a cause-effect relationship. In support of this argument, consider the ExclP in (52) and notice the implausibility of the second glossing for the intended meaning:

- 52) *mā* 'a *ḍama* Allah-*a*
 i. PTCL great. EXCL Allah-ACC
 ii. something cause to be great Allah- ACC
 'How great Allah is!'

The intended meaning indicates the high degree of Allah's greatness not that something caused Allah to be great; that is, by no means, the exclamative can be analyzed as a CAUSE-BECOME-structure in a usual TP. The second piece of evidence is related to the use of a copula *kāna* 'was' which demonstrates two peculiarities. First, only one auxiliary *kāna* 'was' can be used for semantic effect (i.e., emphasis) with no syntactic consequences (i.e., it is deprived of its case features available in clauses), other auxiliaries related to present or future cannot be utilized. Second, *kāna* cannot occupy its canonical position sentence initially, instead it follows the particle *mā* (see, e.g., Ya'īsh, 2001:423-424). The non-canonical position of *kāna* indicates that *mā* in these Excls is not a noun; rather, a particle introduced into the derivation for syntactic rather than semantic reasons.

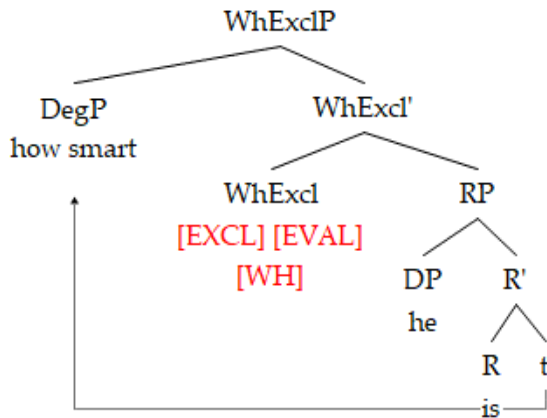
Generally speaking, the claimed analysis of the templatic V-ExclPs in (46a-c) accounts for the different case endings on the referent *Zayd*, viz., nominative, genitive, and accusative, respectively, although it has the same thematic role in the given constructions. This phenomenon, as well as the presence of the spurious preposition *bi*- and the particle *mā*, cannot be accounted for in the light of previous arguments in the literature that Excls are sentential. Moreover, the claimed superiority of this approach over clausal ones may be supported by the existence of similar structures in other languages, as argued in the following section.

5. Implications

The assumptions argued so far that Arabic Excls are nonsententials imply some empirical and theoretical consequences on Excls across languages. Let us first see how the given approach provides the minimalist amount of structure to account for some peculiarities in English Excls which, as highlighted in section (2.1), include (i) the absence of S-V inversion **How smart is he!*, (ii) the obligatorily movement of *wh*-phrase (cf. *He can speak -three languages./ -what languages?/ -*what languages!*), and (iii) the impossibility of preposition stranding (*In a beautiful house they lived./ In which house do they live?/ vs. *In what a house they live!*).

The absence of S-V inversion stems from the assumption that Excls are derived by syntactic operations affecting RPs, rather than TPs. *How smart he is!* can be represented as follows:

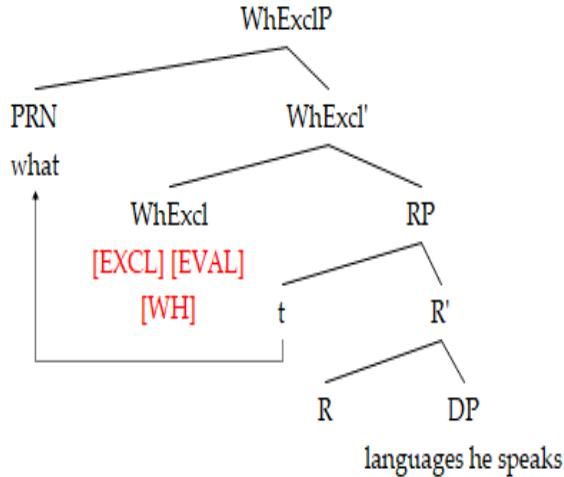
53)



As explained in section (4), the structure of RP is asymmetrical and nondirectional in the sense that either the subject or the predicate can occupy spec-RP. In this representation, the referent *he* occupies the spec-RP followed by R which is lexicalized as the copula *is*, and the DegP *how smart* moves to spec-WhExclP for the same reasons argued for Arabic Wh-ExclPs. This simple derivation explains the absence of S-V inversion and accounts for all English Excls initiated by *how* which may look like full clauses although they are not.

The second peculiarity is related to the obligatory movement of *wh*-phrase in Excls but not in echo questions (cf. **He can speak what languages!* vs., *He can speak what languages?*). This peculiarity can be clarified simply by assuming that *what languages* in the given constructions do not have the same status, that is, whereas in echo questions the *wh*-phrase forms one constituent which can either move or stay in situ, the same phrase in Excls is formed of two elements: the *wh*-word *what* and the DP *languages* that belongs to *he can speak* to form the DP *languages he speaks*, as explained in the following derivation (the internal structure of the relative clause in the DP is overlooked for ease of exposition):

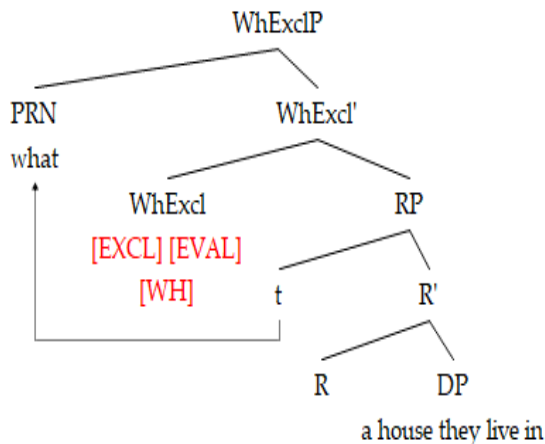
54)



The same assumptions account for other *what*-Excls such as *What stories she tells!* which are composed of the exclamative pronoun *what* and the DP *stories she tells*. Further evidence for this assumption can be drawn from the ellipsis process which may affect only *what* and the result is the well-formed DP *The stories she tells!* but not the whole *wh*-phrase *what stories* as that leads to ungrammaticality of **She tells!*.

This analysis also accounts for the mysterious requirement to strand the preposition in *What a house they live in!* (cf. **In which house** do they live? vs. ***In what a house they live!**). To explain, this exclamative starts the derivation as an RP formed from the referent [DP a house they live in] and an exclamative expression [AP amazing] which is due to its [EXCL] and [EVAL] features is spelled out as the exclamative pronoun *what*. Then, *what* moves to spec-WhExclP, as follows:

55)



Because the exclamative is not a TP like the interrogative in which either the DP *which house* or the whole PP *in which house* moves to spec-CP, only the PRN *what* moves to spec-WhExclP, *in* cannot be pied-piped along with the *wh*-phrase because it exists in a separate constituent (i.e., the DP *a house that they live in*).

If this line of analysis is on the right track, it may have some theoretical implications not only on the derivation of Wh-ExclPs but also on formulaic questions such as those below:

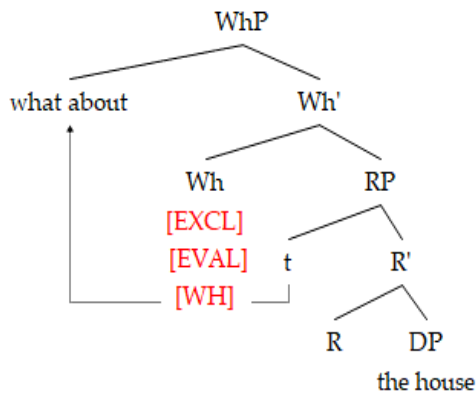
- 56) a. What about the house?
b. How about joining us?

c. How come you missed the bus?

(Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973:204)

In all these formulaic expressions, we notice that (i) they cannot be projected into full CPs without a change of meaning (cf. (56c) vs. *How did you miss the bus?*), (ii) there is an obligatory movement of a *wh*-element although no subject-verb inversion or do-support is required (cf. **you missed the bus how come?*), (iii) all these formulae are directed to the addressee to ‘evaluate’ specific entities in (56a) or events in (56b,c). These properties seem similar to that of Excls to some extent, except that the exclamative pronoun is a complex form consisting of a *wh*-word with a prepositional (e.g., *how about*) or with a verbal form (e.g., *how come*) to indicate a combination of interrogation and exclamation simultaneously (i.e., two distinct communicative functions)²¹, and for that reason, (56a) may have the representation in (57):

57)



This derivation directs us to an important point related to the constituency of expressions like *how beautiful* in *How beautiful she is!*. Contra previous studies which analyze *how* AP as a single constituent (e.g., a QP in, e.g., Radford, 2009 and references therein), I claim that *wh*-phrase in Excls do not always form a single constituent, that is, their constituency varies across languages and language internally based on three pieces of evidence. First, since *how* AP cannot stay in situ (e.g., **she is how beautiful!*), there is no evidence that *how* AP form one phrase before movement (at least in languages like Arabic and English). Secondly, crosslinguistic data shows that it is not always the case that the AP must be preceded by a degree element realized as ‘*how*’. Consider (58a-c) and notice that the AP can be preceded by a verb or a determiner in Spanish (58a,b) (for examples of Det-Excls in Catalan, see Miró, 2006:3), or an adverb that “cannot easily modify adjectives or adverbs in declarative clauses” (Jónsson, 2010:45) in Icelandic (58c).

58) a) *Vaya hermosa que es María!*
 go-SBJ pretty that is Mary
 ‘How pretty Mary is!’

(Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001:169)

b) *Lo hermosa que es María!*
 the-NEUT pretty that is Mary

²¹ The complexity of the given *wh*-phrases led linguists to overlook them or to claim that they have no internal syntax, that is, “no identifiable word-class/syntactic function for the *wh*-phrase itself [because] it is extremely difficult, not to say impossible to judge whether these items actually do have a *wh*-feature or a syntactic function [therefore, they cannot be integrated] into the analysis of the more general properties of *wh*-clauses” (Trotta, 2000:35). However, in support of the claimed representation of these *wh*-phrase above, we highlight that they are “among the last acquired *wh*-questions” (Peng, 1999:25).

‘How pretty Mary is!’

(Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001:170)

c) *Mikið sto’ð markmaðurinn sig vel!*
 much did the.goal.keeper himself well

‘What a performance by the goalkeeper!’

(Jónsson, 2010:45)

Thirdly, ‘how’ does not necessarily form a single constituent with the element(s) it associates with, that is, the two constituents can optionally be separated as in Mandarin Chinese (59a) or obligatorily as in French (59b) or Icelandic (59c) compared with (59d):

59) a. *Tā zěnmě mǎi nàme duō shū a!*
 S/he how buy that.ME many book SFP
 ‘How many books s/he bought!’

(Badan & Cheng, 2015:388)

b. *Comme elle est grande!*
 how she is tall
 ‘How she’s tall!’

(Zanuttini & Portner, 2000:131)

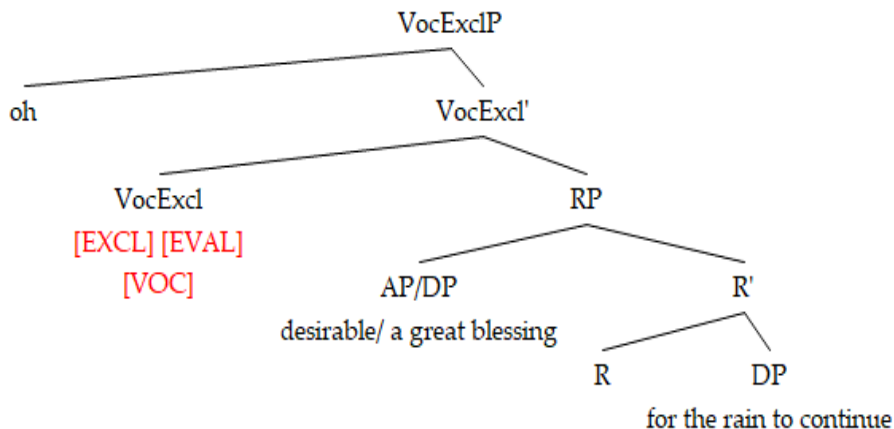
c. *Hvað þessi mynd er falleg!*
 how this picture is beautiful
 ‘How beautiful this picture is!’

d. **Hvað falleg þessi mynd er!*
 how beautiful this picture is

(Jónsson, 2010:43)

Also, the given approach has theoretical consequences on the analysis of Voc-ExclPs in other languages such as English *Oh for the rain to continue* or *Oh to be free!* In such expressions, the adopted representation accounts for the c-command position of the vocative particle *oh* (cf. **For the rain to continue oh!*) and the absence of an AP like *desirable* (cf. **Oh for the rain to continue desirable*). Considering the English *Oh for the rain to continue* to be a CP derived from the TP *For the rain to continue is desirable/ a great blessing* wrongly predicts that **Oh desirable/ a great blessing for the rain to continue is!* to be grammatical (assuming a movement of AP or DP to spec-CP with *oh* either originating within the moved constituent or internally merging in spec-CP). A more plausible analysis is represented in (60) where the free relative *for the rain to continue* originates as one constituent in RP due to its function as a DP:

60)



The VocExcl serves as a probe and agrees with the goal AP/DP *desirable/ a great blessing*. In consequence of Agreement, the values of the [EVAL] and [EXCL] features of AP/DP are copied onto VocExcl, and the [EPP] feature is satisfied by external merge of *oh* rather than movement of the AP because Voc-Excl carries the feature [VOC] that requires the specifier of Voc-ExclP to be a vocative particle. The AP/DP gets null spellout by the haplology rule, as explained for Arabic Voc-ExclPs. The only difference between this representation and that of the Arabic is that the latter allows the optional preposition *la-* (which has the obligatory variant ‘*a-*’ in JA). The presence of a spurious preposition in some Arabic Excls (i.e., Voc-ExclPs and templatic V-ExclPs) is also found in other languages. Consider, for example, the Spanish preposition *de* ‘of’ which becomes obligatory in contemporary Spanish in (61a) (see, Miró, 2008:79, for Catalan *de*); the preposition *za* ‘for’ in Russian which does not assign case and cannot be used in cases that requires a preposition (61b); and the preposition *a* and its variants in Mandarin Chinese which occur in structures distinct from declaratives and interrogatives in (61c) (see also the prepositions ‘*i*’ and *ki* in some Oceanic languages, reported by Moyse-Faurie, 2011)²²:

- 61) a. *Lo que son los niños de altos!*
 the-NEUT that are the boys of tall
 ‘How tall the boys are!’ (Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2008:124)

- b. *Čto za šutki!*
 what for jokes.NOM
 ‘What [bad] jokes!’ (Vishenkova & Zevakhina, 2019:13)

- c. *duō nànkàn (na)!*
 how ugly PREP
 ‘how ugly!’ (Han, 1988:50)

The presence of these spurious prepositions in Arabic and other languages can be claimed to be the realization of R.

In addition to similar phenomena of Wh-ExclPs and Voc-ExclPs, we also find similar patterns concerning V-ExclPs. Consider the Spanish V-ExclP in (62):

- 62) *Vaya hermosa que es María!*
 go-SBJ pretty that is Mary
 ‘How pretty Mary is!’ (Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2001:169)

The analysis of this structure as a CP fails to account for several issues such as the placement of a verb before the adjective, the possibility of *vaya*, but not other verbs, in this position, and the irrelevance of the semantics of *vaya* and *hermosa* to form one constituent with the result of a combination that cannot take place in clauses. The claimed approach may provide a straightforward analysis of the Spanish V-ExclP by claiming that the AP *hermosa* occupies the spec-RP and *vaya* is base-generated in spec-VExclP to satisfy the [V] feature on VExcl. Needless to say, such claims are just preliminary predictions that need to be argued for or against by other cross-linguistic studies in the future.

²² The preposition *of* in English ExclPs such as *of all the impudence!* and *of all the stupid things to say!* (from Ding, 2011:45) seems to me a spurious one (i.e., not semantically required). However, I haven’t included it as a supportive example because *of*-ExclPs need further consideration which I leave for the future.

6. Summary and conclusion

This paper provides a general overview and a critical assessment of the essential characteristics of Excls, and it examines and analyzes the morphosyntactic structure of Excls in Arabic. An overview of previous studies shows that the syntactic strategies utilized in Excls are related to phrasal, rather than clausal, structures (i.e., *wh*-phrases, subordinate clauses, and noun phrases), and that debatable issues involve the basic characteristics of Excls, viz., clausal type, defining features, and their analyses. Concerning their clause type, the paper argues that Excls are unambiguously distinguishable from clauses since they have unique syntactic structures (i.e., non-TPs) and definable semantic and pragmatic properties. The defining features argued in the literature (i.e., factivity, scalar implicature, and question/answer relations) are shown to be highly controversial and cross-linguistically invalid, the paper suggests that evaluation and referentiality features are more plausible and also essential to account for the syntax of Excls since they are associated with the main components of exclamative phrases, namely, the subject (i.e., the referent) and the property ascribed to it (i.e., the exclamative expression). Regarding previous clausal analyses, the paper claims that assuming Excls to be TPs led to two unsatisfactory consequences, viz., inconsistency (i.e., each study claims several projections in the C domain which are different from those in other studies in their number, categories, functional heads and features) and complication (i.e., unavoidable complicated derivations with multiple projections are required to differentiate between Excls and non-Excls).

Based on the claimed inadequacies of previous clausal analyses, the paper adopts a more straightforward approach that assumes Excls to be non-TP constructions which start the derivation as asymmetrical and nondirectional RP selected by Excl which carries the unvalued [EVAL] and [EXCL] features which are valued by the AP and the [EPP] feature which requires the spec-ExclP to be lexically realized. Depending on the type of ExclP, Excl also carries [WH] in Wh-ExclPs, [VOC] in Voc-ExclPs, and [v] in V-ExclPs. This approach is argued to account for the peculiarities and intricacies associated with the different types of Arabic ExclPs such as (i) their inflexible word order, (ii) case alternation on the referent in templatic V-ExclPs, (iii) the presence of spurious prepositions obligatorily (e.g., *bi-* in imperative templatic V-ExclPs) or optionally (e.g., *la-* in Voc-ExclPs), and (vi) the obligatory presence of some meaningless elements (e.g., the demonstrative-like *ha-* in Wh-ExclPs and the particle *mā* in V-ExclPs).

The analysis of Wh-ExclPs shows that the different distributions of the two *wh*-elements *šū* and *ayš* supports the phrasal nature of this type. The given approach explains the intricacies associated with the inflexible word order, the obligatory presence of *ha-* preceding the DP, and the different selectional properties of the *šū-/ayš*-forms. Moreover, the given arguments are claimed to imply theoretical consequences on English *wh*-Excls and formulaic questions and to provide a more satisfactory account of their idiosyncrasies based on supportive data from Spanish, Icelandic, Mandarin Chinese, and French.

The paper shows that VocPs are distinguished from Voc-ExclPs based on a number of syntactic properties (i.e., case assignment and selectional requirements) and semantic features (i.e., [REFERENTIALITY], [EVALUATIVE], [ANIMACY] and [DEGREE]). Also, the analysis of Voc-ExclPs clarifies the syntactic motivations behind the absence of a predicative AP and the presence of semantically empty prepositions. The vocative particle *yā* 'oh' is argued to have the same syntactic features of the AP, and by syntactic haplology, the AP gets a null spell-out. The spurious prepositions *la-* and *'a-* are argued to be the lexical realizations of R. Such prepositions are attested by cross-linguistic data (e.g., Spanish *de*, Russian *za*, Mandarin Chinese *a*, and *'i* and *ki* in some Oceanic languages). Additionally, the paper explores the two strategies involved in V-ExclPs (i.e., evaluative

verb and morphological templates). The argued approach provides a straightforward analysis and explanation for evaluative verbs, especially, their nominal and verbal properties, obligatory initial position, and existence only at the non-clausal level. Moreover, it clarifies the debatable categorial status of exclamative templates, their case assignment properties, and the presence of the spurious preposition *bi-* and the particle *mā*.

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