Grounding in English and Arabic News Discourse
Khalil, E.N.

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Chapter 5

Sentence-Initial Markers

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we examine manifestations of grounding at sentence-initial position in Arabic news texts. We present a detailed analysis of each marker in that position by:

1. describing its grammatical features and the syntactic constraints it imposes on the sentence in which it appears.
2. explaining its semantic properties; describing and illustrating the main or distinctive grounding-signaling function it serves.
3. ascertaining whether it signals almost invariably the same grounding-value. In other words, we address the question of whether Arabic news texts have preferred devices for signaling certain grounding-values. A preferred device obtains when the association of an initial marker with a level of grounding 'is so frequent as to provide a reliable signal for that level' (see Jones and Jones 1979: 23).
4. exploring the necessary conditions that must hold for its occurrence, that is, factors that encourage its presence or disfavour its use in a particular sentence. We look therefore into the properties of the context in which the marker would (not) occur.

We will present evidence that sentence-initial markers in Arabic news texts differ in the grounding-values they signal. This is consistent with the requirement that news texts signal distinctions in (semantic) grounding, mapping information that has greater or lesser importance and relevance in event and context models. It is also consistent with the strategies that writers apply inter alia to manage the context models of readers in written communication and eventually help readers to interpret meaning from the same perspective.

After analyzing in 5.2 each marker and illustrating its main grounding-signaling function, in 5.3 we extend the analysis by looking more closely at constraints on the interchangeability of markers and recasting options.
that writers may have. Then we focus on cases of markers that neutralize an initial marker in the English news text.

5.2 Types of Sentence-Initial Markers

Sentence-initial markers that have been examined fall into two broad categories:

1- **Grammatical**: two tense-aspect entities, the pre-verbal particle *qad* and the auxiliary verb *kāna* (*to be*), as well as the particle *fa-* (*so, thus*) and the preposition *fi* (*in*). Operating in units larger than the sentence, these entities perform functions that are distinct from their parallel functions in sentence grammar. They are sensitive to pragmatic factors and discourse context which play a crucial role in the interpretation of the meaning of grammatical categories (Fleischman and Waugh 1991:1).

2- **Lexical**: several expressions and constituents some of which have stylistic variants. They are peripheral to the main clause.

Table 1 displays the markers, their grounding-signaling functions, and main features.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Grounding Function</th>
<th>Main Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- <em>qad</em></td>
<td><em>midground</em></td>
<td>- signals a high grounding-value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pre-verbal particle)</td>
<td></td>
<td>typical <em>midground</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- serves a local shift function (i.e. within the same main event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains VS syntax which is typical of events and text-initial sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- <em>kāna qad</em></td>
<td><em>background</em></td>
<td>- signals a low grounding-value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(past auxiliary verb to be + particle)</td>
<td></td>
<td>typical <em>background</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- may serve a global shift function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains SV syntax which is typical of description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- <em>mimmā yudkaru anna</em></td>
<td><em>background</em></td>
<td>- signals significant <em>background</em> meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(among things to be mentioned is that)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- underlying information about a side feature that is rather important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- may serve a global shift function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains SV syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- <em>fa-</em> (qad)</td>
<td><em>midground</em></td>
<td>- signals a high grounding-value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(so)</td>
<td></td>
<td>explicates specifics of the main event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- serves a local shift function (i.e. within the same main event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains VS syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- min <em>nahiyatin/ jihatin uxrā</em></td>
<td><em>background</em></td>
<td>- signals a low grounding-value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(from another side/ aspect)</td>
<td></td>
<td>underlying information is insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- serves a global shift function and hence may be digressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains VS syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- min <em>al-ma'rūfī anna</em></td>
<td><em>background</em></td>
<td>- signals a low grounding-value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(it is known that)</td>
<td></td>
<td>peripheral <em>background</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- underlying information is assumed to be known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains SV syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- <em>fi</em> (in)+ spatio/temporal entity</td>
<td><em>background</em></td>
<td>- signals a low grounding-value:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the event referred to may express a global (spatio/temporal) shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains VS syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- *fi nafsī al-*waqti (at the same time)</td>
<td><em>background</em></td>
<td>- signals the <em>background end of the continuum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- serves a global shift function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- sustains VS syntax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Sentence-initial markers: grounding-signaling function and main features
Table 1 presents the general pattern of the markers and their tendency to serve certain grounding functions on the FG-BG continuum. It shows that the markers are used in an environment of grounding-values that are lower than foreground. Several markers may appear in one and the same text, signaling grounding-values that are close to either midground or background, or far from them at the background end of the continuum. Thus, although qad occupies the top and fi nafsi al-waqt the bottom of the Table, we do not imply that other background markers in the Table are presented in an order of decreasing grounding-values. Besides, since their positions are not absolute, a marker such as qad may also appear in a sentence that expresses background (see below).

All eight markers imply a preceding proposition and serve an anticipatory function. They also seem to denote that a boundary point in the text has been reached. The nature of this boundary point depends on the particular function the marker serves and the way it displays the unfolding of the FG-BG structure of the news text. In addition, the markers are assumed to be part of stage manipulation, governed by communicative situation constraints and the need to cope with (consequences of) shifts in grounding-values. It may also be said that some of the markers— that establish relations among text segments— operate on a presentational level of discourse (see Kroon 1995), and that by using them the writer performs different steps in a communicative act.

SENTENCE-INITIAL MARKERS AND GROUNDING-VALUES
Before we examine the individual markers, it is perhaps useful to get a general picture of their distribution as regards midground and background functions. Table 2 presents the distribution of the markers in sample I.
Table 2 Markers and the distribution of grounding-values in sample I

Table 2 shows the frequency of each marker that occurs in the translated texts and that coincides with a midground or a background value. These values have already been assigned to the underlying propositions of the English texts. The pattern that emerges shows a correspondence with the grounding-signaling functions that we suggested for the markers. This is supported by similar grounding functions that the markers serve in the other two samples. However, we do not suggest that the markers are redundant and that they have no influence on the grounding-value at issue. As will become apparent later on (see 5.3), using a different marker, where possible, may sometimes signal a different (i.e. a higher or lower) grounding-value on the continuum.

That Table 2 shows some occurrences of qad signaling also background is due to the fact that the sentence containing this marker occurs after a global shift to the background end of the continuum has already been made in a preceding sentence, and hence the host sentence of qad expresses also the same background meaning (see e.g. S6 of T22 below). This however does not invalidate the general tendency of the pre-verbal particle to signal a relatively high grounding-value as will become evident later. Apart from that, it may be argued that since the sentences that follow a global shift may constitute an independent news text, qad may be conceived of as signaling midground meaning: The host sentence of qad expresses specifics of the (newly introduced) event. In other words, what is at issue is perhaps a locally high grounding-value.

We examined the second sentence of each news text in sample I for the occurrence of initial markers and found that only four markers appear in it. They are distributed as follows:
This shows that a large number of qad and fa-qad obtains early in the news text. It is an interesting finding since both are midground markers and their early occurrence manifests— and coincides with— a typical news structure where high grounding-values are (expected to be) expressed before low ones.

WA-
Since all markers— with the exception of fa— may be prefaced with wa- (and), a few words about this inseparable co-ordinate/conjunctive conjunction are in order. Wa- is the basic and most frequent conjunction in Arabic: Sentences and even paragraphs frequently begin with it (Beeston 1970). It occurs at all levels in text (see Al-Batal 1990). In its intra-sentential function, wa- denotes an additive relation (e.g. logical, temporal simultaneity) and connects nominal sentences as well verbal ones (e.g. a series of verbs denoting a sequence of events). In its discourse function, wa- does not denote a strong relation between propositions. Thus, it connects sentences without implying any closer, more logical relationships (Cantarino 1975: 11). Its occurrence sentence-initially may signal a continuative relation— an addition of certain events that are loosely related to preceding ones. In this respect, wa- has a low semantic value or specificity and may be called a neutral connective. In translating into other languages such as English, it is often neglected.

5.2.1 Qad

The marker qad preceded by the particle fa- serves a different function from the one we examine here, and hence will be treated separately (see 5.2.4). We examine here the occurrence of qad preceding the perfective verb form in the sentence, thus denoting a past event. This is also the pattern that käna qad (see 5.2.2) manifests in news discourse. (For some syntactic constraints on the occurrence of qad preceding the suffix-tense verb (i.e. past verb form) in classical Arabic, see Kinberg 1989). We do not deal with the use of qad in combination with the imperfective of the
main verb, which denotes probability, nor with the use of the imperfective of käna in combination with qad, which denotes future perfect.

The simple past, which encodes a past event, is considered to have a zero aspect. Its occurrence with qad and käna qad is relevant to our analysis (for various aspect forms in Classical Arabic, see Hassaan 1973: 256). This is exemplified below by verb to do in the past tense form (fa’ala):

1- qad fa’ala, which denotes al-muntahi bi-al-hādir (cessation with the present).
2- käna qad fa’ala, which denotes al-qarib al-munqati’ (near/recent disconnected past).

The first aspect form will be discussed below and the second in the next section.

CLAUSAL PROPERTIES OF qad
The functions that qad and käna qad perform in (news) texts, or even in units larger than the sentence, are different from those performed within the sentence (for details, see Khalil 1985). In order to understand the discourse function of qad, we first look at its clausal properties.

Arabic grammar has traditionally referred to qad as a particle that denotes either perfectivity or emphasis. So the grammatical form qad + perfective in a sentence such as qad Saribat al-qahwah (drank-she the-coffee) would mean she drank the coffee, denoting the completion of action, or rather a terminated-before-the-present-moment past. (Qad kataba (wrote-he) is glossed in English as 'he has written' (Comrie 1976: 81).)

Most grammarians, old and new, consider qad as a particle that denotes a close to the present time action ('proximate past' (see Holes 1995: 190) just did something): a terminated before speech time action. Qad may also serve an affirmative function. So it may imply certainty about an action, such as when someone announces: qad Saribit al-qahwah (drank-I the-coffee), that is, I did indeed drink coffee.

A related clausal property of qad is its occurrence in non-initial position prior to a circumstantial clause (what in Arabic is called a hāl sentence) in a sequence of clauses whose verbs encode past events. In this case, qad denotes temporal anteriority and signals background meaning to the meaning expressed in the preceding clause (see Al-Tarouti 1991) such as in:
Jalasa 'ala al-kursiyy wa-qad baddā 'alayhi al-surūr
sat-he on the-chair and-particle appeared on him the-joy
He sat on the chair as joy appeared on his face

Without qad, the second clause would be temporally sequent to the first, so the presence of qad 'reverses the sequential relation between the two events' (Al-Tarouti 1991: 146).

THE DISCOURSE FUNCTION OF qad
It has been suggested that the different uses of qad in combination with the past verb form make it difficult to characterize its specific function (Haak 1996: 129). What may partly account for the difficulty is the fact that qad performs other, i.e. text(-grammatical) functions that are distinct from its sentential (temporal or circumstantial) ones. In sentence-initial position, that is, introducing an independent clause, qad does not temporally locate the event that the verb encodes prior to whatever events preceding sentences have referred to. Of course, the event may be anterior, but in such a case a temporal adverb (e.g. before) denoting a preceding activity would be used in order to make this clear. More importantly, in its discourse function, qad looks forward in the past, denoting a further development. It may however neutralize temporal successivity (Khalil 1985: 636), and although the temporal location of the event may, though not necessarily, be interpreted as subsequent to what preceded (see Khalil 1985), temporal adverbs or other lexical items are usually present in the sentence in order to explain the temporal feature.

THE HIGH GROUNDING-VALUE THAT qad SIGNALS
The pre-verbal particle signals the organization of meaning in terms of grounding. Two main properties of qad support the suggestion that it signals a relatively high grounding-value:
1- The syntactic property that it prefices VS syntax, which is also the syntax that expresses proper foreground meaning in the lead sentence (see chapter 4).
2- The (sentential) semantic/temporal property that it denotes a just terminated event, which coincides with one feature of news discourse, namely reporting recent past events that have current relevance to language users. In other words, host clauses of qad denote current relevance. The propositions are about specifics of the main event referred to in the foreground
proposition and hence are midground.

All things being equal, the particle frequently appears early in the text as part of news upstage (see chapter 2). Constraints on its occurrence have to do with writers' assessment of the relative grounding-value that they want to signal (see 5.3). That qad signals midground meaning is evident in S2 of T20 below.

(For ease of reading, we provide the sentences in English and initial markers in Arabic (in bold). Where necessary, word-order would be changed to reflect the order in the Arabic sentence. Since all host sentences of qad have VS word-order, S2 of T20 manifests that order, i.e. instead of Greek officials in Athens confirmed. Other (minor) changes that might be made in the Arabic sentence and that pertain for example to lexical choices are not reflected in the provided English sentence, since they are immaterial to our purposes.)

KUWAIT (Combined Dispatches)
(1) A missile fired by an Iraqi warplane damaged a Greek oil tanker Monday near Iran's main oil export facility in the Gulf, it was reported here.
(2) wa-qad confirmed Greek officials in Athens that the Greek tanker Fairship-1 had been seriously damaged in an attack while en route to the Kharg Island oil terminal.

The host sentence of qad expresses midground meaning. That meaning reformulates the foreground proposition expressed in S1 that denotes the main event about the missile attack. Qad heralds a shift to a scene within the same main and current event, namely from what was announced in Kuwait to the confirmation by Greek authorities in Athens. This property of qad is also evident in text (1) presented in chapter 4 about the Kuwaiti passenger plane. Qad thus is non-digressive: it tends to appear in a sentence whose underlying propositions refer to events that are closely related to those referred to in the foreground proposition. It also has a narrow scope of signaling grounding. All things being equal, the midground proposition is expressed immediately after the expression of the foreground proposition.

STAGING AND qad
As we saw in earlier chapters, the realization of midground in surface structure may not be immediately after the realization of foreground in the
lead sentence. *Background* propositions may be expressed in sentences that are staged early in the text. In this case, they intervene between both grounding-values, and sentence-initial *qad* may in this case signal a return-to-before the interruption high grounding-value. This is illustrated by S4 of text TR41 (TR refers to texts cited from the random sample). The source of the news item is Cairo, and it is originally written in Arabic.

**TR41**

**Murphey leaves Cairo to Israel**

(1) Mr. Richard Murphey, assistant secretary of state, left Cairo yesterday morning to Israel after a two-day visit during which he held talks with Dr. Ismat Abdel Majid, vice premier and minister of foreign affairs.

(2) President Mubarak is scheduled to receive him after his return from Israel today.

(3) *wa-kāna* Murphey *qad* held talks at Cairo airport yesterday with Dr. Nabil Al-Arabi, director of the African department at the ministry of foreign affairs and the head of Egypt's delegation to Taba talks.

(4) *wa-qad* left Murphey Cairo accompanied by David Qimhi, the Israeli negotiator in these talks, to inform Shimon Perez, the Israeli premier, of the results that have been reached.

S4 that *qad* introduces expresses a *midground* proposition about specifics of the main event of leaving Cairo referred to in the lead sentence. The *midground* proposition is realized non-prominently, that is, late in the text as news downstage (see chapter 2). It has been preceded by *background* propositions expressed in sentences S2 (a forthcoming event) and S3 (a preceding event). The latter has *kāna qad* as an initial marker (see 5.2.2).

**NEUTRALIZING TEMPORAL SUCCESSIVITY AND DISAMBIGUATING**

We have seen in the last chapter that sentence-initial markers examined here do not occur in cases of event continuity or speech act addition. This means that the presence of a marker like *qad* would be warranted only if what is at issue is neither temporally sequent nor speech act additive. In other words, its presence would neutralize such a reading. Consider S6 of T22 presented in chapter 3.

(5) 5a Meanwhile, Nicaragua's vice president, 5b Sergio Ramirez, 5c visiting London on Wednesday, asked Britain to urge Washington to exercise its influence by reaffirming backing for the Contadora regional peace plan and by encouraging the United States to resume the
dialogue with Nicaragua it suspended three weeks ago. 

(6) 6a wa-qad met Mr. Ramirez for talks with the British foreign secretary, 6b Sir Geoffrey Howe.

Although the event referred to in S6 may in effect be subsequent to the one referred to in S5, the presence of qad neutralizes any interpretation of temporal sequentiality and makes it clear that the meeting of Mr. Ramirez with the British foreign secretary is a different event from the one during which the request to Britain has been made.

This function of qad is perhaps more evident in TR62. The first two sentences begin as follows:

(1) Arrested security men in the harbour of Alexandria two Arab pass­

(2) wa-qad started the interrogation of the two...

Although it is apparent that the event referred to in the proposition expressed in S2 is temporally sequent, the Arabic text employed qad. In so doing, the writer neutralizes—or marginalizes perhaps—the interpretation of temporal sequentiality by focussing on the feature of organizing textual meaning and signaling the distinction in grounding-values, that is, between foreground in S1 (main event) and midground in S2 (specification).

The particle qad may fulfil an ancillary function to the grounding-signaling function, namely to disambiguate. Consider the first two sentences of T47.

JERUSALEM (AP)—(1) The Israeli government has agreed to allow Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty to broadcast to the Soviet bloc from a transmitter in Israel, U.S. and Israeli officials said here Sunday. 

(2) The officials asked not to be identified.

In Arabic, the two sentences are as follows:

(1) Said U.S. and Israeli officials here Sunday that the Israeli govern­

(2) wa-qad asked the officials not to be identified.

Qad has been employed in spite of the fact that S2 denotes a speech act of
addition by the same participants in agent position. This is due to text-level grounding constraints, namely disambiguating the sequence and signaling the shift to *midground*. The marker makes it clear that what the officials asked is not on the same level as what they said. Specifically, the presence of qad arrests the progress of the main (speech) event and signals the introduction of a change of perspective on the underlying information mapped as a *midground* proposition. In other words, qad explicates the grounding-relation between the propositions of the two sentences.

5.2.2 *Kāna qad*

*Kāna qad* differs in essential ways from *qad* in the constraints to which it is subject and in the kind of meaning that it encodes (Khalil 1985). It signals typical *background* meaning. Most of its occurrences in sample I show this (see Table 2). This marker consists of the perfective of the auxiliary verb *kāna* (*to be*), that is inflected for person and gender, and the particle qad. A noun phrase or a subject is usually inserted between *kāna* and qad.

*Kāna + NP + qad + perfective of the main verb*, e.g.:

`wa-kāna the president qad arrived...`

*Kāna* modifies the subsequent verb in its modal or temporal aspects (Cantarino 1974: 67). Thus the event referred to denotes anterior past: a temporal relation of antecedence between two past and completed events. In this regard, *kāna qad* is like an English pluperfect (see Holes 1995: 190; Al-Muttalibi 1986). Or rather, *kāna* establishes a reference point in the past, and the perfective verb locates the event even further back in the past, thus creating a time reference anterior to a reference point in the past, corresponding to the pluperfect in English (see Comrie 1991: 8).

An important constraint on the use of *kāna qad* is that the propositions expressed in the sentence that it introduces manifest what is referred to as 'non-sequenced states and actions' (Hopper 1982: 6). The anterior event that *kāna qad* encodes may also be relative to a future one such as in:

1. The minister arrives tonight...
2. *wa-kāna qad visited-he yesterday*...

*Background* propositions that refer to earlier events are expressed later in the text as is typically the case in news discourse.
No conformity of opinion has existed as regards the function of qad in the construction kāna qad. Some (Cowan 1958; Comrie 1976) maintain that it is optionally used, and that in classical Arabic a pluperfect meaning could be expressed without qad. Accordingly, kāna + perfective (e.g. arrived) would denote a disconnected past event. Though optionally used in Classical Arabic, the particle qad is virtually obligatory in Modern Standard Arabic (Comrie 1991: 8).

THE MEANING OF THE MARKER
In news discourse kāna qad backgrounds meanings (Khalil 1985). There are syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic explanations for the background(ing) function that it fulfils.

Syntactically, kāna qad always realizes SV order: it places the subject between the auxiliary verb and the particle, prior the main verb. A discourse function of this syntactic structure, where the verb is placed in a far-inside-the-sentence position is to present description and signal background meaning. (Holes (1995: 190) refers to the 'backgrounding' function of kāna qad occurring in a relative clause to provide explanation.) Semantically, the fact that kāna qad denotes a past that is severed from the present means that the event referred to has no current relevance. This property contributes to the function of signaling background that the marker serves in news discourse. That kāna qad also denotes a near past corresponds with—and explains—its usual function in this type of discourse to encode (very) recent events in background propositions. So the decision to express background meaning is perhaps independent of the temporal remoteness of the event referred to. Pragmatically, kāna qad shows that the phenomenon at issue is looked at from a distance—that it is pragmatically subordinate and that the information underlying the proposition has been relegated to beyond the immediate concern (which is with the here-and-now) of readers as well as writers.

THE TYPICAL GROUNDING-SIGNALING FUNCTION OF kāna qad
Signaling background by means of kāna qad denotes a change of perspective to what is called an 'embedded story' (Polanyi and Schä 1983: 152) or a new embedded event (Sanders and Redeker 1993). Kāna qad is therefore conceived of as being a flashback marker. The proposition that refers to the earlier event—usually expressed in an abridged form—serves as a reminder to readers. This is illustrated by the last sentence, S5,
of T3 cited in chapter 2. The first and the last sentences of the text are presented below for convenience.

(1) Arturo José Cruz, leader of the democratic opposition to the Nicaraguan government, has shifted his position to endorse continued U.S. funding for the rebels fighting the Sandinist government.

(5) Mr. Cruz had said previously that the rebels provided the Sandinists with an excuse to tighten repression.

The event referred to in S5 is an earlier event relative to the new event referred to in the foreground proposition expressed in the lead sentence, which is the main concern of language users. Expressing background meaning (viz. about the earlier declaration) provides the historical context of foreground meaning (viz. about the recent declaration) and puts it in perspective.

The typical grounding-signaling function of kāna qad is also evident in T29.

T29

Basques Suspected in Madrid Killing
MADRID (Reuters)— Ricardo Tejero, a director of Banco Central, Spain's leading bank, was shot to death on Tuesday in the garage of his Madrid home by suspected Basque guerrillas posing as police officers, police said.

(2) Mr. Tejero, 58, regarded as the bank's second-ranking executive, was shot twice in the head by four men.

(3) the men [had] produced security credentials of a type seized by French police in recent raids on hideouts of the Basque separatist guerrilla group ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom).

(4) Nine-millimeter cartridges found at the scene were also of the type used by ETA.

(5) the rebel group has carried out hundreds of bomb attacks against Spanish banks during its 17-year fight for an independent Basque state.

The sentence expresses meaning about what the assassins did before shooting the bank director. The underlying proposition has background interpretation since it provides the circumstance of the main event referred to in the foreground proposition expressed in S1. Background meaning that kāna qad expresses is directly related to foreground.
STAGING AND kāna qad

The expression of a background proposition in a sentence at the head of which kāna qad appears in initial position may precede the expression of a midground proposition in a sentence that has qad in initial position. In this case, the sentence is staged more prominently, that is, as part of news upstage. TR41 cited earlier illustrates this feature. It is also evident in TC49 below (TC refers to texts cited from the sample I chose, i.e. sample III). The item is reported from Washington by the newspaper-correspondent.

(1) The Jordanian government expressed its regret and dissatisfaction with the American Administration because it refrained from pleading for the American weapons deal with Jordan, which exceeded 1.9 billion dollars.

(2) wa-kānat Washington qad informed King Hussain of Jordan of its decision before it has been announced.

(3) wa-qad declared Mohamamd Kamal, the Jordanian ambassador to Washington that the announcement did not come as a surprise to Jordan and that the surprise was because of the inability of the American administration to fulfil its commitments.

Although S3 expresses meaning that is midground (verbal reaction to the main event), mapping more important information, it has been staged less prominently. Background meaning expressed in S2 (circumstance of the main event) has been staged more prominently, though mapping less important information. Both news items employ the two sentence-initial markers that we examined so far and manifest the way their respective grounding-values may be expressed in surface structure prominence.

DIFFERENCES WITH ENGLISH

In the examples examined above, we have seen that kāna qad expresses background meaning while the equivalent English sentence employs the past perfect. (For a discussion of the past perfect in narrative fictional texts and newspaper reports, see Caenepeel 1995.) But while the simple past may occur in English sentences that express both foreground and background meanings, kāna qad is employed to signal background. It is significant to note that most occurrences of kāna qad (37 out of 45) in sample I coincide with the simple past in the English sentence. There are 5 occurrences that coincide with the past perfect and 3 with the present per-
5.2.3 *Mimmā yudkaru anna* (among things to be mentioned is that)

The first word in the expression *mimmā yudkaru anna* is an assimilation of *min* (from/among) and *mā* (what). It denotes partition or division into parts (*al-tab‘īd*) (see Hasan 1975 (Vol. 2): 458-459; see also Wright 1975: 137). *Yudkaru* (is mentioned) is the imperfective passive form of verb *dakara* (mention). It is one of the few verbs of saying, mentioning, reporting, or telling. The particle *anna* (that) introduces the subject. It may also be followed by an attached pronoun (see S5 of T5 below). Thus, the clause that this expression introduces has SV syntax that is typical of description.

One trait of *mimmā yudkaru anna* is that it prefaces entire or independent sentences, hence it does not connect clauses into a composite sentence such as:

The president arrived at Cairo airport, *wa-mimmā yudkaru anna-hu* (and it is worth mentioning that he) visited earlier a number of European capitals.

**THE MEANING OF THE MARKER AND ITS VARIANTS**

The expression *mimmā yudkaru anna* implies that someone—not specified—mentions something. The fact that it denotes a speech act of informing where the agent is deleted distinguishes it from the form *dakarat al-anbā‘* (news said/mentioned), where *al-anbā‘* is a specific agent. The expression also implies that someone has judged certain information in context and event models to be relevant and important enough to be mapped as a textual proposition that has background interpretation. The meaning expressed in the sentence that the marker introduces is tangential and marginally related to other meanings expressed before. In addition, it is not necessarily related temporally to other propositions. So the event or state of affairs that the marker encodes is not restricted in its temporal location. The background proposition maps some recalled and occasional information that would increase the knowledge of readers as regards other events and states of affairs.

One variant of this marker is without *mimmā*, namely *yudkaru anna*. Other variants are very similar in meaning but include the word for worthy, whether nominal or prepositional structures such as *jadīrun bi-al-
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dîkr, min al-jâdîrî bi-al-dîkr, mimmâ huwa jadîrun bi-al-dîkr (among that which is worth mentioning), or those that include a verb such as mimmâ tajduru al-iṣârâtâ ilayhi, mimmâ yajduru dîkruhû, tajduru al-iṣârâtâ ila (it merits to be referred to that).

Mimmâ yudkaru anna fulfills the function of pushing to an embedded level, hence it does not denote thematic expansion of what preceded (e.g. the current event), but its termination. From the discourse-topic point of view, it signals a shift— something similar perhaps to what has been referred to as an 'associated topic shift' (van Kuppevelt 1995a) where elements of the current topic are associated with the newly introduced one. In pragmatic terms, mimmâ yudkaru anna expresses parenthetic meaning such as by the way, incidentally. In this sense, it introduces what is called 'incidental background' (Thorndyke 1979: 109). It may, of course, signal the introduction of a new schematic category. The sentence that mimmâ yudkaru anna prefaces is usually expressed less prominently as part of news downstage.

Mimmâ yudkaru anna and its variants serve a number of text-level functions:

1- Referring to the informing— or news imparting— process in which writers are engaged and in which they play an authoritative role, not personally as individuals but collectively as a newspaper. The assumption is that readers do not possess certain information.

2- Denoting the relative importance and relevance of the underlying information at a particular point in text and context, namely that it deserves to be mentioned (i.e. mapped as a textual proposition) and to be attended to.

3- Signaling a shift from the current semantic representation.

4- Indicating the position of the proposition on the FG-BG continuum, thus helping readers comprehend its relative grounding-value.

THE NATURE OF BACKGROUND THAT mimmâ yudkaru anna SIGNALS

Two seemingly contradictory reasons account for the use of mimmâ yudkaru anna. On the one hand, the writer wants to draw the attention of readers to the importance as well as the relevance of the underlying information and, on the other hand, to make evident the incidental nature of the information, namely that the semantic representation is tangential, given other textual propositions that are higher on the FG-BG continuum. This is
evident in S5 of T29 cited earlier.

(5) *wa-mimmā yudkaru anna* the rebel group has carried out hundreds of bomb attacks against Spanish banks during its 17-year fight for an independent Basque state.

The *background* proposition (historical survey)— mapping information about previous Basque attacks—increases the knowledge of readers and puts the *foreground* proposition that refers to the present major event (viz. the Madrid killing) in perspective. It shows that the *background* proposition is not the main goal of the writer in the news imparting process.

The incidental nature of the underlying information mapped as a *background* proposition and expressed in a sentence that has *mimmā yudkaru anna* is evident also in S5 of T6 cited in chapter 2:

(6) *wa-mimmā yudkaru anna* neither kind of car is very popular...

The *background* proposition (a comment statement, social context) is about the present situation of the two cars whose price has been reduced. The initial marker shows that the underlying information deserves to be mapped in order to increase the knowledge of readers about the main event referred to in the *foreground* proposition.

The *background* proposition underlying the sentence that *mimmā yudkaru anna* prefaces may nevertheless complement other *background* propositions that have been expressed before. This is illustrated by S5 of T5 cited in chapter 1. The last two sentences are repeated below for convenience.

(4) *wa-kānat* rumors *qad* circulated in South Africa in mid-December that Mr. Savimbi had been captured by Angolan troops.

(5) *wa-mimmā yudkaru anna-hu* [that-[He]] has not appeared in public for several weeks, and did not make his usual address at Christmas.

The information underlying the semantic representation in S5 provides evidence for what has been reported in S4 (i.e. rumors that Savimbi has been captured). The initial marker shows the nature of meaning expressed in the sentence: that including the *background* proposition would increase the knowledge of readers, given the proposition in S4. It also shows that
the information is tangential, given the information mapped as foreground meaning about Savimbi being wounded.

**VARIANTS OF mimmā yuḍkara anna**

Before we leave this marker we will illustrate its variants. Two of them appear in sentences S4 and S6 of T84.

**T84**

**Portuguese Leader Is Visiting Macao**

MACAO (Reuters) — (1) *1a President António Ramalho Eanes of Portugal arrived Monday in Macao at the end of a visit to China, 1b where he held talks on the future of the Portuguese-administered territory.*

(2) *2a The Chinese leader, 2b Deng Xiaoping, told Mr. Eanes that the future of Macao would be settled easily through friendly consultation.*

(3) *3a Mr. Eanes, 3b the first Portuguese president to visit Macao, was handed the keys to the territory, 3c which was founded 428 years ago.*

(4) *wa-yuḍkaru anna-ha [...that-[It]] was the first European settlement on the south China coast.*

(5) *China and Portugal announced in Beijing last week that they would soon open talks on the transfer of Macao to Chinese rule.*

(6) *wa-mimmā tajduru al-isāratu ilayhi anna Lisbon conceded sovereignty in 1975.*

The initial marker in S4 (*It is to be mentioned that*) signals background meaning (a remote past historical fact) about the settlement, and that in S6 (*what is worth referring to is that*) signals background meaning (historical context of the main event). The use of the two variants makes it clear that the writer considers the underlying historical information to be significant, and hence it merits to be referred to so that readers acquire it or be reminded of it. The markers, as it were, justify the inclusion of this information and mapping it as low grounding-value propositions. The worthiness of the information is, of course, relative to the worthiness of the information that is mapped as foreground meaning and expressed in the beginning of the text.

5.2.4 *Fa- (so, thus, therefore)*

The particle *fa-*, described by Arab grammarians as a co-ordinating conjunction, denotes temporal ordering and succession (*al-tartīb al-*)
As a particle of classification (harf tarīb), fa- indicates co-ordination together with the idea of development in the narrative (Cantarino 1975 (vol. 3): 20). It denotes, in addition, cause or effect (see Wright 1975: 290f). In this respect, fa- resembles the English 'so', giving a cause or a justification (Beeston 1970: 97) as well as a rational explanation. Accordingly, fa- signals different relationships (Al-Batal 1990: 246): causal, conclusive (therefore), consequential (accordingly), successive, and discourse movement-shifting.

Under the function of fa- to denote the order of mentioning in the text (at-tartīb ad-dikrī) is 'ātīf al-mufassal ʿala al-mujmal (Hasan 1975 (Vol. 3): 573) which means conjoining the detailed with the summarized. This is another way of saying that the proposition has a functional relation of detail or explanation with what has been referred to before in general terms, i.e. as a macroproposition. As we will see below, this function of fa- coincides with its function in news texts to explain or specify what preceded. Fulfilling this function in news texts, however, requires that a-prefixes the particle qad or the preposition fī. In news texts, fa-qad occurs in sentence-initial position and maintains VS syntax. It should be noted that traditional Arabic grammar did not refer to the use of fa-prefixing the particle qad.

Without qad, fa-prefixing the verb would denote temporal successive-ness, namely that the event the verb encodes would be consequent to the event referred to before. The presence of qad, then, organizes the relationship between meanings expressed in the two sentences.

Since fa-qad occupies the initial position in a sentence that expresses specifics of the preceding proposition that is usually foreground, it signals a shift to midground. Most occurrences of fa- in sample I demonstrate that (see Table 2). Most of them too occur in S2, which means that midground meaning is prominently expressed.

That fa-qad accounts to the same event or situation referred to in the immediately preceding proposition shows that it signals a local shift. This is evident in S2 of T29 cited earlier. The first two sentences are repeated below for convenience.

(1) Ricardo Tejero, a director of Banco Central, Spain's leading bank, was shot to death on Tuesday in the garage of his Madrid home by suspected Basque guerrillas posing as police officers, police said.

(2) fa-qad shot four men twice in the head Mr. Tejero, 58, regarded as the bank's second-ranking executive.
The marker prefaces a sentence that expresses *midground* meaning about specifics of the main event referred to in SI. It is tantamount to saying: *The situation described in the preceding sentence obtains since four men shot the director*. *Fa-qad* thus arrests the progress of the main event in order to provide a *close-up* of it. This feature may also be illustrated by the first two sentences of T34.

(1) Lebanon appealed Thursday to the United Nations Security Council to call on Israel to end immediately its "military onslaught" in southern Lebanon and immediately withdraw its forces. 

(2) *Fa-qad* told Rachid Fakhoury, the Lebanese representative, the opening session of a council meeting on the situation in southern Lebanon that "fast action" was needed to end attacks by the "Israeli military machine" on towns and villages in his country.

S2 at the head of which *fa-qad* appears expresses *midground* meaning. The marker initiates a speech event about specifics of the main event referred to in the *foreground* proposition expressed in S1. Of course, preceding textual propositions may constrain the interpretation of the grounding-value of the proposition expressed in the sentence that contains *fa-qad*. This is the case in S8 of T20 cited in chapter 3. The last two sentences of the text are repeated below.

(7) Meanwhile, there were reports that a fresh diplomatic effort was underway to end the war.

(8) *Fa-qad* said the newspaper Al-Seyassah in Kuwait Sunday that France, Saudi Arabia and Algeria were working on a plan for talks with the support of the six-nation Gulf Co-operation Council.

The text is about what happened to a Greek tanker. The propositional content of sentences S7 and S8 is assigned to the *background end of the continuum*, since it is about an unrelated development. It is also subsumed under an *Association* schema category. The proposition expressed in S8 specifies the proposition in S7, hence it is assigned the same grounding-value. It may be argued, however, that *fa-qad* here signals a *midground* proposition—a locally high grounding-value (see our earlier discussion about *qad*).

A similar grounding-signaling function is served by *fa-* followed by the preposition *fi+* location. The difference with *fa-qad* is that it denotes a location shift. This is evident in S2 of TC254.
At least 35 people died, tens were injured and thousands became homeless as a result of a series of earthquakes and inundations that swept Turkey and Iran yesterday.

(2) \textit{fa-fi} Turkey were hit south east areas by an earthquake...

(3) \textit{wa-fi} Iran were hit five villages...

\textit{Fa-fi} is followed by a location specification of the main event referred to in S1. It prefaces a sentence that expresses \textit{midground} (exemplification).

5.2.5 \textit{Min nāhiyatin/jihatin uxrā} (from another side/aspect)

This sentence-initial marker is composed of the directional preposition \textit{min} (from), the noun \textit{nāhiyatin} (side, aspect, angle)— or its synonym \textit{jihatin}— in the genitive case, and the adjective \textit{uxrā} (another/different). It introduces VS syntax, characteristic of the lead sentence in news texts. This underscores its grounding function of signaling a global shift, since it looks as if a new news text starts with the sentence that contains this marker. In this respect, \textit{min nāhiyatin uxrā} signals some kind of (semantic) discontinuity (see Zammuner 1982) with what preceded—a gap or a shift from the presently described events or states of affairs. The reader needs to be aware of—i.e. get a signal for—the introduction of a semantic discontinuity, otherwise 'he/she would not understand properly what is the relationship between the present and a preceding text unit' (Zammuner 1982: 142).

Unlike the adverbial compound \textit{on the other hand}, where conditional coherence seems to predominate the functional type (van Dijk 1985c: 111), \textit{min nāhiyatin uxrā} does not necessarily denote a contrast in the subject matter between events. The shift is created by writers in their organization of—and interpretation of relations among—components of semantic representations. As such, the initial marker signals a shift to a new attention field. Consider T39.

\textbf{T39}

\textbf{Accident May Delay Shuttle Mission}

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP)— (1) 1a A falling bucket injured a workman 1b and imbedded itself in the cargo bay door of the space shuttle Discovery on Friday, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration reported.

(2) 2a The agency said it was too early to assess the extent of the damage or the possible effect on Discovery's mission 2b scheduled
for March 28, 2c when Senator Jake Garn of Utah is to be a member of the crew.

(3) But officials said the flight almost certainly would be postponed.

(4) They said the metal bucket penetrated the top of the shuttle and probably caused extensive damage to heat protection tiles and structure.

(5) NASA said it had no idea why the bucket fell.

(6) A board of experts began an investigation.

(7) *wa-min nāhiyatin uxrā* was the workman being treated at a hospital for two fractures of his left leg.

(8) 8a He is an employee of Lockheed Space Operations Co., 8b which handles shuttle servicing under a contract with NASA.

The meaning expressed in S7 is midground (specification of main event). It is non-prominently realized, namely what we call news downstage, relative to other midground meanings about the accident and the damage to *Discovery*. The use of the sentence-initial marker signals a shift from what happened to the *shuttle* to a different attention field, namely what happened to the *workman*.

It should be added that though *min nāhiyatin uxrā* in this text signals a proposition that has been assigned midground interpretation, the marker influences the grounding-value and locates it close to background. It is significant to note that most other occurrences of this marker signal background. The function of signaling background is illustrated by S3 of (1) presented in chapter 4. It is repeated below.

(3) *wa-min jihatin uxrā* announced Sheikh Nawaaf Al-Ahmad, the Kuwaiti minister of interior, that next March changes will be made in Kuwaiti security top management, following the bomb incidents of last year.

The main event that is referred to in the foreground proposition expressed in S1 is about a *Kuwaiti* plane. The meaning expressed in S3 is about unrelated developments, hence it is assigned to the background end of the continuum, and hence the need for the introductory marker.

It is apparent that there are no constraints on meanings expressed in sentences at the head of which *min nāhiyatin uxrā* appears. This is illustrated by S4 of TR350.

(1) Clashes between Amal militias and Palestinians intensified in Southern Lebanon...

(2) Security sources said that four people were killed and 65 injured...
(3) In the South, Israeli occupation troops shelled yesterday a number of villages...

(4) *wa-min nāḥiyatin uxrā* attacked unidentified militants a bank and two store houses in Beirut while three thousand women and children demonstrated in front of the Central Bank in West Beirut yesterday protesting against the high costs of living...

The writer of this text employs the initial marker in order to signal a shift to a proposition that is in the background end of the continuum: It refers to an event that is unrelated to what has been expressed in the preceding three sentences. The marker signals the distinction between the very low grounding-value from higher grounding-values expressed before.

5.2.6 *Min al-ma'rūfi anna* (It is known that)

This sentence-initial marker consists of the partitive preposition *min*, the participle *al-ma'rūfi* in the genitive case) of the verb *'arafa* (to know, to be acquainted with); and the particle *anna*. Other variants are *ma'rūfun anna*, that is, without the preposition and the definite article, and *min al-ma'lūmi anna*, which is the participle of the synonymous verb *'alima* (to know). Both verbs belong to cognition verbs that encode mental attitude (see Givón 1984b).

The presence of *min al-ma'rūfi anna* allows the sentence to retain SV syntax. It also defers the introduction of the subject, hence defocuses or de-emphasizes it. In other words, the marker neutralizes the effect of markedness produced by SV syntax in initial position in the sentence and hence the sentence realizes a function typical of news discourse.

The proposition expressed in the sentence maps information that is anonymized. The marker does not explicitly say or identify the person(s) by whom the information is known. Usually the statement that follows the marker has a general truth character. It reflects a generally and widely acknowledged view of popular and known facts and hence it is taken for granted. Accordingly, *min al-ma'rūfi anna* expresses the assumption by the writer that what is (about to be) reported is known, for example from earlier news reports. By assuming or claiming that the information is known, the writer eliminates the possibility or interpretation that it is also new.

*Min al-ma'rūfi anna* has a wide scope of signaling grounding-relation, namely with propositions expressed in preceding paragraphs. Several fac-
tors warrant the use of this sentence-initial marker. Among these are the following ones:

1- The amount of information that is available in models about events and states of affairs.
2- The writer's evaluation of the knowledge of readers: the assumption that they know, are supposed to know, or have known that information in event models.
3- The writer's wish— in view of new developments— to remind readers of certain previous events and states of affairs in the real world, should they have forgotten them.
4- The writer's evaluation of the relative importance of that (known) information vis-à-vis other (new) information that is mapped as textual propositions. That is to say, the evaluation of the necessity to make use of the information because it will for example increase readers' understanding of other textual propositions.
5- The writer's wish to map this information (that is, to organize manifestations of information) in discourse meaning as background relative to already expressed meanings.
6- The writer's intention to help readers perceive the grounding-value of the proposition from the same perspective he or she sees it.

**TYPICAL GROUNDING-SIGNALING FUNCTION OF** \(\text{min al-ma'rüfi anna}\)**

Typical background meaning expressed in the host sentence of \(\text{min al-ma'rüfi anna}\) may map general, popular, or supposed to be known information about how things are. This may be a statement of fact about the present situation as S4 of T7 shows.

**T7**

**Zia Sets Date for Assembly Elections**

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)— (1)** President Mohammed Zia ul-Haq has announced that elections will be held Feb. 25 to replace the parliament disbanded in July 1977 with the imposition of martial law, which is still in force.

(2) General Zia said Saturday that, although the elections for the National Assembly are expected to start a process of power-sharing between the armed forces and elected civilian representatives, political parties will not be allowed to take part in the campaign.

(3) He said Moslems will vote for Moslem candidates, and non-Moslems will elect non-Moslem candidates.

(4) \(\text{wa-min al-ma'rüfi anna}\) **4a** Pakistan is an overwhelmingly
Islamic country, and General Zia has been enforcing the religion's code of law.

The propositions expressed in S4 about Pakistan are background (political and social context). The initial marker makes this clear and provides the frame for understanding the significance of the main event referred to in the foreground proposition expressed in the lead sentence. This function of signaling grounding is also evident in S4 of T17.

**T17**

**Botha Sets Terms for Mandela Release**

CAPE TOWN (AP)—(1) President P.W. Botha told Parliament Thursday that South Africa was prepared to consider the release of the black nationalist leader, Nelson Mandela, the South African Press Association reported.

(2) The news agency said Mr. Botha's government would require only that Mr. Mandela, imprisoned for life for sabotage, divorce himself from the violence carried out by the African National congress, which he heads.

(3) Mr. Botha's remarks appeared to be the farthest any government official has gone in suggesting that Mr. Mandela, 66, might be freed.

(4) *wa-min al-ma 'rūfi anna-hu* [...that- [He] was (*kāna qad*) sentenced in 1964.

Though marginal, the underlying information is important enough to be mapped as a background proposition (political or historical context of the main event). The marker signals the background interpretation and hence the distinction with other grounding-values.

### 5.2.7 Fi (*in*)+ spatio/temporal entity

The preposition *fi* (*in*) is followed by a temporal or spatial lexical item in which a certain activity takes place. It governs the genitive case (see Lentzner 1977). The prepositional phrase is followed by VS syntax.

All occurrences of *fi*+ spatio/temporal entity in sample I have their equivalent in the English news text. But as we will see later (5.3.1), not all occurrences of the adverbial in the English text are rendered in Arabic by an equivalent marker in initial position.

An example of *fi* followed by a temporal lexical item is S4 of T24 cited in chapter 3.
(4) In November 1981, Mr. Abruzzo was captain of the helium-filled Double Eagle-5 when he, Mr. Newman and two other men made the first balloon crossing of the Pacific Ocean, flying from Nagashima, Japan, to northern California in four days.

The initial marker wa-fi + November signals a boundary point and realizes a shift to a different time span during which certain events have taken place. The temporal shift introduced by the initial marker is about a historical survey of events. The events are referred to in propositions that have background interpretation.

Fronted locatives in news texts realize a shift of scene or episode to background meaning. They mark a section of the text such as in guidelines (see Enkvist 1987b), following a strategy 'of first guiding the readers to a certain definite place and position, and then telling them what they are supposed to see' (Enkvist 1987b: 209). Fronted locatives, of course, maintain discourse-perspective (for this, see Thompson and Longacre 1985). But what is important is their function in Arabic to signal a global shift in grounding to the background end of the continuum. All four locative markers in sample I manifest that they fulfil that function. This is illustrated by T59.

T59

5th Patient Receives Artificial Heart

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky (AP)—(1) A retired railroad engineer became the fifth person in the world to receive a permanent artificial heart in an operation here Sunday, a spokesman at Humana Hospital-Audubon announced.

(2) 2a Three hours into the operation on Jack C. Burcham, 2b the mechanical heart was working and "everything is going according to the surgical plan," said George Atkins, 2c Humana's director of public affairs.

(3) Doctors had encountered no complications, he said.

(4) 4a Mr. Burcham, 62, 4b who doctors said was near death because of heart disease, was the fifth person to receive the plastic-and-metal Jarvik-7 device and the third at Humana.

(5) 5a wa-fi Sweden, 5b said the fourth recipient and Europe's first in a statement on Sunday that he was "filled with a sense of great relief" after receiving the device a week ago at Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm.

(6) Hospital officials have refused to disclose the patient's name, at his request.

(7) 7a But Swedish and other Scandinavian news media say he is Leif Stenberg, 53, 7b a Stockholm businessman under indictment for tax
evasion.

Textual propositions expressed in sentences S1-S4 are about the heart operation of the world's fifth artificial heart patient. Those in sentences S5-S7 are about the world's fourth artificial heart recipient in another country, namely Sweden. Since the meaning expressed in these sentences is not covered by the current main event or topic, *wa-fi* *Sweden* in initial position in S5 signals a global shift in grounding to the background end of the continuum.

That the locative *fi* in initial position is usually used to fulfil that function, and not for example to specify, is evident in TR430. The beginning of each sentence is given below.

(1) The separatist government in South African imposed yesterday new measures for further restrictions on media coverage of the national revolt...
(2) The measures included...
(3) The new measures give the minister of interior the authority...
(4) *wa-min nāhiyatīn uxrā* the West German opposition managed yesterday to secure the approval of the Parliament to conduct an investigation about reports of the government's approval to sell German designs of building submarines to South Africa.
(5) *wa-fi* Johannesburg held hundreds of parents prayers the day before yesterday in order to secure the release of their children...

A locative adverbial initiates S5 that expresses the background end of the continuum. It signals a shift of scene to an activity that is not covered by other textual propositions. It maps information that has a low degree of importance, given other information mapped as textual propositions.

5.2.8 *Fi* nafsi al-waqt (at the same time, in the meantime, simultaneously, meanwhile)

This prepositional phrase consists of the preposition *fi* (*in*), the noun *nafsi* (*same*) in the genitive case, and *al-waqt* (*the-time*). Other variants are *fi xilāli/gudūni dālika* (*during that*). This initial marker (or its equivalent *fi al-waqtī nafsih*) is always followed by VS syntax. The event referred to in the propositional content of the sentence has a relation of simultaneity with the event(s) referred to before. But apart from that, the events are...
usually widely divergent and may be referred to in propositions of two independent news items. *Fi nafsi al-waqt* is therefore employed by writers in order to organize the presentation of propositional content that is about other events. Usually the propositions are not related to *foreground* or even other *background* meanings that are expressed before. All other grounding-values are terminated before the introduction of *fi nafsi al-waqt*. Being contextually or pragmatically relevant, the underlying information is mapped as a proposition that occupies the *background end of the continuum*. In other words, the mapping of information that has low importance as part of model macrostructures does not interfere with the realization of other components of the FG-BG structure. *Fi nafsi al-waqt* occurs in the last segment or paragraph of the news text. This coincides with the low grounding-value that it signals.

Although the adverbial *meanwhile* is used in the English text, which suggests a temporal relation of simultaneity in the semantic/external reality: 'thesis time' (see Halliday and Hasan 1976), *fi nafsi al-waqt* performs a pragmatic function of expressing a different step in the process of reporting: internal time or 'situation time' (see Halliday and Hasan 1976). Neither writers nor readers attach much significance to the temporal meaning of the initial marker. In other words, the pragmatic meaning overrides the meaning of temporal organization of events and states of affairs.

We have seen examples of this marker in chapter 3: *T20*, where *S7* is about diplomatic efforts to end the Gulf war. Similarly, in the last paragraph of *T22*, *S5* expresses meaning about the visit by the Nicaraguan vice president to London. Preceding textual propositions are about increasing food prices in Nicaragua.

(5) 5a *wa-fi al-waqt* nafsih asked Nicaragua's vice president, 5b Sergio Ramirez, 5c visiting London on Wednesday, Britain to urge Washington to exercise its influence by reaffirming backing for the Contadora regional peace plan and by encouraging the United States to resume the dialogue with Nicaragua it suspended three weeks ago.

It is to be noted that there is similarity between this marker and another initial marker that appears in the random sample, namely *'ala sa'idin âxar* (on another level, plane, field). It is also similar to *fi tatâwwurin jadîd* (in a new development). Other initial markers that occur in similar
environments are: *fi ṭatawwurin āxar* (in another/related/separate development) and *fi ḥādītin āxar* (in a different event). Meanings expressed in the sentences containing *fi nafsi al-waqt* are unrelated to what preceded. It would be appropriate to express them in a separate news item.

That the markers are suitable to initiate a new topic is illustrated by S4 of TR300.

(1) Businessmen in South Africa requested President Pieter Botha to relinquish the racial discrimination policies against African nationals and said that a better economy could not be realized without political reform.
(2) Two hundred leading businessmen called in their meeting with Botha for...
(3) *wa-qad* approved the meeting a plan...
(4) *wa-‘ala sa‘idin āxar* ended hundreds of gold mine workers in Pretoria their strike yesterday.

The event referred to in the proposition expressed in S4 is not covered by the main event. It is nevertheless considered contextually or pragmatically relevant to readers and/or writers hence it is included in the semantic representation of the text as meaning that has the lowest grounding-value and that should be realized as an instance of news downstage.

5.3 Constraints on the Interchangeability of Markers: Recasting Options

After having analyzed each individual sentence-initial marker, we address the question of marker interchangeability, that is, the possibilities and limitations of choosing among markers. This dimension complements the preceding analysis by providing more insight into the behaviour of each marker.

Marker interchangeability is assumed to be governed by cognitive and pragmatic constraints on the writer's evaluation of the importance as well as the relevance of the information. For example, that the writer may consider the information to be known or not, worth mentioning or not may determine the selection of the marker that serves a specific grounding-signaling function. This selection shows that the writer favours the assignment of a certain grounding-value to a particular proposition. It also has conse-
quences for the interpretation of the FG-BG structure in the entire text. It should be added that apart from cognitive and pragmatic constraints, tense and aspect may limit recasting options. An evident example is the anteriority constraint which limits the interchangeability of qad and kāna qad. We will examine below recasting options in nine combinations of markers.

i. Qad and kāna qad

We have seen that the two grammatical entities qad and kāna qad perform non-temporal discourse-pragmatic functions (see Khalil 1985). That is, their occurrence correlates with difference in (signaling the expression of) meaning in terms of a FG-BG structure. This is consistent with the suggestion that 'different kinds of information [our meaning] tend to be communicated by grammatically distinctive forms in surface structure' (Grimes 1975: 35), and that sentence particles, with or without other devices, are used to realize aspect in discourse: to mark foreground and background sentences (Hopper 1979).

Thus, not only is the presence of qad and kāna qad in news texts pragmatically motivated, but so also is the choice that might be made between them. Where applicable, the choice is between signaling midground meaning by means of qad or background meaning by means of kāna qad. That qad signals the assignment of a higher grounding-value than the value that kāna qad signals is evident in TR41 that we examined earlier. It is also evident in T60.

T60

Heart Recipient Given Transfusions

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky (AP)— (1) 1a Jack C. Burcham, 1b the world's fifth recipient of a permanent artificial heart, bled throughout the night 1c after his surgery 1d and had to have approximately 21 pints of blood replaced, 1e but one of his doctors said Monday the problem was not considered life-threatening.

(2) Nonetheless, doctors were concerned enough that they said they would decide later Monday whether to reopen the chest cavity and stem the bleeding, as they did with previous implant patients.

(3) wa kāna Mr. Burcham, 62, of Le Roy, Illinois, qad received the Jarvik-7 heart in a difficult, six-hour operation Sunday at Humana Hospital-Audubon.

(4) 4a wa qad remained Mr. Burcham, 4b a retired railroad engineer, in critical condition one day after the implant, 4c but Dr. Allan M. Lansing, 4d chairman of Humana Heart Institute
International, said he personally considered Mr. Burcham's condition to be satisfactory.

(5) \textit{wa-qad} said Dr. William C. DeVries, who implanted the heart, the mechanical pump was "a tight fit".

\textit{Kāna qad} in S3 signals typical \textit{background} meaning (a preceding event) about the heart operation itself. \textit{Qad} in sentences S4 and S5 signals \textit{midground} meaning (respectively, specification of the main event and verbal reaction to the main event). It signals a shift from \textit{background} meaning that has been expressed more prominently as S3 and re-introduces the present situation.

We look now at the interchangeability of the two sentence-initial markers. Since the proposition expressed in S3 satisfies the general condition of anteriority, \textit{kāna qad} is more appropriate here than \textit{qad} which, as we explained before, has a forward looking signaling-function. That is to say, \textit{qad} denotes the more recent event, whereas the event referred to here is about the surgery itself and not about what followed it. Apart from that, using \textit{qad} as an initial marker in S3 would unwarrantably signal a higher grounding-value that maps a higher degree of information importance.

Alternatively, \textit{kāna qad} would be less appropriate in S4, since the event referred to in the proposition is not anterior. In addition, it would signal \textit{background(ed)} meaning and consequently produce anomalousness since the proposition maps highly important information.

\textbf{T60} manifests \textit{foregrounding} and \textit{backgrounding} operations in semantic representations: \textit{background} meaning is expressed earlier than \textit{midground} meaning. In the absence of these operations, signaling grounding-values in surface structure would be according to the typical news pattern, namely that \textit{midground} signaled by \textit{qad} would be expressed earlier than \textit{background} signaled by \textit{kāna qad}. This is illustrated by \textbf{T57} presented in chapter 2. The first four sentences of the text are repeated below for convenience.

\section*{T57}

\textbf{India Rejected Union Carbide Offer}

NEW DELHI (AFP)— (1) \textit{India's} decision to sue Union Carbide \textit{was taken} \textit{after} it had spurned a "ridiculously low" company offer of compensation for the Bhopal gas disaster, \textit{a minister told Parliament here Tuesday.}

(2) \textit{wa-qad} was filed the lawsuit for unspecified damages and compensation in a New York court Monday on behalf of the Indian
government.

(3) 3a However, Veerendra Patil, 3b minister of chemicals and fertilizers, said that an out-of-court settlement was possible if the U.S. company agreed to pay an adequate amount to the victims of the world's worst industrial accident.

(4) 4a wa-käna an estimated 2,500 people qad died and more than 200,000 others were affected 4b when poisonous methyl isocyanate gas leaked from a Union Carbide pesticides plant in the central Indian city on Dec. 3.

Apart from expressing grounding-values according to the typical news pattern, the text also shows constraints on the interchangeability of the two markers. The proposition expressed in S2 that contains qad is midground (specification of the main event). It maps information that has immediate concern and high importance as well as relevance to readers and/or writers.

Though käna qad would be a possible substitute, its use would signal backgrounded meaning. It would also signal a change in the function of the textual proposition, namely from specification of the main event to a context of that event.

Alternatively, inserting qad in initial position in S4 would be problematic, since the underlying proposition denotes an earlier event and hence it is assigned background interpretation, given the FG-BG structure in the whole text. Since qad looks forward in the past, using it in S4 would create the impression and the expectation that what is at issue is a more recent event and, more importantly, that the event is subsumed under the event referred to in the foreground proposition.

Constraints on the interchangeability of qad and käna qad are more evident in the following two-sentence text.

TC82
BAGHDAD (MENA)— (1) Mr. Yaser Arafat, Chairman of the executive committee of the PLO, arrived in Baghdad yesterday for a few days visit.

(2) wa-käna Arafat qad left Cairo yesterday after a six-day visit to Egypt.

Employing qad instead of käna qad as an initial marker in S2 would be less appropriate since qad signals typically a specification of the main event, and hence midground meaning. The event referred to in the proposition of S2 is not a specification of the main event which is about the visit to Iraq, but it is a preceding event and hence it is background. Apart from
that, using *qad* would raise the expectation that the event is subsequent to the visit to Iraq such as: *wa-qad left Arafat Baghdad* (instead of *Cairo*). Therefore, it is more appropriate that S2 expresses meaning as background signaled by *kāna qad*.

In fact, the appropriate use of *qad* and *kāna qad*, and consequently the appropriate signaling of grounding-values, may be crucial for the correct interpretation of the intended meaning. Consider **TC92**.

**TC92**

(1) The Nigerian government categorically denied yesterday what has been reported about resuming diplomatic relations with Israel.
(2) The spokesman explained that...
(3) *wa-kāna* radio Israel *qad* said that the resumption of relations between Nigeria and Israel will be soon.

S3 has *kāna qad* in initial position in order to express background meaning about the earlier event that has prompted the main event denoted in the foreground proposition expressed in S1. The underlying information provides the context of that event. Substituting *kāna qad* with *qad* would signal a proposition that has a higher grounding-value, namely the interpretation of what the *Israeli radio* announced as a specification or an explanation of the main event referred to before. More importantly, employing *qad* would create the impression that the event of announcing the resumption of diplomatic relations is subsequent to the event of the denial by the Nigerian government. This reading would be contrary to the (order of) facts, since the denial was subsequent to the announcement by the *Israeli radio*. By expressing meaning as *midground*, an initial *qad* would misrepresent the meaning of the entire text.

**ii. Qad and mimmā yudkaru anna**

The choice between *qad* and *mimmā yudkaru anna* (among thins to be mentioned is that) is between the centrality or marginality of the proposition on the FG-BG gradient. Consider S3 of **T2**.

**T2**

**Sri Lanka says Rebels Blew Up Bridge**

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)— (1) Tamil guerrillas have blown up a railroad bridge near Jaffna, disrupting deliveries of food and fuel sup-
plies to the northern capital, the government has announced.

(2) The government said Tuesday that the guerrillas, who seek a separate minority Tamil state in northern Sri Lanka, blew up a 40-foot (12-meter) bridge situated between Kobikanam and Pallai on the Jaffna Peninsula.

(3) \textit{wa-qad} estimated a Defense Ministry official it would take at least a week to repair the bridge.

(4) Another official said supplies needed for security forces could be flown in but other residents of the area would face shortages.

The proposition expressed in S3 is \textit{midground} (verbal reaction to the main event). It maps rather important information about the time needed to repair the bridge. Although it is possible to use \textit{mimmā yudkaru anna} instead of \textit{qad}, it would be less appropriate because the meaning maps less important information. In other words, this marker would show that the underlying proposition has been relegated to a lower position on the FG-BG continuum.

To get a closer picture of the environment of the two markers and hence of their interchangeability, we examine TR8 that includes both markers.

\textbf{TR8}

(1) The Iranian news agency said yesterday that the revolutionary guard defused a new bomb that has been placed under a car, north of the capital Tehran.

(2) The agency said...

(3) \textit{wa-mimmā yudkaru anna} five bombs \textit{qad} exploded in Tehran since the beginning of the year.

(4) \textit{wa-qad} led the explosion that occurred last week to the death of 20 persons and the injury of more than 80.

The proposition expressed in S3 containing \textit{mimmā yudkaru anna} has \textit{background} interpretation (historical survey of the main event). It maps less important information about prior bomb explosions. The proposition expressed in S4 containing \textit{qad} has \textit{midground} interpretation (specification of the main event). It maps more important information about the consequences of the recent bomb explosion. \textit{Qad}, then, would be less appropriate as an initial marker in S3, given the nature of the underlying information: namely, a reminder of a series of past events. It is unlikely that \textit{qad} would perform this \textit{background(ing)} function. The alternative that the writer has is to express the \textit{background} proposition before expressing the \textit{midground} proposition.
On the other hand, *minmā yudkaru anna* could replace *qad* in S4, signaling the *backgrounding* of *midground* meaning and showing that the writer marginalizes important information by mapping it as *background* meaning.

iii. *Qad* and *fi+* spatio/temporal entity

*Qad* and *fi+* spatio/temporal entity differ greatly in their grounding-signaling function and may not be interchangeable. Consider TC225.

**TC225**

Inundations Sweep Iran and Argentine

TEHRAN (News Agencies)—(1) Five people were killed in southwest Iran yesterday because of inundations that swept the area as a result of heavy rain in the last two days.

(2) *wa-fi* Argentine, evacuated authorities yesterday about 190 thousand people in the north east of the country in the worst inundation this century.

The locative *fi* that the writer used in S2 signals a shift of scene from *Iran* to *Argentine*. This shift function that *fi* serves would not be realized by *qad*, since the meaning expressed in the sentence is not a specification of the event referred to in the *foreground* proposition expressed in S1 about inundations in Iran, and hence S2 does not express *midground* meaning relative to the meaning expressed in S1.

It may be argued, however, that both sentences express propositions that are subsumed under the macroproposition expressed in the headline where reference is made to events in the two countries. Though true, the locative adverbial is an appropriate marker for signaling in initial position the shift from the events in the first country to those in the second. *Qad* would not signal that shift on the basis of a global macroproposition in the headline. The difficulty of using *qad* here demonstrates, on the other hand, its appropriateness for a further specification of the *foreground* proposition about *Iran*.

iv. *Kāna qad* and *minmā yudkaru anna*

Unlike *kāna qad*, which encodes events in a past tense verb, *minmā yudkaru anna* (*among things to be mentioned is that*) is not subject to constraints pertaining to the temporal location of events. As will become
apparent below, this marker is more free than käna qad in signaling background meaning.

Though both markers signal background meaning, mimma yudkaru anna seems to signal a lower proposition on the FG-BG gradient. Consider S4 of T57 cited earlier.

(4) 4a wa-käna an estimated 2,500 people qad died and more than 200,000 others were affected 4b when poisonous methyl isocyanate gas leaked from a Union Carbide pesticides plant in the central Indian city on Dec. 3.

The sentence at the head of which käna qad appears expresses typical background meaning about a previous event that triggered the current main event (i.e. Union Carbide offer/rejection) referred to in the foreground proposition expressed in the lead sentence. Replacing this initial marker with mimma yudkaru anna would block this interpretation and signal meaning that maps information that has a very low degree of importance (i.e. as an afterthought) in the event model.

The typical grounding-signaling function that mimma yudkaru anna fulfils is illustrated by S5 of T29 cited earlier about previous Basque attacks.

(5) wa-mimma yudkaru anna the rebel group has carried out hundreds of bomb attacks against Spanish banks during its 17-year fight for an independent Basque state.

The marker signals the incidental nature of the underlying information. It does not signal a background proposition about the specific event referred to in the foreground proposition (i.e. shooting a bank director). In other words, the meaning that mimma yudkaru anna expresses is rather diffuse.

That mimma yudkaru anna prepares readers for the introduction of a grounding-value that is lower than that signaled by käna qad is evident in S3 of T70.

T70

Legionnaire's Disease Kills 27 in U.K.

STAFFORD, England (Reuters)—(1) 1a The first major outbreak of Legionnaire's disease in Britain was confirmed Friday 1b after 27 people died 1c in what doctors had been treating as an influenza epidemic.
A spokesman for Mid-Staffordshire Health Authority in central England said that 12 cases of the disease had been identified among the 27 people who died and 70 who have been infected.

Legionnaire’s disease, a form of pneumonia, was first recognized in 1976 in the United States when 29 persons died from an outbreak at an American Legion convention in Philadelphia.

The meaning expressed in S3 is background (historical fact). Though it is quite possible and appropriate to use *kāna qad* in initial position, the writer opted for *mimmā yudkaru anna* in order to show the expression of meaning that maps a less relevant piece of information. By employing this initial marker, the writer presents the textual proposition embodying this information from more distance than *kāna qad* would typically do.

In order to get a closer look at the discourse behaviour of both markers, and the distinction in the grounding-value that each signals, consider S5 of T35.

**T35**

**Bomb Defused at Embassy in Athens**

ATHENS (Reuters)—(1) Police defused a small bomb found outside the West German Embassy in Athens after telephone tip-offs to Greek newspapers.

(2) The half-pound (250-gram) device, found Saturday, was packed into a cardboard box.

(3) A statement found in Athens claimed responsibility for the bomb on behalf of a hitherto unknown group named after Christos Kassimis, a Greek shot dead by police during a raid in 1977 on installations belonging to the West German company AEG.

(4) The statement said the group had links with the West German Red Army Faction, the French group Direct Action and Belgium’s Fighting Communist Cells, which have been responsible for a series of attacks this year in Europe.

(5) *wá-mimmā yudkaru anna* governments of the European Community *kānāt qad* agreed to cooperate in efforts to combat what they say is a coordinated campaign by leftist guerrillas.

The sentence expresses meaning that is assigned to the background end of the continuum (unrelated event: digression). The underlying information is considered relevant for readers, and hence worth including in the semantic representation. By stating that what follows is among things to be mentioned within the framework of what has already been reported, the marker...
signals the incidental nature of the underlying information. Kāna qad, on the other hand, does not provide such an introductory statement, since it usually signals higher background, mapping more important information in event models. Besides, it usually encodes meaning that is covered by the (main) topic. This is demonstrated by the fact that the writer opted for mimma yudkaru anna as the marker that signals in initial position the low level of background and did not depend on kāna qad, which in fact appears also in the sentence in non-initial position, to fulfil that grounding-signaling function.

v. Kāna qad and min al-maʾrūfi anna
The information that is mapped as background meaning and expressed in a sentence containing kāna qad may not be known before. For example, S4 of T5 about rumors of capturing Mr. Savimbi is introduced by kāna qad. Had min al-maʾrūfi anna (it is known that) been used instead, a change in the status of the underlying information would have been assumed, namely that it is known, hence the writer's explicit expression of that assumption.

The choice between both markers is not random, but is determined by cognitive and pragmatic constraints as is illustrated by the last sentence of T17 cited earlier about Mr. Mandela.

(4) wa-min al-maʾrūfi anna-hu kāna qad sentenced in 1964.

Though kāna qad, which occurs in non-initial position in S4, could have been used as an initial marker, signaling background meaning (a remote past event), the writer preferred the more appropriate marker min al-maʾrūfi anna because the underlying information is part of general knowledge about a prominent figure and is supposed to be known or has been known before. In addition, there is the writer's intention to recast this piece of information as a proposition that has a lower grounding-value than what kāna qad usually signals. The sentence also demonstrates that kāna qad is not automatically used as an initial marker to encode anterior events, and that min al-maʾrūfi anna may sometimes be preferred to signal background propositions, mapping information about historical, widely acknowledged and established facts.
vi. *Kāna qad* and *fī- + spatio/temporal entity*

Unlike *kāna qad* that usually prefaces a sentence whose underlying proposition has a *background* value relative to the *foreground* proposition, *fī- + spatio/temporal entity* may signal a global shift and hence a lesser grounding-value. Consider S5 of T55.

**T55**

**Germans Protest at U.S. Missile Base**

**MUTLANGEN,** West Germany (UPI)— (1) *1a* Police detained Friday six anti-nuclear protesters who climbed a fence at a U.S. missile base, *1b* erected a six-foot wooden cross and lit a small "peace" candle.

(2) *2a* On the first of four days of planned national peace demonstrations, *2b* six persons threw a piece of carpet over the barbed wire on top of an eight foot fence at the Mutlangen military base *2c* and climbed into a security zone in front of an inner fence of the base, police said.

(3) *3a* Eight other demonstrators, *3b* wearing masks, escaped *3c* after stoning a police car near the base, *cd* which is 30 miles (48 kilometers) east of Stuttgart.

(4) No one was injured.

(5) *wa- fī* Britain, marched hundreds of anti-nuclear demonstrators toward a planned U.S. cruise missile site north of London to begin an Easter weekend rally expected to attract 20,000 protesters.

(6) *6a* Three groups of demonstrators, *6b* organized to protest the basing of nuclear missiles in Britain, left the towns of Leicester, Stevenage and Cambridge to converge on a base at Molesworth, *6c* which is scheduled to house 64 cruise missiles by the end of 1988.

We mentioned earlier that a locative adverbial may not always be appropriate as an initial marker in Arabic. Its potential for signaling a global shift from what has been reported before makes it appropriate to introduce the setting of a different type of activity as in T55. The *background* proposition expressed in S5 is assigned to an *Association* schema category that is usually the least prominent category.

Suppose now that the locative marker would be replaced by *kāna qad* as follows:

(5) *wa- kāna* hundreds of anti-nuclear demonstrators in Britain *q a d* marched toward...

The change would make it evident that the proposition is intended as *background* to *foreground* meaning expressed in the lead sentence, which is not
vii. Mimmä yudkaru anna and min nāhiyatin uxrā
Although both markers express meanings that are background, there is a rather subtle difference between their grounding-signaling behaviour. Both mimmä yudkaru anna (among things to be mentioned is that) and min nāhiyatin uxrā (from another side/aspect) may be distinguished in the scope of grounding-signaling. Consider the last two sentences (S7 and S8) of T39 examined earlier.

(7) wa-min nāhiyatin uxrā the workman was being treated at a hospital for two fractures of his left leg.
(8) 8a wa-mimmä yudkaru anna-hu [...that-[He]] is an employee of Lockheed Space Operations Co., 8b which handles shuttle servicing under a contract with NASA.

The last sentence introduced by mimmä yudkaru anna refers to the entity, viz. the workman, referred to in the immediately preceding sentence. It has a suffix pronoun. The marker, which usually signals background meaning, signals here a midground proposition (identification of participant: social role). Similarly, min nāhiyatin uxrā signals in this example midground, namely specification of the main event. It also signals a shift from meanings expressed in the preceding sentences about what NASA has announced, and reintroduces the workman referred to in the lead sentence. It may therefore be said that min nāhiyatin uxrā has a wide scope of signaling grounding. For that matter, it would be rather difficult to replace it with mimmä yudkaru anna since the meaning expressed in S7 is not about the shuttle accident. In other words, mimmä yudkaru anna has a narrower scope of signaling grounding and the shift to a new attention field.

viii. mimmä yudkaru anna and min al-maʿrūfi anna
The difference is rather big between meanings expressed by mimmä yudkaru anna (among things to be mentioned is that) and those expressed by min al-maʿrūfi anna (it is known that). The interchangeability of the two sentence-initial markers is governed by writers' assessment of the availability as well as the importance and relevance of the information in their (and their readers') event and context models. Consider again S4 of T17.
As we said earlier, the writer considers the information about Mr. Mandela to be part of general knowledge that language users (should) have. Mimma yudkaru anna would be used if the writer does not share this perspective and consequently would like to bring this information to the attention of other language users as an extra piece of useful information.

That the two markers are not always interchangeable, and hence one of them would be more appropriate than the other, is evident in S8 of T39 cited above. The underlying information is about an unknown person, and neither he nor the fact that he is employed by Lockheed Space Operations Company is supposed to be known. Aware of these constraints, the writer uses mimma yudkaru anna.

ix- Min nähiyatin/jihatin uxrā and fi nafsi al-waqt

As examples showed, no conformity exists in the use of min nähiyatin/jihatin uxrā (from another side/aspect): It may denote meaning about a side feature that is covered by the main topic. Fi nafsi al-waqt, on the other hand, expresses meaning about a distantly related topic. Its presence breaks all relations with what preceded and justifies the introduction of (participants in) events that are eligible to be referred to in propositions of sentences in an independent news text. Consider TC103.

(1) The first American transport plane arrived the day before yesterday to Chad to deliver the first consignment of military equipment...
(2) The Voice of America said the weapons consist of...
(4) wa-fi al-waqtī nafsih began in Addis Ababa the ministerial council of the organization of African Unity during which the Chad problem will be discussed as well as the problem of the debts of African countries.

The information mapped as a proposition in S4 is about a distantly related topic and may be mapped as textual propositions of a separate news item. The marker, however, may signal a shift in grounding that is less drastic than it usually does. In this case, it signals a proposition that is background to the foreground proposition. Denoting a parallel event, the temporal property of at the same time is at issue:

(1) A bomb exploded in Jerusalem...
That the two initial markers are not always interchangeable is evident in the following illustration:

(1) The president met yesterday evening with the queen.
(2) \textit{wa-min nāhiyatin uxrā} met the president with the premier.

It would be inappropriate to use \textit{fi nafsi al-waqt}, signaling simultaneous acts by the same participant.

5.3.1 Neutralizing an Initial Marker in English

We examined in chapter 3 a number of sentence-initial markers in English news texts. These markers may not occur in that position in the (equivalent) Arabic news text and hence they would lose their text-level grounding-signaling function. This means that the Arabic text may sometimes neutralize that function by placing the markers in sentence-medial position, and manifest instead either a zero initial marker or a different marker. This has consequences for the pattern of grounding that the surface structure of the text expresses. We examine below the two manifestations of neutralizing initial markers in English.

A. NeUTRALIZING BY A ZERO INITIAL MARKER

The Arabic news text may neutralize an initial marker that signals \textit{background} meaning in English by means of a zero initial marker. Zero initial markers may characterize a whole text or part of it. This process involves signaling (the assignment of) a grounding-value that differs from the one assigned to the same proposition in the English text. In chapter 3 we have seen that S2 of T1 expresses \textit{background} meaning (the spatial setting of the main event) prior to \textit{midground} meaning. The Arabic text uses instead a verb: \textit{and-said the Pope addressing}... This makes it clear to readers from the beginning that it is an addition to the main speech event and hence \textit{midground}: a sequential descending pattern (see chapter 3). Similarly, S3 of the same text also ex-
presses *background* meaning (the occasion of the main event):

(3) *In a speech marking the Roman Catholic Church's day of peace...*

It is rendered in Arabic by a verb of addition in sentence-initial position: *wa-aḍāfa* *(and-added)* the pope in his speech...

In fact, the Arabic sentence uses a possessive pronoun, which is an extra signal to readers that no shift of scene or occasion takes place. It dissipates any doubt that it is the same speech (event) referred to in the preceding sentences. This example provides evidence that the occurrence of an adverbial in sentence-initial position in the Arabic news text may not always be appropriate, since it introduces discontinuity and serves a global shift signaling function, as we have seen before. (Ennaji (1995) notes that an initial prepositional phrase is used to start a new story.) Since the sentences introduced by the markers in T1 do not express propositions that denote a different event, the Arabic text neutralizes them in initial position.

**B. NEUTRALIZING BY A DIFFERENT MARKER**

The Arabic news text may neutralize an initial marker in English by employing a different marker. A few manifestations are examined below.

1- neutralizing by *qad*

The pre-verbal particle *qad* may neutralize an initial adverbial in English. Consider the first two sentences of T18.

(1) 1a Pope John Paul II visited a bambo-and-tin shantytown of 350,000 inhabitants Friday 1b [and] urged the rich to show solidarity with the poor by sharing their wealth with them.

(2) 2a On the second leg of his 12-day, four-nation Latin American tour, 2b the pope visited the squalid neighborhood of El Guasmo on the outskirts of the western port city of Guayaquil and addressed 50,000 people, 2c who cheered him.

2a expresses *background* meaning (context of the main event) and 2b *midground* meaning (specification of the main event). In Arabic S2 reads as follows:

(2) *wa-qad* visited the pope, on the second leg of his 12-day, four-nation Latin American tour, the squalid neighborhood...
By employing *qad*, the sentence expresses *midground* meaning in initial position and hence manifests a gradual shift from *foreground* in S1. In addition, the initial marker neutralizes a reading that what is at issue is an event or occasion that is different from the one referred to in the lead sentence.

2- neutralizing by *kāna qad*

*Kāna qad* may neutralize a temporal adverbial that denotes a point in the past in order to realize continuity and express *background* meaning. S2 of T24 is an example.

(2) 2a In August 1978, 2b Mr. Abruzzo, Maxie Anderson and Larry Newman crossed the Atlantic Ocean in a balloon 2c named the Double Eagle-2.

In Arabic, the sentence has *kāna qad* in initial position in order to manifest the perspective of the writer, namely that the meaning is *background* to *foreground* meaning about the plane crash.

(2) *wa-kāna* Mr. Abruzzo, Maxie Anderson and Larry Newman *qad* crossed in August 1978 the Atlantic Ocean in a balloon named the Double Eagle-2.

3- neutralizing by *jadīrun bi-al-dikri anna*

An initial adverbial clause may also be neutralized by *jadīrun bi-al-dikri anna* (*it is worth mentioning that*). This is the case in S3 of T85.

T85  

**Brazil Sugar Workers' Strike Ends**

SAO PAULO (WP)— (1) 1a Representatives of the Brazilian sugar cane industry and rural workers have ended their strike 1b after signing an agreement mediated by the labor minister, Almir Pazzianotto.

(2) 2a The accord, 2b signed Monday, signaled an important shift toward free collective bargaining between labor and employers 2c as the new civilian government struggles to restore industrial democracy.

(3) 3a Since the military left power in March, 3b airline employees, postal workers, teachers, subway and busdrivers, car assembly workers and members of other trades have held about 40 strikes in an effort to restore living standards 3c cut by a two-year recession 3d that has been deepened by an austerity program.
The Arabic sentence begins as follows:

(3) \textit{wa-jadīrun bi-al-dikri anna-hu} since left the military power in March...

In other words, the initial marker makes it clear that the underlying information is worth mentioning within the framework of ending the strike.

4- neutralizing by \textit{fa-qad}

The initial marker \textit{fa-} followed by \textit{qad} is preferred to a locative adverbial in order to signal an explanation of the preceding proposition. This is illustrated by S8 of T20 cited earlier.

(7) Meanwhile, there were reports that a fresh diplomatic effort was underway to end the war.
(8) In Kuwait, the newspaper Al-Seyassah said Sunday that France, Saudi Arabia and Algeria were working on a plan for talks with the support of the six-nation Gulf Co-operation Council.

The sentence in Arabic reads:

(8) \textit{fa-qad} said the newspaper Al-Seyassah in Kuwait Sunday that...

The proposition expressed in S7 is about diplomatic efforts and \textit{fa-qad} in S8 signals an explanation of these efforts. By neutralizing the effect of the shift in location (in Kuwait), \textit{fa-qad} makes clear the grounding function of the proposition.

5- neutralizing by \textit{min nāhiyatīn/jihatin uxrā}

The use of \textit{min jihatin uxrā} (from another side/aspect) instead of a locative adverbial is illustrated by S6 of T12 examined in chapter 3 and repeated here.

(6) In Jerusalem, Brian E. Urquhart, a United Nations undersecretary for special political affairs, conveyed to Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli defense minister, Lebanon's agreement to resume negotiations on deploying UN troops in the evacuated areas.

In the Arabic version, \textit{min jihatin uxrā} signals a shift from the meaning expressed in preceding sentences about preparations for the Israeli with-
drawal to the background end of the continuum about the U.N. political efforts.
Conclusion

This chapter presented empirical evidence of sentence-initial markers as text-level manifestations of grounding in Arabic news texts. It showed that the markers are sensitive to grounding-values and that they are employed in these texts primarily in order to distinguish among these values on the FG-BG continuum. The markers are also indicative of importance as well as relevance assignment to the underlying information.

The analysis showed that considerations of contextual and pragmatic relevance lead to maximizing the signaling of the FG-BG structure and that writers make sure that news texts contain the necessary and sufficient markers, honouring what we call—à la Clark and Haviland (1977)—the foreground-background contract. The foreground proposition is always in the mind of writers as well as readers, in the hierarchical realization of the top-down FG-BG structure. The absence of these markers in contexts where markers should be present creates incoherent news texts. Unlike other connectives (in other types of text and other languages), these sentence-initial markers are obligatory in Arabic news texts.

The chapter provided a close analysis of the grounding-signaling behaviour of each marker and the environment in which it is more likely to appear. It also showed the influence that markers exert on different levels. Syntactically, they influence word-order. This demonstrates how crucial it is to study the discourse uses of various word-order types (Hopper 1986) and the interplay with the FG-BG distinction. Semantically, the markers signal the relative grounding-value of propositions and establish (the absence of) a relation with preceding as well as following propositions. We have seen that replacing a marker, where possible, may change meaning and influence the interpretation of grounding-values. Pragmatically, sentence-initial markers add certain interpretations by the writer of the relative grounding-value that is assigned to incoming propositions.

*News upstage* and *news downstage* indicate how grounding-values and their signaling by means of sentence-initial markers are expressed in surface structure prominence. Certain meanings—signaled by a background(ing) marker such as *kāna qad*—may be prominently expressed, that is, as *news upstage*, and certain other meanings—signaled by a foregrounding mechanism such as *qad*—may be relegated to a later and hence lower position in surface structure, that is, as *news downstage*.

It became apparent that the problem of signaling grounding comes to the
fore in grounding-values other than foreground. We presented evidence that the markers are employed in an environment of lower grounding-values and that they realize a strategy of backgrounding. They restructure the (expression of the) FG-BG hierarchy of the news text, i.e. make it less 'figured', or rather background otherwise foreground meaning. In addition, the requirement to maintain the Arabic news type of text is more evident in the case of expressing background meaning, which discourages the use of VS/SV syntax in initial position. Therefore, in order to create or realize functional equivalence, Arabic news texts have to adapt syntax at sentence-initial position.

We examined combinations of markers and explored constraints on—as well as consequences of—their interchangeability. The fact that writers sometimes (have to) choose between two or more appropriate sentence-initial markers demonstrates that the choice is not random but is subject to cognitive and discourse pragmatic constraints to recast a certain grounding-value. The grounding-value may differ from the English equivalent.

By examining the phenomenon of sentence-initial markers in (translated into) Arabic news texts we have spelled out some basic differences with English news texts. In English, the FG-BG distinction is not necessarily marked at sentence-initial position. We have shown that Arabic news texts are more explicit in signaling in initial position the FG-BG structure. (Hatim (1997: 67) refers to the fact that a background function in English is not usually marked in any conspicuous way and that Arabic background information is 'frequently introduced by one of a number of conventional phrases...').

We noted the infrequent occurrence in Arabic news texts of temporal and spatial adverbials (i.e. involved reporting) in sentence-initial position. We also noted cases where Arabic news texts neutralize adverbials that the English news text uses in that position.

Finally, a few words about the shift to the background end of the continuum position. Ten texts in sample I signal that level. They include 11 sentences: Ten of them (5 adverbials and 5 Meanwhile) are expressed in Arabic news texts by means of the same marker, respectively fi + location and fi nafsi al-waqt (at the same time). The last sentence that expresses the background end of the continuum is not signaled in English. The equivalent Arabic sentence has mimma yudkaru anna (it is to be mentioned that). A sentence-initial marker seems to be indispensable to signal a global shift to a very low grounding-value.
We also looked at environments that discourage the use of markers. We found that markers are most likely to be discouraged if the sentence denotes a speech act of addition or temporal sequentiality. In these cases, sequences of sentences will manifest zero initial markers, that is to say, entities such as verbs and markers of addition or continuation. These are presentative devices that achieve what is referred to as the 'link onto the scene' (Givón 1976b: 155).