

## Emergent Participles in Makkan Arabic

Hanadi Azhari & Jila Ghomeshi

Umm Al-Qura University and University of Manitoba

The exact nature of the constraint on the adjectival use of present participles has been a matter of debate. Brekke (1988) proposes that only verbs with experiencer arguments can function as adjectives (*the upsetting movie* vs. *\*the flying plane*). Brekke notes, however, that counterexamples exist such as *the glimmering water*. Borer (1990) contests Brekke's claim and argues that the constraint is semantic rather than a matter of syntactic category. She shows the verbal participles that appear to lack an adjectival counterpart are derived from verbs that cannot be modified by *very much* (*the water shone very much* vs. *\*the plane flew very much*). Meltzer-Asscher (2010) revisits the issue for active participles in both English and Hebrew and argues that the relevant notion is stativity. Participles derived from stative verbs can also serve as adjectives, and this derivation from verb to adjective is, for Meltzer-Asscher, a lexical one.

In this paper we first consider adjectival active participles in Makkan Arabic (MA). We note that unlike English and Hebrew, not every adjectival active participle has a corresponding verbal participle in MA. This casts doubt on whether the 'adjectives' are derived from the verbs. For instance, both *fa:tiḥ<sub>V</sub>* 'opening' and *fa:tiḥ<sub>A</sub>* 'bright/light colour' are used but *ma:liḥ<sub>A</sub>* 'salty' has no verbal counterpart and *ṭa:bix<sub>V</sub>* 'cooking' has no adjectival one. Further, where adjectival active participles are lacking, there seems to be no generalization that holds of the type first identified by Brekke and Borer. Finally, where both a verbal and adjectival use exists, the meanings are not always transparently related to one another.

Given these facts, we assume that active participles are no longer formed via a productive process in MA. In contrast, we show that there is a use of the imperfective form of the verb that is adjectival. Like the participles above, the perfective and imperfective are formed on a consonantal root. The perfective form occurs almost exclusively in past tense sentences while the imperfective form has a wider distribution encoding past, present and future tense. We put aside the issue of whether the perfective/imperfective distinction is one of tense (Fassi Fehri (2012), aspect (Bahloul 1994) or agreement (Aoun et al. 2010). For our purpose it suffices that both the imperfective and the perfective forms are primarily **verbs**. In (1a) we see that an imperfective verb with an object can take the full range of verbal inflections while in (1b) the same form without an object, which we argue is adjectival, cannot. (1c) shows that the perfective can never occur without an object.

- (1) a. al-*zurḥ* (bi-/ ḥa-) *yiṣawwir-ni*  
DEF-wound (PROG/FUT) hurt.IMPERF.3SG.M-me  
'The wound hurts me/is hurting me/will hurt me.'
- b. al-*zurḥ* (\*bi-/ ḥa-) *yiṣawwir*  
DEF-wound (\*PROG/FUT) hurt.IMPERF.3SG.M  
'The wound hurts/is painful.'
- c. al-*zurḥ* *ṣawwar\*(-ni)*  
DEF-wound hurt.PERF.3SG.M-me  
'The wound hurt me.'

The adjectival nature of the imperfective form shown in (1b) can be shown using other tests. Crucially, the object must be implicit and unergative verbs cannot be adjectival in the imperfective unless they are first causativized. We argue that this emergent participial form is syntactically derived by 'adjectivizing' an imperfective vP via *a*, just in case the internal argument of a verb is unsaturated and existentially bound. Given that neither the Experiencer Constraint nor stativity can account for the facts, we propose to have found a third property that can give rise to the adjectival use of a verbal form.