



## Progressive Aspect in Hijazi Arabic

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### Abstract

This paper aims to analyze and compare imperfective forms and implications in Hijazi Arabic, situated in the ongoing grammaticalization process of a progressive aspect marker across Arabic vernaculars. In Modern Standard Arabic, an eventive imperfective verb is ambiguous, as it could be given a progressive or a habitual reading. In the context of /min al-muhtamali ʔan/ “of the likely” however, it can only be given a future shifted reading. In Hijazi Arabic on the other hand, the study findings showed that eventive imperfective verbs are always ambiguous despite the context. With regard to the progressive aspect marker, it was revealed that Hijazi Arabic behaves like other dialects in that a marker has developed out of the active participle of the verb “sit” to indicate a progressive reading. Even though the newly developed marker in Hijazi Arabic does not require an animate subject and appears with verbs having seemingly conflicting meanings (e.g., “sit” used with “swim”), it has not lost its lexical meaning, and a short form has not been developed like in other dialects, such as Maltese and Iraqi Arabic.

**Keywords:** Arabic, Hijazi, Progressive, Imperfective verb, Perfective verb.

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## صيغة الفعل الدالة على الاستمرار في اللهجة الحجازية

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### الملخص:

يهتم هذه البحث بصيغة الفعل المضارع ودلالاته في اللهجة الحجازية في ضوء التغييرات اللغوية في اللهجات العربية. من المعروف مسبقاً أن صيغة الفعل المضارع في اللغة العربية الفصحى يكون دالاً على الاستمرارية أو التكرار والديمومة للفعل وقد يكون دالاً على كلا المعنيين في حال غياب ما يرجح إحدى المعنيين على الآخر. لكن هذه الدلالات ليست مرتبطة بصيغة الفعل لذلك تختفي عندما يتبع الفعل المضارع "من المحتمل أن" ويكون لصيغة الفعل معنى أو قراءة مستقبلية فقط. وكذلك هو الحال بالنسبة للهجات العربية. لكنها طورت أدوات مساعدة تستخدم قبل صيغة الفعل المضارع لترجح الدلالة على الاستمرارية دون غيرها وتحديداً "اسم الفاعل من يقعد - يجلس". لذلك يهدف البحث إلى تحليل صيغة الفعل المضارع ودلالاته في اللهجة الحجازية. وكذلك دراسة ومقارنة حالة الأدوات المساعدة "اسم الفاعل من يقعد - يجلس" التي تطورت لترجیح معنى الاستمرارية أسوة باللهجات الأخرى. تشير نتائج البحث إلى أن معاني الاستمرارية أو التكرار والديمومة لا يمكن أن تنفك عن صيغة الفعل المضارع في اللهجة الحجازية مما يشير إلى اختلافها في هذا عن العربية الفصحى. وتشير كذلك إلى أن اللهجة الحجازية تختلف عن اللهجات الأخرى في حالة هذه الأدوات المساعدة فعلى الرغم من استخدام "اسم الفاعل من يقعد - يجلس" كفعل مساعد قبل الفعل المضارع لترجیح معنى الاستمرارية إلا أن هذا لم يفقد معناها المعجمي ولم تتطور منها صيغة مختصرة كما هو الحال في اللهجة المالطية أو اللهجة العراقية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العربية، الحجازية، الاستمرارية، الفعل المضارع، الفعل الماضي.

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## 1. Introduction

Arabic verb morphology has received little attention in the literature with regard to what temporal or aspectual information each form of the verb provides. Furthermore, the majority of existing research has focused on Modern Standard Arabic, with little research on the regional dialects used in the daily lives of Arabic speakers. These dialects can present interesting linguistic phenomena and do not necessarily follow the standard form. One such phenomenon is the different meanings an imperfective verb form can suggest when adverbs are not used to clarify the intended meaning.

The imperfective is the default form of the verb in Arabic (Aoun et al., 2010; Benmamoun, 2000). This form has an ambiguous meaning, as it can carry a progressive reading (see Example 1a) as well as a habitual reading (see Example 1b), a characteristic that is typical of the imperfective form (Comrie, 1976). However, it has been established that it is not the imperfective verb form that gives rise to such readings in Modern Standard Arabic and in other dialects but rather covert operators or auxiliaries (Hallman, 2015).

Adverbs can help clarify which of the two potential readings of a verb is intended, as presented in Example 2a (showcasing the progressive meaning) and Example 2b (showcasing the habitual meaning).

1. a. ja-drus-u                      moḥamad-un      fi                      al-maktabat-i  
3P.Sg.M-study-Ind      Mohammad-Nom      in                      the-library-Gen  
"Mohammad is studying/studies in the library." (Modern Standard Arabic)
- b. jə-ḏakir                      fi                      al-ʒamʕah  
3P.Sg.M-study                      in                      the-university  
"He is studying/studies in the university." (Hijazi Arabic)
2. a. ja-drus-u                      moḥamad-un      fi                      al-maktabat-i                      ʔalʔān  
3P.Sg.M-study-Ind      Mohammad-Nom      in                      the-library-Gen                      now  
"Mohammad is studying in the library." (Modern Standard Arabic)
- b. ja-drus-u                      moḥamad-un                      fi al-maktabat-l                      kula jawmin  
3P.Sg.M-study-Ind      Mohammad-Nom                      in the-library-Gen                      every day  
"Mohammad studies in the library every day." (Modern Standard Arabic)

Recent studies of certain Arabic dialects have revealed an ongoing change in how the progressive aspect is expressed e.g. (Alhailawani & Al-Raba'a, 2024) in Urban Jordanian Arabic, (Sellami, 2022; & Ouali, 2022) in a group of different dialects, including Yemeni Arabic of Wadi Hadhramout, Omani Arabic and Sudanese dialects, among others. As is often the case in language change, this change appears to be gradual, taking shape over the course of multiple steps. As a result, dialects vary in what stage of the change they are currently in. To expand and test the literature, it is useful to discuss these issues using new data from dialects that have



received less scholarly attention. In this context, this paper is an attempt to find answers to these two questions: a) Has Hijazi Arabic developed a context in which the verb “sit” is grammaticalized? b) How can Hijazi Arabic be compared to other Arabic vernaculars with reference to the way progressive aspect is expressed? Thus, the present study aims to extend Hallman’s (2015) analysis of the imperfective to rural Hijazi Arabic, a relatively understudied dialect of Arabic. The study also seeks to show at what stage this dialect is in the ongoing change in the way the progressive aspect is expressed.

The paper is organized into an introduction, two sections and a conclusion. The introductory part introduces the study’s topic, objectives and questions. The first section gives a brief overview of the literature with regard to the imperfective verb form as well as the development of a progressive aspect marker across different dialects of Arabic. The second section presents background information on Hijazi Arabic, extends the analysis of the imperfective verb form to Hijazi Arabic and discusses where this dialect is in terms of developing a progressive aspect marker. The conclusion summarizes the key findings and suggestions for future research.

## 2. Literature Review

### *The Imperfective Form of a Verb*

The notion of imperfective form of a verb has attracted growing attention among research scholars, with variant perspectives over the years. Comrie (1976) defined the imperfective cross-linguistically as the verb form that gives rise to progressive or habitual aspects when the verb is underlyingly eventive. In Arabic linguistics research, the form shown in Example 3 below is assumed to be in the imperfective since it meets Comrie’s (1976) definition.

- |               |      |    |             |
|---------------|------|----|-------------|
| 3. ja-drus    | zajd | fi | al-maktaba  |
| 3P.Sg.M-study | Zayd | in | the-library |
- “Zayd is studying/studies in the library.” (Ouali, 2018)

It is observed that Example 3 above is ambiguous because it gives rise to two possible readings. In the first, Zayd is studying right now in the library (the progressive meaning), while in the second, Zayd has a habit of studying in the library but is not necessarily doing so at the moment. However, Hallman (2015) claimed that such a form has a broader meaning than what is generally associated with the imperfective and is typically reserved for the infinitive. Thus, he argued that this form might not be what it appears to be.

To clarify the broader implications associated with the imperfective, Hallman (2015) sees that if this verb form is imperfective, eventive verbs in the imperfective should never be devoid of progressive or habitual readings. However, if such readings are not due to verbal morphology of the so-called imperfective form but rather to covert operators, that form is expected to be found in contexts where the progressive and habitual



readings are not available. Hallman (2015) claimed that if the latter scenario turns out to be true, the form that has been treated as imperfective is clearly the basic form. To validate this hypothesis, it is necessary to find a context in which an eventive verb in the imperfective does not give rise to the progressive or habitual readings. The only context in which such readings can be manipulated in Arabic is in modal contexts, specifically after /min l-muhtamali ʔan/ “of the likely.” Examples 4 and 5 below illustrate stative and eventive verbs in the imperfective form.

4. a. wa-ʔadaf-at ʔanna as-sayyar-at-i allāti min al-muhtamal-i ʔan  
and-add.Perf-F that the-car-F.Pl-Acc which of the-likely-Gen that  
ta-kun-a mutaʔaʔir-at-an hiya min mudll-i 2011  
F-be.Impf-Sub effected-F-Acc they of model-Gen 2011  
“And she added that the cars that are likely to be affected [by previously mentioned mechanical problems] are 2011 model cars.”

(Hallman, 2015, p. 111)

- b. min al-muhtamal-i ʔan ta-kun-a at-tasrih-at-u  
of the-likely-Gen that F-be.Impf-Sub the-statement-F.Pl-Nom  
al-yamaniyy-at-u ar-rasmiyy-at-u as-salbiyy-at-u la-ha  
the-Yemeni-F-Nom the-official-F-Nom the-negative-F-Nom to-them  
sad-an ʔizdbiyy-un fi daxil-l al-yaman-i  
repercussion-Nom positive-Nom in interior-Gen the-Yemen-Gen  
“The negative official Yemeni statements are likely to have positive repercussions inside Yemen.” (Hallman, 2015, p. 114)

5. a. min al-muhtamal-i ʔan ya-qum-a al-ʔamlr-u  
of the-likely-Gen that 0-undertake.Impf-Sub the-prince-Nom  
nayif bin abdu l-aziz bi-ziyar-at-in qarb-at-in li-al-yaman-i  
Nayif bin Abdulaziz in-visit-F-Gen soon-F-Gen to-the-Yemen-Gen  
“Prince Nayif bin Abdulaziz is likely to undertake a visit to Yemen soon.”

(Hallman, 2015, p. 115)

- b. min al-muhtamal-i ʔan ta-kun-a ʔaslih-at-un  
of the-likely-Gen that F-be.Impf-Sub weapons-F-Nom  
ta-sil-u min as-sudan-i ʔila qitaʔ-i gazz-at-a.  
F-arrive.Impf-Ind from the-Sudan-Gen to strip-Gen Gaza-F-Gen  
“Weapons are likely to be arriving from Sudan to the Gaza Strip.”

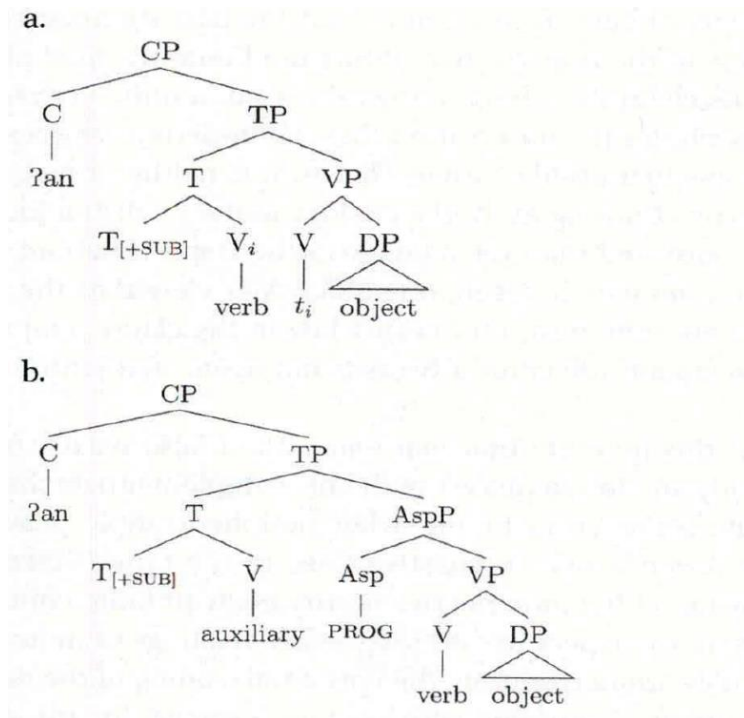


(Hallman, 2015, p. 117)

The sentences in Example 4 above show that with a stative verb in the imperfective form, a simultaneous epistemic (see Example 4a) and a future shifted interpretation (see Example 4b) are available. On the other hand, only a future shifted interpretation exists only with eventive verbs as in Example 5a. Hallman (2015) provided these examples to undermine the view that imperfective morphology is stativizing and to support the view that imperfective is the basic form of the verb in Arabic.

Structurally, these facts were accounted for by assuming that in the context of [ʔan], there is no AspP intervening between the verb and T to which the verb must raise to acquire subjunctive morphology, hence the structure seen in Example 6a (Hallman, 2015). A progressive reading in the context of [ʔan] is possible only with overt auxiliary support, as presented in Example 5b, since it licenses an AspP that blocks V to T movement. The auxiliary then hosts the subjunctive feature, while the main verb has indicative morphology, hence the structure seen in Example 6b. The next section discusses the development of a progressive aspect marker in dialects of Arabic.

6.



(Hallman, 2015, p. 118)



### Progressive Aspect Marker

In consideration of existing literature over the past few years, it is observed that certain dialects of Arabic have developed a way to disambiguate the two potential readings of the imperfective highlighted in Example 3 and repeated in Example 7.

7. a. ja-drus                      zajd      fi              al-maktaba  
3P.Sg.M-study              Zayd      in              the-library  
"Zayd is studying/studies in the library." (Ouali, 2018)

This topic has been discussed in detail in previous studies (e.g., Al Aloula, 2021; Camilleri & Sadler, 2019; Caubet, 1991; Ouali, 2022). The goal here is to briefly discuss the newly developed progressive marker in terms of its source, interaction with the rest of the clause, and the meaning entailed when it is used in order to have a reference point when the same facts are discussed in Hijazi Arabic.

The claim that Arabic copula clauses in the present tense show zero copula undermines what is observed in several Arabic dialects (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019). Research showed that a number of Arabic dialects have developed a copula out of the active participle of the posture verb with a lexical meaning of "sit" /ga:ʕid, ʒa:lɔs/, such as in Moroccan Arabic (see Heath, 2002) and Emirati Arabic (see Jarad, 2015). The present study, however, is limited to /ga:ʕid, ʒa:lɔs/, owing to the widespread use of these forms and that such forms are common in Hijazi Arabic. The sub examples given in Example 8 illustrate the perfective and the imperfective verb forms that the progressive marker is derived from in Modern Standard Arabic.

8. a. ʒalasa                      muḥamadun      fi              al-ʕurf-ah  
3P.Sg.M.sit.Perf              mohammed      in              the-room-F.Sg  
"Mohammed sat in the room."  
b. qaʕada                      muḥamadun      fi              al-ʕurf-ah  
3P.Sg.M.sit.Perf              mohammed      in              the-room-F.Sg  
"Mohammed sat in the room."  
c. ja-ʒlisu                      muḥamadun      fi              al-ʕurf-ah  
3P.Sg.M-sit.Impf              mohammed      in              the-room-F.Sg  
"He is sitting/sits in the room."  
d. ja-qʕudu                      muḥamadun      fi              al-ʕurf-ah  
3P.Sg.M-sit.Impf              mohammed      in              the-room-F.Sg  
"He is sitting/sits in the room."

The lexical meaning of the verbs "sit" and "stay" /ʒalasa, qaʕada, jaʒlisu, jaqʕudu/ are still preserved in all Arabic dialects when the verb is used in the perfective or imperfective form. However, the situation is not



uniform when such verbs are in the active participle. Such variability is normal given the fact that the dialects discussed here are spread across a geographically large area and interact with different languages. However, this does not change the fact that they are all in the process of developing a progressive marker.

To elucidate the concept of active participle grammaticalization further, Camilleri and Sadler (2017) discussed several pieces of evidence that show that the active participle is being grammaticalized as a progressive marker across different dialects of Arabic. These are related to the use of the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʕid, ʕa:ləs/ with verbs that would seem to have an incompatible meaning (e.g., the word for “sit” used with the word for “swim”), loss of agreement, interaction with negation, and loss of lexical meaning. However, it is important to note here that Arabic dialects vary in terms of the degree to which these phenomena occur. Some varieties, such as Maltese Arabic, show all of them while others just show only some of them. The rest of this section discusses each of these phenomena in turn.

Example 9a (taken from Hijazi Arabic) and Example 9b (taken from Emirati Arabic) illustrate the occurrence of the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʕid, ʕa:ləs/ with other lexical verbs that involve seemingly conflicting meanings.

9. a. ʕalis                                      ji-sbaħ  
sit.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M                      3P-swim.Impv  
“He is swimming.”
- b. jalis                                      ji-bni                                      ʕmara  
sit.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M                      3P.Sg.M-build.Impf                      building  
“He is building a building.” (Camilleri & Sadler, 2017, p. 171)

Another piece of evidence for grammaticalization is that the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʕid, ʕa:ləs/ no longer requires an animate subject, a step that is often taken prior to the emergence of a word as an auxiliary (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019). This is found in many dialects, such as Libyan Arabic, as shown in Example 10.

10. al-malabes      gaʕad-a                      ta-nʕif  
the-clothes      sit.Act.Ptcp-Sg.F                      3P.Sg.F-dry.Impv  
“The clothes are drying.” (Camilleri & Sadler, 2017, p. 172)

Additionally, as with other language changes, traces of the previous stage of a change can persist. In the case at hand, even though the active participle is reanalyzed as an auxiliary in some dialects, the negation used with it is still the one typically used for non-finite predicates, as shown in Example 11, taken from Kuwaiti Arabic. However, in other dialects, reanalysis of the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʕid, ʕa:ləs/ as an auxiliary is





accompanied by a syntactic reanalysis resulting in the use of a negation strategy of finite predicates, as shown in Example 12, taken from Baghdadi Arabic (Camilleri & Sadler, 2017).

11. mu                    gaʕid                    gayim  
Neg                    sit.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M    stand.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M  
"He is not sitting, but standing."
12. ʔiskut                    ma-da-s-suf                    ig-gahil  
be.quiet.Impf.2P.Sg    Neg-Prog-2P.Sg-see.Impf                    the-child  
nayim  
sleep.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M  
"Quiet! Aren't you seeing that the child is sleeping!"

(Camilleri & Sadler, 2017, p. 174)

In Maltese, Chadian, and Libyan Arabic, which are ahead of every other dialect in terms of this grammaticalization process, the active participle form of "sit" has completely lost its lexical meaning, as presented in Example 13a (taken from Maltese Arabic), Example 13b (taken from Chadian Arabic), and 13c (taken from Libyan Arabic) (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019).

13. a. Il-vapur                    qieghed il-port.  
the-ship.Sg.M                    be.Sg.M the-port  
"The ship is in the harbour." (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019, p. 9)
- b. al-ʔutel                    gaʕid                    ʔarib  
the-hotel.Sg.M                    be.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M                    West  
"The hotel is towards the West." (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019, p. 16)
- c. müš                    läzəm                    n-ži                    ʔudwa                    ʔlë-xāṭer                    hūwa                    müš  
Neg                    must                    1P-come.Impf.Sg                    tomorrow                    because                    he                    Neg  
gaʕəd  
stay.Act.Ptcp.Sg.M  
"I don't have to come tomorrow because he will not be (there)!"

(Camilleri & Sadler, 2019, p. 13)

In contrast, Levantine and Gulf varieties of Arabic, among others, still preserve the lexical meaning of the active participle form of "sit," as shown in Example 14a (taken from Palestinian Arabic) and Example 14b (taken from Qatari Arabic).

14. a. in-niswān                    kāʕd-at                    barra  
the-woman.Pl                    sit.Act.Ptcp-Pl.F                    outside



“The women are sitting outside.” / “The women are outside.” (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019, p. 18)

b. al-marra	ti-y	ʕinda-na	niswān
the-woman	3P.Sg.F-come.Impf	with-1P.Pl.Gen	women
gāʕid-īn	hīnī		
sit.Act.Ptcp-Pl	here		

“The woman comes to us, the women are sitting here.” (Camilleri & Sadler, 2019, p. 18)

In the above literature review, it was revealed that even though the imperfective verb form is assumed to entail two different readings (i.e., progressive and habitual), such readings do not arise due to the form itself but rather to covert operators, as these readings disappear in the modal context /min l-muhtamali ʔan/ “of the likely.” (Hallman, 2015). When both readings are available, contextual information helps with determining the intended meaning. However, dialects have developed a progressive auxiliary marker out of the verb “sit” in the active participle form. While certain dialects are well documented in terms of this progressive marker development (e.g., Maltese, Libyan, Chadian, Moroccan, and Iraqi Arabic), others remain understudied in this area, if they are studied at all.

The next section turns to the imperfective verb form and progressive marker in Hijazi Arabic with a comprehensive analysis of their status in order to situate the dialect among the previously discussed dialects regarding this change.

### 3. Hijazi Arabic

#### 3.1 Imperfective Verb Form in Hijazi Arabic

Hijazi Arabic is a dialect of Arabic spoken in western Saudi Arabia and has two varieties that are drastically different. Urban Hijazi Arabic is spoken mainly in the western cities, while the rural variety is spoken in rural villages. The data presented below were drawn from rural Hijazi Arabic. The eventive imperfective form in Hijazi Arabic is demonstrated in Example 15.

15. jə-ðakir	fi	al-ʕamʕah
3P.Sg.M-study	in	the-university
“He is studying/studies in the university.”		

The Hijazi Arabic imperfective is quite similar to Modern Standard Arabic with changes in the vowel melody of some verbs. The form in Example 15 gives rise to two readings typical of the imperfective, namely the progressive and the habitual. Using such forms in modal contexts with stative verbs gives rise to a simultaneous epistemic and future shifted reading, as shown in Example 16.

16. a. ʔihtimal	jə-ʕarif	al-ʕawab
likely	3P.Sg.M-know.Impf	the-answer



"It is likely that he knows the answer."

- b. ?iħtimal    ?inno    jə-ʕarif    al-ʒawab  
likely    Comp    3P.Sg.M-know.Impf    the-answer

"It is likely that he knows the answer."

The sentences in Example 16 give rise to two interpretations, depending on the context. They could mean that he knows the answer right now or that he will know it if asked in the future. These interpretations are expected with stative verbs. In contrast to Modern Standard Arabic, Hijazi Arabic eventive verbs in the imperfective imply both progressive and future shifted interpretations, as shown in Example 17.

17. a. ?iħtimal    jə-sʕalliħ    as-sajarah  
likely    3P.Sg.M-fix.Impf    the-car  
"It is likely that he is fixing/will fix the car."
- b. ?iħtimal    ?inno    j-sʕalliħ    as-sajarah  
likely    Comp    3P.Sg.M-fix.Impf    the-car  
"It is likely that he is fixing/will fix the car."
- c. ?iħtimal    ja-lʕab    kurah  
likely    3P.Sg.M-play.Impf    soccer  
"It is likely that he is playing/will play soccer."
- d. ?iħtimal    ?inno    ja-lʕab    kurah  
likely    Comp    3P.Sg.M-play.Impf    soccer  
"It is likely that he is playing/will play soccer."
- e. ?iħtimal    jə-ðakir    fi    al-ʒamʕah  
likely    3P.Sg.M-study    in    the-university  
"Zayd is studying/will study in the university."

These facts at first seem to challenge Hallman's (2015) view, at least in Hijazi Arabic. However, Hallman conditioned the imperfective form to be in a non-finite clause so as to be without the progressive or the habitual reading, which in Modern Standard Arabic follows /min l-muħtamali ?an/ rather than /min l-muħtamali ?anna/, embedding a finite clause; thus, a progressive reading emerges in such finite clauses. It becomes evident that in all of the sentences in Example 17, a finite clause follows the modal (Alharbi, 2017; Hallman, 2015; Soltan, 2007; Mohammad, 2000), resulting in a progressive reading.

Therefore, an alternative context needs to be used when examining these dialects in which such readings are disentangled from the imperfective form. The findings could then show that such readings are not because of imperfective morphology but rather are due to covert operators and that the imperfective is



actually the basic form of the verb. This paper assumes that dialects in this issue necessarily follow Modern Standard Arabic in that the so-called imperfective form is the basic form and can be found without the progressive or habitual readings since they are not indicated by the morphology of the form.

### 3.2 Progressive Marker in Hijazi Arabic

As was shown in the literature reviewed above, an ongoing change in various Arabic dialects is the introduction of an auxiliary to indicate that a verb should be read as progressive. Following this trend, rural Hijazi Arabic speakers use the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʔid, ʒa:ləs/ as an overt progressive marker before the imperfective verb (as in Example 18a), an optional auxiliary before the progressive marker (as in Example 18b), or an auxiliary without the progressive marker (as in Example 18c).

18. a. ʔihtimal    ʔinno                    qaʔid    jə-ðakir                    fi                    al-ʒamiʔah  
likely            Comp                    Prog    3P.Sg.M-study            in                    the-university  
“It is likely that he is studying at the university.”
- b. ʔihtimal    ʔinno                    jkun    qaʔid    ja-lʔab                    kurah  
likely            Comp                    be            Prog    3P.Sg.M-play            soccer  
“It is likely that he is playing soccer.”
- c. ʔihtimal    ʔinno                    jkun    ja-lʔab                    kurah  
likely            Comp                    be            3P.Sg.M-play            soccer  
“It is likely that he is playing soccer.”

As illustrated by these examples, the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʔid, ʒa:ləs/ is widely used as a progressive marker. This contrasts with urban Hijazi Arabic, see (Almalki, 2020) for a full description of the dialect. This dialect uses bi- to indicate a progressive reading, as presented in Example 19. Therefore, the aim of this study was to identify how this clarification is made in rural Hijazi Arabic when compared to other dialects. Similar to other dialects, the active participle of “sit” /ga:ʔid, ʒa:ləs/ is found preceding other main verbs that show incompatible physical disposition, as presented in Example 20 below.

19. Sami                    biyiʔri                    daʔeen  
Sami                    Prog.3P.Sg.M.run.Impf                    right.now  
“Sami is running right now.” (Abusulaiman, 2019, p. 11)
20. a. qaʔid                    janguz  
Prog.M                    jump  
“He is jumping.”
- b. ʒa:ləs                    jasbaħ  
Prog.M                    swim



"He is swimming." (Al Zahrani, 2015, p. 58)

c. qaʕid jaʕri

Prog.M run

"He is running."

As for agreement, the active participle of "sit" /ga:ʕid, ʕa:lʕs/ still shows full concord with the subject but does not require an animate subject, as it can be used with non-animate subjects, as shown in Example 21 and Example 22, respectively.

21. a. qaʕid-in jadrus-un

Prog.M/F.Pl study.M-Pl

"They are studying."

b. qaʕid-ah tadrus

Prog-F.Sg study.F

"She is studying."

c. qaʕid jadrus

Prog-M.Sg study.M

"He is studying."

22. a. al-kur-ah qaʕid-ah tnasim

the-ball-F Prog-F inflate.F

"The ball is inflating."

b. al-bajit qaʕid jtʕih

the-house.Sg Prog.M fall.M

"The house is falling."

In terms of negation, Hijazi Arabic dialect shows a persistent use of the negation form appropriate for non-finite predicates despite the fact that the active participle of "sit" /ga:ʕid, ʕa:lʕs/ is reanalyzed as a progressive verbal element. Example 23 presents multiple sentences in which the negation marker "mu" — which is typically used with nouns or adjectives — precedes the progressive auxiliary under discussion. On the other hand, the negative marker that precedes the verb is provided in Example 24.

23. a. mu qaʕid jaktub

Neg Prog.M write.Impf

"He is not writing."

b. mu qaʕid-ah trud ʕalia

Neg Prog-F answer.Impf.F me



"She is not answering me."

24. a. ma            jalʃb-un            kur-ah  
      Neg            play-Pl.M            ball-F

"They do not play soccer."

- d. ma            jafhum-un            ʔa-ddars  
      Neg            understand-Pl.M    lesson-F

"They do not understand the lesson."

In some dialects, the active participle form of "sit" /ga:ʔid, ʒa:ləs/ has lost its lexical meaning. That is not the case in Hijazi Arabic, however, for it still preserves its lexical meaning, as demonstrated in Example 25.

25. a. ʔana            qaʔid            mani            wagəʔ  
      I            sit.Act.Ptcp            Neg            stand.Act.Ptcp

"I am sitting, not standing."

- b. qaʔid            ʔala            al-kursi  
      sit. Act.Ptcp    on            the-chair.Sg

"I am sitting on the chair."

One aspect pertinent to the progressive marker under investigation has not been addressed so far. Many spoken Arabic dialects have a full form and a reduced form of the active participle of "sit" /ga:ʔid, ʒa:ləs/ or other verbs used for the same purpose, as shown in Example 26a (taken from Najafi Arabic in Iraq) and Example 26b (taken from Baghdadi Arabic). Ouali (2022) offered a representative list of full and short forms across Arabic dialects. However, Hijazi Arabic has not developed a reduced form yet.

26. a. ʔəl-tʃalIb            ga-j-drus            bI-ʔəl-məktəbəh  
      the-student.3P.Sg.M    Prog-3P.M.study.Sg-Impf    in-the-library

"The student is studying in the library." (Albuarabi, 2021, p. 6)

- b. ʔəl-tʃalIb            da-j-drus            bI-ʔəl-məktəbəh  
      the-student-3P.Sg.M    Prog-3P.M.study.Sg-Impf    in-the-library

"The student is studying in the library." (Albuarabi, 2021, p. 6)

Based on the discussion of Hijazi Arabic above, it can be safely assumed that it is at the initial stages of this change. It is true that a progressive marker has already been put into use, but it has not yet been treated as a verbal element signaling negation. The active participle has not yet lost its lexical meaning, and no reduced form of the active participle has appeared yet. However, if this trend continues, one can assume that Hijazi Arabic will ultimately lose the lexical meaning of the active participle of "sit" /ga:ʔid, ʒa:ləs/ and develop a reduced form similar to other dialects that are ahead in this change.



#### 4. Conclusion

This paper examined the imperfective form of verbs in Hijazi Arabic. Hallman (2015) argued that the Modern Standard Arabic verb form labeled “imperfective” is not quite the imperfective but rather the basic form of the verb, similar to English infinitives. The readings typical of the imperfective associated with this form in Arabic are not attributed to morphology but rather covert semantic operators. Modal contexts show that such readings do not show up even when eventive verbs are used. An overt auxiliary is necessary for the progressive reading to show up in modal contexts. Similar findings are applicable to Hijazi Arabic, except that the progressive reading with eventive verbs in the imperfective form is found in modal contexts and is thus context dependent. It is not completely blocked as in Modern Standard Arabic. To disambiguate the situation in favor of the progressive reading, an overt progressive marker has developed out of the verb “sit” in the active participle form. Such facts show the need to develop diagnostics that work at the dialectal level, preceded by a thorough investigation of Hijazi Arabic morphosyntax. The paper also compared the status of this newly developed progressive marker across Arabic dialects. Variations are attested among dialects with regard to the progressive marker’s form, interaction with negation, maintenance of the lexical meaning of the verb it was developed from, and its requirement for an animate subject.

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