

ADJECTIVAL PASSIVES AND THEMATIC ROLES
IN EGYPTIAN ARABIC:
A COGNITIVE SEMANTIC APPROACH*

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This paper investigates the semantic and pragmatic constraints on adjectival passive participles (APPs) in Egyptian Arabic within the framework of Cognitive Semantics. In this language it is acceptable to use APPs 'derived' from unaccusative activity verbs to modify head nouns or subjects that carry the thematic roles of LOCATION, SOURCE, GOAL and INSTRUMENT. The acceptability and distribution of APPs are argued to be determined by the construal of the participants in an entailed event or process. Specifically, an APP can be used regardless of the thematic role of the subject or head noun as long as the referent of that noun is profiled as the landmark of the entailed event and is construed as the trajector of the resultant state. Moreover, the use of an APP has to be informative and relevant to the speech event providing information that is not presupposed or entailed by the use of head noun.

0. Introduction

Adjectival passives are deverbal adjectives that are used attributively either as NP modifiers (e.g., *the RETIRED professor*) or as predicates (e.g., *Mary is WIDOWED.*) Various generativist hypotheses have been proposed to describe the constraints that determine their distribution and acceptability in English as well as other languages assuming that their derivation is motivated by 'universal deep principles'. For example, Anderson (1977) proposed the *theme hypothesis*, which requires the head noun modified by an adjectival passive to hold the THEME relation to the verb it is derived from. The inadequacies of this hypothesis motivated the *subject theme hypothesis* proposed by Bresnan (1982), where adjectival passives can be derived from transitive verbs according to the *theme hypothesis* and from intransitive verbs that take a THEME subject. However, this hypothesis has become subject to much criticism mainly because of the exceptional nature of the data it can account for and because of the observations that novel adjectival passives derived from transitive verbs are marginally acceptable, whereas those formed from intransitive verbs are completely unacceptable, as in example (1) (Dryer 1985, 324).

(1) He lay in bed all night ?*unbothered*/**unslept*.

An alternative analysis proposed by Dryer (1985) is the *direct object hypothesis*, which claims that the use of an adjectival passive is acceptable only if the head noun it modifies can be used as a direct object licensed by the verb the participle is derived from in a grammatical sentence. Levin and Rappaport (1986) proposed a more explicated analysis based on the assumption that an adjectival passive maintains the lexical-thematic properties of the verb it is derived from. They argue that only the direct internal argument that is assigned a theta role by an underlying verb can be externalized as the subject or head noun for an adjectival passive modifier or predicate. Their analysis explains the grammaticality of (2a), where the THEME direct internal argument of the underlying verb is externalized, and the ungrammaticality of (2b) where the LOCATION indirect internal argument, which is assigned a theta role by the preposition, is externalized.

(2a) The books remained neatly placed on the table.

(2b) *The table remained neatly placed the books on.

The English adjectival passives roughly correspond to two linguistic categories in Arabic: the active participle and the passive participle. Usually, the difference between them is described in terms of argument structure such that the active participle is associated with the external argument of the verb it is derived from, whereas the passive participle is used in association with the internal argument of that verb (Cuvalay-Haak 1997). Other analyses restrict the passive participle to the argument denoting the entity that had undergone some action viz. the PATIENT argument (Gadalla 2000). For example, in (3) only the passive participle *maksu:r* 'broken' is acceptable since the head noun *ef-fibba:k* 'the window' holds the PATIENT relation to the assumed underlying verb denoting the breaking event.

(3) *ef-fibba:k* *el-maksu:r/* **el-ka:sir*
 the-widow the-broken_(APP) /the-breaking_(AP)
 the broken window/*the breaking window

The arguments presented in this paper aim to explore the semantic and pragmatic constraints on the use of adjectival passive participles (APPs) in Egyptian Arabic (EA) within the framework of Cognitive Semantics developed by Langacker (1990; 1991). For an analysis to adequately account for APPs in EA, it has to explain acceptability of the set of data exemplified by the sentence in (4a).

(4a) *el-keli:m*, *el-mamfi* *ʕalei-h*, *mehta:g* *tanɕi:f*.
 the-rug the-walked_(APP) on-it need cleaning
 'The walked-on rug needs cleaning.'

This type of sentences is problematic for many analyses of APPs because of the following observations. First, the APP *mamfi* 'walked' is derived from an intransitive unaccusative verb even though it is generally assumed, if not stipulated, that APPs in EA can be derived only from transitive verbs (Abdel-malek 1972). Second, the APP is associated with an activity predicate even though it is well established in the literature that this is not possible because activities can not denote resultative states (Ackerman & Goldberg 1996). Third, the subject of this

sentence does not bear the THEME or PATIENT relation to the 'underlying' verb denoting the walking event because *el-keli:m* 'the rug' is a LOCATION. Fourth, the subject of this sentence cannot be the direct object or a direct internal argument licensed by the verb associated with the APP in an acceptable sentence as illustrated in (4b). In fact, it is the complement of the preposition in an adjunct phrase as indicated by the resumptive pronoun.

- (4b) *ana mafe:t el-keli:m.
 I walked the-rug.
 'I walked the rug.'

The problem described above is not limited to NPs that carry the thematic role LOCATION because GOAL, SOURCE and INSTRUMENT arguments can also be modified by APPs derived from the assumed underlying verbs in acceptable sentences. For example, in (4c) the SOURCE NP *el-ṭaba:ʔ* 'the dishes', which is the object of the preposition *menn* 'from', can not be the direct object of the verb associated with the APP, yet the sentence is acceptable. Also, in (4d) the NP *el-fira:χ* 'the chicken' is modified by an APP in an acceptable sentence even though the NP is a GOAL argument following Jackendoff's analysis (1990, 1997).

- (4c) el-aʔṭba:ʔ_i el-metta:kel menn-ha_i la:zem te-t-ʔasal
 the-dishes the-eaten from-it must 3rd.sing.fem.-pass.-wash
 'The eaten off dishes must be washed.'

- (4d) el-fira:χ el-mahʃeyy-ah roz fi el-forn.
 The-chicken the-stuffed-fem. rice in the-oven
 'The rice stuffed chicken is in the oven.'

With regard to the semantic constraints on APPs in EA I argue that their acceptability is determined by the construal of the participants in a given event, namely the event entailed by the use of the APP. Specifically, an APP can be used regardless of thematic role of the subject or head noun as long as it can be construed as the landmark rather than the trajector of the entailed event, and as the trajector of the state resulting from that event. In Cognitive or Space Grammar the notions of trajector and landmark roughly correspond to the traditional notions of subject and object respectively. The difference is that the former terms are determined semantically rather than configurationally. Also, a landmark refers to a 'conceptually autonomous' entity whereas the trajector is 'conceptually dependent', and consequently construed in relation to the landmark:

every relational predication shows an asymmetry in the prominence accorded the entities that participate in the profiled interconnections: some participant is signaled out and construed as the one whose nature or location is being assessed. That participant is called trajector (tr) and analyzed as the figure within the relational profile. The term landmark (lm) is applied to other salient participants, with respect to which the trajector is situated. (Langacker 1990: 76)

The pragmatic constraints include *informativeness*, initially proposed by Ackerman and Goldberg (1996), where APPs are acceptable only if they provide

information that is not presupposed or entailed by the use of the head noun or subject. Ackerman and Goldberg state this constraint as *the non-redundancy constraint*: "If the referent of the head noun, N, implies a property P as part of its frame-semantics or encyclopedic knowledge, then the APP is not allowed to simply designate P; it must be further qualified" (21). Another constraint is the *current relevance*, where the APP denotes a resultant state that holds at the time of utterance, such that this state is either a real state such as 'confused' or an abstract one denoting the extension in time of being the landmark of that state.

1. Form and distribution of the APP in EA

Although both verbal and adjectival passives in EA do not allow *by*-phrases that are usually used as a diagnostic of verbal passives (Wise 1975), they are morphologically distinct as two different constructions. The prefixes *it-* and *in-* are bound to a past tense verb stem only to express verbal passives, hence the distinction between the verbal passive forms *it-kasar* and *in-kasar* (be broken) on one hand, and the APP *maksu:r* (broken) on the other. Moreover, APPs in EA are distinguished from other adjectives in that the phonological forms of APPs are associated with verbal roots according to systematic patterns such as those illustrated below, which do not apply to adjectival patterns (see Gadalla 2000 for a detailed description of these patterns).

VERB PATTERN		ADJECTIVAL PASSIVE PARTICIPLE FORM	
C ₁ aC ₂ aC ₃ a	katab (wrote)	maC ₁ C ₂ u:C ₃	maktu:b (written)
C ₁ aC ₂	hab (love)	maC ₁ C ₂ u:C ₂	mahbu:b (loved)
C ₁ aC ₂ a	ḡala (boil)	maC ₁ C ₂ i	mayli (boiled)
C ₁ iC ₂ i	nisi (forget)	maC ₁ C ₂ i	mansi (forgotten)
C ₁ aC ₂ C ₂ aC ₃	naḡḡaf (clean)	mitC ₁ aC ₂ C ₂ aC ₃	mitnaḡḡaf (cleaned)

Although Arabic APPs are generally treated as nominal forms (Xrakovskij 1988) they have adjectival properties. Among their adjectival properties is the inflection for definiteness, number and gender in agreement with the head noun as in example (5). However, APPs can be used as subjects, as in (6), which makes it difficult to draw a distinction between APPs and nouns. The distinction between nouns and adjectives becomes quite blurred when, under certain pragmatic conditions, nouns can be modified with degree modifiers such as the equivalents of 'very', 'extremely' and 'to some/large extent', similarly to APPs, as in *ana dokto:r giddan* 'I am a very doctor.'

- (5) el-harameyya el-masgun-i:n
 the-thieves the-imprisoned-masc.pl.
 'the imprisoned thieves'
- (6) el-masgun-i:n harabu
 the-imprisoned-masc.pl. escaped
 'The prisoners escaped.'

If the head noun is a super-ordinate term, it is usually deleted because its use is not informative, and the APP is used as a referential expression, e.g., *masru:ʔa:t*

'stolen', and *mawlu:d* 'born' where the deleted nouns are 'items' and 'baby' respectively similarly to English lexicalized APPs of French origin such as 'deportee' and 'divorcee'. Another adjectival property of the APPs is the observation that the plural forms for APPs used to describe human referents can only be regular masculine plurals, expressed by the suffix *-i:n* as in (7), even if the referent of the head noun is feminine. If the feminine regular plural or irregular plural is used, the sentence is ungrammatical.

- (7) el-mudarras-i:n/el-mudarras-a:t el-maʕzu:m-i:n/*el-maʕazi:m
 the-teacher-masc.pl. /the-teacher-fem.pl. the-invited-masc.pl./the-invited-pl.
 'the invited teachers'

Moreover, if the APPs are used to describe non-human referents, they are not inflected for plural, and they are marked for feminine gender even if the head noun has masculine grammatical gender as in (8). Also, if the APP is the predicate of a verbless sentence such as that in (9), it is always indefinite, and otherwise the sentence is ungrammatical.

- (8) el-kotob el-masru:ʔ-a
 the-books.masc. the-stolen-fem.
 'the stolen books'
- (9) el-kotob di masru:ʔ-a/*el-masru:ʔ-a
 the-books this.fem stolen-fem./the-stolen
 'These books are stolen/*the stolen'.

2. Thematic roles and the APP

Previous analyses of adjectival passives in general, or the Arabic APPs in particular, agree that the head noun or the subject has to refer to an entity that is either the PATIENT or THEME as long as it can be used as the direct object of the verb the APP is derived from in an acceptable sentence. These claims are based on uses of the APP such as that in (10a) where the head noun *ef-ʃibba:k* 'the window' refers to the entity that has undergone a breaking event, and it can be the direct object or bear the PATIENT relation to the verb the APP is derived from as in (10b).

- (10a) ef-ʃibba:k el-maksu:r (10b) hadd kasar ef-ʃibbka:b
 The-window the-broken someone broke the-window
 'the broken window'

However, these analyses make false predictions and leave many uses of APPs unaccounted for. For example, there are many cases where the head noun can carry the THEME relation to the verb the APP is associated with, yet the utterance is ungrammatical. For example, in (11a) the head noun *ed-deyu:f* 'the guests' can be the direct object of the verb the APP is derived from, as illustrated in (11b), and at the same time the head noun is the THEME of the receiving event, yet the use of the APP is ungrammatical. It is not clear how the analyses based on the thematic roles can account for such instances.

- (11a) *ed-deyu:f el-mostaʕbali:n (11b) ana istaʕbelt ed-deyu:f.
 the-guests the-received I received the-guests.

'the received guests

Moreover, when the APP is associated with some dative shift verbs such as that in (12a), the head noun holds the GOAL rather than the THEME relation to the assumed underlying verb, yet the phrase is grammatical. Interestingly, if it is the THEME NP that is used as the head noun, the phrase is ungrammatical as in (12b). Assuming, along with Bresnan's (1982) analysis, that the noun phrase *es-sikerte:r-ah* 'the secretary' is actually the THEME; not the GOAL, it is not clear what thematic role is assigned to the NP *ingli:zi* 'English'.

(12a) *es-sikerte:r-ah* *el-metšallem-ah* *ingli:zi*
 the-secretary-fem. the-taught_(APP)-fem English
 'the taught English secretary'

(12b) **ingli:zi* *el-metšallem* *es-sikerte:r-ah*
 English the-taught_(APP) the-secretary-fem.
 'the secretary taught English'

In the case of predicates that take two internal arguments: a THEME and a LOCATION, either argument can be used as a head noun modified by an APP associated with that verb. For example, in (13a) below, the THEME argument *el-kotob* 'the books' is the head noun in an acceptable noun phrase as predicted, as it can be the direct object of that verb in a grammatical sentence as in (13b). However, in (14a) it is the LOCATION argument that is used as a head even though it cannot be the direct object of the verb the APP is associated with as illustrated in (14b).

(13a) *el-kotob* *el-mahtu:ta* *šala el-maktab*
 the-books the-put_(APP)-fem. on the-desk
 'the put on the desk books'

(13b) *ana* *hače:t* *el-kotob* *šala* *el-maktab*
 I put-1st thebooks on the-desk
 'I put the books on the desk'.

(14a) *el-maktab* *el-mahtu:t* *šalei-h* *el-kotob*
 the-desk the-put_(APP) on-it the-books
 'the put on books desk'

(14b) **ana* *hateit* *el-maktab* *šalei-h* *el-kotob/el-kotob* *šalei-h*
 I put the-desk on-it the-books/the books on-it
 'I put the desk on it the books'.

3. A cognitive semantic analysis

Langacker (1990, 1991) provides an analysis of situation construal that can provide valid constraints for the uses of the APP illustrated above. The main claim is that the APP can be used to modify any head noun as long as that noun refers to an entity that can be construed as the landmark of an entailed preceding event and can be construed as the trajector or figure of the resultant state denoted by the APP. He argues that the perfect participle morpheme¹ in English has three

variants: [PERF₁], [PERF₂], and [PERF₃]. The first of these variants 'designates a state characterized as the final state in a process (e.g., *swollen* designates the final state in the process *swell*)' (129). [PERF₁] profiles the state that came about as a result of the culmination of a process that has a single participant, namely the trajector, which undergoes change of state or location. Langacker's [PERF₁] corresponds to the EA adjectival active participle. For example, the sentence in (15) below profiles a final state resulting from a culminated event of closing, where the subject NP 'the store' is the single participant that is salient i.e., a trajector. That NP is also profiled as the trajector of the resultant state, even though it is the THEME or PATIENT of the closing event, and it can be the direct object of the verb *ʕafal* 'close' in a grammatical sentence.

- (15) ed-dokka: ʔa:fil
 the-store close_(AP)
 'The store is closed.'

[PERF₂], on the other hand, profiles states that results from the culmination of processes involving two participants such that the profiled trajector imposes a change of state or location on the landmark, which is profiled as the trajector of the resultant state. Langacker's [PERF₂] is the APP in EA. For example, the APP *masru*: 'stolen', in (16) below, profiles a final state of a stealing process where the landmark, the car, undergoes change of location or domain, as it was transferred from the domain of its owner's property to that of the thief. That landmark of the process is profiled as the trajector of the state in the APP construction.

- (16) el-ʕarabeyya el-masru:ʔa
 the-car the-stolen
 'the stolen car'

Many EA class X verbs, whose stems start with *ist-* and denote events that involve eliciting such as *istaʔbel* 'to receive someone', and *istagweb* 'to question someone' do not have acceptable APPs even though they seem to have theme direct objects, and therefore, they have always been stipulated to be exceptional. Applying the construal analysis of APPs to this class of verbs indicates that in fact there is nothing peculiar about them because their objects cannot be construed as the landmark of the event and hence cannot be used in a [PERF₂] construction where it is construed as the trajector of the resultant state. Similarly to causative constructions, class X verbs profile events that involve two participants such that the trajector, 'the persecutor' in example (17a), induces a process whose trajector is the secondary actor, namely the referent of the NP 'the defendant' who answers questions. Since the secondary actor is the trajector of the imposed or induced process, it cannot be construed as the trajector of a resultant state profiled by an APP as in (17b).

- (17a) en-neya:ba istagwebet el-mottaham (17b)*el-mottaham el-mestagwab
 the-prosecutor questioned the-accused the-accused the-questioned
 'The prosecutor questioned the defendant. The questioned defendant'

The same analysis accounts for the acceptability of APPs derived from intransitive activities as in (4a), repeated below as (18). The APP *mamfi* 'walked'

profiles a final state resulting from a walking process that involves two participants: an unexpressed trajector (those who walked) and a landmark (the carpet) that has undergone some change such as getting dirty. The resulting state involves only one participant, namely the landmark of the process, which is construed as the trajector of the state, and hence the acceptability of the utterance below.

- (18) el-keli:m_i el-manfi ʕalei-h_i mehta:g tandi:f.
 the-rug the-walked_(APP) on-it need cleaning
 'The walked-on rug needs cleaning.'

One basic assumption in this paper is that APPs denote current states that came about as a result of the culmination of an entailed preceding process (Parsons 1990). Support for this claim comes from the observations that a sentence such as that in (19a) is contradictory because the second clause denies that the event entailed by the APP occurred, and that in (19b) is also contradictory because the second clause entails that the state of being broken does not hold at speech time.

- (19a) #dera:ʕi maksu:r, bas ma-it-kasar-f
 arm- my broken, but neg-pass-broke-neg
 'My arm is broken, but it was not broken'.

- (19b) #dera:ʕi maksu:r, bas ʕaff
 arm-my broken, but healed-3rds.
 'My arm is broken, but it healed'.

For an event or a process to culminate, it has to cease to continue, i.e., a sentence profiling event e has to be false at the point in time t_2 immediately following t_1 at which it holds. In other words, although it is usually assumed in the formal paradigm of semantics that the sentence 'John is pushing a cart' entails that he pushed a cart even if the pushing event is in progress (Dowty 1979), that event culminates only when he stops pushing that cart. This view of culmination explains why a sentence such as that in (20) is acceptable even though the APP is associated with an activity verb. The activity process of eating culminated, even though there is no object NP that triggers the telic reading, and the resulting state of having been the landmark of an eating event is relevant to the speech context, which explains why the dishes need to be washed.

- (20) el-ʔatba:ʔ el-meta:kel fi:ha ʕawza yasi:l.
 the-dishes the-eaten in-it need washing
 'The eaten-off dishes need to be washed.'

4. The nature of resultant states

APPs derived from stative predicates denote real attributive states such as *mafʕu:l* 'busy/occupied', which entails a past event of moving from a state of not being busy to a state of being busy. That event results in a state that has to hold at speech time and hence the unacceptability of the sentence in (21) when the past time adverbial *imba:reḥ* 'yesterday' indicates that the state no longer holds.

- (21) ba:l-i mafɣu:l (*imba:reh)
 mind-my occupied (yesterday)
 'My mind is occupied (*yesterday).

APPs associated with non-stative verbs might not denote a real state, but they all denote abstract states, namely the extension through time of a stable state. For example, the APP in (22) denotes a real state of being kidnapped, yet that state does not hold at speech time as asserted by the past time verb 'returned'. The sentence is not contradictory because the APP also denotes a state of having been kidnapped that is relevant to the speech context as it might be the only way to refer to the child or because that state is the reason why is he the topic of discourse.

- (22) el-walad el-maɣtu:f ragaʃ li-ʔahl-oh
 the-boy the-kidnapped returned t o-family-his
 'The kidnapped boy returned to his family'.

In other cases the APP entails a past event, which results in the referent of head NP ceasing to exist, however, the abstract state of having been a participant in such an event still holds as long as it is relevant to the speech context. For example, in (23) the APP denotes an event that resulted in the speaker's losing a tooth. That sentence would be acceptable to profile a state for every individual who lost a baby tooth, yet that is not the case because the state has to be relevant to the speech context such as explaining why there is a gap in the speaker's mouth or explaining why he is taking strong pain killers.

- (23) ʃandi senna maɣlu:ʃa
 at-me tooth removed
 'I have a missing tooth'.

Closely related to the notion of current relevance is the informativeness constraint such that the use of an adjectival passive is pragmatically required to provide information that is not presupposed or entailed. It has been observed that phrases such as 'a built house' are unacceptable because they are not informative (Ackerman & Goldberg 1996) and therefore, an adjunct phrase is necessary. The same constraint applies for APPs in EA. For example, the APP *mawlu:d* 'born' is always used without the head noun because mentioning the trajector of the resultant state (someone) is not informative. Moreover, that APP is used only to refer to newly born babies because all individuals are assumed to have been born at some point (current relevance).

An example of the interaction between the *relevance* and *informativeness* requirements is that it is acceptable to use an APP to profile the final state of a selling process, but not of buying process even though they differ only in the direction they profile; from the seller's domain to the buyer's domain, or vice versa. Assuming that all cars owned by dealers or individuals have been bought at some time, it is uninformative for a car dealer to profile a car as having been bought especially that his/her concern is to sell cars rather than to buy them. On the other hand, in a context such as that in (24) it is the transition from the seller's domain

that is relevant, hence the unacceptability of (24c) where it is the buyer's domain that is profiled.

- | | | |
|------|--|-----------------------------|
| (24) | A: be-ka:m el-ʕarabeyya di? | How much is this car? |
| | B: ʔa:sif, el-ʕarabeya di metba:ʕa | Sorry, This car is sold. |
| | C: #ʔa:sif, el-ʕarabeyya el-metʕereyya | #Sorry, This car is bought. |

The use of EA 'verbal nouns', which are equivalent to gerunds in English, to designate the process that resulted in the state is acceptable even though such uses seem redundant and uninformative. For example, in (25a) below the noun *kasr* 'breaking' has no compositional value, as it provides no further information about the state. Such structures are conventionally interpreted as to implicate that trajector of the process incurred the process on purpose or meticulously as in (25b).

- | | | | | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|---------------------------------|----------|----------|
| (25a) | el-fibba:k | makru:r | kasr | (25b) | el-felu:s | maʕdu:da | ʕad |
| | the-window | broken | breaking | | the-money | counted | counting |
| | 'The window is broken breaking.' | | | | 'the money is counted counting' | | |

In sum, the APP in EA designates a final state of a process such that the landmark of the process is profiled as the trajector of the state. The state has to hold at speech time provided that it is relevant to the discourse context and it is informative. Moreover, the state could be a real state that can be designated by the use of a linguistic form such as 'annoyed' and 'surprised' or an abstract state of being the trajector of a resultant state such as 'broken' and 'sold'.

NOTES

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¹ Interestingly, when EA participles (active and passive) are used as predicated in verbless sentences, they are interpreted as to have a present perfect reading, which is Langacker's [PERF₃] even though there is no phonologically represented functional category that denotes tense. Analyses that assume invisible copulas (Brustad 2000, Eisele 1999) or a null AUX (Jelinek 1982) consider the participles as marked uses where tense is not associated with the deictic present invisible categories.

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