

The Effect of Transitivity, Futurity, and Aspectuality on the Translation of English Present Progressive into Arabic Verbal and Active Participle Counterparts

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Abstract

Arabic lacks a specific form for progressive tenses and instead uses the imperfective form '*jaʕʕal*' to express habitual and progressive aspects. Arabic also uses an active participle form (AP) to express progressiveness. This paper addresses the effect of transitivity, futurity, and aspectuality on the translation of English present progressive (PP) into Arabic verbal and active participle counterparts. To investigate which of the two forms is used to translate English PP into Arabic, data were collected from 100 students who were studying an elective 'translation' course at Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT). The researchers built a questionnaire of 38 English sentences each of which has two main translations: one that uses the imperfective form '*ja-ʕʕal*' and another that has an (AP) form, mainly '*ja-ʕil*' or '*mu-ʕʕil*'. The participants were asked to rate the acceptability of each sentence on a scale of 0-2. The findings reveal that transitivity and the future reading of the progressive verb affect the translatability of the progressive tenses as imperfective or (AP) form. Transitive verbs are more likely to be translated as imperfective verbs than transitive APs because (AP) does not have as strong verbal properties as lexical verbs. On the other hand, translocative verbs accept (AP) translations fairly enough to refer to future. The findings also reveal that the aspectuality of the verb affects its translation in one of the two main forms mentioned above. (AP) translations of English (PP) become more acceptable when the root of the verb indicates state-of-affair actions, achievements or accomplishments.

Keywords: active participle, progressive tenses, imperfective, Arabic, aspectuality

1. Introduction

Arabic lacks a specific form for progressive tenses. In fact, it uses the imperfective form '*jaʕʕal*' to express habitual and progressive aspects:

1. Omar-u ja-lʕab-u l-kura-t-a
Omar-NOM impf-play-IND the-ball-FEM-ACCⁱ
'Omar **plays/ is playing** football'.

On the other hand, Arabic also uses the (AP) to express progressive aspectⁱⁱ:

2. Omar-u ʕa:hib-un ʔila l-madrasa-t-i lʔa:n
Omar go:AP-NOM to the-school-FEM-GEN now
'Omar is going to the school now'ⁱⁱⁱ

While translating English progressive tenses as Arabic imperfective is quite acceptable with many verbs, it sounds odd in others and (AP) translation sounds more acceptable:

3. a. My father is snoring in the bedroom.
ab-i: ja-ʕʕur-u/ *ʕa:xir-un fi: ʕurfa-t-i n-nawm l-ʔa:n
father-my IMPF-snore-IND/ snore:AP-NOM in room-FEM-GEN the-sleep now
'Dad is snoring in the bedroom now'.
- b. My father is sleeping in the bedroom now
ab-i: !ja-na:m-u/ na:ʔim-un fi: ʕurfa-t-I n-nawm l-ʔa:n
father-my IMPF-sleep-IND/ sleep:AP-NOM in room-FEM-GEN the-sleep now
'Dad is sleeping in the bedroom now'.

Both verbs *jafxur* 'snore' and *jana:m* 'sleep' are intransitive dynamic verbs. However, while translating the English progressive 'snore' into Arabic imperfective is quite natural, its (AP) counterpart is totally unacceptable (3a). By contrast, the (AP) *na:ʔim* is quite a natural translation for the progressive English 'sleep', whereas the Arabic imperfective counterpart *yana:m* is not as acceptable (3b). This indicates that there are other factors that may affect the translatability of English progressive tenses into Arabic imperfective or (AP) forms.

This paper investigates the semantic and syntactic constraints that influence the translation of English progressive tenses into Arabic imperfective or (AP) forms. The paper aims to answer the following questions:

1. Does transitivity affect the translation of the (PP) tense in English into Arabic?
2. Does the future reading of English translatability (PP) affect its as (AP)?
3. Does verb aspectuality affect the translation of the (PP) tense in English into Arabic (AP)?

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews literature related to the usage of (PP) tense, Arabic imperfective, and Arabic (AP). Section 3 goes over the methodology. Section 4 discusses the results related to the three research questions. Section 5 concludes.

2. Literature Review

In this section we review some of the literature related to the study's topic: present progressive, Arabic imperfective verb, and (AP).

2.1 Present Progressive

Though (PP) is mainly used for ongoing actions, it has some other uses. Wigtil (1992: 678) states that "The (PP) specifies ongoing action, continuous or persisting through the immediate present time... This form virtually defines an immediate moment, for the action and the verb are portrayed as being exactly simultaneous." Leech and Svartvik (2013: 52) argue that "the verbs that most generally take the progressive aspect are verbs expressing activities such as *read, drink, write, work*, etc. or processes such as *grow, improve, widen* etc." The researchers state that the (PP) basically refers to a temporary activity in progress, incomplete in nature and stretches into the past and into the future in the sense that no information about the beginning or the end is given. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik (1985: 209) maintain that the (PP) generally occurs at the time of the utterance. It may refer to the time being or indicate a longer action happening around now.

However, Jarvie (1993) pinpoints that the (PP) in English is used in different contexts, and for different purposes. For example, the (PP) may indicate a habitual situation that lasts for a limited period (e.g. She is eating too much these days). Lewis (1986) adds other uses for the (PP) that indicate a habitual meaning such as describing actions or events happening before or after a given a time as in "At one o'clock they are always having parties."

On the other hand, Leech and Svartvik (2013) maintain that the (PP) is used in English with a future reference when it is referring to a future arrangements or plans. In this case, the (PP) is expressed by means of verbs denoting movement from one place condition to another.

Comparing these studies to Arabic, we find that Arabic does not have a specific progressive aspect. Progressiveness and habituality are both expressed by the same verb form *ja-fʔal*. It is the addition of certain adverbs such as *al-ʔa:n* 'now' or *da:ʔiman* 'always' that gives it the progressive or habitual aspect reading.

In terms of translation, Al-khawalda and Al-Oliemat (2014) conducted an experiment that consisted of two inter-related processes. The researchers used twelve English sentences divided onto present, past and future tenses which included simple present, (PP), present perfect and present perfect progressive. The researchers found that English (PP) sentences were translated into Arabic simple present, then back into English simple present. It was also found that the combination between the present form and the adverb 'now' in Arabic expresses a meaning similar to the (PP) in English.

Ghazala (2017) found that the (PP) in English equals the simple present in Arabic. The researcher found few examples where the (PP) is translated into a topic and a comment. Though Ghazala used *topic* and *comment* terms, in fact, the examples he mentioned represent Arabic (AP) as illustrated below:

4. We are going to meet some friends.
Nahnu *tha:hibu:na* (AP) li-liqa:ʔi baʔdi l-ʔaSdiqa:
5. I am leaving.
ʔana *musa:dirun* (AP)

This indirectly proves that AP is a good candidate for the translation of English (PP).

2.2 Arabic Imperfective Verb

Kufa School divided tense into three categories: past tense expressed by the perfective form *faʔala*, the nonpast tense (present and future) expressed by the imperfective form *jafʔalu*, and the permanent tense expressed by the deverbal (AP) form *faaʔil* (AISaaqi 1977).

The imperfect/ present tense is formed by adding prefixes and suffixes to the tri-consonantal root. The prefix represents *person* while the suffix indicates gender and number of the subject. The imperfect/ present tense has three moods: subjunctive jussive and indicative which

is used to express facts, continuous actions, and habitual actions. Benmamoun (2000) contends that the imperfective form in Arabic is used to denote six different contexts including progressiveness, habituality and futurity.

Notably, "The tenses in Arabic do not express the time of an event in the same precise way as the primary tenses in Indo-European languages. The Arabic tenses can be better understood as different aspects of viewing the action in terms of an opposition between a stated or proposed fact and an action or state in progress or preparation" (Abu-Chacra 2018: 106-107).

What matters here is the fact that the Arabic imperfect form can be used to indicate a habitual or progressive aspect. This, in fact, makes it hard to translate into English unless some reasonable context or background is given.

2.3 Arabic (AP)

(AP) is one of the mixed categories in Arabic. In the review below, we will see that (AP) can function as a noun, adjective or a verb. First, it is worth mentioning that Al-Farra' (died A.D. 823) coined the term 'the permanent tense' to refer to deverbal APs which are tensed verb forms that denote events, their time of occurrence, and the agents of these events. Adopting this definition, Gadalla (2017: 62) states that "(AP) is a morphological form derived from a verb to refer to the person or animate being that performs the action denoted by the verb." ALSaaqi (1977) and AlZajjaajy (1984) point out that the permanent tense, expressed by (AP), is a tense that does not locate events in any particular domain of time or in relation to speech time.

Hassan (1980: 238) defines the (AP) as "a derived noun which denotes an absolute temporary action as well as its agent." Also, Al-Hashemi (2000: 310) defines it as "a noun derived from the verbal noun of the active to denote the person doing the action, with the meaning of renewal and incidence." Radwan (1987: 19) defines the (AP) as "the adjective denoting an action, its incidence and its agent." Al-Andalusi (1990: 70) asserts that the (AP) is "the adjective denoting an agent, corresponding in masculinity and femininity to the imperfect of its verb, and having its meaning or that of the perfect." Though the wording sounds different, these definitions emphasize the eventivity and agentivity of APs.

Gadalla (2000: 187-94) pinpoints that APs have two patterns; one formed from the primary tri-consonantal verb and the other from the derived tri-consonantal as well as the quadri-consonantal verbs. The former has the form *fa:ʕil*, e.g. *ʕa:bid* 'worshipping' and the latter is formed from the imperfect form of the verb by replacing the consonant of the imperfect prefix [j] with /m/ and replacing the vowel before the last consonant with /i/ if it were not already /i/, i.e. [mu- ...iC], e.g. *mukrim* 'honoring'.

Syntactically, the (AP) performs a number of functions. It can be used as a noun, adjective or tense form (i.e. replacing verbs) (Gadalla 2017:63). Wright (1967: 1/109) considers it one of the "deverbal nouns" which indicate a temporary, transitory or accidental action or state of being, and express a continuous action, a habitual state of being, or a permanent quality.

Hassan (1980: 240) believes that (AP) refers to a temporary action meaning. Kharma (1983: 36) states that the (AP) seems: "to add an aspectual meaning of continuity (in the three spheres of time). This line of reasoning may have been the one that led Al-farraa' and other grammarians of the Kufa school to substitute for the traditional binary opposition a new tripartite division, adding *ism al-fa:ʕil* (AP) as the third form of the verb and calling it *al-da:ʕim*, i.e. the permanent; the continuous (aspect/tense)".

Eades and Persson (2013) maintain that previous studies described Arabic (AP) as specifying various meanings associated with tense and aspect. However, the researchers continue, such analyses have been problematic due to the fact that the Arabic (AP) is formally a noun and lacks verbal morphology. On the other hand, various scholars (e.g. Kinberg 1992; Eisele 1999; Mughazy 2005) conclude that the (AP) can only express present tense and/or simultaneity with the moment of speech or reference point of an utterance. They add that the tense/aspect inference of (AP) is dependent on the context and/or the lexical semantics of the underlying verb.

Eisele (1999) states that in many studies on Arabic, (AP) has been analyzed as having a verbal nature. The temporal value of the (AP) has been described as expressing simultaneity with a contextually determined temporal point of reference. Eades and Persson (2013:345) argue that "it is not the participial form itself that expresses all these aspectual and/or temporal values, but rather it is the context of the utterance combined with the lexical aspectual properties of the verb that result in an inferred aspectual/ temporal reading in any given instance of (AP) use." By the same token, Hallman (2017: 153) maintains that since Syrian Arabic participles license objective case, they are considered as verbs 'disguised' as adjectives. To support his argument Hallman reveals that the morphological forms of active and passive participles depend on the morphological complexity of the base verb, i.e. they are derived from the verb templates.

On the other hand, there are few studies that addressed the translation of Arabic (AP) and/or English progressive. Gadalla (2017) investigates the translation of APs in English. He argues that the reason that the Arabic (AP) is sometimes translated as English verbal is that it sometimes has an aspectual meaning. Gadalla (2017: 77) found that the subjects in his study translated the Arabic (AP) into the following English verbal structures in two TL texts: future simple, present simple, modal + verb, (PP), infinitive, present perfect, or past simple.

In a study on *Translating Latin Tenses into English*, Wigtil (1992) concluded that the development of the progressive aspect made it hard to map English tenses and aspects to Latin tenses, since English tenses are narrower in scope than Latin ones. This entails that students and translators have to make some hard choices in the translation between the two languages. This also applies to Arabic since the 18 tenses and aspects of English are, more or less, translated to three main Arabic tenses.

In conclusion, (AP) seems to have tense/aspect properties that enable it to function as a verb. However, there are other factors that are at

play, e.g. the context in which it occurs, its aspectual or temporal values. As this study looks at (AP) from a translation point of view, we will examine the contexts in which (AP) can be a good translation candidate for English (PP).

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

One hundred students studying at PSUT participated in this study. Most participants were sophomore, junior and senior students. The students were majoring in Accounting, IT and Engineering. All students were taking a general 'translation' course that introduces basic principles of translation. They were all native speakers of Arabic. They also had good command of English as almost half of them studied either SAT, IB, or IG systems at private schools and therefore their level of English is pretty good. The rest also have good command of English as well since the university's mode of instruction is English.

3.2 The Study Tool

To answer the research questions, the researchers designed a translation task that consisted of 38 English sentences that were (PP). Next to each sentence, there were two translations; one translates the progressive tense into an imperfective Arabic aspect, while the other translates it into an (AP). The participants were asked to judge the acceptability of the two translations on a scale of 0-2 where 0 indicates a totally unacceptable sentence, 1 a rather acceptable sentence, and 2 an acceptable (natural) sentence in Arabic. The participants were instructed that they can give the two translations similar or different ratings depending on how acceptable they find these sentences in Arabic.

The English sentences had three linguistic factors that may affect their translatability: Transitivity, future reading of the progressive verb, and aspectuality. The sentences were randomly ordered and they all had SVO-word-order translations.

3.3 Validity

The researchers prepared the study tool and asked three translators to provide translations for each of the English progressive sentences. The focus here was on the (AP) translations. On average, the three translators translated 88% of the (PP) as imperfect Arabic verb forms. In contrast, they translated 58% of the (PP) as Arabic APs. This moderate percentage indicates that (AP) is a good translation candidate for (PP). On the other hand, since the percentage is not high, this may suggest that there are factors that constrain accepting (AP) as equivalent for English (PP).

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the effect of the linguistic factors mentioned above on the translatability of the English progressive sentences. For purposes of describing the results, we will adopt the following scale which classifies sentence acceptability based on its number of occurrences:

Table 1. Sentence Acceptability Scale

No. of occurrences	Description	Acceptability
≥ 67 (more than two-thirds)	High	Very acceptable
≥ 34 (more than one-third)	Medium	Acceptable
≤ 33 (less than one-third)	Low	Not acceptable

4.1 Transitivity

Generally speaking, transitivity is a verbal property. However, in some cases, mixed categories such as agentive participle *-ing* form in English (e.g. Having *conducting* the research, I felt relieved) may assign an accusative case to its complement (see Haegeman 2005). By the same token, (AP) in Arabic may take a complement and assign an accusative case to it under certain conditions (Sibawaih, 1988 and Al-Samirra'i 2003).

The first research question seeks to find out if *transitivity* affects which form of translation may be chosen. All transitive verbs used in our task have an active participle counterpart with the absolute indefinite suffix *-un* as this is mandatory for (AP) to have verbal properties and thus take an object. Table (2) shows that transitivity did affect the participants' choice as (AP) was rarely used. To eliminate any effect of other factors, sentences with negation, interrogation, and verb modifications were excluded from this table.

Table 2. The effect of *transitivity* on the translation of progressive transitive verbs into imperfective verbs or APs in Arabic

English sentences	Translation with a transitive verb	No. of highly accepted sentences	Translation with AP	No. of highly accepted sentences
Laith is writing a complaint to the director at the moment	<i>lajθ jaktubu fakwa: lil-mudi:ri l-ʔa:n</i>	95	<i>lajθ ka:tubun fakwa: lil-mudi:ri l-ʔa:n</i>	2
The children are playing in the garden	<i>al-aʔfa:l jalʕabu:na fi-l ʕadi:qa</i>	99	<i>al-a ʔfa:l la:ʕibu:na fi-l ʕadi:qa</i>	2
My little sister is watching a horror movie, but she is not frightened.	<i>uxti aʕ-ʕaʕi:ra tufahidu filma ruʕbin</i>	92	<i>uxti aʕ-ʕaʕi:ra mufahidatun filma ruʕbin</i>	3
While Laila was cleaning her room, she fell down and broke her wrist	<i>bajnama ka:nat laila tunaððifu ʕurfataha, ...</i>	96	<i>bajnama ka:nat laila munaððifatan ʕurfataha, ...</i>	3
I am meeting the president next week	<i>saʔuqa:bilu ar-raʔi:sa al-usbu:ʕa al-muqbil</i>	97	<i>ʔana muqa:bilun ar-raʔi:sa al-usbu:ʕa al-muqbil</i>	5
He is extending his hand for peace	<i>ʔinnahu jamuddu jadahu lis-sala:m</i>	84	<i>ʔinnahu ma:ddun jadahu lis-sala:m</i>	53
John is sending the letters tomorrow	<i>dʒo:n sajursilu r-rasaʔila ʕadan</i>	95	<i>dʒo:n mursilun r-rasaʔila ʕadan</i>	16
John is returning the books to the library tomorrow	<i>dʒo:n sajurdʒifu l-kutuba lil-maktabati ʕadan</i>	94	<i>dʒo:n murdʒiʕun l-kutuba lil-maktabati ʕadan</i>	0

The table makes it clear that transitive verbs are highly accepted as translations for English progressive tenses. APs with transitive root verbs, by contrast, are hardly acceptable except for the (AP) *ma:dd* ‘extending’ which was fairly accepted (scored 53). This is because this form is highly used in the Jordanian vernacular especially within the collocation ‘*ma:dd ʔi:duh*’ ‘extending his hand’. Additionally, we will see that this root verb indicates a degree achievement aspectual meaning that is compatible with APs.

Recall that in a transitive verb, there is a transfer of the action from the agent to the object (Fabb, 1997). On the other hand, being nominal, active participle is not supposed to be transitive nor take an object complement. However, this form has verbal and nominal properties (Beeston 1970; Kinberg 2001; Kremers 2003; Muqada 2004; Mughazy 2005; Gadalla 2017). Therefore, it can take an object complement under certain conditions. One of these conditions is being inflected with the absolute indefinite suffix *-un*. In fact, *Verbal* (AP) was widely used in Classical Arabic (CA) as witnessed in the Holy Quran and Arabic prose and poetry (Muqada, 2004). However, Modern Standard Arabic does not use AP as much.

In line with Hopper and Thompson (1980), we assume that an action expressed by a verb is high in transitivity in comparison with an action expressed by a nominal. Therefore, *uxti aʕ-ʕaʕi:ra tufahidu filma ruʕbin* ‘My little sister is watching a horror movie’ is more transitive than the equivalent (AP) clause ‘*uxti aʕ-ʕaʕi:ra mufahidatun filma ruʕbin*’. Moreover, prosody may be at work here. APs that have the indefinite suffix *-un* end with a consonant that is followed by another consonant (the first sound of the object) (6a). This results in two prosodic minor phrases (MiPs) as each word ends with a closed heavy syllable. By contrast, the imperfective ends with the indicative inflection vowel *-u*, which results in an open (light) syllable (6b). As a result, the verb and its complement are uttered as one MiP.

- 6. a. *muʕa:hida-t-un* *film-a* *ruʕb*
 watch:AP-F-INDF *film-ACC* *horror*
 mu.ʕa:.hi.da.tun **fil.** *ma* *ruʕb*
 (mu.ʕa:.hi.da.tun)_{MiP} (**fil.** *ma* *ruʕb)_{MiP}*
 ‘Watching a horror film.’
- b. *tuʕa:hid-u* *film-a* *ruʕb*
 watch:IMPF-IND *film-ACC* *horror*
 tu.ʕa:.hi.du **fil.** *ma* *ruʕb*

(tu.ʃa:hi.du **fil.** ma ruʃb)MIP

‘She is watching a horror film.’

4.2 Futurity of (AP)

Unlike Arabic imperfective which represents present tense, and perfective which expresses the past tense, Arabic does not have a separate form for future aspect/ tense. Instead, Arabic uses a modal auxiliary *sa/ sawfa* ‘will’ plus an imperfective verb. Arabic also uses (AP) inflected with the absolute indefinite ‘-un’ to express future tense (Al-Farahidi, 718-786 AD; Sibawayh 760-797 AD; Benmamoun 2000; Al-Samirra’i 2003; Aoun, Benmamoun, & Choueiri 2010). Eades and Persson (2013:348) show that depending on the context in which it occurs, the (AP) can be a potential marker of tense and grammatical aspectual categories such as ‘perfective’, ‘continuous’ and ‘future’. This indicates that (AP) qualifies as a good translation for an English (PP) tense because it uses this tense to express future planned activities as suggested. This agrees with Mori (2016) who suggests that the progressive is used with a future reference to indicate ‘arrangements, plans, programs, intentions, and decisions’.

The study task included (6) sentences in this regard. Table (3) shows that (AP) makes a good translation to expresses a future tense.

Table 3. The future reading and its effect on translating English (PP) tense into APs in Arabic

English sentence	Highly acceptable (2)	Verbal translation	Acceptable (1)	Highly acceptable (2)	(AP) translation
I am travelling to the states next week.	93	<i>saʔusa:ʃiru ʔila l-wila:ja:t al-muttahida al-ʔusbu:ʃa l-qa:dim</i>	43	53	<i>ʔana musa:ʃirun ʔila l-wila:ja:t al-muttahida al-ʔusbu:ʃa l-qa:dim</i>
I am meeting the president next week.	97	<i>saʔuqa:bilu ar-raʔi:sa al-usbu:ʃa al-muqbil</i>	29	5	<i>ʔana muqa:bilun ar-raʔi:sa al-usbu:ʃa al-muqbil</i>
I am resigning soon.	98	<i>saʔastaqi:lu qari:ban</i>	42	14	<i>ʔana mustaqa:lun qari:ban</i>
John is leaving in three minutes.	81	<i>John saʔuʃa:diru fi: ʔala:ʔ daqa:ʔiq</i>	51	41	<i>John muʃa:dirun fi: ʔala:ʔ daqa:ʔiq</i>
John is sending the letters tomorrow.	95	<i>dʒo:n saʔursilu r-rasaʔila ʔadan</i>	49	16	<i>dʒo:n mursilun r-rasaʔila ʔadan</i>
John is returning the book to the library	94	<i>dʒo:n saʔurdʒiʃu l-kutuba lil-maktabati ʔadan</i>	47	9	<i>dʒo:n murdʒiʃun l-kutuba lil-maktabati ʔadan</i>

As can be seen in Table (3) above, all verbal translations were highly acceptable. As for the (AP), two translations were quite acceptable *ʔana musa:ʃirun ʔila l-wila:ja:t al-muttahida al-ʔusbu:ʃa l-qa:dim* ‘I am travelling to the United States next week’ (53), and *John muʃa:dirun fi: ʔala:ʔati daqa:ʔiq* ‘John is leaving in three minutes (41). Here, APs represent the backgrounded preliminary stage and the outcome stage, the event time of the present-participle situation, and the schematic situation in line with Wada’s (2009) future interpretation of the progressive tense. In addition, APs here indicate the relatively near future as pointed out by Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 171) and Leech (2004: 61-62)^{iv}.

But why do these two verbs *musa:ʃirun* ‘travelling’ (53), and *muʃa:dirun* ‘leaving’ (41) were highly accepted with (AP) future reading? Hallman points out that there is a subclass of eventive verbs that receive the simultaneous reading in the participial form, i.e. verbs of directed motion such as *ra:h* ‘go’, *mafa* ‘walk’, *ʃa:l* ‘carry’, and others. The active participles of these verbs have an essentially progressive interpretation as well as a futurate reading. Mughazy (2004) notices that APs derived from inchoative verbs, such as *waaqif* ‘stand (AP)’, or motion verbs, such as *muttadʒih* ‘head for’, have only non-past (present and future) readings. Jelinek (1981) states that APs derived from motion verbs are readily accepted on futurate readings. Hence, using a future adverbial such as *bukra* ‘tomorrow’ with an (AP) derived from a motion verb such as *misaʔafir* ‘travel’ (AP) is grammatical. By the same token, El-Bakry (1990) argues that APs derived from translocative verbs such as *raagiʃ* ‘return (AP)’ and *raayih* ‘go (AP)’ have future readings. Eisele (1999) observes instances where the use of the (AP) is associated with futurate interpretations as is the case with the class of APs derived from ‘translocative’ or ‘motion’ verbs.

In the second place come the two sentences *ʔana mustaqa:lun qari:ban* ‘I am resigning soon’ (14) and *dʒo:n mursilun r-rasaʔila ʔadan* ‘John is sending the letters tomorrow (16). As for *mustaqa:lun* ‘resigning’, it is not a translocative root. However, it is not used transitively. On the other hand, although *mursilun* ‘sending’ is also translocative, it did not score high because it was used transitively. Similarly, the sentences with lower scores were the ones with an object assigned by the (AP): *muqa:bilun ar-raʔi:sa* ‘meeting the president’ (5) and

murđiſun l-kita:ba ‘returning the book’ (9). Although these two sentences also indicate translocative verbs, their acceptability came lesser. As discussed earlier, having an object after the (AP) highly affects its translation acceptability since transitivity is a verbal property rather than a nominal one. Nonetheless, a closer look shows that *all* (AP) sentences with future reading were either highly acceptable (scored 2) or fairly acceptable (scored 1). Our results support Gadalla (2017) who found that among the highest scores of Arabic (AP) translations were English future simple.

Finally, perhaps the Arabic (AP) translations of the English future sentences were fairly acceptable because the (AP) suggests a stronger determination to do the activity than the imperfective verb because (AP) denotes the action, its incidence and the person doing the action (Hassan 1980; Radwan 1987; Al-Hashemi 2000:).

4.3 Verb Aspectuality

The most well-known aspectual classification of verbs might be Vendler’s (1967): *state*, *activity*, *accomplishment*, and *achievement*. The four classes were categorized in terms of three underlying aspectual notions, i.e. dynamicity, duration, and telicity. States (e.g. *know/have*) are non-dynamic and continuous situations that are homogeneous (Dowty 1979 and McClure 1994). Activities (e.g. *run/swim*) are dynamic events that go on continuously, and have no inherent endpoint (Smith 1997). Accomplishments (e.g. *draw a circle/build a house*) are dynamic and durative events with an inherent endpoint. Achievements (*arrive/die*) are dynamic and near instantaneous events with an inherent endpoint.^v

Peck, Lin and Sun (2013) introduced a new aspectual feature [\pm scale] into the traditional Vendler system in order to more comprehensively account for a wider range of verbs. The researchers noticed that there are ‘degree achievement’ verbs such as *cool*, *widen*, *cook*, *dry*, *lengthen*, and *darken* that show dual telicity, and thus do not fit neatly into Vendler’s aspectual system (Hay et al. 1999). For instance, while atelic predicates are usually only compatible with *for*-adverbials, and telic predicates are usually only compatible with *in*-adverbial, a degree achievement (DA) can be found natural with both *in*- and *for*-adverbial, as illustrated in (7):

- (7) a. atelic: The soup cooled *for an hour*.
 b. telic: The soup cooled *in an hour*. (Hay et al. 1999:127).

Peck, Lin, & Sun. (2013) argue that a verb has the feature [+scalar] if it lexicalizes a scalar change. For example, accomplishments, achievements and (DA) verbs are [+scalar], whereas activities and semelfactives are [-scalar]. Closed scalar change verbs can be further classified into two different classes: multi-point closed scale verbs (accomplishments) and two-point closed scale verbs (true achievements).

With regard to Arabic APs, Jelinek (1981) and Mughazy (2004) maintains that the temporal interpretations of sentences with AP predicates are dependent on the lexical aspect of the APs. Brustad (2000), Mughazy (2005), and Boneh (2010) found that (AP) in different Arabic dialects such as Egyptian Arabic occurs most robustly with ‘telic’ verbs where it has a perfect interpretation that is contingent on the lexical aspect of the underlying verb.

Hallman (2017) contends that (AP) in Syrain Arabic may denote a stative aspect as it is incompatible with the progressive auxiliary *ſam*. In this case, it has a ‘simultaneous’ interpretation:

- (8) ma:hir ħa:bib nawa:l z-zoybi kti:r.
 mahir loving-AP nawal zoghbi much
 ‘Mahir loves Nawal Zoghbi a lot.’

Jelinek (1981) classifies APs in two main lexical classes: duratives and non-duratives. Durative APs are those derived from roots referring to ‘steady states’ or ‘on-going processes’. This category includes statives or motion verbs, e.g. *naayim* ‘sleep (AP)’, *ma:fi* ‘walk (AP)’ and *xa:rig* ‘go out (AP)’. Durative APs have a wide range of aspectual interpretations all subsumed under the ‘imperfective’ term, i.e. present simple, (PP), the present habitual and the futurate.

- (9) ?ana mwa:ifi? ſala iqtira:fi-ak (present simple)
 I agree-AP on suggestion-your
 ‘I agree to your suggestion.’
- (10) ?inta sa:ji? bi-surſa (present progressive)
 You-M drive-AP with-speed
 ‘You are driving fast.’
- (11) ?inti da:jman mit?axxar-a (present habitual)
 You-F always late-F-AP
 ‘You are always late.’
- (12) ?ifna misafr-i:n bukra (future)
 we travel-PL-AP tomorrow

‘We are traveling tomorrow.’

Mughazy (2004) contends that sentences with (AP) predicates license durative adverbials such as *fi talat saʕa:t* ‘in three hours’, if the onset is an accomplishment, as well as punctual adverbials such as *es-sa:ʕa setta* ‘at six o’clock’ and *fi nus sa:ʕa* ‘in half an hour’, which describes the time interval preceding the onset, if the onset is an achievement. Since sentences with (AP) predicates encode the present (or the non-past) tense, they are expected to have futurate readings regardless of the aspectual nature of the onset events.

Thackston (1984, 41-2) asserts that “the active participle often functions, like the English present active participle in *-ing*, as a verbal adjective for on-going action, or the durative aspect.” Moreover, Kremers (2003: 145) argues that “verbal participles have verbal properties, e.g., in being able to assign accusative case.” Additionally, Kharma (1983, 36) states that the (AP) seems “to add an aspectual meaning of continuity”.

The last research question in our study seeks to find out the effect of verb aspectuality on translating English progressive tenses to Arabic active participle. Note that Arabic does not have a specific progressive tense since the imperfective is used to express both habitual and progressive aspects. However, Arabic uses (AP) to express progressive aspect with certain morphology: either with the absolute indefinite inflection *-un* or when preceded with the definite article *al-* (e.g. *ʔula:ʔika ʔal-muxtabiʔun xalfa f-fadʒara...* ‘Those who are hiding behind the tree ...’). The study tool consisted of 38 English sentences that had progressive tenses. Table (4) below shows that 10 verb roots highly accepted the Arabic AP form when translating an English progressive tense^{vi}.

Table 4. Verb that highly accepted Arabic (AP) for English progressive tenses

Verb root	Sentence	Highly acceptable (2)
ʕ w m ‘fast’	<i>ʔbi: ʕa:ʔimun l-jawm</i> ‘Dad is fasting today’	93
r k ʕ ‘kneel’	<i>Wahwa ra:kiʕun l-ʔa:n</i> ‘and he is kneeling now’	77
ð h b ‘go’	<i>Al-muza:riʕu ða:hibun ʔila l- haʕqli l-ʔa:n</i> ‘The farmer is going to the field now’	83
n w m ‘sleep’	<i>Ar-raʕi:ʕu na:ʔimun</i> ‘The baby is sleeping’	95
s t l q ‘lie’	<i>Wahwa l-ʔa:n mustalqin ʕala l-ʔari:ka</i> ‘Now he is lying on the couch’.	85
ʔ t j ‘come	<i>Al-harbu ʔa:tijatun la: mahala</i> ‘War is definitely coming’	94
ʕ w d ‘return’	<i>dʒo:n ʕa:ʔidun ʔila l-manzili l-ʔa:n</i> ‘John is coming home now’	95
b q j ‘stay’	<i>Ana ba:qin fil-bajt</i> ‘I am staying home’	100
ʔ r dʒ h ‘fluctuate’	<i>al-asʕa:ru mutaʔdʒihatun ha: ðhi l-aʕja:m</i> ‘Prices are fluctuating these days’	69
w q f ‘stand’	<i>dʒo:n wa:qifun bidʒa:nib t-ʔari:q</i> ‘John is standing on the side of the road’	78

Moreover, there were 13 root verbs that accepted (AP) to rather a good degree as shown in Table (5) below.

Table 5. Verb roots that fairly accepted Arabic (AP) for English progressive tenses

verb root	Sentence	Acceptable (1)
<i>sa:fara</i> ‘travel’	<i>ʔana musa:ʕirun ʔila l-wila:ja:t al-muttahida al-ʔusbu:ʕa l-qa:dim</i> ‘I am travelling to the United states next week’.	53
<i>ʔafraqa</i> ‘rise’	<i>aʕ-famsu muʕfriqatun bi-xadʒalin xalfa l- buju:m.</i> ‘The sun is rising behind the clouds	52
<i>ʕarada</i> ‘expel’	<i>Lastu biʕa:ridihim.</i> ‘I am not dispelling them’.	49
<i>hana:</i> ‘lean’	<i>Ka:na ar-raʕi:ʕu ha:nin raʕsahu ʕala kataʕi ʔummihi.</i> ‘The baby was leaning his head on his mother’s shoulder’.	60
<i>taʔardʒaha</i> ‘fluctuate’	<i>Al-ʔasʕa:ru mutaʔardʒihatun bi-faklin ha:ddin ha:ði l-ʔaʕja:m</i> ‘Prices are highly fluctuating these days’.	64
<i>ʕafa:</i> ‘float’	<i>ʔunʕur! Al-dʒi ʕu ʕa:ʕin ʕala saʕhi l-birkati</i> ‘Look! The log is floating on the water surface’.	56
<i>hallaq</i> ‘fly’	<i>t-ʕa:ʔiratu l-waraqijjatu muhalliqatun ʕa:ljan.</i> ‘The kite is flying high’.	43
<i>sakana</i> ‘live’	<i>Laila sa:kinatun fi irbid ha: ðhi l-aʕja:m.</i> ‘Laila is living in Irbid nowadays.	39
<i>madada</i> ‘extend’	<i>ʔinnahu jamuddu jadahu lis-sala:m.</i> ‘He is extending his hand for peace’.	53
<i>hama:</i> ‘protect’	<i>ʕalajsa ʕalijjun ha:mi:ka?</i> ‘Isn’t Ali protecting you?’	36
<i>ʕasa:</i> ‘listen’	<i>Hal ʔanta ʕa:ʕin lima: ʔaʕu:lu?</i> ‘Are you listening to what I say?’	55
<i>ba:dara</i> ‘leave’	<i>John musa:dirun l-bila:da fi: ʕala:ʕi daʕa:ʔiq.</i> ‘John is leaving the country in three days’.	50
	<i>John musa:dirun fi: ʕala:ʕi daʕa:ʔiq.</i> ‘John is leaving in three minutes’.	41
<i>ʔax ða</i> ‘take’	<i>dʒo:n laʕsa biʕa:xi ðn mawa:dda ʔixtija:rijja ha:ða l-ʕaʕl.</i> John is not taking any elective courses this semester’	35
	<i>lastu biʕa:xi ðn ʔi dʒra:ʔa:tin ʔuxra</i> ‘I am not taking any further actions’.	61

In total, 23 root verbs accepted the Arabic (AP) for the English (PP) tenses. This indicates that Arabic AP is a good equivalent for English progressive tenses.

This raises the question: what makes these verbs prone to accept the (AP) translation? (AP) or *Ism l-fa'il*, as dubbed in Arabic, refers to the event, its recurrence, renewal and agent (Al-Ansari, 1966). The (AP) is "a derived noun which denotes an absolute temporary action as well as its agent" (Hassan 1980: 238). Therefore, when we say *qa:ri?* 'reader', it indicates the event of reading and the person who does the event (Yaqut 1994:104). When inflected with nunation^{viii}, Arabic (AP) indicates a state-of-affairs or future activity (Al-Samirra'i, 147-149: 2003).

Thus, we find the APs with acceptable or highly acceptable scores can be classified as follows: first, all APs that are highly acceptable are durative APs that refer to 'steady states' or 'on-going processes'. This, in fact, supports Gadalla (2017), Jelinek (1981) and Wright (1967). This category includes statives (*sawama* 'fast', *rakaʕa* 'kneel' *nawama* 'sleep', *baqija* 'stay' *stalqa*: 'lie' *waqafa* 'stand') or motion verbs (*ʕawada* 'return', *?ataja* 'come', *ʔahaba* 'go' *?ardzaʕa* 'fluctuate'). We find that these verb roots express two-point degree achievement. For instance, *sa:?im* 'fasting', from *sa:ma* 'fasted', is a two-point (DA) since people become 'fasting' as soon as they stop eating.

Second, for acceptable APs, some express translocatives such as *sa:fara* 'travel', *ʕarada* 'expel', and *ʕa:dara* 'leave' which all scored between 49-53. These three APs have futurate reading. In other words, APs are more likely to have a future reading when their roots indicate translocation. Another group includes multi-point degree achievements such as *?afraqa* 'rise', *hana*: 'lean', *ʕafa*: 'float' *madada* 'extend'. These all have scored between 52-60. The multi-point closed scale verbs and APs correspond to accomplishments in that these verbs have the features of [+dynamic, +scale, -punctual, +telic] (Xiao & McEnery (2004).

The last subgroup expresses on-going processes such as *ʕasa*: 'listen' *hama*: 'protect' *hallaqa* 'fly' *taʕardzaʕa* 'fluctuate'. These have scored between 39-64. However, these APs do not an inherent endpoint as they denote activities, i.e. they are atelic. Such atelic predicates are more compatible with progressive verbs than with APs.

In a nutshell, two-point degree achievements express a transient state and therefore they highly accept the (AP) translation. Multi-point closed scalar verbs also express degree achievements and thus they accept the (AP) to a lesser degree. By contrast, activities, which are [-scalar] express ongoing activities and so they are better translated as imperfective verbs. This explains the unacceptability of translating activity verbs as Arabic APs (e.g. *Uxti aʕ-ʕaxi:ra muʕahidatun filma ruʕbin* 'My little sister is watching a horror movie, but she is not scared' especially when followed by an object as the verbal properties become more robust than the nominal ones implied by APs.

5. Conclusion

This paper sought to find the effect of transitivity, futurity, and aspectuality on the translation of English present progressive (PP) into Arabic verbal and active participle counterparts. The study found that transitive verbs are more likely to be translated as imperfective verbs than transitive APs. This is because (AP) does not have as strong verbal properties as lexical verbs. As for the future reading of the progressive verb, the study found that translocative verbs accept (AP) translations fairly enough. Finally, the findings also reveal that the aspectuality of the verb affects its translation as an imperfective verb or (AP). State-of-affair actions, achievements and accomplishments accepted (AP) translations more than activities.

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Appendix

Choose the right translation for the following sentences. Give 2 for the best translation, (1) for the less acceptable one, and (0) for the non-accepted translation. If the translations have the same acceptability, give them both the same number (e.g. 2, 2).

No.	English sentence	G	1 st translation (imprf)	G	2 nd translation (AP)
1.	My father is fasting today	1	?bi:jaʃu:mu l-jawm	2	?bi: ʃa:ʔimun l-jawm
	Laith is praying thuhr . He is kneeling now. / The farmer is going to his farm right now.	1	wahwa jarkaʃu l-ʔa:n Al-muza:riʃu ja ʔhabu ʔila l-haʃqli l-ʔa:n	2	wahwa ra:kiʃun l-ʔa:n Al-muza:riʃu ʔa:hibun ʔila l-haʃqli l-ʔa:n
	Don't make any noise. The baby is sleeping .		Ar-raʔi:ʃu jana:mu		Ar-raʔi:ʃu na:ʔimun
	Dad has a chronic back pain. So, he does not like sitting long. Now he is lying down on the couch.		wahwa l-ʔa:n jastalqi ʃala l-ʔari:ka		wahwa l-ʔa:n mustalqin ʃala l-ʔari:ka
	Laith is writing a complaint letter to the director at the moment.		lajθ jaktubu fakwa: lil-mudi:ri l-ʔa:n		lajθ ka:tubun fakwa: lil-mudi:ri l-ʔa:n
	I am travelling to the states next week.		saʔusa:firu ʔila l-wila:ja:t al-muttahida al-ʔusbu:ʃa l-qa:dim		ʔana musa:firun ʔila l-wila:ja:t al-muttahida al-ʔusbu:ʃa l-qa:dim
	John is returning home right now.		dʒo:n jaʃu:du ʔila l-manzili l-ʔa:n		dʒo:n ʃa:ʔidun ʔila l-manzili l-ʔa:n
	The war is coming no doubt.		Al-ħarbu taʔti: la: mahala		Al-ħarbu ʔa:tijatun la: mahala
	The sun is rising behind the clouds.		af-ʃamsu tufriqu bi-xadʒalin xalfa l- ʔuju:m.		af-ʃamsu mufriqatun bi-xadʒalin xalfa l- ʔuju:m.
	I am not dismissing them.		ʔana la: ʔaʔrudahum		Lastu biʔa:ridihim.
	The children are playing in the yard.		Al-atfa:l jalʃabu:na fi-l hadi:qa		Al-atfa:l la:ʃibu:na fi-l hadi:qa
	My little sister is watching a horror movie, but she is not scared.		Uxti aʃ-ʃaʔi:ra tufahidu filma ruʃbin		Uxti aʃ-ʃaʔi:ra mufahidatun filma ruʃbin
	While Laila was cleaning her room, she fell down and broke her wrist.		Bajnama ka:nat Laila tunaʔḏiʔu ʔurfataha, ...		Bajnama ka:nat Laila munaʔḏiʔatun ʔurfataha, ...
	The economy is growing fast in the Far East.		ʔal-ʔiqti ʃa:du janmu: sari:ʃan fiʃ-farqi l-ʔawsaʔ		ʔal-ʔiqti ʃa:du na:min sari:ʃan fiʃ-farqi l-ʔawsaʔ
	The baby was leaning on her mother's shoulder.		Ka:na ar-raʔi:ʃu jahni: raʔsahu ʃala kataʔi ʔummihi.		Ka:na ar-raʔi:ʃu ha:nin raʔsahu ʃala kataʔi ʔummihi.
	I am staying home today.		Ana ʔabqa: fil-bajt		Ana ba:qin fil-bajt
	The prices are fluctuating these days.		al-asʃa:ru tataʔdʒahu ha: ʔhi l-ajja:m		al-asʃa:ru mutaʔdʒihatun ha: ʔhi l-ajja:m
	The prices are fluctuating sharp these days.		Al-ʔasʃa:ru tataʔdʒahu bi-faklin ha:ddin ha:ʔi l-ʔajja:m		Al-ʔasʃa:ru mutaʔardʒihatun bi-faklin ha:ddin ha:ʔi l-ʔajja:m
	Look! The log is floating on the surface of the pool.		ʔunḏur! Al-dʒi ʔu jatfu: ʃala saʔhi l-birkati'		ʔunḏur! Al-dʒi ʔu ta:fin ʃala saʔhi l-birkati'
	The kite is flying high.		t-ta:ʔiratu l-waraqijjatu		t-ta:ʔiratu l-waraqijjatu

		<i>tuhalliqatu</i> ʕa:lijan.	<i>muhalliqatun</i> ʕa:lijan.
Laila is living in Irbid nowadays.		Laila <i>taskunu</i> fi irbid ha: ðhi l-ajja:m	Laila <i>sa:kinatun</i> fi irbid ha: ðhi l-ajja:m
I am meeting the president next week.		<i>saʔuqa:bilu</i> ar-raʔi:sa al-usbu:ʕa al-muqbil	ʔana <i>muqa:bilun</i> ar-raʔi:sa al-usbu:ʕa al-muqbil
I am resigning soon.		<i>saʔastaqi:lu</i> qari:ban	ʔana <i>mustaqi:lun</i> qari:ban
Listen! The little boy is yelling at your brother.		ʔistamiʕ! ʕ-ʕabijju <i>jaʕruxu</i> ʕala axi:ka	ʔistamiʕ! ʕ-ʕabijju <i>ʕa:rixun</i> ʕala axi:ka
We are working hard to find some solutions for global warming.		<i>nahnu naʕmalu</i> li-ʔi:dʒa:di ...	<i>nahnu ʕa:miluna</i> li-ʔi:dʒa:di ...
I saw the boy walking to the store.		<i>raʔajtu</i> l-walada jamfi: lil-matdʒari	<i>raʔajtu</i> l-walada ma:fijan lil-matdʒari
He is extending his hand for peace.		ʔinnahu jamuddu jadahu lis-sala:m	ʔinnahu ma:ddun jadahu lis-sala:m
Isn't Ali protecting you?		<i>ʕalajsa ʕalijjun jahmi:ka?</i>	<i>ʕalajsa ʕalijjun ha:mi:ka?</i>
Are you listening to what I say?		<i>Hal ʔanta tuʕbi: lima: ʔaqu:lu?</i>	<i>Hal ʔanta ʕa:bin lima: ʔaqu:lu?</i>
You are not following what I say.		<i>Anta la: taibaʕu ma: ʔaqu:l</i>	<i>Lasta bi-tabiʕin ma: ʔaqu:l</i>
I am not taking any further actions.		<i>La: ʔa:xu ðu ʔidʒra:ʔa:tin ʔuxra</i>	<i>lastu biʔa:xi ðn ʔi dʒra:ʔa:tin ʔuxra</i>
John is leaving in three minutes.		<i>John sajuwa:diru</i> fi: ʕala:ʕ daqa:ʔiq	<i>John muwa:dirun</i> fi: ʕala:ʕ daqa:ʔiq
John is sending the letters tomorrow.		<i>dʒo:n sajuʕsilu</i> r-rasaʔila wadan	<i>dʒo:n mursilun</i> r-rasaʔila wadan
John is not taking any elective courses this semester.		<i>dʒo:n la: jaʔxu ðu mawa:dda ʔixtija:rijja ha:ða l-faʕl.</i>	<i>dʒo:n lajja biʔa:xi ðn mawa:dda ʔixtija:rijja ha:ða l-faʕl.</i>
John is not taking his enemies as friends		<i>dʒo:n la: jaʔxu ðu ʕaduwwahu ʕadi:qahu.</i>	<i>dʒo:n lajja biʔa:xi ðn ʕaduwwahu ʕadi:qahu.</i>
John is returning the book to the library tomorrow.		<i>dʒo:n sajuʕdʒiʕu</i> l-kutuba lil-maktabati wadan	<i>dʒo:n murdʒiʕun</i> l-kutuba lil-maktabati wadan
John is standing next to the pole		<i>dʒo:n jaqifu</i> bidʒa:nib s-sa:rijja	<i>dʒo:n wa:qifun</i> bidʒa:nib s-sa:rijja

ⁱ The following abbreviations will be used in the gloss line: NOM: nominative, ACC: accusative, GEN: genitive, IND: indicative, SUBJ: subjunctive, PRF: perfective, IMPF: imperfective, AP: active participle, 3SM: third singular masculine, FEM: feminine.

ⁱⁱ (AP) has several forms depending on the root verb from which they are derived. The most common ones are *fa:ʕil* for tri-consonantal verbs, and *mufʕil* for quadri-consonantal verbs.

ⁱⁱⁱ Transliteration will follow the APA symbols.

^{iv} Allen (1966: 215), by contrast, suggested that the progressive is also used for events in the distant future when certain adverbs such as: *after a year, in five years, and in two years* are used with the progressive to refer to the future time.

^v Regarding the question of whether we are classifying verbs only, entire VPs, or sentences, we follow the position of Krifka (1989, 1998) and Rothstein (2008) in assuming that verbs can be classified into aspectual classes, and that we can predict the aspectual classification of sentences based on the aspectual class of a head verb because verbs of particular aspectual classes interact with arguments and modifiers in principled ways.

^{vi} There is some overlap between this section and preceding two sections because we look at the verb root here regardless of the linguistic context in which it occurred.

^{vii} Nunation is the addition of *-un* suffix to the noun. It contrasts with the construct state where the first noun of the construct is inflected with *-u* suffix.

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