**Actuality Entailments in Palestinian Arabic**

In this talk we discuss the ability modal /?d̪r/ ‘able’ in Palestinian Arabic (PA). We show that /?d̪r/ behaves like ability modals in Hindi, French, and Greek, in giving rise to Actuality Entailments (AEs) in the past perfective, but not the imperfective:

1. Yusuf havaii-jahaaz ur.aa sak-aa (#lekin us-ne havaii-jahaaz nahi ur.aa-yaa) (Hindi)  
   Yusuf air-ship fly CAN-PVF (but he-erg air-ship Neg fly-PVF)  
   ‘Yusuf could fly the airplane, but he didn’t fly the airplane.’ (could fly $\Rightarrow$ flew: AE)

   b. Yusuf havaii-jahaaz ur.aa sak-taa thea (lekin vo havaii-jahaaz nahi ur.aa-taa thea)  
   Yusuf air-ship fly CAN-IMP be.pst (but he-air-ship Neg fly-IMP Be.pst)  
   ‘Yusuf is/ was able to fly airplanes but he didn’t/ didn’t fly airplanes.’

2. ?d̪r jrawwIè (#bas ma: rawwah) (PA)  
   CAN.PAST.PFV.3sg.M 3sg.M-go.home but NEG go.home.PAST.PFV.3sg.M  
   ‘He could go home, but he didn’t.’ (could go home $\Rightarrow$ went home: AE)

   b. kan br?dar jrawwIè bas ma: rawwah  
   PAST CAN.IMP 3sg.M-go.home but NEG go.home.PAST.PFV.3sg.M  
   ‘He could go home, but he didn’t.’

We present data from PA that favor the aspectual shift analysis of AEs (Martin and Mari 2007, Homer 2010), and challenge two prominent alternatives: Bhatt’s (1999) treatment of ability modals as implicative predicates, and Hacquard’s (2009) Preservation of Event Description principle (PED).

**I. PA templatic morphology.** We begin by highlighting three relevant morphological templates in PA:

3. Given a tri-consonantal root XYZ in PA,
   (i) \( XyYyZ \) (past perfective – PFV)  
      e.g. /ktabl/ ‘write’ $\Rightarrow$ [katab] ‘he wrote (perfective)’  
   (ii) a. biXYyZ (imperfective – IMP)  
      e.g. /rkd̪l/ ‘run’ $\Rightarrow$ [birkod̪] ‘he runs (generic)’
      b. ?am biXYyZ (progressive – PROG)  
      e.g. /rkd̪l/ ‘run’ $\Rightarrow$ [?am birkod̪] ‘he is running’
   (iii) XaaYyZ (nominalized – NML)  
      e.g. /?wa?f/ ‘stand’ $\Rightarrow$ [wa?if] ‘he is standing’

We set the stage by using templates (3ii-b) and (3ii) in a novel two-way classification of PA roots, which we call Type-A and Type-B roots: Type-A roots give rise to the familiar “ongoing” progressive reading only in template (3ii-b); Type-B roots give rise to the same reading only in template (3iiii) – see (4/5). (The two types are complementary, and they correspond, plausibly though not crucially, to non-stative and stative predicates, respectively). The root /?d̪r/ is classified as a Type-B root (6).

4. Type-A roots:  
   a. Template (3ii-b): ?am birkod̪ / br?ztf / bidhan  
      (he is running/playing/painting)
   b. Template (3iiii): raaktI? / ?aaztf / daahtI?  
      (*) he is running/playing/painting

5. Type-B roots:  
      (+ he is sleeping/sitting/quiet)
      (he is sleeping/sitting/quiet)

6. Iyad (/* ?aadItI?) /* ?am br?dar) jimfî  
   Iyad (CAN.NML)/(CAN.PROG) walk  
   ‘Iyad can/is able to walk’

**II. Argument against /?d̪r/ as implicative.** Bhatt treats can/able as an implicative predicate, as in (7).

7. \[can] = \[\lambda P_{(e,s)} : \text{P takes effort, P}\]  
   \[can \text{run}\] is defined only if running takes effort; if defined \[can \text{run} = [\text{run}]\]

To Bhatt, AEs follow from the semantics of can/able in the perfective. In the imperfective AEs are blocked because of the non-actual generic semantics that arise in the presence of the imperfective. In our counter-argument we note that the PA template (3iiii) never gives rise to generic/non-actual readings by itself:
III. Argument against Hacquard. We argue that (9) also challenges Hacquard’s account of AEs. Unlike Bhatt, Hacquard takes ability modals to have non-actual semantics. She accounts for AEs as follows: ability modals are interpreted below aspect heads. The PFV head introduces an event variable e, whose description is provided by the complement VP. When the VP includes an ability modal, e is assigned a modal description, e.g. as an eventuality of possibly flying the plane (for 1a). To derive AEs, Hacquard adds the PED:

(10) Preservation of Event Descriptions (PED): For all worlds $w_1, w_2$, if e occurs in $w_1$ and in $w_2$, and e is a $P$-event in $w_1$, then $ceteris paribus$, e is a $P$-event in $w_2$ as well.

If the PED is assumed, the description of e in the relevant possible world(s) carries over to the actual world, and e (in 1a) becomes an event of actually having flown the airplane. AEs are derived thus.

Hacquard’s account of why the imperfective blocks AEs is similar to Bhatt’s: the imperfective aspect head, in e.g. (1b), introduces an event argument e in a non-actual/generic world. Since e does not exist in the actual world, its description as an eventuality of possibly flying planes does not become actual. Our counter-argument repeats the observation that template (3iii) does not give rise to generic/non-actual semantics (recall (8)), and accordingly we expect (9) to produce AEs, contrary to fact.

IV. Argument in favor of aspect-shift. The argument for the aspect shift analysis compares /?dt/ to other Type-B roots. As examples we choose the Type-B roots in (5), and show that they are given the inchoative/ingressive reading in three constructions: (i) the past perfective, (ii) the progressive, and (iii) the habitual.

(11) a. (lamma jof-o) naam/?a?ad/sakat (past perfective – template (3i))
   (when saw.1sg-him) sleep/sit/quiet.PAST.PFV.3sg
   ‘(when I saw him) he fell asleep/sat down/shut up (+he was sleeping/sitting/quiet)’

b. ëam binaam/bt?yod/btskot (progressive – template (3ii-b))
   sleep/sit/silence.PROG.3sg
   ‘he is falling asleep/seating himself/shutting up (+he is sleeping/sitting/quiet)’

c. (lamma kont ajufo) kaan inaa/mj?l/ij/kot (habitual – jiXYVZ)
   (when PAST.1sg see.HAB.1sg-him) PAST sleep/sit/silence.HAB.3sg
   ‘when I used to see him, he would fall asleep/sit/shut up (+he would be sleeping/sitting/quiet)’

We take the readings in (11) to result from aspect shift, and show that AEs arise in the very same environments where Type-B roots are shifted: the perfective (2a), the habitual (12), and the progressive (13):

(12) lamma kaan b ëamman, kaan (kol ween u ween) yt?dar yzuur el-batra. #bas maa raah
    when PAST in Amman, PAST (occasionally) HAB visit Petra. but NEG go.PFV
    ‘When he was in Amman, he was able to visit Petra, but he didn’t’

(13) btl awwal ma kaan faahtm el as?ileh. halla? ëam yt?dar ygalles el waajeb.
    at first NEG PAST understand.NML the questions. now HAB.PROG finish the homework.
    #bas maa rah ygalles
    but NEG FUT finish
    ‘At first he didn’t understand the questions. Now he is about to finish the homework’