

Epistemic modality in Makkan Arabic: the case of *qad*

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The present paper investigates the relationship between modality and aspect in Makkan Arabic (MA). In MA, an epistemic modal *qad* interacts with aspect; for instance:

- (1) *qad* *katab-t* *l-waʒib* *ʔams*
qad write.PFV-1.SG. the-homework yesterday
'I already wrote the homework yesterday.'

In (1), *qad* is followed by a perfective VP complement. The modal *qad* is free from an aspectual marking. The event of writing *kaba-t* is completed; hence it is impossible to cancel it 'but I did not write it'. Therefore, the event of writing is actualized with perfective aspect here, and it is called *actual entailment*.

However, *qad* epistemic modal reading is acquired by the imperfective VP complement in (2). It is possible that the speaker writes his/her homework at sometime today. It is true that the event is asserted by saying 'but I did not write the homework.'

- (2) *qad* *ʔa-ktub* *l-waʒib* *l-yuum*
qad 1.SG.-write.IMPFV the-homework the-today
'I might write the homework today.'

In fact, my observation is not captured by Bhatt (1999; 2006)'s perspective on Hindi-Urdu ability modal. The interaction between modal and aspect exhibits various patterns across languages (Bhatt, 1999; 2006), (Hacquard, 2006; 2009), and (Davis, Louie, Matthewson, Paul, Peterson, Reis-Silva, 2010). Two influential approaches discussed such phenomenon in Hindi-Urdu (Bhatt, 1999; 2006), and in French and Italian (Hacquard, 2006; 2009). We compared our data with Bhatt (1999; 2006)'s proposal as a stepping stone analysis in Hindi-Urdu

In Hindi-Urdu, Bhatt (1999; 2006) argued that the ability modal *sak* receives two interpretations due to aspectual morphological distinction. Actual entailment is always expressed by perfective aspect. To obtain ability modal reading and a generic one, imperfective aspect is always marked on the modal *sak*.

Accordingly, Bhatt proposed two operators for *sak* ability modal. They are *ABLE* and *Generative* (GEN) operators. So, the modal *sak* has a base implicative. The base implicative refers to some sort of effort is carried by a subject analogical to an implicative verb '*managed to*'. To derive actuality, the ability modal, which has the base implicative, combines with *ABLE* operator parallel to '*managed to*' in the perfective aspect. For modal reading, the GEN is mapped to *ABLE* in the imperfective. It is false that GEN refers to an actualized event; hence it is absent with perfective.

Therefore, I question the following: (A) Is epistemic modal *qad* sustainable with perfective aspect in MA? (B) Considering Bhatt(1999; 2006)'s proposal, is the GEN operator applicable with MA epistemic modal? I argue that perfective aspect eradicates *qad* epistemic modality reading in MA. I also realize another MA modal that is ability modal *gider* 'able.PFV' and *yi-gdar* 'able.IMPFV' are analogical to Hindi-Urdu data discussed in Bhatt (1999; 2006). Interestingly, aspect marker is overt on MA ability modal while it is absent on MA epistemic. The present paper aims to account for the relationship between epistemic *qad* and ability *gidir/yi-gdar* modals, and aspect in MA.

References: Bhatt, Rajesh. 1999. *Covert Modality in Non-Finite Contexts*. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Pennsylvania. Bhatt, Rajesh. 2006. *Covert modality in non-finite contexts*. NY: Mouton de Gruyter. Davis, H.; M Louie; L Matthewson; I. Paul; T Peterson; and A Reis-Silva. 2010. *Perfective aspect and circumstantial modality: Across linguistic approach*. *The Proceedings of SULA 5: The semantics of Under-Represented Languages in the Americas*. Amherst, MA: GLSA, 17-32. Hacquard, Valentine. 2006. *Aspects of modality*. Cambridge, MA: MIT thesis. Hacquard, Valentine. 2009. *On the event relativity of modal auxiliaries*. *Nat Lang Semantics* 18. 79- 114.