The Typology Of Progressive Constructions In Arabic Dialects

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1 Introduction

1.1 The PROGRESSIVE aspect (PROG): “conveys the idea that an event is progressing dynamically over a time frame opened up by an utterance” (Mair [2012]).

1.2 It is a subcategory of the IMPERFECTIVE (IPFV) aspect that has a more specific meaning. (Comrie [1976] 25)

![Figure 1: Deo’s (2019) representation of PROG]

1.3 Progressiveness differs from imperfectivity in semantic (ibid.:33) and typological/historical (Mair [2012]) respects:

1.3.1 Imperfective verbs do not exclude a habitual reading (Comrie [1976]:34):

(1) *Chaque jour à cinq heures le poète écrivait un poème.*

- a. Each day at five the poet wrote a poem. **HABITUAL**
- b. Each day at five the poet was writing a poem. **EVENT-IN-PROGRESS**

1.3.2 PROG is reserved for eventive predicates (i.e., activities, achievements, and accomplishments).

1.3.3 PROG historically “younger” than other aspectual categories (Deo [2019]), and is thus “rarer in the world’s languages than the perfective/imperfective distinction” (Mair [2012]).

1.4 Languages are divided in three categories from the perspective of their expression of PROG (Deo [2019]):

1.4.1 Zero-PROG: “context-dependent strategy for encoding and recovery of sub-meanings.”

1.4.2 Emergent-PROG: “partially context dependent and partially explicit marking.”

1.4.3 Categorical–PROG: “explicit marking strategy for encoding and recovery of sub-meanings.”

1.5 These are not just synchronic states that are independent of each other, but they are historically ordered stages of a four stage cycle.
1.6 The goal of this paper is to provide:

1.6.1 A description of the historical underpinnings of the development of the progressive category in Arabic dialects.

1.6.2 A survey of a representative sample of Arabic dialects with respects to their encoding of PROG.

1.6.3 The classification of the dialects according to the typology in §1.4 and their strategies for expressing PROG.

2 The Historical Development of the Progressive Category in Spoken Arabic

2.1 The Progressive in Semitic and Arabic

2.1.1 The progressive aspect is not fully grammaticalized in old West Semitic languages where the main aspectual distinction is between the PERFECTIVE (PFV) and the IPFV.

2.1.2 The older stages of Arabic also lacked a grammaticalized progressive, judging by the Classical Arabic and Semitic data, i.e., the morphological encoding of the progressive arises at some point in the history of Arabic but it is not inherited from the proto-language.

2.1.3 Cross-linguistically, the IPFV has 3 different readings (Deo 2019), all available in Classical Arabic, and in a handful of dialects.

(2) Generic/habitual reading: (Kuwaiti)

\[
\text{ništirí} \quad \text{tanākir} \quad \text{wi-ňsubb} \quad \text{fi} \quad l-\text{birča}
\]

We buy tanks of water and pour (it) into the cistern. (Johnstone 1967:143)

(3) Event in Progress: (Kuwaiti)

\[
\text{wi-lán} \quad \text{asağãl} \quad \text{lkum} \quad \text{iš-šarît} \quad \text{hãda}
\]

And now I am recording this tape for you. (ibid.:143)

(4) Continuous reading with lexical states: (Bahraynî)

- \( ṭoḥibb \quad il-bâḥar \) ?
  love.2.IPV DEF-sea

Do you like the sea?

- \( na’\text{am} \quad aḥibb-ih \) \( wi-di \quad kill \quad agl-ad \) \( ẓ\text{ind-ih} \)
  yes \( \text{love.1SG.IPV-OBL.3MSG} \) and-DEM always sit.1.SG.IPV by-OBL.3MSG

Yes, I like it, and I always sit by it. (ibid. 204-5)

2.2 The Rise of Progressive Marking and the Reorganization of the TAM Systems

2.2.1 Cohen [1984] shows how the innovative verbal systems of Arabic dialects arose by means of trying to encode the concomitance of two actions, be it in the PFV or the IPFV.
2.2.2 In Classical Arabic, while the prefix conjugation still bears all the readings of the IPFV \((2)-(4)\), the active participle when used as a verb is the main form expressing concomitance in the realm of the IPFV (Cohen 1984:276). This applies to dynamic transitive predicates. As for stative verbs, “le participe désigne un état dont ne sont pas envisagés les termes” (ibid.:277).

2.2.3 By our definition, then, CA is a zero-PROG language since its strategy for conveying event in progress is nevertheless context dependent: The event in progress meaning is only accessible for certain types of predicates in the right context, which is not what categorical-PROG or emergent-PROG languages look like.

2.2.4 Arabic dialects, by contrast, have grammaticalized more aspectual distinctions, and have developed various strategies in order to encode the progressive aspect.

2.2.5 This development is actually responsible for many Arabic dialects’ TAM systems today, since the integration of auxiliaries to mark finer aspectual distinctions has led to the reorganization of those systems. Specifically, it is the grammaticalization of the progressive aspect that led to the synchronization of affairs.

2.2.6 For this reason, many dialects have now a marked distinction between modal and non modal forms, because their older progressive forms became indicative imperfectives (e.g., \(b\)-imperfectives in Levantine Arabic).

2.2.7 It is precisely this kind of development that will be explored in \(\S 4\) after looking at the synchronic situation of progressive marking in Arabic dialects.

3 The Progressive in Arabic Dialects

3.1 Typological Classification

3.1.1 Zero-PROG: The dialect in question has no specific way of encoding the PROG and the event-in-progress reading always needs to be recovered from context.

3.1.2 Emergent-PROG: The dialect in question has (a) specific way(s) to encode the PROG but it is optional and the imperfective morphology can still convey the event-in-progress reading.

3.1.3 Categorical-PROG: The dialect in question has a way of encoding that is generalized and thus the event-in-progress reading is blocked for the imperfective.

| Zero-PROG dialects | Emergent-PROG dialects | Categorical-PROG dialects |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Wādi Ḥadramawt (1A), Lahej, Aden, Ḥabbān, Abyan (Yemen) | Sason (Turkey) (6A), Salt (Jordan) (7A), Als Murrah (Gulf) (8A), Moroccan (9A), Sedentary Oman (10A), Khartoum (Sudan) (11A), Djidjelli (Algeria) (12A) | Tunisian (13A), Maltese (14A), Benghazi (15A), Tripoli (16A) (Libya), Khuzestan (17A), Šawi (18A), Uzbekistan Arabic (19A), Iraqi (20A), Levantine (21A), Hijazi (22A), Gulf (23A), Mardin City (24A) |

Table 1: Arabic Dialects according to their PROG-marking

1. Vanhove 2011
2. Taine-Cheikh 2011
3.2 The sources and morphosyntactic forms of the Arabic progressive constructions

3.2.1 Cross-linguistically, there are four major lexical sources for progressive constructions (Bybee et al. [1994]:128-129):

- **Locative elements** in the verbal auxiliary (e.g., a posture verb like ‘sit’ or verb expressing “the notion of being in a location without reference to a specific posture like ‘stay’”), or “postpositions or prepositions indicating location” ([ibid.]:129-130).

- **Copula** functioning as an auxiliary + a non-finite form.

- **Movement sources** such as ‘come’ (Motu), ‘go’ (Guaymi), ‘to, toward’ (Mano), etc.

- **Reduplication** of one of the stem's syllables.

- **Other sources**: verbs meaning ‘keep on’ or ‘continue’ as auxiliairies, or the word ‘now’ as an affix.
3.2.2 These can be perfectly integrated as affixal progressives (e.g., a preverb), and thus yield a synthetic progressive construction, or they can be periphrastic Mair (2012:809).

| Source Dialect | Strategy | Morphosyntactic type | Example |
|----------------|----------|----------------------|---------|
| Salt (Jordan)  | gāš id ‘sit’ | AUX | (7A) |
| Oman (Sedentary) | gāšls ‘sit’ | AUX | (10A) |
| Sudan          | gāš id | AUX | (11A) |
| Tunisian       | gāš od/ fi‘sit/ in’ | AUX / PREP | (13A) |
| Maltese        | qed ‘sit’ | AUX | (14A) |
| Benghazî, Tripoli | gāš id / fi’remain / in’ | AUX / PREP | (15A-16A) |
| Khuzestan      | gāš od ‘sit’ | AUX | (17A) |
| Shâwi          | gâš d ‘sit’ | AUX | (18A) |
| Uzbekistan     | nâm ‘lie’ | AUX | (19A) |
| Iraq           | gâš id, qad, qa, da ‘sit’ | AUX | (20A) |
| Hijâz          | b- (<bayn) ‘between’ | PREVERB | (22A) |
| Mardin City    | qayem ‘stand’ | AUX | (24A) |
| Copula         | Djidjelli | ka-ku (< kä-n-yakûn) ‘be’ | PREVERB | (12A) |
|                | Anatolian (Sason, Kinderib) | ku (< yakûn) ‘be’ | PREVERB | (6A) |
| ‘do’            | Levantine | ‘am(mâl) ‘work’ | AUX/PREVERB | (21A) |
|                | Taza (Morrocco) | xaddûm ‘work’ | AUX | (9Ac) |
| Other/not sure | Central Yemen | ya, ta, qa | PREVERB | |
|                | Âl-Murrah | gâm | PREVERB | (8A) |

Table 2: Strategies used for PROG-marking in Arabic dialects

3.2.3 The table shows that Arabic dialects display the same kind of distribution found in a large sample of unrelated languages: “The semantic content of expressions recruited for PROG is overwhelmingly locative” (Deo 2019).

4 The Progressive to Imperfective Shift

4.1 Cohen (1984) had already noticed that many dialects introduced a new aspectual subdivision, reducing the scope of the bare prefix conjugation that was inherited with all its semantic content (2)-(4).

4.2 He also noticed a grammaticalization path that became later on a well studied one in semantic and typological literature: the progressive to imperfective shift (Deo 2015).

\[ (8) \quad \text{a. } X_{\text{IPFV}} \quad \text{zero-PROG} \]
\[ \text{b. } (Y_{\text{PROG}}) X_{\text{IPFV}} \quad \text{emergent-PROG} \]
\[ \text{c. } Y_{\text{PROG}}, X_{\text{IPFV}} \quad \text{categorical-PROG} \]
\[ \text{d. } Y_{\text{IPFV}} \quad \text{generalized-PROG} \]

3. *qad, i.e., the particle marking the perfect aspect.
4.3 (8a) and (8b) are formally identical: generalized-PROG is a diachronic term, whereas zero-PROG is a synchronic one.

4.4 The jump form (8c) to (8d) is explained by the overuse of the innovative variant Y$_{PROG}$ whose semantic meaning is weakened over time such that it starts encoding all meanings available to the IPFV.

4.5 This jump would follow a set of steps whereby speakers use the PROG marker in infelicitous contexts where the meaning can be retrieved by hearers, and from there extend it to other uses until it does not convey exclusively the event-in-progress reading anymore.

4.6 For example, this would involve speakers using the PROG marker with stative predicates, which are not compatible with PROG, but hearers can retrieve a continuous reading from it, which is a more general subcategory of the IPFV.

4.7 As for habitual readings, they are already licensed in the scope of a quantifier.

(9) **Tunis Arabic: Progressive with Quantifier:**

\[
\text{qāḥd } \text{yoskor} \quad \text{koll } \text{nhār h-al-ayyēmēt}
\]

\[
\text{sit.AP.MSG } \text{get_drunk.IPFV.3MSG } \text{every } \text{Dem-Def-days.}
\]

He’s been getting drunk every day these days. **HABITUAL**

This type of example gives rise to “restricted habit” readings, which can then broaden their domain by speaker overuse, leading to the generalization of the progressive to imperfective. This seems to be happening in San’ā? Arabic **[25A]**.

4.8 The progressive to imperfective path is actually responsible for certain distributions today: The indicative preverb of certain dialects comes from a historical progressive form.

(10) **14th C. Syrian Arabic:**

\[
\text{kunnā } \text{l-bāriḥata } \text{... bi-našrabu}
\]

\[
\text{be.PVF.1PL } \text{DEF-eve } \text{... PROG-drink.IPFV.1PL}
\]

We were drinking ... the night before.

4.9 After this generalization, Levantine dialects with $b$-imperfects innovated a new progressive marker: They went through the cycle once completely and are now in the 3rd stage of it a second time. In the same family of dialects, Cyprus Arabic **[4A]** went through the cycle once and is now synchronically a zero-PROG dialect but diachronically a generalized-PROG dialect.

4.10 Cairo Arabic has also undergone the same process of the $b$-generalization and could be considered a zero-PROG dialect.

4.11 Juba Arabic, has a $gi=$ preverb almost certainly originating in a progressive marker and is now a zero-PROG dialect **[5A]**.

4.12 In Yemen, while certain varieties are at the Zero-PROG stage (e.g., Wādī Ḩaḍramawt [1A]), others went through the whole cycle, generalizing their progressive marker to a plain imperfective preverb, as in the subvariety of Jabal Yāzīdī (Vanhove [2011]), or even in San’a Arabic, which seems to be undergoing the change or to have undergone it recently, as seen in the use of the preverb $bi=$ in habitual contexts **[25A]**, as well as its extension to stative predicates (Watson [1993:79]).
4.13 In Tripoli Arabic, it seems that one of the PROG markers, fi, is extending to habitual contexts (Pereira 2008), generalizing into an IPFV marker—perhaps with specific nuances of durativity—while the auxiliary gā‘id is not generalizing in that way, rather, it developed copular meanings.

4.14 Some dialects seem to start generalizing their PROG marker before reaching the categorical-PROG stage, going against the predictions of the theory:

(11) Omani: Coastal Dhofari (Davey 2016:143;258):
   a. aqsal wash.1SG face-my every morning
      I wash my face every morning. [bare ipfv] HABITUAL
   b. mā b-arūh NEG go.1SG DEF-market because bring bread
      I never go to the market to buy bread. [prefixed ipfv] HABITUAL
   c. yifarqūn separate.3PL between DEF-goats and DEF-sheep
      They are separating the goats and the sheep. [bare ipfv] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS
   d. hū bi-kādāb he lie.3MSG to-us
      He is lying to us. [prefixed ipfv] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

5 Conclusion

5.1 This paper has shown that Arabic dialects display a sort of microcosm of linguistic typology.

5.2 Studying certain features in Arabic from a typological perspective shows how much variety exists in this branch of the Semitic family that is often lumped together as a single group. Even dialects in the same country can vary widely as to what stage they pertain to with regards to the grammaticalization of the progressive marking, as seen in Yemen and Oman.

5.3 Moreover, the Arabic data displays a few unexpected things with regards to the predictions of the theory as proposed.

5.4 This variety taken into account, there is no motivation behind referring to “Arabic” as a single language. In this particular case, the typological literature has treated “Arabic” as a zero-PROG language, despite the fact that “Arabic”, with regards to this feature—as well as other linguistic features—is by no means monolithic.

5.5 Finally, this typological study participates in the larger scale project of documenting the world’s languages tense aspect systems, where in the future, I hope to see different Arabic dialects represented rather than the usual ‘Arabic’.

4. See Camilleri and Sadler (2017) for a treatment of this phenomenon.
6 Appendix: Data

6.1 Zero-PROG Dialects:

(1A) Wādi Ḥaḍramawt Arabic (Al-Saqqaf 2011):

a. sālim yrūḥ l-ibtidāʾi w sāliḥ yrūḥ ittanawi

Salim goes to primary and Salih goes to secondary.

b. illasāʾīr ṭṭlaʾī kān il-mrattabāt makān-ha

Prices are soaring, but salaries are the same.

(2A) Najdi Arabic (Ingham 1994:91-2):

a. kill yūm aktib xaṭṭ l-ixū-y

Every day I write a letter to my brother.

b. al-ḥān aktib xaṭṭ l-ixū-y

Now I am writing a letter to my brother.

(3A) Mardin Arabic (Jastrow 2011):

toṙānī ana aqˇ c maʾ-k ṣaɾabī

You see, I am talking Arabic to you.

(4A) Cypriot Arabic (Borg 1985:76,173):

a. amma prí xlip prúx l-māntra u pāxlop kwélles

When I want milk, i go to the sheepfold and milk some sheep.

b. kóm olān kāti pisúr mimparrā

Get up, lad! Something is going on outside.

(5A) Juba Arabic (Manfredi 2017:98-9):

a. madāris fi=bóɾ soudan gi=fáta šāhar tíṣa

The schools of Port Soudan (always) open in September.

b. úmon g=ámuɾu šenu

What are they doing?
6.2 Emergent-PROG Dialects:

(6A) Sason Arabic (Akkuş 2016): 39):

a. yamel
work.IPV.3MSG
He works/is working/will work. AMBIGUOUS

b. kū yamel
PROG work.IPV.3MSG
He is working. EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(7A) Salt Arabic (Herin 2010:293;366;308)

a. bigûz ob-kull šahor b-tittasîl maça-na ṭalâd arba′î telefônât
maybe in-all month IND-call.IPV-3SG with-1PL three four phones
She calls us maybe three or four times a month. HABITUAL

b. hī ʿin-dâr ahmad lâb́èd ob-tîsrah
3SG at house Ahmad lâb́èd IND-pasture.IPV.3SG
It [the cow] was on the side of Ahmād lâb́èd's house pasturing. EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

c. gâd id bôkîl ʿan tîne
sit.AP.MSG eat.IPV.3MS of fig
He is eating a fig. EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(8A) Āl-Murrah: (Ingham 1986:279)

u gad-hum yamšûn
and qad-3MPL walk.IPV.3MPL
While they were walking EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(9A) Moroccan Arabic (Caubet 1996):

a. Coastal towns:
    bârāk / mrayyâl ka-yfèb
crouch.AP.MSG / rest.AP.MSG IND-play.IPV.3MSG
He is playing.

b. Fes (2 auxiliaries)

i. gâlsîn ka-yfêdâtu
sit.AP.PL IND-talk.IPV.3MPL
They are (sitting) talking.

ii. kân gâlsâs ta-yfêb huwa u gâlsâs ta-yûg-ha
be.IPV.3MSG sit.AP.MSG IND-play.IPV.3MSG he and sit.AP.MSG IND-ride.IPV.3MSG-it
He was playing and was riding it (a bike).

6. “De manière générale, l’utilisation de gâd id comme auxiliaire marquant l’aspect progressif est relativement rare à Salt. Beaucoup plus rare en tout cas que ne peut l’être l’utilisation de la particule ūam et ses différentes variantes dans les autres parlers levantins.” (Herin 2010:308)

7. Caubet (1996:93) claims that her informant can only use the active participle of ‘to sit’ as a quasi-auxiliary if there is actual sitting involved in the action described 9AAb-i, whereas her younger niece uses it with verbs of movement 9AAb-ii, which shows a higher grammaticalization degree.
iii. šūfi šūfi xāyda ka-tfārīk ḡa mḥa
look.IMP.2FSG look.IMP.2FSG be_absorbed.AP.FSG IND-fight.IPFV.3FSG only with rẓol-ḥa
foot-3fsg
Look! Look! She is fighting with her foot.

c. Taza
āš xāddām ka-tdir
what work.AP.MSG IND-do.IPFV.2MSG
What are you doing?

(10A) Omani Arabic: Bāṭina Sedentary Dialect (Al-Balushi 2016:119):

a. ykitbu l-ʔawlād wagbāt-hum
write.IPFV.3.PL DEF-boys homework-3PL
The boys write their homework GENERIC
b. l-ʔawlād ykitbu wagbāt-hum
DEF-boys write.IPFV.3.PL homework-3PL
The boys are writing their homework [word order change] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

c. l-ʔawlād gālṣīn ykitbu wagbāt-hum
DEF-boys sit.AP.MPL write.IPFV.3.PL homework-3PL
The boys are writing their homework [auxiliary + IPFV] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(11A) Khartoum Arabic (Dickins 2011):

a. bagām assā’a sitta
wake_up.1IPFV.1SG hour six
I wake up at six o’clock. GENERIC
b. bitsawwi šīnu
do.IPFV.2SG what
What are you doing? EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

c. gā’id tasawwi šīnu
sit.AP.MSG do.IPFV.2SG what
What are you doing? EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(12A) Djidjelli (Marcais 1952:148;152)

a. ṣad-drāi b-ṣad-dum yḥbkiw
DEF-kids in-DEF-always cry.IPFV.3.PL
Kids always cry. GENERIC
b. barka ma ku-tḍūdoš
enough NEG PROG-turn_around.IPFV.2SG
Stop turning around. EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

8. Caubet (1996:93) gives examples that are presumably from Fes but Agius and Harrak (1987) say that this usage is reported in Taza, too.
6.3 Categorical-PROG Dialects:

(13A) Tunis Arabic (McNeil 2017):
   a. \textit{tiktib} əḏ-žwēbēt
      \textit{write.IPV.3.FSG DEF-letters}
      She writes the letters.
      \footnotesize{HABITUAL}
   b. \textit{tiktib} fi-əḏ-žwēbēt
      \textit{write.IPV.3.FSG (in)PROG-DEF-letters}
      She is writing the letters.
      \footnotesize{EVENT-IN-PROGRESS}
   c. \textit{makš qā’da tomšī} məstwiiya
      \textit{NEG.2SG sit.APR.FSG walk.IPV.2.FSG straight}
      You are not walking straight.
      \footnotesize{EVENT-IN-PROGRESS}

(14A) Maltese (Camilleri 2016:48;73)
   a. \textit{Naqra} ktieb kull ˙gimg
      \textit{read.IPV.1.SG book every week}
      I read a book every week
      \footnotesize{HABITUAL}
   b. \textit{It-tifla qed/qieg} è da
      \textit{DEF-girl PROG/sit.}
      \textit{tikteb write.IPV.}
      \textit{The girl is writing.}
      \footnotesize{EVENT-IN-PROGRESS}
   c. \textit{It-tifel qed/qieg} è d
      \textit{DEF-BOY PROG/sit.}
      \textit{fil-˙gnien in.
      \textit{The boy is in the garden.}
      \footnotesize{COPULA}

(15A) Benghazi Arabic (Pereira and Benkato 2015)
   a. \textit{kull mā yi?dīn} əž-žāmī?, tīq’ad itkāwi el-kelba
      \textit{all call_prayer.IPV.3.MSG DEF-mosque stay.IPV.3.FSG bark.IPV.3.FSG DEF-dog}
      Every time the mosque calls the prayer, the dog begins to bark
      \footnotesize{HABITUAL}
   b. \textit{ana gā’ida} nṭayyib fi makarūna
      \textit{I remain.APR.FSG cook.IPV.1.SG in pasta}
      I am cooking pasta.
      \footnotesize{EVENT-IN-PROGRESS}
   c. \textit{fi s-subw  yig’ad} madrasa u fi Ḳašiyya yf’ad maf’had
      \textit{in DEF-morning stay.IPV.3.MSG school and in DEF-evening stay.IPV.3.MSG institute}
      In the morning, it is a school and in the afternoon, it is an institute.
      \footnotesize{COPULA}

(16A) Tripoli Arabic (Pereira 2008:3,7)
   a. \textit{yāduxu} s-soḥlub w yəṭḥnū-h f tāḥūna
      \textit{take.IPV.3.PL DEF-salep and grind.IPV.3.PL-3MSG in mixer}
      They take the salep and grind it in the mixer.
      \footnotesize{GENERIC}
   b. \textit{fi yōm əḏ-žum’a} nṣollu f смер ᵉḏ-żum’a
      \textit{In day DEF-friday pray.IPV.1.PL in prayer DEF-friday}
      On Fridays, we pray the Friday prayer.
      \footnotesize{HABITUAL}

\footnotesize{9. "The auxiliary gā’id is not obligatory to express unemphasized concomitant action, which is usually done with fi." (Benkato 2014:82)}
c. *nušrub fi šahi*
   drink.IPfV.1.SG in tea
   I am drinking tea.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

d. *gā‘dāt y‘aṣṣalu f al-bāzin*
   sīt.AP.FPL knead.IPfV.PL in DEF-bazin
   They are kneading the bazin.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(17A) Khuzestan Arabic (Shabibi 2006:89–94):

a. *‘ahmad yrūh l-‘a-madrāsā*
   Ahmad go.IPfV.MSG to-DEF-school
   Ahmad goes to school.  
   GENERIC

b. *mon yoftahm-īn hɔyya gā‘d-ā təgra l-‘oddoktorā*
   when understand.IPfV.3.MPL she PROG.3FSG read.IPfV.3FSG for-doctorate
   When they realize that she is doing the Ph.D.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

c. *l-‘afrūx gā‘d-in yta‘aššūn*
   DEF-kids PROG-3.MPL eat.IPfV.3MPL
   The kids are eating their dinner.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(18A) Šawi Arabic, ‘atīg tribe (Younes and Herin 2013:57;50):

a. *yidbahūn ?is-‘iḥbāb w-yiyagūfūn-ha w-‘ınsalūq mšān*
   slaughter.IPfV.3MPL DEF-youth and-cut.IPfV.3MPL-3FSG boil.PASS.IPfV.3FSG for
   t‘wazzū‘ī l-a-‘l-mināsof
   divide.PASS.IPFV.3FSG on-mināsof
   The youth slaughter them and cut them, and (the heads) are boiled so that they are divided
   on the mināsof.  
   GENERIC

b. *gā‘dā ṭxabez ṭa t-tannūr*
   sīt.AP.FSG bake_bread.IPFV.3FSG on DEF-oven
   She is making bread on a tannūr oven.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(19A) Uzbekistan Arabic, Qashqa-darya (Chikovani 2005, 2012):

a. *‘amlalān isi*
   work do.IPfV.3.MSG
   He works (usually).  
   HABITUAL

b. *iṭbus nāyim*
   cook.IPFV.3MSG lie.AP.MSG
   He is baking.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

c. *nokul nāyiminni*
   eat.IPfV.1.PL lie.AP.MPL
   We are eating.  
   EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

(20A) Iraqi Arabic (Agius and Harrak 1987):

a. Southern Iraq (auxiliary inflected for number and gender)

   *gā‘din nešrāb*
   sīt.AP.PL drink.IPfV.1.PL

10. In the North, the same situation obtains, but the auxiliary is inflected for gender only, so there is no plural form.
We are drinking. 

b. Mawsīl:

i. Muslim:

\( ?\text{ad } \text{ašrab} \)

PROG drink.IPFV.1SG

I am drinking

ii. Christian:

\( \text{ke nākol} \)

PROG eat.IPFV.1PL

We are eating.







c. Baghdād (Muslim) (Cohen 1984:288):

i. \( \text{tumṭur } \text{ihwāha hnā} \)

rain.IPFV.3SG a_lot here

It rains a lot here.

ii. \( \text{da-yuṣruf } \text{ihwāya flus } \text{qala bēta } \text{ž-židīd} \)

PROG-spend.IPFV.3SG a_lot money on house DEF-new.

He is spending a lot of money on his new house.









(21A) Levantine Arabic:

a. Beirut (Bruweleit 2015:130;121)

i. \( \text{b-tišṭīgli } \text{intī kill yawm hawn} \)

IND-work.IPFV.2SG every day here

Do you work here everyday?

ii. \( \text{huwwe } \text{am-yyūrub } \text{xayy-u } \text{halla} \)

he PROG-hit.IPFV.3MSG brother-3MSG now

He is thrashing his brother at the moment.

b. Damascus (Cowell 1964:326;320)

i. \( \text{b-} ?\text{awāxor } r-\text{rabī} l-habb } \text{b-yōstowi} \)

in-end DEF-spring DEF-grain IND-straighten

Late in spring the grain ripens.

ii. \( \text{l-} ?\text{m}\text{-adden } \text{am-} ?\text{adden } ?\text{l-} ?\text{adān} \)

DEF-muezzin PROG-give_prayer_call CALL_FOR_PRAYER

The muezzin is giving the call to prayer.









(22A) Hijāzi Arabic (Restö 2011):

\( \text{al-walad b-yiktub } \text{jawāb} \)

DEF-boy PROG-write.IPFV.3MSG letter.

The boy is writing a letter




11. I could not find an example with bare PC (habitual reading) to contrast with the event-in-progress reading but Restö (2011) claims that “in Urban Hijāzi the b-forms mark actual present/contemporaneity only—habitual is without b-.”
(23A) Gulf Arabic

a. *ma ʔashrab xamar wilaʔākil laḥam xinzīr*
   ṈE̱G̱ drink.IP̱F̱V̱.1SG alcohol or ṈE̱G̱ eat.IP̱F̱V̱.1SG pork
   I neither drink alcohol nor eat pork.

b. *hum gā'id-in yithawašūn ma'ā baḍḍ*
   They sit.AP-PL argue-IP̱F̱V̱.PL with each other.
   They are having an argument with each other.

(24A) Mardin (City) Arabic (Grigore 2007:160)

a. *maymāt-i ṭotbāx maxlōta*
   grandmother-1.SG cook.IP̱F̱V̱.3SG soup
   My grandmother makes soup.

b. *maymāt-i qāyom ṭotbāx maxlōta*
   grandmother-1.SG stand.AP-with each other
   My grandmother is making soup.

6.4 Generalized-PROG Dialects:

(25A) Şanī‘ā Arabi (Restö 2011 and Watson 1993)

a. *fi l-ar’d niḥfar ṣurgīgh zaqīrīh u-nilʕab lā wāṣt al-ṣurgīgh hādā*
   in DEF-ground dig.IP̱F̱V̱.1PL hole small and-play.IP̱F̱V̱.1PL in middle DEF-hole DEM
   We dig a little hole in the ground then play into the middle of that hole. [bare ipfv] GENERIC

b. *al-banāt bi-gannayn*
   DEF-girls PROG-sing.IP̱F̱V̱.3FPL
   The girls are singing [prefixed ipfv] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

c. *bāḍa’hum bi-gūl alli u-bāḍa’hum yugūl allaḏī*
   some-3MPL PROG-say.IP̱F̱V̱ alli and-some-3MPL say.IP̱F̱V̱ allaḏī
   Some say alli and some say allaḏī. [prefixed ipfv] GENERIC

(26A) Omani: Coastal Dhofari (Davey 2016:143,258):

a. *aḡsal wigh-ḥ kull șubuh*
   wash.IP̱F̱V̱.1SG face-my every morning
   I wash my face every morning. [bare ipfv] HABITUAL

b. *mā b-arāḥ is-sūq ṭaṣān gīb xubz*
   NEG CONT-go.IP̱F̱V̱.1SG DEF-market because bring bread
   I never go to the market to buy bread. [prefixed ipfv] HABITUAL

c. *yifarqūn bēn iḥ-dān wa l-maʕz*
   separate.IP̱F̱V̱.3PL between DEF-goats and DEF-sheep
   They are separating the goats and the sheep. [bare ipfv] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

d. *hō bi-kdāb ṭalē-nā*
   he CONT-lie.IP̱F̱V̱.3MSG to-us
   He is lying to us. [prefixed ipfv] EVENT-IN-PROGRESS

12. Holes’s (1990) data comes primarily from Bahraini but is relevant for Emirati, Qatari, Kuwaiti, and Eastern Saudi.
List of Abbreviations

1: 1st person - 2: 2nd person - 3: 3rd person - AP: active participle - CONT: continuous - DEF: definite article - DEM: demonstrative - F: feminine - IPFV: imperfective - IMP: imperative - IND: indicative - M: masculine - NEG: negation - PASS: passive - PL: plural - PROG: progressive.

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