Perfect Constructions in Syrian Arabic

NORA BONEH

1 Introduction

The aim of this article is to study the temporal properties of the active participle in Syrian Arabic main clauses. It will be shown that this form gives rise to perfect readings comparable to the English resultative and experiential perfects (McCawley 1971, McCoard 1978). Moreover, it will be claimed that in this language, the perfect reading conveyed by the participle is an instantiation of a viewpoint aspect, available in the Syrian Arabic temporal system alongside the more familiar perfective and imperfective viewpoint aspects. This viewpoint aspect is responsible for linking the Assertion-Time to a Post-State interval related to the eventuality. The present proposal makes no use of an Extended Now/Perfect Time Span interval (cf. McCoard 1978, Dowty 1979, Mittwoch 1988, Iatridou et al. 2001 inter alii).

From a general typological perspective, the constructions described in this article are of interest since they contain active non-past participles that yield perfect readings. Bybee & Dahl (1989) enumerate four typical diachronic sources of the perfect in the languages of the world: (i) copula + past participle; (ii) possessive constructions, involving a past participle (iii) main verb + particle meaning ‘already’; and (iv) constructions involving verbs like ‘finish’ or ‘case aside’. Neither of these underlie the perfect con-

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structions in Syrian Arabic (and other varieties of Arabic, not described here), as it will be shown in this article.\footnote{The constructions discussed in this paper exist in most (if not all) dialects of Arabic, but they are not used in exactly the same way in the different dialects. Some dialects of Palestinian Arabic resemble the Syrian dialect (Hadil Karawani, Shirin Siam p.c.); Henkin (1992) reports that in Negev Bedouin dialect the form is used as an evidential or narrative form; Mitchell (1978) reports that in Jordanian Arabic the form is not used as resultative perfect. Standard Arabic differs from Dialectal Arabic in that the active participles are employed to express imperfective meanings. (Fassi Fehri 1993). Fassi Fehri (2003) shows that in Standard Arabic, several factors need to conspire in order to give rise to perfect readings (inflection, particles and adverbs). In the present discussion it will be shown that the Syrian Arabic active participles unambiguously give rise to resultative readings without any triggering adverbs or dedicated particles.}

If the analysis presented here is correct, the participial form in Syrian Arabic seems to be situated on the \textit{Universal Perfect Cycle} (Dahl 2000, Lindstedt 2000) between a stative resultative and a fully inflected perfect form with a resultative reading. The cycle is said to begin with stative forms, evolving into resultative statives which are gradually grammaticalized as flexional affixes, with a resultative semantics, then gradually acquiring non-resultative properties until they become general past tenses or forms compatible with narrative uses.

The article is organized as follows: in the next section, I will present the Syrian Arabic active participle form and describe the temporal readings it gives rise to, showing that these are indeed perfect readings. Section 3 spells-out the analysis of the perfect conveyed by the participial form. Section 4 presents some evidence in favor of the proposal based mainly on adverbial modification. Section 5 is the conclusion.

\section{General Presentation}

The constructions under consideration contain an active non-past participial form, which is used as the main verb in non-embedded clauses.

(1) a. sami kaateb ar-risaale\footnote{\textit{(non-standard) Phonetic Transcription:}
\begin{itemize}
  \item D voiced emphatic dental plosive
  \item T voiceless emphatic dental plosive
  \item S voiceless emphatic dental fricative
  \item H pharyngeal fricative
\end{itemize}}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
Sami & write.PART.SG.M \\
\multicolumn{2}{l}{\text{the-letter}}
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{‘Sami has written the letter.’}
\end{tabular}

b. sami mDayee\footnote{\textit{(non-standard) Phonetic Transcription:}}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\multicolumn{2}{l}{\text{Daaraat-o}}
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
Sami & lose.PART-SG.M \\
\multicolumn{2}{l}{\text{glasses-3sg.m}}
\end{tabular}
A quick examination of the examples above shows that these constructions do not have uniform temporal readings and that the variation depends on the VP type: dynamic VPs give rise to an anteriority reading (a-c), while state denoting VPs – an inchoative reading (d-e). It will be shown in the next subsections that all these examples denote a state that holds of the subject DP: its referent is found in a state related to the underlying eventuality the VP expresses.\(^3\)

### 2.1 Dynamic VPs

Accomplishment, achievement and activity VPs pattern together in these constructions in the temporal readings they yield. In both cases the subject

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\(^3\) Directional motion verbs may give rise to an imminent future reading in addition to the anteriority reading:

(i) a. sami naazel ña s-s-uu
   Sami go down.PART.SG.M to-the-market
   ‘Sami has gone down to the market.’
   ‘Sami is about to go down to the market.’

b. sami maašii
   Sami leave.PART.SG.M
   ‘Sami has left.’
   ‘Sami is about to leave.’

c. sami Taalef ña j-jabal
   Sami climb.PART.SG.M on the-mountain
   ‘Sami has climbed the mountain.’
   ‘Sami is about to climb the mountain.’

Under the imminent future reading, the (human) subject DP is in a state that precedes the eventuality expressed by the underlying VP. This reading is not available with other verb classes. For a fuller description of the conditions under which this reading arises see Boneh (2005).
is interpreted as being in a state following the underlying eventuality. I will refer to it henceforth as a Post-State, and distinguish it from the result state of the object. A Post-State of the subject is not necessarily dependent on there being an object in a result state. Although it is true that with some telic VPs, the object is indeed in a result-state that holds at utterance time, as the following examples illustrate, there are cases in which the state of the subject DP is clearly dissociated from that of the object DP:

(2) a. Sami mlaʔii l-kenez bas Dayaʔ-o
   \[\text{Sami find.PART.SG.M the-treasure but lose.3SG-it}\]
   \[\text{‘Sami has found the treasure but lost it.’}\]

b. Sami laabes tyaab-o
   \[\text{Sami wear.PART.SG.cloths-3SG}\]
   \[\text{‘Sami has put on his cloths (and still has them on at speech time).’}\]

(adapted from Cowell 1964, p. 265)

This can be seen with verbs that allow the object to be in a result-state, like break or open. Consider the following example adapted from Dahl & Lindstedt’s (2000) Perfect Questionnaire:

(3) [context: it is cold in the room. The window is closed]
   Šuu faateH aš-šabbaak?
   Q open.PART.SG.M the-window
   ‘Have you opened the window?’

In (3), the question aims to find out whether the addressee is to be held responsible for the temperature in the room “attributing” to him the status of being in the Post-State of opening the window with no relation to whether the window is open or not. Had the emphasis been on the state of the window, the Syrian Arabic speaker has the option of using the passive participle.

(4) aš-šabbaak maftuuH

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4 It is worth noting, that unergative activities, such as in (1c), have a modal nuance to them, as the speaker can utter them if she has reason to believe that dancing, running or laughing has taken place and that these eventualities can be associated with the subject DP (Sami in our case), e.g. there are running shoes laying around in the room, Sami is sweating, etc. In this article, I focus only on the temporal readings the participial form yields.

5 The participle is not inflected for person, but in the conversational situation in (3), the addressee is to be understood as the subject of the verb.
The window open.

The availability of activity VPs (1c) with the Post-State reading also shows that the state of the subject is not dependent on there being any result-state of the object. Thus, the Post-State of the subject DP in these constructions does not depend exclusively on lexical properties of the verb: having a natural end-point, being a change-of-state verb, selecting an affected object.6

Here are some additional examples built along the lines of the Perfect Questionnaire, illustrating the perfect readings the participial form gives rise to:

(5) A: I want to give your sister a book to read, but I don’t know which one. Are there any of these books that she READ already?
A: bədiit ʔafTii ʔəxtak ktaab la-təʔr-aa, bas maa ba-yəref ʔayaa waaHeed.
fiwaaHeed mən həl-kətəb ʔaariit-o ʔabel? 6
EXIST one of this-the-books read.PFV.SG.F-it already?

B: Yes, she READ this book.
B: ʔee, (hiye) ʔaarye hadə l-ktaab
Yes, (she) read.PART.SG.F this the-book

(6) [A child asks: Can I go now?]
Mother: ʔamalt / ʔaamel wazziirt-ak?
do.PFV.2SG.M / do.PART.SG.M homework-your
’did you do/have you done your homework?’

2.2 Stative VPs

Stative and positional verbs (1d-e), which seem to pattern alike in the Syrian Arabic participial constructions (and under other verbal forms, cf. section 4.1) differ from dynamic VPs.7 Clauses with this type of verbs do not denote an eventuality in which Sami is in a Post-State of having slept or of having believed in aliens, but rather they give rise to an inchoative reading

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6 I avoid committing myself to a specific definition of telicity (quantization, non-homogeneity, end-point) since the picture that emerges is that all dynamic verbs seem to pattern alike in these constructions, the result- or post-state relevant for the specific reading of these participial constructions not being an inherent part of any verb in particular.

7 According to Fassi Fehri (1993), in Standard Arabic the stative/dynamic distinction does not characterize the participial form.
where the state denoted by the VP is understood as simultaneous to the Speech time. I wish to claim here that they share with dynamic VPs the property of denoting a Post-State holding of the subject DP, and are related in a way that will be made clear in the next section to a change of state, hence the inchoative flavor they convey. In other words, the state described by the VP is itself the Post-State, required by the participial construction. In examples (1d-e) above, the subject Sami, is in a state of sleeping/believing in aliens and these constructions imply that Sami has entered these states after undergoing some change-of-state or transition.

3 The analysis

It will be proposed here that the perfect readings the participial form denotes can be captured if the Assertion-Time (adopted from Klein 1994) is seen as related to a Post-State Time, and not to the whole Eventuality Time as with the perfective/imperfective viewpoint aspects (cf. Kamp & Reyle 1993). Thus, it will be claimed that the perfect readings this form conveys do not involve an Extended Now interval (McCoard 1978, Dowty 1979, Iatridou et al. 2001). The proposal relies on the assumptions that (i) tense and aspect can be captured as relations between time intervals (Klein 1994), and (ii) the Eventuality Time may be a complex entity composed of phases or stages. This will be elaborated on in section 3.1. Section 3.2 spells out the proposal.

3.1 The temporal framework

I will assume here that tense and aspect are the realizations of relations between temporal intervals and that the Eventuality Time is a complex entity composed of subparts (phases or stages).

According to the relational approach to temporality, tense and aspect are seen as instantiating relations between time intervals. Specifically, Klein (1994) suggested that tense expresses a relation between the Utterance Time (UT) and the Assertion-Time (Ast-T, the time about which the assertion is made), while viewpoint aspect expresses a relation between the Assertion-Time and the Eventuality-Time (Ev-T), the running time of the eventuality.

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8 I keep with Klein’s proposal on the nature of these intervals and the possible relations that hold between them, but use here the above mentioned terms introduced by Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria (2001). Klein (1994) uses different names for the intervals, i.e.: Situation-Time (for Ev-T) and Topic Time (for Ast-T).
Several authors have deemed it necessary to refine the relations holding between the Assertion-Time and the Eventuality-Time by decomposing the latter into subparts (Klein 1994, Kamp & Reyle 1993, Smith 1991, Caudal 2005). Essentially, all these proposals take into consideration, beyond a core running time of the eventuality, peripheral phases or stages that constitute a complex Eventuality-Time. Generally speaking, recurring to subparts of the Eventuality Time was needed to account for a variety of imminential readings leading to a transition point (e.g. prospective aspect, progressive achievements) or for the perfect readings. Here I will adopt Kamp & Reyle’s view, as the stative/dynamic distinction relevant for the Syrian Arabic data is present in their work. According to them, in the case of dynamic verbs, the Eventuality-Time is potentially constituted of three parts: a preparatory phase, a culmination point and a result state. Thus, in the case of accomplishments the core Eventuality-Time consists of a preparatory phase and a culmination point; in the case of achievements, it consists only of a culmination point; for activities, the core Eventuality-Time is the preparatory phase, the culmination point can be supplied by external means. Statives, on the other hand, are not complex; they denote a single stretch, which may be conceived either as a preparatory phase or as a result state. To avoid associating the result state with the object’s result state, in what follows, this term will be substituted with the term Post-State, introduced in §2.1.9

The current proposal takes up an idea, expressed both by Klein and by Kamp & Reyle, that languages differ in their aspectual systems as to which of the subparts of the complex Eventuality-Time is relevant for viewpoint aspect.

3.2 A third viewpoint aspect

9 Klein works with the terms Source-State and Target-State for telic verbs, and supplements them with pre-time and post-time for each eventuality-class; Smith calls the core Eventuality-Time “developments”; and for Caudal, the subparts of a complex eventuality are: “Preparatory-State”, “Inner-Stage” and “Result-State”.
I propose that in Syrian Arabic, active participles give rise to a reading in which, for all VP types, the Assertion-Time is related to the Post-State Time and not to the core Eventuality-Time. The relation is one in which the Assertion-Time is included in the Post-state Time (8). In this case, and contrary to other viewpoint aspects, as will be discussed shortly, the Assertion-Time is not related to the core Eventuality-Time.

\[(8) \quad \text{AST-T} \subseteq \text{POST-T}, \text{UT} \subseteq \text{AST-T}\]

(10) is a schematic representation of the proposed viewpoint aspect for each one of the verb-classes. The symbols used for the representation are the following:

(9) Symbols:
   a. ++++++ preparatory phase and culmination point
   b. ====== Post-State
   c. [ ] Assertion-Time (Ast-T)

(10) a. ++++++=[=====]= Accomplishments
    b. +=[=====]= Achievements
    c. ++++++=[=====]= Activities
    d. =[=====]= or [=====]= Statives/positional

In the case of accomplishment and achievement verbs represented in (10a-b), the culmination point is not included in the Ast-T since it is part of what I termed the core Eventuality-Time. Activities represented in (10c) pattern like accomplishments and achievements, not like statives. In the schemas in (10) they have the same representation as accomplishments since the culmination point is not graphically distinguished from the preparatory phrase here. What is crucial for the present purposes is that the culmination point, whether it is part of the core Eventuality-Time or not, is not included in the Assertion-Time. This sets dynamic verbs apart from static and positional verbs.

Stative and positional verbs, represented in (10d), pattern differently since they are assumed to be associated with a single stretch of running Eventuality-Time and not with a complex one containing subparts as is the case with other verb types. This single stretch is seen as a Post-State when associated with Assertion-Time in the case of the participial form, thus presupposing a change of state (a culmination point), which is not part of the assertion since it does not overlap with the Assertion-Time interval. Evidence for this claim will be provided in section 4.1.
In the case of perfective and imperfective viewpoint aspects, the core Eventuality-Time is related to the Assertion-Time interval. (11) is a slight modification of (7b), taking into account a complex Eventuality-Time. (12) is a schematic representation of the perfective for all verb classes.

\[(11)\]
\[
a. \text{Perfective} \quad \text{core Ev-T} \subseteq \text{Ast-T} \\
b. \text{Imperfective} \quad \text{Ast-T} \subseteq \text{core Ev-T}
\]

\[(12)\]
\[
a. \quad [++++++]= \quad \text{Accomplishments} \\
b. \quad [+]= \quad \text{Achievements} \\
c. \quad [+++++ ] \quad \text{Activities} \\
d. \quad [+++++] \quad \text{Statives/positional verbs}
\]

The perfective viewpoint aspect is a temporal relation in which the Assertion-Time includes core Eventuality-Time. Accomplishments and achievements pattern alike, since for both the culmination point is included in the Assertion-Time (12a-b). Accomplishments pattern like activities (12a, c) in that for both the preparatory phase is entirely included in the Assertion-Time. The perfective represented in (12a-c) differs from the temporal readings yielded by the participle in (10a-c) in the positioning of the culmination point with respect to the part included in the Assertion-Time.

Statives, represented in (12d) and (10d) differ in the following way: in (10d), the state is actually conceived as a Post-State, whereas in (12d) it is conceived rather as a state that held (or will hold) at some time:

\[(12d')\]
\[
a. \text{sami naam} \\
\text{Sami sleep.PFV.3SG.M} \\
\text{‘Sami slept.’} \\
b. \text{sami Haab muna} \\
\text{Sami love.PFV.3SG.M Muna} \\
\text{‘Sami loved Muna.’}
\]

The Post-State differs from the preparatory phase in that a potential culmination point precedes the former but follows the latter. The inclusion of the Assertion-Time in the Post-State interval (10d) carves out of the Post-State a chunk relevant for the speaker. In this way, the assertion is about some part of the Post-State that may hold forever after (Parsons 1990). This inclusion relation captures the subjectivity of the speaker.

The present proposal for the Syrian Arabic perfect clearly sides with the view of the perfect as a stativizer (Kamp & Reyle 1993, Klein 1994, Parsons 1990 *inter alii*). The Post-State Time abuts what I termed here the core
Eventuality-Time; it must not necessarily be seen as a result state, i.e. there is no necessary direct causation relation between the two phases, as this Post-State is available for all eventuality types. The Post-State is also seen as a permanent state, it does not have to be restricted in time. Importantly, in the present proposal, what provides the necessary restrictions to the Post-State is its relation with the Assertion-Time: the Assertion-Time is included in the Post-State time, and thus, what gets asserted is only a portion of the Post-State time. The Assertion-Time need not abut the core eventuality although it might. Furthermore, the Assertion-Time can be long or short allowing historically long Post-States, consider:

(13) a. marconi mextare? r-radio
    Marconi invent.PART.SG.M the-radio
    ‘Marconi has invented the radio.’
    [roughly: Marconi is in a post-state of having invented the radio].

b. anštayn zaayer Princeton
    Einstein visit.PART.SG.M Princeton
    ‘Einstein has visited Princeton.’
    [roughly: Einstein is in the post-state of having visited Princeton].

While the English translations of these sentences are judged ungrammatical or deviant, their Syrian Arabic counterparts are perfectly fine. In (13b), there is no life-time effect, as there is in the English equivalent. The examples in (13) could support the proposal that it is the Post-State Time that is related to the Assertion-Time, and that this Post-State may be infinitely long, as it is the time that holds ever after the core eventuality has ended. Thus, under this account, the Assertion-Time can be included in the Post-State Time even after the referent of the subject of the underlying eventuality no longer exists.

The next section provides more evidence for the specific temporal relation put forth in this section.

4 Evidence

In order to support the analysis outlined above, in this section I will show that the core Eventuality-Time is not accessible for temporal modification and I will compare the participial forms in the relevant verb-classes to fully
inflected verbs of the corresponding VP types.\textsuperscript{11} I will start with stative and positional verbs, as they pattern differently from the other verb classes.

\section*{4.1 Stative and positional verbs}

It was shown in section 2.2 that stative and positional participial verbs yield an inchoative temporal reading. It has then been claimed that this is so because these verbs do not denote complex eventualities with subparts, and thus, the only part that can be related to the Assertion-Time is the core Eventuality-Time. Consequently, this core Eventuality-Time is seen as the Post-State itself, and the transition phase is not included in the Assertion-Time, but is presupposed. Here I will try to provide evidence for this claim.

The first piece of evidence comes from a comparison between the participial stative and positional verbs presented in (1d-e) and the fully inflected verbal counterparts. I will start by comparing the stative participles with the progressive stative and positional verbs.\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(14)]
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textbf{a.}] sami ñam-yã-nam
\text{Sami PROG-3SG.M-sleep}
\text{‘Sami is about to fall asleep.’}
\text{(he got into bed, he is lying down, with his eyes closed)}
\item[\textbf{b.}] sami ñam-yã-ãmar be-l-maxluu?aat l-faadã?iye
\text{Sami PROG-3SG.M-believe in-the-creatures the-out of space}
\text{‘Sami is starting to believe in aliens.’}
\end{enumerate}
\item[(15)]
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textbf{a.}] sami naayem
\text{Sami sleep.PART.SG.M}
\text{‘Sami has fallen asleep.’}
\item[\textbf{b.}] sami m?aaam be-l-maxluu?aat l-faadã?iye
\text{Sami believe.PART.SG.M in-the-creatures the-out of space}
\text{‘Sami has started to believe in aliens.’}
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

The temporal readings in examples (14) contrast with the parallel participial ones (15) precisely by which sub-interval that is related to the Assertion-

\textsuperscript{11} With the participial form, the Syrian Arabic verbal system includes three main inflected forms (in the active voice). The non-participial forms are of course inflected for person; they differ morphologically as to whether the person marking appears as a prefix or as a suffix. Very generally put, the suffixed forms are perfective and past. The prefixed forms are the unmarked forms, their default temporal reading is non-past and imperfective (see Cowell 1964 for a full description of the Syrian Arabic verbal system).

\textsuperscript{12} The progressive in Syrian Arabic is constructed on the basis of the prefixed form preceded by the particle ñam.
Time. The progressive forms of the verb make available a preparatory phase of sleeping and believing in aliens not the actual sleeping or believing in aliens. This latter reading is available only with the participial form. Thus, the core Eventuality-Time is a Post-State relative to a transition point (culmination point). This point is also available with the progressive, but here it follows the preparatory phrase.

At this point two remarks are due. First, these examples indirectly show that stative and positional verbs pattern together not only in their participial form but also in the progressive (cf. section 2.2). Second, the progressive form gives rise to a true progressive reading with dynamic VPs:

(16) sami ʔam-yə-ktober risaale
Sami PROG-3SG.M-write the-letter
‘Sami is writing the letter.’

This is not surprising since, for dynamic VPs, the preparatory phase is defined as part of the core Eventuality, and thus is directly related to the Assertion-Time.

The second piece of evidence comes from negation. In the case of stative and positional verbs, only the core Eventuality-Time, i.e. the Post-State, is negated, not the transition point. So in the following examples, the speaker negates the actual state of sleeping or being in love, not the subpart of entering into this state:

(17) a. sami muu Haabeb muna
Sami NEG love.PART.SG.M Muna
‘Sami is not/no longer in love with Muna now (but he did fall in love with her).’

b. sami muu naayem
Sami NEG sleep.PART.SG.M
‘Sami is not/no longer asleep now (but he did fall asleep).’

In (17a) Sami has fallen in love with Mona at some point, but what the speaker asserts is that now he is not in love with her. The same holds for (17b), where Sami is asserted not to be asleep now, but to have indeed fallen asleep some time ago. Thus, in the case of stative verbs the only part that is negated is the one related to the Assertion-Time, this is the Post-State, which, in this particular verb class, is the underlying eventuality itself. The stage of entering into the relevant state is not negated. This might indicate that the transition point is presupposed, since it is not canceled un-
der negation. Consider also the preservation of the presupposition in the following context:

(18) šii sami muu Haabeb muna?
    Q Sami NEG love.PART.SG.M Muna
    ‘Is it the case that Sami is not in love with Muna?’

If the addressee replies to this question in the negative, it is possible that Sami did fall in love with Muna at some past time.

The same holds for other verb classes, the outcome, however, is different. In these cases, negating the Post-State of the subject means that the whole eventuality did not occur, i.e., in the following examples, there was no writing of a letter or running that can be attributed to Sami:

(19) a. sami muu kaateb #risaale
    Sami NEG write.PART.SG.M the-letter
    ‘Sami is not in the post-state of having written the letter.’
    (=he didn’t write the letter)

b. sami muu raked
    Sami NEG run.PART.SG.M
    ‘Sami is not in a post-state of having run (=he didn’t run).’

Importantly, negating these constructions does not simply mean that the eventuality did not take place; this meaning can be expressed using the negated perfective form:

(20) a. sami maa katab #risaale
    Sami NEG write.PFV.3SG.M the-letter
    ‘Sami didn’t write the letter.’

b. sami maa rakad
    Sami NEG run.PFV.3SG.M
    ‘Sami didn’t run.’

The difference between the two sets of constructions lays precisely in the fact that in the case of the participial form, negation reflects an expectation of the speaker not present in the case of the perfective form. Namely, in (19) Sami was supposed to engage in the described actions, but he hasn’t. The schemas given in (10a, c) and (12a, c) reflect this situation, since in the case of the participial forms, the Post-State included in the Assertion-Time is linked to a previous subpart, the preparatory phase, which is not directly asserted, hence the expectation reading. On the other hand, with the perfec-
tive form, the preparatory phase is included in the Assertion-Time and is the part directly being negated.

The evidence in the next section is based on several types of adverbial modification. These contexts intend to show the accessibility of the Post-State Time to modification, or the impossibility of modifying the core Eventuality-Time.

4.2  *In-x-time, for-x-time*

Consider first, modification by the adverbial expression \textit{in-x-time}, which measures the preparatory phase and the culmination point in the case of English accomplishments and also in the case of clauses containing the perfective form in Syrian Arabic.

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{c}
(21) \quad \text{sam\u00ed katab} \ \text{\text{	extasciitilde}ar-\textit{risaale xilal tlet saa\u0161aat}} \\
& \quad \text{Sami write.PFV.3SG.M the-letter in three hours} \\
& \quad \text{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft Sami wrote the letter in three hours.\textquoteright\textquoteright}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

This type of modification is not possible with the parallel participial construction:

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{c}
(22) \quad *\text{sam\u00ed kaateb} \ \text{\text{	extasciitilde}ar-\textit{risaale xilal tlet saa\u0161aat}} \\
& \quad \text{Sami write.PART.SG.M the-letter in three hours}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

I take the incompatibility of this adverbial expression to attest that the core Eventuality-Time cannot be measured out since it is not related to the Assertion-Time. Note, that when this specific adverbial expression appears in the English perfect constructions, only the experiential reading is available, not the resultative one.\footnote{I thank Malka Rappaport-Hovav for bringing to my attention this example.}

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{c}
(23) \quad \text{Mary has read this article in three hours} \quad \text{Exp/*Res}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

Thus, in (23) the only available reading is the one in which during the Perfect Time Span\footnote{This term is due to Iatridou \textit{et al.} (2001).} there was at least one occurrence of Mary reading this article in three hours’ time.

Furthermore, neither the adverbial expression \textit{for-x-time} can modify the Syrian Arabic participial constructions by measuring out the duration of the Eventuality-Time, not even in the case of atelic and stative/positional verbs.
4.3 Positional adverbs

Modification by positional adverbs like at four o’clock is also revealing as to the accessibility to modification of specific intervals in the constructions under discussion. Consider the difference between stative and non-stative verbs in the following examples:

(25) a. sami naayem òs-saaʕaa ?arb>yā
    Sami  sleep.PART.SG.M  the-hour four
    ‘Sami fell asleep at four o’clock.’

    b. sami kaateb òr-risaale òs-saaʕaa ?arb>yā
    Sami  write.PART.SG.M  the-letter  the-hour four
    ‘=Sami has written the letter at four o’clock.’

    c. sami raked òs-saaʕaa ?arb>yā
    Sami  run.PART.SG.M  the-hour four
    ‘=Sami has run at four o’clock.’

In all these examples, the positional adverb localizes the left boundary of the Post-State. With stative/positional verbs, the reading indicates the starting point of sleeping, recall that in this case, sleeping is the Post-State of falling asleep. With dynamic verbs, the adverb at 4 o’clock necessarily gives that the end point of the underlying eventuality, which is the starting point of the Post-State Time.

Again, what is demonstrated here is that the Assertion-Time is not related to the core Eventuality-Time, but only to the Post-State temporal interval, in this case its beginning.

4.4 Two modifying temporal expressions

An additional piece of data comes from the impossibility to modify the participial construction with two temporal adverbs:

(26) *sami kaateb òr-risaale xams marraṭ
Sami write.PART.SG.M the-letter five times
mən lət tyaam
since three days
Intended: ‘Sami has written the letter five times three days ago.’

This sentence cannot mean that Sami, for some reason, had to write five identical letters, and that he did it three days prior to Utterance Time, and that now he has five written letters. The ungrammaticality does not stem from an incompatibility of the participial form with either one of these adverbial expressions, as the following examples show:

(27) a. sami kaateb ər-risaale xams marrat
Sami write.PART.SG.M the-letter five times
‘Sami has written the letter five times.’

b. sami kaateb ər-risaale mən lət tyaam
Sami write.PART.SG.M the-letter since three days
‘Sami has written the letter three days ago.’

Compare this state of affairs with the perfective form where more than one part of a complex eventuality may be modified by the adverbial expressions:

(28) sami katab ər-risaale xams marrat
Sami write.PVF.3SG.M the-letter five times
mən lət tyaam
since three days
‘Sami wrote the letter five times in the last three days.’

The construction with the participle in (26) can be salvaged by inserting an auxiliary verb:15

(29) sami Saar kaateb ər-risaale xams marrat
Sami BECOME write.PART.SG.M the-letter five times
mən lət tyaam
since three days
‘Sami has written the letter five times in the last three days.’

It seems that the auxiliary verb Saar in (29) makes available an additional part of the eventuality for the second adverbial to modify. This is again

15 The auxiliary verb Saar has many varied uses in the language. The gloss BECOME gives its somewhat bleached lexical content.
taken as evidence that the Assertion-Time is only related to one part of the complex eventuality in the case of the bare participle.

An additional example is (30), where, again, the participial form is compatible with each one of the adverbial expressions separately but not with both of them at the same time. As in the previous example, only the insertion of the auxiliary verb Saar renders the construction grammatical.

(30) a. *sami šaayef muna marrtān bi-l-yom hala?  
Sami see.PART.SG.M Muna twice a day now
b. sami Saar šaayef muna  
Sami BECOME see.PART.SG.M Mona  
marrtān bi-l-yom hala'?  
twice a day now  
‘Now, Sami has seen (met) Mona twice.’  
[Non-repetitive: two meeting occurred in total]

4.5  Perfect-level adverbial expressions

In the remaining part of this section I will consider two perfect-level adverbial modifiers. I will examine the available readings with the participial form and compare them with the readings available with the perfective one, modified by the same adverbials. It will be shown that these forms differ precisely in the ways predicted by the proposal made in section 3. Let us start with the adverbial expression mān tlet tyaam ‘since/for three days’.

4.5.1 Since-x-time

(31) a. sami kaateb ūr-risaale mān tlet tyaam  
Sami write.PART.SG.M the-letter since three days  
‘Sami has written the letter three days ago.’  
(non-existent reading: Sami has been writing the letter for 3 days)'
b. sami raked mān tlet tyaam  
Sami run.PART.SG.M since three days  
‘Sami has run three days ago.’  
(non-existent reading: Sami has been running for 3 days)

The examples in (31) show that this adverbial measures the Post-State, not the core Eventuality-Time. Only in the case of stative verbs, this adverbial expression seems to measure the core Eventuality-Time, but it has been shown that stative participial verbs pattern differently than dynamic ones, since the core eventuality is the Post-State.
If the proposal is correct, there is expected to be a sharp contrast between the perfective form of a stative verb and the participial one, where the underlying eventuality is not a Post-State but the actual Eventuality-Time. This is indeed the case:

(33) sami naam  
Sami sleep.PFV.3SG.M since three days
‘Sami slept three days ago.’

Here the Eventuality-Time is included in Assertion-Time and thus the sleeping event ended three days before the Utterance Time. Perfective stative verbs pattern with the other verb classes:

(34) a. sami katab  
Sami write.PFV.3SG.M the-letter since three days
‘Sami wrote the letter 3 days ago.’

b. sami rakad  
Sami run.PFV.3SG.M since three days
‘Sami ran 3 days ago.’

Note that the participial form, when modified by this perfect level adverb, does not give rise to universal perfect readings, with dynamic VPs. Stative VPs seem to enable a universal perfect reading, however, in this case a distinction between the universal and the resultative perfect reading seems to be neutralized.

4.5.2 (just) this minute

The last set of data includes modification by the adverbial expression ha-daḥi’a ‘(just) this minute’, and the way it interacts with the different verb-classes in the perfective and participial verb forms.

In general, the perfective form may come close in some cases to the participial one in giving rise to resultative perfect readings, but the major difference between the two is that for the latter, a resultative state is entailed while for the perfective form, it is not. In examples (35-37), all including
the perfective form, the resultative reading is obtained only in the presence of the adverbial expression *ha-d-daʔiʔa*:

(35) a. sami katab ʔar-risaale  
    Sami write.PFV.3SG.M the-letter  
    ‘Sami wrote the letter.’  

b. sami katab ʔar-risaale ha-d-daʔiʔa  
    Sami write.PFV.3SG.M the-letter this minute  
    ‘Sami has just written the letter.’

(36) a. Sami naam  
    Sami sleep.PFV.3SG.M  
    ‘Sami slept.’  

b. sami naam ha-d-daʔiʔa  
    Sami sleep.PFV.3SG.M this minute  
    ‘Sami has just fallen asleep.’

(37) a. sami rakad  
    Sami run.PFV.3SG.M  
    ‘Sami ran.’  

b. sami rakad ha-d-daʔiʔa  
    Sami run.PFV.3SG.M this minute  
    ‘Sami has just started running.’

Notice that with stative/positional and activity verbs there is a significant difference in temporal meaning when this adverbial expression is present: instead of the usual meaning of termination, in the presence of this adverbial expression, these verbs denote *inceptions*. This may indicate that with the perfective form, VPs are not distinguished according to the stative/dynamic feature.

Now, let us compare the modified perfective forms with the already familiar participial ones:

(38) sami kaateb ʔar-risaale (ha-d-daʔiʔa)  
    Sami write.PART.SG.M the-letter (this minute)  
    ‘Sami has just written the letter.’

(39) sami naayem (*ha-d-daʔiʔa)  
    Sami sleep.PART.SG.M this minute  
    ‘Sami has fallen asleep.’
Crucially, contrary to the perfective forms, participial ones express resultative readings without necessarily being modified by specific adverbial expressions.

With this particular adverbial modification, accomplishments and stative/positional verbs yield the same temporal readings under the two forms, while activities do not. This picture is entirely compatible with the proposal made here, reflecting which of the core Eventuality-Time or the Post-State are related to the Assertion-Time. Let us consider each verb class separately. With accomplishments, whether the Assertion-Time is related to the core Eventuality-Time or only to the Post-State, the temporal reading is the same with this particular adverbial, as in both cases, the Post-State is related to the Assertion-Time (cf. 10a-b, 12a-b). In the case of stative/positional verbs, the fact that perfectives and participles pattern alike is not surprising either, since the core Eventuality-Time is treated as a Post-State in the case of the latter, implying that there was a transition point, and hence the subject DP is perceived as being in a Post-State. Notice that in the case of the participial form (39) the inchoative reading is present without the adverbial expression, and that applying this adverbial expression results in ungrammaticality. Presumably this is so since the transition point with this type of verb class is only presupposed. Finally, the class of activity verbs is the one in which variation between the perfective form and the participial one is expected, since in the case of the perfective form, the core Eventuality-Time is included in the Assertion-Time and is modified by the adverbial expression resulting in an inchoative reading, whereas in the case of the participial form, the Post-State is related to the Assertion-Time, and the core Eventuality-Time can only be understood as being anterior to the Utterance Time, whether the adverbial expression is there or not. In other words, in the case of the participle, the core Eventuality-Time is not accessible to the Assertion-Time, while in the case of the perfective form, the Post-State is not directly related to the Assertion-Time.

5 Concluding remarks

In this paper I have shown that the participial form in Syrian Arabic non-embedded clauses gives rise to resultative perfect readings. It was proposed that these readings are an instantiation of a certain type of a viewpoint aspect, available in the language alongside the perfective and imperfective viewpoint aspects. The proposal to view this temporal reading as a view-
point aspect comes from the idea that for the perfective and imperfective viewpoint aspect, the Assertion-Time is related to what I termed here as the core Eventuality-Time, while for participles, the Assertion-Time is related to a simplex time interval, the Post-State Time.

Compared to the perfect in English, we can say that the division of labor between the partical form and the perfective one in the case of dynamic verbs corresponds, respectively, to the resultative and experiential perfect readings discussed for English: the participial form yields resultative readings, while the perfective one yields experiential perfect readings, and can yield also resultative ones, when the appropriate adverbial expressions are present, e.g. ha-d-da’i‘ā ‘just this minute’. However, in the proposal presented and defended here, Syrian Arabic differs from the English Perfect in that it does not introduce an additional temporal interval to the existing three (Ev-T, Ast-T, UT). Rather, it makes the Post-State temporal interval accessible to the Assertion-Time. Thus siding with Klein’s, Kamp & Reyle’s and Parsons’ conception of the Perfect presented earlier in the paper seems to be more adequate for capturing the Syrian Arabic data than the XN/PTS approach.

References


