Impersonal Passive 'Personalized'

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Abstract: *Within a specified sense of pragmatics, this article will discuss **impersonal passive** in (written) Arabic and its typological counterpart in English, a rather unique construction which subjectivizes the semantically vacuous nominal expletive to refer to the indefinite humanness of the real Agent (or its thematic proxy). It will show that there exist certain instantiations of the construction where the subjectivized category is not semantically vacuous but the real Agent (or its thematic proxy) still maintains reference to its indefinite humanness in particular, thus overlapping with what is misleadingly termed **'personal passive'** in the literature. Hence, with respect to the logical value of transitivity underlying the central activity, the article will highlight two major sub-types of impersonal passive and their **'personalized' versions** as a preliminary to further reconsideration of the entire terminological apparatus in this regard –the principal concern of a forthcoming article.*

1. Introduction

Any attempt to define pragmatics would imply the imposition of *ad hoc* boundaries on its intractable scope, on the one hand, and the determination of such boundaries with particular linguistic domains, on the other (Mey 1989; 1994). What is beyond question, however, is the necessary affinity between pragmatics and semantics as two domains complementing each other (Leech 1983; Horn 1988). To avoid possible misunderstanding in the upcoming analysis, the *defined* pragmatic dimension of what is collectively known as '**impersonal passive**' will be considered from the viewpoint of the central activity (i.e. its underlying force, specifically)[1]. Thus, in addition to the structural representation of given constituents, the pragmatic dimension will comprise the **semantics** of the argument structure (e.g. Agent, Patient, Location, etc.) and the **logic** that gives rise to this structure. Accordingly, the analysis will be confined to this bipolar dimension for the arrival at a new account of what will be called the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive**. To make the description more concrete at the outset, consider first the following examples from (written) Arabic and English:

(1)   a. ni:ma fi: al-da:ri.
            (Gloss: was slept (3MSG) in the-house (OBL))
        b. (Lit.: It was slept in the house.)

(2)   a. qi:la inna zaydan ka:tibun.
            (Gloss: was said (3MSG) that Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
        b. It was said that Zaid was a writer.

The present article is, therefore, concerned with impersonal passive, as illustrated in (1-2), and with its 'personalized' version (or versions); it is not concerned with what is misleadingly termed 'personal passive' in the literature. As a starting-point, a sharp distinction will be made here between two different sub-types of impersonal passive in terms of the potential value of transitivity underlying the main verb, as exemplified by *na:ma* 'to sleep' in (1) and by *qa:la* 'to say' in (2) above. The distinction will be explained with reference to its instantiation in (written) Arabic and its typological counterpart in English. Thus, either sub-type of impersonal passive will be identified with its 'personalized' version insofar as the subjectivized non-subject category in this version *has* a semantic content. Given that the 'surface' subject in the 'non-personalized' version of impersonal passive does *not* have a semantic content, its 'personalized' version must, therefore, be understood accordingly. That is to say, both in impersonal passive and its 'personalized' version, the entity that is responsible for bringing about the central activity refers strictly to a covert and indefinite human Agent, with the subjectivized category in the former being depleted of semantic connotation and the subjectivized category in the latter being repleted with semantic connotation. It is as simple as that.

What seems to constitute an empirical fact about the frequency of canonical passivization in natural discourse is what establishes the markedness of impersonal passive and the unmarkedness of the confusing 'personal passive' (El-Marzouk 1998a; 1998b; 2003). The markedness of impersonal passive is ascribable to the very restricted nature of the 'surface' subject which takes the form of a **nominal expletive**: the **implicit** third-person-masculine-singular (3MSG) pronominal *huwa* 'it' (literally, 'he') in Arabic and the **explicit** third-person-neutral-singular (3NSG) pronominal *it* in English[2]. These two pronominals can be said to coincide in their expletive interpretation whose logical status is abstractively dissociated from the real Agent or its thematic proxy. It is, therefore, this expletive interpretation which stands in contrast with the assumption that the 'surface' subject in impersonal passive is syntactically deleted as a result of what is called 'spontaneous demotion', since the demotion of any nominal which originally occupies a subject position must be triggered by the promotion of another nominal to the same position (Comrie 1977a; 1977b). Even in reference to those alternative analyses within the framework of Relational Grammar, it is still difficult to regard the 'surface' subject as a 'dummy' subject which is said to be constantly promoted from a non-subject relation-**2** in the (original) active sentence to a subject relation-**1** in the passive counterpart, especially when the grammaticality of (1) in Arabic and its ungrammaticality in English are to be examined, for instance (Perlmutter 1978; 1983; Perlmutter and Postal 1984; Blake 1990).

Rather, the aforesaid expletive interpretation is implemented to simply impersonalize the identity of the real Agent (or its thematic proxy). Thus, as the term 'impersonal' would literally indicate, the nominal expletive is structurally represented (implicitly in Arabic and explicitly in English –see note 2) to refer specifically to a human Agent that is characterized by a covert and indefinite

nature. For this reason, the nominal expletive in impersonal passives, as in (1-2) above, can be semantically equated with (quantified) pronominals, such as, *aẖaduhum* 'someone' and *hum* 'they', which act arbitrarily as the 'surface' subject in certain **impersonal actives** in Arabic and English, as in (3-4) below, the 'active' versions of (1-2). Notice that by virtue of the analogously implicit realization of the pronominal *hum* 'they' in Arabic, in particular, its perceived subjectivization also entails inflecting the verb *qa:la* 'to say' in accordance with the 3MPL-morpheme *-u:*, hence the seemingly null-subject nature of this language, as illustrated in (4). For example:

(3)   a. na:ma aẖaduhum fi: al-da:ri.
            (Gloss: slept (3MSG) someone (NOM) in the-house (OBL))
        b. Someone slept in the house.

(4)   a. qa:lu: inna zaydan ka:tibun.
            (Gloss: said (3MPL) that Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
        b. They said that Zaid was a writer.

The well perceivable covertness and indefiniteness of the (quantified) pronominal in impersonal actives, such as (3-4), involves a strict reference to an **unspecified** human Agent, and subsequently an abstractive dissociation of this pronominal from the **specified** human Agent (the entity that causes the central activity), since it appears that there exists no semantically represented nominal in a core relationship with the main verb. This is in fact the basic property of the nominal expletive which acts as the 'surface' subject in **impersonal passive** (Moreno 1990:32; Klaiman 1991:8f.). As such, the mapping of a potential nominal is transferred onto the subjectivized pronominal (i.e. the nominal expletive itself) in a typically detransitivized construction, for which reason the non-subject category in the corresponding active version will be syntactically unpromoted (Givón 1990:570f.). In other words, if impersonal actives, such as (3-4), happen to undergo canonical passivization for some pragmatic reason, as in (1-2), then the non-subject category (the NP *al-da:ri* 'the house' in (3) and the NP *zaydan* 'Zaid' in (4)) will remain in its base position, and will therefore retain the Case assignment it originally inherits (El-Marzouk 2003:38f.). The examples cited in (1-2) at the outset are repeated in (5-6) for convenience:

(5)   a. ni:ma fi: al-da:ri.
            (Gloss: was slept (3MSG) in the-house (OBL))
        b. (Lit.: It was slept in the house.)

(6)   a. qi:la inna zaydan ka:tibun.
            (Gloss: was said (3MSG) that Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
        b. It was said that Zaid was a writer.

This would now bring to light two syntactically discrete sub-types of impersonal passive which exhibit exactly the same expletive interpretation that is necessarily confined to a covert and indefinite human Agent. The first sub-type (call it **impersonal passive-PP**) generally implements an intransitive verb which incorporates a PP-argument to act as its phrasal complement, a structural representation which takes place in Arabic, but not in English, as in (5). This sub-type as well as its 'personalized' version will be discussed soon in section 2. The second sub-type (call it **impersonal passive-CP**) normally employs a ditransitive verb whose two objects are typically integrated into an embedded CP-argument to act as its sentential complement, a structural representation that occurs both in Arabic and English, as in (6). Hence, ditransitivity indicates that lexical verbs, such as *qa:la* 'to say' in (6), *do* take two explicit objects (viz. *zaydan* 'Zaid' and *ka:tibun* 'writer'), and therefore necessitate Accusative-Case assignment to these objects, at some level of representation, especially in Arabic-type languages, as will be seen later on. Again, this sub-type as well as its 'personalized' version will be considered in section 3.

2. Impersonal passive-PP

Concerning impersonal passive-PP, as cited in (5) above, the implementation of an intransitive verb incorporating a typically Locative PP-argument seems to act as an important precondition for the implicit subjectivization of the nominal expletive *huwa* 'it' (literally, 'he') in Arabic. The empirical evidence for the real, albeit implicit, existence of this nominal expletive appears to be buttressed by the fact that the passive form of the intransitive verb is constantly inflected in accordance with the 3MSG-pronominal, given the seemingly null-subject nature of Arabic-type languages, as mentioned (see also note 2). This apparently 'default' value of the morphological component is to strictly refer to a covert and indefinite human Agent within a typically detransitivized construction, whatever the lexical signification of the NP that is incorporated in the Locative PP-argument. For example:

(7)   a. si:ra ᶜala: al- ar<u>d</u>i.
            (Gloss: was walked (3MSG) on the-land (OBL))
        b. (Lit.: It was walked on the land.)

(8)   a. ruqi<u>s</u>a fi: al-masra<u>h</u>i.
            (Gloss: was danced (3MSG) in the-theatre (OBL))
        b. (Lit.: It was danced in the theatre.)

In such a perspective, the strict reference to a covert and indefinite human Agent will still be maintained, even if the NP of the Locative PP-argument denotes a place that is typical of animals, as in <u>hadi:qati al-hayawa:ni</u> 'the Zoo' (literally, 'the animal park') in (9), or even if the intransitive verb itself expresses an animal activity, as in *naba<u>h</u>a* 'to bark' in (10). Thus, in such instances of **impersonal passive-PP** (instances which do not exist in English-

type languages), the implicit subjectivization of the nominal expletive *huwa* 'it' (literally, 'he') in Arabic refers strictly to an **unspecified human** rather than an unspecified animal in (9) or an unspecified dog in (10), with the latter implying a derogatory meaning only (Frajzyngier 1982:280)[3]:

(9)   a. huriba min ḥadi:qati al-ḥayawa:ni.
              (Gloss: was escaped (3MSG) from park (OBL) the-animal (GEN))
         b. (Lit.: It was escaped from the Zoo.)

(10)   a. nubiḫa fi: al-maḥkamati.
              (Gloss: was barked (3MSG) in the-court (OBL))
         b. (Lit.: It was barked in the court.)

Cross-linguistically, however, to render what is referentially perceived from the (implicit) nominal expletive *huwa* 'it' in Arabic, as in (9-10), into English would require the subjectivization of a (quantified) pronominal, such as *someone*, so as to also stand strictly for an unspecified human Agent (cf. (3-4)). Given the absence of impersonal passive-PP in English, the subjectivization of a (quantified) pronominal means therefore that it is structurally represented in a typically **impersonal active**, as in (11b-12b), a representation which is also possible in Arabic, as in (11a-12a):

(11)   a. haraba aḥaduhum min ḥadi:qati al-ḥayawa:ni.
               (Gloss: escaped (3MSG) someone (NOM) from park (OBL)
             the-animal (GEN))
         b. Someone escaped from the Zoo.

(12)   a. nabaḥa aḥaduhum fi: al-maḥkamati.
              (Gloss: barked (3MSG) someone (NOM) in the-court (OBL))
         b. Someone barked in the court.

Moreover, given the nonexistence of impersonal passive-PP in English, this language would permit instead the instantiation of what seems to be a 'structurally inverted' representation of the construction in question, a quite unique representation which is erroneously referred to as 'pseudo-passive' in the literature (El-Marzouk 2003). As it clearly stands, the peripheral NP of the PP-argument (i.e. the object of the preposition) is subjectivized to replace the nominal expletive, thereby reflecting a construction which *does* instantiate the subjectivization of a non-subject category but is well inhibited in Arabic-type languages. Even in this construction, however, the strict reference to a covert and indefinite human Agent may still be maintained, albeit with some exceptional fortuity, as will be discussed presently. But, first, let us consider briefly some of the logical consequences that would follow from the mere subjectivization of a non-subject category.

The process of subjectivization in verbal sentences entails Nominative-Case assignment to the NP that acts as the 'surface' subject, whatever form of voice the main verb may express (Saad 1982:104). If, however, there exists no other NP with a semantic content that can function as the 'surface' subject under canonical passivization, then the main verb would be associated with the (implicit) nominal expletive *huwa* 'it' for the impersonalization of the real Agent (cf. (5-10)). This association can be seen more transparently in reference to certain 'intransitive' verbs, like *marra* 'to pass', whose lexical status is causativized by the preposition *bi-* 'by', thereby forming a transitive-like entity. Thus, as a verbal-valency process which constitutes one logical consequence of subjectivizing a non-subject category, causativization *does* actually increase the magnitude of 'transitivity', but has nothing to do with the voice-value of the main verb. Consider the following example from Arabic, in particular, where the main verb *marra* 'to pass' and the preposition *bi-* 'by' it requires are causatively linked within a typically impersonal active structure, thus allowing a considerable measure of cross-linguistic interpretation:

(13)   a. marra   ahaduhum bi-al-maktabati.
              (Gloss: passed (3MSG) someone (NOM) by-the-library (OBL))
          b. Someone passed by the library.

To medieval Arabic linguists like Ibn Jinni (942-1002), causativization is looked upon as a 'unitary process', a contention which seems to also hold in English. Just as the causative marker *-w-* '-en' forms an integral part of the whole morphological structure of the verb *sawwada* 'to black**en**', for instance, the preposition *bi-* 'by' would be in complementary association with the lexical signification of the verb *marra* 'to pass'. This indicates that the object of the preposition (*al-maktabati* 'the library' in (13)) has the same potential character of a direct object, even though it is assigned the Oblique Case ending, since prepositions are considered to be 'proper Case assigners' (Owens 1988:176f.)[4]. In other words, if the example of impersonal active in (13) undergoes canonical passivization, as in (14), then the object of the preposition in question appears to have the same potential character of the 'surface' subject in the passive version (a category which is traditionally known as *na: ib al-fa:ᶜil* 'the acting Agent')[5]. For example:

(14)   a. murra bi-al-maktabati.
              (Gloss: was passed (3MSG) by-the-library (OBL))
          b. (Lit.: It was passed by the library.)

Although the object of the preposition in question displays the same potential character of a direct object, the absence of any Accusative-NP that is susceptible to subjectivization, and therefore to Nominative-Case assignment, in an impersonal active, as in (13), seems to mark further evidence for the implicit subjectivization of the nominal expletive *huwa* 'it' in an impersonal passive-PP,

as in (14). There exist in Arabic, however, certain Accusative-NPs which, upon their subjectivization under canonical passivization, result in an idiosyncratic representation of impersonal passive-PP. A consideration of these Accusative-NPs is, therefore, necessary for illuminating the salient pragmatic properties of this idiosyncratic representation. This consideration will later be taken as a preliminary to further cross-linguistic analysis in order to see the alternative structural conditions under which impersonal passive-PP would be realized in English.

Canonical passivization entails, among other structural alterations, subjectivization of the direct object or any syntactic category standing proxy for it. This means that, in the absence of the direct object, the category that stands proxy for it would act as the 'surface' subject, and would therefore be assigned the Nominative Case. In medieval Arabic linguistic theory, the term *al-mafᶜu:l* (roughly, 'the object') refers technically to any Accusative-NP which is dependent on the main verb, a structural-dependency condition that is well perceivable from Tesnière's notion of 'verbal-valency conditions' (Tesnière 1959:238f.). From this viewpoint, at least eight categories of Accusative-NPs were identified in the literature, a matter that is beyond the scope of the present study (Al-Bustaanii 1983:696; Owens 1988:167f.). What matters is the fact that only three of these eight categories may be subjectivized under certain conditions of canonical passivization, thereby signifying the direct object and the categories which stand proxy for it under similar conditions. These three categories may be illustrated in terms of their functional importance or 'basicness' as follows:

(i) al-mafᶜu:l bihi **'the patientive object'** (literally, 'the acted upon'), an Accusative-NP which the central activity is placed on or carried over. It may be structurally represented as either a **direct object** (e.g. *kita:ban* 'a book' in (15) and *al-kita:ba* 'the book' in (16)) or an **indirect object** (e.g. *zaydan* 'Zaid' in (16)):

(15)   a. kataba kita:ban.
            (Gloss: wrote (3MSG) book (ACC))
        b. He wrote a book.

(16)   a. aᶜta: zaydan al-kita:ba.
            (Gloss: gave (3MSG) Zaid (ACC) the-book (ACC))
        b. He gave Zaid the book.

(ii) al-mafᶜu:l al-mutlaq **'the cognate object'** (literally, 'the absolute object'), an Accusative-NP which takes the form of *al-masdar* 'the verbal nominal' with the sole purpose of intensifying the central activity. It may be structurally represented as either a **cognate object** proper (e.g. *julu:san* 'sitting' in (17)) or an **acting cognate object** to stand proxy for it (e.g. *quᶜu:dan* 'sitting' in (18))[6]:

(17)   a. jalasa zaydun julu:san.

(Gloss: sat down (3MSG) Zaid (NOM) sitting (ACC))
(Lit.: Zaid sat down sitting.)
b. Zaid sat down (for) long.

(18)   a. jalasa zaydun quᶜu:dan.
(Gloss: sat down (3MSG) Zaid (NOM) <u>sitting</u> (ACC))
(Lit.: Zaid sat down <u>sitting</u>.)
b. Zaid sat down (for) long.

(iii) al-mafᶜu:l fi:hi **'the adverbial object'** (literally, 'the object of whenness or whereness'), an Accusative-NP which indicates the time or space being associated with the central activity. It may be structurally represented as either a **temporal adverbial** (e.g. *yawman* 'a day' in (19)) or a **spatial adverbial** (e.g. *ama:ma* 'before' in (20)):

(19)   a. jalasa yawman fi: al-maktabi.
(Gloss: sat (3MSG) day (ACC) in the-office (OBL))
(Lit.: He sat a day in the office.)
b. He sat in the office for a day.

(20)   a. waqafa ama:ma al-mahkamati.
(Gloss: stood up (3MSG) before (ACC) the-court (GEN))
b. He stood up before the court.

With the above identification of all three Accusative-NPs that may be subjectivized under canonical passivization, there seems to be an inherent hierarchy among them when the mechanisms underlying this construction operate: the direct or indirect object, otherwise either the cognate or adverbial object (Owens 1988:167f.). This hierarchy is determined by the degree of functional importance or 'basicness' which may be explained as follows: if the direct and/or indirect object exist overtly in a core relationship with the main verb (cf. (15-16)), then either category is subjectivized, even if one, or more, of the other categories also coexist. In this case, the resultant construction would be what is misleadingly called 'personal passive', a matter that does not concern us here[7]. If, however, neither the direct nor indirect object exists in such a configuration (cf. (17-20)), then either the cognate or adverbial object may be subjectivized. It is, therefore, the **cognate object** and the **adverbial object** which, together with the **indirect object**, stand proxy for the direct object to be subjectivized under canonical passivization.

Given the hierarchy of Accusative-NPs, a reconsideration of both the cognate object and the adverbial object may shed light on an idiosyncratic representation of impersonal passive-PP. As just discussed, either the cognate or adverbial object may be subjectivized in the absence of both the direct and indirect object. Thus, according to the rule of subjectivization mentioned earlier, a passive sentence where either Accusative-NP is subjectivized, and is thence

assigned the Nominative Case, would reflect what is misleadingly designated 'personal passive', simply because this category instantiates a subjectivized non-subject category that *has* a semantic content (see note 7). In order to realize the idiosyncratic representation being talked about, consider the canonical passive versions of (17-20), as in (21-24), respectively (Owens 1988:167f.):

(21) a. julisa **julu:sun**. (Cognate Object)
          (Gloss: was sat down (3MSG) sitting (NOM))
      b. (Lit.: A **sitting** was sat down.)

(22) a. julisa **quᶜu:dun**. (Acting Cognate Object)
          (Gloss: was sat down (3MSG) <u>sitting</u> (NOM))
      b. (Lit.: A <u>**sitting**</u> was sat down.)

(23) a. julisa **yawmun** fi: al-maktabi. (Adverbial Object (Temporal))
          (Gloss: was sat (3MSG) day (NOM) in the-office (OBL))
      b. (Lit.: A **day** was sat in the office.)

(24) a. wuqifa **ama:mu** al-maḥkamati. (Adverbial Object (Spatial))
          (Gloss: was stood up (3MSG) before (NOM) the-court (GEN))
      b. (Lit.: **Before** the court was stood up.)

Here, the subjectivized cognate object is exemplified by *julu:sun* 'a sitting' in (21) (or its proxy *quᶜu:dun* 'a <u>sitting</u>' in (22)), and the subjectivized adverbial object is exemplified by *yawmun* 'a day' (temporal) in (23) or *ama:mu* 'before' (spatial) in (24). Although these categories exist in a core relationship with intransitive verbs, and are thus assigned the Nominative Case, the abstractive dissociation of the implicit pronominal *huwa* 'it' from the real human Agent is still perceivable, even if the pronominal may not exhibit the 3MSG-value[8]. For this reason, the examples (21-24) can be said to constitute a **pragmatic interface** between impersonal passive and what is misleadingly called 'personal passive'. That is to say, they are structurally represented as 'personal passives', whilst at the same time the pragmatic import of impersonal passive-PP is still maintained. Let us initially identify the examples (21-24) with what may be called, the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-PP**. This initial identification appears to be corroborated even further if a moment of reflection is given to the manner in which the same examples in (21-24) are rendered into English within typically impersonal actives, as in (25-28), respectively:

(25) a. Someone sat down (for) long.
      b. (Lit.: A **sitting** was sat down.) (cf. (21))

(26) a. Someone sat down (for) long.
      b. (Lit.: A <u>**sitting**</u> was sat down.) (cf. (22))

(27)   a. Someone sat in the office for a day.
         b. (Lit.: A **day** was sat in the office.) (cf. (23))

(28)   a. Someone stood up before the court.
         b. (Lit.: **Before** the court was stood up.) (cf. (24))

Recall that impersonal passive-PP exists in Arabic-type languages, but not in English-type languages (cf. (5), (7-8), and (14)). Cross-linguistically, however, to render the pragmatic import of this construction into English involves apparent subjectivization of the peripheral NP of the PP-argument, a representation which is erroneously termed 'pseudo-passive' in the literature (see above). But the abstractive dissociation of the subjectivized peripheral NP from the real human Agent is perceivable even more transparently than in (21-24), the examples which have been initially identified with the 'personalized' version of impersonal passive-PP. Consider now the cross-structural variation between impersonal passive-PP in Arabic, as in (29b-32b), and its typological counterpart in English, as in (29a-32a):

(29)   a. The house was slept in.
         b. (Lit.: It was slept in the house.) (cf. (5))

(30)   a. The land was walked on.
         b. (Lit.: It was walked on the land.) (cf. (7))

(31)   a. The theatre was danced in.
         b. (Lit.: It was danced in the theatre.) (cf. (8))

(32)   a. The library was passed by.
         b. (Lit.: It was passed by the library.) (cf. (14))

To linguists like Dixon (1991), subjectivization of the peripheral NP of the PP-argument in (29a-32a) is conditioned by two restrictions. The first restriction refers to what may be called, '**the structural intrusion of NPs**'. That is, there must be no direct-object NP intervening between the main verb and the preposition it may take, otherwise the peripheral NP which is prepositionally marked cannot be subjectivized under canonical passivization. If this is correct, then the (first) restriction would explain the grammaticality of (33a) and the ungrammaticality of (33b):

(33)   a. The spoon was eaten with.
         b. *The spoon was eaten beans with.

The second restriction suggests what may be called, '**the semantic codification of NPs**'. That is, the peripheral NP which is prepositionally

marked must not be alternatively codable as a direct-object NP within the same semantic role, otherwise the peripheral NP cannot be subjectivized under canonical passivization. Again, if this is correct, then the (second) restriction would account for the grammaticality of (34a) and the ungrammaticality of (34b) (Dixon 1991:315f.):

(34)   a. The box was kicked.
         b. *The box was kicked at.

According to these two restrictions, therefore, the prepositionally-marked peripheral NP in (29a-32a) displays many of the characteristics of the direct object, a point that was already made by the medieval Arabic linguist Ibn Jinni within his concept of causativization (cf. (13-14)). For this reason, the peripheral NP may be subjectivized under canonical passivization, thereby reflecting the (misleading) 'personal passive' by virtue of its semantic content. Given the abstractive dissociation of the same peripheral NP from the (real) human Agent, the examples (29a-32a) can also be said to constitute a pragmatic interface between impersonal passive-PP and 'personal passive' in the sense referred to earlier (cf. also (21-24)). In other words, rather than mistakenly identifying the examples (29a-32a) as English 'pseudo-passives', it would be more accurate to consider them instances of what we have already called, the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-PP**.

With this well perceivable pragmatic equilibrium between impersonal passive-PP in Arabic and its 'personalized' version in English, there seems to exist an exceptional situation, however, where the peripheral NP denotes a place of animals specifically (e.g. *hadi:qati al-ḥayawa:ni* 'the Zoo' in (9)) or where the intransitive verb itself expresses an animal activity too (e.g. *nabaḥa* 'to bark' in (10)). As we saw, in Arabic instances of impersonal passive-PP as these, the (Agentive) reference is restricted to an **unspecified human** rather than an unspecified animal in (9) or an unspecified dog in (10) (see note 3). Yet if these Arabic impersonal passives are to be rendered into their English 'personalized' versions (on the analogy of (29a-32a)), then the strict reference to an unspecified human may not necessarily be maintained. Thus, the real Agent may well be understood as an unspecified animal in (35a) or an unspecified dog in (36a). For this very reason, subjectivization of the (quantified) pronominal *someone* does constitute a pragmatic prerequisite to stand strictly for an unspecified human within typically impersonal actives in English, as in (35b-36b), which are also possible in Arabic (cf. (11-12)):

(35)   a. The Zoo was escaped from.
         b. Someone escaped from the Zoo. (cf. (11))
         c. (Lit.: It was escaped from the Zoo.) (cf. (9))
(36)   a. The court was barked in.
         b. Someone barked in the court. (cf. (12))
         c. (Lit.: It was barked in the court.) (cf. (10))

Another exceptional situation concerns the syntactic status of the object of the preposition which, as we saw, is realized as a peripheral NP unmarkedly. If, however, this NP is realized as an infinitival clause in Arabic (a clause which is semantically equated with *al-masdar* 'verbal nominal' –see also below), then a marked instantiation of a PP-argument would arise, where the (embedded) infinitival clause occupies the object of the preposition itself. This may be characteristic of the ditransitive *ittafaqa* 'to agree' and the preposition ᶜ*ala:* 'on' it requires. Given that prepositions are proper Case-assigners, as mentioned earlier, the whole infinitival clause would be assigned the Oblique Case, albeit invisibly. The interesting point here is that an instance of **impersonal passive-PP** in Arabic, as in (37a), would be rendered into a corresponding instance of **impersonal passive-CP** in English, as in (37b), with the latter instance being the subject-matter of section 3, as will be seen soon.

(37)   a. uttufiqa ᶜala: an yaku:na al-sala:mu da: iman.
            (Gloss: was agreed (3MSG) on to be (3MSG) the-peace (NOM)
            permanent (ACC))
            (Lit.: It was agreed on **to be** the Peace permanent.)
       b. It was agreed that the Peace **would be** permanent.

Thus, what seems to determine the acceptability of this quite marked instantiation in Arabic is the deletion of inherent boundaries between the main clause and the (embedded) infinitival clause[9]. Since both the infinitive marker *an* 'to' and the subjunctive copula *yaku:na* 'be' in Arabic can be semantically equated with the verbal nominal *kawni* 'being' (whose English counterpart is a verbal gerundive), this nominal may also act as the object of the preposition ᶜ*ala:* 'on' to be assigned the Oblique Case visibly, thereby identifying a peripheral NP unmarkedly, as in (38a). Even in this unmarked situation, English would still inhibit subjectivization of the peripheral NP (cf. (29a-32a)), and would resort instead to impersonal passive-CP, as in (38b):

(38)   a. uttufiqa ᶜala: kawni al-sala:mi da: iman.
            (Gloss: was agreed (3MSG) on being (OBL) the-peace (GEN)
            permanent (ACC))
            (Lit.: It was agreed on the **being** of the Peace permanent.)
       b. It was agreed that the Peace **would be** permanent.

This fortuitous occurrence of the cross-linguistic parallelism between the two sub-types of impersonal passive (that is, between impersonal passive-PP in Arabic and impersonal passive-CP in English), as in (37-38), can now be taken as an objective starting-point for a fairly detailed analysis of impersonal passive-CP and its 'personalized' version in both languages.

3. Impersonal passive-CP

Concerning impersonal passive-CP (which is the second distinct sub-type of impersonal passive proper), the implementation of a ditransitive verb whose two objects represent an embedded CP-argument seems to constitute another important precondition for the subjectivization of the nominal expletive on cross-linguistic ground: the **implicit** 3MSG-pronominal *huwa* 'it' (literally 'he') in Arabic and the **explicit** 3NSG-pronominal *it* in English, as discussed earlier (see note 2). Thus, like impersonal passive-PP (in Arabic), impersonal passive-CP appears to also exhibit the expletive interpretation of the pronominal in question to refer strictly to a covert and indefinite human Agent. However, unlike impersonal passive-PP (which exists in Arabic, but not in English), impersonal passive-CP is in fact instantiated in both languages, thereby marking cross-linguistic similarity far more conspicuously (cf. (2)/(6)). But what is the nature of the ditransitive verb that *does* render its activeness susceptible to the effect of impersonal passive-CP? To answer this question satisfactorily, a brief account of the major categories of ditransitive verbs is necessary here.

In medieval Arabic linguistic theory (I am making further reference to this theory, since I do not see any other conclusive evidence with respect to the issue at hand), the notion of generalized ditransitivity, considered under the more generalized notion of transitivity proper, was explained in terms of its underlying proclivity towards structural dependence upon, and/or structural independence from, the central activity (Al-Ghalaayiini 1982; Owens 1988; Owens 1990; Al-Antaakii 1991). Generalized ditransitivity was, therefore, scrutinized in massive detail in order to capture all possible lexical properties of ditransitive verbs along with the structural representations which do arise from these properties. Thus, no empirical lacuna appears to have been left untouched as regards ditransitive verbs in general, be they **lexical ditransitives** or **morphological ditransitives**[10]. And in this connection, two apparently discrete classes of ditransitive verbs are identified with the potential syntactic behaviour of the two objects that these verbs necessitate.

The first class of ditransitives dictates that the two objects which they require cannot stand independently as a nominal sentence consisting of a subjective 'topic' and a predicative 'comment'. Thus, the first class designates what may be called, **ditransitives of nominal-sentential inhibition**, as is the case with *aᶜta:* 'to give', *sa ala* 'to ask', *manaᶜa* 'to deny'/'to prevent', *albasa* 'to dress', *ᶜallama* 'to teach', etc. A concrete example of these ditransitives may make the point clear. In verbal sentences, like (39) below, the two objects *zaydan* 'Zaid' and *qalaman* 'pen' (which are dependent on the ditransitive *aᶜta:* 'to give') cannot stand independently as a nominal sentence, as in (40) below, unless someone, the 'producer' of (40), is thinking of some chimerical world, thereby confusing the actual world in which we live with any other possible world!

(39) a. aᶜta: zaydan qalaman.
        (Gloss: gave (3MSG) Zaid (ACC) pen (ACC))

      b. He gave Zaid a pen.

(40)   a. *zaydun qalamun.
          (Gloss: Zaid (NOM) pen (NOM))
      b. *Zaid is a pen.

The second class of ditransitives, on the other hand, dictates that the two objects which they require can in fact stand independently as a nominal sentence (a subjective 'topic' and a predicative 'comment'). Thus, in contrast with the first class of ditransitives, the second class designates what may be called, **ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission**. These ditransitives are further sub-classified into two sub-classes: firstly, what is known as *af͡a:l al-yaqi:n* '**verbs of certainty**', such as, *ᶜalima* 'to know', *dara:* 'to realize', *adraka* 'to perceive', *iᶜtaqada* 'to believe', etc.[11]; and secondly, what is termed *af͡a:l al-THann* '**verbs of uncertainty**', such as, *THanna* 'to assume'/'to think', *ḥasaba* 'to suppose'/'to think', *zaᶜama* 'to claim'/'to allege', *qa:la* 'to say'/'to state', etc. A concrete example of these ditransitives may clarify the point. In verbal sentences, like (41) below, the two objects *zaydan* 'Zaid' and *ka:tibun* 'writer' (which are dependent on the ditransitive *ᶜalima* 'to know') can indeed stand independently as a (full) nominal sentence, as in (42) below, which seems to be valid for any possible world, including the world in which we live.

(41)   a. ᶜalima anna zaydan ka:tibun.
          (Gloss: knew (3MSG) that Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
      b. He knew that Zaid was a writer.

(42)   a. zaydun ka:tibun.
          (Gloss: Zaid (NOM) writer (NOM))
      b. Zaid is a writer.

Given the distinction between the two classes of ditransitives, it appears that ditransitives of nominal-sentential inhibition cannot undergo impersonal passive-CP, though they can undergo what is misleadingly called, 'personal passive', as seen (see also note 7). Whereas it is the second class of ditransitives (ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission) which are in fact susceptible to impersonal passive-CP. This susceptibility can be attributed to the semantic association of the two objects in question with an independent (valid) nominal sentence, where both the subjective 'topic' and the predicative 'comment' are assigned the Nominative Case (cf. also (42)). Hence, the independent nominal sentence may act as an embedded CP-argument within an invariable position, meaning that Case-assignment would not be affected in any configuration, whether the CP-argument is embedded in **impersonal active** (cf. (4)) or in **'personal' active** (cf. (41)) or even in **impersonal passive-CP**, as in (43-44):

(43)   a. ᶜulima anna zaydan ka:tibun.

(Gloss: was known (3MSG) that Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
    b. It was known that Zaid was a writer.

(44)   a. zuᶜima   anna hindan sha:ᶜiratun.
        (Gloss: was claimed (3MSG) that Hind (ACC) poetess (NOM))
    b. It was claimed that Hind was a poetess.

Clearly, the embedded CP-argument (the *anna*-argument in Arabic and the *that*-argument in English) is a declarative statement that can convey its message quite independently. It is a simple, informative statement which is *known*, *claimed*, etc. by an **unspecified person**, with the subjective 'topic' and the predicative 'comment' of this statement standing for the two objects being talked about. Thus, the strict reference to a covert and indefinite human Agent is constantly maintained, provided that the 'humanness' of the Agent can be perceived even more transparently than the case with the impersonal passive-PP discussed in the previous section (cf. section 2). This is due to the fact that ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission are always associated with a mental activity (*knowing*, *claiming*, etc.) that is characteristic of humans rather than animals or things.

It follows that, both in Arabic and English, the first object which the subjective 'topic' of the sentential complement stands for (e.g. *zaydan* 'Zaid' in (43) and *hindan* 'Hind' in (44)) may also be subjectivized to replace the nominal expletive itself. For reasons which have to do with the degree of intentional importance or 'basicness', so it seems, the subjectivized (non-subject) category would establish a new grammatical relationship with the ditransitive itself, and would thus be assigned the Nominative Case. While in Arabic subjectivization entails mere accusativization of the second object which the predicative 'comment' stands for, as in (45a-46a), in English it involves infinitivization of the copula *be* as an Accusative-Case assigner, as in (45b-46b):

(45)   a. ᶜulima zaydun ka:tiban.
        (Gloss: was known (3MSG) Zaid (NOM) writer (ACC))
    b. Zaid was known to be a writer.

(46)   a. zuᶜima-t hindun sha:ᶜiratan.
        (Gloss: was claimed (3FSG) Hind (NOM) poetess (ACC))
    b. Hind was claimed to be a poetess.

Now if examples of impersonal passive-CP, as in (43-44), do license subjectivization of a non-subject category that has a semantic content, as in (45-46), then they would again reflect what is misleadingly referred to as 'personal passive' in the literature (see note 7), given the mere retention of the Accusative-Case assignment to the predicative 'comment' (the second object), as just seen[12]. However, on the analogy of what we have already called, the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-PP** (cf. (29-32)), the abstractive dissociation of

the subjectivized (non-subject) category from the human Agent can still be perceived within a typically detransitivized construction. For this very reason, canonical passives, such as (45-46), can also be said to establish a pragmatic interface between impersonal passive and the (misleading) 'personal passive', thereby marking further instances of what may be called, the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-CP**.

Given the clear identification of examples like (43-44) with impersonal passive-CP and examples like (45-46) with its 'personalized' version in both languages, there seems to exist some exceptional fortuity, however, where the CP-argument (viz. its **partial** formation in Arabic or its **total** formation in English) is subjectivized so as to replace the nominal expletive, thus assuming a substantival identity similar to that of the subjective 'topic' of the sentential complement (the first object) (cf. also (45-46)). As it so appears, the apparently marked tendency of the (embedded) CP-argument towards subjectivization would characterize certain ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission, such as, *qa:la* 'to say' in Arabic and *believe* in English, with the latter being a verb of certainty and the former being a verb of uncertainty (see note 11). Let us, first, consider the phenomenon in English in order to see what its possible typological counterpart in Arabic would follow from. For example:

(47)   a. **It** was believed that John was a writer.
        b. **John** was believed to be a writer.
        c. **That John was a writer** was believed.

Here, three distinctive categories are equally subjectivized: firstly, the nominal expletive itself *it* in impersonal passive-CP, as in (47a) (cf. (43-44)); secondly, the subjective 'topic' of the sentential complement (the first object) *John* in its 'personalized' version, as in (47b) (cf. (45-46)); and thirdly, the total formation of the CP-argument *that John was a writer* in a fortuitous version, as in (47c). We have, therefore, three structurally different representations of impersonal passive-CP exhibiting the same pragmatic properties: the humanness of the Agent, its perceived covertness, non-specification, etc. within a plainly detransitivized construction, not to speak of the abstractive dissociation of the subjectivized category from the Agent. This means that a fortuitous example like (47c) is in principle classifiable under the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-CP**, simply because the subjectivized CP-argument is endowed with a semantic content (even far more endowed with the content than the subjective 'topic' in (47b)). Yet, its identification with a fortuitous version should not only be perceived intra-linguistically, but also emphasized cross-linguistically, since the phenomenon does not normally exist in Arabic, except perhaps the case with the ditransitive *qa:la* 'to say', the verb of uncertainty mentioned above. Let us now consider the same phenomenon in Arabic before we reach the conclusion, a phenomenon which requires some initial remarks on the nominal sentence *vis-à-vis* the verbal sentence.

Unlike English-type languages, Arabic-type languages instantiate VSO as a principal word order. Hence, the verbal sentence in the latter begins with the verbalized activity (V) which entails the explicit or implicit existence of the subjectivized agency (S), with the objectivized 'patiency' (O) being determined by the underlying force of the activity. The nominal sentence, on the other hand, starts with the subjective 'topic' (S) which also entails the explicit or implicit existence of the predicative 'comment' (P), with the latter ranging over all syntactic categories that may predicate of, or about, the former. This implies the latter's (i.e. P) connate expressibility of the verbalized activity itself, where a nominal sentence *does* permit realization of the predicative 'comment' as a VP. It follows that the distinction between the verbal sentence and the nominal sentence is not explicable in terms of the presence or absence of the verbalized activity, but rather in terms of its pre-nominal or post-nominal locality. Thus, in the unmarked situation, the verbal sentence identifies itself **inclusively** with the verbalized activity and the subjectivized agency, as in (48), whereas the nominal sentence identifies itself **exclusively** with the subjective 'topic', whatever the syntactic representation of the predicative 'comment', as in (49-50):

(48)   a. kataba zaydun.
           (Gloss: wrote (3MSG) Zaid (NOM))
       b. (Lit.: wrote Zaid.)
     c. Zaid ***wrote***.

(49)   a. zaydun kataba.
           (Gloss: Zaid (NOM) wrote (3MSG))
       b. (Lit.: Zaid worte.)
       c. ***Zaid*** wrote.

(50)   a. zaydun ka:tibun.
           (Gloss: Zaid (NOM) writer (NOM))
       b. Zaid is a writer.

Here, the structural difference between the verbal sentence (48) and the nominal sentence (49) is in fact an intentional difference between the contextual accentuation of the verbalized activity in the former and the subjectivized agency in the latter, an apparent measure of accentuation which is comparable with what is sometimes termed, 'focalization' (cf. *John wrote* versus *It was John who wrote*). Given the exclusive identification of the nominal sentence with the subjective 'topic', as just explained, the structural difference between the two nominal sentences (49-50) is therefore a categorical difference between the VP-realization of the predicative 'comment' in (49) and its NP-realization in (50), with the intentional difference being determined by the mere accentuation of either category. It follows that, unlike the verbal sentence, the nominal sentence may be introduced by the particle *inna* which, as a phonological variant of the category *anna* 'that' illustrated above, displays a verb-like identity, thereby

accusativizing the subjective 'topic' and nominativizing the predicative 'comment'. As a free element being quite depleted of lexical signification, this particle may function as *either* a particle of **'nominal-sentential introduction'** so as to accentuate the informative statement *or* a particle of **'subordinating conjunction'** in order to also act as a complementizer (C) of an embedded CP-argument, as is the case with *all* ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission (the second class) discussed earlier. Consider the nominal sentence (50) when introduced by the particle *inna*, as in (51). Notice, here, that the copula *be* in (51b) is overstressed to simply indicate the accentuation effect of the particle, since there exists no English equivalent for it as a particle of nominal-sentential introduction (PNSI):

(51)   a.   inna zaydan ka:tibun.
              (Gloss: inna (PNSI) Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
        b.   Zaid *is* a writer.

Now, the structural difference between the bare-nominal sentence (i.e. devoid of the particle *inna*) in (50) and the *inna*-nominal sentence (i.e. introduced by the particle *inna*) in (51) is in fact between the Nominative Case of the subjective 'topic' in the former and its Accusative Case in the latter, with the perceived intentional difference having to do with the measure of contextual accentuation. It is, therefore, the *mere* physical introduction of the particle *inna* in (51) which is responsible for this accentuation. In his monumental work *Al-Muqaddimah* [*Prolegomena*], the Arabic philosopher of history Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) attempted to account for the subtle distinction between the two types of the nominal sentence in terms of the receptive mode of language, a mode that is preconditioned by the mental state of the receiver/hearer. He expounded the distinction as follows:

> […] The bare-nominal sentence brings advantages to one [i.e. the receiver/hearer] who has not yet entertained the central idea [e.g. the idea of Zaid being a writer in (50)]; whereas the *inna*-nominal sentence brings advantages to one who is still hesitant about the central idea [e.g. the same idea in (51)]. (*Prolegomena* [A Prolegomenon to Language: 551]; free translation)

Thus, in contrast with the bare-nominal sentence which is well devoid of contextual accentuation, and is thence well suitable for the 'not-yet-preoccupied' receiver/hearer, the *inna*-nominal sentence tends to express its overstatement, overemphasis, and exaggeration, pragmatic methods of attempting to induce the undecided, doubtful receiver/hearer to accept the informative message. All of such purely communicative exigencies can, therefore, be 'articulated' by the *mere* physical introduction of the particle *inna*, as in (51).

This essential, albeit subtle, distinction seems to underline contextual accentuation insofar as the particle *inna* functions as a particle of nominal-sentential introduction, meaning that it may well forfeit some (but not all) of its accentuation effect if it does not function as the selfsame particle. However, the (accentuated) *inna*-nominal sentence, in its entirety, may also be objectivized unmarkedly and subjectivized markedly, with the particle *inna* functioning as a particle of subordinating conjunction to be a complementizer of an embedded CP-argument. In the unmarked situation, a **total** CP-argument is objectivized by all ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission (the second class), as we saw. Conversely, in the marked situation, a **partial** CP-argument, as will be seen, is subjectivized by an idiosyncratic ditransitive like *qa:la* 'to say' (the verb of uncertainty). Consider now the *inna*-nominal sentence (51) when objectivized as an embedded CP-argument, in its entirety, as in (52-53) below. Notice, again, that objectivization comprises *both* the CP-argument being the object of the ditransitive verb itself in (52) *and* the CP-argument being the object of the preposition which co-occurs with it in (53):

(52) a. qi:la inna zaydan ka:tibun. (cf. (47a))
     (Gloss: was said (3MSG) that Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM))
   b. **It** was said that Zaid was a writer.

(53) a. qi:la ᶜan zaydin inna-hu ka:tibun. (cf. (47b))
     (Gloss: was said (3MSG) about Zaid (OBL) that-he writer (NOM))
   b. (Lit.: It was said about Zaid that he was a writer.)
   c. **Zaid** was talked about/spoken of as a writer.

Here, the ditransitive *qa:la* 'to say' in (52a) does not diverge from the structural norm in the sense that it permits (implicit) subjectivization of the nominal expletive *huwa* 'it' and objectivization of the (total) CP-argument in **impersonal passive-CP**, structural non-divergence which is also maintained cross-linguistically (cf. also (52b)). Paradoxically, the same ditransitive in (53a) *does* diverge from the structural norm due to its co-occurrence with the preposition *ᶜan* 'about', thus reflecting a (marked) instance of **impersonal passive-PP**. Structural divergence indicates, therefore, a pragmatic interface between impersonal passive-PP in Arabic, as in (53a), and its 'personalized' version in English, as in (53c) (cf. also (29-32)). Yet structural divergence can be seen more conspicuously when a **partial** CP-argument is subjectivized in Arabic. Hence, the discernible pragmatic interface can only be determined by the inherent intentionality of the informative statement. Consider, lastly, how a 'residual' CP-argument is subjectivized in (54a), which yields two possible interpretations in (54b-c), but whose possible paraphrase is illustrated in (55):

(54) a. qi:la zaydun ka:tibun. (cf. (47c))
     (Gloss: was said (3MSG) Zaid (NOM) writer (NOM))
   b. (Lit.: Zaid was a writer was said.)

    c. (Lit.: "Zaid was a writer", it was said.)
    d. ?**That Zaid was a writer** was said.

(55)   a. inna zaydan ka:tibun qi:la.
          (Gloss: inna (PNSI) Zaid (ACC) writer (NOM) was said (3MSG))
    b. "Zaid *was* a writer", it was said.

Recall, furthermore, that the entire CP-argument in English may be subjectivized to reflect the 'personalized' version of impersonal passive-CP as a fortuitous version, as in (54d) (cf. (47c)). This fortuity also occurs in Arabic in principle, but only if the (partial) CP-argument is not introduced by the particle *inna*, as in (54a) above, a configuration which marks cross-linguistic structural divergence, since the 'residue' of this CP-argument represents a bare-nominal sentence (see above). The 'residue' of the CP-argument in Arabic (or its totality in English) is explicable in terms of what is traditionally known as *taqdi:m* 'fronting', a syntactic process whose sole purpose is to accentuate the 'fronted' category[13]. Given the distinction between the bare-nominal sentence and the *inna*-nominal sentence (cf. (50-51)), a **'residual'** CP-argument would therefore be less contextually accentuated than a **total** CP-argument. Furthermore, a combination of this fortuitous 'residuality' and the implicitness of the nominal expletive in Arabic would result in an ambiguous reading between continuous speech, as in (54b), and discontinuous speech, as in (54c). This ambiguous reading can only be eliminated through one-dimensional intentionality which can be expressed in a possible paraphrase, as in (55), where the entire CP-argument is represented as a 'fronted' object of *saying* in the sense of *taqdi:m* 'fronting' just mentioned (see note 13). In consequence, the apparently marked tendency of the 'residual' CP-argument towards subjectivization would result in an apparently fortuitous instance that reflects the 'personalized' version of impersonal passive-CP, thereby exhibiting structural ambiguity which can only be resolved in reference to the intentionality of the informative statement.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, an analysis of impersonal passive was put forward with reference to (written) Arabic and English as two samples of typologically unrelated languages. The analysis began with the identification of the 'surface' subject with its nominal-expletive interpretation in either language, a semantically vacuous interpretation which refers strictly to a covert and indefinite human Agent. This further led to the characterization of two different sub-types of impersonal passive exhibiting the same expletive interpretation: **impersonal passive-PP** which is exemplified in Arabic, but not in English (section 2); and **impersonal passive-CP** which is instantiated both in Arabic and English (section 3). Reference was also made to medieval Arabic linguistic theory to illuminate the categories of Accusative-NPs that are subjectivizable under canonical passivization within a specific hierarchy. Thus, the canonical passives which establish a pragmatic interface between impersonal passive and the

(misleading) 'personal passive' were identified to identify the 'personalized' version of either sub-type of the former structure: the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-PP** (in English, but not in Arabic); and the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-CP** (both in Arabic and English).

From the detailed discussion of the outstanding pragmatic properties of impersonal passive, it can be seen that these properties have to do mainly with the underlying force of the central activity (which may be intransitive or ditransitive). The intransitive activity typically requires a PP-argument to specify its 'whereness' (or, more markedly, its 'whenness'), whereas the ditransitive activity almost invariably necessitates a CP-argument which represents its sentential complement. Either activity entails the proportionate significance of two entities establishing a deputational relationship, namely the 'surface' subject (or the acting Agent) and the perceivable real Agent, the former characterizing its semantic (thematic) nature and the latter specifying its logical (referential) nature. While the 'surface' subject is non-causational and may or may not be endowed with semantic connotation, the (real) Agent is causational and refers strictly to an unspecified human identification. If the 'surface' subject is depleted of semantic connotation, then it takes the form of the nominal expletive which carries non-promotional signification. If, however, the 'surface' subject is repleted with semantic connotation, then it is represented as an NP (or, more markedly, as a CP) instead, a category which carries promotional signification. At either extreme, the non-causational nature of the 'surface' subject is its internalization, whereas the causational nature of the (real) Agent is its externalization.

Impersonal passivization is of pragmatic necessity directed towards the impersonalization of the Agent in terms of covertness, indefiniteness, non-specification, an Agent that is expressed by the nominal expletive in order to refer strictly to its humanness rather than any other stamp of normative reification. It is thus subjectivized implicitly in Arabic-type languages and subjectivized explicitly in English-type languages. In either language-type, the nominal expletive is itself depleted of semantic connotation: its lexicalization or delexicalization does not affect the underlying force of the activity. If the nominal expletive is lexicalized, then it is subjectivized, and therefore depleted of semantic connotation within two discrete sub-types: **impersonal passive-PP** and **impersonal passive-CP**. The former sub-type is exemplified in Arabic-type languages only, where the value of transitivity underlying the activity is **zero**. The intransitive activity cannot dispense with itself, since it is associated with a Locative PP-argument unmarkedly. The latter sub-type is instantiated both in Arabic-type and English-type languages, where the value of transitivity underlying the activity is **two**. The ditransitive activity can indeed dispense with itself, since it is associated with a CP-argument characterizing an independent nominal sentence. In either sub-type, there exist, of course, a few exceptionally fortuitous situations. If, on the other extreme, the nominal expletive is delexicalized, then one category that is dependent on the activity is subjectivized instead, and is subsequently repleted with semantic connotation, thereby

identifying the 'personalized' version of either sub-type along with its pragmatic properties in their entirety. In the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-PP**, the peripheral NP of the Locative PP-argument is subjectivized to replace the nominal expletive, a construction that is exemplified in English-type languages only. In the **'personalized' version of impersonal passive-CP**, moreover, the subjective 'topic' of the CP-argument is subjectivized to replace the nominal expletive itself, a construction which is instantiated both in Arabic-type and English-type languages. Again, in either version, there exist a few exceptionally fortuitous situations. Consequently, it is not impossible, so it appears, to designate a set of 'general principles' which may account for what may be called, **core pragmatics** with its periphery, a 'universalized' point of semantic and logical intersection across typologically unrelated languages, such as, Arabic-type and English-type languages. If impersonal passive-PP is exemplified in Arabic-type languages only, and if its seemingly 'personalized' version is instantiated in English-type languages only, then both language-types converge in the application of certain pragmatic principles, regardless of the syntax and/or morphology of either language-type, since neither construction diverges pragmatically from the other at bottom. I have no further remarks on impersonal passive-CP or its 'personalized' version.

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Notes

[1] Some of the ideas that are put forward in the present paper were initially discussed in the context of other Germanic languages such as Danish and German, and were delivered at an international conference which was organized by the University of Southern Denmark a couple of years ago, when I was affiliated with the Centre for Contemporary Middle East Studies as Associate Professor of Arabic Linguistics. I wish to thank Professor Jihad Hamdan for his competent communication as Editor-in-Chief of *IJAES* and for kindly reading the initial manuscript from start to finish. I am also grateful to an anonymous reviewer for his invaluable remarks on a previous version of this paper. All remaining errors are mine.

[2] The term *'surface' subject* refers, here, to its physical properties that are observable on at least two external levels: the **phonemic level** in the spoken mode of language and the **graphemic level** in the written mode. Given the implicit-explicit difference between Arabic and English in the expletive representation, respectively, the implicitness of the pronominal *huwa* 'it' (literally, 'he') in the former language indicates, therefore, that this pronominal does not normatively surface on either of the two external levels, but it is felt to be there somewhere on an internal level. The only empirical evidence for its perceived, albeit implicit, realization in Arabic is the fact that the main lexical verb in impersonal passive, as in (1-2) in the text, is invariably inflected in accordance with the 3MSG-pronominal, thus giving rise to a seemingly null-subject nature of this language, as will be seen further in the text.

[3] Yet there still appear to exist certain fortuitous exceptions to this strict reference to an unspecified human Agent, particularly when the intransitive verb that expresses an animal activity, as in *nabaha* 'to bark' in (10), incorporates a Locative PP-argument in which the lexical signification of the NP gives rise to some sort of referential ambiguity. Thus, as an anonymous reviewer pointed out, if the Locative PP-argument in question employs an NP, like *al-layli* '(the) night', then the resultant instance of impersonal passive-PP may well mark referential ambiguity between a human-reading and an animal-reading. For example:

(i)   a. nubiha fi: al-layli.
           (Gloss: was barked (3MSG) in the-night (OBL))
        b. (Lit.: It was barked at night.)

Still, a closer examination of the basic pragmatic properties of impersonal passive-PP in Arabic may also lead one's perception back to the possibility of the human-reading rather than the animal-reading, given the sole implication of the derogatory meaning referred to in the text. In other words, if the animal-reading is indeed *the* intended reading in a pragmatic context that is more likely to require the implementation of impersonal passive-PP in Arabic, as in (i), then it is *far* more likely that users of this language resort to the implementation of an active version, depending on the contextual accentuation of the animal activity, as in (ii), or the animal agency itself, as in (iii) (cf. (48-49)). For example:

(ii)   a. nabaha al-kalbu fi: al-layli.
           (Gloss: barked (3MSG) the-dog (NOM) in the-night (OBL))

   b. The dog ***barked*** at night.

(iii)   a. al-kalbu naba<u>h</u>a fi: al-layli.
         (Gloss: the-dog (NOM) barked (3MSG) in the-night (OBL))
      b. ***The dog*** barked at night.

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[4] It is worth mentioning, here, that the Case endings which are assigned to bare nominals, adjectivals, and adverbials in Arabic fall into three major categories: the Nominative Case -*u*, the Accusative Case -*a*, and the Genitive Case -*i*. The third Case ending, however, refers vaguely to either a relation of possession/association or a relation identified with the object of a preposition. For ease of exposition, the term 'Genitive Case' will be preserved for the former relation, whereas the term 'Oblique Case' will be used to indicate the latter.

[5] In medieval Arabic linguistic theory, the 'surface' subject of an active-verbal sentence is technically referred to as *al-fa:^{c}il* 'the Agent' (literally, 'the doer (of the activity)'), whereas the 'surface' subject of the canonical-passive version is termed *na: ib al-fa:^{c}il* 'the acting Agent' (literally, 'the acting doer (of the activity)'). The latter is sometimes called 'a proxy of the Agent' (Gruntfest 1984:228) or 'a deputy Agent' (Owens 1988:181).

[6] Notice that the underlined-printed English entry '<u>sitting</u>' indicates that the acting cognate object *qu^{c}u:dan* carries exactly the same lexical meaning of the cognate object *julu:san* 'sitting', though either Accusative-NP is derived from an entirely different three-radical root, since none of the possible lexical synonyms in English (e.g. *resting*, *perching*, *settling*, etc.) is satisfactory.

[7] What is misleadingly termed 'personal passive' in the literature is generally identified with the subjectivization of a non-subject category that has a **semantic content**, as in (i-ii) below, which are the canonical-passive versions of (15-16) in the text. As will be demonstrated further in the text, however, there exist certain examples of impersonal passive, where the subjectivized non-subject category *has* a semantic content as well.

(i)   a. kutiba kita:bun.
         (Gloss: was written (3MSG) book (NOM))
      b. A book was written.

(ii)   a. u^{c}tiya zaydun al-kita:ba.
         (Gloss: was given (3MSG) Zaid (NOM) the-book (ACC))
      b. Zaid was given the book.

[8] If, however, the gender of the cognate object or the adverbial object (temporal) is feminine, as in *qira: atun* 'a reading (F)' in (i), and *sa:^{c}atun* 'an hour (F)' in (ii), then the main verb may be inflected accordingly. For example:

(i)   a. quri a-t **qira: atun**. (Cognate Object)
         (Gloss: was read (3FSG) reading (NOM))
      b. (Lit.: A **reading** was read.)

(ii)   a. julisa-t **sa:ᶜatun**. (Adverbial Object (Temporal))
         (Gloss: was sat (3FSG) hour (NOM))
      b. (Lit.: An **hour** was sat.)

But the fact that the implicit 3FSG-pronominal in (i-ii) above may also take the implicit 3MSG-pronominal, as in (iii-iv) below, seems to invariably underline the idea of abstractive dissociation referred to in the text. For example:

(iii)   a. quri a **qira: atun**. (Cognate Object)
         (Gloss: was read (3MSG) reading (NOM))
      b. (Lit.: It was read **a reading**.)

(iv)   a. julisa **sa:ᶜatun**. (Adverbial Object (Temporal))
         (Gloss: was sat (3MSG) hour (NOM))
      b. (Lit.: It was sat **an hour**.)

[9] Infinitival-clause representation is comparable with one required by the idiosyncratic verb *decide* in English, as in (ia) below, where the infinitival clause is embedded as the object of the verb. Again, this idiosyncratic representation is acceptable mainly because of the deletion of inherent boundaries between the main clause and the (embedded) infinitival clause. However, it cannot be embedded in its canonical-passive form as the object of the preposition *on*, as in (ib). Nor can it be embedded in its verbal-nominal form, as in (ic), or its verbal-gerundive form, as in (id), notwithstanding the possibility of at least (ib-c) in Arabic, as in (ii-iii).

(i)   a. It was decided to agree on the Peace.
      b. *It was decided on to be agreed on the Peace.
      c. *It was decided on agreement on the Peace.
      d. *It was decided on agreeing on the Peace.

(ii)   a. qurrira ᶜala: an yuttafaqa ᶜala: al-sala:mi. (cf. (ib))
         (Gloss: was decided (3MSG) on to agree (PASS) on the-Peace (OBL))
      b. (Lit.: It was decided on **to be agreed** on the Peace.)

(iii)   a. qurrira ᶜala: al-ittifa:qi ᶜala: al-sala:mi. (cf. (ic))
         (Gloss: was decided (3MSG) on the-agreement (OBL) on the-Peace (OBL))
      b. (Lit.: It was decided on **agreement** on the Peace.)

Given the expletive interpretation of (ia) in English, it may well be classified under **impersonal passive-PP** within a marginal situation. Interestingly, an English impersonal passive, such as (ia), is usually rendered into its **'personalized' version** in Arabic, as in (iv), where the verbal nominal *al-ittifa:qu* '(the) agreement' is subjectivized to replace the nominal expletive itself (El-Marzouk 2003:44, n.16):

(iv)   a. qurrira al-ittifa:qu ᶜala: al-sala:mi.
         (Gloss: was decided (3MSG) the-agreement (NOM) on the-Peace (OBL))
      b. (Lit.: Agreement was decided on the Peace.)

[10] In medieval Arabic linguistic theory, in particular, an important distinction was made between *muta^c addiya bi-nafsiha:* 'lexical transitives' (literally, '(being) transitives by themselves') and *muta^c addiya ṣarfiyyan* 'morphological transitives' whatever the number of objects they take. Lexical transitives, on the one hand, may permit **one** direct object (e.g. *kataba* 'to write', etc.), or **two** objects (e.g. *sa ala* 'to ask', *THanna* 'to think', etc.) depending on their inherent valency. Morphological transitives, on the other hand, may or may not permit a direct object in their basic form, but whose inherent valency is increased by causative morphemes, such as, the infix *-t-* in *kattaba* 'to dictate'/'to make someone write' (cf. *kataba* 'to write'). Thus, **lexical ditransitives** belong to the former category of transitives while **morphological ditransitives** belong to the latter.

[11] Notice that the ditransitive *i^c taqada* 'to believe' signifies *^c aqi:da* 'belief' in the sense of 'to be certain', etc., rather than in the sense of 'to think', etc., with the latter sense being non-factive, specifically. The distinction between factivity and non-factivity is to do with the speaker's commitment and non-commitment to the truth of the proposition, respectively, whereas the distinction between 'certainty' and 'uncertainty' is not. For instance, *I **believe** that the colour of the sky is blue* is pragmatically equivalent to *I am certain that the colour of the sky is blue*. Yet the truth of the proposition does not hold, since the sky in reality is colourless.

[12] Notice, again, that subjectivization of the subjective 'topic' (the first object), and thus the mere retention of accusativization of the predicative 'comment' (the second object), as in (45-46), presupposes Accusative-Case assignment to both categories at some level of representation, at least at a level prior to the implementation of the complementizer *anna* 'that' in both languages, as (i-ii) below. Yet, this Accusative-Case assignment can be seen more conspicuously in Arabic due to its highly inflectional nature, thereby confirming the ditransitivity of *all* ditransitives under consideration (i.e. what we called, ditransitives of nominal-sentential permission). For example:

(i)   a. *^c alima zaydan ka:tiban.*
             (Gloss: knew (3MSG) Zaid (ACC) writer (ACC))
          b. He knew Zaid (was) a writer.

(ii)   a. *za^c ama hindan sha:^c iratan.*
             (Gloss: claimed (3MSG) Hind (ACC) poetess (ACC))
          b. He claimed Hind (was) a poetess.

[13] The term is borrowed from what was known in medieval Arabic linguistic theory as ***taqdi:m** wa ta ^khi:r* '**fronting** and backing'/'**antepositioning** and post-positioning' (see Owens 1988:305f.; Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990:36f.).

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