

MODERN STANDARD
ARABIC
GRAMMAR

A Learner's Guide

Mohammad T. Alhawary



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Modern Standard Arabic Grammar

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MOHAMMAD T. ALHAWARY

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Introduction

The Aim of this Book

Enthusiasm and demand for Arabic language learning have risen dramatically since the mid-1990s. Yet the field of Arabic as a foreign language has not been keeping up with this demand, especially with respect to instructional materials and foreign language teacher-preparation programs. This book is an effort toward filling the gap in both areas. It is also a pedagogical guide to all the basic structures and grammar of the Arabic language needed in the first 4–5 years of learning the language, taking into consideration comprehensive coverage (while not being overly comprehensive), sequence of presentation (from the more basic and frequent to the less basic and frequent in the language), and communicative functional use (from the more essential for communication to the less essential), and presented holistically in terms of forms and functions (i.e., without being solely based on grammar items alone). Concomitantly, it is a resource book for the teacher to develop an awareness or a better conceptualization of the essentials of Arabic grammar and structures and how to present them to students of Arabic as a foreign language.

The book aims to develop adequate exposure to Arabic grammar in current standard use from beginner to advanced proficiency levels, covering phonological, syntactic, and morphological rules. I focus on essential aspects of the grammar rules and provide straightforward explanations and multiple examples. The book is pedagogically oriented and uses symbols, tables, and diagrams to further encapsulate the rules and make them easy to understand and remember.

In addition to being useful to learners of Arabic as a foreign language, other types of learners and users will equally benefit from the book as a resource or reference tool, such as heritage speakers, teachers, and linguists (who know Arabic script). Because of its balanced coverage of phonology, morphology, and syntax, the book can be used as a supplementary text for language courses during the first 4–5 years of Arabic language learning, a primary text for Arabic structure and grammar courses, or a reference book.

Why Learn/Teach Grammar?

The communicative approach is often misunderstood as implying that knowledge of the grammar and structure is not as important as other language skills, and therefore its role is often marginalized by teachers and learners. The view adopted here is similar to that of most foreign language theorists and practitioners: that grammar is one of the important composite skills for developing communicative *competence*:

Communicative competence is composed minimally of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and communication strategies, or what we refer to as strategic competence. There is no strong theoretical or empirical motivation for the view that grammatical competence is any more or less crucial to successful communication than is sociolinguistic competence or strategic competence. The primary goal of a communicative approach must be to facilitate the integration of these types of knowledge for the learner, an outcome that is not likely to result from overemphasis on one form of competence over the others throughout a second language program. (Michael Canale and Merrill Swain, “Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing,” *Applied Linguistics* 1: 47, 1980, p. 27; see also Leech and Svartvik, *A Communicative Grammar of English*, 2002: p. 3)

Is the Arabic Language Difficult to Learn?

While Arabic may present some learning challenges because of some of its grammatical aspects or its diglossic nature (although diglossia is a characteristic of almost all languages), Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is not difficult to learn. Consider the following facts that *are not* characteristic of Arabic:

- its script is not logographic requiring knowledge of tens of thousands of logographs or symbols in order to reach the level of an educated native speaker
- it exhibits no distinction between capital and lowercase letters
- it exhibits no distinction between cursive and noncursive styles, allowing only for one (cursive) style
- it is not a tonal language in which word meanings change with tone changes
- unlike English, it exhibits no complex intonation patterns reflecting the mood of the speaker, beyond simple rising and falling patterns.

Rather, MSA has many aspects that are easy and/or amenable to rigorous learning strategies (of guessing the meaning of words from contexts). Consider the following facts that *are* characteristic of Arabic:

- its script is phonetic
- its phonetic alphabet is transparent, with one-to-one correspondence between sound and symbol; i.e., each distinct sound has its own distinct symbol
- it has a simple vowel system: three long (high front, high back, and low) simple ones (aa, ii, uu) and three short (high front, high back, and low) corresponding ones (a, u, i)
- unlike English, stress is predictable and non-phonemic (such that if stress is misplaced it does not result in a change in meaning)
- word derivations and patterns allow us not only to identify the part of speech to which a word belongs, but also, in combination with knowledge of the root, can allow us to guess the meaning of the word.

Vocabulary may be one of the few areas that may present a learning challenge, especially for someone learning a second language (e.g., Arabic) which is a non-cognate language in relation to his or her native language (e.g., English), but this does not make Arabic uniquely difficult, since the same can be said about the learner's native language (English) when learned by someone whose native language is a non-cognate language.

The Organization and Content of the Book

The organization and content of the book are based on the author's experience of over fifteen years' teaching Arabic as a second/foreign language and acquisition research (from the learner's perspective) of Arabic as a second language. The organization also takes into consideration the development of language skills and sequencing due to complexity or formality of structure and communicative functional use (i.e., it is not just based on grammar items alone, such as presenting negation or the subjunctive particles isolated from the verbs/tenses).

The book consists of 22 chapters and five appendices. It begins with the most basic and fundamental aspects of the language and progresses as communicative needs dictate. The first four chapters of the book start with letter/sound level and progress to syllable level, word level, phrase level, and sentence level. The next eight chapters focus on Arabic prepositions, pronouns, question words, and the different adverbs available in Arabic. These items are important to solidify knowledge of the Arabic sentence. The next four chapters aim to help the learner gain deeper knowledge of verbs, nouns, adjectives, and quantifiers, respectively. Due to its complexity, the conditional sentence is then presented in an independent chapter. The last five chapters contain the most formal structures covered in the book, with the last chapter aiming to help the learner fine-tune their knowledge of case and mood endings.

In addition, three of the five appendices contain rules for the writing of the *hamza*, rules for the Arabic numbers, and rules for looking up words in the dictionary so that they are immediately accessible to both the student and the teacher. Depending on the level of the learner, especially in the first year of Arabic language learning, roughly represented in most of the contents of the first four chapters, the book is best covered in sequence. Beyond the first year, the learner can navigate between the chapters smoothly, as all necessary cross-references are provided. If used alongside a language textbook, items can be skipped until they are covered in the textbook.

For ease of reference and space constraints, a number of abbreviations and symbols (for transliteration) are used. A list of all transliteration symbols used is provided. The distinction between the long and short *back* low vowels [aa] and [a] and the long and short *front* low vowels [aa] and [a] is only maintained in Chapter 1, since one of the primary aims of the chapter is accuracy of the sound system. The [l] sound of the definite article [ʾal-] is assimilated whenever the sun letter rule applies

throughout the text and examples. Beyond Chapters 1–2, all proper names are transliterated following conventional spellings (i.e., not according to the transliteration symbols provided). This makes such names easier to read and helps the learner understand how to connect Arabic names as they are typically transliterated in English with their correct spelling and pronunciation in Arabic.

Background Knowledge Required of the Reader

The first two chapters of the book do not presuppose any background knowledge of Arabic, since all Arabic texts and examples are transliterated fully in English. Beyond these two chapters, the examples presuppose knowledge of Arabic script only, since only occasional transliteration of the examples is provided, to help clarify and simplify the explanation. Arabic script is usually taught at the beginning of almost any first course in Arabic and should take only a few weeks to learn. Therefore, with knowledge of the script, the reader can follow the contents of the book independently. To help clarify the scope of the Arabic structures in question (and that of English), comparisons are occasionally made between Arabic and English (such as question formation, conjugation of the past tense, and active participles). The learner and teacher are encouraged to make further comparisons of other structures so that the full scope of both Arabic and English (or any other language) is explored and connections are made between the two.

In addition, linguistic jargon and terminology are kept to a minimum and the prose is simplified so that the book is accessible to as many second-language learners of Arabic as possible. Arabic terms are provided side by side with the English terms so that: (1) the contents are immediately accessible and easier to identify by students at all levels; (2) the book can be integrated with any classroom textbooks, most of which also use these terms; and (3) fourth- to fifth-year students and beyond can make the transition to reading Arabic grammar explanations written solely in Arabic.

Transliteration Symbols of Arabic Sounds

I. Consonants

<i>Arabic</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Technical description</i>	<i>Examples of equivalent or closest equivalent sounds in English (in bold)</i>
ب	b	voiced bilabial stop	bank
ت	t	voiceless alveolar stop	tan
ث	th	voiceless interdental/dental fricative	thank
ج	j	voiced alveo-palatal fricative	job
ح	H	voiceless pharyngeal fricative	no English equivalent
خ	kh	voiceless velar fricative	Bach
د	d	voiced alveolar stop	Dan
ذ	dh	voiced interdental/dental fricative	that
ر	r	voiced alveolar trill	road
ز	z	voiced alveolar fricative	zebra
س	s	voiceless alveolar fricative	see
ش	sh	voiceless palato-alveolar fricative	shoes

<i>Arabic</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Technical description</i>	<i>Examples of equivalent or closest equivalent sounds in English (in bold)</i>
ص	S	voiceless alveolar fricative emphatic	saw
ض	D	voiced alveolar stop emphatic	Donna (closest English equivalent)
ط	T	voiceless alveolar stop emphatic	tar
ظ	Z	voiced interdental/dental fricative emphatic	no English equivalent
ع	ʕ	voiced pharyngeal fricative	no English equivalent
غ	gh	voiced velar fricative	no English equivalent
ف	f	voiceless labio-dental fricative	fan
ق	q	voiceless uvular stop	caw (closest English equivalent)
ك	k	voiceless velar stop	king
ل	l	voiced alveolar lateral	light
م	m	voiced bilabial nasal	man
ن	n	voiced alveolar nasal	near
هـ	h	voiceless glottal fricative	here
و	w	voiced bilabial velar glide	woman
ي	y	voiced palatal glide	yes
ء	ʔ	(voiceless) glottal stop	co'operate

II. Vowels

<i>Arabic</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Technical description</i>	<i>Examples</i>
اَ	a	short front low	instant
اُ	ɑ	short back low	interruptive
إِ	aa	long front low	bat
أِ	aa	long back low	bar
أُ	u	short high back rounded	full
و	uu	long high back rounded	fool
إِ	i	short high front unrounded	fill
ي	ii	long high front unrounded	feel

Abbreviations

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
acc	accusative case
AP	active participle
CA	Classical Arabic
D	dual
F	feminine
gen	genitive case
H	human
M	masculine
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
nom	nominative case
P	plural
PP	passive participle
VN	verbal noun
S	singular

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1

Arabic Script and Sounds

This chapter discusses the essentials of the Arabic writing and sound systems at sound/letter, syllable, word, and sentence level. The following will be covered:

- Arabic letters of the alphabet, writing method, and orientation
- Arabic sounds (consonants, vowels, diphthongs, and other sound combinations)
- gemination (or consonant doubling)
- stress
- variations in sounds and spelling
- additional symbols
- formal MSA vs. informal MSA (Modern Standard Arabic)
- definiteness and assimilation of the [l] sound of the definite article
- helping vowels
- the dropping and retention of the *hamza* and 'alif seat of the definite article.

Due to the transparent nature of Arabic spelling, the terms *letter* and *sound* are used interchangeably.

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2 Arabic Script and Sounds

1.1 Arabic Script: The Alphabet

Arabic has a phonetic alphabet consisting of distinct symbols for three long (pure) vowels and 26 consonants. Whether in handwriting or print, Arabic script only exhibits a cursive style and is written from right to left. It may be for reasons to do with this right-to-left writing orientation that Arabs abandoned their (Arabic) numeral system, which was based on a geometrical conceptual design of the number of angles in each number (see Appendix A):

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

and later adopted the Indian Sanskrit number system:

١٠ ٩ ٨ ٧ ٦ ٥ ٤ ٣ ٢ ١ ٠

Whereas most Indian Sanskrit numerals are written from right to left, most Arabic numerals are written from left to right.

Although Arabic script is characterized as cursive, not all letters can be connected to a letter following them, allowing them only to be connected to letters preceding them. These letters comprise a small number of the total letters (six out of the 29 letters) and are usually referred to as *non-connectors*. The remaining letters can be connected to letters before and after them and are usually referred to as *connectors*. The nature of cursive writing style necessitates that:

- each *connector* letter assumes four (slightly) different shapes
- each *non-connector* letter assumes two shapes
- each shape depends on whether it is in initial, medial after a connector, medial after a non-connector, final after a connector, or final after a non-connector (usually referred to as *independent* or dictionary shape) position
- the *initial* and *medial after a non-connector* shapes of all the letters are identical
- the *medial* and *final after a connector* shapes of the *non-connectors* are identical.

Table 1.1a shows the alphabet (in descending order), which consists of 29 letters, including the 26 consonants and three long vowels, the different shapes (initial, medial, final after connectors, and final after non-connectors), and the distinction of connectors vs. non-connectors.

Table 1.1a Shapes of Arabic letters according to their positions within the word

Name		Final after non- connectors	Final after connectors	Medial after non- connectors	Medial after connectors	Initial
ألف	' <i>alif</i>	ا	ل	ا	ل	ا*
باء	<i>baa'</i>	ب	بب	ب	بب	ب
تاء	<i>taa'</i>	ت	تت	ت	تت	ت
ثاء	<i>thaa'</i>	ث	ثث	ث	ثث	ث
جيم	<i>jiim</i>	ج	جج	ج	جج	ج
حاء	<i>Haa'</i>	ح	حح	ح	حح	ح
خاء	<i>khaa'</i>	خ	خخ	خ	خخ	خ
دال	<i>daal</i>	د	دد	د	دد	د
ذال	<i>dhaal</i>	ذ	ذذ	ذ	ذذ	ذ
راء	<i>raa'</i>	ر	رر	ر	رر	ر
زاي	<i>zaay</i>	ز	زز	ز	زز	ز
سين	<i>siin</i>	س	سس	س	سس	س
شين	<i>shiin</i>	ش	شش	ش	شش	ش
صاد	<i>Saad</i>	ص	صص	ص	صص	ص
ضاد	<i>Daad</i>	ض	ضض	ض	ضض	ض
طاء	<i>Taa'</i>	ط	طط	ط	طط	ط
ظاء	<i>Zaa'</i>	ظ	ظظ	ظ	ظظ	ظ
عَيْن	' <i>ayn</i>	ع	عع	ع	عع	ع
غَيْن	<i>ghayn</i>	غ	غغ	غ	غغ	غ
فاء	<i>faa'</i>	ف	فف	ف	فف	ف

4 Arabic Script and Sounds

Table 1.1a Continued

Name		Final after non- connectors	Final after connectors	Medial after non- connectors	Medial after connectors	Initial
قاف	<i>qaaf</i>	ق	قـ	ق	قـ	ق
كاف	<i>kaaf</i>	ك	كـ	ك	كـ	ك
لام	<i>laam</i>	ل	لـ	ل	لـ	ل
ميم	<i>miim</i>	م	مـ	م	مـ	م
نون	<i>nuun</i>	ن	نـ	ن	نـ	ن
هاء	<i>haa'</i>	ه	هـ	ه	هـ	هـ
واو	<i>waaw</i>	و	وـ	و	وـ	و*
ياء	<i>yaa'</i>	ي	يـ	ي	يـ	ي*
هَمْزَة	** <i>hamza</i>	ء / أ / و / ئ	ء / أ / و / ئـ	ء / أ / و / ئـ	ء / أ / و / ئـ	أ / إ

Note: Names of letters in bold = non-connectors; *= (pure) long vowels which never occur in word initial position; ** = *hamza* which has certain writing rules (see Appendix B).

Table 1.1b gives examples of the letter *baa'* [b] occurring in initial position, in medial position following a connector, in medial position following a non-connector, in final position following a connector, and in final position following a non-connector.

Table 1.1b

Name	Final after non- connectors	Final after connectors	Medial after non- connectors	Medial after connectors	Initial
<i>baa'</i>	ب	بـ	ب	بـ	بـ
Examples	تاب <i>taab</i> “he repented”	حليب <i>Haliib</i> “milk”	ربح <i>ribH</i> “profit”	حبل <i>Habl</i> “rope”	بعيد <i>ba'iid</i> “far”

Table 1.1a shows the letters according to the most widely known alphabetical order, usually referred to as *al-tarṭīb al-alfbā'iyy* “the *'alifbaa'iyy* or alphabetical order.” Another (earlier) order exists and is usually used for arranging headings and subheadings within a text. The latter order is based on the first alphabet invented by the Phoenicians and is usually referred to as *al-tarṭīb al-ʾabjadīyy* “the *'abjadiyy* order.” The order is combined in the following words:

كَلَمَن	حُطِّي	هَوَز	أَبْجَد
ن م ل ك	ي ط ح	ز و ه	د ج ب أ
n m l k	ii T H	z w h	d j b a

صَطَّغ	تَخَذ	قَرَسَتْ	سَعَفَص
غ ظ ض	ذ خ ث	ق ر ش ت	ص ف ع س
gh Z D	dh kh th	t sh r q	S f ^c s

It is the same Phoenician alphabet that the Greeks relied on for their alphabet. Hence the order of the Greek alphabet proceeds in a similar fashion, as Α, Β, Γ, Δ, etc. (see Appendix C for the oldest extant tablet of the Phoenician alphabet, the first real phonetic alphabet).

Note: The *'alif* here stands for two sounds: the long vowel [aa] and the *hamza* [ʾ]. This makes the total number of characters in the Arabic alphabet 29: 26 consonants and three (long) vowels. As for the meaning of the words containing the letters arranged according to the *'abjadiyy* order,” traditional Arabic sources state that the words refer to names of ancient kings of *Madyan* tribes (in the Arabian Peninsula) who invented the Arabic alphabet, except for the last two words, containing the letters [th], [kh], [dh], [D], [Z], and [gh], which were added later.

1.2 Arabic Sounds

1.2.1 Vowels and Grammatical Vowel Endings

From the above explanation of the letters of the Arabic alphabet, note that only the long vowels are included in the alphabet and the representation

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of the short vowels is left out. MSA has a symmetrical vowel system: three long vowels [aa], [uu], and [ii]; and three corresponding short ones: [a], [u], and [i]. These are explained in Tables 1.2 and 1.3.

Table 1.2 Arabic long vowels

Name	Symbol	Sound	Examples (from English)	Examples (from Arabic)
'alif	ا	[aa]	as "a" in fan	"mortal" <i>faan</i> فان
waaw	و	[uu]	as "oo" in fool	"beans" <i>fool</i> فول
yaa'	ي	[ii]	as "ee" in feel	"elephant" <i>fil</i> فيل

Table 1.3 Arabic short vowels

Name	Symbol	Sound	Examples (from English)	Examples (from Arabic)
fatHa	َ —	[a]	as "a" in instant	"art" <i>fan</i> فَن
Damma	ُ —	[u]	as "u" in full	"jasmine" <i>ful</i> فُل
kasra	ِ — َ	[i]	as "i" in fill	"cent" <i>fls</i> فِلس

Long vowels are twice as long as short vowels. Thus, if we assume the short vowel to equal one beat, the long vowel equals two beats of its corresponding short vowel. Pure long and short vowels as such never occur at the beginning of a word, occurring only in medial or final word position. However, unlike the symbols for the long vowels, the short vowel symbols are not written as part of the word but rather as diacritical marks above or under the consonants. Thus, a short vowel is written above or below the consonant that follows it in speech. For this reason, short vowels are usually left out for adult readers but usually retained for children and adolescents (kindergarten to 12th grade) until they are able to read and spell words without the short vowels.

Arabic script has four additional symbols, one signifying the absence of any vowel (long or short), called *sukun* سُكُون "stillness," and three (formal ones) usually referred to as *tanwiin* تَنْوِين or *numation*, signifying indefiniteness

(equivalent to the indefinite article “a” in English), signaled by the sound [n] attached to the grammatical (case) endings [a], [u], and [i] (to be discussed in subsequent chapters, particularly Chapter 22). These are illustrated in Table 1.4:

Table 1.4 Arabic nunation and grammatical endings and *sukuun*

Name	Translation and function	Symbol	Sound	Examples
تَنْوِينُ الْفَتْحِ (مَنْصُوب)	nunation of <i>fatH</i> (accusative)	◌َ —	[an]	“a boy” <i>walad-an</i> وَوَلَدًا
تَنْوِينُ الضَّمِّ (مَرْفُوع)	nunation of <i>Damm</i> (nominative)	◌ُ —	[un]	“a boy” <i>walad-un</i> وَوَلَدٌ
تَنْوِينُ الْكَسْرِ (مَجْرُور)	nunation of <i>kasr</i> (genitive)	◌ِ ◌َ	[in]	“a boy” <i>walad-in</i> وَوَلَدٍ
سُكُون	<i>sukuun</i>	◌ْ —	[∅]	“a rope” <i>Habl</i> حَبْلٌ

As shown in Table 1.4, the nunation, together with the three grammatical endings [an], [un], and [in], only occur in word final position, whereas the *sukuun* occurs in medial or final position but never in word initial position nor following a consonant in initial position, since MSA does not allow consonant clusters in word initial position, unlike English and some other languages. Thus, the word *street* in English contains the three-consonant cluster [str] with no vowels separating the first [s] and second [t] consonants. The absence of consonant clusters in word initial position in MSA is illustrated in the example below:

“he concealed” *satara* سَتَرَ
 “concealing” *satrun* سَتْرٌ
 “concealing” *satr* سَتْرٌ

Sukuun is not allowed in initial position in any of the three words. Rather, in *satara* “he concealed,” Arabic exhibits short syllables (or chunks of a

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word) consisting of a consonant [s] + a vowel [a], hence the short word consists of three syllables (*sa + ta + ra* → *satara*). In *satrun* “concealing” Arabic allows *sukuun* in the middle of the word following a consonant (following a consonant and a vowel in word initial position), allowing for a longer first syllable, consisting of a consonant [s], a vowel [a], and a consonant [t] and a similar second syllable; hence the short word consist of two syllables (*sat + run* → *satrun*). In *satr* “concealing,” which is similar to *satrun* “concealing” (except that the former occurs in pause form; i.e., without the grammatical *un* at the end), *sukuun* occurs in the middle of the word after the consonant [t] and at the end of the word. A good way to conceptualize the *sukuun* in Arabic, if a word contains *sukuun*, is to consider it the point at which a word can be broken into parts/syllables.

1.2.2 Consonants

As stated above, Arabic has 26 consonants. Most of these have equivalent consonant sounds in English and other languages, although a few do not. Below is a brief description of all Arabic consonants, examples, and, where there is little or no similarity between Arabic consonants and those of the English language, an explanation.

1. ب b [voiced bilabial stop] produced with the two lips: as “b” in *bank*.
2. ت t [voiceless alveolar stop] produced with the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge at the base of the upper incisors (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “t” in *tan*.
3. ث th [voiceless interdental/dental fricative] produced with the tip of the tongue and the tip of the incisors (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “th” in *thank*.
4. ج j [voiced alveo-palatal fricative] produced with the tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge and the middle of the tongue raised against the palate in this sequence: as “j” in *judge*.
5. ح H [voiceless pharyngeal fricative] produced in the middle of the windpipe by constricting it (so as to constrict the air passage without complete closure), just as producing a steam/breath with a *sound*; not to be confused with “h” as in *hat*, which is produced in the larynx.
6. خ kh [voiceless velar fricative] produced with the back of the tongue raised against the back of the roof of the mouth: as “ch” in the name of the German composer *Bach*.

7. د d [voiced alveolar stop] produced with the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge at the base of the upper incisors (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “d” in *Dan*.
8. ذ dh [voiced interdental/dental fricative] produced with the tip of the tongue and the tip of the incisors (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “th” in *that*.
9. ر r [voiced alveolar trill] produced with the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge above the upper incisors with the back of the tongue lowered: as “r” in *read* or with the back of the tongue raised, as “r” in *rust*.
10. ز z [voiced alveolar fricative] produced with the tip or blade of the tongue against the alveolar ridge (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “z” in *zebra*.
11. س s [voiceless alveolar fricative] produced with the tip or blade of the tongue against the alveolar ridge (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “s” in *see*.
12. ش sh [voiceless palato-alveolar fricative] produced with the middle of the tongue and that of the palate (without complete closure): as “sh” in *shoes*.
13. ص S [voiceless alveolar fricative emphatic] produced with the tip or blade of the tongue against the alveolar ridge (with the back of the tongue raised): as “s” in *saw*. **Note:** The consonant [S], as well as [s] and [z] above, are usually referred to as “alveolar.” Another accurate articulation is where the tip of the tongue is behind the back of the lower incisors.
14. ض D [voiced alveolar stop emphatic] produced with the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge at the base of the upper incisors (with pressure applied from both sides of the tongue against the inner sides of the upper molars, so that the sound produced is not just the emphatic/heavy/deep version of the voiced alveolar stop [d]; the closest English sound is “d” in *Donna*.)
15. ط T [voiceless alveolar stop emphatic] produced with the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge at the base of the upper incisors (with the back of the tongue raised): as “t” in *tar*.
16. ظ Z [voiced interdental/dental fricative emphatic] produced with the tip of the tongue and the tip of the incisors (with the back of the tongue raised): as “th” in *though* (with the additional effect of the back of the tongue raised).

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17. ع ° [voiced pharyngeal fricative] produced in the middle of the windpipe by constricting it (so as to constrict the air passage without complete closure) to produce a voiced throat sound; not to be confused with the *hamza* “glottal stop” [ʔ] as in *co’opt*, which is produced in the larynx.
18. غ gh [voiced velar fricative] produced with the back of the tongue raised against the back of the roof of the mouth, resembling gurgling, or the French [r].
19. ف f [voiceless labio-dental fricative] produced with the tip of the upper incisors and the upper, inner part of the lower lip: as “f” in *fan*.
20. ق q [voiceless uvular stop] produced with the back of the tongue against the uvular: the closest English equivalent is “c” in *caw* if it were to be produced from the very back of the mouth.
21. ك k [voiceless velar stop] produced with the back of the tongue against the soft palate/velum: as “k” in *king*.
22. ل l [voiced alveolar lateral] produced with the front sides and tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge above the upper incisors: as “l” in *list*.
23. م m [voiced bilabial nasal] produced with the two lips: as “m” in *man*.
24. ن n [voiced alveolar nasal] produced with the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge above the upper incisors (with the back of the tongue lowered): as “n” in *near*.
25. ه h [voiceless glottal fricative] produced in the larynx: as “h” in *hear*.
26. ء ’ [voiceless glottal stop] produced in the larynx: as the catch [ʔ] between the two syllables in *co’opt* (when the word is pronounced with the catch; i.e., when the glottal stop/catch in the middle is not elided/dropped in speech).

1.2.3 Variations in Consonants and Vowels

Of the 26 consonants, seven have an emphatic or deep/heavy quality. These are [kh], [S], [D], [T], [Z], [gh], and [q]. Of these, five have somewhat roughly light counterpart consonants: [S] vs. [s], [D] vs. [d], [T] vs. [t], [Z] vs. [dh], and [q] vs. [k]. However, all seven consonants both influence and are influenced by the quality of the vowels adjacent to them; in particular, the vowels following them. Thus, the deep/heavy consonants are generally:

- deepest/heaviest when followed by 'alif [aa] or fatHa [a]
- less deep/heavy when followed by waaw [uu] or Damma [u]
- least deep/heavy when followed by yaa' [ii] or kasra [i].

With respect to their effect on the vowels, most distinctly, the 'alif [aa] and fatHa [a] are pronounced as deep (back) vowels following any of these seven consonants, whereas 'alif [aa] and fatHa [a] are pronounced as light (front) vowels following any of the remaining consonants. The examples below illustrate the distinction between the [S] and [s].

[S] as in saw/sauce:

<i>Saa</i>	صا	<i>Sa</i>	صَ
<i>Suu</i>	صو	<i>Su</i>	صُ
<i>Sii</i>	صي	<i>Si</i>	صِ

[s] as in see/seem/Sam:

<i>saa</i>	سا	<i>sa</i>	سَ
<i>suu</i>	سو	<i>su</i>	سُ
<i>sii</i>	سي	<i>si</i>	سِ

In addition, another consonant, the voiced alveolar trill [r]:

- is treated as a deep/heavy sound when followed by 'alif [aa] and fatHa [a] or waaw [uu] and Damma [u] by raising the back of the tongue: as “r” in *rust*
- is not treated as a deep/heavy sound following yaa' [ii] or kasra [i] by lowering the back of the tongue: as “r” in *read*.

Note: Some dialects do not treat [kh] and [gh] as heavy/deep consonants, for example, Damascene, Syria, but others do, such as the dialect of Aleppo, Syria. According to the former, a following 'alif [aa] or fatHa [a] sound is produced as a light/front vowel. Thus, the 'alif [aa] in the proper name Khalid [khaalid] is pronounced as a long front vowel (as “a” in *fan*) rather than as a long back vowel (as “a” in *far*). Similarly, some

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dialects do not treat [r] as a heavy/deep consonant (when preceding *'alif* or *fatHa* and *waaw* or *Damma*). Hence, *'alif* in such dialects is pronounced as a long front vowel, as “a” in *rat* with [r] more rolled.

Finally, the voiced alveolar lateral consonant [l] is always pronounced light (as “l” in *list*) except for the name الله [ʾal-laah] “God,” where it is pronounced dark/heavy (somewhat as “l” in *light*), as long as it is not preceded by a word ending with *yaa'* [ii] or *kasra* [i]. The following examples illustrate the variations of the consonant [l]:

“God”	<i>'al-laah</i> (“l” as in <i>law</i>)	الله	←	dark/heavy [l]
“to God”	<i>'ilaa l-laah</i> (“l” as in <i>law</i>)	إلى الله	←	dark/heavy [l]
“I worship God”	<i>'aʿbudu l-laah</i> (“l” as in <i>law</i>)	أَعْبُدُ الله	←	dark/heavy [l]
“in the name of God”	<i>bismi l-laah</i> (“l” as in <i>lamp</i>)	بِسْمِ الله	←	light [l]

1.2.4 Diphthongs and other Sound Combinations

In addition to the 29 consonants and vowels of the Arabic alphabet, MSA has at least 16 diphthongs, glides/semi-vowels, and basic sound combinations. These are illustrated in Table 1.5:

Table 1.5 Diphthongs and other sound combinations

“spouse”	<i>zawj</i>	زَوْج	←	[aw]	اَوْ
“the Faw (Port)”	<i>'al-faaw</i>	الْفَاوُ	←	[aaw]	اَوْ
“Zayd”	<i>zayd</i>	زَيْد	←	[ay]	اَيَّ
“tea”	<i>shaay</i>	شَاي	←	[aay]	اَيَّ
“hand”	<i>yad</i>	يَد	←	[ya]	يَا
“measurement”	<i>qiyaas</i>	قِيَاس	←	[yaa]	يَا

Table 1.5 Continued

“to honor”	<i>yukrim</i>	يُكْرِم	←	[yu]	يُ
“Joseph”	<i>yuusuf</i>	يُوسُف	←	[yuu]	يُو
“minister”	<i>waziir</i>	وَزِير	←	[wa]	وَ
“valley”	<i>waadii</i>	وَادِي	←	[waa]	وَا
“sin”	<i>wizr</i>	وَزْر	←	[wi]	وَ
“amateur”	<i>haawii</i>	هَآوِي	←	[wii]	وِي
“roses”	<i>wuruud</i>	وُرُود	←	[wu]	وُ
“peacock”	<i>Taawuus</i>	طَآوُوس	←	[wuu]	وُو
“Zaayid”	<i>zaayid</i>	زَايِد	←	[yi]	يِ
“decoration”	<i>tazyiin</i>	تَزْيِين	←	[yii]	يِ يِ

1.3 Gemination

Gemination refers to consonant doubling (termed in Arabic *tashdiid* تَشْدِيد), or the occurrence of two identical consonants with no vowel, short or long, between them. Unlike English, where gemination only occurs in medial word position (e.g., as “pp” in *appear*, “mm” in *immoral*, and “rr” in *irrational*), in MSA gemination occurs in medial or word final positions, but never in initial position. For reasons of economy (keeping Arabic script neat and simple) and because gemination occurs widely, gemination is represented by a single consonant and a *shadda* symbol which resembles a slanted “w” shape placed over the consonant. Below are examples of gemination *tashdiid* in different positions of the word followed and preceded by short and long vowels:

“he deliberated”	<i>tadabbar</i>	تَدَبَّر	←	بَّ = بَ + بَ
“deliberation”	<i>tadabbur</i>	تَدَبَّرْ	←	بُّ = بُ + بُ
“deliberator”	<i>mutadabbir</i>	مُتَدَبِّر	←	بِّ = بَ + بَ

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“Mass”	<i>quddaas</i>	قُدَّاس ←	دَا =	د + دا
“the Sanctified”	<i>qudduus</i>	قُدُّوس ←	دُو =	د + دو
“saint”	<i>qiddiis</i>	قِدِّيس ←	دِّي =	د + دي
“a mole”	<i>Dabb</i>	صَبَّ ←	بَّ =	ب + ب
“young man”	<i>shaabb</i>	شَابَّ ←	بَّ =	ب + ب
“to love each other”	<i>taHaabbaa</i>	تَحَابَّأ ←	بَّ =	ب + ب

In addition, gemination in Arabic occurs with diphthongs and glides/semi-vowels (see also Table 1.5) followed by any of the short or long vowels. The following examples illustrate such possible gemination combinations:

“he changed”	<i>taghayyar</i>	تَغَيَّر ←	[yya]	يَّ =	ي + ي
“pilot”	<i>Tayyaar</i>	طَيَّار ←	[yyaa]	يَّا =	ا + ي + ي
“changing”	<i>taghayyur</i>	تَغَيَّرُ ←	[yyu]	يُّ =	ي + ي
“the Sustainer”	<i>qayyuum</i>	قَيَّوم ←	[yyuu]	يُّو =	و + ي + ي
“he got married”	<i>tazawwaj</i>	تَزَوَّج ←	[wwa]	وَّ =	و + و
“doorman”	<i>bawwaab</i>	بَوَّاب ←	[wwaa]	وَّا =	ا + و + و
“he was married”	<i>zuwwij</i>	زُوج ←	[wwi]	وِّ =	و + و
“she/it strengthens”	<i>tuqawwii</i>	تُقَوِّي ←	[wwii]	وِّي =	ي + و + و
“getting support”	<i>tazawwud</i>	تَزَوَّد ←	[wwu]	وُّ =	و + و
“Mister”	<i>sayyid</i>	سَيِّد ←	[yyi]	يِّي =	ي + ي

1.4 Stress

The very first fact to keep in mind with respect to stress النَّبْر (or emphasis on a syllable within a word) in Arabic is that it is predictable and not phonemic. In other words, absence or presence and even misplacement of stress do not lead to a change in word meaning. This is unlike English where, for example, the placement of stress at the beginning of a word such as *'reject* makes the word a noun, whereas placement of stress on the second syllable (i.e., before [j]), as in *re'ject*, renders the word a verb. However, there are certain stress rules in Arabic which can be very helpful in mastering the Arabic script and sound system more quickly and efficiently. The most basic and most useful stress rules to know are those observed in the presence or absence of long vowels, since in Arabic stress is generally associated with vowel length.

1.4.1 Presence of a Long Vowel

Stress falls on the syllable with the long vowel, whether the syllable is in initial, medial, or final position of the word. The following examples illustrate stress accordingly:

Long vowel in the initial syllable:

“he said”	<i>qaala</i>	قَالَ
“student”	<i>Taalib</i>	طَالِبٌ
“worms”	<i>duudun</i>	دُوْدٌ

Long vowel in the middle syllable:

“he meets”	<i>yuqaabil</i>	يُقَابِلُ
“negotiator”	<i>mufaawiD</i>	مُفَاوِضٌ
“borders”	<i>Huduudun</i>	حُدُودٌ

Long vowel in the final syllable:

“they both”	<i>humaa</i>	هُمَا
“both studied”	<i>darasaa</i>	دَرَسَا
“borders”	<i>Huduud</i>	حُدُودٌ

1.4.2 Presence of Two Long Vowels

Since stress is generally associated with vowel length, stress is distributed between the two syllables where the long vowels occur; that is, with the word containing two stresses, as in the following words:

“negotiations”	<i>mufaawaDaat</i>	مُفَاوَضَات
“high”	<i>‘aali</i>	عَالِي
“both got lost”	<i>Daa‘aa</i>	ضَاعَا

1.4.3 Absence of a Long Vowel

In the absence of a long vowel in a word, stress generally falls on the first syllable (i.e., the beginning of the word) except when *gemination* occurs, then stress falls on the first part/syllable where gemination occurs as in the following examples:

“he”	<i>huwa</i>	هُوَ
“we”	<i>naHnu</i>	نَحْنُ
“office”	<i>maktab</i>	مَكْتَبٌ
“office”	<i>maktabun</i>	مَكْتَبٌ
“he taught”	<i>‘allama</i>	عَلَّمَ
“he learned”	<i>ta‘allama</i>	تَعَلَّمَ

Note: There are a few exceptions to the stress rules here, including اَنَا “I” pronounced with word initial stress. However, the word اَنَا “I” is pronounced [ʔana] with a final *fatHa* [a] but written orthographically with a final *‘alif* (to be distinguished from اَنَّ [ʔan] “to”).

A useful implication of the above stress rules, especially for the beginner, is that when a long vowel and a short vowel occur within a word and we are not sure which of the two vowels is the long one, stress provides the answer: stress falls on the syllable with the long vowel. Similarly, if two long vowels occur in two syllables within a word, we can determine the presence of two long vowels, since stress is distributed; that is, there are two stresses within a word.

1.5 Spelling Variations of 'alif

The symbol of the 'alif [ا] explained as part of the Arabic alphabet above has two additional variant shapes in word medial and final positions. Remember that 'alif does not occur at the beginning of the word as a vowel (see Appendix C for an explanation of rules of the *hamza* and silent 'alif occurring at the beginning of the word and elsewhere as merely a seat for the *hamza* consonant). The medial form of 'alif is also represented by a shorthand form (as part of a CA spelling convention) where 'alif is not actually connected within the word but rather appears as a short vertical line raised to the level of the dots and the short vowels. This form of the 'alif is usually referred to as الألف الخنجريّة 'al-'alif 'al-khinjariyya “dagger 'alif” or الألف الصّغيرة 'al-'alif 'aS-Saghiira “the small 'alif.” Sometimes this 'alif does not appear in handwritten or printed texts but occurs in a few words that are quite common, hence perhaps the reason for this short-form 'alif. Below is a list of such common words both with and without the dagger 'alif:

“God”	'al-laah	الله	=	الله
“the Merciful”	'ar-raHmaan	الرَّحْمَنُ	=	الرَّحْمَنُ
“a god”	'ilaah	إِلَه	=	إِلَه
“but”	laakinna	لَكِنَّ	=	لَكِنَّ
“but”	laakin	لَكِنْ	=	لَكِنْ
“this [masculine]”	haadhaa	هَذَا	=	هَذَا
“this [feminine]”	haadhibi	هَذِهِ	=	هَذِهِ
“that [masculine]”	dhaalika	ذَلِكَ	=	ذَلِكَ
“these [human]”	haa'ulaa'i	هَؤُلَاءِ	=	هَؤُلَاءِ
“those [human]”	'ulaa'ika	أُولَئِكَ	=	أُولَئِكَ

The other variant form of the 'alif occurs in word final position and is represented by the same shape of the final *yaa'* (final after a connector or non-connector) without the two dots ى. Both final 'alif shapes (ا and ى) are pronounced the same. Arab grammarians refer to 'alif in final position, whether it has the shape ا or ى, as الألف المقصورة 'al-'alif 'al-maqSuura. However, today only the latter is referred to as 'al-'alif 'al-maqSuura. The

variations in the spelling of the final 'alif depend on the derivation rules of such words (rules of words ending with 'al-'alif 'al-maqsuura will be discussed in Chapter 2). To distinguish the final 'alif shape ى from that of the yaa' ي (although only the latter has dots beneath it), the symbol of 'al-'alif 'al-khinjariyya “the dagger 'alif” or 'al-'alif 'aṣ-Ṣaghiira “the small 'alif” is written above, although it may not be provided in some texts. Below are examples of words ending with final 'alif ى with and without 'al-'alif 'al-khinjariyya “the dagger 'alif”:

“to”	'ilaa	إلى	=	إِلَى
“on”	'alaa	على	=	عَلَى
“he cried”	bakaa	بكى	=	بَكَى
“he spent”	qaDaa	قضى	=	قَضَى
“hospital”	mashfaa	مشفى	=	مَشْفَى
“café”	maqbaa	مقهى	=	مَقْهَى
“Layla”	laylaa	لَيْلى	=	لَيْلَى
“Salma”	salmaa	سَلْمى	=	سَلْمَى
“Moses”	muusaa	موسى	=	مُوسَى
“Jesus”	'iisaa	عيسى	=	عِيسَى
“Mustafa”	musTafaa	مُصْطَفى	=	مُصْطَفَى

1.6 *taa' marbuuTā*

A suffix (word ending) referred to as 'at-taa' 'al-marbuuTā التاء المُربوطة “the tied [t]” results from literally tying up the Arabic letter ت. The latter is referred to as التاء المُبسوطة 'at-taa' 'al-mabsuuTā “the flat [t].” There are two shapes of *taa' marbuuTā*, depending on whether it occurs following a connecting letter or a non-connecting letter, as the two examples below illustrate:

“a female dog”	<i>kalb-ah</i>	كَلْبَةٌ ← ة	following a connector
“a female cow”	<i>baqar-ah</i>	بَقْرَةٌ ← ة	following a non-connector

The suffix is a feminine gender, as Arabic refers to humans, animals, and any inanimate objects as having either the masculine gender “he” or the feminine gender “she” (see Chapter 2). The *taa’ marbuuTa* is always preceded by the vowel [a]. In pause form (where no grammatical ending is produced) in formal MSA (and CA), *taa’ marbuuTa* is pronounced as a voiceless glottal fricative [h] so that it is pronounced, together with the vowel [a] preceding it, as [-ah]. However, in spoken and informal MSA, speakers do not usually produce the voiceless glottal fricative [h], and instead just produce the vowel [a], so that the *taa’ marbuuTa* is simply pronounced as [a] in word final position to indicate the feminine gender marking of the word. Below are examples of masculine and feminine human, animal, and inanimate objects in pause form:

“a female teacher”	<i>’ustaadh-a</i>	أُسْتَاذَة	“a male teacher”	<i>’ustaadh</i>	أُسْتَاذ
“a female dog”	<i>kalb-a</i>	كَلْبَة	“a male dog”	<i>kalb</i>	كَلْب
“a library”	<i>maktab-a</i>	مَكْتَبَة	“an office”	<i>maktab</i>	مَكْتَب

In full (formal) MSA form (where grammatical endings are produced), *taa’ marbuuTa* is produced as [t] with the only distinction that feminine forms do not require the *’alif* as a seat (i.e., the *’alif* is written but not pronounced) for the nunation of *fatH* [َ], but masculine forms require the *’alif*, as shown in the following examples (see also Table 1.4 above):

“a student F”	<i>Taalib-at-an</i>	طَالِبَةٌ	“a student M”	<i>Taalib-an</i>	طَالِبًا
“a student F”	<i>Taalib-at-un</i>	طَالِبَةٌ	“a student M”	<i>Taalib-un</i>	طَالِبٌ
“a student F”	<i>Taalib-at-in</i>	طَالِبَةٌ	“a student M”	<i>Taalib-in</i>	طَالِبٍ

Finally, a small number of words may end with a *taa’ marbuuTa* following *’alif*. In full MSA form, *taa’ marbuuTa* is produced as [t] followed by any of the grammatical endings, as in the above examples. In pause form in formal MSA (and CA), *taa’ marbuuTa* following *’alif* is pronounced as a voiceless glottal fricative [h] so that it is pronounced, together with the *’alif* [aa] preceding it, as [-aah]. However, in spoken

and informal MSA, it is usually pronounced as [t], so that it is pronounced, together with the *'alif* preceding it, as [-aat]. Below are examples illustrating both uses:

“a channel”	<i>qanaa-t</i>	قَنَاة	“a channel”	<i>qanaa-h</i>	قَنَاة
“life”	<i>Hayaa-t</i>	حَيَاة	“life”	<i>Hayaa-h</i>	حَيَاة
“a girl”	<i>fataa-t</i>	فَتَاة	“a girl”	<i>fataa-h</i>	فَتَاة

1.7 Definiteness

At the word level, a word (noun or adjective) is by default indefinite whether in pause (with no *nunation* attached) or full form (with *nunation*) (see Table 1.4 above). On the other hand, definiteness is signaled by attaching the definite article *al-* [ʾal-] “the” to the beginning of the word. The *fatHa* [ʾ] that appears on the *hamza* (itself seated on a silent *'alif*) is not usually provided in texts, nor is the *hamza* itself, nor is the *sukuun* on *ʾ*, since the definite article occurs quite frequently. Therefore, the definite article appears simply as *al-*.

Note: The *hamza*, the *fatHa*, and the *sukuun* are provided on the definite article *al-* [ʾal-] “the” in this chapter and whenever appropriate in order to clarify the rules involved. Due to orthographic conventions, the *hamza* and the *fatHa* [ʾa] are widely misunderstood as being merely a *fatHa* on a silent *'alif* rather than a *hamza* and a *fatHa* on a silent *'alif* [ʾa]. As a glottal stop, the *hamza* originates from the larynx, as opposed to a *fatHa*, which would originate from the mouth alone. The latter would be hard to pronounce at the beginning of a word starting with a vowel (without a glottal stop), at least for Arabic and English speakers. In English, every word that starts with a vowel also starts with a *hamza* “glottal stop.” However, English does not require a special symbol to represent it, since it rarely occurs in the middle of a word (e.g., *co'ordinate* and *co'operate*), and even then it is often elided/dropped (see 1.2.2 for a description of the *hamza* and how it is articulated/pronounced). Similarly, in Arabic the *hamza* of the definite article belongs to the *همزة الوصل* “connecting/eliding *hamza*” category, which, in certain contexts, is elided/dropped (in speech) (see 1.9–10 below and Appendix B).

With respect to pronunciation, the [l] sound of the article may undergo assimilation with the initial sound of the word following it, depending on whether such a sound is a *sun letter* or *moon letter*. When the definite article is added to a word beginning with a *moon letter*, the [l] sound of the article is not assimilated; hence, the definite article and the word attached to it are pronounced normally. Except for [j], all *moon letters* are produced without involving the tip of the tongue. This makes it easy to remember and we can apply it intuitively by feeling the position of the tongue before applying the rule. Table 1.6 lists all the *moon letters*, with examples for each in indefinite and definite words:

Table 1.6 *Moon letters* in indefinite and definite words

“the Earth”	'al-'arD	الأَرْض ← 'arD	أَرْض + الـ	أ
“the door”	'al-baab	الباب ← baab	باب + الـ	ب
“the mountain”	'al-jabal	الجَبَل ← jabal	جَبَل + الـ	ج
“the milk”	'al-Haliib	الحَلِيب ← Haliib	حَلِيب + الـ	ح
“the bread”	'al-khubz	الخُبْز ← khubz	خُبْز + الـ	خ
“the eye”	'al-'ayn	العَيْن ← 'ayn	عَيْن + الـ	ع
“the deer”	'al-ghazaal	الغَزَال ← ghazaal	غَزَال + الـ	غ
“the cent”	'al-fils	الفِلس ← fils	فِلس + الـ	ف
“the moon”	'al-qamar	القَمَر ← qamar	قَمَر + الـ	ق
“the dog”	'al-kalb	الكَلْب ← kalb	كَلْب + الـ	ك
“the salt”	'al-milH	المِلْح ← milH	مِلْح + الـ	م
“the crescent”	'al-hilaal	الهِلَال ← hilaal	هِلَال + الـ	هـ
“the paper”	'al-waraqā	الوَرَقَة ← waraqā	وَرَقَة + الـ	و
“the hand”	'al-yad	الْيَد ← yad	يَد + الـ	ي

Note: As shown, the *hamza* and the *fatHa* [ء] on the silent 'alif seat are not provided in texts.

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However, when the definite article is added to a word beginning with a *sun letter*, the [l] sound of the article is assimilated. The [l] sound becomes silent (i.e., not pronounced). The loss of the [l] sound (in pronunciation only) is compensated for by doubling the *sun letter* beginning the word. Like gemination, as discussed above, this is represented by a *shadda* symbol placed on the *sun letter*. All *sun letters* are produced using the tip of the tongue, so it is easy to remember and apply the rule intuitively (by feeling the position of the tongue). Table 1.7 lists all the *sun letters*, with examples in indefinite and definite words:

Table 1.7 *Sun letters* in indefinite and definite words

“the berries”	'at-tuut	التُّوت ← tuut	توت + الـ	ت
“the snow”	'ath-thalj	الثَّلَج ← thalj	ثَلَج + الـ	ث
“the house”	'ad-daar	الدَّار ← daar	دار + الـ	د
“the corn”	'adh-dhura	الدُّرَّة ← dhura	دُرَّة + الـ	ذ
“the leg”	'ar-rijl	الرِّجْل ← rijl	رِجْل + الـ	ر
“the button”	'az-zar	الرَّزْر ← zar	زَر + الـ	ز
“the sugar”	'as-sukkar	السُّكَّر ← sukkar	سُكَّر + الـ	س
“the sun”	'ash-shams	الشَّمْس ← shams	شَمْس + الـ	ش
“the patience”	'aS-Sabr	الصَّبْر ← Sabr	صَبْر + الـ	ص
“the mole”	'aD-Dabb	الصَّبَب ← Dabb	صَبَب + الـ	ض
“the medicine”	'aT-Tibb	الطَّب ← Tibb	طِب + الـ	ط
“the shade”	'a Z-Zill	الظِّل ← Zill	ظِل + الـ	ظ
“the night”	'al-layl	الليْل ← layl	لَيْل + الـ	ل
“the fire”	'an-naar	النَّار ← naar	نار + الـ	ن

Note: As shown, the *hamza* and the *fatHa* [ε] on the silent 'alif seat are not provided in texts.

It is worth noting here that Arab grammarians who came up with the terms *moon letters* الحُرُوفُ الْقَمَرِيَّة and *sun letters* الحُرُوفُ الشَّمْسِيَّة did so as they chose the words قَمَر *qamar* “moon” and شَمْس *shams* “sun” to exemplify the rule and to remind the speaker of the intuitive nature of the rule: it is applied intuitively by first feeling the position of the tongue in a somewhat conscious manner, and eventually by applying it unconsciously. Alternatively, to apply and learn the *sun* and *moon letter* rule, one can memorize the *moon letters* (a total of 14 letters) and *sun letters* (a total of 15 letters) which are distributed somewhat evenly between letters of the alphabet. With practice and exposure over time, applying the rule will become automatic (see Tables 1.6–1.7 above).

1.8 Formal MSA vs. Informal MSA

Formal MSA style is marked by the production of grammatical and vowel (as part of the spelling and pronunciation) endings of words in a sentence, except for the last word in the sentence, which should be in pause form. “Pause form” means that no grammatical or short vowel ending of any kind is produced (except for a few one-letter words usually used in CA). Hence, formal MSA means providing the full form of each word with its ending, whether the ending is grammatical or has to do with its fixed spelling at the end of the word. The following sentence is an example of full formal MSA style:

الرَّئِيسُ الْجَزَائِرِيُّ فِي زِيَارَةٍ رَسْمِيَّةٍ مَعَ نَائِبِهِ إِلَى سُوْرِيَّةِ .

'ar-ra'iusu l-jazaa'iriyyu fii ziyaaratin rasmiiyyatin ma'a naa'ibih 'ilaa suuriyya
“The Algerian president is on an official visit with his vice-president to Syria.”

Note that every word in the sentence is fully vowelled; that is, every word has the grammatical and vowel endings on the end except the last word سُوْرِيَّةِ .

Informal MSA style, on the other hand, is marked by the production of words in the sentence in pause form, just as one would produce the last word of the sentence in formal MSA in pause form. This means that all grammatical endings are dropped (i.e., not produced altogether). Below is the same sentence in pause form, as an example of informal MSA style at sentence level:

الرَّئِيسُ الْجَزَائِرِيُّ فِي زِيَارَةٍ رَسْمِيَّةٍ مَعَ نَائِبِهِ إِلَى سُوْرِيَّةِ .

'ar-ra'ius 'al-jazaa'iriyy fii ziyaara rasmiiyya ma'a naa'ibih 'ilaa suuriyya
“The Algerian president is on an official visit with his vice-president to Syria.”

Unlike grammatical endings, short vowel endings that constitute part of the spelling/pronunciation of a word may or may not be produced in pause form. The preposition *ma^aca* “with” in the sentence above is the only word which is produced with the *fatHa* ending here. The ending is part of the pronunciation of the word (prepositions have no grammatical endings) and it may also be produced as *ma^c* without the *fatHa* in pause form.

However, the presence of two MSA styles, formal and informal, does not mean that Arab speakers use one style restrictively to the exclusion of the other. This is especially evident in formal speech, where some speakers may tend to produce full forms and pause forms selectively within the same sentence due to running out of breath or some other consideration, some of which may be idiosyncratic. Below is the same sentence again, restated with words produced selectively both in full and pause forms:

الرئيس الجزائري في زيارة رسمية مع نائبه إلى سورية .

'ar-ra'iisu 'al-jazaa'iriyy fii ziyaaratin rasmiyya ma^aa naa'ibih 'ilaa suuriyya
“The Algerian president is on an official visit with his vice-president to Syria.”

الرئيس الجزائري في زيارة رسمية مع نائبه إلى سورية .

'ar-ra'iis 'al-jazaa'iriyy fii ziyaaratin rasmiyya ma^aa naa'ibih 'ilaa suuriyya
“The Algerian president is on an official visit with his vice-president to Syria.”

Thus, full mastery of MSA skills, especially that of listening, necessitates learning and practicing the use of grammatical and vowel endings.

1.9 Helping Vowels and Dropping the *hamza* of the Definite Article

When full or mixed full and pause forms are used in MSA, Arabic resorts to dropping the *hamza* of the definite article together with the *fatHa* [a] vowel that occurs with it [أ] and to inserting certain vowels to help merge words smoothly, so that words in a stretch of speech in full form style can be pronounced with less effort than in pause form. Many languages resort to similar methods, probably for ease of pronunciation. English, for example, allows the insertion of [n] with the indefinite article before words starting with a vowel (e.g., *a banana* vs. *an apple*). This allows the glottal stop (equivalent to the *hamza* in Arabic) occurring with the vowel to be elided/dropped, since any English word that starts with a vowel necessarily starts with a glottal stop (to make vowels easier to pronounce in word initial position). Similarly, some

English dialects allow the insertion of [r] when words preceding the preposition *of* end with a vowel (*idea of* → *idea-r-of*). In Arabic, vowels inserted to help smooth the merger between words are referred to as “helping vowels” that include [a], [u], and [i] and the occurrence is explained due to *إلتقاء الساكنين* “the meeting of the quiescent/still sounds.”

1.9.1 The *fatHa* Helping Vowel [a]

The *fatHa* [a] helping vowel is inserted after the preposition *من* *min* “from” when a word following it contains the definite article *ألّ* [’al-] “the.” Inserting the vowel [a] is also accompanied by the dropping of the *hamza* and the *fatHa* of the definite article *أ* [’a] (in speech only) so that only the sound [l] is produced/heard in words beginning with a *moon letter*, whereas the entire definite article is dropped in words beginning with a *sun letter* (see 1.7 above). The following are examples of both phenomena taking place at the same time:

	After helping vowel [a]		Before helping vowel [a]
“from the moon”	<i>mina l-qamar</i> مِنَ الْقَمَرِ ←	<i>min ’al-qamar</i> مِنْ الْقَمَرِ	
“from the sun”	<i>mina sh-shams</i> مِنَ الشَّمْسِ ←	<i>min ’ash-shams</i> مِنَ الشَّمْسِ	

1.9.2 The *Damma* Helping Vowel [u]

The *Damma* [u] helping vowel is inserted after the personal pronouns and pronoun suffixes for second- and third-person masculine plural when a word following it contains the definite article *ألّ* [’al-] “the.” Inserting the vowel [u] is also accompanied by the dropping of the *hamza* and the *fatHa* of the definite article *أ* [’a] (in speech only) so that only the sound [l] is produced/heard in words beginning with a *moon letter*, whereas the entire definite article is dropped in words beginning with a *sun letter* (see 1.7 above). The following are examples of both phenomena taking place at the same time:

After helping vowel [u]	Before helping vowel [u]
<i>qaabala-kumu l-waziir</i> قَابَلَكُمُ الْوَزِيرَ ←	<i>qaabala-kum ’al-waziir</i> قَابَلَكُمْ الْوَزِيرَ
“The minister met you all.”	

After helping vowel insertion [u]	Before helping vowel insertion [u]
wadda ^ʿ a-humu r-rajul وَدَّعَهُمُ الرَّجُلُ	wadda ^ʿ a-hum 'ar-rajul وَدَّعَهُمُ الرَّجُلُ ←
“The man bade them farewell.”	

1.9.3 The kasra Helping Vowel [i]

The *kasra* [i] helping vowel is inserted after any word ending in a consonant sound (i.e., *sukuun*/no vowel) when a word following it begins with the definite article **الـ** [ʾal-] “the” or with a (light) *hamza* ‘i (see also Appendix B on the different types of *hamza*). Inserting the vowel [i] is also accompanied by the dropping of the *hamza* and the *fatHa* of the definite article **أ** [ʾa] (in speech only) so that only the sound [l] is produced/heard in words beginning with a *moon letter*, whereas the entire definite article is dropped in words beginning with a *sun letter* (see 1.7 above). Accordingly, the *kasra* helping vowel is the most frequent of the three “helping vowels” [a], [u], and [i]. The following are some examples of the *kasra* “helping vowel”:

	After helping vowel [i]		Before helping vowel [i]	
“Is the moon ...?”	<i>hali l-qamar</i>	هَلِ الْقَمَرُ...؟	←	<i>hal 'al-qamar</i> هَلِ الْقَمَرُ...؟
“Is the sun ...?”	<i>hali sh-shams</i>	هَلِ الشَّمْسُ...؟	←	<i>hal 'ash-shams</i> هَلِ الشَّمْسُ...؟
“the sun rose”	<i>Tala^ʿati sh-shams</i>	طَلَعَتِ الشَّمْسُ	←	<i>Tala^ʿat 'ash-shams</i> طَلَعَتِ الشَّمْسُ
“take* the book”	<i>khudhi l-kitaab</i>	خُذِ الْكِتَابَ	←	<i>khudh 'al-kitaab</i> خُذْ الْكِتَابَ
“take* the notebook”	<i>khudhi d-daftar</i>	خُذِ الدَّفْطَرَ	←	<i>khudh 'ad-daftar</i> خُذْ الدَّفْطَرَ
“who is the man”	<i>mani r-rajul</i>	مَنْ الرَّجُلُ؟	←	<i>man 'ar-rajul</i> مَنْ الرَّجُلُ؟

Note: * = second-person singular masculine

Thus, in addition to the “helping vowels,” the rules of the *sun letters* and *moon letters* apply (see 1.7 above). In the case of a definite word containing a *sun letter* following the definite article, not only are the

hamza, *fatHa*, and *'alif* seat of the definite article **أ** [ʾa] silent, but also the [l] sound; that is, the whole definite article is silent, with gemination giving the clue as to the position of the definite article. However, in the case of the definite word containing a *moon letter* following the definite article, only the *hamza* and its *fatHa* **أ** [ʾa] are silent.

Of course, no “helping vowel” is needed if the word preceding the definite article already contains a vowel (long or short). However, an additional rule applies when a long vowel is present. In this case, the long vowel is shortened (e.g., عَلَى “on” *ʿalaa* → *ʿala* and فِي “in” *fii* → *fi*), as in the following examples:

	After two words are combined	Before two words are combined
“on the moon”	<i>ʿala-l-qamar</i> عَلَى الْقَمَرِ ←	<i>ʿalaa ʿal-qamar</i> عَلَى الْقَمَرِ
“and the moon”	<i>wa-l-qamar</i> وَالْقَمَرِ ←	<i>wa ʿal-qamar</i> وَالْقَمَرِ
“in the sun”	<i>fi-sh-shams</i> فِي الشَّمْسِ ←	<i>fii ʿash-shams</i> فِي الشَّمْسِ
“and the sun”	<i>wa-sh-shams</i> وَالشَّمْسِ ←	<i>wa ʿash-shams</i> وَالشَّمْسِ

1.10 Dropping the *hamza* and *'alif* Seat of the Definite Article in Writing

In none of the above phenomena is any letter or symbol deleted in *writing*. The only occasion when an actual letter or symbol is deleted in writing (as well as in speech) is when a word containing the definite article is preceded by the preposition particle **لِ** *li-* “for.” In this case, the *hamza* of the definite article, its *fatHa*, and its silent *'alif* seat **أ** [ʾa] are dropped in both speech and writing. Other particles, such as the preposition *bi-* “with/in/by” and *fa-* “so/but,” when attached to a word containing the definite article, do not require the deletion of the *hamza* and its *fatHa* in writing – requiring only the *hamza* and its *fatHa*, together with the *'alif* seat, to be silent. The following examples illustrate the dropping in both speech and writing of the *hamza* (together with its *fatHa* and *'alif* seat) of the definite article with the particle *li-* and its retention in writing with other particles, such as *bi-* “with/in/by” and *fa-* “so/but”:

	After two words are combined		Before two words are combined	
“for the moon”	<i>li-l-qamar</i>	لِلْقَمَرِ ←	<i>li- 'al-qamar</i>	لِ الْقَمَرِ
“for the sun”	<i>li-sh-shams</i>	لِلشَّمْسِ ←	<i>li- 'ash-shams</i>	لِ الشَّمْسِ
“so, the moon ...”	<i>fa-l-qamar</i>	فَالْقَمَرِ ←	<i>fa- 'al-qamar</i>	فَ الْقَمَرِ
“so, the sun ...”	<i>fa-sh-shams</i>	فَالشَّمْسِ ←	<i>fa- 'ash-shams</i>	فَ الشَّمْسِ
“by train”	<i>bi-l-qitaar</i>	بِالْقِطَارِ ←	<i>bi- 'al-qitaar</i>	بِ الْقِطَارِ
“by car”	<i>bi-s-sayyaara</i>	بِالسَّيَّارَةِ ←	<i>bi- 'as-sayyaara</i>	بِ السَّيَّارَةِ

1.11 Summary

This chapter discussed the basic facts relevant to the Arabic writing and sound systems. Remember:

- Arabic script proceeds from right to left
- Arabic allows only cursive-style writing, with each letter having a slightly distinct shape to fit five word positions: initial, medial after a connector, medial after a non-connector, final after a connector, and final after a non-connector
- Arabic has a straightforward phonetic alphabet consisting of 26 consonants and three long vowels, in addition to three corresponding short vowels represented as floating symbols above the consonants
- each distinct sound is represented by a distinct symbol, except for the symbol of the long vowel 'alif [aa], which has three variants
- Arabic has a simple, symmetrical vowel system: with three simple, long vowels [aa], [uu], and [ii] and three short corresponding ones [a], [u], and [i], respectively – allowing for additional semi-vowels, diphthongs, and sound combinations which are simple and which almost all have English equivalents
- Arabic adopts an economical system of writing where gemination/consonant doubling is represented by a special symbol over the doubled consonant, since gemination occurs frequently in many words and in both medial and final word positions

- Arabic stress generally follows straightforward intuitive patterns, as stress is associated with vowel length: where there is a long vowel there is stress
- Arabic has a special symbol, *taa' marbuu* T_a , attached to the end of the word to indicate the feminine gender of the word (whether noun or adjective)
- Arabic indefiniteness is signaled by the default form of the word and/or nunation [n] sound at the end of the word, usually attached together with a grammatical (short vowel) ending
- Arabic definiteness is formed by attaching the definite article 'al- "the" to the beginning of the word following an intuitive assimilation rule, for ease of pronunciation
- Arabic, at the sentence level, is produced both in pause form (informally) and full form (formally)
- Arabic employs three helping vowels for ease of pronunciation
- The *hamza*, together with its 'alif seat belonging to the definite article, is dropped in speech as well as writing only with the preposition \downarrow *li-* "for."

2

Word Structure

This chapter discusses the basic components of the Arabic word. It also discusses particles or suffixes that are attached to words as part of their essential, individual makeup. The chapter deals with aspects of Arabic words that any given word necessarily consists of and covers:

- the basic components of the Arabic word: root and pattern
- gender markings: masculine and feminine
- the dual: masculine and feminine
- the regular masculine plural
- the regular feminine plural
- the irregular plural: masculine and feminine.

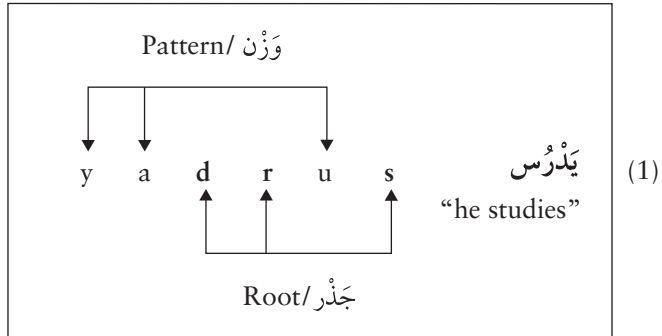
2.1 The Basic Components of the Arabic Word: Root and Pattern

As in other Semitic languages, Arabic words have a unique underlying form–meaning relationship. Words are derived from combining a pattern **وَزْن** with core root **جَذْر** consonants. Patterns consist of vowels (and sometimes additionally auxiliary consonants), while roots mostly consist of three consonants in a specific order. The complete meaning of a given word obtains only from combining both, since root consonants carry the

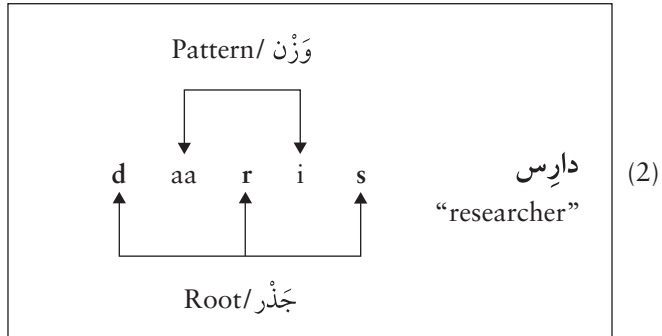
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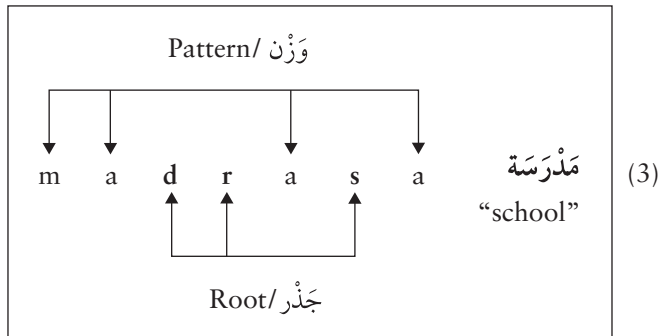
core meaning and a given pattern modifies the core meaning by making it more specific. Examples (1)–(3) show that the words are formed by combining the root *d-r-s* “that which has to do with studying” with certain patterns.



Literally speaking, *daaris* دَارِس means “a studier”; hence the gloss given: “researcher.”



Literally speaking, *madrasa* مَدْرَسَة means “a place where studying takes place”; hence the gloss given: “school.”



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Accordingly, a given word can have a large number of related words which share the same core root consonants. Thus, from the root د - ر - س (in this order: [d], then [r], then [s]) we can derive a large number of related words such as those listed below:

“he studied”	<i>darasa</i>	دَرَسَ
“he studies”	<i>yadrusu</i>	يَدْرُسُ
“studying/a study”	<i>diraasa</i>	دِرَاسَةٌ
“studies”	<i>diraasaat</i>	دِرَاسَاتٍ
“a lesson”	<i>dars</i>	دَرْسٌ
“lessons”	<i>duruus</i>	دُرُوسٌ
“a researcher”	<i>daaris</i>	دَارِسٌ
“researchers”	<i>daarisuuna</i>	دَارِسُونَ
“studied”	<i>madruus</i>	مَدْرُوسٌ
“a teacher”	<i>mudarris</i>	مُدَرِّسٌ
“teachers”	<i>mudarrisuuna</i>	مُدَرِّسُونَ
“a school”	<i>madrasa</i>	مَدْرَسَةٌ
“two schools”	<i>madrasataani</i>	مَدْرَسَتَانِ
“schools”	<i>madaaris</i>	مَدَارِسٌ

Literally speaking, *mudarris* مُدَرِّسٌ means “someone who causes to study”; hence the gloss given: “teacher.”

There is a large number of patterns (which may also be called “infixes” or “circumfixes”), but at this point only certain patterns are useful to learn. As for root consonants, the vast majority of words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) have three root consonants; a small number (of nouns and verbs and adjectives) have four; and a smaller number (of nouns and adjectives) have five. Table 2.1 gives examples of words having three root consonants (called “trilateral root” الجذر الثلاثي), four root consonants (called “quadrilateral root” الجذر الرباعي), and five root consonants (called “quintilateral root” الجذر الخماسي):

Table 2.1

“he studies”	<i>yadrusu</i>	يَدْرُسُ	d-r-s	د - ر - س	الثلاثي trilateral
“a man”	<i>rajul</i>	رَجُلٌ	r-j-l	ر - ج - ل	الثلاثي trilateral
“beautiful”	<i>jamiil</i>	جَمِيلٌ	j-m-l	ج - م - ل	الثلاثي trilateral
“in the morning”	<i>SabaaHan</i>	صَبَاحاً	S-b-H	ص - ب - ح	الثلاثي trilateral
“he rolled”	<i>daHraja</i>	دَحْرَجَ	d-H-r-j	د - ح - ر - ج	الرباعي quadrilateral
“a penny”	<i>dirbam</i>	دِرْهَمٌ	d-r-h-m	د - ر - ه - م	الرباعي quadrilateral
“a translator”	<i>mutarjim</i>	مُتَرْجِمٌ	t-r-j-m	ت - ر - ج - م	الرباعي quadrilateral
“quince”	<i>safarjal</i>	سَفَرَجَلٌ	s-f-r-j-l	س - ف - ر - ج - ل	الخماسي quintilateral
“false”	<i>kbuza^c bil</i>	كُزْعَبِلٌ	kh-z- ^c -b-l	خ - ز - ع - ب - ل	الخماسي quintilateral

34 Word Structure

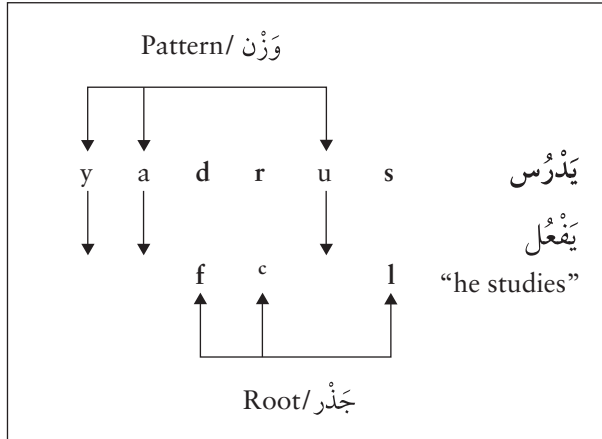
There is also a small subset of words consisting of fewer than three root consonants which, instead, may consist of one or two consonants with one or two vowels. Such words include a few connectors, a few prepositions, a few question words, and a few negation particles. Table 2.2 shows examples of words consisting of fewer than three consonant roots:

Table 2.2

Word	جذر / Root
“and” <i>wa</i> و	w و
“then” <i>fa</i> فَ	f ف
“in” <i>fii</i> فِي	f-ii ف - ي
“with” <i>ma^ca</i> مَعَ	m- ^c م - ع
“about” <i>^can</i> عَن	^c -n ع - ن
“who” <i>man</i> مَنْ	m-n م - ن
“how many” <i>kam</i> كَمْ	k-m ك - م
“will not” <i>lan</i> لَنْ	l-n ل - ن
“did not” <i>lam</i> لَمْ	l-m ل - م

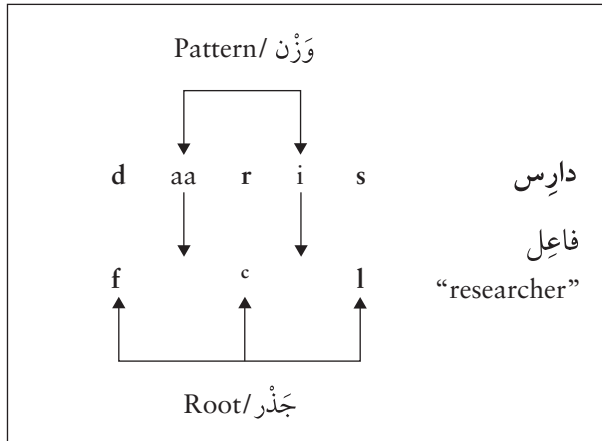
In the eighth century Arab grammarians came up with an ingenious way or scale of representing this relationship between the root and the pattern, to make word meanings and patterns easier to learn. To represent the root consonants, they came up with three consonants which they used as variables in the following order: ل - ع - ف / f - ^c - l. Then, any non-root letters (including consonants and vowels) are added according to the pattern of the word while keeping the sequence of the variable letters. Thus, for example, the ل - ع - ف pattern of the examples (1)–(3) above can be captured as in examples (4)–(6), as follows:

يَفْعُلُ is a present-tense pattern.



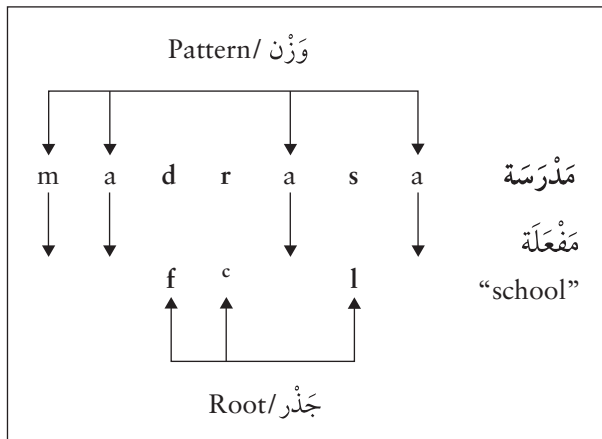
(4)

فاعِل is a "doer" pattern equivalent to the English suffix {-er} when attached to the verb in English.



(5)

مَفْعَلَة is a noun of place pattern; i.e., a place where the act of studying takes place.



(6)

Thus, the ف - ع - ل pattern of يَدْرُسُ *yadrus* “he studies” is يَفْعُلُ *yaf^cul*, of دَارِسٍ *daaris* “researcher” is فَاعِلٍ *faa^cil*, and of مَدْرَسَةٍ *madrasa* “school” is مَفْعَلَةٌ *maf^cala*.

As mentioned above, there is a large number of patterns, such as يَفْعُلُ *yaf^cul*, فَاعِلٍ *faa^cil*, and مَفْعَلَةٌ *maf^cala*, but it is only useful to learn certain patterns. In this chapter, as well as in subsequent ones, patterns making up words (including verbs, nouns, and adjectives) that are useful to learn will be discussed in detail, and over the course of the book it will be possible to tease apart root consonants from non-consonants and vowels (see Appendix D for rules on reducing the word to its essential root, which is necessary for looking up words in root-based Arabic dictionaries).

Beyond the two basic components of Arabic words, root and pattern, Arabic words exhibit other basic markings, such as gender and number. These are discussed in the sections immediately below.

2.2 Gender الجِنْس

Verbs, nouns, and adjectives are marked for gender: masculine and feminine. Pronouns are also marked for masculine and feminine gender (see Chapter 5). All other parts of speech, such as prepositions, adverbs, question words, negation particles, conditional particles, and other particles, are not marked for gender. The gender distinction can sometimes be *natural*, referring to humans and animals with biological gender traits as males and females, or *grammatical*, when referring to inanimate objects that exhibit no biological gender traits and which are marked in Arabic as masculine or feminine. Verbs are marked for gender in distinct ways from nouns and adjectives, as explained in the sections below.

2.2.1 Gender in Verbs

Arabic verbs are marked for masculine and feminine gender either by means of a prefix or a suffix or both, depending on whether the verb is in the present or past tense. Specifically, the masculine–feminine distinction is marked in the second-person singular, second-person plural, third-person singular, third-person dual, and third-person plural (for more on verbs, see Chapter 13). Tables 2.3–2.4 display all the gender markings of all the conjugated verb forms. The example given here is the verb يَدْرُسُ “he studies” and دَرَسَ “he studied” in the present and past tense, respectively.

13

The Verb **الفِعْل**

This chapter discusses essential aspects of the *verb*, called in Arabic **الفِعْل** “the action,” whether in the form of active voice, passive voice, the imperative, or the negative imperative, as well as common verb patterns/forms. The chapter covers the following:

- common trilateral verb forms and their meanings
- common quadrilateral verb forms
- verb categories and their conjugations
- the imperative
- the negative imperative
- the passive voice.

13.1 Common Trilateral Verb Forms

Most commonly Arabic has ten verb patterns/forms of trilateral roots (see Chapter 2 for more on the notion of roots and patterns). While Form I exhibits somewhat unpredictable sound changes between the past and the present form, and vice versa, the rest (Forms II–X) exhibit predictable changes.

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13.1.1 Form I

Form I exhibits a single slight sound change with respect to its past and present forms. The best way to understand this sound change is to consider the conjugation of English verbs in the present and past tenses (as well as the past participle), as shown in the examples below.

<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Sound changes</i>
travel	traveled	traveled	+ [d]
want	wanted	wanted	+ [ɪd]
walk	walked	walked	+ [t]
buy	bought	bought	[aɪ] → [ɔt]
run	ran	run	[ʌ] → [æ] → [ʌ]
begin	began	begun	[i] → [æ] → [ʌ]
rise	rose	risen	[aɪ] → [oʊ] → [i] & [ən]
write	wrote	written	[aɪ] → [oʊ] → [i] & [ən]
stand	stood	stood	[æɪ] → [u]
go	went	gone	[goʊ] → [went] → [gɔn]
put	put	put	∅

In fact, the corresponding sound changes in English verbs are unpredictable and therefore irregular. The sound change irregularities are further compounded by additional irregularities in the spelling, as the list of the above examples shows. However, unlike English, Arabic Form I, which is the only verb pattern that can be characterized as irregular, exhibits a minimal sound change of one middle vowel, with six common subtypes of verbs, as follows:

	<i>Present/المضارع</i>		<i>Past/الماضي</i>		<i>Form I</i>
“he reads”	يَقْرَأُ ـ ـ	—	قَرَأَ ـ ـ	“he read”	1.
“he writes”	يَكْتُبُ و ـ	—	كَتَبَ ـ ـ	“he wrote”	2.
“he sits”	يَجْلِسُ ـ ـ	—	جَلَسَ ـ ـ	“he sat”	3.
“he understands”	يَفْهَمُ ـ ـ	←	فَهِمَ ـ ـ	“he understood”	4.
“he thinks”	يَحْسِبُ ـ ـ	—	حَسِبَ ـ ـ	“he thought”	5.
“he becomes far”	يَبْعُدُ و ـ	←	بَعَدَ و ـ	“he became far”	6.

Note: The direction of the two arrows indicates that the present tense can be predicted from the form of the past tense.

However, while it is not possible to predict how the past-tense middle *fatHa* vowel would turn out in the present tense in subtypes 1–3, the past-tense middle *Damma* (in subtype 6 above) always surfaces as *Damma* in the present tense and the middle *kasra* in sub-type 4 almost always surfaces as a *fatHa*, as indicated by the arrows (with a few exceptions, as in subtype 5, although most of these exceptions are found in *mithaal* “assimilated” verbs; i.e., those starting with a long vowel, as in *وَرِثَ* → “he inherited” *يَرِثُ* “he inherits”). Hence, learning both past and present forms of Form I verbs at the same time, while noting the regularity in two of the subtypes (4 and 6), is necessary – just as it is necessary for the English learner to learn the conjugations of every single English verb in the past, present, and past participles. Perhaps the best way to learn the conjugations of Form I verbs is to learn both the past and present forms together.

The best way to capture the patterns of Form I is by means of the form *فَعَلَ* “he did” and *يَفْعَلُ* “he does,” as a mnemonic device (see also Chapter 2), as follows:

<i>Present/ المضارع</i>		<i>Past/ الماضي</i>	<i>Form I</i>
يَفْعَلُ	–	فَعَلَ	1.
يَفْعَلُ	–	فَعَلَ	2.
يَفْعَلُ	–	فَعَلَ	3.
يَفْعَلُ	←	فَعَلَ	4.
يَفْعَلُ	–	فَعَلَ	5.
يَفْعَلُ	←	فَعَلَ	6.

Note: Arabic has no infinitive form equivalent to “to read,” “to write,” etc. Rather, the verb always occurs with a pronoun suffix attached to it. The verb with the third-person singular, as in *قَرَأَ* “he read” and *كَتَبَ* “he wrote,” is usually used (in dictionaries, textbooks, and elsewhere) instead when referring to any verb, since it is the shortest form.

13.1.2 Forms II–X

Unlike Form I, Forms II–X, which are derived from Form I (as will be explained below), are all regular and involve no irregular sound changes between the past and present forms, as shown below by means of the mnemonic-derived forms of *فَعَلَ* where knowing the past form entails the ability to predict the exact present form, and vice versa, as indicated in the bidirectional arrows.

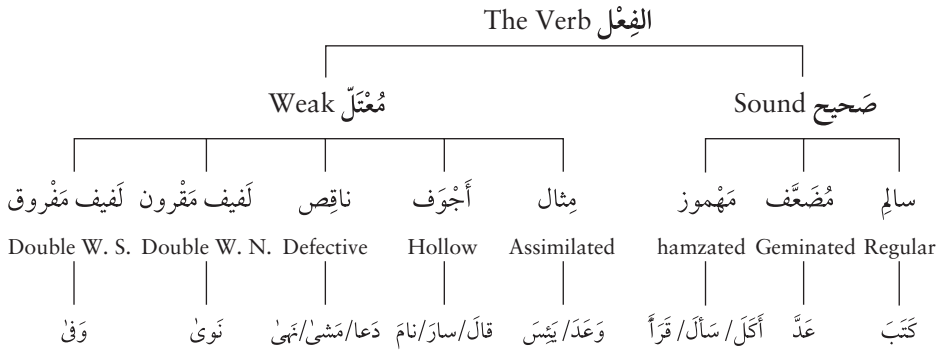
<i>Present/المضارع</i>		<i>Past/الماضي</i>	<i>Forms</i>
يُفَعِّلُ	↔	فَعَّلَ	II
يُفَاعِلُ	↔	فَاعَلَ	III
يُفَعِّلُ	↔	أَفْعَلَ	IV
يَتَفَعَّلُ	↔	تَفَعَّلَ	V
يَتَفَاعَلُ	↔	تَفَاعَلَ	VI
يَنْفَعِلُ	↔	أَنْفَعَلَ	VII
يَنْفَعِّلُ	↔	أَنْفَعَّلَ	VIII
يَفْعَلُ	↔	أَفْعَلَ	IX
يَسْتَفْعِلُ	↔	اسْتَفْعَلَ	X

13.2 Meanings of the Common Triliteral Verb Forms

The ten verb patterns differ from each other mainly in whether or not they are transitive (i.e., they require an object) or intransitive (they do not require an object), although some verb forms have additional subtle or specialized meanings according to their specific forms/patterns, all being derived from Form I.

13.4 Categories of Arabic Verbs and Conjugations

Arabic verbs belong to two major categories: (1) *صحيح* “sound verbs” consisting of exclusively root consonants and (2) *معتل* “weak verbs” consisting of one or more long vowels in the root. In addition, sound verbs are divided into three subcategories: *سالم* “sound/regular,” *مضعف* “geminated” (with the second and third root consonants being identical), and *مهموز* “hamzated” (containing a *hamza* as any of the three root consonants). Weak verbs are divided into five subcategories: *مثال* “assimilated” (containing *ي* or *و* in initial position of the root), *أجوف* “hollow” (containing *و*, *ي*, or *ا* as a middle vowel), *ناقص* “defective” (containing *ي*, *و*, or *ا* as a root vowel in final position), *لَفَيْف مَقْرُون* “non-separated, double weak” (containing two long vowels in second and third positions), and *لَفَيْف مَفْرُوق* “separated, double weak” (containing two long vowels in initial and final positions) verbs. While sound verbs undergo little or no sound changes in the different conjugations and derivation forms, weak verbs do. Hence, the Arabic terms given to them (by traditional Arab grammarians): “sound” and “weak.” The following chart illustrates the different types of verbs available according to the sound–weak root type distinction:



13.4.1 Conjugation of Sound Verbs *سالم*

A sound/regular verb consists exclusively of root consonants none of which is a *hamza* or an identical consonant. Apart from a change in the middle vowel, as explained in 13.1 above, the conjugation of a sound verb with the different pronouns is regular and results in no additional changes, neither in the past nor present tense (except for the final

endings of the subjunctive مَنصوب and jussive مَجْزوم), as in the verb “to write” - كَتَبَ - يَكْتُبُ:

المضارع المَجْزوم <i>Jussive</i>	المضارع المَنصوب <i>Subjunctive</i>	المضارع المَرْفوع <i>Present (indicative)</i>	الماضي <i>Past</i>	الضمير <i>Pronoun</i>
يَكْتُبُ يَكْتُبَا يَكْتُبُوا	يَكْتُبَ يَكْتُبَا يَكْتُبُوا	يَكْتُبُ يَكْتُبَانِ يَكْتُبُونَ	كَتَبَ كَتَبَا كَتَبُوا	هُوَ هُمَا هُمْ
تَكْتُبُ تَكْتُبَا يَكْتُبَنَّ	تَكْتُبَ تَكْتُبَا يَكْتُبَنَّ	تَكْتُبُ تَكْتُبَانِ يَكْتُبَنَّ	كَتَبْتَ كَتَبْتَا كَتَبَنَّ	هِيَ هُمَا هِنَّ
تَكْتُبُ تَكْتُبَا تَكْتُبُوا	تَكْتُبَ تَكْتُبَا تَكْتُبُوا	تَكْتُبُ تَكْتُبَانِ تَكْتُبُونَ	كَتَبْتِ كَتَبْتُمَا كَتَبْتُمْ	أَنْتِ أَنْتُمَا أَنْتُمْ
تَكْتُبِي تَكْتُبَا تَكْتُبْنَ	تَكْتُبِي تَكْتُبَا تَكْتُبْنَ	تَكْتُبِي تَكْتُبَانِ تَكْتُبْنَ	كَتَبْتِ كَتَبْتُمَا كَتَبْنَ	أَنْتِ أَنْتُمَا أَنْتُنَّ
أَكْتُبُ نَكْتُبُ	أَكْتُبَ نَكْتُبَ	أَكْتُبُ نَكْتُبُ	كَتَبْتُ كَتَبْنَا	أَنَا نَحْنُ

Note: The subjunctive مَنصوب mood ending is used after certain particles such as the future negation particle لَنْ “will not” (and أَنْ “to,” لِـ “in order to,” حَتَّى “in order to,” كَيْ “in order to,” كَيْلَا “in order not to” particles) and the jussive مَجْزوم mood ending is used after the past-tense negation particle لَمْ “did not” and the imperative and negative imperative forms (see also the sections on the use of imperative and negative imperative below, and 4.1 and 22.2.1 on the use of mood endings).

Note: Even though derived Forms III (يُسَاعِدُ - سَاعَدَ “to help”) and VI (يَتَنَازَعُ - تَنَازَعَ “to conflict”) verbs contain a middle long vowel ‘alif [ا], they conjugate as sound/regular verbs (i.e., with no additional changes), as in the verb يُسَاعِدُ - سَاعَدَ “to help”:

المُضارع المَجْزوم <i>Present jussive</i>	المُضارع المَنْصوب <i>Present subjunctive</i>	المُضارع المَرْفوع <i>Present (indicative)</i>	الماضي <i>Past</i>	الضمير <i>Pronoun</i>
يُسَاعِدُ يُسَاعِدَا يُسَاعِدُوا	يُسَاعِدَ يُسَاعِدَا يُسَاعِدُوا	يُسَاعِدُ يُسَاعِدَانِ يُسَاعِدُونَ	سَاعَدَ سَاعَدَا سَاعَدُوا	هُوَ هُمَا هُمْ
تُسَاعِدُ تُسَاعِدَا يُسَاعِدَنَّ	تُسَاعِدَ تُسَاعِدَا يُسَاعِدَنَّ	تُسَاعِدُ تُسَاعِدَانِ يُسَاعِدَنَّ	سَاعَدَتَ سَاعَدَتَا سَاعَدَنَّ	هِيَ هُمَا هِنَّ
تُسَاعِدُ تُسَاعِدَا تُسَاعِدُوا	تُسَاعِدَ تُسَاعِدَا تُسَاعِدُوا	تُسَاعِدُ تُسَاعِدَانِ تُسَاعِدُونَ	سَاعَدَتَ سَاعَدْتُمَا سَاعَدْتُمْ	أَنْتَ أَنْتُمَا أَنْتُمْ
تُسَاعِدِي تُسَاعِدَا تُسَاعِدَنَّ	تُسَاعِدِي تُسَاعِدَا تُسَاعِدَنَّ	تُسَاعِدِينَ تُسَاعِدَانِ تُسَاعِدَنَّ	سَاعَدْتِ سَاعَدْتُمَا سَاعَدْتُنَّ	أَنْتِ أَنْتُمَا أَنْتُنَّ
أُسَاعِدُ تُسَاعِدُ	أُسَاعِدَ تُسَاعِدُ	أُسَاعِدُ تُسَاعِدُ	سَاعَدْتُ سَاعَدْنَا	أَنَا نَحْنُ

13.4.2 Conjugation of Geminated Verbs مُصَعَّف

A geminated مُصَعَّف verb is one whose second and third root consonants are identical. In this case, the following rules apply to Form I and derived Forms II–X: (1) the gemination/*shadda* is broken (i.e., the two identical consonants are separated) in the past tense in all first persons, all second persons, and third-person plural feminine; (2) the gemination is broken in the present form in second- and third-person plural feminine; and (3) the endings in the subjunctive مَنْصُوب and jussive مَجْزُوم are identical throughout, as in the verb عَدَّ - يَعُدُّ “to count”:

المضارع المَجْزُوم <i>Present jussive</i>	المضارع المَنْصُوب <i>Present subjunctive</i>	المضارع المَرْفُوع <i>Present (indicative)</i>	الماضي <i>Past</i>	الضمير <i>Pronoun</i>
يَعُدُّ	يَعُدَّ	يَعُدُّ	عَدَّ	هُوَ
يَعُدَّا	يَعُدَّا	يَعُدَّانِ	عَدَّا	هُمَا
يَعُدُّوا	يَعُدُّوا	يَعُدُّونَ	عَدُّوا	هُم
تَعُدُّ	تَعُدَّ	تَعُدُّ	عَدَّتْ	هِيَ
تَعُدَّا	تَعُدَّا	تَعُدَّانِ	عَدَّتَا	هُمَا
يَعُدُّنَ	يَعُدُّنَ	يَعُدُّنَ	عَدَدْنَ	هُنَّ
تَعُدُّ	تَعُدَّ	تَعُدُّ	عَدَدْتِ	أَنْتِ
تَعُدَّا	تَعُدَّا	تَعُدَّانِ	عَدَدْتُمَا	أَنْتُمَا
تَعُدُّوا	تَعُدُّوا	تَعُدُّونَ	عَدَدْتُمْ	أَنْتُمْ
تَعُدِّي	تَعُدِّي	تَعُدِّينَ	عَدَدْتِ	أَنْتِ
تَعُدَّا	تَعُدَّا	تَعُدَّانِ	عَدَدْتُمَا	أَنْتُمَا
تَعُدُّنَ	تَعُدُّنَ	تَعُدُّنَ	عَدَدْتُنَّ	أَنْتُنَّ
أَعُدُّ	أَعُدَّ	أَعُدُّ	عَدَدْتُ	أَنَا
نَعُدُّ	نَعُدَّ	نَعُدُّ	عَدَدْنَا	نَحْنُ

Note: The ending of sound/regular verbs in the jussive مَجْزُوم – in the third-person singular, second-person singular masculine, and first-person – is a

Exceptive Sentences الإِسْتِثْنَاءُ

Unlike in English, where the exceptive structure is conveyed more generally through words and phrases such as “except,” “except for,” and “apart from,” etc., Arabic has a specific grammatical structure called الإِسْتِثْنَاءُ “the exception.” In addition to the use of exceptive particles or words called in Arabic أَدْوَاتُ الإِسْتِثْنَاءِ “the tools of exception,” certain words have certain case endings as a result of the exceptive structure. This chapter covers the following:

- common exceptive particles and words, their meanings, and use
- variations in the use of exceptive sentence structure
- the different case endings involved in the use of different exceptive particles/words and their different structures.

18.1 Exceptive Words and Their Use

There are at least seven exceptive particles or words used in MSA to express the exceptive sentence structure. Some are treated as particles, some as nouns, and some as verbs. An exceptive sentence structure usually consists of three parts: (1) a noun preceding the exceptive particle/word, called in Arabic المُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ “the excepted-from noun”; (2) the exceptive particle/word itself; and (3) a noun following the exceptive word, called in Arabic المُسْتَثْنَى “the excepted noun.”

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18.1.1 إِيَّاءُ “Except for”

Of all the exceptive particles/words, the particle إِيَّاءُ is the most commonly used for expressing exceptive sentences. The *excepted* noun الْمُسْتَثْنَى following إِيَّاءُ occurs always with the accusative case ending, as long as the *excepted-from noun* مِنْهُ الْمُسْتَثْنَى is not dropped, as in:

حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ إِيَّاءُ وَاحِدًا .

“The students came except for one.”

حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ إِيَّاءُ سَلِيمًا .

“The students came except for Salim.”

حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ إِيَّاءُ أُسْتَاذَهُمْ .

“The students came except for their teacher.”

In the sentences above, the *excepted-from noun* مِنْهُ الْمُسْتَثْنَى preceding إِيَّاءُ occurs as the subject/doer of the verb/action. The *excepted-from noun* can also occur as the object/doee of the verb/action or following a preposition, as in:

قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ إِيَّاءُ وَاحِدًا .

“I met the students except for one.”

اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ إِيَّاءُ وَاحِدًا .

“I listened to the students except for one.”

18.1.2 سِوَى and غَيْرِ “Except for”

The words غَيْرِ and سِوَى follow the same rule as that of إِيَّاءُ . However, unlike إِيَّاءُ , they are treated as nouns and receive the accusative مَنْصُوب case ending themselves rather than the noun following them, although the accusative *fatHa* case ending does not appear on سِوَى since the latter ends with the 'alif [aa] long vowel. As for the *excepted* noun الْمُسْتَثْنَى following غَيْرِ and سِوَى , it receives the genitive مَجْرُور case ending (since together with the exceptive word it forms an إضافة 'iDaafa phrase), as in:

حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ . = حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ غَيْرِ وَاحِدٍ .

“The students came except for one.”

“The students came except for one.”

قَابَلْتُ <u>الطُّلَّابَ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ</u> .	=	قَابَلْتُ <u>الطُّلَّابَ غَيْرَ وَاحِدٍ</u> .
“I met the students except for one.”		“I met the students except for one.”
إِسْتَمَعْتُ <u>إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ</u> .	=	إِسْتَمَعْتُ <u>إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ غَيْرَ وَاحِدٍ</u> .
“I listened to the students except for one.”		“I listened to the students except for one.”

18.1.3 “Except for” حَاشَا , عَدَا , وَخَلَا

The exceptive words حَاشَا , عَدَا , and خَلَا “except for” are subject to two optional rules: (1) they can be treated as verbs where the *excepted* noun following them occurs with the accusative مَنصُوب case ending or (2) as particles (or prepositions) where the *excepted* noun following them occurs with the genitive مَجْرُور case ending, as in:

حَضَرَ <u>الطُّلَّابُ عَدَا وَاحِدٍ</u> .	=	حَضَرَ <u>الطُّلَّابُ عَدَاً</u> .
“The students came except for one.”		“The students came except for one.”
قَابَلْتُ <u>الطُّلَّابَ عَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .	=	قَابَلْتُ <u>الطُّلَّابَ عَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .
“I met the students except for one.”		“I met the students except for one.”
إِسْتَمَعْتُ <u>إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ عَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .	=	إِسْتَمَعْتُ <u>إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ عَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .
“I listened to the students except for one.”		“I listened to the students except for one.”

18.1.4 “Except for” مَاخَلَا and مَاعَدَا

Both عَدَا and خَلَا can be preceded by the particle مَا in which case they are treated as verbs where the *excepted* noun following them occurs with the accusative مَنصُوب case ending only, as in:

حَضَرَ <u>الطُّلَّابُ مَاخَلَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .	=	حَضَرَ <u>الطُّلَّابُ مَاعَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .
“The students came except for one.”		“The students came except for one.”
قَابَلْتُ <u>الطُّلَّابَ مَاخَلَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .	=	قَابَلْتُ <u>الطُّلَّابَ مَاعَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .
“I met the students except for one.”		“I met the students except for one.”
إِسْتَمَعْتُ <u>إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ مَاخَلَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .	=	إِسْتَمَعْتُ <u>إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ مَاعَدَاً</u> وَاحِدٍ .
“I listened to the students except for one.”		“I listened to the students except for one.”

18.2 Variations in the Exceptive Structure

18.2.1 Use of Negation Preceding إِلَّا

If negation is used with the exceptive structure involving إِلَّا, then one of two optional rules may apply: (1) the *excepted* noun المُسْتَثْنَى following إِلَّا may occur always with the accusative مَنْصُوب case ending or (2) the *excepted* noun may occur with the مَرْفُوع nominative, مَنْصُوب accusative, or مَجْرُور genitive case ending, according to the function in the sentence of the *excepted-from* noun المُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ (that precedes إِلَّا), as in:

<u>مَا حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا .</u>	=	<u>مَا حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا .</u>
“The students did not come except for one.”		“The students did not come except for one.”
<u>مَا قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا .</u>	=	<u>مَا قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا .</u>
“I did not meet the students except for one.”		“I did not meet the students except for one.”
<u>مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا .</u>	=	<u>مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا .</u>
“I did not listen to the students except for one.”		“I did not listen to the students except for one.”

18.2.2 Use of Negation Preceding غَيْرَ and سِوَى

If negation is used with the exceptive structure involving غَيْرَ or سِوَى, then one of two optional rules may apply: (1) غَيْرَ and سِوَى may occur always with the accusative مَنْصُوب case ending (although no case ending appears on سِوَى since it ends with an 'alif [aa] long vowel) or (2) غَيْرَ and سِوَى may occur with the مَرْفُوع nominative, مَنْصُوب accusative, or مَجْرُور genitive case ending, depending on the function in the sentence of the *excepted-from* noun المُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ (that precedes غَيْرَ and سِوَى). In either case, the *excepted* noun المُسْتَثْنَى following غَيْرَ and سِوَى receives the genitive مَجْرُور case ending (since it forms with the exceptive word an إضافة 'iDaafa phrase), as in:

<u>مَا حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ غَيْرَ وَاحِدٍ .</u>	=	<u>مَا حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ غَيْرَ وَاحِدٍ .</u>
“The students did not come except for one.”		“The students did not come except for one.”
<u>مَا قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ غَيْرَ وَاحِدٍ .</u>	=	<u>مَا قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ غَيْرَ وَاحِدٍ .</u>
“I did not meet the students except for one.”		“I did not meet the students except for one.”

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مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ غَيْرِ وَاحِدٍ . = مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ غَيْرِ وَاحِدٍ .

“I did not listen to the students
except for one.”

“I did not listen to the students
except for one.”

مَا حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ . = مَا حَضَرَ الطُّلَّابُ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ .

“The students did not come except
for one.”

“The students did not come except
for one.”

مَا قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ . = مَا قَابَلْتُ الطُّلَّابَ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ .

“I did not meet the students except
for one.”

“I did not meet the students except
for one.”

مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ . = مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى الطُّلَّابِ سِوَى وَاحِدٍ .

“I did not listen to the students
except for one.”

“I did not listen to the students
except for one.”

18.2.3 Use of Negation and Dropping the Noun Preceding إِلا

If the *excepted-from* noun الْمُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ preceding the exceptive particle إِلا is dropped, then one rule applies: the *excepted* noun occurs with the مَرْفُوعٌ nominative, مَنْصُوبٌ accusative, or مَجْرُورٌ genitive case ending, depending on its own function in the sentence (i.e., irrespective of the presence of إِلا in the sentence), as in:

مَا حَضَرَ إِلا طَالِبٌ .

“Only one student came.”

مَا قَابَلْتُ إِلا طَالِباً .

“I met only one student.”

مَا اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلا إِلَى طَالِبٍ .

“I listened to only one student.”

18.2.4 Use of Negation and Dropping the Noun Preceding سِوَى and غَيْرِ

If the *excepted-from* noun الْمُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ preceding the exceptive particle غَيْرِ or سِوَى is dropped, then one rule applies: غَيْرِ and سِوَى occur with the مَرْفُوعٌ nominative, مَنْصُوبٌ accusative, or مَجْرُورٌ genitive case ending, depending on

its function in the sentence (although no case ending appears on سَوَى since it ends with an 'alif [aa] long vowel). In this case, the *excepted* noun المُسْتَشْتَى following غَيْرَ and سَوَى receives the genitive مَجْرُور case ending (since together with the exceptive word it forms an *iDaafa* phrase), as in:

ما حَصَرَ سَوَى طَالِبٍ .	=	ما حَصَرَ غَيْرَ طَالِبٍ .
“Only one student came.”		“Only one student came.”
ما قَابَلْتُ سَوَى طَالِبٍ .	=	ما قَابَلْتُ غَيْرَ طَالِبٍ .
“I met only one student.”		“I met only one student.”
ما اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى سَوَى طَالِبٍ .	=	ما اسْتَمَعْتُ إِلَى غَيْرَ طَالِبٍ .
“I listened to only one student.”		“I listened to only one student.”

18.3 The Structure of “Especially” لا سَيِّمًا

In addition to the above exceptive particles/words, لا سَيِّمًا “especially” is usually listed among exceptive words, although its meaning is the opposite of *except for*. It is usually used with the conjunction وَ “and.” As for the case ending on the noun following لا سَيِّمًا “especially,” it depends on whether it is indefinite or definite. If indefinite, the word can occur with any of the case endings (i.e., مَرْفُوع nominative, مَنْصُوب accusative, or مَجْرُور genitive), although most usually with the genitive مَجْرُور case, and if definite, it (most) usually occurs with the genitive مَجْرُور and less so with the nominative مَرْفُوع case, as in:

بُعْجِبُنِي كُلُّ تَلْمِيذٍ وَلَا سَيِّمًا تَلْمِيذٍ مُجْتَهِدٍ / تَلْمِيذًا مُجْتَهِدًا / تَلْمِيذٌ مُجْتَهِدٌ .
“Every student impresses me, especially a hard-working student.”
بُعْجِبُنِي كُلُّ تَلْمِيذٍ وَلَا سَيِّمًا التَّلْمِيذِ الْمُجْتَهِدِ / التَّلْمِيذُ الْمُجْتَهِدُ .
“Every student impresses me, especially the hard-working student.”
حَصَرَ الْمُوظَّفُونَ الحَفْلَ وَلَا سَيِّمًا مُدِيرَهُمْ / مُدِيرُهُمْ .
“The employees attended the party/celebration, especially their manager.”
نَجَحَ الطُّلَابُ وَلَا سَيِّمًا سَلِيمٍ / سَلِيمٌ .
“The students passed, especially Salim.”

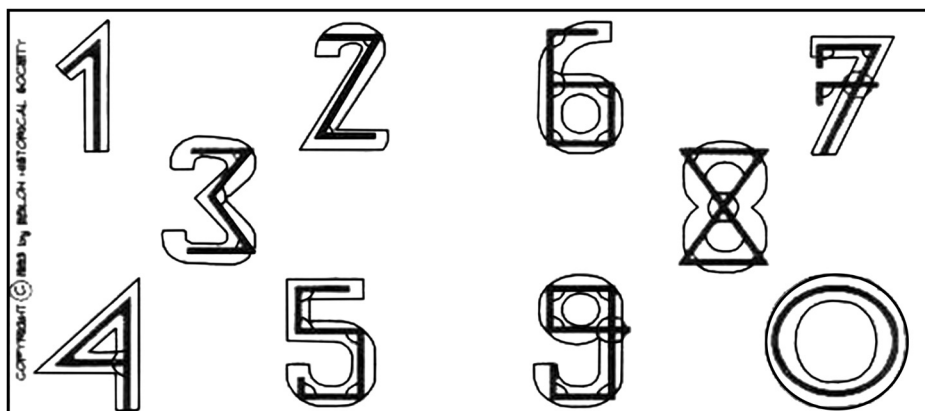
18.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the exceptive structure in Arabic. Remember:

- the structure of the exceptive sentence consists of three components: (1) the “excepted-from noun” *المُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ* preceding the exceptive particle/word, (2) the exceptive particle/word itself, and (3) the “excepted noun” *المُسْتَثْنَى* following the exceptive particle/word
- there are at least seven exceptive particles/words, some of which function as particles, some as nouns, and some as verbs
- when the exceptive structure is not missing any of its three parts and is in the affirmative (i.e., not used with negation), the ending on the *excepted noun* *المُسْتَثْنَى* following *إِلَّا* is the accusative *مَنْصُوب* case; the other exceptive words themselves exhibit the accusative *مَنْصُوب* case ending, with the noun following them having the genitive *مَجْرُور* case ending
- when negation is used with the exceptive structure, the case ending on the *excepted noun* *المُسْتَثْنَى* following *إِلَّا* is (a) either the accusative *مَنْصُوب* or (b) any of the three case endings (*مَرْفُوع* nominative, *مَنْصُوب* accusative, or *مَجْرُور* genitive), depending on the function of the *excepted-from* noun *المُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ* preceding *إِلَّا* in the sentence; the other exceptive words themselves exhibit (a) the accusative *مَنْصُوب* case ending or (b) any of the three case endings, depending on the function of the *excepted-from* noun in the sentence, with the noun following the exceptive words having the genitive *مَجْرُور* case ending
- when negation is used with the exceptive structure and the *excepted-from* noun *المُسْتَثْنَى مِنْهُ* is dropped, the case ending on the *excepted noun* *المُسْتَثْنَى* following *إِلَّا* is any of the three case endings, depending on the function of the *excepted* noun in the sentence; the other exceptive words themselves exhibit any of the three case endings, depending on the function of the *excepted* noun in the sentence, with the noun following the exceptive words having the genitive *مَجْرُور* case ending.

Appendix A

The Geometric Basis of Arabic Numerals



The Arabic numerals as reconstructed by the Eblon Historical Society. Each number is represented by a geometric form, where the number of angles corresponds to the value of the number it represents (from the *ADC Times*, February 1994).

Appendix C

The Phoenician Alphabet



𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉
A	B	G	H	D	H	W	Z	H	T
أ	ب	ج	خ	د	هـ	و	ز	ح	ط

𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓
Y	K	Š	L	M	D	N	Z	S	C
ي	ك	ش	ل	م	ذ	ن	ظ	س	ع

𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	𐤜	𐤝
P	Ṣ	Q	R	T	G	T	I	U	(S)
ف	ص	ق	ر	ث	غ	ت	إ	ؤ	(س)

The oldest extant Phoenician alphabet (ca. 1400 BC) – the first real phonetic alphabet – excavated from the Phoenician city of Ugarit on the Syrian Coast (from <http://www.utexas.edu/courses/classicalarch/images1/UgaritAlphabet1400.jpg>).

Appendix D

Identifying the Root الجذر and Looking up Words in the Dictionary

1. Triliteral Roots

The vast majority of Arabic words have triliteral (i.e., three-letter) roots. Identifying the root of a given word requires the dropping of certain consonants and vowels in the sequence provided here, each step being inclusive of the previous ones. Words can then be looked up alphabetically according to the order of the letters within the root.

1. Prefixes (e.g., definite-article and present-tense prefixes) and suffixes (e.g., gender, number, past-, present-tense, and adjective suffixes) are dropped:					
Root		Retained letters		Dropped letter/s	Word
ب-ي-ت	←	بَيْت	←	الـ	الْبَيْت
و-ر-د	←	وَرَد	←	الـ	الْوَرْدَة
و-ل-د	←	وَلَد	←	انـ	وَلَدَانِ
ح-ج-ر	←	حُجْر	←	تـانـ	حُجْرَتَانِ

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ح - ج - ر	←	حُجِر	←	تَيْنَ	حُجْرَتَيْنِ
ح - ج - ر	←	حُجِر	←	ات	حُجْرَات
ك - ت - ب	←	كَتَبَ	←	وا	كَتَبُوا
س - م - ع	←	سَمِعَ	←	تَدَ وَنَ	تَسْمَعُونَ
م - ص - ر	←	مَضَرَ	←	يَ	مِضْرِي
خ - ض - ر	←	خَضَرَ	←	اء	خَضْرَاءَ
ج - و - ع	←	جَوَعَ	←	ان	جَوْعَان
ج - د - د	←	جَدَّ / جَدَّدَ	←	ة	جَدَّة
ك - ت - ب	←	كَتَبَ	←	-	كَتَبَ

2. Long (pure) vowels ا [aa], و [uu], and ي [ii] in words consisting of more than three letters are dropped; otherwise, the و [uu] and ي [ii] are part of the root:

Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ش - ر - ع	←	ش ر ع	شارع
ص - ف - ف	←	ص ف ف	صُفوف
ص - د - ق	←	ص د ق	صَدِيق
و - ز - ر	←	و ز ر	وِزارة
ي - س - ر	←	ي س ر	يَسار
ك - ت - ب	←	ك ت ب	كَاتِبُونَ
س - ي - ر	←	س ي ر	سَيْر
س - و - ق	←	س و ق	سوق

3. The initial <i>hamza</i> in words consisting of more than three letters is dropped; otherwise, the <i>hamza</i> in words consisting of three letters is part of the root unless the last of the two letters is doubled (i.e., with a <i>shadda</i>):			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ص - ح - ب	← صَحَب	← أ _ ا _	أَصْحَاب
ك - ر - م	← كَرَمَ	← أ _ _	أَكْرَمَ
ء - س - ر	← أَسْرَ	← ة _ _	أُسْرَة
م - ث - ل	← مَثَلَ	← أ _ _ ة	أَمْثَلَة
م - ث - ل	← مَثَلَ	← أ _ ا _	أَمْثَال
ص - غ - ر	← صَغَرَ	← أ _ _	أَصْغَرَ
ح - ب - ب	← حَبَّ / حَبَبَ	← أ _ _	أَحَبَّ
ء - ل - ف	← أَلَفَ	← -	أَلَفَ
ء - س - د	← أَسَدَ	← -	أَسَدَ

4. The initial <i>ta</i> in words consisting of more than three letters is dropped; otherwise, the initial <i>ta</i> in words consisting of three letters is part of the root:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ك - ر - م	← كَرَمَ	← ت _ _	تَكَرَّمَ
د - ر - س	← دَرَسَ	← ت _ _ ي _	تَدْرِسُ
ر - ك - م	← رَكَمَ	← ت _ ا _ ات	تَرَكَمَات
ط - و - ر	← طَوَّرَ	← ت _ _ ي _	تَطْوِير
و - ض - ع	← وَضَعَ	← ت _ ا _	تَوَاضَع
ت - ح - ف	← تُحِفَ	← ة _ _	تُحِفَة
ت - خ - ت	← تَخَّتْ	← -	تَخَّتْ

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5. The initial م in words consisting of more than three letters is dropped unless they contain a long vowel; otherwise, the initial م in words consisting of three letters is part of the root:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
س - ج - د	← سَجِد	← مَ	مَسْجِد
د - ر - س	← دَرَس	← مَ	مَدْرَسَة
ج - ه - د	← جِهَد	← مُ - ا	مُجَاهِد
م - ث - ل	← مِثْل	← ا	مِثَال
س - ل - م	← سَلِم	← مُ - و	مُسْلِمُونَ
ن - ط - ق	← نَطَق	← مَ	مَنْطِق
م - د - د	← مَدَّ / مَدَد	← مَ	مُدَّة
م - ث - ل	← مِثْل	-	مِثْل

6. The initial ا and/or medial ن in words consisting of more than three letters are dropped:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ك - س - ر	← كَسَرَ	← ا - ن	اِنْكَسَرَ
ك - س - ر	← كَسِر	← مُ - ن	مُنْكَسِر
ط - ل - ق	← طَلَق	← ا - ن	اِنْطَلَق

7. The initial ا and/or medial ت in words consisting of more than three letters are dropped:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ع-م-د	← عَمَدَ	← اِ-تْ	إِعْتَمَدَ
ع-ل-م	← عِلْمَ	← اِ-مْتْ	مُتَعَلِمٌ
ح-ر-ق	← حَرِقَ	← اِ-مْتْ	مُحْتَرِقٌ
ه-م-م	← هَمَمَ	← اِ-تْ-اِ	إِهْتِمَامٌ

8. The initial ا and/or medial سْت in words consisting of more than three letters are dropped:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ع-م-ر	← عَمَرَ	← اِسْتْ	إِسْتَعْمَرَ
ق-ب-ل	← قَبَلَ	← اِسْتْ	مُسْتَقْبَلٌ
ل-ز-م	← لَزِمَ	← اِسْتْ-اِ	مُسْتَلْزِمَاتٌ

2. Trilateral (Hollow and Defective) Roots

A smaller number of words, in particular hollow and defective verbs, contain a long vowel as part of the root in medial and final position, respectively. In the past tense, their medial and final long vowel is 'alif [aa] and in the present tense their medial and final long vowel is either waaw و [uu], yaa' ي [ii], or 'alif [aa], although 'alif [aa] is never a root vowel. The root vowel in this case is either a waaw و [uu] or yaa' ي [ii]. The correct root vowel can be identified through the present tense and/or the verbal noun (see also 13.4).

The root of hollow and defective verbs/words identified through the present tense and/or verbal noun:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ق - و - ل	← قول	← يَ / ___	قَالَ ← يَقُولُ / قَوْلٌ
س - ي - ر	← سير	← يَ / ___	سَارَ ← يَسِيرُ / سَيْرٌ
ن - و - م	← نَوْمٌ	← يَ / ___	نَامَ ← يَنَامُ ← نَوْمٌ
د - ع - و	← دَعَوٌ	← يَ / ___	دَعَا ← يَدْعُو / دَعْوَى
م - ش - ي	← مُشِي	← يَ / ___	مَشَى ← يَمْشِي / مَشْيٌ
ن - ه - ي	← نَهَى	← يَ / ___	نَهَى ← يَنْهَى ← نَهْيٌ

Note: If we do not know the present tense or the verbal noun, we must hypothesize that either *waaw* و [uu] or *yaa'* ي [ii] is the root vowel and look up both roots for the proper meaning in light of the context in which the word is used. Fortunately, the two vowels are next to each other in alphabetical order, and so are the two sections in the dictionary. Similarly, the root long vowel of derived hollow and defective verbs and words derived from them can be identified after being reduced to Form I or a trilateral, related word (see also 13.4).

The root of derived hollow and defective verbs identified through Form I or a trilateral-related word:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ع - و - د	← عود	← يَ	أَعَادَ - يُعِيدُ ← عَادَ - يَعُودُ
ب - ي - د	← بيد	← يَ	أَبَادَ - يُبِيدُ ← بَادَ - يَبِيدُ
ق - و - د	← قود	← يَ	إِقْتَادَ - يَقْتَادُ ← قَادَ - يَقْوَدُ
خ - ي - ر	← خير	← يَ	إِخْتَارَ - يُخْتَارُ ← خَارَ - يَخِيرُ

تَنَاسَى - يَتَنَاسَى ← نَبِيَّ - يَنْبِيْ	←	نَسِيَ	←	ن - س - ي
تَدَاعَى - يَتَدَاعَى ← دَعَا - يَدْعُو	←	دَعَو	←	د - ع - و
اِسْتَدْعَى - يَسْتَدْعِي ← دَعَا - يَدْعُو	←	دَعَو	←	د - ع - و
اِسْتَشَى - يَسْتَشِي ← ثَنَى - يَثْنِي	←	ثَنِيَ	←	ث - ن - ي

3. Triliteral with a Geminate Root Letter

Some Arabic words have geminate triliteral (i.e., three-letter) roots with fewer than three letters, with the second and third letters being doubled (i.e., identical with a *shadda*). Hence, the root of such words consists of the letters after the gemination is broken (i.e., the identical letters separated) and after prefixes and suffixes have been eliminated.

Gemination in roots consisting of fewer than three letters separated:			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
ص - ف - ف - ص	← صَفَف	← -	صَفَّ
ج - د - د - ج	← جَدَد	← -	جَدَّ
م - م - ء - م	← أُمَّم	← -	أُمَّمَّ
ث - م - م - م	← ثَمَم	← -	ثَمَّمَّ
ث - م - م - م	← ثَمَم	← -	ثَمَّمَّة
ع - م - م - م	← عُمَم	← -	عُمَّمَّ

4. Monoliteral and Biliteral Roots

A very small number of Arabic words or particles may belong to monoliteral or biliteral roots, and consist of fewer than three letters.

Monoliteral and biliteral roots consisting of fewer than three letters:					
Root		Retained letters		Dropped letter/s	Word
و	←	وَ	←	-	وَ
فَ	←	فَ	←	-	فَ
ف-ي	←	في	←	-	في
ع-ن	←	عَنْ	←	-	عَنْ
ك-م	←	كُمْ	←	-	كُمْ

5. Quadriliteral

Some words in Arabic may belong to quadriliteral roots, consisting of four root letters. To identify the root of a word containing four root letters, the same rules (1–8 in Section 1 above) for identifying trilateral roots are followed for eliminating non-root letters, except for eliminating initial ت and medial ت , which have to be applied cautiously.

Quadrilateral roots consisting of four letters (rules 1–8 above are applied):			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
د-ر-ه-م	← دَرِهَم	← ال_ا_	الدَّرَاهِم
ش-ي-ط-ن	← شَيْطَان	← ا_ة	شَيْطَانَةٌ
ط-م-ء-ن	← طَمَّأَنَّ	← ا_	إِطْمَآنًا
ع-س-ك-ر	← عَسْكَر	← مُد_ات	مُعَسَّكَرَات
م-س-ك-ن	← مَسْكِن	← مُد_	مُمَسَّكِن
د-ح-ر-ج	← دَخَّرَج	← ت_	تَدَخَّرَج
ت-ر-ج-م	← تَرْجَمَ	← ت_	تَرْجَمَتْ

6. Quinqueliteral

A small number of words in Arabic have quinqueliteral roots, consisting of five root letters. To identify the root of a word containing five root letters, the same rules (1–8 in Section 1 above) for identifying trilateral roots are followed for eliminating non-root letters.

Quinqueliteral roots consisting of five letters (rules 1–8 above are applied):			
Root	Retained letters	Dropped letter/s	Word
س-ف-ر-ج-ل	← سَفَرَجَل	← ال_	السَّفَرَجَل
خ-ز-ع-ب-ل	← خَزَعِبَل	← ات_	خَزَعِبَلَات
ع-ن-د-ل-ب	← عَنَدَلِب	← ي_	عَنَدَلِيب

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