Standard Arabic
An elementary – intermediate course

This book presents a comprehensive foundation course for beginning students of written and spoken Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), providing an essential grounding for successful communication with speakers of the many colloquial varieties. This long-established and successful text has been completely revised with the needs of English-speaking learners especially in mind, and will prove invaluable to students and teachers alike.

- step-by-step guide to understanding written and spoken texts
- develops conversational ability as well as reading and writing skills
- Arabic–English Glossary containing 2600 entries
- fresh texts and dialogues containing up-to-date data on the Middle East and North Africa
- includes Arab folklore, customs, proverbs, and short essays on contemporary topics
- grammatical terms also given in Arabic, enabling students to attend language courses in Arab countries
- provides a wide variety of exercises and drills to reinforce grammar points, vocabulary learning and communicative strategies
- includes a key to the exercises
- accompanying cassettes also available

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STANDARD ARABIC
اللغة العربية
AN ELEMENTARY - INTERMEDIATE COURSE
دورة أساسية ومتوسطة

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CONTENTS

Introduction ix
Notes for the User xi
Abbreviations xiv

Lesson 1 1
  1. The Alphabet (Pronunciation and Writing) 1

Lesson 2 14
  1. Article 14; 2. Gender 15; 3. The Equational Sentence 16; 3.3. Agreement in Gender 18
  Text 1: البيت (The House) 22; Text 2: مكالمة تلفونية (A Telephone Call) 23

Lesson 3 29
  1. Number 29; 1.1. The Personal Pronoun 29; 1.2. The Noun and the Adjective 29; 2. The Adjective 30
  Text 1: في المدينة (In the City) 34; Text 2: البيت (In the House) 34

Lesson 4 44
  Text 1: في السوق (In the Market) 50; Text 2: أين الطريق؟ (How to get to ...?) 50

Lesson 5 56
  1. The Perfect Tense 56; 2. The Verbal Sentence 57; 2.4. The Objective Clause 59; 3. The Nisba-Ending 60
  Text 1: الاستقبال (The Reception) 62; Text 2: في المدينة (Down-town) 63

Lesson 6 68
  1. The Genitive Construction (Idāfa) 68; 2. Affixed Pronouns 70; 3. Definiteness (Summary) 73; 4. The Adverb 73
  Text 1: رسالة إلى محمد (A Letter to Mohammed) 75; Text 2: في مكتب السفر (At the Travel Agency) 76

Lesson 7 81
  1. The Imperfect Tense 81; 2. Demonstrative Pronouns 82; 3. Diptotes 85
  Text 1: عند البقال (At the Greengrocer’s Shop) 88; Text 2: في المطعم (In the Restaurant) 88

Lesson 8 95
  1. Subjunctive and Jussive 95; 2. The Imperative 96; 3. Negation 97
  Text 1: أخبار عالمية (World News) 101; Text 2: في المكتبة (At the Bookshop) 102
Contents

Lesson 9 109
1. The Dual 109; 2. The Numerals 1 and 2 111; 3. “How much/many” 112; The Names of the Months 114
Text: 1. في الفندق (My University) 116; Text 2: في الفندق (In the Hotel) 117

Lesson 10 123
1. Cardinal Numerals 123; 1.9. The Year 127
Text: 1. الإسلام والمسلمون (Islam and the Muslims) 130; Text 2: عند المسحوق (At the Registration) 131

Lesson 11 136
1. The Perfect Tense of Verbs with و and the Subject of the Sentence 138
Text: 1. كلمة الرئيس (The Speech of the President) 141; Text 2: مقابلة صحافية (Interview) 142

Lesson 12 149
1. The Imperfect Tense of Verbs with و and ى 149; 2. Subjunctive and Jussive of Verbs with و and ى 151; 3. The Imperative of Verbs with و and ى 152; 4. The Verbs رأى and جاد ى 152
Text: 1. معرض الرياض الدولي للكتاب (The Riyadh International Book Fair 154; Text 2: عند الصرف (At the Exchange Office) 155

Lesson 13 162
1. The Use of بعض, كل, and جمع 162; 3. أداة and أداة 165; 4. اسم and اسم 166; 5. أي and أي 167
Text: 1. جسم الإنسان (The Human Body) 170; Text 2: عند الطبيب (At the Doctor’s) 171

Lesson 14 178
1. Forms II, III and IV of the Verb: 178; 2. The Attributive Relative Clause 179
Text: 1. (World News) 183; Text 2: في الصحافة (In the Pharmacy) 184

Lesson 15 194
1. Forms II, III and IV of Verbs with و and ى 194; 2. The Nominal Relative Clause 196
Text: 1. مناخ الصحراوات (The Climate of the Desert) 201; Text 2: الرحلات إلى الصحراوات (A Trip to the Desert) 202

Lesson 16 209
Text: 1. سيرة حياتي (My Curriculum Vitae) 217; Text 2: تجديد الرخصة (Renewing the License) 217
Contents vii

Lesson 17 224
Text 1 (Sports and the Arabs) 230; Text 2: في الملعب (In the Sports Ground) 230

Lesson 18 237
1. Forms VII, VIII, IX and X of the Verb 237
Text 1: رسالة من السعودية (A Letter from Saudi Arabia) 247; Text 2: السياقة (Driving Abroad) 242

Lesson 19 248
1. The Passive Voice 248; 1.4.3. About the Construction of Doubly Transitive Verbs 251; 2. Some Characteristic Features of the Derived Forms 251
Text 1: The Arabic and English 257; Text 2: استئجار سيارة (Rent a Car) 258

Lesson 20 264
1. The Collective 264; 1.3. Names of Nationalities 264; 2. The Feminine نسبي 265; 3. أن 266
Text 1: ندوة الزراعة (Symposium on Agriculture) 271; Text 2: في سوق الحضائر (In the Market of Fruits and Vegetables) 272

Lesson 21 280
1. The Participle 280; 1.1. Patterns of the Participle 280; 1.2. The Usage of the Participles 285; 1.2.2. Shortened Relative Clauses 285; 1.2.3. The Participle as Predicate 287; 1.2.4. The False Idāfa 288; 1.2.5., 1.2.6. Participles and Adjectives as 1st or 2nd Term of the Idāfa 289; 1.2.7. Impersonal Expressions 290
Text 1: الأنظمة السياسية في العالم العربي (Political Systems in the Arab World) 292; Text 2: مقابلة صحافية (Interview) 293

Lesson 22 302
1. The Infinitive 302; 1.2. The Use 303; 1.2.2. The Infinitive instead of a Subordinate Clause 303; 1.2.4. Functional Verbs; Functional Verbs instead of Passive constructions 305; 2. Adverb and Adverbal Constructions 306; 2.3. The Usage 307; 2.3.3.3. The Cognate Accusative 309
Text 1: التعليم والمستقبل (Education and Future) 310; Text 2: في الطريق إلى السوق (On the Way to the Market) 311

Lesson 23 317
1. Subordinate Clauses: A Survey 317; 2. Temporal Clauses 318
Text 1: رسالة إلى محمد (A Letter to Mohammed) 321; Text 2: قصة الحقائب (The Story of the Lost Suitcases) 322
Lesson 24  329
1. Verbs  \( R_2 = R_3 \); 2. Verbs with *Hamza* 330; 3. The Spelling of *Hamza* 331; 4. Clauses of Reason 334
Text في محل بيع الملابس 1.1 (Mesopotamia) 337; Text 2: (Buying Clothes) 337

Lesson 25  343
1. The Pattern ُعَلِّمُ ٌ 343; 1.2.1. The *Elative* as Positive 344; 1.2.2. The *Elative* as Comparative 345; 1.2.3. The *Elative* as Superlative 346; 1.4. Common *Elatives* 347; 2. Specification (*Tamýлиз*) 350
Text البلدان العربية وثرائها الطبيعية 1.2 (Arab Countries and Their Natural Ressources) 354; Text 2: (At the Police) 354

Lesson 26  362
1. Conditional Sentences 362; 1.1. The Real Conditional Sentence 362; 1.1.1. إن 365; 1.1.2. The Unreal Conditional Sentence (لوُ) 366; 1.3. The Concessive Clause (وَإِذَا) 368
Text الحيوان في اللغة العربية 1.3 (Animals in the Arabic Language) 370; Text 2: (About Marriage) 384

Lesson 27  377
1. Exceptives 377; 1.1. إلا 377; 1.2. فقط 377; 1.3. Other Excepitive Particles 379; 1.4. 380; 2. Diminutives 380
Text من تأريخ العرب 1 (From the History of the Arabs) 383; Text 2: (About Islam) 404

Lesson 28  393
1. The *Hāl*-Accusative 393; 2. The *Hāl*-Clause 394; 3. Survey of Use of the Accusative 396; 3.1.1. إِيَّا 396; 3.7. Exclamations in the Accusative 399
Text مقتطفات من طبقات النحوين واللغويين لأبي بكير الزيدني 1 (Linguistic Anecdotes) 402; Text 2: (About Islam) 404

Arabic-English glossary 411
The numerals 456
The months of the Islamic calendar 460
Tables of the forms of the verbs and the nouns 461
Writing exercises 500
Key 514
Subject index of grammatical terminology (English) 606
Subject index of grammatical terminology (Arabic) 626
INTRODUCTION

This book is based on the well-tried Lehrbuch des modernen Arabisch by Günther Krahl, Wolfgang Reuschel and Eckehard Schulz and has been conceived as a comprehensive course for beginners, in which particular attention is given to a speaking-focused training. It presents the basic grammar, vocabulary and phraseology of written and spoken Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

The book centers on imparting the grammatical and lexical basics to enable the learner step by step to understand written and spoken texts, to hold a conversation with an Arabic speaker independently and, moreover, to translate and write Arabic texts. A variety of highly different texts (reports, commentaries, interviews, dialogues, letters etc.) together with appropriate exercises have been included in the book in addition to the description of the grammar to achieve these objectives. Quite naturally, style and vocabulary of the texts in the first lessons are influenced to a greater extent by the grammar in the respective lesson. If the knowledgeable user is of the opinion that it would have been better to use a different word or construction in some passages, then he may know that it was of importance to me for didactic reasons not to keep anticipating morphological and syntactic structures to be treated later.

When conceiving the texts, particular attention was paid to impart and to consolidate those patterns which occur over and over again in spoken and written MSA and to provide the learner with a guide to master different communicative situations and strategies. The book also contains more or less timeless news and exercises to practice listening comprehension and to introduce the style of the news in newspapers and in radio and television to the students.

The grammar comprises all substantial phenomena of MSA which are necessary for a good command of Arabic as a spoken and written language. The teacher might miss some important grammatical topics but he/she should always have in mind that this book is a book for beginners which covers all grammatical and syntactic phenomena necessary for a correct and active command of Arabic, but it cannot be exhaustive. The basic grammatical terms are also given in Arabic to enable the student to use the Arabic terminology needed when attending language courses in the Arab countries.

The book aims at imparting MSA because it is well-known that it is impossible to cope with the numerous Arabic dialects without these foundations. Nevertheless, the dialogues are partially adapted to colloquial usage as far as sentence structures and vocabulary are concerned. There are also exercises and notes focusing on the dialects to give the students those patterns which are the outcome of the widespread diglossia in Arabic, i.e. the coexistence of MSA and dialects and their use according to the communicative needs and circumstances.

This tightrope walk is, of course, not an easy undertaking but I wanted to build bridges for the students where the exclusive use of MSA would be long-winded and not appropriate to the situation. The endings in the dialogues are written according to the rules of MSA to prevent the students from complete confusion, although (spoken) reality is different. In this field, the teacher must always decide whether to tolerate the omission of the endings or not.
Introduction

Our experience is not to ask the students to read all the endings of the dialogues but to follow the Arabic language of the educated (لغة المثقفين) to enable the students to speak Arabic as soon as possible. In all the other texts and exercises, special attention must be paid to the correct use of the rules of MSA.

The imparting and permanent repetition of stereotype phrases (greetings, wishes, forms of address, introduction, apologizing etc.), proverbs and sayings as well as historical facts and cultural traditions (religion, Arabic and Islamic history) and the appropriate terminology do not only aim at illustrating the grammar of the respective lesson but also at achieving a growing knowledge about this region of the world.

The exercises are subdivided into lexical exercises, grammar exercises and conversation drills as well as into a final exercise to arrive at a better structure of the process of teaching, even though a strict separation of these fields is impossible. The repetition exercises systematically deal with topics discussed two or three lessons before to help the students not to forget basic structures. Some grammar exercises are repeated as lexical exercises with new vocabulary because it is assumed that the grammar dealt with long before is now consolidated.

From my own experience, I can tell the student that Arabic with all its peculiarities in morphology, syntax and pronunciation really can be learned as spoken and written language. You will be able to learn the basics of grammar and the vocabulary of this book with diligence, a little bit of talent and the help of your teachers and might soon realize when meeting Arabs that you are a most welcome partner because of your good command of Arabic. Even educated Arabs encounter sometimes considerable difficulties in using their own language according to the rules which are valid and nearly unchanged since the revelation of the Koran approximately 1300 years ago.

This book will be accompanied by cassettes with all the texts as well as a key to the exercises to help the student work through the book independently.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Janet C.E. Watson, James Dickins and Alan S. Kaye, the editorial consultants for Cambridge University Press, who contributed to this book as editorial consultants and generously provided valuable observations and excellent advice.

I am deeply grateful to Monem Jumaili who gave the texts, which were almost completely conceived and written by myself, their final shape. I am indebted to Birgit Bouraina, who rendered valuable assistance to the English translation, and to Christfried Naumann who took responsibility for the subject index and provided greatly appreciated advice.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Avihi Shivtiel thanks to whose initiative this English edition can now be presented to the public and to all those who have contributed to this undertaking.

I hope and wish that this book - like its German predecessor - will find its way to the students. I readily accept comments, suggestions and critical remarks and hope to incorporate them in future editions.

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NOTES FOR THE USER

This revised textbook has been conceived as an elementary course for beginners, in which particular attention is given to a speaking-focused training.

The lessons consist of the following parts: Grammar (G), Vocabulary (V), Text 1 and Text 2 (except in Lesson 1) and Exercises, which are subdivided into lexical exercises (L), grammar exercises (G) and conversation drills (C) from Lesson 4 onwards as well as into a Final exercise in each lesson (from Lesson 2 onwards).

I permit myself to offer the following hints regarding the use of this book to teaching staff and students, which should be understood as a suggestion:

Seven to eight class hours are planned for each lesson with at least the same number of hours needed for the students’ preparation and further study of the subject matter. One should see to it that there is enough time (e.g. the weekend) after the introduction of the new grammar subject and lexical items and that exercises which were to be prepared by pre-set homework only follow after this period, so that the students can have sufficient time to internalize the new subject matter and to learn the new vocabulary.

The subject matter should be presented in the following order:

- Introduction to grammar (1 class hour)
- Phonetics/calligraphy (1 class hour, only in the 1st semester)
- Lexical exercises (1 class hour)
- Grammar exercises (1 class hour)
- Text interpretation (1 class hour)
- Conversation (1 class hour in the 1st semester, 2 class hours in the 2nd semester)
- Final exercise (1 class hour)

Phonetics and calligraphy
This lecture, which is intended for the 1st semester, centers on imparting the correct pronunciation and the Arabic script. Reading the texts aloud is of particular importance; while one student does so, the other students note the mistakes and analyze and evaluate them afterwards together with the teacher. Suitable grammar and lexical exercises and particularly the texts marked by No. 1 should serve as a basis for the writing exercises. We have been quite successful here in Leipzig using dictations in which certain groups of Arabic sounds are systematically practiced. The students learn step by step to write by hearing and distinguishing sounds like

ع / ع، ظ / ض، ض / د، ذ / د، س / ص، ص / ط

which sound very similar at first.

Grammar and grammar exercises
The discussion of every new lesson should begin with the introduction of the new grammatical subject(s). The teacher should take the passages marked by A (= annotation) into consideration from the beginning, even if they, in most cases,
Notes for the user

only comprise elucidations or comments for the purpose of explaining the grammatical rules more accurately, and although they only refer to colloquial or dialectal usage in some places.

Only part of the vocabulary contained in the respective lesson is used in the grammar exercises in order not to overload the students with the requirement of mastering too many new lexical items in addition to their having to cope with new grammatical phenomena. Most grammar exercises are transformation exercises, but there are also fill-in, linking and sentence completion exercises. The objective here is to obtain the best learning results, while excluding the use and influence of the mother tongue.

Lexical exercises and text interpretation

The aim of these exercises is for the teacher to elucidate the new lexical items, to impart them in collocations, if possible, and to clarify paradigmatic relations in the vocabulary step by step. The translations given in the glossaries of the lessons only provide the meaning referred to in the respective text in order not to overstrain the learner. Additional translations we confined to a minimum. On this basis the texts are to be translated orally and/or in writing by the students, and possible variants of the translation are to be discussed. It is also possible to read and discuss the texts marked No. 2, which are always drafted as dialogues, within the conversation.

The glossaries are arranged alphabetically by root, listing the new words from the texts of the respective lesson. The exercises only occasionally contain words which do not appear in the texts. Words used for the purpose of explaining new grammar, which were not derived from the texts have not been included in the glossaries. Additional vocabulary imparted in some lexical exercises and conversation drills (specific terms, proverbs and idioms) has not been included in the glossaries either.

Conversation

The pre-set conversation drills are to be understood as suggestions; the teacher should vary them in accordance with the interests and requests of the learners. Role-play, which has been demanded time and time again, is of particular importance for the success of these exercises; here the teacher may recede more and more into the background with the increasing progress of the learners. The teacher must apply judgement as to whether he should interfere immediately and correct every mistake the students make, or if he should refrain from constantly interrupting the flow of speech and only correct the mistakes later in the interest of breaking down natural inhibitions. The seating arrangement usually found in school should be avoided particularly in the conversation lessons, so that the atmosphere can become relaxed. Only 1 class hour of conversation drills per lesson should be planned in the first semester because the students still need more development in the fundamentals at this stage. From the second semester onwards, two class hours are to be allocated to conversation drills, and therefore the calligraphy and phonetics exercises should be reduced.
Notes for the user  xiii

Final exercise
The final exercise at the end of each lesson is aimed at checking whether the students have internalized the grammar and lexical items and is intended to lay the foundations for translation into the foreign language. Review of subject matter which was taught in previous lessons is a methodical principle of these exercises.

The final exercises can be worked through in class, and they can form the basis for holding a written test after each lesson.

I readily accept criticism of the textbook’s being “organized on school lines” by these kinds of checks if they help students consolidate their knowledge of the subject-matter and make them work steadily with the book. The teacher can also decide which revision exercises need to be worked through in a particularly intensive way in the following lessons or whether some can be omitted, depending on the results achieved in the Final Exercise.

Glossary
The Arabic-English glossary comprises roughly 2600 entries; unlike the glossaries in the lessons, it has been computerized in alphabetical order, and the items are only partly vocalized. This system has been chosen in order to make the book easier for the beginner to use, even if a whole series of important paradigmatic relations in the Arabic vocabulary become concealed by this approach.

Tables
Tables containing the essential Arabic verbal and nominal forms as completely vocalized items can be found in the appendix in addition to tables containing the cardinal and ordinal numerals.

Key
The key to the exercises gives the solutions in all those cases where only one solution is possible as well as the translations asked for based on the vocabulary and the texts of this book. Some of the translations should be understood as suggestions and not as the only possibility. The student should never resort to the key before trying to find the answer in the respective lesson(s).

Subject index
The subject index, which is subdivided into two indexes, comprises all essential English and Arabic morphological-syntactic and linguistic terms which are used in the textbook. Its purpose is to facilitate finding the relevant passages for the student. The page numbers of the pages which focus on the topics concerned are indicated in bold type.
ABBREVIATIONS

A annotation

a., acc. accusative case

adv. adverb

Alger. Algerian

appr. approximately

C conversation

cf. compare

coll. collective noun

colloq. colloquial

conj. conjunction

def. definite

dimin. diminutive

Ex exercise

e.g. for example

Eg. Egyptian

Elat. Elative

Engl. English

etc. et cetera

f., fem. feminine

fig. figurative sense

foll. following

Fr. French

G grammar exercise

g. genitive case

gen. genitive

geogr. geographical

Glo. glossary

Gr. grammar of the lesson

gram. grammar

imp. imperative

indef. indefinite

interj. interjection

intrans. intransitive

Ital. Italian

itsf. itself

L lexical exercises

lit. literal

loc. local

m., masc. masculine

n. nominative case

of so. of someone

off. official

osf. oneself

pass. passive

p. person

perf. perfect

pl., plur. plural

poss. possibly

part. participle

prep. preposition

1st radical

2nd radical

3rd radical

rel. pr. relative pronoun

Russ. Russian

s. see

s.a. see also

so. someone

so.’s. someone’s

sg., sing. singular

sth. something

Syr. Syrian

temp. temporal

th.s. the same

thmsv. themselves

to sb. to somebody

trans. transitive

V vocabulary

Yem. Yemeni

muthannan = dual

jäm = plural

mu’annath = feminine