CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic is a comprehensive handbook on the structure of Arabic. Keeping technical terminology to a minimum, it provides a detailed yet accessible overview of Modern Standard Arabic in which the essential aspects of its phonology, morphology, and syntax can be readily looked up and understood. Accompanied by extensive carefully chosen examples, it will prove invaluable as a practical guide for supporting students' textbooks, classroom work, or self-study and will also be a useful resource for scholars and professionals wishing to develop an understanding of the key features of the language. Grammar notes are numbered for ease of reference, and a section on how to use an Arabic dictionary is included, as well as helpful glossaries of Arabic and English linguistic terms and a useful bibliography. Clearly structured and systematically organized, this book is set to become the standard guide to the grammar of contemporary Arabic.

KARIN C. RYDING is Sultan Qaboos bin Said Professor of Arabic, Department of Arabic Language, Literature and Linguistics, Georgetown University. She has written a variety of journal articles on Arabic language and linguistics, and her most recent books include *Early Medieval Arabic* (1998) and *Formal Spoken Arabic: Basic Course* (second edition, with David Mehall, 2005).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

KARIN C. RYDING
Georgetown University

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521777711

© Karin C. Ryding 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Ryding, Karin C.
A reference grammar of modern standard Arabic / Karin C. Ryding.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0 521 77151 X – ISBN 0 521 77771 2 (pb.)
1. Arabic language–Grammar. I. Title.

PJ6303.R93 2005 492.7′82421–dc22

ISBN-13 978-0-521-77151-1 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-77151-X hardback
ISBN-13 978-0-521-77771-1 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-77771-2 paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

I am especially indebted to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman, who generously endowed the position I occupy at Georgetown University, and whose patronage of study and research about Arabic language, literature, and culture is well known and widely respected. It is for this reason that I dedicate this book, with profound gratitude, to His Majesty.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

Contents

Preface *xvii*
List of abbreviations *xxii*
Acknowledgments *xxv*

1 Introduction to Arabic 1
1 Afro-Asiatic and the Semitic language family 1
2 An overview of Arabic language history 2
3 Classical Arabic 2
4 The modern period 4
5 Arabic today 5

2 Phonology and script 10
1 The alphabet 10
2 Names and shapes of the letters 11
3 Consonants: pronunciation and description 12
4 Vowels 25
5 MSA pronunciation styles: full form and pause form 34
6 MSA syllable structure 35
7 Word stress rules 36
8 Definiteness and indefiniteness markers 40

3 Arabic word structure: an overview 44
1 Morphology in general 44
2 Derivation: the Arabic root-pattern system 45
3 Word structure: root and pattern combined 49
4 Dictionary organization 49
5 Other lexical types 50
6 Inflection: an overview of grammatical categories in Arabic 51
7 Distribution of inflectional categories: paradigms 55
8 MSA inflectional classes 55
9 Case and mood: special inflectional categories in Arabic 56

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

4 Basic Arabic sentence structures 57
1 Essential principles of sentence structure 57
2 The simple sentence 58
3 Other sentence elements 72
4 Compound or complex sentences 72

5 Arabic noun types 74
1 Verbal noun (*al-maSdar* المصدر) 75
2 Active and passive participle (*ism al-faaᶜil* اسم الفاعل, *ism al-mafᶜuul* اسم المفعول) 83
3 Noun of place (*ism makaan* اسم مكان) 86
4 Noun of instrument (*ism al-ʾaala* اسم الآلة) 87
5 Nouns of intensity, repetition, profession 88
6 Common noun (*al-ism* الاسم) 88
7 Generic noun (*ism al-jins* اسم الجنس) and noun of instance (*ism al-marra* اسم المرة) 89
8 Diminutive (*al-taSghiir* التصغير) 90
9 Abstraction nouns ending with *-iyya* 90
10 Nouns not derived from verb roots 92
11 Common nouns from quadriliteral and quinquiliteral roots: (*ʾasmaaʾ rubaaᶜiyya wa xumaasiyya* أسماء رباعية وخماسية) 93
12 Collective nouns, mass nouns, and unit nouns (*ism al-jins* اسم الجنس; *ism al-waHda* اسم الوحدة) 94
13 Borrowed nouns 95
14 Arabic proper nouns 96
15 Complex nouns, compound nouns, and compound nominals (*naHt* نحت and *tarkiib* تركيب) 99

6 Participles: active and passive 102
1 Active participle (AP): (*ism al-faaᶜ il* اسم الفاعل) 103
2 Passive participle (PP): (*ism al-mafᶜuul* اسم المفعول) 113

7 Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case 119
1 Gender 119
2 Humanness 125
3 Number 129
4 Definiteness and indefiniteness 156
5 Case inflection 165

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

8 Construct phrases and nouns in apposition 205
1 The construct phrase or *ʾiDaafa* الإضافة 205
2 Nouns in apposition (*badal* بدل) 224

9 Noun specifiers and quantifiers 228
1 Expressions of totality 228
2 Expressions of limited number, non-specific number, or partiality 230
3 Expressions of "more," "most," and "majority" 234
4 Scope of quantifier agreement 235
5 Non-quantitative specifiers 236

10 Adjectives: function and form 239
Part one: Function 239
1 Attributive adjectives 239
2 Predicate adjectives 240
3 Adjectives as substantives 240
4 Arabic adjective inflection 241
5 The adjective *ʾiDaafa*, the "false" *ʾiDaafa* (*ʾiDaafa ghayr Haqiiqiyya* إضافة غير حقيقية) 253
Part two: Adjective derivation: the structure of Arabic adjectives 254
1 Derivation patterns from Form I triliteral roots 255
2 Quadriliteral root adjective patterns 258
3 Participles functioning as adjectives 258
4 Derivation through suffixation: relative adjectives (*al-nisba* النسبة) 261
5 Color adjectives 270
6 Non-derived adjectives 273
7 Compound adjectives 274

11 Adverbs and adverbial expressions 276
1 Adverbs of degree 277
2 Adverbs of manner 281
3 Place adverbials 288
4 Time adverbials 290
5 Numerical adverbials 295
6 Adverbial accusative of specification (*al-tamyiiz* التمييز) 295
7 Adverbial accusative of cause or reason (*al-mafʿuul li-ʾajl-i-hi* المفعول لأجله, *al-mafʿuul la-hu* المفعول له) 296
8 Adverbs as speech acts 297

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

12 Personal pronouns 298
1 Independent personal pronouns (*Damaaʾir munfaSila* ضمائر منفصلة) 298
2 Suffix personal pronouns (*Damaaʾir muttaSila* ضمائر متصلة) 301
3 Reflexive expressions with *nafs* plus pronouns 312
4 Independent possessive pronoun: *dhuu* + noun 312

13 Demonstrative pronouns 315
1 Demonstrative of proximity: 'this; these' هذا *haadhaa* 315
2 Demonstrative of distance: 'that; those' ذلك *dhaalika* 316
3 Functions of demonstratives 316
4 Other demonstratives 319

14 Relative pronouns and relative clauses 322
1 Definite relative pronouns 322
2 Definite relative clauses 323
3 Indefinite relative clauses 324
4 Resumptive pronouns in relative clauses 324
5 Indefinite or non-specific relative pronouns: *maa* ما and *man* مَنْ 325

15 Numerals and numeral phrases 329
1 Cardinal numerals (*al-ʾaʿdaad* الأعداد) 329
2 Ordinal numerals 354
3 Other number-based expressions 360
4 Expressions of serial order: "last" 364

16 Prepositions and prepositional phrases 366
1 Overview 366
2 True prepositions (*Huruuf al-jarr* حروف الجرّ) 367
3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions
(*Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* ظروف مكان وظروف زمان) 386
4 Prepositions with clause objects 400

17 Questions and question words 401
1 *ʾayn-a* أَيْنَ 'where' 401
2 *ʾayy-un* أَيٌّ 'which; what' 402
3 *kam* كَمْ 'how much; how many' 402
4 *kayf-a* كَيْفَ 'how' 403
5 *li-maadhaa* لِماذا 'why; what for' 403

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

6 *maa* ما and *maadhaa* ماذا 'what' 403
7 *man* مَنْ 'who; whom' 405
8 *mataa* مَتى 'when' 405
9 *hal* هَلْ and *ʾa-* -أ interrogative markers 405

18 Connectives and conjunctions 407
1 *wa-* 'and' (*waaw al-ʿaTf* واو العطف) 409
2 *fa-* فَـ 'and so; and then; yet; and thus' 410
3 Contrastive conjunctions 411
4 Explanatory conjunctions 412
5 Resultative conjunctions 412
6 Adverbial conjunctions 413
7 Disjunctives 417
8 Sentence-starting connectives 419

19 Subordinating conjunctions: the particle *ʾinna* and her sisters 422
1 Introduction 422
2 The particles 425

20 Verb classes 429
1 Verb roots 429
2 Verb derivation patterns: *ʾawzaan al-fiʿl* أوزان الفعل 433

21 Verb inflection: a summary 438
1 Verb inflection 438
2 Complex predicates: compound verbs, *qad*, and verb strings 446

22 Form I: The base form triliteral verb 455
1 Basic characteristics 455
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root (*al-fiʿl al-SaHiiH al-saalim* الفعل الصحيح السالم) 456
3 Geminate verb root (*al-fiʿl al-muDaʿʿaf* الفعل المضعّف) 458
4 Hamzated verb root (*al-fiʿl al-mahmuuz* الفعل المهموز) 460
5 Assimilated verb root (*al-fiʿl al-mithaal* الفعل المثال) 460
6 Hollow root (*al-fiʿl al-ʾajwaf* الفعل الأجوف) 461
7 Defective verb root (*al-fiʿl al-naaqiS* الفعل الناقص) 463
8 Doubly weak or "mixed" verb root 464
9 Verbal nouns of Form I 465
10 Form I participles 470

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

23 Form II 491
1 Basic characteristics 491
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root 492
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form II 492
4 Hamzated roots in Form II 492
5 Assimilated roots in Form II 493
6 Hollow roots in Form II 493
7 Defective roots in Form II 493
8 Doubly weak roots in Form II 494
9 Examples of Form II verbs in context 494
10 Form II verbal nouns 494
11 Form II participles 496

24 Form III triliteral verb 503
1 Basic characteristics 503
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root 503
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form III 504
4 Hamzated roots in Form III 504
5 Assimilated roots in Form III 505
6 Hollow roots in Form III 505
7 Defective roots in Form III 505
8 Doubly weak roots in Form III 506
9 Examples of Form III verbs in context 506
10 Form III verbal noun 506
11 Form III Participles: 508

25 Form IV triliteral verb 515
1 Basic characteristics 515
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root 516
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form IV 516
4 Hamzated roots in Form IV 517
5 Assimilated roots in Form IV 517
6 Hollow roots in Form IV 517
7 Defective roots in Form IV 518
8 Doubly weak roots in Form IV 518
9 Exclamatory Form IV 518
10 Examples of Form IV verbs in context 519
11 Verbal noun of Form IV 519
12 Form IV participles 521

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

26 Form V triliteral verb 530
1 Basic characteristics 530
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root 531
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form V 531
4 Hamzated roots in Form V 531
5 Assimilated roots in Form V 532
6 Hollow roots in Form V 532
7 Defective roots in Form V 532
8 Doubly weak roots in Form V 533
9 Examples of Form V verbs in context 533
10 Form V verbal nouns 533
11 Form V participles 534

27 Form VI triliteral verb 543
1 Basic characteristics 543
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root 543
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VI 544
4 Hamzated roots in Form VI 544
5 Assimilated roots in Form VI 545
6 Hollow roots in Form VI 545
7 Defective roots in Form VI 545
8 Examples of Form VI verbs in context 545
9 Form VI verbal noun 546
10 Form VI participles 547

28 Form VII triliteral verb 555
1 Basic characteristics 555
2 Regular (sound) triliteral root 556
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VII 556
4 Hamzated roots in Form VII 556
5 Assimilated roots in Form VII 557
6 Hollow roots in Form VII 557
7 Defective roots in Form VII 557
8 Examples of Form VII verbs in context 557
9 Form VII verbal noun 557
10 Form VII participles 558

29 Form VIII triliteral verb 565
1 Basic characteristics 565
2 Regular or sound roots 568

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VIII 568
4 Hamzated roots in Form VIII 568
5 Assimilated roots in Form VIII 569
6 Hollow roots in Form VIII 569
7 Defective roots in Form VIII 569
8 Examples of Form VIII verbs in context 569
9 Verbal nouns of Form VIII 570
10 Form VIII participles 571

30 Form IX triliteral verb 579
1 Basic characteristics 579
2 Sound/regular roots in Form IX 579
3 Geminate (doubled) roots Form IX 580
4 Hamzated roots in Form IX 580
5 Assimilated roots in Form IX 580
6 Hollow roots in Form IX 580
7 Defective roots in Form IX: rare 580
8 Form IX verbs in context 580
9 Verbal nouns of Form IX 580
10 Form IX participles 581

31 Form X triliteral verb 584
1 Basic characteristics 584
2 Sound/regular root 585
3 Geminate (doubled) roots in Form X 585
4 Hamzated roots in Form X 585
5 Assimilated roots in Form X 585
6 Hollow roots in Form X 585
7 Defective roots in Form X 586
8 Examples of Form X verbs in context 586
9 Form X verbal nouns 586
10 Form X participles 587

32 Forms XI–XV triliteral verb 596
1 Form XI: *if^{c}aall-a* افعالّ /*ya-f^{c}aall-u* يَفْعالُّ 596
2 Form XII: *if^{c}aw^{c}al-a* اِفْعَوْعَلَ/ *ya-f^{c}aw^{c}il-u* يَفْعَوْعِلُ 596
3 Form XIII: *if^{c}awwal-a* اِفْعَوَّلَ / *ya-f^{c}awwil-u* يَفْعَوِّلُ 597
4 Form XIV: *if^{c}anlal-a* اِفْعَنْلَلَ / *ya-f^{c}anlil-u* يَفْعَنْلِلُ 597
5 Form XV: *if^{c}anlaa* اِفْعَنْلى /*ya-f^{c}anlii* يَفْعَنْلِي 597

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

33 Quadriliteral verbs 599
1 Basic characteristics of quadriliteral verb roots (*ʾafʿaal rubaaʿiyya* أفعال رباعيّة) 599
2 Form I 599
3 Form II 601
4 Form III 602
5 Form IV 603
6 Examples of quadriliteral verbs in context 603
7 Quadriliteral verbal nouns 604
8 Form I quadriliteral participles 604

34 Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive 606
1 The indicative mood: *al-muDaariʿ al-marfuuʿ* المضارع المرفوع 606
2 The subjunctive mood: *al-muDaariʿ al-manSuub* المضارع المنصوب 608

35 Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative 616
1 The jussive: *al-jazm* الجزم 616
2 The imperative: *al-ʾamr* الأمر 622
3 The permissive or hortative imperative: *laam al-ʾamr* لام الأمر 632
4 The negative imperative: *laa* لا + jussive 632

36 Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (*kaan-a wa-ʾaxawaat-u-haa*) 634
1 The verb *kaan-a* كانَ */ya-kuun-u* يَكونُ 'to be' 634
2 The verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ 'to not be' 637
3 Verbs of becoming: *baat-a* باتَ *ʾaSbaH-a* أَصْبَحَ, *Saar-a* صارَ 637
4 Verbs of remaining: *baqiy-a* بَقِيَ, *Zall-a* ظَلَّ, *maa zaal-a* ما زالَ, *maa daam-a* ما دامَ 638
5 Verbs of seeming or appearing 640

37 Negation and exception 641
1 The verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ 'to not be' 641
2 Negative particles and their effects 644
3 Exceptive expressions 650

38 Passive and passive-type expressions 657
1 Introduction 657
2 The internal or inflectional passive 659
3 Passive with derived forms of the verb 668

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

39 Conditional and optative expressions 671
1 Possible conditions: *idhaa* إذا and *ʾin* إنْ 671
2 Conditional expressed with *-maa* ما 'ever' 674
3 Contrary-to-fact conditionals: *la-* لـ *law . . .* لَوْ 675
4 Optative constructions 676

Appendix I: How to use an Arabic dictionary 677
Appendix II: Glossary of technical terms 682
References 691
Index 701

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

Preface

This basic reference grammar is intended as a handbook for the general learner – a step on the way toward greater understanding of the Arabic language. Many excellent and effective textbooks for teaching Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) exist, as well as published research on a range of topics in Arabic linguistics (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, variation theory), but information in English on MSA grammatical topics tends to be scattered, and if a complete answer to a question regarding contemporary usage is needed, sometimes a number of sources need to be consulted.

The idea behind this reference grammar is to gather together in one work the essentials of MSA in such a way that fundamental elements of structure can be readily looked up and illustrated. It is intended primarily for learners of MSA as a practical guide for supporting their textbook lessons, classroom work, or self-study. This book is not intended in any way to supplant the exhaustive and profound analyses of classical and literary Arabic such as those by Wright (1896, reprint 1967) and Cantarino (1974–76). Those monumental books stand on their own and are irreplaceable reference works. This book is a work of considerably more modest goals and proportions.

1 Goals

This book is not designed to cover the entire field of literary or classical Arabic grammar. A comprehensive accounting of Arabic grammar is an undertaking of great complexity and depth, of competing indigenous paradigms (Basran and Kufan), of several dimensions (diachronic, synchronic, comparative), and of theoretical investigation across the spectrum of contemporary linguistic fields (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis).

The Arabic language is a vast treasure-house of linguistic and literary resources that extend back into the first millennium. Its grammatical tradition is over a thousand years old and contains resources of extraordinary depth and sophistication. Works in English such as Lane's dictionary (1863, reprint 1984), Wehr's dictionary (fourth edition, 1979), Wright's grammar (1896, reprint 1967), and

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

Howell's grammar (reprint 1986) are seminal contributions in English to understanding the wealth of the Arabic linguistic tradition. Yet, for the neophyte, for the average learner, or for the non-specialized linguist, easily usable reference works are still needed. This is, therefore, not a comprehensive reference grammar covering the full range of grammatical structures in both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic; rather, it centers on the essentials of modern written Arabic likely to be encountered in contemporary Arabic expository prose.

2 Methodology

The choices of explanations, examples, and layouts of paradigms in this book are pragmatically motivated rather than theoretically motivated and are not intended to reflect a particular grammatical or theoretical approach. I have been eclectic in providing descriptions of Arabic language features and structures, always with the intent of providing the most efficient access to Arabic forms and structures for English speakers. For example, I have assigned numbers to noun declensions for ease of reference. Also, I refer throughout the text to "past tense" and "present tense" verbs rather than "perfect" tense and "imperfect" tense verbs, although this has not been standard practice for Arabic textbooks or grammars.[1] I refer to the "locative adverbs" (*Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan*) as "semi-prepositions" (following Kouloughli 1994) because it captures their similarities to prepositions.[2]

Many Arabic terms and classifications, however, such as the "sisters of *ʾinna*" and the "sisters of *kaan-a*" are highly useful and pragmatic ways of organizing and presenting morphological and syntactic information, even to nonnative speakers of Arabic, so they have been retained. I have endeavored to provide both English and Arabic technical terms for categorized phenomena.

There are those, both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, who will no doubt disagree with the mode of presentation and grammatical descriptions used in this book. However, since this text is aimed at learners and interested laypeople as well as linguists, I hope that the categories devised and the descriptions and examples provided will be useful, readable, and readily understandable. Transliteration is provided for all examples so that readers who do not have a grasp of Arabic script may have access to phonological structure.

3 The database

This reference grammar is based on contemporary expository prose, chiefly but not exclusively from Arabic newspapers and magazines, as the main resource for

[1] See the rationale for this choice in Chapter 21 on verb inflection, section 1.2.2.
[2] *Grammaire de l'arabe d'aujourd'hui*, D. E. Kouloughli refers to *Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* as "quasi-prépositions." (152).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

topics and examples of current everyday Arabic writing practice. The grammatical description that emerges therefore calibrates closely with contemporary written usage. Media Arabic was chosen as a main source of data for this text because of its contemporaneousness, its coverage of many different topics, and the extemporary nature of daily reporting and editing. As a primary source of information about and from the Arab world, newspaper and magazine language reflects Arab editorial and public opinion and topics of current interest.[3] Various subject matter and texts were covered, ranging from interviews, book reviews, feature stories, religion and culture, and sports reports, to straight news reports and editorials. In addition to newspapers, other sources used for data collection included contemporary novels and nonfiction. This is therefore strictly a descriptive grammar that seeks to describe MSA as it is within the parameters noted above, and not to evaluate it or compare it with earlier or more elegant and elaborate forms of the written language.

There are doubtless those who would assert that the ordinariness of media language causes it to lack the beauty and expressiveness of literary Arabic, and therefore that it is unrepresentative of the great cultural and literary achievements of the Arabs.[4] To those I would reply that the very ordinariness of this type of language is what makes it valuable to learners because it represents a widely used and understood standard of written expression. As Owens and Bani-Yasin (1987, 736) note, "the average Arab is probably more exposed to this style than to most others, such as academic or literary writing." In fact, it is a vital and emergent form of written language, being created and recreated on a daily basis, covering issues from the mundane to the extraordinary. With limited time to prepare its presentation style, media Arabic reflects more closely than other forms of the written language the strategies and structures of spontaneous expression.[5]

Media Arabic is straightforward enough in its content and style to form the basis for advanced levels of proficiency and comprehension, to expand vocabulary, to create confidence in understanding a wide range of topics, and particu-

[3] Media discourse is described by Bell and Garrett (1998, 3) as "a rich resource of readily accessible data for research and teaching" and its usage "influences and represents people's use of and attitudes towards language in a speech community." They also state that "the media reflect and influence the formation and expression of culture, politics and social life" (1998, 4).

[4] Cantarino, for example, in the introduction to his major work, *The Syntax of Modern Arabic Prose*, vol. I, states that in compiling his illustrative materials, he consulted a variety of literary sources, but "Newspapers have generally been disregarded, since Arabic journalism – like most news writing around the world – does not necessarily offer the best or most representative standard of literary language" (1974, 1:x).

[5] The discipline of "media discourse research" or "media discourse analysis" is a rapidly growing one in linguistics. See Cotter 2001 for an overview of developments in this field. See also the cogent discussion of Arabic newspapers and the teaching of MSA in Taha 1995, and Mehall 1999.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

larly to provide clear reference points for issues of structural accuracy.[6] As Widdowson has stated, students whose future contexts of use are broad and not clearly predictable need fundamental exposure to "a language of wider communication, a language of maximal generality or projection value" (1988, 7). I see media language as a cornerstone of linguistic and cultural literacy in Arabic; a medium which can be a useful goal in itself, but also a partial and practical goal for those who ultimately aim to study the Arabic literary tradition in all its elegance, diversity, and richness.

4 Contents

The book is arranged so that grammar notes are numbered and indexed for ease of reference; examples provided are based on information in the database. I have omitted or avoided names of persons and sometimes I have changed the content words to be less specific. For the most part, I have not created ad hoc examples; illustrations of syntactic structure are based on authentic usage. A section on how to use an Arabic dictionary is provided, as well as lists of Arabic and English technical terms, a bibliography that includes specialized and general works in Arabic, English, French, and German, and indexes based on Arabic terms and English terms.

Although I have tried to cover a wide range of aspects of contemporary written Arabic usage, there are bound to be lacunae, for which I am responsible. In terms of accuracy of description, the entire book has been submitted to native Arabic-speaking scholars and professional linguists for checking the grammatical descriptions and examples, but I alone am responsible for any shortcomings in that respect.

Procedures:

- Proper names have been left unvoweled on the final consonant, except where the voweling illustrates the grammatical point under discussion.
- For individual words or word groups taken out of context, the nominative case is used as the base or citation form.
- In giving English equivalents for Arabic structures, I have included in square brackets [ ] words inserted into English that are not present in the Arabic text but are necessary for understanding in English.
- I have included in parentheses and single quotes (' ') a more or less exact wording in the Arabic text that does not appear in the English equivalent.

[6] In his article "Broadcast news as a language standard," Allan Bell discusses the central role of media in reinforcing and disseminating a prestige standard language, especially in multilingual, multi-dialectal, or diglossic societies. See Bell 1983.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

- In running text, English equivalents of Arabic lexical items are referred to in single quotes ‘’.
- In giving English equivalents for Arabic lexical items, essentially synonymous English meanings are separated by commas, whereas a semicolon separates equivalents with substantially different meanings.
- For purposes of brevity, in providing English equivalents of lexical items with broad semantic ranges, I have selected only one or two common meanings. These are not meant to be full definitions, only very basic glosses.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
AP	active participle
C	any consonant
CA	Classical Arabic
comp.	comparative
def.	definite
demons.	demonstrative pronoun
ESA	Educated Spoken Arabic
f./ fem.	feminine
Fr.	French
FSA	Formal Spoken Arabic
fut.	future
g.	gender
gen.	genitive
imp.	imperative
indef.	indefinite
indic.	indicative
intr.	intransitive
lw	loanword
m./masc.	masculine
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
n.	noun
neg.	negative
no.	number
nom.	nominative
NP	noun phrase
o.s.	one's self
obj.	object
p./pers.	person

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

pass.	passive
perf.	perfect
pers.	person
pl./plur.	plural
plup.	pluperfect
pos.	positive
PP	passive participle
pres.	present
pron.	pronoun
quad.	quadriliteral
QAP	quadriliteral active participle
QPP	quadriliteral passive participle
refl.	reflexive
rel. pron.	relative pronoun
s.o.	someone
s.th.	something
sg./sing.	singular
subj.	subjunctive
superl.	superlative
trans.	transitive
v.	verb
V	any short vowel
vd.	voiced
vl.	voiceless
VN	verbal noun (*maSdar*)
VP	verb phrase
VV	any long vowel

Other diacritics:

boldface words (in examples)	indicate key words in examples
boldface syllables	indicate primary word stress
–	morpheme boundary[1]

[1] For purposes of structural clarity I have indicated inflectional morpheme boundaries within words when possible. There are points where morpheme boundaries merge (as in the endings of defective verbs and nouns); in these cases I have omitted a specific boundary marker. I have also omitted the morpheme boundary marker before the *taaʾ marbuuTa* (*-at* ~ *-a*) and the sound feminine plural ending (*-aat*).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

/	separates singular and plural forms of substantives and past/present citation forms of verbs, e.g., *dars/duruus* 'lesson/s' *daras-a/ya-drus-u* 'to study'
/ /	encloses phonemic transcription
' '	encloses glosses or translations
*	indicates a hypothetical or reconstructed form
~	'alternates with; or'

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521777712 - A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Karin C. Ryding
Frontmatter
More information

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to my first editor at Cambridge University Press, Kate Brett, for encouraging and shepherding this project in its initial stages. I gratefully acknowledge the support and help of my subsequent Cambridge editor, Helen Barton, who saw this project through its final stages, to Alison Powell and her production team, and to Jacque French for her careful copy editing. Deepest thanks go to Roger Allen and Mahdi Alosh, to my Georgetown colleagues Mohssen Esseesy, Serafina Hager, Margaret Nydell, Irfan Shahid, and Barbara Stowasser; and especially to David Mehall, who worked closely with me in editing and providing the Arabic script of the text.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Omar Al-Zawawi, Special Advisor to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman.

Much gratitude is owed to my colleague Amin Bonnah who advised me throughout my research on knotty grammatical questions, and whose insight into and knowledge of the Arabic grammatical system is encyclopedic and unmatched. Invariably, when I had doubts or questions about particular structures or usages, I consulted Dr. Bonnah. Invariably, he had the answer or was able to find it out. If this reference grammar is found useful and valid, it is largely due to his guidance and contributions.

Any gaps, omissions, errors, or other infelicities in this text are my responsibility alone.

Sincere thanks go to all the faculty and students in the Arabic Department at Georgetown University who tolerated my obsession with collecting data, drafting, and compiling the book over a number of years. And I want to thank my husband, Victor Litwinski, who through his caring support and virtuoso editing skills made it possible for me to complete this project.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org