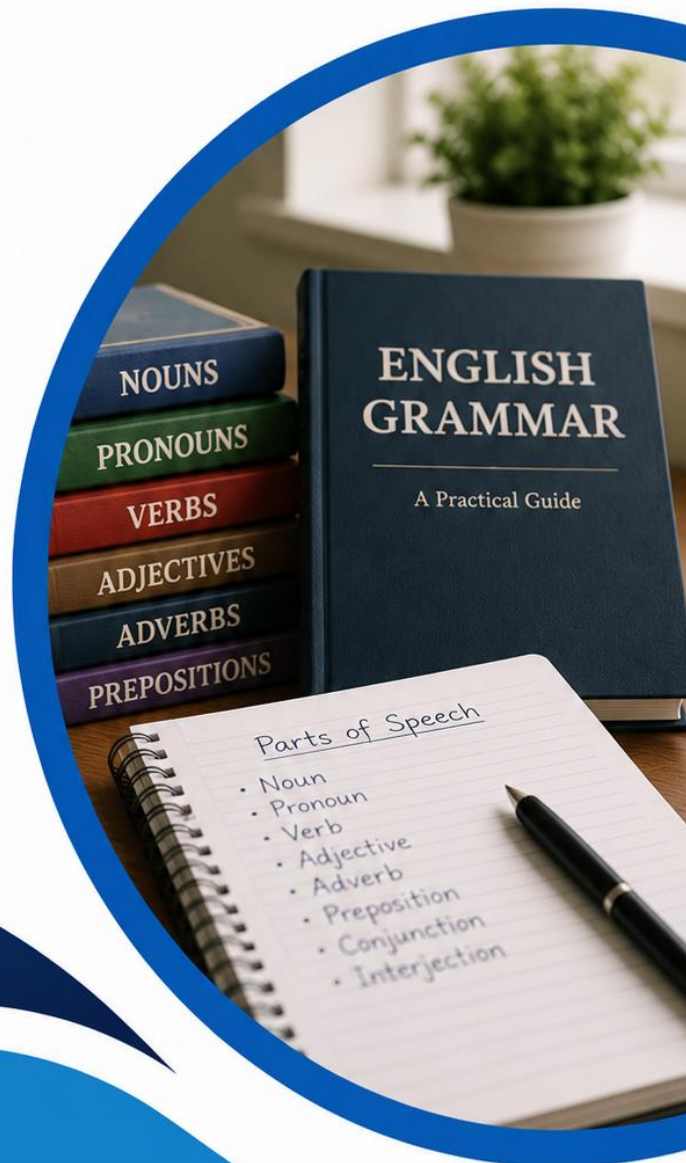




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Series 1: Types of Arabic Sentences and Word Order

1.1 Types of Arabic Sentences

- 1.1.1 Nominal Sentences (*Jumlah Ismiyyah*)
- 1.1.2 Verbal Sentences (*Jumlah Fi'liyyah*)
- 1.1.3 Comparative Features of Nominal and Verbal Sentences

1.2 Word Order in Arabic Sentences

- 1.2.1 Subject–Predicate Order
- 1.2.2 Verb–Subject–Object Order
- 1.2.3 Factors Affecting Word Order

1.3 Functional Roles in Sentence Structure

- 1.3.1 Subject (*Fā'il*) and Predicate (*Khabar*)
- 1.3.2 Object (*Maf'ūl*) and Complementary Elements
- 1.3.3 Variations in Sentence Construction

1.4 Practical Applications of Sentence Types

- 1.4.1 Examples from Classical Arabic Texts
- 1.4.2 Examples from Modern Standard Arabic
- 1.4.3 Exercises for Sentence Construction



Introduction

Language is the foundation of communication, and Arabic, with its rich grammatical system, offers learners a unique way of expressing meaning through sentence structure. Understanding how sentences are formed and how word order operates is essential for mastering both classical and modern Arabic. This Series sets the stage for your journey into Arabic grammar by focusing on the building blocks of sentences and the principles that govern their arrangement.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the ability to identify, explain, and analyse different types of Arabic sentences, as well as to evaluate how word order contributes to meaning and emphasis. By the end of this Series, you will be able to apply these concepts in practical contexts, strengthening your overall grasp of Arabic grammar.

We shall commence this Series by examining the two main types of Arabic sentences, namely nominal and verbal, and comparing their features. Next, we will explore word order in Arabic, considering subject–predicate and verb–subject–object arrangements, along with the factors that influence these patterns. Following that, we will study the functional roles of sentence elements such as subject, predicate, and object, and how variations in construction affect meaning. Finally, we will wrap up by applying these concepts through examples drawn from both classical and modern Arabic, supported by exercises that allow you to practise sentence construction.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** define the two main types of Arabic sentences, namely nominal (*Jumlah Ismiyyah*) and verbal (*Jumlah Fi'liyyah*).
- **SLO 2.2** explain the comparative features of nominal and verbal sentences in terms of structure and usage.



- **SLO 2.3** analyse the patterns of word order in Arabic sentences, including subject–predicate and verb–subject–object arrangements.
- **SLO 2.4** evaluate the grammatical and stylistic factors that influence word order in Arabic.
- **SLO 2.5** identify the functional roles of sentence elements such as subject (*Fā'il*), predicate (*Khabar*), and object (*Maf'ūl*).
- **SLO 2.6** demonstrate variations in sentence construction by applying different functional roles.
- **SLO 2.7** apply knowledge of sentence types and word order to examples drawn from classical Arabic texts.
- **SLO 2.8** construct sentences in modern standard Arabic that correctly reflect nominal and verbal structures.

1.1 Types of Arabic Sentences

Arabic grammar is built upon two fundamental sentence structures. These are the **nominal sentence** (*Jumlah Ismiyyah*) and the **verbal sentence** (*Jumlah Fi'liyyah*). Each type has its own rules, functions, and stylistic features. By studying them, you will gain insight into how meaning is conveyed in Arabic and how sentence construction differs from English or other languages.

1.1.1 Nominal sentences (*Jumlah Ismiyyah*)

A **nominal sentence** is a sentence that begins with a **noun** or **pronoun**. In Arabic, this type of sentence typically consists of two main elements: the **subject** (*Mubtada'*) and the **predicate** (*Khabar*). The subject introduces the topic, while the predicate provides information about it.

For example:

- **الكتاب مفيد** (*al-kitābu mufīdun*, “The book is useful”).

Here, **الكتاب** (*al-kitābu*) is the subject, and **مفيد** (*mufīdun*) is the predicate.

Nominal sentences are often used to express states, qualities, or descriptions rather than actions. They are particularly common in classical texts and formal registers of Arabic.



Fill in the blank: A nominal sentence begins with a _____ or a _____.

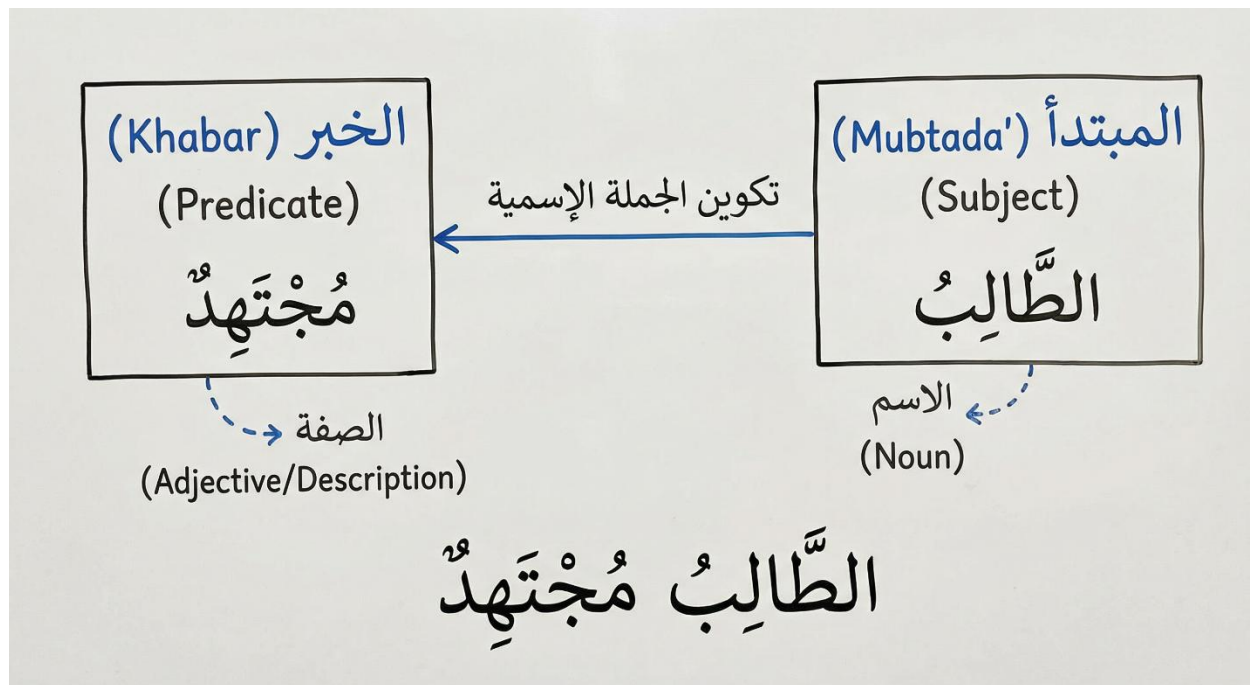


Figure 1.1 Structure of a nominal sentence

1.1.2 Verbal sentences (*Jumlah Fi'liyyah*)

A **verbal sentence** is a sentence that begins with a **verb**. In Arabic, the typical order is **verb–subject–object**. The verb introduces the action, the subject performs it, and the object receives it.

For example:

- كتب الطالب الدرس (*kataba al-talibu al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”).
Here, كتب (*kataba*) is the verb, الطالب (*al-talibu*) is the subject, and الدرس (*al-darsa*) is the object.

Verbal sentences are used to describe actions, events, or processes. They are more common in everyday speech and narrative contexts.

Fill in the blank: A verbal sentence begins with a _____.



الْجُمْلَةُ الْفِعْلِيَّةُ: تَرْتِيبُ فِعْلٍ - فَاعِلٍ - مَفْعُولٍ بِهِ (VSO Order)

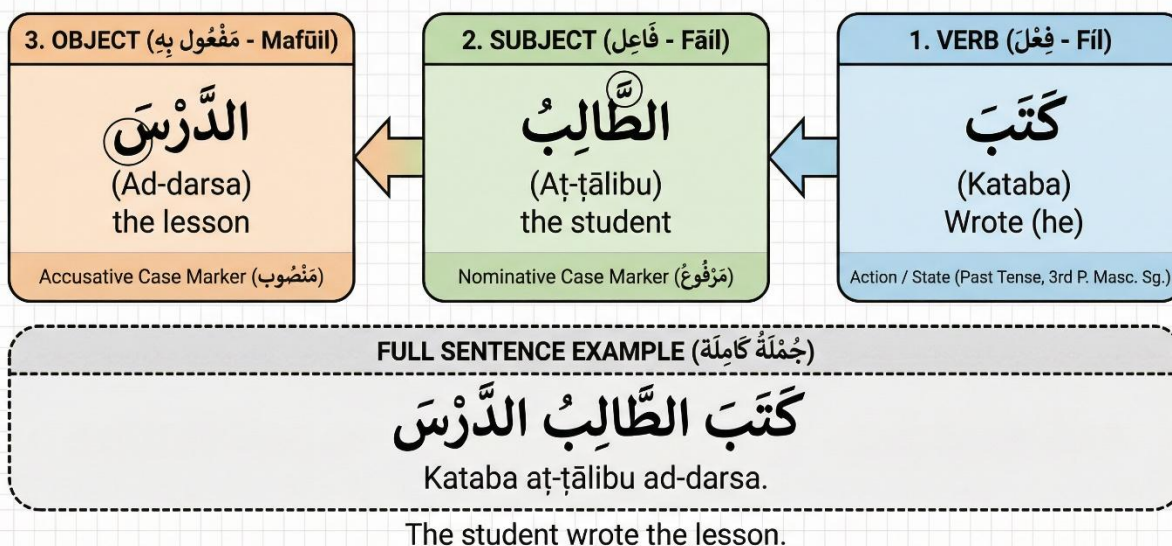


Figure 1.2 Structure of a verbal sentence

1.1.3 Comparative features of nominal and verbal sentences

Nominal and verbal sentences differ in their starting points, functions, and stylistic uses. While nominal sentences emphasise description and states, verbal sentences emphasise actions and processes. Both are essential for expressing meaning in Arabic.

For instance, the choice between a nominal and a verbal sentence can affect emphasis.

- الطالب يكتب (al-ṭalību yaktubu, “The student is writing”) highlights the subject.
- يكتب الطالب (yaktubu al-ṭalību, “The student writes”) highlights the action.

Fill in the blank: Nominal sentences emphasise _____, while verbal sentences emphasise _____.

Feature	Nominal Sentence (الجملة الاسمية / Jumlah Ismiyyah)	Verbal Sentence (الجملة الفعلية / Jumlah Fi'liyyah)
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Starting element	Noun or pronoun (اسم أو ضمير)	Verb (فعل)
Common usage	States, qualities, descriptions	Actions, events, processes
Typical structure	Subject (المبتدأ) + Predicate (الخبر)	Verb (فعل) + Subject (فاعل) + Object (مفعول به)
Emphasis	Subject (المبتدأ)	Action (الفعل)
Arabic example 1	السَّمَاءُ صَافِيَةٌ → “The sky is clear”	كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ → “The student wrote the lesson”
Arabic example 2	الْبَيْتُ كَبِيرٌ → “The house is big”	ذَهَبَ مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ → “Muhammad went to school”
Usage context	Expresses qualities, timeless truths, or static states	Narration, storytelling, describing sequences of events

Table 1.1 Comparative features of nominal and verbal sentences

Pilot questions 1.1

1. Which element does a nominal sentence begin with?
2. What are the two main components of a nominal sentence?
3. In a verbal sentence, what is the typical order of elements?
4. Which type of sentence is more common in everyday speech?
5. What is emphasised in a nominal sentence compared to a verbal sentence?

1.2 Word Order in Arabic Sentences

Arabic word order is central to how meaning and emphasis are conveyed. Unlike English, which generally follows a subject–verb–object pattern, Arabic allows flexibility depending on whether the sentence is nominal or verbal. By studying word order, you will learn how meaning can shift depending on the arrangement of elements, and how grammar rules interact with style and emphasis.



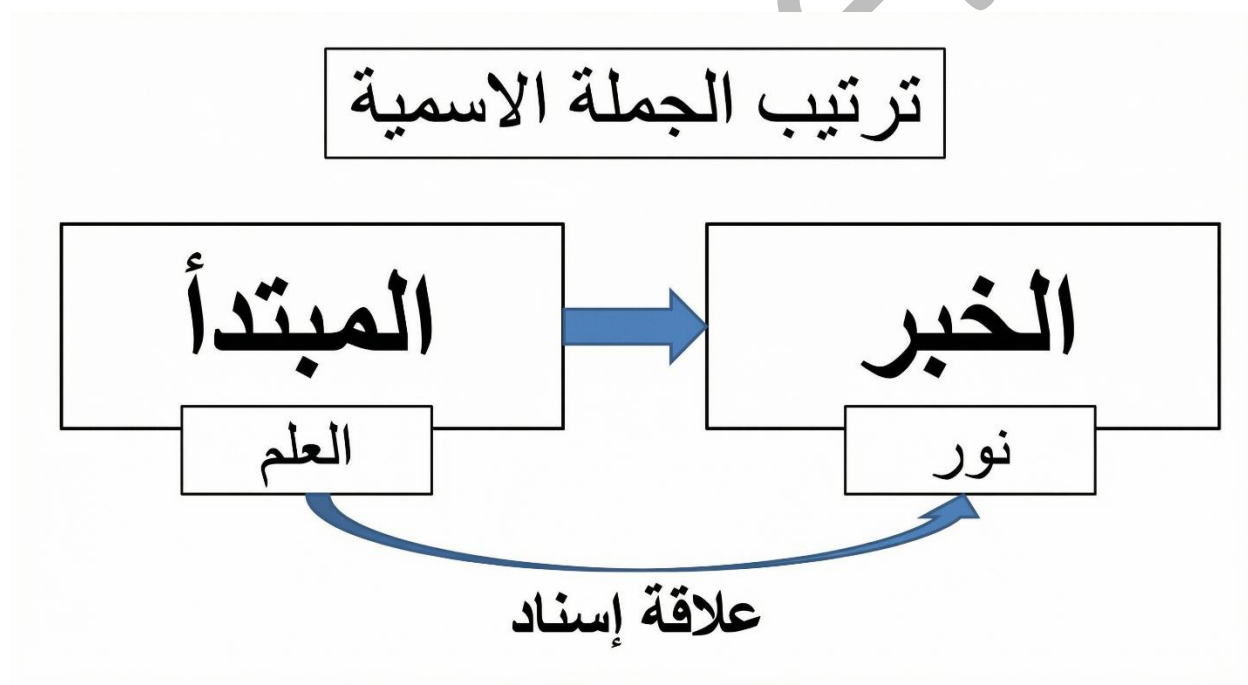
1.2.1 Subject–predicate order

In **nominal sentences**, the typical order is **subject followed by predicate**. The **subject** (*Mubtada'*) introduces the topic, while the **predicate** (*Khabar*) provides information about it. This order is the default in Arabic grammar, and it ensures clarity in descriptive statements.

For example:

- البيت كبير (*al-baytu kabīrun*, “The house is big”).
Here, البيت (*al-baytu*) is the subject, and كبير (*kabīrun*) is the predicate.

Fill in the blank: In a nominal sentence, the _____ comes first, followed by the _____.



Caption: Figure 1.3 Subject–predicate order in a nominal sentence

1.2.2 Verb–subject–object order

In **verbal sentences**, the typical order is **verb–subject–object**. The **verb** introduces the action, the **subject** performs it, and the **object** receives it. This order is considered the most natural in Arabic narrative and conversational contexts.



For example:

- قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*qara 'a al-talību al-kitāba*, “The student read the book”).

Here, *قرأ* (*qara 'a*) is the verb, *الطالب* (*al-talību*) is the subject, and *الكتاب* (*al-kitāba*) is the object.

Fill in the blank: In a verbal sentence, the order is —_____.

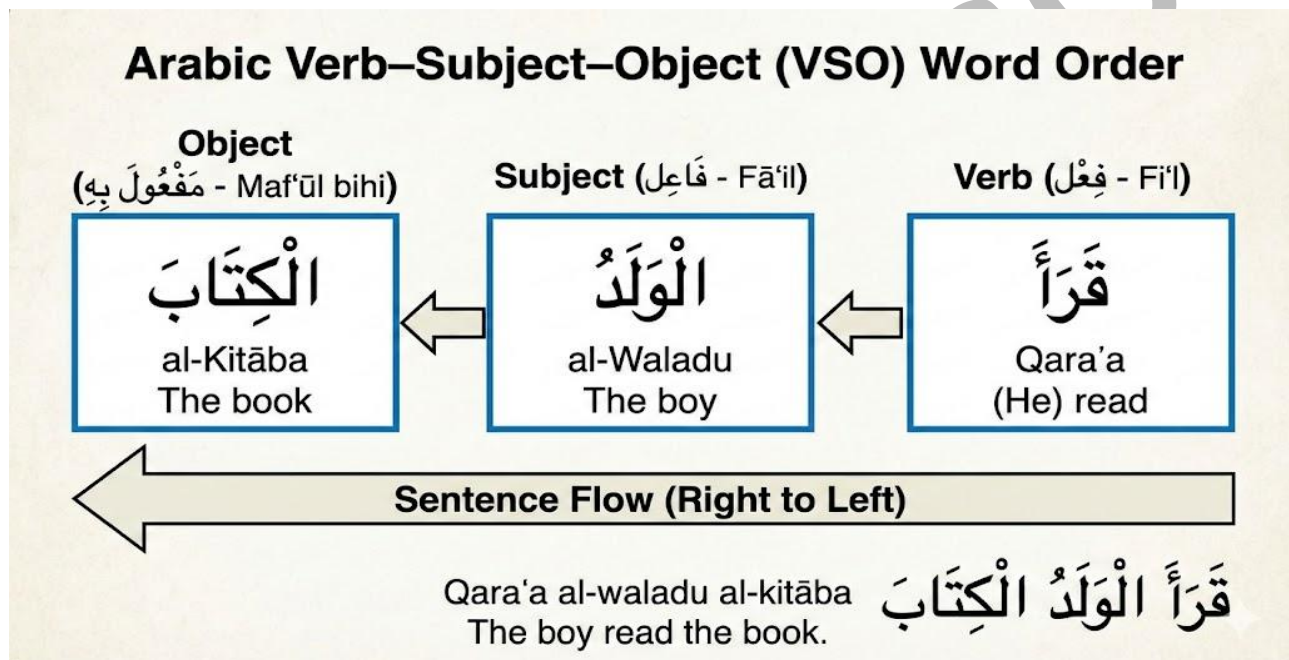


Figure 1.4 Verb–subject–object order in a verbal sentence

1.2.3 Factors affecting word order

Arabic word order can be influenced by several **factors**, including **emphasis**, **style**, and **grammatical rules**. For instance, placing the subject before the verb in a verbal sentence can emphasise the subject, while beginning with the verb highlights the action. Similarly, stylistic choices in poetry or rhetoric may alter the expected order for effect.

For example:



- الطالب قرأ الكتاب (*al-talību qara'a al-kitāba*, “The student read the book”).

This variation places emphasis on the student rather than the action.

Fill in the blank: Changing word order in Arabic can shift _____ from the action to the subject.

Box 1.1 Factors Influencing Word Order in Arabic

- **Emphasis & Pragmatics (التوكيد والبلاغة):** Shifting constituents to the beginning gives them prominence. The standard Verb-Subject-Object (VSO) order is neutral, while Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) emphasizes the subject.
Neutral (VSO): قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*Qara'a al-ṭālibu al-kitāba*) - 'The student read the book.'
Subject Emphasis (SVO): الطالب قرأ الكتاب (*Al-ṭālibu qara'a al-kitāba*) - 'The student, he read the book.'
- **Grammar Rules & Agreement (النحو والمطابقة):** Verb agreement changes depending on position. In VSO, the verb is often singular even with a plural subject. In SVO, full number and gender agreement is required.
VSO (Partial Agreement): ذهب الأولاد (*Dhahaba al-awlādu*) - 'The boys went.' (Verb is singular)
SVO (Full Agreement): الأولاد ذهبوا (*Al-awlādu dhahabū*) - 'The boys went.' (Verb is plural)
- **Role of Case Endings (دور الإعراب):** Explicit case markings (vowel endings) clarify the grammatical role of nouns (subject, object), allowing for flexible word order without ambiguity, often used for poetic or rhetorical effect.
Fronted Object (OVS): الرسالة كتب المعلم (*Ar-risālatu kataba al-mu'allimu*) - 'The letter, the teacher wrote.' (Accusative 'a' on letter shows it's the object).

Box 1.1 Factors influencing word order in Arabic

Pilot questions 1.2

1. What is the typical order of elements in a nominal sentence?
2. In a verbal sentence, which element comes first?
3. What is the usual sequence of verb, subject, and object in Arabic?
4. How can word order be altered to emphasise the subject?
5. Name one factor that influences word order in Arabic sentences.



1.3 Functional Roles in Sentence Structure

Every sentence in Arabic is made up of elements that perform specific **functional roles**. These roles determine how meaning is conveyed and how words relate to one another. By studying them, you will be able to identify the subject, predicate, object, and other complementary elements, and understand how they interact to form coherent sentences.

1.3.1 Subject (*Fā'il*) and predicate (*Khabar*)

The **subject** (*Fā'il*) is the doer of the action in a verbal sentence, or the topic in a nominal sentence. The **predicate** (*Khabar*) is the part of the sentence that provides information about the subject. Together, they form the backbone of Arabic sentence structure.

For example:

- الطالب ناجح (*al-talību nājiḥun*, “The student is successful”).
Here, الطالب (*al-talību*) is the subject, and ناجح (*nājiḥun*) is the predicate.

Fill in the blank: The _____ provides information about the subject in a nominal sentence.



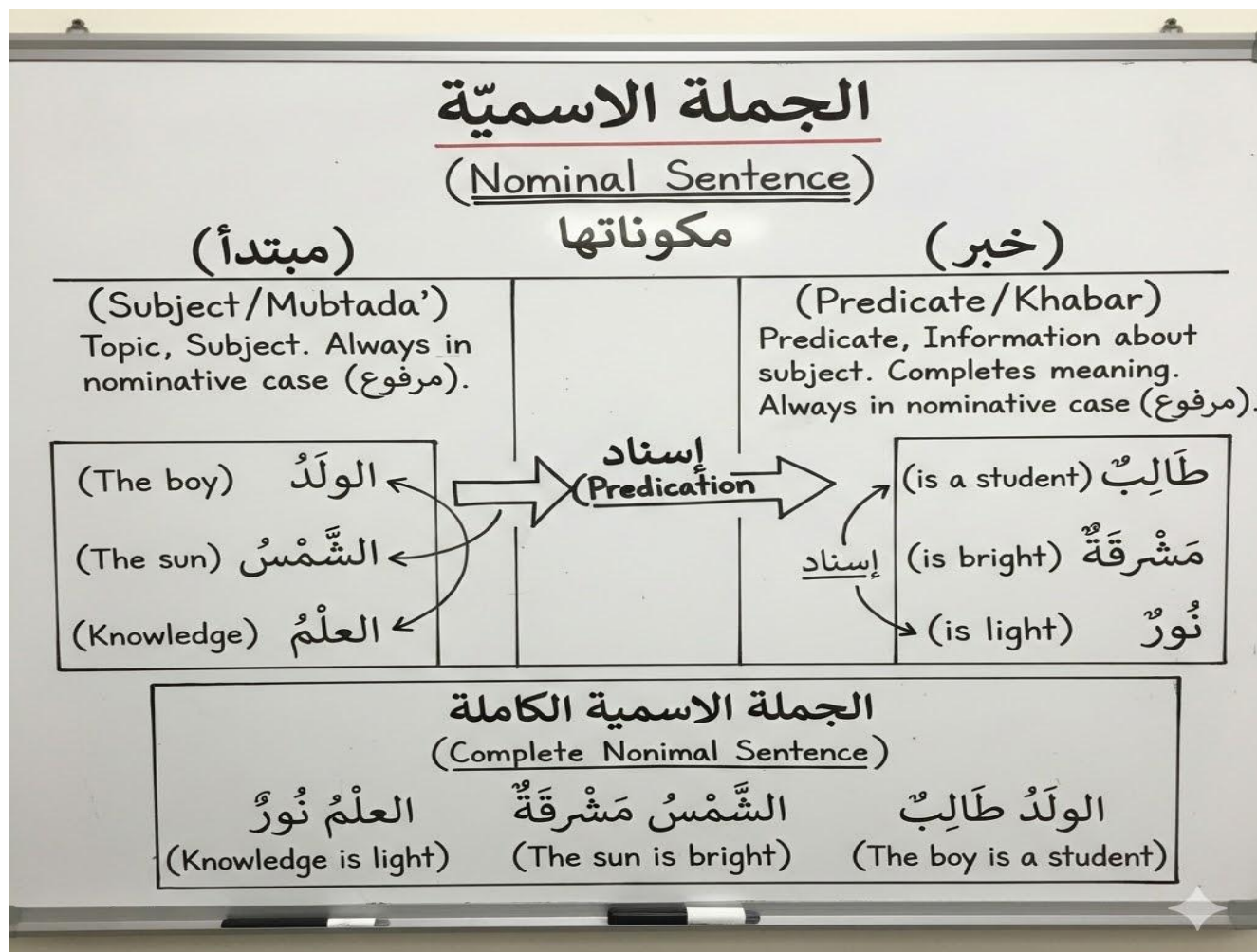


Figure 1.5 Subject and predicate in a nominal sentence

1.3.2 Object (*Maf'ūl*) and complementary elements

The **object** (*Maf'ūl*) is the receiver of the action in a verbal sentence. It completes the meaning of the verb and clarifies what the subject is acting upon. Complementary elements include adverbs, prepositional phrases, and other modifiers that add detail to the sentence.

For example:

- كتب الطالب الدرس في المكتبة (*kataba al-talību al-darsa fī al-maktabati*, “The student wrote the lesson in the library”).



Here, *الدرس* (*al-darsa*) is the object, while *في المكتبة* (*fī al-maktabati*) is a complementary phrase indicating location.

Fill in the blank: The _____ is the receiver of the action in a verbal sentence.

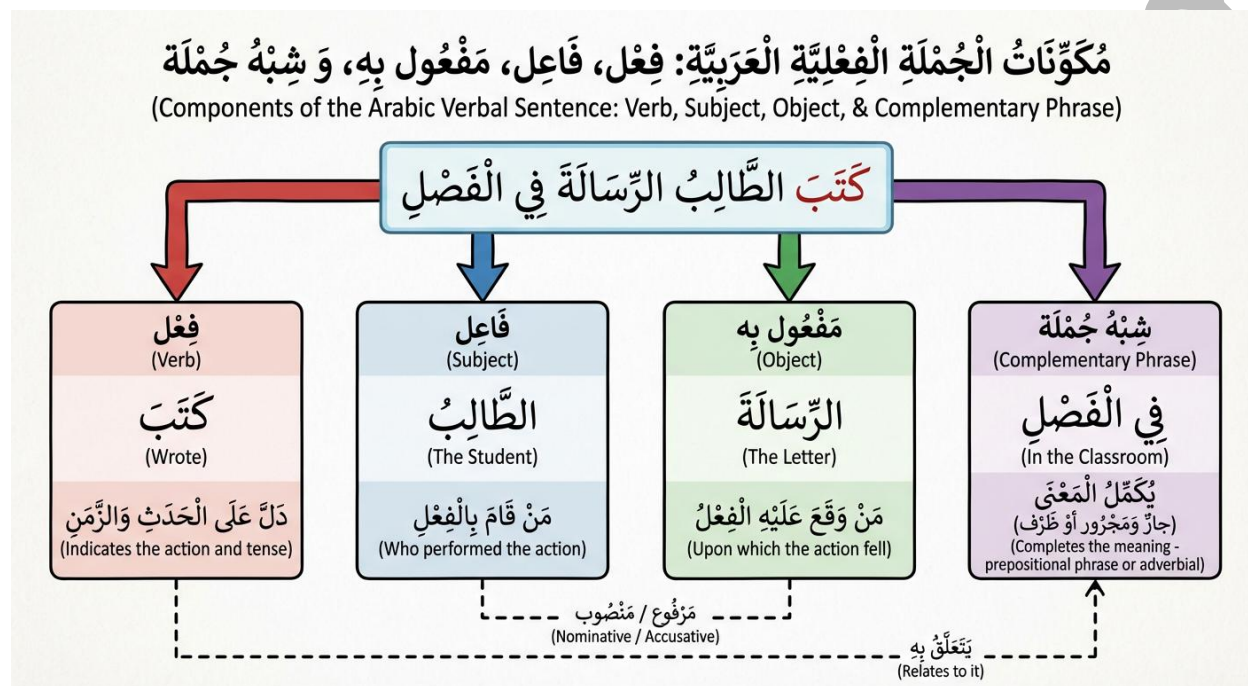


Figure 1.6 Object and complementary elements in a verbal sentence

1.3.3 Variations in sentence construction

Arabic allows flexibility in sentence construction. For example, the subject may precede the verb for emphasis, or the predicate may be placed before the subject in a nominal sentence for stylistic effect. These variations are guided by grammar rules and often used in poetry, rhetoric, or to highlight specific elements of meaning.

For instance:

- **ناجح الطالب** (*nājiḥun al-talību*, “Successful is the student”).

This variation places emphasis on the predicate rather than the subject.



Fill in the blank: Changing the order of subject and predicate in a nominal sentence can shift _____.

Here's the summary of **variations in Arabic sentence construction** presented neatly in a table format with examples in Arabic script:

Sentence Type	Description	Example (Arabic)	Translation
Nominal Sentence (الجملة الاسمية)	Begins with a noun or pronoun.	الْكِتَابُ جَمِيلٌ	The book is beautiful.
Verbal Sentence (الجملة الفعلية)	Begins with a verb, followed by subject and object.	كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ	The student wrote the lesson.
Equational Sentence (الجملة الاسمية بدون فعل)	No verb "to be" in present tense; subject and predicate are linked directly.	الْمُعَلِّمُ فِي الْفَصْلِ	The teacher [is] in the classroom.
Inverted Sentence (تقديم وتأخير)	Word order can be shifted for emphasis.	جَمِيلٌ الْكِتَابُ	Beautiful is the book.
Complex Sentence (الجملة المركبة)	Combines clauses with connectors like وَ (and), لَكِنْ (but), أَنَّ (that).	ذَهَبْتُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ وَقَرَأْتُ الْكِتَابَ	I went to school and read the book.
Conditional Sentence (الجملة الشرطية)	Uses particles like إِذَا (if/when), لَوْ (if).	إِذَا دَرَسْتَ تَنْجَحْ	If you study, you succeed.

Box 1.2 Variations in sentence construction

Pilot questions 1.3

1. What role does the predicate play in a nominal sentence?
2. In a verbal sentence, who is the doer of the action?
3. What is the function of the object in a verbal sentence?
4. Name one type of complementary element that can add detail to a sentence.



5. How can changing the order of subject and predicate affect emphasis?

1.4 Practical Applications of Sentence Types

The study of Arabic sentence types becomes most meaningful when applied to real texts and everyday usage. By examining examples from classical Arabic and modern standard Arabic, you will see how nominal and verbal sentences function in practice. This Part also provides exercises that allow you to construct sentences, reinforcing your understanding of the rules and variations you have studied.

1.4.1 Examples from classical Arabic texts

Classical Arabic, particularly the Qur'an and early literary works, makes extensive use of both **nominal sentences** and **verbal sentences**. Nominal sentences often convey timeless truths or descriptions, while verbal sentences narrate actions and events.

For example:

- الحمد لله (*al-ḥamdu lillāh*, “All praise belongs to Allah”). This is a nominal sentence emphasising a state of praise.
- قال ربك (*qāla rabbuka*, “Your Lord said”). This is a verbal sentence introducing an action.

Fill in the blank: Classical Arabic often uses _____ sentences to express timeless truths.





Plate 1.1 Examples of nominal and verbal sentences in classical Arabic

1.4.2 Examples from modern standard Arabic

In **modern standard Arabic**, verbal sentences are more common in everyday communication, especially in news reports, narratives, and conversations. Nominal sentences, however, remain important for descriptions, definitions, and formal statements.

For example:

- يكتب المحرر المقالة (yaktubu al-muḥarriru al-maqālata, “The editor is writing the article”). This is a verbal sentence typical of journalistic style.
- المدرسة كبيرة (al-madrasatu kabīratun, “The school is large”). This is a nominal sentence used in descriptive contexts.

Fill in the blank: Modern standard Arabic often uses _____ sentences in news and narratives.



Arabic Sentence Structure: Nominal vs. Verbal

(Modern Standard Arabic Contexts)

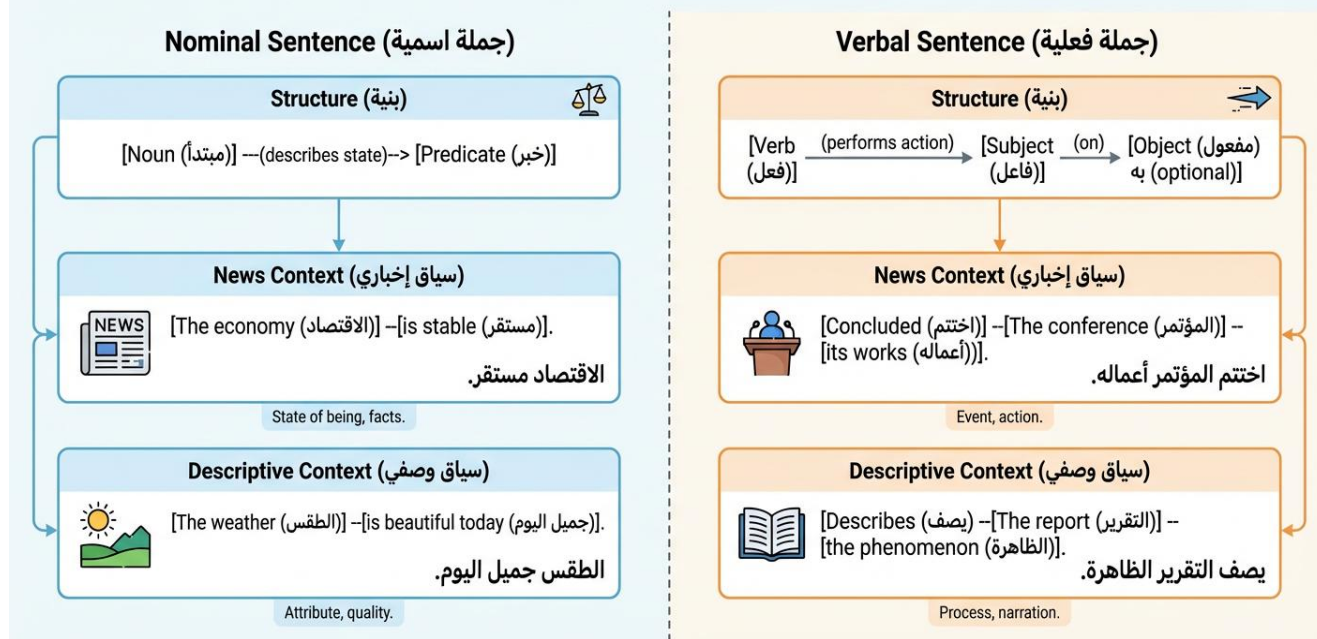


Figure 1.7 Nominal and verbal sentences in modern standard Arabic

1.4.3 Exercises for sentence construction

To consolidate your learning, it is important to practise constructing sentences. Begin by forming simple **nominal sentences** with a subject and predicate, then move on to **verbal sentences** with verb, subject, and object. Finally, experiment with variations in word order to emphasise different elements.

For example:

- Nominal: البنت جميلة (*al-bintu jamīlatun*, “The girl is beautiful”).
- Verbal: درس الطالب العلوم (*darasa al-talību al-‘ulūma*, “The student studied the sciences”).
- Variation: العلوم درسها الطالب (*al-‘ulūma darasahā al-talību*, “The sciences were studied by the student”).

Fill in the blank: A good way to practise sentence construction is to start with _____ sentences before moving to verbal ones.



Activity	Instruction	Examples (Arabic)	Translation
Nominal Sentences	Write five nominal sentences describing objects around you.	• الْكِتَابُ عَلَى الطَّوْلَةِ • الْقَلَمُ جَدِيدٌ • الْمَصْبَاحُ • الْمَكْتَبُ كَبِيرٌ • الْحَقِيبَةُ فِي مَضِيءٍ • الْغُرْفَةُ	• The book is on the table. • The pen is new. • The desk is big. • The lamp is bright. • The bag is in the room.
Verbal Sentences	Write five verbal sentences describing actions you performed today.	• قَرَأْتُ الْكِتَابَ • كَتَبْتُ دَرَسًا • ذَهَبْتُ إِلَى السُّوقِ • صَلَّيْتُ الظُّهْرَ • أَكَلْتُ الطَّعَامَ	• I read the book. • I wrote a lesson. • I went to the market. • I prayed zuhr. • I ate the food.
Word Order Variations	Rewrite two sentences by changing the word order to emphasise different elements.	• أَلَوْلَدُ كَتَبَ الدَّرْسَ → • كَتَبَ أَلَوْلَدُ الدَّرْسَ • جَمِيلٌ الْكِتَابُ → الْكِتَابُ جَمِيلٌ	• The boy wrote the lesson → The lesson was written by the boy. • Beautiful is the book → The book is beautiful.

Box 1.3 Suggested practice activities for sentence construction

Pilot questions 1.4

1. Which type of sentence is often used in classical Arabic to express timeless truths?
2. In modern standard Arabic, which type of sentence is common in news reports?
3. What are the two main components of a nominal sentence?
4. What is the typical order of elements in a verbal sentence?
5. How can changing word order in a sentence affect emphasis?



Series Summary

This Series has guided you through the foundations of Arabic sentence structure, focusing on how meaning is conveyed through different types of sentences and the role of word order. Its purpose was to help you recognise the distinction between nominal and verbal sentences, understand how subjects, predicates, and objects function, and appreciate how variations in construction can shift emphasis. By linking theory with practical examples from both classical and modern Arabic, the Series has shown how grammar rules operate in real contexts.

We began by exploring the two main sentence types, then examined patterns of word order and the factors that influence them. Following that, we studied the functional roles of subjects, predicates, objects, and complementary elements, before concluding with practical applications through examples and exercises. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to define and explain sentence types, analyse and evaluate word order, identify functional roles, and apply these skills in constructing sentences across different contexts.

Glossary of Terms

Action (verb) – The part of a sentence that shows what is being done. In Arabic, it usually begins a verbal sentence.

Complementary elements – Extra words or phrases that add detail to a sentence, such as adverbs or prepositional phrases.

Fā'il (subject in a verbal sentence) – The doer of the action in a verbal sentence.

Jumlah Fi'liyyah (verbal sentence) – A sentence that begins with a verb, usually following the order verb–subject–object.

Jumlah Ismiyyah (nominal sentence) – A sentence that begins with a noun or pronoun, typically made up of a subject and a predicate.

Khabar (predicate) – The part of a nominal sentence that provides information about the subject.



Maf'ūl (object) – The receiver of the action in a verbal sentence.

Mubtada' (subject in a nominal sentence) – The topic or starting point of a nominal sentence, about which information is given.

Predicate – The part of a sentence that tells something about the subject. In Arabic, this is called *Khabar*.

Subject – The person or thing that performs the action in a verbal sentence, or the topic in a nominal sentence.

Word order – The arrangement of elements in a sentence, such as subject–predicate in nominal sentences or verb–subject–object in verbal sentences.



Objective Questions

1. Identify the two main types of Arabic sentences. *(Linked to SLO 2.1)*
2. Choose the correct order of elements in a verbal sentence:
 - a. Subject–predicate
 - b. Verb–subject–object
 - c. Predicate–subject*(Linked to SLO 2.3)*
3. Which element in a nominal sentence provides information about the subject? *(Linked to SLO 2.5)*
4. True or False: Nominal sentences are more common in everyday speech than verbal sentences. *(Linked to SLO 2.2)*

Short-Answer Questions

5. Define the term *Mubtada'* and explain its role in a nominal sentence. *(Linked to SLO 2.5)*
6. Give one example of a nominal sentence in Arabic and translate it into English. *(Linked to SLO 2.8)*
7. Explain how changing word order in a verbal sentence can shift emphasis. *(Linked to SLO 2.4)*
8. Provide one example of a complementary element in a verbal sentence. *(Linked to SLO 2.6)*

Long-Answer Questions

9. Compare nominal and verbal sentences in terms of structure, usage, and emphasis. *(Linked to SLO 2.2)*
10. Analyse the functional roles of subject, predicate, and object in Arabic sentence construction, and illustrate with examples. *(Linked to SLO 2.5, SLO 2.6)*
11. Evaluate how sentence types and word order are applied in classical Arabic texts versus modern standard Arabic. *(Linked to SLO 2.7, SLO 2.8)*



Objective Questions

1. Nominal sentences (*Jumlah Ismiyyah*) and verbal sentences (*Jumlah Fi'liyyah*).
2. b. Verb–subject–object.
3. The predicate (*Khabar*).
4. False. Verbal sentences are more common in everyday speech.

Short-Answer Questions

5. *Mubtada'* is the subject in a nominal sentence. It introduces the topic about which information is given.
6. Example: الكتاب مفيد (*al-kitābu mufīdun*, “The book is useful”).
7. Changing word order can highlight either the subject or the action. For example, قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*qara'a al-talību al-kitāba*) emphasises the action, while الطالب قرأ الكتاب (*al-talību qara'a al-kitāba*) emphasises the subject.
8. Example: في المكتبة (*fī al-maktabati*, “in the library”) as a phrase showing location.

Long-Answer Questions

9. Compare nominal and verbal sentences

- *Basic response*: Nominal sentences begin with a noun or pronoun and emphasise states or descriptions. Verbal sentences begin with a verb and emphasise actions or processes.
- *Value-added response*: Beyond structure, nominal sentences are often used in formal or classical contexts to express timeless truths, while verbal sentences dominate everyday speech and narratives. Writers may deliberately choose one type over the other to achieve stylistic or rhetorical effects.

10. Analyse functional roles



- *Basic response:* The subject (*Mubtada'* or *Fā'il*) introduces the topic or performs the action. The predicate (*Khabar*) provides information about the subject. The object (*Maf'ūl*) receives the action.
- *Value-added response:* In addition to these roles, complementary elements such as adverbs and prepositional phrases enrich meaning by specifying time, place, or manner. For example, **كتب الطالب الدرس في المكتبة** (*kataba al-talību al-darsa fī al-maktabati*) shows how the object and location phrase combine to give a fuller picture of the action.

11. Evaluate applications in classical vs modern Arabic

- *Basic response:* Classical Arabic often uses nominal sentences to express universal truths, while modern Arabic favours verbal sentences in news and narratives.
- *Value-added response:* Classical texts, such as the Qur'an, employ nominal sentences for emphasis and permanence, while verbal sentences narrate divine actions. Modern Arabic, especially in journalism, uses verbal sentences to report events concisely, but nominal sentences remain important in formal writing and definitions. This demonstrates how sentence choice reflects cultural and communicative priorities across time.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 1]

Part 1.1

- A noun or a pronoun.
- Subject and predicate.
- Verb–subject–object.
- Verbal sentences.
- Nominal sentences emphasise the subject, while verbal sentences emphasise the action.

Part 1.2

- Subject–predicate.
- Verb.
- Verb–subject–object.
- By placing the subject before the verb.



- Emphasis, style, and grammar rules.

Part 1.3

- The predicate provides information about the subject.
- The subject (*Fā'il*).
- The object receives the action.
- Prepositional phrases or adverbs.
- Emphasis.

Part 1.4

- Nominal sentences.
- Verbal sentences.
- Subject and predicate.
- Verb–subject–object.
- Emphasis.



General References

- Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holes, C. (2004). *Modern Arabic: Structures, Functions, and Varieties*. Georgetown University Press.
- Wright, W. (1996). *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Suggested Open Educational Resources (OER):
 - “Arabic Grammar Resources” – Open Access materials available via [OpenArabic.org](https://openarabic.org).
 - “Nominal and Verbal Sentences in Arabic” – OER teaching notes, University of Michigan Language Resource Centre.

Illustrations

Figure 1.1 Structure of a nominal sentence

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a simple diagram showing the subject (Mubtada’) and predicate (Khabar) in an Arabic nominal sentence, with Arabic script labels.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Figure 1.2 Structure of a verbal sentence

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a diagram showing verb–subject–object order in an Arabic verbal sentence, with Arabic script examples.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Table 1.1 Comparative features of nominal and verbal sentences

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- Suggested OER source for comparison: “Nominal vs verbal sentences Arabic grammar OER” (OpenArabic.org).



Figure 1.3 Subject–predicate order in a nominal sentence

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a diagram showing subject–predicate order in an Arabic nominal sentence with Arabic script labels.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Figure 1.4 Verb–subject–object order in a verbal sentence

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a diagram showing verb–subject–object order in an Arabic verbal sentence with Arabic script examples.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Box 1.1 Factors influencing word order in Arabic

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- Suggested OER source: “Factors influencing Arabic word order OER” (OpenArabic.org).

Figure 1.5 Subject and predicate in a nominal sentence

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a diagram showing subject (Mubtada’) and predicate (Khabar) roles in an Arabic nominal sentence with Arabic script examples.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Figure 1.6 Object and complementary elements in a verbal sentence

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a diagram showing verb, subject, object, and complementary phrase in an Arabic verbal sentence with Arabic script examples.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Box 1.2 Variations in sentence construction

- Attribution: Compiled by author based on Series content.
- Suggested OER source: “Arabic sentence construction variations OER” (OpenArabic.org).

Plate 1.1 Examples of nominal and verbal sentences in classical Arabic



- Attribution: AI-generated image using prompt “Generate an image of a classical Arabic manuscript page with highlighted nominal and verbal sentences.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.
- Suggested OER source: “Classical Arabic text examples nominal verbal sentences OER” (University of Michigan Language Resource Centre).

Figure 1.7 Nominal and verbal sentences in modern standard Arabic

- Attribution: AI-generated diagram using prompt “Create a diagram showing examples of nominal and verbal sentences in modern standard Arabic contexts such as news and descriptions.”
- Platform: Microsoft Copilot graphic generation tool.

Box 1.3 Suggested practice activities for sentence construction

- Attribution: Compiled by author based on Series content.
- Suggested OER source: “Arabic grammar practice activities nominal verbal sentences OER” (OpenArabic.org).



Series 2: Elements Influencing Word Order in Arabic

2.1 Grammatical Factors in Word Order

- 2.1.1 Agreement of subject and verb
- 2.1.2 Case endings and their impact
- 2.1.3 Role of particles (*inna*, *kāna*, etc.)

2.2 Stylistic and Rhetorical Influences

- 2.2.1 Emphasis through reordering
- 2.2.2 Word order in poetry and rhetoric
- 2.2.3 Variations in Qur'anic style

2.3 Semantic and Communicative Considerations

- 2.3.1 Shifting focus between subject and action
- 2.3.2 Pragmatic choices in conversation
- 2.3.3 Word order in modern media and journalism

2.4 Comparative Perspectives

- 2.4.1 Word order in Arabic vs English
- 2.4.2 Cross-dialectal variations (MSA vs colloquial)

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored the basic types of Arabic sentences and how word order shapes meaning. That foundation is essential, but word order in Arabic is not determined by sentence type alone. It is influenced by a range of grammatical, stylistic, and communicative factors that can shift emphasis, alter



case endings, or highlight particular elements of meaning. Understanding these influences will help you appreciate the flexibility and richness of Arabic expression, both in classical texts and in modern usage.

The aim of this Series is to examine the key factors that affect word order in Arabic and to equip you with the ability to recognise, analyse, and apply them in your own sentence construction. By the end of this Series, you should be able to explain how grammar, style, meaning, and comparison with other languages shape the way Arabic sentences are formed.

We shall commence this Series by studying grammatical factors such as subject–verb agreement, case endings, and the role of particles. Next, we will move on to stylistic and rhetorical influences, including emphasis, poetry, and Qur’anic variation. Following that, we will consider semantic and communicative aspects, such as shifting focus and pragmatic choices in conversation. Finally, we will conclude with comparative perspectives, looking at how Arabic word order contrasts with English and how it varies across dialects.

Series Learning Outcomes

Series 2: Factors Influencing Word Order in Arabic

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** define how subject–verb agreement operates in Arabic and explain its impact on word order.
- **SLO 2.2** identify case endings and demonstrate how they determine the grammatical role of words in a sentence.
- **SLO 2.3** analyse the role of particles such as *inna* and *kāna* in altering sentence structure.
- **SLO 2.4** explain how stylistic devices, including emphasis and rhetorical variation, influence word order.
- **SLO 2.5** evaluate the use of word order in poetry and Qur’anic style to highlight meaning.
- **SLO 2.6** apply semantic and communicative principles to shift focus between subject and action in conversation.
- **SLO 2.7** demonstrate how word order is adapted in modern media and journalism for clarity and emphasis.



- **SLO 2.8** compare Arabic word order with English and assess variations across Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial dialects.

2.1 Grammatical Factors In Word Order

Arabic word order is shaped by several **grammatical factors** that determine how subjects, verbs, and other elements interact within a sentence. These rules ensure clarity and precision, and they help speakers and writers convey meaning accurately. In this Part, we will explore three major grammatical influences: subject–verb agreement, case endings, and the role of particles.

2.1.1 Agreement of subject and verb

In Arabic, the **subject** is the doer of the action, while the **verb** expresses the action itself. The verb must agree with the subject in **gender** (masculine or feminine) and **number** (singular, dual, or plural). This agreement is crucial because it signals who is performing the action and ensures the sentence is grammatically correct.

Example:

- كتب الطالب الدرس (*kataba al-ṭālibu al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”).
- كتبت الطالبة الدرس (*katabat al-ṭālibatu al-darsa*, “The female student wrote the lesson”).

Fill in the blank: The verb must agree with the _____ in gender and number.



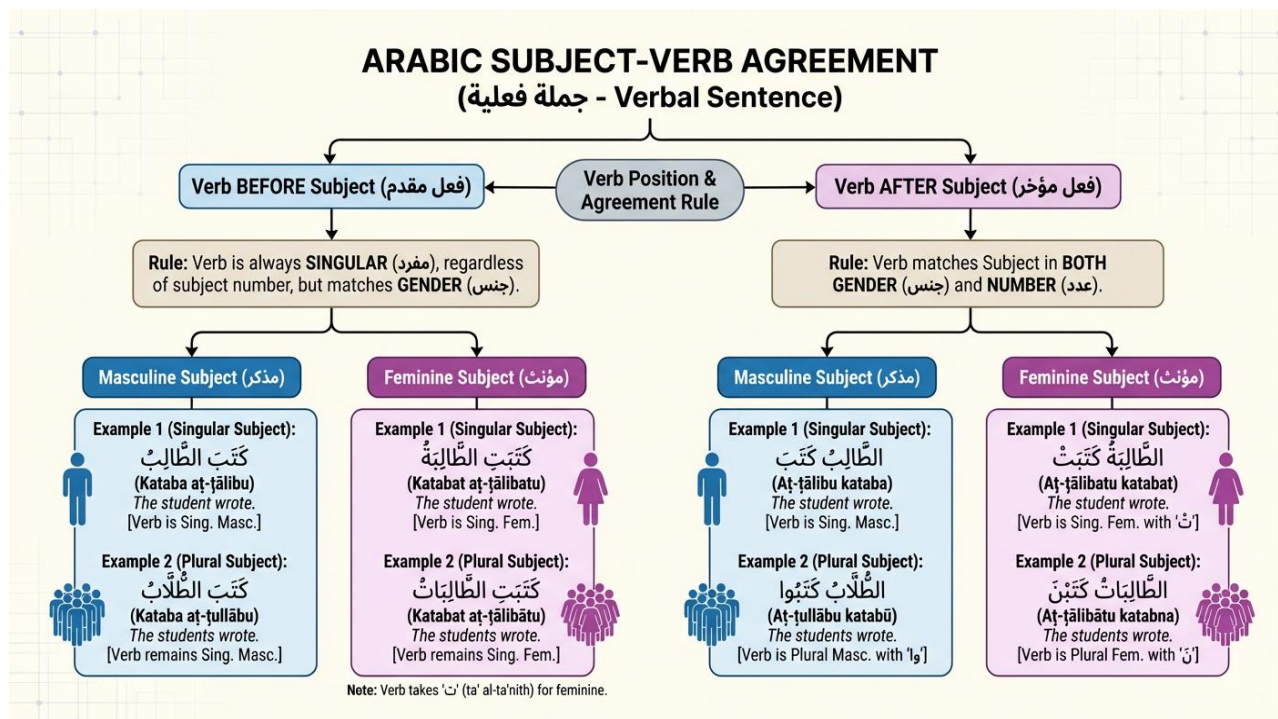


Figure 2.1 Subject–verb agreement in Arabic sentences

2.1.2 Case endings and their impact

Case endings are short vowel marks added to the end of words in Arabic to indicate their grammatical role. The **nominative case** (-u) marks the subject, the **accusative case** (-a) marks the object, and the **genitive case** (-i) marks words following prepositions. These endings allow flexibility in word order because they show clearly which word is the subject and which is the object, even if the order changes.

Example:

- قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*qara 'a al-ṭālibu al-kitāba*, “The student read the book”).

Here, الطالب (*al ṭālibu*) has the nominative ending (u) as subject, while الكتاب (*al kitāba*) has the accusative ending (a) as object.

Fill in the blank: Case endings indicate whether a word is the _____, _____, or predicate.



ARABIC CASE ENDINGS IN SENTENCES: NOMINATIVE, ACCUSATIVE, GENITIVE

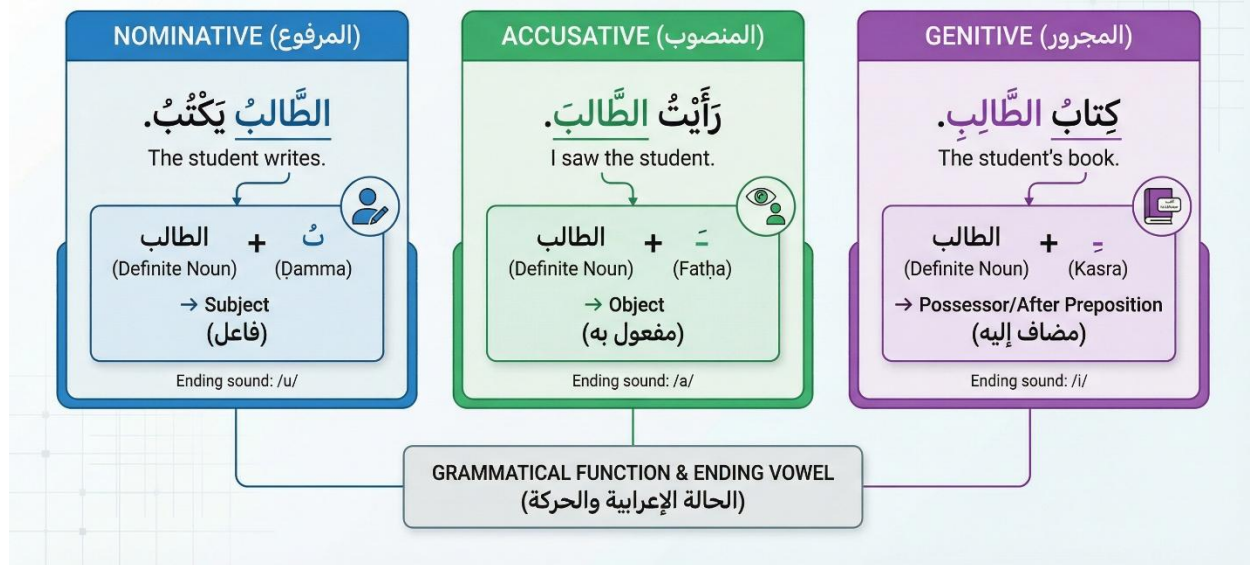


Figure 2.2 Case endings and their impact on word order

2.1.3 Role of particles (inna, kana, etc.)

Particles are words that modify the structure of a sentence by changing the case of the subject or predicate. For example, **إِنَّ** (*inna*, “indeed”) makes the subject accusative, while **كَانَ** (*kāna*, “was”) keeps the subject nominative but makes the predicate accusative. These particles are powerful tools for emphasis and for expressing tense.

Example:

- **إِنَّ الطَّالِبَ مُجْتَهِدٌ** (*inna al-ṭāliba mujtahidun*, “Indeed, the student is hardworking”). Here, *inna* makes the subject accusative (**الطَّالِبَ**).
- **كَانَ الطَّالِبُ مُجْتَهِدًا** (*kāna al-ṭālibu mujtahidan*, “The student was hardworking”). Here, **الطَّالِبُ** (*al ṭālibu*) has the nominative ending (u) as subject, while **الكتاب** (*al kitāba*) has the accusative ending (a) as object.

Fill in the blank: The particle _____ makes the subject accusative, while the particle _____ makes the predicate accusative.



<i>Particle</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Effect on Word Order</i>	<i>Example (Arabic)</i>	<i>Translation</i>
إِنَّ (inna)	Adds emphasis; introduces nominal sentence	Subject becomes accusative; predicate remains nominative	إِنَّ الطَّالِبَ مُجْتَهِدًا	Indeed, the student is hardworking.
كَانَ (kāna)	Indicates past tense of “to be”	Predicate becomes accusative; subject remains nominative	كَانَ الْمُعَلِّمُ فِي الصَّفِّ	The teacher was in the classroom.
لَيْسَ (laysa)	Negates nominal sentence	Same as kāna: predicate accusative, subject nominative	لَيْسَ الْكِتَابُ جَدِيدًا	The book is not new.
أَنَّ (anna)	Subordinating particle (that...)	Subject becomes accusative; used after verbs like ya ‘lamu	عَلِمْتُ أَنَّ الطَّالِبَ نَاجِحٌ	I knew that the student was successful.
صَارَ (šāra)	Indicates transformation or change	Predicate becomes accusative; subject remains nominative	صَارَ الْجَوُّ بَارِدًا	The weather became cold.

Box 2.1 Examples of particles affecting word order

Pilot Questions 2.1

1. What must the verb agree with in Arabic sentences?
2. Which case ending marks the subject in a verbal sentence?
3. How do case endings help determine word order?
4. What effect does the particle *inna* have on the subject?



5. What effect does the particle *kāna* have on the predicate?

2.2 Stylistic And Rhetorical Influences

Arabic word order is not only shaped by grammar but also by **stylistic** and **rhetorical influences**. **Stylistic influences** refer to deliberate choices made by speakers or writers to highlight certain elements of meaning. **Rhetorical influences** involve the use of language for persuasion, emphasis, or artistic effect. These factors allow Arabic to be flexible, expressive, and powerful in both everyday communication and literary contexts.

2.2.1 Emphasis through reordering

One of the most common stylistic devices in Arabic is **emphasis**, which means giving special importance to a word or idea. This is often achieved by reordering the sentence. For example, placing the object before the verb can highlight the object, while beginning with a predicate can stress a description.

Example:

Here, الطالب (al ṭālibu) has the nominative ending (u) as subject, while الكتاب (al kitāba) has the accusative ending (a) as object.

Fill in the blank: Emphasis in Arabic can be achieved by changing the _____ of words in a sentence.



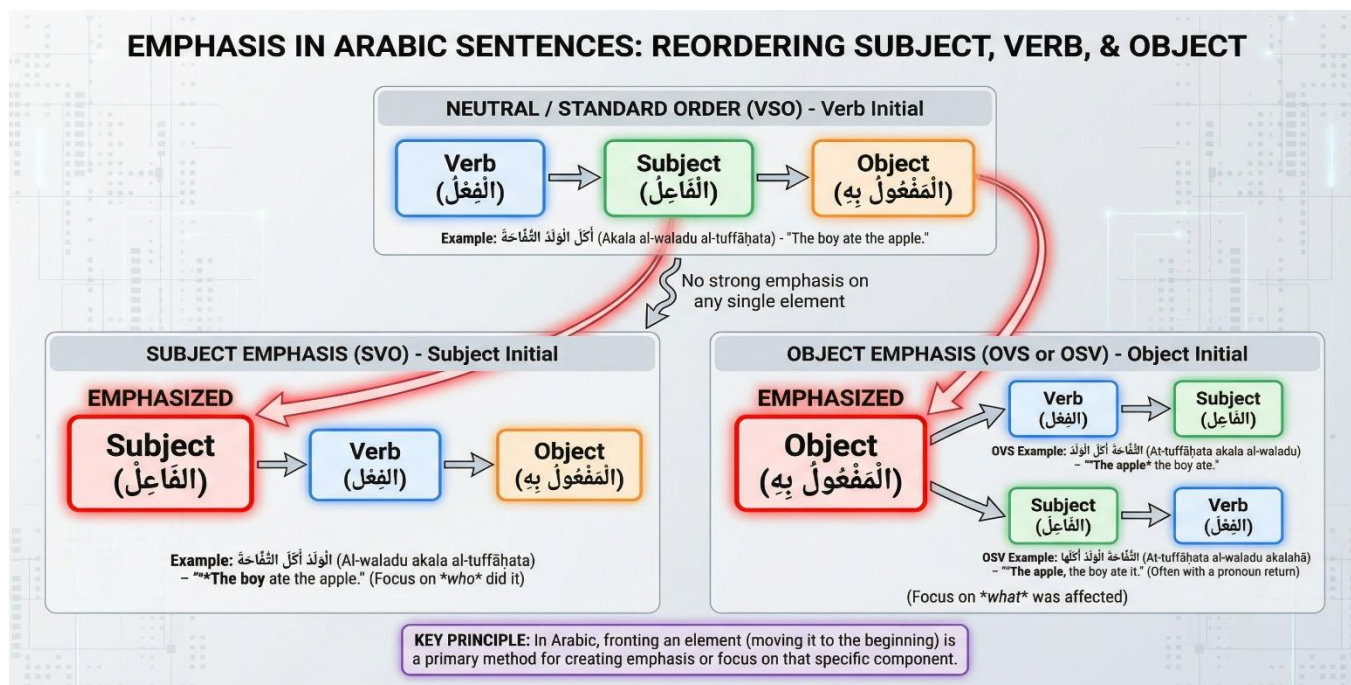


Figure 2.3 Emphasis through reordering in Arabic sentences

2.2.2 Word order in poetry and rhetoric

Arabic poetry and rhetoric often use **word order variation** to create rhythm, beauty, and persuasive effect. In poetry, word order may be adjusted to fit the metre or rhyme scheme. In rhetoric, reordering can make speech more memorable or impactful.

Example:

- Classical Arabic poetry frequently begins with descriptive predicates to set the scene before introducing the subject.
- Rhetorical speeches may place key ideas at the beginning of a sentence to capture attention.

Fill in the blank: In poetry, word order may be adjusted to fit the _____ or rhyme scheme.



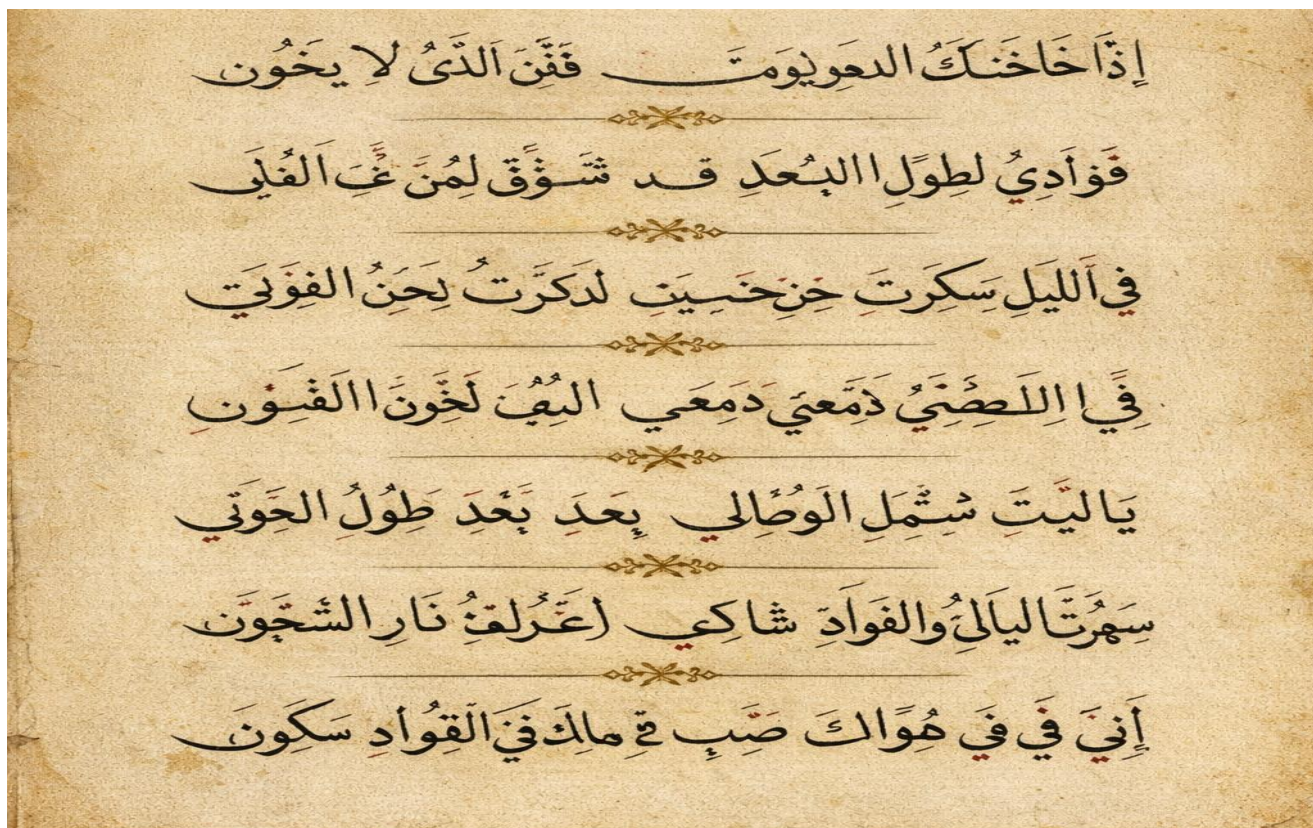


Plate 2.1 Word order variation in Arabic poetry

2.2.3 Variations in Qur'anic style

The **Qur'an** is a prime example of how word order can be used for rhetorical and spiritual impact. Qur'anic style often employs **inversion** (placing the predicate before the subject) or **fronting** (moving an element to the beginning) to emphasise divine truths. These variations are not random but carefully chosen to highlight meaning and guide interpretation.

Example:

- إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ (iyyāka na 'budu wa-iyyāka nasta 'in, "You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help").

Here, الطالب (al ṭālibu) has the nominative ending (u) as subject, while الكتاب (al kitāba) has the accusative ending (a) as object.

Fill in the blank: Qur'anic style often uses _____ to emphasise divine truths.



<i>Verse Reference</i>	<i>Word Order Variation</i>	<i>Example (Arabic)</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Qur'an 1:5 <i>(Al-Fātiḥah)</i></i>	<i>Predicate before subject</i>	<i>إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ</i>	<i>The object “You” (إِيَّاكَ) is moved forward before the verb to emphasise exclusive devotion and reliance on Allah.</i>
<i>Qur'an 12:23 <i>(Yūsuf)</i></i>	<i>Subject before verb</i>	<i>وَرَأَوْنَاهُ أَلْيَاسًا هَؤُلَاءِ فِي بَيْتِهَا</i>	<i>The subject “the woman in whose house he was” precedes the verb to highlight her role and agency in the narrative.</i>
<i>Qur'an 2:2 <i>(Al-Baqarah)</i></i>	<i>Nominal sentence with emphasis</i>	<i>ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ</i>	<i>The demonstrative “That Book” is placed first, stressing the Qur'an's authority and certainty before the predicate.</i>
<i>Qur'an 12:40 <i>(Yūsuf)</i></i>	<i>Predicate before subject</i>	<i>إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ</i>	<i>The predicate “Judgement” (الْحُكْمُ) is fronted to emphasise that judgement belongs solely to Allah.</i>
<i>Qur'an 3:26 (<i>Āl Imrān</i>)</i>	<i>Object moved forward</i>	<i>تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ</i>	<i>The object “sovereignty” (الْمُلْكُ) is advanced to stress Allah's power in granting authority.</i>

Box 2.2 Examples of Qur'anic word order variation

Pilot Questions 2.2

1. How can emphasis be achieved in Arabic sentences?
2. Why might word order be varied in poetry?
3. What rhetorical purpose does reordering serve in speeches?
4. Give one example of how the Qur'an uses word order for emphasis.
5. What is the effect of placing the object before the verb in a sentence?



2.3 Semantic And Communicative Considerations

Word order in Arabic is not only influenced by grammar and style but also by **semantic** and **communicative considerations**. **Semantic considerations** refer to how meaning is shaped by the arrangement of words, while **communicative considerations** involve how speakers choose word order to achieve clarity, emphasis, or natural flow in conversation. These influences make Arabic flexible and responsive to context, allowing speakers to highlight what matters most in a given situation.

2.3.1 Shifting focus between subject and action

In Arabic, word order can be adjusted to shift the **focus** of a sentence. **Focus** means the part of the sentence that the speaker wants to highlight. Placing the subject first emphasises the doer, while placing the verb first emphasises the action.

Example:

- الطالب كتب الدرس (*al-ṭālibu kataba al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”) → focus on the student.
- كتب الطالب الدرس (*kataba al-ṭālibu al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”) → focus on the action of writing.

Fill in the blank: Placing the _____ first emphasises the doer, while placing the verb first emphasises the action.



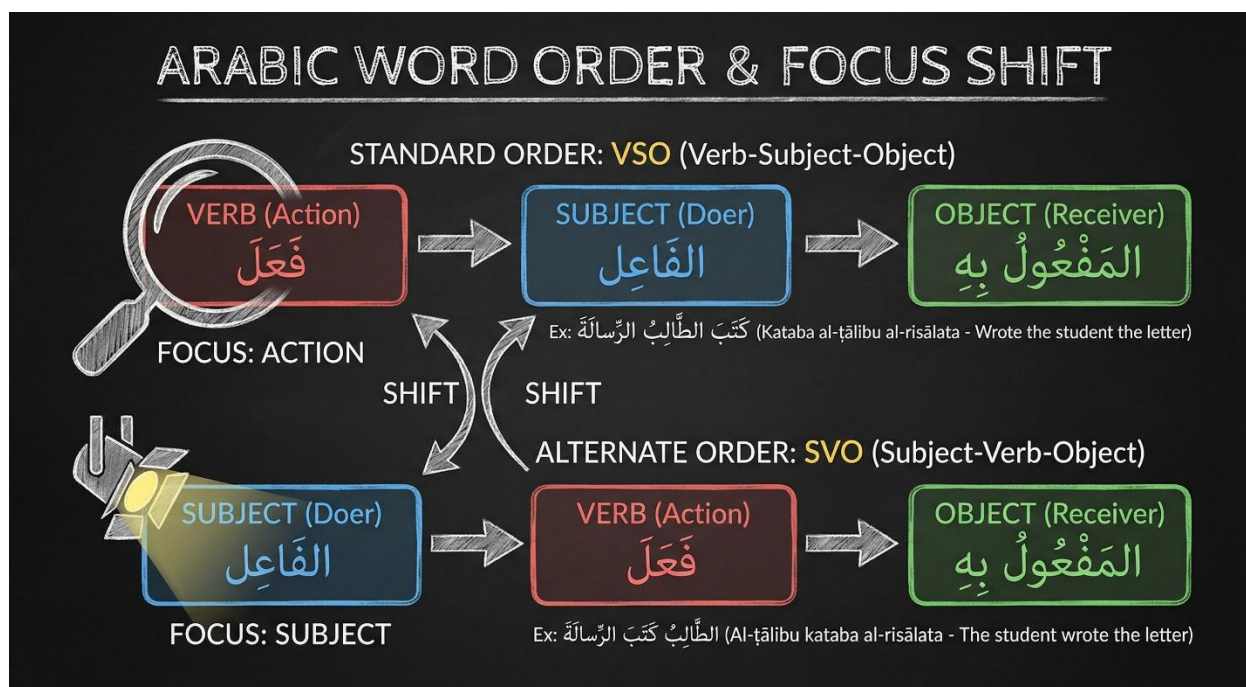


Figure 2.4 Shifting focus in Arabic sentences

2.3.2 Pragmatic choices in conversation

Pragmatics refers to how language is used in real-life communication. In Arabic, speakers often adjust word order to suit the context, such as highlighting new information, maintaining politeness, or ensuring clarity. For example, in casual speech, the subject may be placed first to make the sentence easier to follow, while in formal contexts, the verb may be placed first to maintain grammatical precision.

Example:

- Everyday speech: **المدرس شرح الدرس اليوم** (*al-mudarrisu sharaha al-darsa al-yawm*, “The teacher explained the lesson today”).
- Formal style: **شرح المدرس الدرس اليوم** (*sharaha al-mudarrisu al-darsa al-yawm*, “The teacher explained the lesson today”).

Fill in the blank: In casual speech, the _____ is often placed first to make the sentence easier to follow.



Pragmatic Choice	Function in Conversation	Example (Arabic)	Explanation
Use of vocatives (يا)	To call attention or address someone directly	يَا أَخِي، اسْمَعْنِي	“O my brother, listen to me.” The vocative particle adds politeness and directness.
Politeness markers (من فضلك، لو سمحت)	To soften requests and show respect	مِنْ فَضْلِكَ، أَعْطِنِي الْقَلَمَ	“Please, give me the pen.” Pragmatic choice signals courtesy.
Indirectness (هل يمكن...؟)	To avoid bluntness and maintain social harmony	هَلْ يُمَكِّنُ أَنْ تُسَاعِدَنِي؟	“Could you help me?” Indirect phrasing makes the request more acceptable.
Emphasis with particles (إن، قد)	To strengthen or highlight a statement	إِنَّ هَذَا صَحِيحٌ	“Indeed, this is correct.” The particle inna adds certainty and emphasis.
Mitigation with diminutives or hedges	To reduce forcefulness of statements	قَلِيلًا مِنَ الْمَاءِ، مِنْ فَضْلِكَ	“A little water, please.” The diminutive softens the request.
Repetition for clarity	To ensure understanding or stress importance	نَعَمْ، نَعَمْ، فَهِمْتُ	“Yes, yes, I understood.” Repetition reinforces comprehension and agreement.

Box 2.3 Pragmatic choices in Arabic conversation

2.3.3 Word order in modern media and journalism

Modern Arabic media, such as newspapers and broadcasts, often use word order strategically to capture attention and deliver information clearly. Headlines may begin with the verb to emphasise the action, while reports may place the subject first to identify the actor. This shows how communicative needs shape word order in contemporary contexts.



Example:

- Headline style: أعلنت الحكومة القرار الجديد (*a 'lanat al-ḥukūmatu al-qarāra al-jadīda*, “The government announced the new decision”).
- Report style: الحكومة أعلنت القرار الجديد (*al-ḥukūmatu a 'lanat al-qarāra al-jadīda*, “The government announced the new decision”).

Fill in the blank: Headlines often begin with the _____ to emphasise the action.

Context	Typical Word Order	Example (Arabic)	Translation	Explanation
Headline	Often begins with a verb (verbal sentence) to emphasise immediacy and action.	فازَ المُنْتخَبُ بالبطولةِ	The team won the championship.	Headlines use concise verbal forms to highlight the event directly.
Headline	May omit particles or auxiliary words for brevity.	زيارة الرئيس إلى مصرَ	President's visit to Egypt.	Nominal headline structure drops verbs for compactness.
Report	More complete sentences, often nominal, with subject before verb.	الْمُنْتخَبُ فازَ بالبطولةِ يَوْمَ الأحدِ	The team won the championship on Sunday.	Reports provide fuller context, including time and details.
Report	Includes particles, connectors, and modifiers for clarity.	أعلنَ الرئيسُ أنَّهُ سيزورُ مصرَ الأسبوعَ المُقبلَ	The president announced that he will visit Egypt next week.	Reports use subordinating particles (<i>anna</i> , etc.) to expand information.
Report vs Headline	Headline: compressed, action-focused. Report: expanded, explanatory.	Headline: اجتماعُ الوزراءِ عَدَا		



Report: سيعقد اجتماع الوزراء غدا في العاصمة	Headline: Ministers' meeting tomorrow.			
Report: The ministers' meeting will be held tomorrow in the capital.	Headlines omit auxiliary verbs and details; reports restore them for clarity.			

Table 2.1 Word order in headlines versus reports

Pilot Questions 2.3

1. What is meant by focus in Arabic sentences?
2. How does word order shift emphasis between subject and action?
3. Why might speakers adjust word order in casual conversation?
4. Give one example of how word order differs between everyday speech and formal style.
5. How is word order used differently in headlines compared to reports in modern media?

2.4 Comparative Perspectives

Arabic word order can be better appreciated when compared with other languages and dialects. By examining how Arabic differs from English and how it varies across Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and colloquial dialects, learners gain a clearer understanding of its unique flexibility and communicative power. This Part will highlight these comparative perspectives to deepen your grasp of Arabic sentence structure.



2.4.1 Word order in Arabic vs English

Word order refers to the arrangement of subject, verb, and object in a sentence. In English, the typical order is **Subject–Verb–Object (SVO)**, while in Arabic, the default order is often **Verb–Subject–Object (VSO)**. However, Arabic allows variation depending on emphasis, style, or context.

Example:

- English: *The student wrote the lesson.* (SVO)
- Arabic: *كتب الطالب الدرس* (*kataba al-ṭālibu al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”) → VSO.
- Arabic alternative: *الطالب كتب الدرس* (*al-ṭālibu kataba al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”) → SVO.

Fill in the blank: The typical word order in English is _____, while the default order in Arabic is often _____.

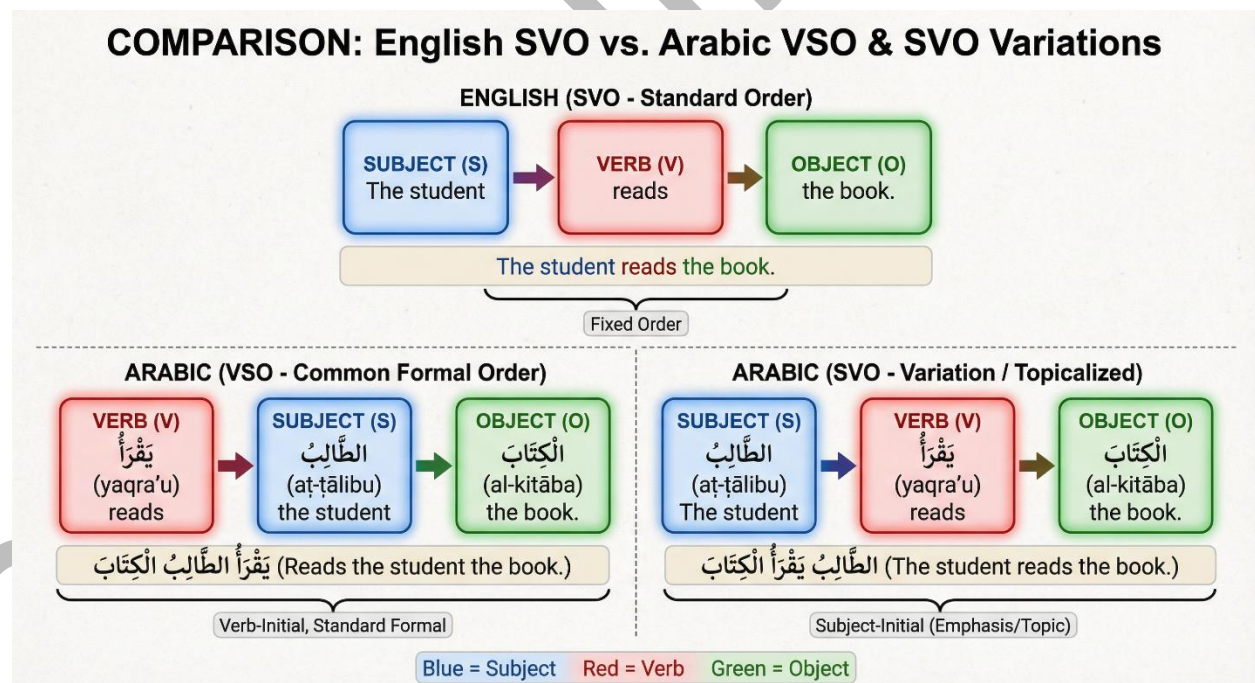


Figure 2.5 Comparison of English and Arabic word order



2.4.2 Cross-dialectal variations (MSA vs colloquial)

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the formal variety of Arabic used in writing, education, and media. **Colloquial Arabic** refers to spoken dialects used in everyday communication. Word order in MSA tends to follow classical rules, often preferring VSO, while colloquial dialects frequently adopt SVO for simplicity and clarity.

Example:

- MSA: قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*qara 'a al-tālibu al-kitāba*, “The student read the book”) → VSO.
- Colloquial (e.g., Egyptian Arabic): الطالب قرأ الكتاب (*al-tālib qara al-kitāb*, “The student read the book”) → SVO.

Fill in the blank: In Modern Standard Arabic, the preferred word order is often _____, while in colloquial dialects it is frequently _____.

Context	Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)	Colloquial Arabic	Translation	Explanation
Nominal Sentence	الْبَيْتُ كَبِيرٌ	الْبَيْتُ كَبِير	The house is big.	MSA uses full case endings (ـُ, ـٌ, ـٍ), while colloquial drops them for simplicity.
Verbal Sentence (Verb–Subject–Object)	كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ	الطَّالِبُ كَتَبَ الدَّرْسَ	The student wrote the lesson.	MSA prefers verb–subject–object order; colloquial often shifts to subject–verb–object.
Negation	لَيْسَ الْكِتَابُ جَدِيدًا	الْكِتَابُ مِشْ جَدِيد	The book is not new.	MSA uses <i>laysa</i> with case endings; colloquial uses <i>mish</i> or <i>ma...sh</i> .



Future Tense	سَوْفَ أَذْهَبُ إِلَى السُّوقِ	خَارُوجَ السُّوقِ	<i>I will go to the market.</i>	<i>MSA uses sawfa or sa- prefix; colloquial uses ha- or rah.</i>
Questions	هَلْ ذَهَبْتَ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ؟	رَحْتَ الْمَدْرَسَةِ؟	<i>Did you go to school?</i>	<i>MSA uses interrogative particle hal; colloquial drops it and relies on intonation.</i>

Table 2.2 Word order in Modern Standard Arabic versus colloquial dialects

Pilot Questions 2.4

1. What is the typical word order in English sentences?
2. What is the default word order in Arabic?
3. How does Arabic word order differ from English word order?
4. Which variety of Arabic tends to follow classical rules of word order?
5. How does word order in colloquial Arabic differ from Modern Standard Arabic?

Series Summary

This Series has focused on the elements and factors that influence word order in Arabic, showing how meaning, emphasis, and clarity are shaped by grammatical rules, stylistic choices, communicative needs, and comparative perspectives. Its purpose has been to help you appreciate the flexibility of Arabic sentence structure and to equip you with practical skills for analysing and applying these variations in different contexts.

We began with grammatical factors, examining subject–verb agreement, case endings, and the role of particles. We then explored stylistic and rhetorical influences, including emphasis, poetry, and Qur’anic variation. Following that, we considered semantic and communicative aspects such



as shifting focus, pragmatic choices in conversation, and usage in modern media. Finally, we compared Arabic word order with English and highlighted differences between Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial dialects. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to define and explain these influences, analyse their impact on sentence construction, apply them in practical contexts, and evaluate how Arabic word order contrasts with other languages and dialects.

Glossary of Terms

Accusative case

A grammatical ending in Arabic (-a) that marks the object of a verb or the predicate of certain particles.

Case endings

Short vowel marks added to the end of words in Arabic to indicate their grammatical role, such as subject, object, or word following a preposition.

Colloquial Arabic

The everyday spoken varieties of Arabic used in different regions, often differing from Modern Standard Arabic in word order and vocabulary.

Emphasis

A stylistic device in Arabic where word order is changed to highlight a particular word or idea.

Focus

The part of a sentence that is given special attention by the speaker, often achieved by reordering subject, verb, or object.

Genitive case

A grammatical ending in Arabic (-i) that marks words following prepositions or shows possession.



Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

The formal variety of Arabic used in writing, education, and media, closely following classical grammatical rules.

Nominative case

A grammatical ending in Arabic (-u) that marks the subject of a sentence.

Particles

Words such as *inna* (“indeed”) or *kāna* (“was”) that modify sentence structure by changing the case of the subject or predicate.

Pragmatics

The study of how language is used in real-life communication, including choices of word order to suit context, politeness, or clarity.

Predicate

The part of a sentence that describes the subject, often affected by particles like *kāna*.

Rhetoric

The art of using language effectively and persuasively, often involving deliberate variation of word order for impact.

Subject–verb agreement

The rule in Arabic that the verb must match the subject in gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular, dual, or plural).

Verb–Subject–Object (VSO)

A common word order in Arabic where the verb comes first, followed by the subject and then the object.

Word order

The arrangement of words in a sentence, which in Arabic can vary depending on grammar, style, meaning, or context.



Objective Questions

1. Identify the typical word order in English sentences. (Linked to SLO 2.8)
2. Define the term *case endings* in Arabic grammar. (Linked to SLO 2.2)
3. Which particle makes the subject accusative in Arabic sentences? (Linked to SLO 2.3)
4. Recognise the preferred word order in Modern Standard Arabic. (Linked to SLO 2.8)
5. State the grammatical ending that marks the subject in Arabic sentences. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

Short-Answer Questions

6. Explain how subject–verb agreement influences word order in Arabic. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
7. Describe one way emphasis can be achieved through reordering in Arabic sentences. (Linked to SLO 2.4)
8. Give an example of how word order differs between everyday speech and formal style in Arabic. (Linked to SLO 2.6)
9. Illustrate how headlines in modern Arabic media use word order to emphasise action. (Linked to SLO 2.7)
10. Compare the use of word order in poetry and rhetoric. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

Long-Answer Questions

11. Analyse the role of particles such as *inna* and *kāna* in altering sentence structure, providing examples. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
12. Evaluate how semantic and communicative considerations shape word order in Arabic conversation and media. (Linked to SLO 2.6, SLO 2.7)
13. Assess the differences between Arabic and English word order, and discuss how these differences affect translation. (Linked to SLO 2.8)



Objective Questions

1. Subject–Verb–Object (SVO).
2. Case endings are short vowel marks that indicate grammatical roles such as subject, object, or predicate.
3. *Inna*.
4. Verb–Subject–Object (VSO).
5. Nominative case (-u).

Short-Answer Questions

6. Subject–verb agreement ensures the verb matches the subject in gender and number, guiding correct word order.
7. Emphasis can be achieved by placing the object before the verb, highlighting it as the focus.
8. Everyday speech often uses SVO for clarity, while formal style prefers VSO for grammatical precision.
9. Headlines frequently begin with the verb to emphasise the action being reported.
10. Poetry may vary word order to fit metre or rhyme, while rhetoric uses reordering for persuasive effect.

Long-Answer Questions

11. **Basic response:** Particles such as *inna* make the subject accusative, while *kāna* keeps the subject nominative but makes the predicate accusative. These changes alter sentence structure and highlight emphasis or tense.

Value-added response: Beyond these examples, other particles like *laysa* and *la 'alla* also influence case endings and meaning. Analysing their role shows how particles provide nuance in emphasis, negation, and supplication.

12. **Basic response:** Semantic and communicative considerations shape word order by shifting focus between subject and action, adjusting for clarity in conversation, and emphasising action in media headlines.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note that these choices reflect broader



pragmatic strategies, such as topic–comment structures, politeness strategies, and audience engagement, which are common across languages but uniquely realised in Arabic.

13. **Basic response:** Arabic often uses VSO, while English uses SVO. This difference affects translation because direct word-for-word rendering may distort meaning or emphasis.

Value-added response: Advanced learners may discuss how translators must balance fidelity to Arabic structure with readability in English, sometimes preserving emphasis through reordering or stylistic devices, especially in literary or Qur’anic texts.



Part 2.1 Grammatical Factors in Word Order

- The subject.
- The nominative ending (-u).
- They show whether a word is the subject, object, or predicate.
- *Inna* makes the subject accusative.
- *Kāna* makes the predicate accusative.

Part 2.2 Stylistic and Rhetorical Influences

- By reordering words in a sentence.
- The metre.
- To capture attention or make speech more persuasive.
- *Iyyāka na 'budu wa-ıyyāka nasta 'ın* ("You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help").
- It highlights the object as the focus of the sentence.

Part 2.3 Semantic and Communicative Considerations

- The subject.
- Placing the subject first emphasises the doer, while placing the verb first emphasises the action.
- To highlight new information, maintain politeness, or ensure clarity.
- Everyday speech uses SVO, while formal style prefers VSO.
- Headlines often begin with the verb.

Part 2.4 Comparative Perspectives

- Subject–Verb–Object (SVO).
- Verb–Subject–Object (VSO).
- Arabic often uses VSO, while English uses SVO.
- Modern Standard Arabic.
- Colloquial Arabic frequently uses SVO instead of VSO.



General References

- Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holes, C. (2018). *Modern Arabic: Structures, Functions, and Varieties*. Routledge.
- Badawi, E., Carter, M. G., & Gully, A. (2016). *Modern Written Arabic: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Routledge.
- Quranic examples cited are from the *Mushaf al-Madina* (King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an).

Illustrations

- *Figure 2.1 Subject–verb agreement in Arabic sentences*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing subject–verb agreement in Arabic sentences with masculine and feminine examples.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic subject verb agreement diagram OER”.
- *Figure 2.2 Case endings and their impact on word order*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing nominative, accusative, and genitive case endings in Arabic sentences.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic case endings nominative accusative genitive diagram OER”.
- *Box 2.1 Examples of particles affecting word order*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising the role of particles (inna, kana, etc.) in Arabic word order with examples.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic particles inna kana effect on word order OER”.
- *Figure 2.3 Emphasis through reordering in Arabic sentences*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing emphasis in Arabic sentences by reordering subject, verb, and object.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic emphasis word order diagram OER”.
- *Plate 2.1 Word order variation in Arabic poetry*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate an image of a classical Arabic manuscript showing poetic verses with varied word order.”



- Suggested OER search string: “Arabic poetry manuscript word order OER”.
- *Box 2.2 Examples of Qur’anic word order variation*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of Qur’anic word order variations with explanations.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Qur’an word order variation examples OER”.
- *Figure 2.4 Shifting focus in Arabic sentences*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing how Arabic word order shifts focus between subject and action.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic word order focus subject verb diagram OER”.
- *Box 2.3 Pragmatic choices in Arabic conversation*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising pragmatic choices in Arabic conversation with examples.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic pragmatics word order conversation examples OER”.
- *Table 2.1 Word order in headlines versus reports*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table comparing word order in Arabic headlines and reports with examples.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic word order headlines vs reports OER”.
- *Figure 2.5 Comparison of English and Arabic word order*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram comparing English SVO word order with Arabic VSO and SVO variations.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic vs English word order diagram OER”.
- *Table 2.2 Word order in Modern Standard Arabic versus colloquial dialects*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table comparing word order in Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial Arabic with examples.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic word order MSA vs colloquial dialects OER”.



Series 3: Subjunctive Words and Appositives (al-Mansūbāt & at-Tawābi')

Part 3.1 Subjunctive nouns (al-Mansūbāt al-asmā')

- 3.1.1 Objects of verbs (direct object, cognate object)
- 3.1.2 Adverbials of time and place
- 3.1.3 Vocatives (*yā* + *noun*)

Part 3.2 Subjunctive verbs (al-Mansūbāt al-af'āl)

- 3.2.1 Verbs in the subjunctive mood (after particles like *lan*, *kay*)
- 3.2.2 Examples from Qur'anic and literary usage

Part 3.3 Appositives (at-Tawābi')

- 3.3.1 Conjuncts (coordinated words)
- 3.3.2 Apposition (renaming or clarifying nouns)
- 3.3.3 Emphasis and specification

Part 3.4 Integrative applications

- 3.4.1 Analysing sentences with multiple subjunctive forms
- 3.4.2 Identifying appositives in authentic texts

Introduction

In the last Series, we examined the factors that influence word order in Arabic, including grammatical rules, stylistic choices, and communicative needs. Building on that foundation, we now turn to an equally important area of Arabic grammar: the **subjunctive forms (al-Mansūbāt)** and **appositives (at-Tawābi')**.

These elements are central to understanding how Arabic sentences are structured, as they determine how words relate to one another and how meaning is clarified or emphasised. Mastering them will give you



greater confidence in both reading classical texts and constructing accurate sentences in Modern Standard Arabic.

The aim of this Series is to introduce you to the main categories of subjunctive forms and appositives, and to equip you with the ability to identify, explain, and apply them in practical contexts. By the end of this Series, you should be able to analyse sentences containing these structures and demonstrate how they function to shape meaning.

We shall commence this Series by exploring **subjunctive nouns**, focusing on objects of verbs, adverbials of time and place, and vocatives. Next, we will move on to **subjunctive verbs**, examining how particles such as *lan* and *kay* affect verb forms, with examples drawn from Qur'anic and literary usage. Following that, we will study **appositives**, including conjuncts, renaming structures, and emphasis. Finally, we will bring the Series to a close with **integrative applications**, where you will practise analysing sentences that combine multiple subjunctive forms and appositives, and identify them in authentic Arabic texts.

Series Learning Outcomes

Series 3: Subjunctive Forms and Appositives in Arabic

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 3.1** define the main categories of subjunctive nouns (*al-Mansūbāt al-asmā'*) such as objects, adverbials, and vocatives.
- **SLO 3.2** explain how objects of verbs function in Arabic sentences and identify their case endings.
- **SLO 3.3** demonstrate the use of adverbials of time and place in constructing sentences.
- **SLO 3.4** apply vocative structures (*yā + noun*) correctly in both formal and conversational contexts.
- **SLO 3.5** describe the role of particles such as *lan* and *kay* in forming subjunctive verbs.
- **SLO 3.6** analyse examples of subjunctive verbs from Qur'anic and literary texts.
- **SLO 3.7** define appositives (*at-Tawābi'*) and explain their grammatical function in Arabic.
- **SLO 3.8** identify and illustrate conjuncts, apposition, and emphasis within sentences.
- **SLO 3.9** evaluate authentic Arabic sentences that combine multiple subjunctive forms and appositives.



3.1 Subjunctive Nouns (al-Mansūbāt al-asmā')

In Arabic grammar, **subjunctive nouns** are those that take the **accusative case ending (-a)** due to their grammatical role in the sentence. These nouns are grouped under *al-Mansūbāt al-asmā'* and include objects of verbs, adverbials of time and place, and vocatives. Understanding these categories is essential because they show how meaning is clarified and emphasis is achieved in Arabic sentences.

3.1.1 Objects of verbs (direct object, cognate object)

An **object of a verb** is the noun that receives the action of the verb. In Arabic, it usually takes the accusative ending (-a). For example:

- قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*qara 'a al-ṭālibu al-kitāba*, “The student read the book”).
Here, الكتاب (*al-kitāba*) is the direct object.

A **cognate object** is a noun derived from the same root as the verb, used to emphasise the action. For example:

- ابتسم ابتساماً (*ibtasama ibtisāmatan*, “He smiled a smile”).

Fill in the blank: The direct object of a verb in Arabic usually takes the _____ ending.



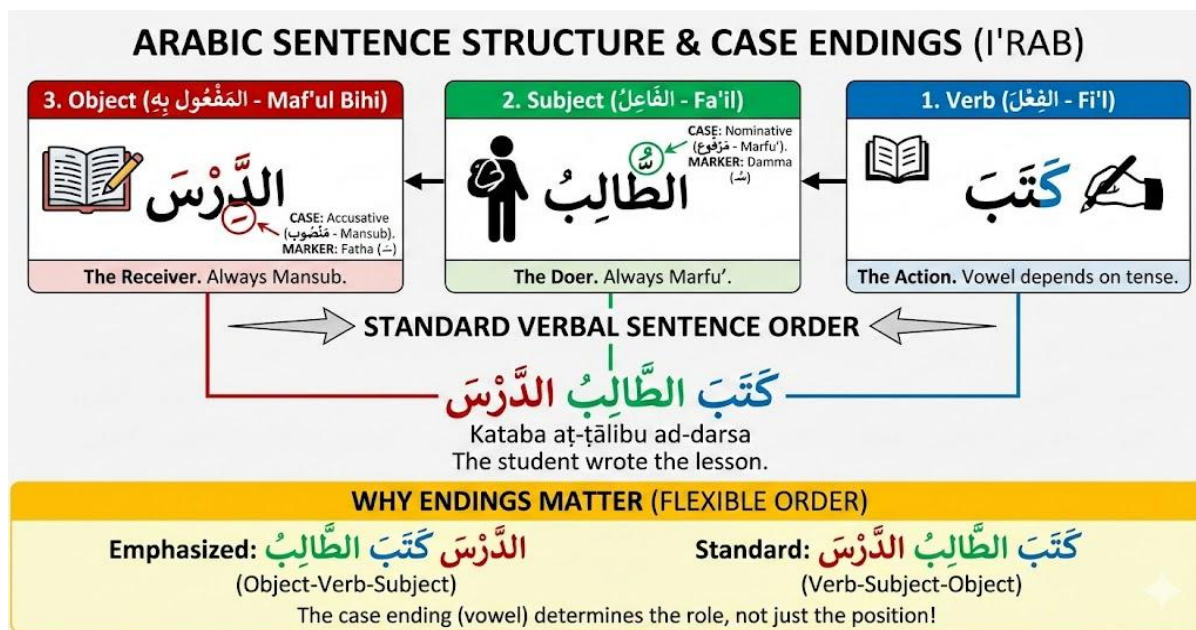


Figure 3.1 Direct and cognate objects in Arabic sentences

3.1.2 Adverbials of time and place

Adverbials of time and place are nouns that specify when or where an action occurs. They also take the accusative ending.

Examples:

- سافرتُ يومَ الجمعةِ (sāfartu yawma al-jum'ati, "I travelled on Friday").
- جلستُ أمامَ البيتِ (jalastu amāma al-bayti, "I sat in front of the house").

Fill in the blank: Adverbials of time and place in Arabic take the _____ case ending.

Category	Arabic	Transliteration	English Translation
Time (زَمَان)	اليَوْمَ	al-yawma	Today
	أَمْسٍ	amsi	Yesterday



Category	Arabic	Transliteration	English Translation
	غَدًا	<i>ghadan</i>	Tomorrow
	الآن	<i>al-āna</i>	Now
	صَبَاحًا	<i>ṣabāḥan</i>	In the morning
	مَسَاءً	<i>masā'an</i>	In the evening
	لَيْلًا	<i>laylan</i>	At night
	نَهَارًا	<i>nahāran</i>	During the day / daytime
	قَبْلَ	<i>qabla</i>	Before
	بَعْدَ	<i>ba'da</i>	After
	دَائِمًا	<i>dā'iman</i>	Always
	أَحْيَانًا	<i>'ahyānan</i>	Sometimes
	أَبَدًا	<i>abadan</i>	Never / Forever
	حِينَ	<i>hīna</i>	When / At the time of
Place (مكان)	أَمَامَ	<i>amāma</i>	In front of
	خَلْفَ / وَرَاءَ	<i>khalfā / warā'a</i>	Behind
	فَوْقَ	<i>fawqa</i>	Above / On top of
	تَحْتَ	<i>taḥta</i>	Under / Below
	بَيْنَ	<i>bayna</i>	Between



Category	Arabic	Transliteration	English Translation
	عِنْدَ	<i>inda</i>	At / Near / With
	هُنَا	<i>hunā</i>	Here
	هُنَاكَ	<i>hunāka</i>	There
	حَوْلَ	<i>ḥawla</i>	Around
	دَاخِلَ	<i>dākhila</i>	Inside
	خَارِجَ	<i>khārija</i>	Outside
	يَمِينِ	<i>yamīna</i>	To the right of
	يَسَارَ / شِمَالِ	<i>yasāra / shimāla</i>	To the left of

Table 3.1 Examples of adverbials of time and place

3.1.3 Vocatives (yā + noun)

A **vocative** is a noun used when calling or addressing someone directly. In Arabic, vocatives are introduced by the particle **yā** and usually take the accusative ending.

Example:

- يَا طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ (*yā ṭāliba al-‘ilmi*, “O seeker of knowledge”).

Vocatives are important in both everyday speech and classical texts, as they express direct address and emphasis.

Fill in the blank: Vocatives in Arabic are introduced by the particle _____.



SUMMARY: VOCATIVES IN ARABIC (AL-NIDAA')

The vocative case (النِّدَاءُ, *al-nidaa'*) in Arabic is used to call or address someone directly. The most common vocative particle is يَا (Yā), equivalent to 'O' or 'Hey'. Other particles exist for calling someone near (e.g., إِيّا, 'a), far (e.g., أَيَّاهُ, 'ayā; هَآيَا, hayā), or for lamentation (وَآ, wā). A special rule applies when addressing a noun with the definite article 'ال' (al-), requiring the insertion of أَئِنَّهَا ('ayyuhā) for masculine or أَئِنَّهَا ('ayyatuhā) for feminine after 'Yā'. The grammatical case of the addressed noun (*al-munādā*) changes based on its type.

EXAMPLES WITH TRANSLATIONS:

1. Proper Nouns & Basic Calls (Nominative)

- يَا مُحَمَّدُ (Yā Muḥammadu) - O Muhammad
- يَا فَاطِمَةُ (Yā Fāṭimatu) - O Fatima
- يَا رَجُلُ (Yā rajulu) - O man (specific intended)

2. Definite Nouns with 'al-' (using ayyuhā/ayyatuhā)

- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ (Yā 'ayyuhā n-nāsu) - O mankind / O people
- يَا أَيُّهَا فَاطِمَةُ (Yā fāṭimu) - O Fatima
- يَا مُطْمَئِنَّةً (Yā rajulu) - O nonaarrnmml
- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ (Yā 'ayyatuhā n-nafsu l-muṭma'innatu) - O reassured soul
- يَا غَيْبُ النَّاسِ (Yā 'ayyuhā nāsu) - O mankind
- يَا رَسُولَ (Yā rasūlu) - O messenger
- يَا صَدِيقِي (Yā ṣadīqī) - O my friend

3. Possessive/Annexed Phrases (Accusative)

- يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ (Yā 'abda-llāhi) - O servant of Allah
- يَا رَسُولَ (Yā rasūla-llāhi) - O Messenger of Allah (Abdullah)
- يَا رَحْمَ اللَّهِ ('Allah)
- يَا صَدِيقِي (Yā ṣadīqī) - O my friend

4. Indefinite Nouns (Accusative)

- يَا رَجُلًا (Yā rajulan) - O man (any unspecified man)
- يَا غَافِلًا (Yā ghāfilan) - O heedless one
- يَا غَافِلًا (Yā ghāfilan) - O heedless one

Box 3.1 Examples of vocatives in Arabic

Pilot Questions 3.1

1. What case ending do objects of verbs usually take in Arabic?
2. What is a cognate object, and how does it function in a sentence?
3. Give one example of an adverbial of time in Arabic.
4. How are vocatives introduced in Arabic sentences?
5. Why are subjunctive nouns important for understanding sentence meaning?

3.2 Subjunctive Verbs (al-Mansūbāt al-af'āl)

In Arabic grammar, **subjunctive verbs** are verbs that take a special form when preceded by certain particles. The subjunctive mood is marked by the removal of the final vowel *-u* (present tense indicative) and its replacement with *-a*. These changes are triggered by specific particles such as **lan** (meaning “will not”) and **kay** (meaning “so that”). Recognising these forms is essential for understanding how Arabic expresses purpose, negation, and emphasis.



3.2.1 Verbs in the subjunctive mood (after particles like lan, kay)

The **subjunctive mood** in Arabic is used to express negation of the future, purpose, or intention. It is formed by placing certain particles before the verb.

- **Lan:** This particle negates future actions. Example:

لَنْ يَذْهَبَ الطَّالِبُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ (lan yadhhaba al-ṭālibu ilā al-madrasa, “The student will not go to school”).

Here, the verb يَذْهَبُ (yadhhaba) is in the subjunctive form.

- **Kay:** This particle expresses purpose. Example:

يُذَكِّرُ الطَّالِبُ كَيْ يَنْجَحَ (yudhākiru al-ṭālibu kay yanjaha, “The student studies so that he may succeed”).

Here, the verb يَنْجَحُ (yanjaha) is in the subjunctive form.

Fill in the blank: The particle _____ is used to express purpose, while the particle _____ is used to negate the future.

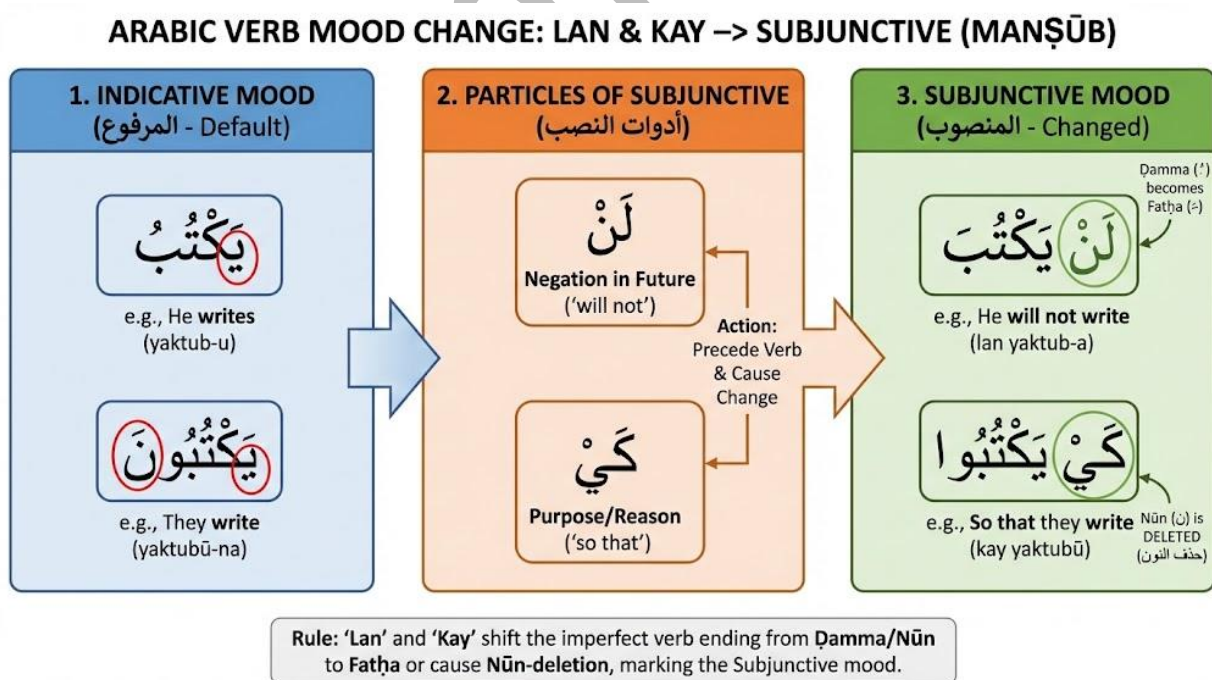


Figure 3.2 Subjunctive verb forms after particles



3.2.2 Examples from Qur'anic and literary usage

The subjunctive mood is frequently used in the Qur'an and Arabic literature to convey emphasis and divine purpose.

Example from the Qur'an:

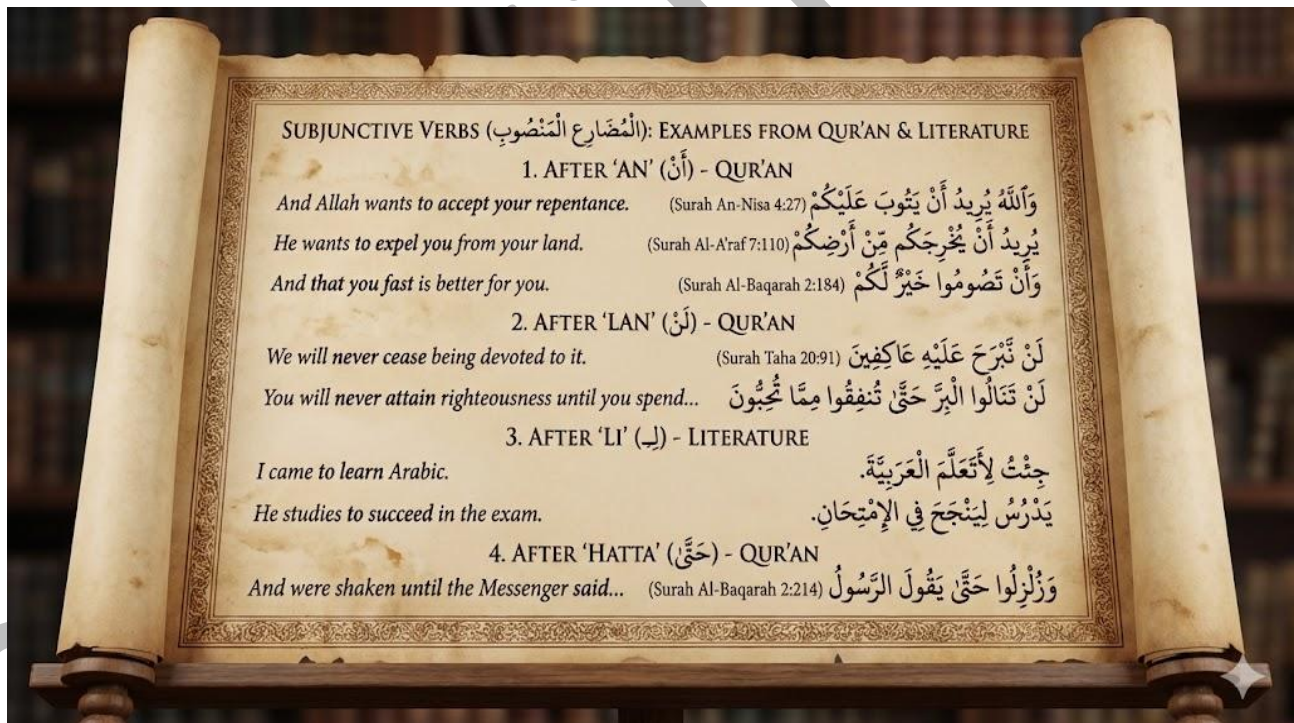
لكيلا تأسوا على ما فاتكم (*li-kay lā ta 'saw 'alā mā fātakum*, “So that you may not grieve over what has passed you”).

Here, *تأسوا* (*ta 'saw*) is in the subjunctive form after *kay*.

Example from literature:

لن يترك الشاعر قلمه حتى يكتب الحقيقة (*lan yatruka al-shā 'iru qalamahu ḥattā yaktuba al-ḥaqīqata*, “The poet will not leave his pen until he writes the truth”).

Fill in the blank: In Qur'anic style, the particle _____ is often used to introduce purpose clauses.



Box 3.2 Examples of subjunctive verbs in Qur'anic and literary texts

Pilot Questions 3.2



1. What case ending marks verbs in the subjunctive mood?
2. Which particle is used to negate future actions in Arabic?
3. Which particle is used to express purpose in Arabic sentences?
4. Give one example of a subjunctive verb from the Qur'an.
5. Why is the subjunctive mood important in Arabic grammar?

3.3 Appositives (at-Tawābi‘)

In Arabic grammar, **appositives** (*at-Tawābi‘*) are words that follow another word to clarify, emphasise, or connect meaning. They take the same grammatical case as the word they follow, ensuring harmony in sentence structure. Appositives include conjuncts, apposition, and emphasis. Mastering these forms helps you recognise how Arabic builds precision and stylistic richness in both spoken and written texts.

3.3.1 Conjuncts (coordinated words)

A **conjunct** is a word joined to another by a coordinating particle such as **wa** (“and”) or **aw** (“or”). The conjunct always matches the grammatical case of the word it is linked to.

Example:

- جاء الطالب والمعلم (*jā ‘a al-tālibu wa-al-mu‘allimu*, “The student and the teacher came”).

Here, both *الطالب* and *المعلم* are nominative because they are subjects.

Fill in the blank: Conjuncts in Arabic are linked by particles such as _____ or _____.



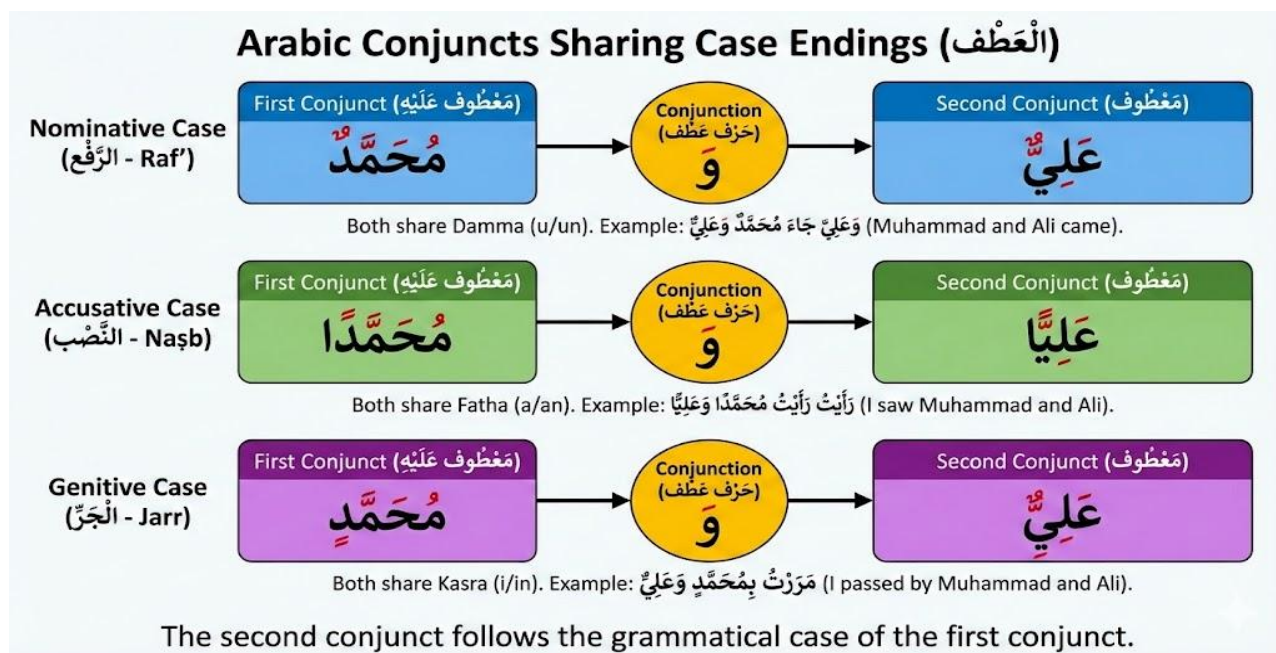


Figure 3.3 Conjuncts in Arabic grammar

3.3.2 Apposition (renaming or clarifying nouns)

Apposition occurs when a second noun follows the first to rename or clarify it. The appositive matches the case of the noun it explains.

Example:

- زار الخليفة عمر بن الخطاب (zāra al-khalīfatu 'Umaru ibn al-Khaṭṭābi, "The Caliph, Umar ibn al-Khattab, visited").
Here, عمر بن الخطاب renames الخليفة.

Fill in the blank: In apposition, the second noun must take the same _____ as the first noun.

Arabic Sentence	English Translation	Type of Badal (Apposition)	Explanation
جاء الخليفة عمر	The Caliph Umar came.	بَدَلُ كُلِّ مِنْ كُلِّ	"Umar" is identical to "The Caliph". The second noun fully replaces the first.



Arabic Sentence	English Translation	Type of Badal (Apposition)	Explanation
		(Total Substitute)	
أَكَلْتُ الرِّغِيفَ نِصْفَهُ	I ate the loaf, half of it.	بَدَلُ بَعْضٍ مِنْ كُلِّ (Partial Substitute)	"Half of it" is a concrete, physical part of "the loaf".
أَعْجَبَنِي الْمُعَلِّمُ عِلْمُهُ	The teacher impressed me, his knowledge.	بَدَلُ اشْتِمَالٍ (Inclusive Substitute)	"His knowledge" is an abstract quality relating to or included in "the teacher," not a physical part.
رَأَيْتُ زَيْدًا الْفَرَسَ	I saw Zaid, a horse.	بَدَلُ غَلْطٍ (Substitute of Error)	The speaker mistakenly said "Zaid" and immediately corrected it with "a horse".

Table 3.2 Examples of apposition in Arabic sentences

3.3.3 Emphasis and specification

Emphasis in Arabic appositives involves repeating a word or phrase to strengthen meaning.

Specification clarifies a general noun by following it with a more specific one. Both forms follow the case of the original word.

Examples:



- Emphasis: جاء الطالب الطالب (jā'a al-ṭālibu al-ṭālibu, "The student, the student came").
- Specification: أكرمت الطالب زيداً (akramtu al-ṭāliba Zaydan, "I honoured the student, Zayd").

Fill in the blank: In specification, the second noun clarifies the _____ of the first noun.

SUMMARY: EMPHASIS & SPECIFICATION IN ARABIC APPOSITIVES (التَّابِع)

1. Emphasis (التَّوَكِيد - al-Tawkīd)

- Self/Selfsame: جاء الأستاذ نفسه (jā'a al-ustādh nafsuḥu) - The professor **himself** came.
- All/Entire: قرأت الكتاب كله (qara'tu al-kitāb kullahu) - I read the **entire** book.
- Both: رأيت الرجلين كليهما (ra'aytu al-rajulayn kilayhimā) - I saw **both** men.

2. Specification/Substitution (الْبَدَل - al-Badal)

- Complete (Identical): هذا الطبيب أحمد (hādhā aṭ-ṭabīb Aḥmadu) - This is the doctor, **Ahmad**.
- Partial (Part of Whole): أكلت الرغيف نصفه (akaltu ar-raghīf niṣfahu) - I ate the loaf, **half of it**.
- Inclusive (Quality/Attribute): أعجبتني الأستاذ علمه (a'jabani al-ustādh 'ilmuhu) - The professor amazed me, **his knowledge**.

Box 3.3 Examples of emphasis and specification in Arabic appositives

Pilot Questions 3.3

1. What particles are used to link conjuncts in Arabic?
2. How does apposition function in Arabic sentences?
3. Give one example of emphasis in Arabic appositives.
4. What is specification, and how does it clarify meaning?
5. Why must appositives match the case of the word they follow?

3.4 Integrative Applications



This Part consolidates your learning on **subjunctive nouns**, **subjunctive verbs**, and **appositives** by showing how they interact in authentic Arabic sentences. By analysing and practising these structures together, you will strengthen your ability to interpret complex texts and construct accurate sentences.

3.4.1 Analysing sentences with multiple subjunctive forms

In authentic Arabic, sentences often contain more than one **subjunctive form**. For example, a verb may be in the subjunctive mood while the sentence also includes an object in the accusative case and an adverbial of time.

Example:

- لن يقرأ الطالب الكتاب يوم الجمعة (*lan yaqra'a al-ṭālibu al-kitāba yawma al-jum'ati*, “The student will not read the book on Friday”).

Here, يقرأ (*yaqra'a*) is a subjunctive verb after *lan*, الكتاب (*al-kitāba*) is a direct object, and يوم الجمعة (*yawma al-jum'ati*) is an adverbial of time.

Fill in the blank: The verb يقرأ is subjunctive because it follows the particle _____.



MULTIPLE SUBJUNCTIVE FORMS IN AN ARABIC SENTENCE

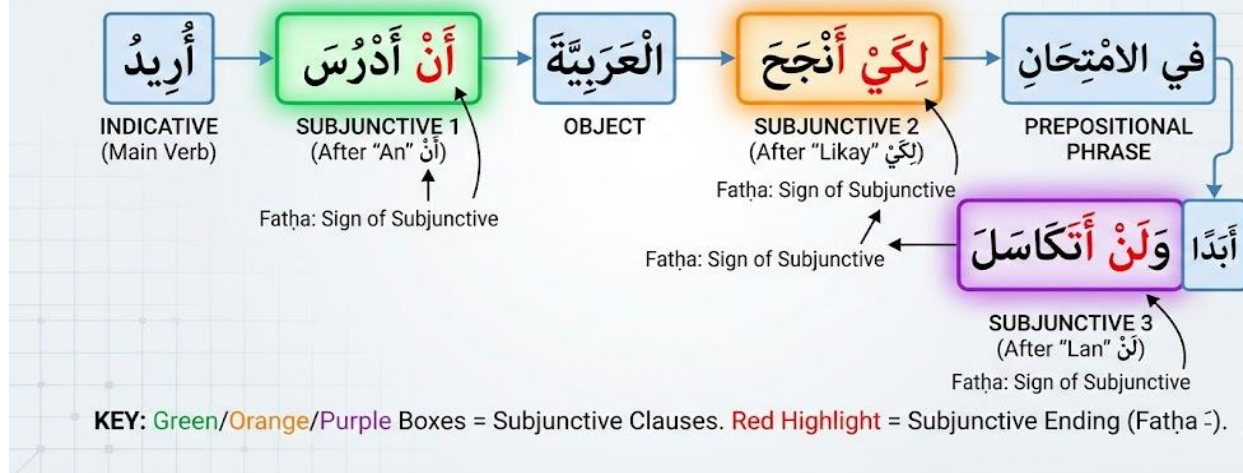


Figure 3.4 Sentence analysis with multiple subjunctive forms

3.4.2 Identifying appositives in authentic texts

Appositives are words that clarify or emphasise another word, and they often appear alongside subjunctive forms. Recognising them helps you interpret sentences more accurately.

Example:

- أكرمت الطالب زيدا ابن المعلم (akramtu al-ṭāliba Zaydan ibn al-mu'allimi, "I honoured the student, Zayd, the son of the teacher").
Here, **زيدا** (Zaydan) is an appositive clarifying **الطالب** (al-ṭāliba), and **ابن المعلم** (ibn al-mu'allimi) further specifies Zayd.

Fill in the blank: In the example above, the word **زيدا** functions as an _____ to clarify **الطالب**.



Arabic Sentence	Transliteration	English Translation	Grammatical Analysis
قَابَلْتُ الْمُهَنْدِسَ عَلِيًّا.	Qābaltu al- muhandisa 'aliyyan.	I met the engineer, Ali.	Subjunctive Noun: الْمُهَنْدِسَ (the engineer) is the direct object (مَفْعُولٌ بِهِ), marked with a <i>fatha</i>. Appositive: عَلِيًّا (Ali) is a matching appositive (بَدَلٌ لِّمَنْ كُنَّ) clarifying who the engineer is. It is also in the subjunctive case, marked with <i>fatha tanwīn</i>.
إِنَّ الْقَائِدَ خَالِدًا شُجَاعًا.	Inna al-qā'ida Khālidan shujā'un.	Indeed, the commander, Khalid, is brave.	Subjunctive Noun: الْقَائِدَ (the commander) is the noun following the particle <i>inna</i> (إِنَّ), marked with a <i>fatha</i>. Appositive: خَالِدًا (Khalid) is a matching appositive. It takes the same subjunctive case as the noun it follows.
أَكَلْتُ الرَّغِيفَ ثُلُثَهُ.	Akaltu al-raghīfa thuluthahu.	I ate the loaf of bread, a third of it.	Subjunctive Noun: الرَّغِيفَ (the loaf) is the direct object. Appositive: ثُلُثَهُ (a third of it) is a partial appositive (بَدَلٌ لِّبَعْضِ مَنْ كُنَّ). The noun ثُلُثُ is in the subjunctive case to match the loaf, and the pronoun هُ refers back to it.



Arabic Sentence	Transliteration	English Translation	Grammatical Analysis
أَحَبَبْتُ الطَّالِبَ أَدَبَهُ.	Aḥbabbtu al-ṭālība adabahu.	I liked the student, his manners.	Subjunctive Noun: الطَّالِبَ (the student) is the direct object. Appositive: أَدَبُهُ (his manners) is an inclusive appositive (بَدَلِ اشْتِمَالٍ), representing a quality of the student. The noun أَدَب is in the subjunctive case to agree with the student.
زُرْتُ الْمَدِينَةَ الْقَاهِرَةَ.	Zurtu al-madīnata al-Qāhirata.	I visited the city, Cairo.	Subjunctive Noun: الْمَدِينَةَ (the city) is the direct object. Appositive: الْقَاهِرَةَ (Cairo) is a matching appositive, clarifying which city was visited and taking the same subjunctive case.

Table 3.3 Examples of appositives combined with subjunctive nouns

3.4.3 Practice with integrated structures

To consolidate your learning, it is important to practise identifying and constructing sentences that combine subjunctive nouns, subjunctive verbs, and appositives. This will strengthen your ability to analyse authentic texts and produce grammatically accurate sentences.

Example:



- لن يكتب الشاعر القصيدة قصيدة طويلة حتى يوضح الفكرة (lan yaktuba al-shā'iru al-qaṣīdah qaṣīdatan ṭawīlatan ḥattā yuwaddiḥa al-fikrata, "The poet will not write the poem, a long poem, until he explains the idea").

This sentence includes a subjunctive verb (يكتب), a direct object (القصيدة), a cognate object (قصيدة طويلة), and another subjunctive verb (يوضح) after حتى.

Fill in the blank: The cognate object قصيدة طويلة emphasises the action of _____.

Practice Sentences: Subjunctive Verbs, Accusative Nouns, and Appositives

This summary provides practice sentences that bring together three key grammatical elements in Arabic: a **subjunctive verb** (فعل مضارع منصوب) preceded by a particle like أن or أن, an **accusative noun** (اسم منصوب) functioning as the direct object, and an **appositive** (بذل) which follows the noun and matches its accusative case.

- أريد أن أزور المدينة القاهرة.
English: I wish to visit the city, Cairo.
Analysis: The verb أزور (to visit) is subjunctive due to the particle أن. The noun المدينة (the city) is the direct object in the accusative case. القاهرة (Cairo) is a total appositive (بذل من كل) for 'the city', so it is also in the accusative case.
- لن أقرأ الكتاب إلا فصله الأول.
English: I will not read the book except for its first chapter.
Analysis: The verb أقرأ (read) is made subjunctive by لن. The noun الكتاب (the book) is the direct object. فصله (its chapter) acts as a partial appositive (بذل بعض من كل) for 'the book' and is in the accusative case.
- يسرني أن أقابل صديقك زيداً.
English: It pleases me to meet your friend, Zaid.
Analysis: The verb أقابل (meet) is subjunctive because of أن. The noun phrase صديقك (your friend) is the direct object in the accusative. زيداً (Zaid) is a total appositive identifying 'your friend' and follows in the accusative case.
- جئت كي أسمع الشاعر إنشاده.
English: I came in order to hear the poet, his recitation.
Analysis: The verb أسمع (hear) is subjunctive due to كي. The noun الشاعر (the poet) is the direct object. إنشاده (his recitation) is an inclusive appositive (بذل اشتمال) representing a quality of the poet, and is in the accusative case.

Box 3.4 Integrated practice with subjunctive forms and appositives

Pilot Questions 3.4

1. Which particle makes the verb يقرأ subjunctive in the sentence لن يقرأ الطالب الكتاب يوم الجمعة?
2. How does the word زيداً function in the sentence أكرمت الطالب زيداً ابن المعلم?
3. Give one example of a sentence that combines a subjunctive verb and an appositive.
4. Why is it important to practise integrated structures in Arabic grammar?
5. What role does a cognate object play in emphasising the verb's action?



Series Summary

This Series has focused on the role of **subjunctive forms (al-Mansūbāt)** and **appositives (at-Tawābi‘)** in Arabic grammar, showing how they shape meaning, clarify relationships between words, and add emphasis in both formal and everyday usage. Its purpose has been to help you recognise these structures, understand their grammatical functions, and apply them accurately when analysing or constructing sentences.

We began with subjunctive nouns, examining objects of verbs, adverbials of time and place, and vocatives. Then we moved on to subjunctive verbs, looking at how particles such as *lan* and *kay* alter verb endings, supported by Qur’anic and literary examples. Following that, we explored appositives, including conjuncts, apposition, and emphasis or specification. Finally, we applied these concepts together in integrated practice, analysing sentences that combine multiple forms. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to define and explain these categories, demonstrate their use in context, identify them in authentic texts, and evaluate how they interact to produce clarity and emphasis in Arabic grammar.

Glossary of Terms

Accusative case

A grammatical ending in Arabic (-a) that marks nouns as objects of verbs, adverbials, or vocatives.

Adverbials of time and place

Nouns in the accusative case that specify when or where an action occurs, such as *يوم الجمعة* (“on Friday”).

Apposition

A grammatical structure where a second noun follows another to rename or clarify it, taking the same case as the first.



Appositives (at-Tawābi‘)

Words that follow another word to clarify, emphasise, or connect meaning, always matching the case of the word they follow.

Cognate object

A noun derived from the same root as the verb, used to emphasise the action, such as *ابتسم ابتسامته* (“He smiled a smile”).

Conjuncts

Words linked by coordinating particles like *wa* (“and”) or *aw* (“or”), sharing the same grammatical case.

Emphasis

A form of appositive where a word or phrase is repeated to strengthen meaning.

Particles (lan, kay, etc.)

Small words placed before verbs that change their form into the subjunctive mood, expressing negation or purpose.

Specification

A type of appositive where a general noun is clarified by a more specific one, such as *أكرمْتُ الطالبَ زيداً* (“I honoured the student, Zayd”).

Subjunctive mood

A verb form in Arabic marked by the ending (-a), used after certain particles to express negation of the future or purpose.

Subjunctive nouns (al-Mansūbāt al-asmā‘)

Nouns that take the accusative case because of their grammatical role, including objects, adverbials, and vocatives.

Subjunctive verbs (al-Mansūbāt al-af‘āl)

Verbs that take the subjunctive mood after specific particles, changing their endings to reflect purpose or negation.



Vocative

A noun used in direct address, introduced by the particle *yā*, usually taking the accusative case.

Concept Check Questions [Series 3]

Objective Questions

1. Identify the case ending that marks subjunctive nouns in Arabic. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
2. Define a cognate object and give its function. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
3. Recognise the particle that negates future actions in Arabic. (Linked to SLO 3.5)
4. State the particle that introduces purpose clauses in Arabic. (Linked to SLO 3.5)
5. Identify the particle used to introduce vocatives. (Linked to SLO 3.4)

Short-Answer Questions

6. Explain how adverbials of time and place function in Arabic sentences. (Linked to SLO 3.3)
7. Describe how apposition clarifies meaning in Arabic grammar. (Linked to SLO 3.7)
8. Illustrate with an example how conjuncts share the same case ending. (Linked to SLO 3.8)
9. Demonstrate how emphasis is achieved through repetition in appositives. (Linked to SLO 3.8)
10. Analyse why integrated practice with subjunctive forms and appositives is important. (Linked to SLO 3.9)

Long-Answer Questions

11. Analyse the role of particles such as *lan* and *kay* in forming subjunctive verbs, with examples. (Linked to SLO 3.5, SLO 3.6)
12. Evaluate how appositives contribute to clarity and emphasis in Arabic sentences. (Linked to SLO 3.7, SLO 3.8)
13. Assess the interaction of subjunctive nouns, subjunctive verbs, and appositives in authentic texts. (Linked to SLO 3.9)



Objective Questions

1. Accusative case (-a).
2. A cognate object is a noun derived from the same root as the verb, used to emphasise the action.
3. *Lan*.
4. *Kay*.
5. *Yā*.

Short-Answer Questions

6. Adverbials of time and place specify when or where an action occurs, taking the accusative case.
7. Apposition renames or clarifies a noun, matching its grammatical case.
8. Example: جاء الطالب والمعلم (*jā'a al-ṭālibu wa-al-mu'allimu*), both subjects are nominative.
9. Example: جاء الطالب الطالب (*jā'a al-ṭālibu al-ṭālibu*), repetition strengthens emphasis.
10. Integrated practice helps learners recognise how different structures interact, improving analysis and sentence construction.

Long-Answer Questions

11. **Basic response:** *Lan* makes verbs subjunctive to negate future actions, while *kay* introduces purpose clauses.
Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note that other particles like *hattā* and *li-kay* also trigger the subjunctive, and that Qur'anic usage demonstrates subtle shifts in meaning and emphasis.
12. **Basic response:** Appositives clarify meaning by renaming or specifying nouns, and emphasis strengthens the message.
Value-added response: Advanced learners may highlight how appositives enhance rhetorical style in Arabic literature, providing precision and persuasive force, especially in poetry and Qur'anic text.
13. **Basic response:** Subjunctive nouns, verbs, and appositives often appear together, shaping meaning and clarity in sentences.



Value-added response: Outstanding learners may discuss how these structures reflect broader syntactic harmony in Arabic, and how translators must carefully preserve emphasis and clarity when rendering texts into other languages.



Part 3.1 Subjunctive nouns (al-Mansūbāt al-asmā')

- The accusative ending (-a).
- A cognate object is a noun from the same root as the verb, used to emphasise the action.
- *يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ* ("on Friday").
- *آي*.
- They clarify meaning and show the grammatical role of words in sentences.

Part 3.2 Subjunctive verbs (al-Mansūbāt al-af'āl)

- The accusative ending (-a) marks verbs in the subjunctive mood.
- *Lan*.
- *Kay*.
- *كَيْلَا تَأْسُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ* ("So that you may not grieve over what has passed you").
- The subjunctive mood expresses negation of the future and purpose.

Part 3.3 Appositives (at-Tawābi')

- *Wa* ("and") or *aw* ("or").
- It renames or clarifies a noun, taking the same case as the first noun.
- *جاء الطالبُ الطالبُ* ("The student, the student came").
- Specification clarifies a general noun by following it with a more specific one.
- Because appositives must agree in case with the word they follow.

Part 3.4 Integrative applications

- *Lan*.
- It functions as an appositive clarifying *الطالبُ*.
- Example: *أَكْرَمْتُ الطَّالِبَ زَيْدًا ابْنَ الْمَعْلَمِ* ("I honoured the student, Zayd, the son of the teacher").
- It helps learners practise how different structures interact, improving analysis and accuracy.
- It emphasises the action of writing the poem.



General References

- Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holes, C. (2018). *Modern Arabic: Structures, Functions, and Varieties*. Routledge.
- Badawi, E., Carter, M. G., & Gully, A. (2016). *Modern Written Arabic: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Routledge.
- Quranic examples cited are from the *Mushaf al-Madina* (King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an).

Illustrations

- *Figure 3.1 Direct and cognate objects in Arabic sentences*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing subject, verb, and object in Arabic sentences with case endings.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar direct object cognate object diagram OER”.
- *Table 3.1 Examples of adverbials of time and place*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table listing examples of Arabic adverbials of time and place with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic adverbials of time and place examples OER”.
- *Box 3.1 Examples of vocatives in Arabic*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of vocatives in Arabic with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic vocatives yā examples OER”.
- *Figure 3.2 Subjunctive verb forms after particles*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing how Arabic particles lan and kay change verb endings into subjunctive mood.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.



- Suggested OER search string: “Arabic subjunctive verbs lan kay diagram OER”.
- *Box 3.2 Examples of subjunctive verbs in Qur’anic and literary texts*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of subjunctive verbs from Qur’an and Arabic literature with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Qur’an subjunctive verbs lan kay examples OER”.
- *Figure 3.3 Conjuncts in Arabic grammar*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing how conjuncts in Arabic share the same case ending.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar conjuncts wa aw diagram OER”.
- *Table 3.2 Examples of apposition in Arabic sentences*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table listing examples of apposition in Arabic sentences with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar apposition examples OER”.
- *Box 3.3 Examples of emphasis and specification in Arabic appositives*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of emphasis and specification in Arabic appositives with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar emphasis specification appositives examples OER”.
- *Figure 3.4 Sentence analysis with multiple subjunctive forms*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing an Arabic sentence with multiple subjunctive forms highlighted.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar multiple subjunctive forms diagram OER”.
- *Table 3.3 Examples of appositives combined with subjunctive nouns*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table listing examples of Arabic sentences where appositives appear alongside subjunctive nouns.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.



- Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar appositives with subjunctive nouns examples OER”.
- *Box 3.4 Integrated practice with subjunctive forms and appositives*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising practice sentences combining subjunctive nouns, subjunctive verbs, and appositives.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar integrated practice subjunctive verbs nouns appositives OER”.



Series 4: Intensive Study of Arabic Tenses

(Mādi, Mudārc, ‘Amr)

Part 4.1 The past tense (al-Mādi)

- 4.1.1 Formation and endings of past tense verbs
- 4.1.2 Agreement with subject (gender and number)
- 4.1.3 Examples from Qur’anic and literary texts

Part 4.2 The present tense (al-Mudāri‘)

- 4.2.1 Formation and prefixes of present tense verbs
- 4.2.2 Indicative, subjunctive, and jussive moods
- 4.2.3 Usage in everyday and classical contexts

Part 4.3 The imperative (‘Amr)

- 4.3.1 Formation of imperative verbs
- 4.3.2 Rules of usage and politeness markers
- 4.3.3 Examples in Qur’anic injunctions and daily speech

Part 4.4 Integrative applications

- 4.4.1 Analysing sentences with mixed tenses
- 4.4.2 Practising tense shifts in authentic texts
- 4.4.3 Exercises for constructing sentences across tenses



Introduction

In the last Series, we examined how subjunctive forms and appositives function to shape meaning and emphasis in Arabic sentences. Building on that foundation, we now turn to one of the most central aspects of Arabic grammar: **verb tenses**. Verbs are the backbone of communication, allowing us to express actions in the past, present, and future, as well as to issue commands. A clear understanding of how Arabic tenses operate will enable you to interpret texts more accurately and construct sentences with greater precision.

The aim of this Series is to provide you with a structured and practical study of the three main Arabic verb tenses—past (*mādi*), present (*mudāri*), and imperative (*'amr*). By the end of this Series, you should be able to recognise their forms, explain their functions, and apply them effectively in both classical and modern contexts.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the **past tense**, focusing on its formation, endings, and agreement with subjects. Next, we will move on to the **present tense**, examining its prefixes, moods, and usage in everyday and literary contexts. Following that, we will study the **imperative**, learning how commands are formed and used with attention to politeness and style. Finally, we will bring the Series to a close with **integrative applications**, where you will practise analysing sentences that combine different tenses and construct your own examples to reinforce mastery.

Series Learning Outcomes

Series 4: Intensive Study of Arabic Tenses (Mādi, Mudāri, 'Amr)

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 4.1** define the formation and endings of past tense (*mādi*) verbs.
- **SLO 4.2** explain how past tense verbs agree with subjects in gender and number.
- **SLO 4.3** demonstrate the use of past tense verbs in Qur'anic and literary examples.
- **SLO 4.4** describe the formation and prefixes of present tense (*mudāri*) verbs.
- **SLO 4.5** distinguish between the indicative, subjunctive, and jussive moods of present tense verbs.
- **SLO 4.6** apply present tense verbs appropriately in both everyday and classical contexts.



- **SLO 4.7** define the rules for forming imperative (*'amr*) verbs.
- **SLO 4.8** illustrate the use of imperative verbs with attention to politeness and style.
- **SLO 4.9** analyse examples of imperative verbs in Qur'anic injunctions and daily speech.
- **SLO 4.10** evaluate sentences that combine past, present, and imperative verbs.
- **SLO 4.11** construct sentences that demonstrate accurate tense shifts across different contexts.

4.1 The Past Tense (al-Mādi)

The **past tense (al-Mādi)** in Arabic is used to describe actions that have already been completed. It is one of the most fundamental verb forms and provides the foundation for understanding how verbs change according to subject, gender, and number. Mastering the past tense is essential because it allows you to read narratives, historical accounts, and Qur'anic passages with accuracy.

4.1.1 Formation and endings of past tense verbs

The **formation of past tense verbs** in Arabic is based on a root, usually three consonants, to which endings are added. These endings indicate the subject performing the action. For example:

- كَتَبَ (*kataba*, “he wrote”)
- كَتَبْتُ (*katabtu*, “I wrote”)
- كَتَبُوا (*katabū*, “they wrote”).

The endings change depending on whether the subject is singular, dual, or plural, and whether it is masculine or feminine.

Fill in the blank: The verb كَتَبَ means “he wrote”, while كَتَبْتُ means _____.



ARABIC PAST TENSE VERB MORPHOLOGY: ROOTS & ENDINGS

TRILITERAL ROOT (الْجَذْرُ الثَّلَاثِي)			
ف ع ل			
	SINGULAR (مُفْرَد)	DUAL (مُتَنِي)	PLURAL (جَمْع)
3 rd PERSON (غَائِب)	فَعَلَ (huwa - he) فَعَلَتْ (hiya - she)	فَعَلَا (huma - they 2 m.) فَعَلَتَا (huma - they 2 f.)	فَعَلُوا (hum - they m.) فَعَلْنَ (hunna - they f.)
2 nd PERSON (مُخَاطَب)	فَعَلْتَ (anta - you m.) فَعَلْتِ (anti - you f.)	فَعَلْتُمَا (antuma - you 2)	فَعَلْتُمْ (antum - you m.) فَعَلْتُنَّ (antunna - you f.)
1 st PERSON (مُتَكَلِّم)	فَعَلْتُ (ana - I)	فَعَلْنَا (nahnu - we)	

LEGEND: Black Letters = Root (ف ع ل), Red Letters/Diacritics = Past Tense Suffix Endings (الضَّمَائِرُ الْمَتَّصِلَةُ)

Figure 4.1 Formation of past tense verbs in Arabic

4.1.2 Agreement with subject (gender and number)

In Arabic, past tense verbs must agree with the **subject** in both **gender** and **number**. This means the verb ending changes depending on whether the subject is masculine or feminine, and whether it is singular, dual, or plural.

Examples:

- كَتَبَتْ (katabat, "she wrote") – feminine singular.
- كَتَبَا (katabā, "they two wrote") – masculine dual.
- كَتَبْنَ (katabna, "they [feminine] wrote") – feminine plural.

Fill in the blank: The verb كَتَبَا is used when the subject is _____ in number.



Arabic Past Tense Verb Endings for Gender and Number Agreement (الفِعْلُ الْمَاضِي)

Person (الشَّخْص)	Gender (الْجِنْس)	Singular (المُفْرَد) Ending & Example	Dual (المُتَنِي) Ending & Example	Plural (الْجَمْع) Ending & Example
3 rd Person (الْغَائِب)	Masculine (مُذَكَّر)	-(faṭḥa) كَتَبَ (kataba - He wrote)	-(alif) كَتَبَا (katabā - They 2 m. wrote)	-(wāw + alif) كَتَبُوا (katabū - They m. wrote)
	Feminine (مُؤَنَّث)	-(tā' sākinah) كَتَبَتْ (katabat - She wrote)	-(tā' + alif) كَتَبَتَا (katabatā - They 2 f. wrote)	-(nūn fathā) كَتَبْنَ (katabna - They f. wrote)
2 nd Person (الْمُخَاطَب)	Masculine (مُذَكَّر)	-(tā' fathā) كَتَبْتَ katabta - You m. wrote	-(tā' + mīm + alif) كَتَبْتُمَا katabtumā - You 2 m. wrote	-(tā' + mīm sākinah) كَتَبْتُمْ (katabtum - You m. wrote)
	Feminine (مُؤَنَّث)	-(tā' kasra) كَتَبْتِ katabti - You f. wrote	-(tā' + mīm + alif) كَتَبْتُمَا katabtumā - You 2 f. wrote	-(tā' + nūn shaddah fathā) كَتَبْتُنَّ katabtunna - You f. wrote
1 st Person (الْمُتَكَلِّم)	Both (مُذَكَّر وَمُؤَنَّث)	-(tā' ḍamma) كَتَبْتُ katabtu - I wrote	-(nūn + alif) كَتَبْنَا katabnā - We wrote	

LEGEND: Red indicates the past tense verb ending/suffix.

Table 4.1 Past tense verb endings according to subject agreement

4.1.3 Examples from Qur'anic and literary texts

The past tense is frequently used in the Qur'an and Arabic literature to narrate events and describe completed actions.

Example from the Qur'an:

قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ (qālū āmannā billāhi, "They said, 'We believe in Allah'").

Here, قَالُوا (qālū) is a past tense verb meaning "they said".

Example from literature:

سَافَرَ الشَّاعِرُ إِلَى بَغْدَادَ (sāfara al-shā'iru ilā Baghdād, "The poet travelled to Baghdad").

Fill in the blank: In the Qur'anic example, the verb قَالُوا means _____.



Arabic Verb	Root	Example (Qur'an / Literature)	Translation
قَالَ (qāla)	ق و ل	Qur'an 2:30 – وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ	“And when your Lord said to the angels...”
كَتَبَ (kataba)	ك ت ب	Classical poetry – كَتَبَ الشَّاعِرُ رِسَالَةً	“The poet wrote a letter.”
جَاءَ (jā'a)	ج ي ء	Qur'an 12:19 – وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ	“And there came a caravan...”
ذَهَبَ (dhahaba)	ذ ه ب	Literature – ذَهَبَ الطَّالِبُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ	“The student went to school.”
نَزَلَ (nazala)	ن ز ل	Qur'an 97:1 – إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ	“Indeed, We sent it down during the Night of Decree.”

Box 4.1 Examples of past tense verbs in Qur'anic and literary texts

Pilot Questions 4.1

1. What is the basic function of the past tense in Arabic?
2. How is the verb كَتَبَ different from كَتَبْتَ?
3. Which verb ending is used for feminine plural subjects in the past tense?
4. Give one example of a past tense verb from the Qur'an.
5. Why is subject agreement important in forming past tense verbs?

4.2 The Present Tense (al-Mudāri')

The **present tense (al-Mudāri')** in Arabic is used to describe actions that are ongoing, habitual, or expected to occur in the future. It is a versatile tense that can express different shades of meaning depending on the particles that precede the verb. Mastering the present tense is vital because it allows you to engage with everyday communication and interpret Qur'anic and literary texts with precision.



4.2.1 Formation and prefixes of present tense verbs

The **formation of present tense verbs** involves adding specific **prefixes** to the root letters of the verb. These prefixes vary according to the subject and indicate person, gender, and number.

Examples:

- يَكْتُبُ (yaktubu, “he writes”).
- تَكْتُبُ (taktubu, “she writes” or “you [masculine] write”).
- أَكْتُبُ (’aktubu, “I write”).
- نَكْتُبُ (naktubu, “we write”).

Fill in the blank: The prefix **أ** in أَكْتُبُ indicates that the subject is _____.

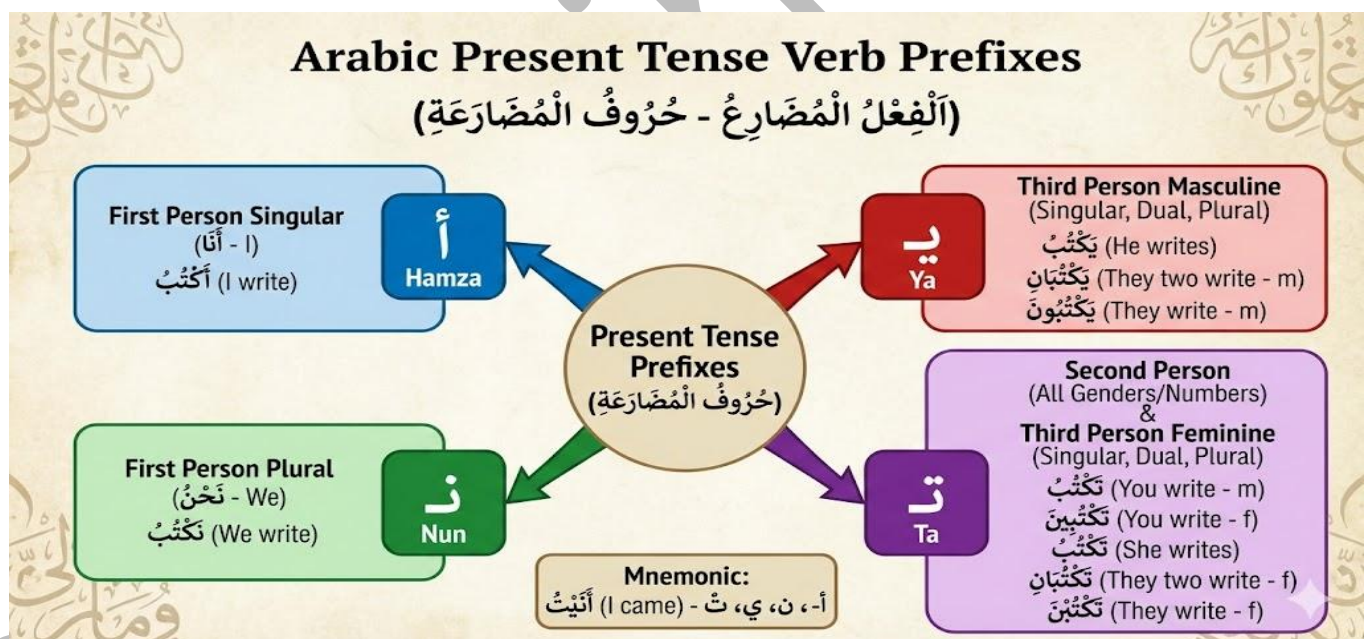


Figure 4.2 Prefixes of present tense verbs in Arabic

4.2.2 Indicative, subjunctive, and jussive moods

The present tense can appear in three **moods** depending on the particles that precede the verb:



- **Indicative mood:** The default form, ending in *-u*. Example: يَكْتُبُ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ (yaktubu al-ṭālibu al-darsa, “The student writes the lesson”).
- **Subjunctive mood:** Triggered by particles such as *lan* (“will not”) or *kay* (“so that”), ending in *-a*. Example: لَنْ يَكْتُبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ (lan yaktuba al-ṭālibu al-darsa, “The student will not write the lesson”).
- **Jussive mood:** Triggered by particles such as *lam* (“did not”) or *lā* (“do not”), often ending in *-ū* (sukūn). Example: لَمْ يَكْتُبِ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ (lam yaktub al-ṭālibu al-darsa, “The student did not write the lesson”).

Fill in the blank: The particle *lam* places the verb in the _____ mood.

Mood Name (English & Arabic)	Primary Marker / Sign	When to Use It (Triggers)	Arabic Example	English Translation	Analysis of the Verb
1. Indicative المَرْفُوعُ (Al-Marfū‘)	Damma (ُ) (Or retaining the ن in plural/dual forms)	The Default State. Used when the verb is stating a fact or a regular occurrence and is <i>not</i> preceded by any particles that cause the subjunctive or jussive moods.	أَحْمَدُ يَكْتُبُ الرَّسَالَةَ.	Ahmad is writing (or writes) the letter.	The verb is يَكْتُبُ (yaktubu). It ends with a Damma because nothing precedes it to change its state.
2. Subjunctive الْمَنْصُوبُ	Fatha (َ) (Or dropping	Intent, Purpose, or Possibility.	أُرِيدُ أَنْ إِلَى أَذْهَبَ بَيْتِكَ.	I want to go to your house.	The verb is أَذْهَبَ (adhaba). It ends with a Fatha



Mood Name (English & Arabic)	Primary Marker / Sign	When to Use It (Triggers)	Arabic Example	English Translation	Analysis of the Verb
(Al-Manṣūb)	<i>the ى in plural/dual forms</i>	Used when preceded by specific "nasib" particles, such as: أَنَّ (to/that) لَنْ (will not) كَيْ (in order to)			because it is preceded by the particle أَنَّ.
3. Jussive الْمَجْزُومُ (Al-Majzūm)	Sukūn (ـ) (Or dropping the final vowel letter in weak verbs)	Negation, Prohibition, or Command. Used when preceded by specific "jazim" particles, such as: لَمْ (did not)	لَمْ يَشْرَبِ الْقَطُّ الحليبَ.	The cat did not drink the milk.	The verb is يَشْرَبُ (yashrab). It ends with a Sukūn because it is preceded by the negating particle لَمْ.



Mood Name (English & Arabic)	Primary Marker / Sign	When to Use It (Triggers)	Arabic Example	English Translation	Analysis of the Verb
		لَا (do not! [prohibition]) لِ (let him/it [command])			

Table 4.2 Present tense moods with examples

4.2.3 Usage in everyday and classical contexts

The present tense is widely used in both everyday speech and classical texts. In daily communication, it expresses current or habitual actions. In Qur'anic and literary contexts, it often conveys ongoing states or timeless truths.

Examples:

- Everyday: أَدْرُسُ اللُّغَةَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ (*adrusu al-lugha al-'arabiyya kulla yawmin*, "I study Arabic every day").
- Qur'anic: يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ (*yu'minūna bil-ghaybi*, "They believe in the unseen").

Fill in the blank: In everyday usage, the present tense often expresses actions that are _____.

Arabic Verb	Root	Example (Qur'an / Daily Speech)	Translation
يَذْهَبُ (<i>yadhhabu</i>)	ذ ه ب	Daily speech – يَذْهَبُ الطَّالِبُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ	"The student goes to school."
يَأْكُلُ (<i>ya'kulu</i>)	أ ك ل	Daily speech – يَأْكُلُ الْوَلَدُ التُّفَّاحَةَ	"The boy eats the apple."



Arabic Verb	Root	Example (Qur'an / Daily Speech)	Translation
يَقُولُ (yaqūlu)	ق و ل	قَالَوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ – Qur'an 2:11	"They say, 'We are but reformers.'"
يَجِيءُ (yajī'u)	ج ي ء	يَجِيءُ الرَّجُلُ إِلَى الْبَيْتِ – Daily speech	"The man comes to the house."
يَنْزِلُ (yanzilu)	ن ز ل	يَنْزِلُ الْغَيْثُ – Qur'an 57:4	"He sends down the rain."

Box 4.2 Examples of present tense verbs in everyday and classical contexts

Pilot Questions 4.2

1. What prefixes are used to form present tense verbs in Arabic?
2. Which mood is the default form of the present tense?
3. Give one particle that triggers the subjunctive mood.
4. Provide an example of a present tense verb in the jussive mood.
5. How is the present tense used differently in everyday speech compared to Qur'anic texts?

4.3 The Imperative (ʿAmr)

The **imperative (ʿAmr)** in Arabic is used to issue commands, requests, or instructions. It is a practical and frequently used verb form, appearing in everyday speech, literature, and Qur'anic injunctions. Understanding how to form and use the imperative correctly is essential for effective communication, as it conveys urgency, direction, and authority.

4.3.1 Formation of imperative verbs

The **formation of imperative verbs** is based on the present tense (*al-Mudāriʿ*) form of the verb, with modifications to create a command. Typically, the prefix is dropped, and the verb is adjusted to begin with a helping vowel if necessary.

Examples:



- From يَكْتُبُ (yaktubu, “he writes”) → اُكْتُبْ (uktub, “write!”).
- From يَجْلِسُ (yajlisu, “he sits”) → اجْلِسْ (ijlis, “sit!”).

Fill in the blank: The imperative form of يَقرَأُ (“he reads”) is _____.

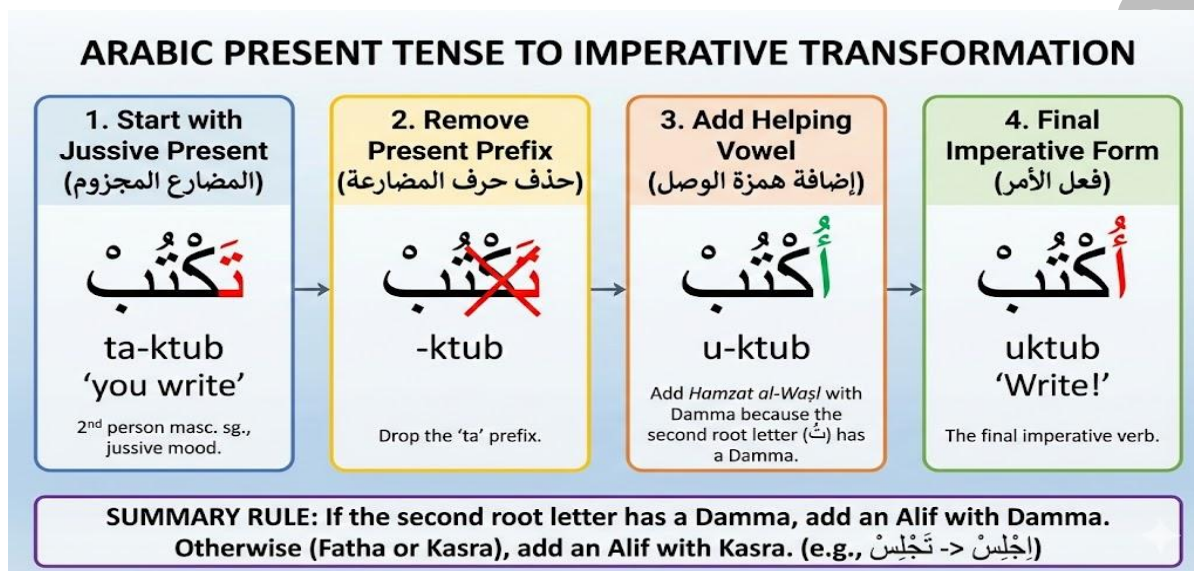


Figure 4.3 Formation of imperative verbs in Arabic

4.3.2 Rules of usage and politeness markers

While the imperative conveys direct commands, Arabic often uses **politeness markers** to soften its tone, especially in social or formal contexts. These include adding phrases such as من فضلك (min faḍlika, “please”) or using indirect forms.

Examples:

- Direct: اُكْتُبِ الدرسَ (uktub al-darsa, “Write the lesson”).
- Polite: اُكْتُبِ الدرسَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ (uktub al-darsa min faḍlika, “Please write the lesson”).

Fill in the blank: The phrase مِنْ فَضْلِكَ is used to make an imperative sound more _____.



Base Imperative Verb (فِعْلُ الْأَمْرِ)	Targeted Person	Politeness Marker (عِبَارَةٌ تَأَدِّبُ)	Polite Imperative Phrase (الْعِبَارَةُ الْمُؤَدِّبَةُ)	Transliteration	English Translation
اجْلِسْ (Ijlis) - Sit	Male Singular	مِنْ فَضْلِكَ (min faḍlika)	اجْلِسْ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ	Ijlis min faḍlika.	Sit down, please.
اُكْتُبِي (Uktubī) - Write	Female Singular	لَوْ سَمَحْتَ (law samaḥti)	اُكْتُبِي هَذَا لَوْ سَمَحْتَ	Uktubī hādhā law samaḥti.	Please write this down.
ادْخُلُوا (Udkhulū) - Enter	Plural (Mixed/Masculine)	رَجَاءً (rajā'an)	ادْخُلُوا رَجَاءً	Udkhulū rajā'an.	Please come in.
أَعْطِنِي (A'ṭinī) - Give me	Male Singular	لَوْ سَمَحْتَ (law samaḥta)	أَعْطِنِي الْكِتَابَ لَوْ سَمَحْتَ	A'ṭinī al-kitāba law samaḥta.	Give me the book, please.
انْتَظِرِي (Intazirī)	Female Singular	مِنْ فَضْلِكَ	انْتَظِرِي قَلِيلًا مِنْ فَضْلِكَ	Intazirī qalīlan min faḍliki.	Wait a moment, please.



Base Imperative Verb (فِعْلُ الْأَمْرِ)	Targeted Person	Politeness Marker (عِبَارَةٌ تَأْدِيبُ)	Polite Imperative Phrase (الْعِبَارَةُ الْمُؤَدِّبَةُ)	Transliteration	English Translation
(Intaẓirī) - Wait		(min faḍliki)			
تَفَضَّلْ (Tafaḍḍal) - Please (go ahead)	Male Singular	(Inherently polite)	تَفَضَّلْ بِالدُّخُولِ	Tafaḍḍal bi-dukhūl.	Please, come in. (Formal/Welcoming)
سَاعِدُونَا (Sā'idūnā) - Help us	Plural (Mixed/Masculine)	مِنْ فَضْلِكُمْ (min faḍlikum)	سَاعِدُونَا مِنْ فَضْلِكُمْ	Sā'idūnā min faḍlikum.	Please help us.

Table 4.3 Examples of imperative verbs with politeness markers

4.3.3 Examples in Qur'anic injunctions and daily speech

The imperative is widely used in the Qur'an to issue divine commands and guidance, as well as in everyday speech to give instructions.

Examples:



- Qur'anic: أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ (aqīmū al-ṣalāta, “Establish the prayer”).
- Daily speech: افْتَحِ الْبَابَ (iftaḥ al-bāba, “Open the door”).

Fill in the blank: In the Qur'anic example, the verb أَقِيمُوا is an imperative meaning _____.

Arabic Verb	Root	Example (Qur'an / Daily Speech)	Translation
اقْرَأْ (iqra')	ق ر أ	Qur'an 96:1 – اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ	“Read in the name of your Lord.”
قُلْ (qul)	ق و ل	Qur'an 112:1 – قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ	“Say: He is Allah, One.”
اذهبْ (idhhab)	ذ ه ب	Daily speech – اذهبْ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ	“Go to school.”
اجلسْ (ijlis)	ج ل س	Daily speech – اجلسْ هُنَا	“Sit here.”
اسْمَعْ (isma')	س م ع	Qur'an 7:204 – فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا	“So listen to it and be silent.”

Box 4.3 Examples of imperative verbs in Qur'anic and daily contexts

Pilot Questions 4.3

1. How is the imperative form derived from the present tense in Arabic?
2. Give one example of a politeness marker used with imperative verbs.
3. Provide the imperative form of the verb يجلسُ (“he sits”).
4. What is the function of the imperative in Qur'anic injunctions?
5. Why is it important to use politeness markers with imperative verbs in social contexts?

4.4 Integrative Applications

This Part brings together the three major Arabic verb tenses—**past (mādi)**, **present (mudāri')**, and **imperative ('amr)**—to show how they interact in authentic texts. By analysing sentences that combine these forms, you will gain confidence in recognising tense shifts and applying them in your own writing and speech.



4.4.2 Practising tense shifts in authentic texts

Tense shifts occur when a writer or speaker moves from one tense to another for stylistic or communicative effect. In Arabic, this is common in Qur’anic passages, poetry, and storytelling.

Example from Qur’an:

ثم أنشأناه خلقاً آخر فتبارك الله أحسن الخالقين (*thumma ansha ’nāhu khalqan ākhar fa-tabāraka Allāhu aḥsanu al-khāliqīn*, “Then We made him into another creation, so blessed be Allah, the best of creators”).

Here, the past tense *أنشأناه* is followed by the present tense *أحسن* to emphasise timeless truth.

Fill in the blank: In Qur’anic style, tense shifts often highlight _____ truths.

Text Type	Arabic Example	Tense Shift	Translation
Qur’an (Surah Al-Fātiḥa 1:4–5)	مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ تَعْبُدُ	Nominal → Present	“Master of the Day of Judgment. <i>You we worship.</i> ” (Shift from timeless nominal description to present action)
Qur’an (Surah Yūsuf 12:19)	وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ فَأَدْلَى دَلْوَهُ قَالَ يَا يُسْرَى	Past → Imperative/Exclamation	“And a caravan came... he let down his bucket. He said: ‘Good news!’” (Shift from narrative past to immediate speech)
Daily Speech	ذَهَبْتُ إِلَى السُّوقِ وَأَنَا أَسْتَرِي الْفَاكِهَةَ	Past → Present	“I went to the market <i>and I am buying</i> fruit.” (Shift from completed action to ongoing activity)
Qur’an (Surah Al-Baqara 2:11–12)	قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا... قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ	Passive Past → Present	“It was said to them, ‘Do not cause corruption...’ They say, ‘We are but reformers.’” (Shift from reported past to present claim)
Daily Speech	أَكَلْتُ الطَّعَامَ وَسَأَذْهَبُ إِلَى الْمَكْتَبِ	Past → Future	“I ate the food <i>and I will go</i> to the office.” (Shift from past completed action to future intention)



Table 4.4 Examples of tense shifts in authentic Arabic texts

4.4.3 Exercises for constructing sentences across tenses

To consolidate your learning, it is important to practise constructing sentences that combine past, present, and imperative verbs. This will help you internalise tense usage and prepare you for authentic communication.

Example exercise:

- Write a sentence that begins with a past tense verb, continues with a present tense verb, and ends with an imperative.

Sample answer: سافرَ الرجلُ إلى مكةَ وهو يقرأ القرآنَ فاذكُرْ الله كثيراً (sāfara al-rajulu ilā Makkata wa-huwa yaqra'u al-Qur'āna fa-udhkur Allāha kathīran, "The man travelled to Mecca while he reads the Qur'an, so remember Allah often").

Fill in the blank: In the exercise above, the verb *نَکَرُ* is an example of the _____ form.

Sentence (Arabic)	Verb Tenses Used	Translation
ذَهَبْتُ إِلَى الْمَكْتَبِ، أَكْتُبُ الرِّسَالَةَ، اكْتُبْ أَنْتَ مَعِيَ	Past + Present + Imperative	"I went to the office, I am writing the letter, write with me."
أَكَلْتُ الطَّعَامَ، أَشْرَبُ الْمَاءَ، اشْرَبْ أَنْتَ أَيْضًا	Past + Present + Imperative	"I ate the food, I am drinking water, drink also."
قَرَأْتُ الْكِتَابَ، أَقْرَأُ الْآنَ الصَّحِيفَةَ، اقْرَأْ أَنْتَ هَذَا	Past + Present + Imperative	"I read the book, I am reading the newspaper now, read this."
جَلَسْتُ فِي الْعُرْفَةِ، أَجْلِسُ عَلَى الْكُرْسِيِّ، اجْلِسْ بَجَانِبِي	Past + Present + Imperative	"I sat in the room, I am sitting on the chair, sit beside me."
سَمِعْتُ الْأُسْتَاذَ، أَسْمَعُ الدَّرْسَ الْآنَ، اسْمَعْ جَيِّدًا	Past + Present + Imperative	"I heard the teacher, I am listening to the lesson now, listen carefully."

Box 4.4 Practice sentences combining past, present, and imperative verbs



Pilot Questions 4.4

1. How can mixed tenses in a sentence enhance meaning in Arabic?
2. Give one example of a Qur'anic passage that shifts between past and present tense.
3. Construct a sentence that combines past, present, and imperative verbs.
4. Why are tense shifts important in Arabic storytelling and poetry?
5. What role does the imperative play when used alongside past and present tense verbs?

Series Summary

This Series has focused on the study of Arabic verb tenses, showing how the past (*mādi*), present (*mudāri*), and imperative (*'amr*) forms are constructed and applied. Its purpose has been to equip you with the ability to recognise, explain, and use these tenses accurately, both in everyday communication and in classical texts such as the Qur'an and Arabic literature. By working through the different Parts, you have seen how verbs change with subject agreement, how moods affect present tense verbs, and how commands are formed and softened with politeness markers.

We began with the past tense, examining its formation and subject agreement, then moved to the present tense with its prefixes and moods. Following that, we studied the imperative, learning how commands are derived and used in social and religious contexts. Finally, we brought these elements together in integrative applications, analysing sentences that combine multiple tenses and practising tense shifts. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to define and demonstrate each tense, apply them in authentic contexts, analyse examples from Qur'anic and literary texts, and construct sentences that show accurate tense shifts across different situations.



Agreement

The way a verb changes to match its subject in gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular, dual, or plural).

Imperative (ʿAmr)

A verb form used to give commands, requests, or instructions, often softened with politeness markers.

Indicative mood

The default form of the present tense verb, usually ending in *-u*, used to express simple statements of fact.

Jussive mood

A form of the present tense verb, often ending in *-ū* (sukūn), used after particles such as *lam* (“did not”) or *lā* (“do not”).

Past tense (Mādi)

A verb form used to describe actions that have already been completed.

Politeness markers

Words or phrases added to imperative verbs to make commands sound more respectful, such as *من فضلك* (“please”).

Prefixes

Letters added to the beginning of present tense verbs to indicate person, gender, and number, such as *ي* (“he”), *ت* (“she/you”), *أ* (“I”), and *نحن* (“we”).

Present tense (Mudāriʿ)

A verb form used to describe ongoing, habitual, or future actions, with different moods depending on preceding particles.



Subjunctive mood

A form of the present tense verb, usually ending in *-a*, triggered by particles such as *lan* (“will not”) or *kay* (“so that”).

Tense shift

The movement from one verb tense to another within a sentence or text, often used for emphasis, contrast, or stylistic effect.

Verb root

The basic set of consonants (usually three) from which Arabic verbs are formed, providing the core meaning of the word.

Concept Check Questions [Series 4]

Objective Questions

1. Identify the case ending that marks past tense verbs in Arabic. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
2. State the prefix used for the first person singular in the present tense. (Linked to SLO 4.4)
3. Recognise the particle that triggers the subjunctive mood in present tense verbs. (Linked to SLO 4.5)
4. Define the imperative form of the verb *يكتب* (“he writes”). (Linked to SLO 4.7)
5. Identify one politeness marker commonly used with imperative verbs. (Linked to SLO 4.8)

Short-Answer Questions

6. Explain how past tense verbs agree with subjects in gender and number. (Linked to SLO 4.2)
7. Describe the difference between the indicative and jussive moods of the present tense. (Linked to SLO 4.5)
8. Illustrate with an example how politeness markers modify the tone of imperative verbs. (Linked to SLO 4.8)
9. Demonstrate how tense shifts are used in Qur’anic passages. (Linked to SLO 4.9)
10. Analyse why combining past, present, and imperative verbs in one sentence can enhance meaning. (Linked to SLO 4.10)



Long-Answer Questions

11. Analyse the formation of past tense verbs and explain how endings change with subject agreement. (Linked to SLO 4.1, SLO 4.2)
12. Evaluate the role of moods in present tense verbs, with examples of indicative, subjunctive, and jussive forms. (Linked to SLO 4.5, SLO 4.6)
13. Assess the importance of politeness markers in imperative verbs, both in social and religious contexts. (Linked to SLO 4.8, SLO 4.9)
14. Construct and evaluate a sentence that combines past, present, and imperative verbs, explaining the effect of tense shifts. (Linked to SLO 4.10, SLO 4.11)

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 4]

Objective Questions

1. The suffix **ـا** (faṭḥa) marks past tense verbs.
2. The prefix **أ** (ʾa) is used for first person singular.
3. The particle **لَنْ** (lan) triggers the subjunctive mood in present tense verbs.
4. The imperative form of **يكتب** ("he writes") is **اكتب** ("write!").
5. A common politeness marker used with imperative verbs is **من فضلك** ("please").

Short-Answer Questions

6. Past tense verbs agree with subjects in gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular, dual, plural) by changing their endings. For example, **كَتَبَتْ** (she wrote), **كَتَبَا** (they two wrote), **كَتَبْنَ** (they [feminine] wrote).
7. The indicative mood (marfūʿ) is the default present tense form, usually ending in **ـا** (damma). The jussive mood (majzūm) is triggered by particles such as **لَا** or **لَمْ**, often ending in **ـا** (sukūn).
8. Politeness markers soften the tone of imperative verbs. For example, **اكتبَ الدرسَ من فضلك** ("Please write the lesson") is more respectful than **اكتبَ الدرسَ** ("Write the lesson").
9. Qurʾanic passages often use tense shifts to highlight timeless truths. For example, Qurʾan 23:14 moves from past tense (**أَنشَأْنَاهُ**) to present tense (**أَحْسَنُ**) to emphasise divine attributes.



10. Combining past, present, and imperative verbs in one sentence enhances meaning by showing sequence, contrast, and instruction. It makes the narrative vivid and interactive.

Long-Answer Questions

11. Past tense verbs are formed from triliteral roots with endings that change according to subject agreement. For example, كَتَبَ (he wrote), كَتَبْتُ (I wrote), كَتَبُوا (they wrote). These endings indicate person, gender, and number, ensuring grammatical accuracy.
12. Present tense verbs can appear in three moods: indicative (default, ending in damma), subjunctive (triggered by particles like لَمْ or كَيْ, ending in fatha), and jussive (triggered by particles like لَمْ, ending in sukūn). These moods allow Arabic to express fact, purpose, negation, or command.
13. Politeness markers in imperative verbs are essential in both social and religious contexts. In everyday speech, they make commands respectful (e.g., اجلس من فضلك – “Sit down, please”). In Qur’anic injunctions, imperatives convey divine authority but are often accompanied by context that emphasises mercy and guidance.
14. A sentence combining past, present, and imperative verbs demonstrates tense shifts and their effect. Example: دَهَبْتُ إِلَى الْمَكْتَبِ، أَكْتُبُ الرِّسَالَةَ، اكْتُبْ أَنْتَ مَعِيَ (“I went to the office, I am writing the letter, write with me”). This shows a completed action, an ongoing action, and a directive, enhancing clarity and engagement.



Answers to Pilot Questions

Part 4.1 (Past Tense – alMādi)

Pilot Questions 4.1

1. What is the basic function of the past tense in Arabic?
 - **Answer:** It describes completed actions. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
2. How is the verb كَتَبَ different from كَتَبْتُ?
 - **Answer:** كَتَبَ = “he wrote”; كَتَبْتُ = “I wrote.” (Linked to SLO 4.1)
3. Which verb ending is used for feminine plural subjects in the past tense?
 - **Answer:** نَ (e.g., كَتَبْنَ). (Linked to SLO 4.2)
4. Give one example of a past tense verb from the Qur’an.
 - **Answer:** قالوا (qālū, “they said”). (Linked to SLO 4.3)
5. Why is subject agreement important in forming past tense verbs?
 - **Answer:** It ensures the verb matches gender and number of the subject. (Linked to SLO 4.2)

Part 4.2 (Present Tense – alMudāri‘)

Pilot Questions 4.2

1. What prefixes are used to form present tense verbs in Arabic?
 - **Answer:** ي (he), ت (she/you), أ (I), ن (we). (Linked to SLO 4.4)
2. Which mood is the default form of the present tense?
 - **Answer:** Indicative (al-marfū‘). (Linked to SLO 4.5)
3. Give one particle that triggers the subjunctive mood.
 - **Answer:** لَنْ (lan). (Linked to SLO 4.5)
4. Provide an example of a present tense verb in the jussive mood.
 - **Answer:** لم يكتب (lam yaktub, “he did not write”). (Linked to SLO 4.5)
5. How is the present tense used differently in everyday speech compared to Qur’anic texts?
 - **Answer:** Everyday = habitual/current actions; Qur’anic = timeless truths/ongoing states. (Linked to SLO 4.6)



Part 4.3 (Imperative – 'Amr)

Pilot Questions 4.3

1. How is the imperative form derived from the present tense in Arabic?
 - **Answer:** By dropping the prefix and adjusting with a helping vowel if needed. (Linked to SLO 4.7)
2. Give one example of a politeness marker used with imperative verbs.
 - **Answer:** من فضلك (min fadlika, “please”). (Linked to SLO 4.8)
3. Provide the imperative form of the verb يجلسُ (“he sits”).
 - **Answer:** اجلسْ (ijlis). (Linked to SLO 4.7)
4. What is the function of the imperative in Qur’anic injunctions?
 - **Answer:** To issue divine commands and guidance. (Linked to SLO 4.9)
5. Why is it important to use politeness markers with imperative verbs in social contexts?
 - **Answer:** They soften commands, making them respectful and socially acceptable. (Linked to SLO 4.8)

Part 4.4 (Integrative Applications)

Pilot Questions 4.4

1. How can mixed tenses in a sentence enhance meaning in Arabic?
 - **Answer:** They add sequence, contrast, and emphasis. (Linked to SLO 4.10)
2. Give one example of a Qur’anic passage that shifts between past and present tense.
 - **Answer:** ثم أنشأناه خلقًا آخر فتبارك الله أحسن الخالقين (Qur’an 23:14). (Linked to SLO 4.9)
3. Construct a sentence that combines past, present, and imperative verbs.
 - **Answer:** ذهبتُ إلى المكتب، أكتبُ الرسالة، اكتبْ أنتَ معي. (Linked to SLO 4.11)
4. Why are tense shifts important in Arabic storytelling and poetry?
 - **Answer:** They create vividness, stylistic effect, and highlight timeless truths. (Linked to SLO 4.10)
5. What role does the imperative play when used alongside past and present tense verbs?
 - **Answer:** It adds instruction or urgency after narration. (Linked to SLO 4.11)



Primary Grammar References

- Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holes, C. (2018). *Modern Arabic: Structures, Functions, and Varieties*. Routledge.
- Badawi, E., Carter, M. G., & Gully, A. (2016). *Modern Written Arabic: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Routledge.

Qur'anic Citations

- Qur'an 2:30 – وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ (“And when your Lord said to the angels...”)
- Qur'an 2:11–12 – قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ (“They say, ‘We are but reformers.’”)
- Qur'an 7:204 – فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا (“So listen to it and be silent.”)
- Qur'an 12:19 – وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ (“And there came a caravan...”)
- Qur'an 23:14 – ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ (“Then We made him into another creation, so blessed be Allah, the best of creators.”)
- Qur'an 57:4 – يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ (“He sends down the rain.”)
- Qur'an 96:1 – اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ (“Read in the name of your Lord.”)
- Qur'an 97:1 – إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ (“Indeed, We sent it down during the Night of Decree.”)
- Qur'an 112:1 – قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (“Say: He is Allah, One.”)
- Source: *Mushaf al-Madina* (King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an).

Illustrations and Tables

- *Figure 4.1 Formation of past tense verbs in Arabic*
Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a diagram showing subject, verb, and endings of past tense verbs in Arabic.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
Suggested OER search string: “Arabic past tense verb endings diagram OER”.
- *Table 4.1 Past tense verb endings according to subject agreement*
Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a table listing Arabic past tense verb endings by subject agreement with translations.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic past tense endings examples OER”.



- *Box 4.1 Examples of past tense verbs in Qur’anic and literary texts*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Generate a text box summarising examples of Arabic past tense verbs from Qur’an and literature.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic past tense Qur’an examples OER”.

- *Figure 4.2 Prefixes of present tense verbs in Arabic*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a diagram showing prefixes for Arabic present tense verbs with subject agreement.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic present tense prefixes diagram OER”.

- *Table 4.2 Present tense moods with examples*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a table illustrating indicative, subjunctive, and jussive moods of Arabic present tense verbs.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic present tense moods examples OER”.

- *Box 4.2 Examples of present tense verbs in everyday and classical contexts*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Generate a text box summarising examples of Arabic present tense verbs from Qur’an and daily speech.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic present tense Qur’an examples OER”.

- *Figure 4.3 Formation of imperative verbs in Arabic*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a diagram showing how imperative verbs are derived from present tense forms in Arabic.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic imperative verb formation diagram OER”.

- *Table 4.3 Examples of imperative verbs with politeness markers*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a table listing Arabic imperative verbs with politeness markers and translations.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic imperative politeness markers examples OER”.

- *Box 4.3 Examples of imperative verbs in Qur’anic and daily contexts*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Generate a text box summarising imperative verbs in Qur’an and daily Arabic speech.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic imperative Qur’an examples OER”.



- *Figure 4.4 Sentence analysis with mixed tenses*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a diagram showing sentence analysis combining past, present, and imperative verbs in Arabic.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic mixed tenses sentence analysis diagram OER”.

- *Table 4.4 Examples of tense shifts in authentic Arabic texts*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Create a table illustrating tense shifts in Qur’an, poetry, and daily Arabic speech.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic tense shifts examples OER”.

- *Box 4.4 Practice sentences combining past, present, and imperative verbs*

Attribution: AI-generated prompt “Generate a text box with practice sentences combining past, present, and imperative verbs in Arabic.” Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation. Suggested OER search string: “Arabic tense practice sentences OER”.



Series 5: Word Case Endings in Arabic

Sentences

Part 5.1 Nominative case (al-Raf')

- 5.1.1 Definition and functions of the nominative case
- 5.1.2 Endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns
- 5.1.3 Examples in subject and predicate positions

Part 5.2 Accusative case (al-Naṣb)

- 5.2.1 Definition and functions of the accusative case
- 5.2.2 Endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns
- 5.2.3 Examples in objects and adverbials

Part 5.3 Genitive case (al-Jarr)

- 5.3.1 Definition and functions of the genitive case
- 5.3.2 Endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns
- 5.3.3 Examples in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions

Part 5.4 Integrative applications

- 5.4.1 Analysing sentences with mixed case endings
- 5.4.2 Practising i' rāb with authentic texts
- 5.4.3 Exercises for constructing sentences across cases

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored Arabic verb tenses, learning how past, present, and imperative forms shape meaning in sentences. Building on that foundation, we now turn to another essential aspect of Arabic grammar: **case endings**. Case endings, known as *i' rāb*, are the small vowel marks at the end of words that



determine their grammatical role in a sentence. They may seem subtle, but they are crucial for understanding how subjects, objects, and other elements interact. Without mastering case endings, it is difficult to read Arabic texts accurately or construct sentences with clarity.

The aim of this Series is to introduce you to the three main case endings in Arabic—nominative (*rafʿ*), accusative (*naṣb*), and genitive (*jarr*)—and to equip you with the skills to identify, explain, and apply them in authentic contexts. By the end of the Series, you should be able to analyse sentences for correct case usage and practise constructing your own examples with confidence.

We shall commence this Series by examining the **nominative case**, focusing on its definition, functions, and endings in singular, dual, and plural forms. Next, we will move on to the **accusative case**, considering how it marks objects and adverbials. Following that, we will study the **genitive case**, exploring its role in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions. Finally, we will wrap up with **integrative applications**, where you will practise analysing sentences with mixed case endings and apply your knowledge to authentic texts.

Series Learning Outcomes

Series 5: Case Endings in Arabic Sentences

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 5.1** define the nominative case (*rafʿ*) and its primary functions in Arabic sentences.
- **SLO 5.2** demonstrate the correct nominative endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns.
- **SLO 5.3** explain how the nominative case is applied to subjects and predicates.
- **SLO 5.4** define the accusative case (*naṣb*) and its primary functions in Arabic sentences.
- **SLO 5.5** illustrate the correct accusative endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns.
- **SLO 5.6** apply the accusative case to objects and adverbials in sentences.
- **SLO 5.7** define the genitive case (*jarr*) and its primary functions in Arabic sentences.
- **SLO 5.8** demonstrate the correct genitive endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns.
- **SLO 5.9** analyse examples of the genitive case in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions.
- **SLO 5.10** evaluate sentences with mixed case endings to identify grammatical roles.
- **SLO 5.11** construct sentences that accurately combine nominative, accusative, and genitive cases.



5.1 Nominative Case (al-Raf‘)

The **nominative case (al-Raf‘)** is one of the three primary cases in Arabic grammar. It is used to mark the subject of a sentence and the predicate of nominal sentences. The nominative case is typically indicated by the vowel ending *-u* (ḍamma) for singular nouns, though endings vary for dual and plural forms. Mastering the nominative case is essential because it helps you identify who or what is performing the action in a sentence.

5.1.1 Definition and functions of the nominative case

The **nominative case** is the grammatical form that shows the subject of a verb or the predicate in a nominal sentence. For example:

- الطالبُ مجتهدٌ (al-ṭālibu mujtahidun, “The student is hardworking”).

Here, الطالبُ is nominative as the subject, and مجتهدٌ is nominative as the predicate.

Fill in the blank: In the sentence الطالبُ مجتهدٌ, the word مجتهدٌ is in the _____ case.

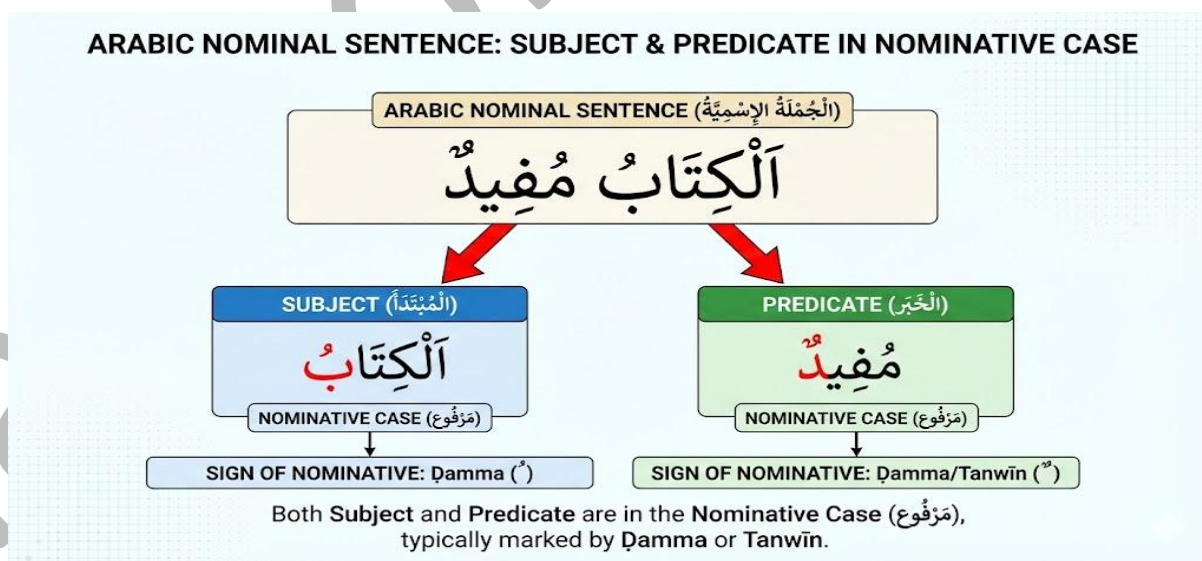


Figure 5.1 Subject and predicate in nominative case



5.1.2 Endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns

The nominative case endings differ depending on whether the noun is singular, dual, or plural.

- **Singular nouns:** usually end with *-u* (ḍamma). Example: الولد (*al-waladu*, “the boy”).
- **Dual nouns:** end with *-āni*. Example: الولدان (*al-waladāni*, “the two boys”).
- **Sound masculine plural:** end with *-ūna*. Example: المعلمون (*al-mu‘allimūna*, “the teachers”).
- **Sound feminine plural:** end with *-ātun*. Example: المعلمات (*al-mu‘allimāt(u)*, “the female teachers”).

Fill in the blank: The nominative ending for dual nouns is _____.

<i>Noun Category</i> (نوع الاسم)	<i>Nominative Marker</i> (علامة الرفع)	<i>Example Sentence</i> (Nominative noun highlighted)	<i>Transliteration & Translation</i>
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Damma</i> (ـ / ـِ)	جَدِيدُ الْكِتَابِ	<i>Al-kitābu jadīdun. (The book is new.)</i>
(المفرد)	(u / un)	حَكِيمٌ رَجُلٌ جَاءَ	<i>Jā‘a rajulun ḥakīmun. (A wise man came.)</i>
<i>Broken Plural</i>	<i>Damma</i> (ـ / ـِ)	يَلْعَبُونَ فِي الْحَدِيقَةِ الْأَوْلَادُ	<i>Al-awlādu yal‘abūna fī al-ḥadīqati. (The children are playing in the park.)</i>
(جمع التذكير)	(u / un)	قِيَمَةٌ كَثَبٌ هَذِهِ	



Noun Category (نَوْعُ الْأِسْمِ)	Nominative Marker (عَلَامَةُ الرَّفْعِ)	Example Sentence (Nominative noun highlighted)	Transliteration & Translation
			<i>Hādhihi kutubun qayyimatun.</i> (These are valuable books.)
Sound Feminine Plural (جَمْعُ الْمُؤَنَّثِ السَّالِمِ)	Damma (تَاثُ / نَاتُ) (ātu / ātun)	مُخْلِصَاتُ الْمُعَلِّمَاتِ كَثِيرَاتُ طَالِبَاتِ حَضَرَتْ	<i>Al-mu'allimātu mukhliṣātun.</i> (The female teachers are sincere.) <i>Ḥaḍarat ṭālibātun kathīrātun.</i> (Many female students arrived.)
Dual (الْمُتَنَّى)	The letter Alif (تَانِ) (āni)	إِلَى الطَّالِبَانِ ذَهَبَ الْمُدْرَسَةُ مُفِيدَانِ كِتَابَانِ هَذَانِ	<i>Dhahaba aṭ-ṭālibāni ilā al-madrasati.</i> (The two students went to school.) <i>Hādhāni kitābāni muḥīdāni.</i> (These are two useful books.)



Noun Category (نَوْعُ الْأِسْمِ)	Nominative Marker (عَلَامَةُ الرَّفْعِ)	Example Sentence (Nominative noun highlighted)	Transliteration & Translation
Sound Masculine Plural	The letter Waw (وَوْن)	يَارِغُونَ الْمُهَنْدِسُونَ	<i>Al-muhandisūna bāri ūna.</i> (The engineers are skilled.)
جَمْعُ الْمَذَكَّرِ (السَّالِمِ)	(ūna)	إِلَى الْمُسَافِرُونَ وَصَلَ الْمَطَارَ	<i>Waṣala al-musāfirūna ilā al-maṭāri.</i> (The travelers arrived at the airport.)

Table 5.1 Nominative case endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns

5.1.3 Examples in subject and predicate positions

The nominative case appears in both **verbal sentences** (as the subject of the verb) and **nominal sentences** (as the subject and predicate).

Examples:

- Verbal sentence: كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ (*kataba al-ṭālibu al-darsa*, “The student wrote the lesson”). Here, الطَّالِبُ is nominative as the subject.
- Nominal sentence: الْمَعْلَمُ حَاضِرٌ (*al-mu‘allimu ḥāḍirun*, “The teacher is present”). Here, both الْمَعْلَمُ and حَاضِرٌ are nominative.

Fill in the blank: In the sentence كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ, the word الطَّالِبُ is the _____ of the verb.



Arabic Sentence	Word in Nominative Case	Function	Translation
الْوَلَدُ ذَكِيٌّ	الْوَلَدُ (al-waladu)	Subject	The boy is intelligent.
الْكِتَابُ جَدِيدٌ	الْكِتَابُ (al-kitābu)	Subject	The book is new.
اللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ	اللَّهُ (Allāhu)	Subject	Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.
الطَّالِبُ يَذْهَبُ الطَّالِبُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ	الطَّالِبُ (al-ṭālibu)	Subject of verb	The student goes to school.
الْمُعَلِّمُ فِي الْفَصْلِ	الْمُعَلِّمُ (al-mu'allimu)	Subject	The teacher is in the classroom.
هَذَا رَجُلٌ	رَجُلٌ (rajulun)	Predicate	This is a man.

Box 5.1 Examples of nominative case in subject and predicate positions

Pilot Questions 5.1

1. What is the primary function of the nominative case in Arabic?
2. Give the nominative ending for a singular noun.
3. Provide the nominative ending for dual nouns.
4. In the sentence *المُعَلِّمُ حَاضِرٌ*, which words are in the nominative case?
5. Why is the nominative case important for identifying the subject in a sentence?

5.2 Accusative Case (al-Naṣb)

The **accusative case (al-Naṣb)** is one of the three primary cases in Arabic grammar. It is used to mark the direct object of a verb, adverbials of time and place, and certain other grammatical functions. The accusative case is typically indicated by the vowel ending *-a* (fatḥa) for singular nouns, though endings vary for dual and plural forms. Mastering the accusative case is essential because it helps you identify what action is being performed on, or when and where the action occurs.



5.2.1 Definition and functions of the accusative case

The **accusative case** is the grammatical form that shows the object of a verb or other elements such as adverbials. For example:

- قرأ الطالب الكتاب (*qara 'a al-ṭālibu al-kitāba*, “The student read the book”).

Here, *الكتاب* is accusative as the direct object of the verb.

Fill in the blank: In the sentence *قرأ الطالب الكتاب*, the word *الكتاب* is the _____ of the verb.

Arabic Verbal Sentence Structure: Object in Accusative Case.

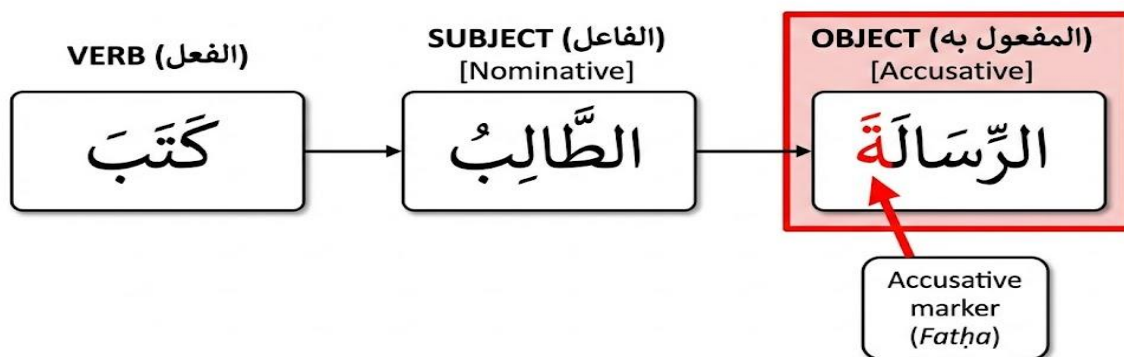


Figure 5.2 Subject and object in accusative case

5.2.2 Endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns

The accusative case endings differ depending on whether the noun is singular, dual, or plural.

- Singular nouns**: usually end with *-a* (fatḥa). Example: الولد (*al-walada*, “the boy”).
- Dual nouns**: end with *-ayni*. Example: الولدين (*al-waladayni*, “the two boys”).
- Sound masculine plural**: end with *-īna*. Example: المعلمين (*al-mu'allimīna*, “the teachers”).
- Sound feminine plural**: end with *-ātin*. Example: المعلمات (*al-mu'allimāti*, “the female teachers”).

Fill in the blank: The accusative ending for sound masculine plural nouns is _____.



Number	Case Ending	Arabic Example	Translation
Singular (مفرد)	ـ / ـ (fatha / tanwīn fath)	رَأَيْتُ الْوَلَدَ	"I saw the boy."
Dual (مثنى)	ـَيْنِ	رَأَيْتُ الْوَلَدَيْنِ	"I saw the two boys."
Masculine Plural (جمع مذكر)	ـِينَ	رَأَيْتُ الْمُعَلِّمِينَ	"I saw the teachers."
Feminine Plural (جمع مؤنث)	ـَاتِ	رَأَيْتُ الطَّالِبَاتِ	"I saw the female students."
Broken Plural (جمع تكسير)	ـ / ـ (same as singular)	رَأَيْتُ الْكُتُبَ	"I saw the books."

Table 5.2 Accusative case endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns

5.2.3 Examples in objects and adverbials

The accusative case appears in both **direct objects** and **adverbials of time and place**.

Examples:

- Direct object: أَكْرَمْتُ الطَّالِبَ (akramtu al-ṭāliba, "I honoured the student").
- Adverbial of time: سَافَرْتُ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ (sāfartu yawma al-jum'ati, "I travelled on Friday").
- Adverbial of place: جَلَسْتُ أَمَامَ الْبَيْتِ (jalastu amāma al-bayti, "I sat in front of the house").

Fill in the blank: In the sentence سَافَرْتُ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ, the word يَوْمَ is in the _____ case.

Caption: Box 5.2 Examples of accusative case in objects and adverbials

Short description: Box summarising examples of accusative case usage in direct objects and adverbials with translations.



Sample AI prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of accusative case usage in Arabic sentences with translations.”

Search string: “Arabic grammar accusative case objects adverbials examples OER”

Pilot Questions 5.2

1. What is the primary function of the accusative case in Arabic?
2. Give the accusative ending for a singular noun.
3. Provide the accusative ending for dual nouns.
4. In the sentence أَكْرَمْتُ الطَّالِبَ, which word is in the accusative case?
5. Why is the accusative case important for identifying the object of a verb?

5.3 Genitive Case (al-Jarr)

The **genitive case (al-Jarr)** is the grammatical form used in Arabic to mark nouns that follow prepositions or appear in possessive constructions. It is typically indicated by the vowel ending *-i* (kasra) for singular nouns, though endings vary for dual and plural forms. Understanding the genitive case is crucial because it shows relationships between words, such as ownership or location, and helps you interpret prepositional phrases accurately.

5.3.1 Definition and functions of the genitive case

The **genitive case** marks nouns governed by prepositions or those that form part of an *iḍāfa* (possessive construction). For example:

- فِي الْبَيْتِ (*fī al-bayti*, “in the house”). Here, الْبَيْتِ is genitive because it follows the preposition فِي.
- كِتَابُ الطَّالِبِ (*kitābu al-ṭālibi*, “the student’s book”). Here, الطَّالِبِ is genitive because it is the second term in a possessive construction.

Fill in the blank: In the phrase كِتَابُ الطَّالِبِ, the word الطَّالِبِ is in the _____ case.



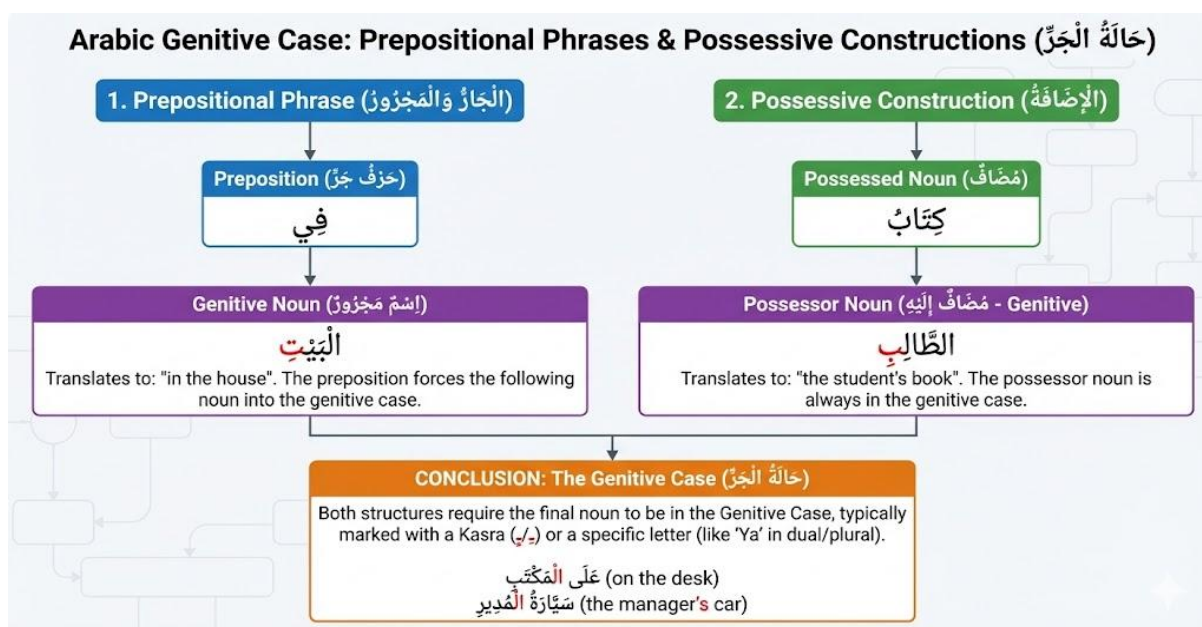


Figure 5.3 Examples of genitive case in Arabic

5.3.2 Endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns

The genitive case endings differ depending on whether the noun is singular, dual, or plural.

- **Singular nouns:** usually end with *-i* (kasra). Example: الولد (*al-waladi*, "of the boy").
- **Dual nouns:** end with *-ayni*. Example: الولدين (*al-waladayni*, "of the two boys").
- **Sound masculine plural:** end with *-īna*. Example: المعلمين (*al-mu'allimīna*, "of the teachers").
- **Sound feminine plural:** end with *-ātin*. Example: المعلمات (*al-mu'allimāti*, "of the female teachers").

Fill in the blank: The genitive ending for singular nouns is usually _____.

Number	Case Ending	Arabic Example	Translation
Singular (مفرد)	ـِ / ـٍ (kasra / tanwīn kasr)	مَرَرْتُ بِالْوَلَدِ	"I passed by the boy."



Dual (مثنى)	بَيْنَ	مَرَرْتُ بِالْوَلَدَيْنِ	"I passed by the two boys."
Masculine Plural (جمع مذكر سالم)	بَيْنَ	سَلَّمْتُ عَلَى الْمُعَلِّمِينَ	"I greeted the teachers."
Feminine Plural (جمع مؤنث سالم)	بَيْنَ	سَلَّمْتُ عَلَى الطَّالِبَاتِ	"I greeted the female students."
Broken Plural (جمع تكسير)	/ - (same as singular)	مَرَرْتُ بِالْكَتُبِ	"I passed by the books."

Table 5.3 Genitive case endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns

5.3.3 Examples in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions

The genitive case is most commonly seen in **prepositional phrases** and **possessive constructions**.

Examples:

- Prepositional phrase: جَلَسْتُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ (jalastu fī al-masjidi, "I sat in the mosque").
- Possessive construction: قَلَمُ الْمُعَلِّمِ (qalamu al-mu'allimi, "the teacher's pen").

Fill in the blank: In the sentence جَلَسْتُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ, the word الْمَسْجِدِ/s governed by the _____.

Arabic Sentence	Word in Genitive Case	Function	Translation
مَرَرْتُ بِالْوَلَدِ	الْوَلَدِ (al-waladi)	Object of preposition	"I passed by the boy."
كَتَبْتُ فِي الدَّفْترِ	الدَّفْترِ (al-daftari)	Object of preposition	"I wrote in the notebook."
سَلَّمْتُ عَلَى الْمُعَلِّمِ	الْمُعَلِّمِ (al-mu'allimi)	Object of preposition	"I greeted the teacher."
الْكِتَابُ لِلطَّالِبِ	الطَّالِبِ (al-talibi)	Object of preposition	"The book belongs to the student."
بَيْتُ الرَّجُلِ	الرَّجُلِ (al-rajuli)	Genitive in idāfa (construct phrase)	"The house of the man."
مَرَرْتُ بِالْكَتُبِ	الْكَتُبِ (al-kutubi)	Object of preposition	"I passed by the books."

Box 5.3 Examples of genitive case in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions



Pilot Questions 5.3

1. What is the primary function of the genitive case in Arabic?
2. Give the genitive ending for a singular noun.
3. Provide the genitive ending for dual nouns.
4. In the phrase قَلَمُ الْمَعْلَمِ, which word is in the genitive case?
5. Why is the genitive case important in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions?

5.4 Integrative Applications

This Part brings together the three major Arabic cases—**nominative (raf')**, **accusative (naṣb)**, and **genitive (jarr)**—to show how they interact in authentic sentences. By analysing examples and practising sentence construction, you will learn how case endings work together to clarify meaning and grammatical relationships.

5.4.1 Analysing sentences with mixed case endings

Arabic sentences often contain words in different cases, each serving a distinct grammatical role. For example:

- كَتَبَ الطَّالِبُ الدَّرْسَ فِي الْكِتَابِ (*kataba al-ṭālibu al-darsa fī al-kitābi*, “The student wrote the lesson in the book”).
Here, الطَّالِبُ is nominative as the subject, الدَّرْسَ is accusative as the object, and الْكِتَابِ is genitive because it follows the preposition فِي.

Fill in the blank: In the sentence above, the word الدَّرْسَ is in the _____ case.



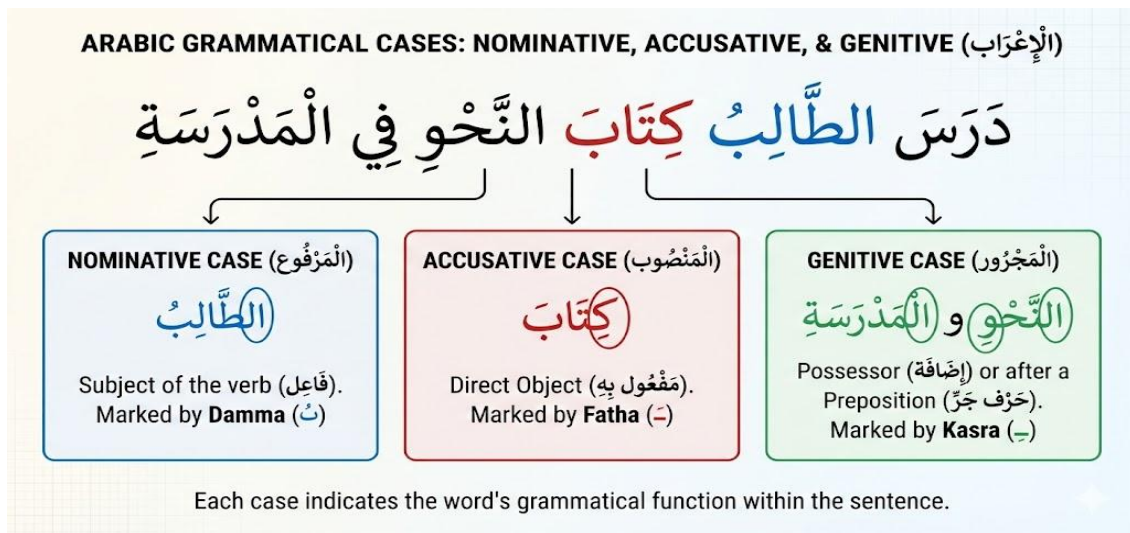


Figure 5.4 Sentence analysis with mixed case endings

5.4.2 Practising i‘rāb with authentic texts

I‘rāb refers to the system of case endings in Arabic that indicate the grammatical role of words. Practising i‘rāb with authentic texts such as Qur’anic verses or literary passages helps you see how case endings function in real contexts.

Example from Qur’an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (inna Allāha ghafūrun raḥīmun, “Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Merciful”).

Here, **الله** is accusative because it follows **إِنَّ**, while **غَفُورٌ** and **رَحِيمٌ** are nominative as predicates.

Fill in the blank: In the Qur’anic example, the word **الله** is in the _____ case.

Case	Ending	Arabic Example	Source	Translation
Nominative (مرفوع)	ـُ / ـٌ	اللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ	Qur’an 2:173	“Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”
Accusative (منصوب)	ـَ / ـِ	إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ	Qur’an 4:25	“Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”
Genitive (مجرور)	ـِ / ـٍ	فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ	Qur’an 2:190	“In the way of Allah.”
Nominative (مرفوع)	ـُ / ـٌ	الشَّعْرُ جَمِيلٌ	Classical poetry	“Poetry is beautiful.”



Accusative (منصوب)	أَحَبُّ الشَّعْرِ	Classical literature	"I love poetry."
Genitive (مجرور)	دِيَوَانُ الشَّعْرِ	Classical literature	"The collection of poetry."

Table 5.4 Examples of i'rāb in authentic Arabic texts

5.4.3 Exercises for constructing sentences across cases

To consolidate your learning, it is important to practise constructing sentences that combine nominative, accusative, and genitive cases. This will help you internalise case usage and prepare you for authentic communication.

Example exercise:

- Write a sentence that begins with a nominative subject, includes an accusative object, and ends with a genitive phrase.

Sample answer: قرأ المعلم الكتاب في المدرسة (qara'a al-mu'allimu al-kitāba fī al-madrasa, "The teacher read the book in the school").

Fill in the blank: In the exercise above, the word المعلم is an example of the _____ case.

Arabic Sentence	Nominative Case	Accusative Case	Genitive Case	Translation
الولد يذهب إلى المدرسة	الولد (al-waladu) – subject	المدرسة (al-madrasata) – object of verb of motion	—	"The boy goes to school."
أكل الطالب التفاحة في الغرفة	الطالب (al-ṭālibu) – subject	التفاحة (al-tuffāḥata) – direct object	الغرفة (al-ghurfati) – object of preposition	"The student ate the apple in the room."
الكتاب على الطاولة وقراءت الفصل	الكتاب (al-kitābu) – subject	الفصل (al-faṣla) – direct object	الطاولة (al-ṭāwilati) – object of preposition	"The book is on the table and I read the chapter."
الله يحب المؤمنين في سبيله	الله (Allāhu) – subject	المؤمنين (al-mu'minīna) – direct object	سبيله (sabīlihi) – genitive in idāfa	"Allah loves the believers in His way."
المعلم يعلم الدرس للطالب	المعلم (al-mu'allimu) – subject	الدرس (al-darsa) – direct object	الطالب (al-ṭālibi) – object of preposition	"The teacher teaches the lesson to the student."



Pilot Questions 5.4

1. How can mixed case endings in a sentence enhance meaning in Arabic?
2. Give one example of a Qur'anic passage that shows *i'rāb* clearly.
3. Construct a sentence that combines nominative, accusative, and genitive cases.
4. Why are case endings important in Arabic storytelling and formal texts?
5. What role does the genitive case play when used alongside nominative and accusative cases?

Series Summary

This Series has focused on the study of **word case endings in Arabic sentences**, an essential aspect of grammar known as *i'rāb*. Its purpose has been to help you recognise how nominative, accusative, and genitive endings clarify the grammatical roles of words, ensuring accurate interpretation and construction of sentences. By working through the different Parts, you have seen how subjects, objects, and prepositional phrases are marked, and how these endings interact to create meaning in authentic texts.

We began with the **nominative case**, examining its functions in subjects and predicates, then moved to the **accusative case**, which marks objects and adverbials. Following that, we studied the **genitive case**, exploring its role in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions. Finally, we brought these elements together in **integrative applications**, analysing sentences with mixed case endings and practising sentence construction. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to define each case, demonstrate their endings across singular, dual, and plural forms, apply them in authentic contexts, analyse examples from Qur'anic and literary texts, and construct sentences that accurately combine nominative, accusative, and genitive cases.



Accusative case (al-Naṣb)

The grammatical form in Arabic that marks the direct object of a verb, as well as adverbials of time and place. It is usually indicated by the vowel ending *-a* (fatḥa) for singular nouns.

Adverbial

A word or phrase that provides extra information about the time, place, or manner of an action. In Arabic, adverbials are often marked with the accusative case.

Case ending (i' rāb)

The short vowel or suffix at the end of a word in Arabic that shows its grammatical role in a sentence, such as subject, object, or noun governed by a preposition.

Dual form

A grammatical form used in Arabic to indicate exactly two of something. Dual nouns have distinct endings depending on their case, such as *-āni* in the nominative and *-ayni* in the accusative and genitive.

Genitive case (al-Jarr)

The grammatical form in Arabic that marks nouns following prepositions or appearing in possessive constructions. It is usually indicated by the vowel ending *-i* (kasra) for singular nouns.

I' rāb

The system of case endings in Arabic that shows the grammatical role of words in a sentence. It includes nominative, accusative, and genitive cases.

Nominative case (al-Raf')

The grammatical form in Arabic that marks the subject of a verb or the predicate in a nominal sentence. It is usually indicated by the vowel ending *-u* (ḍamma) for singular nouns.

Nominal sentence

A sentence in Arabic that begins with a noun rather than a verb. Both the subject and predicate in a nominal sentence are typically in the nominative case.



Object

The word in a sentence that receives the action of the verb. In Arabic, objects are marked with the accusative case.

Possessive construction (iḍāfa)

A grammatical structure in Arabic that shows ownership or association between two nouns. The second noun in an iḍāfa is always in the genitive case.

Prepositional phrase

A phrase that begins with a preposition and is followed by a noun in the genitive case, such as *في البيت* (“in the house”).

Subject

The word in a sentence that performs the action of the verb or is described by the predicate. In Arabic, subjects are marked with the nominative case.

Verb root

The basic set of consonants, usually three, from which Arabic verbs and many nouns are formed. It provides the core meaning of the word.

Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

Objective Questions

1. Identify the typical vowel ending for singular nouns in the nominative case. (Linked to SLO 5.2)
2. State the accusative ending for dual nouns. (Linked to SLO 5.5)
3. Recognise the case used for nouns following prepositions. (Linked to SLO 5.7)
4. Define the grammatical role of the nominative case in a nominal sentence. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
5. Identify the case ending for sound masculine plural nouns in the genitive case. (Linked to SLO 5.8)

Short-Answer Questions

6. Explain how the accusative case is applied to adverbials of time and place. (Linked to SLO



5.6)

7. Describe the difference between nominative and accusative case endings for singular nouns.

(Linked to SLO 5.2, SLO 5.5)

8. Illustrate with an example how the genitive case functions in a possessive construction (*idāfa*).

(Linked to SLO 5.9)

9. Demonstrate how mixed case endings clarify meaning in a sentence. (Linked to SLO 5.10)

10. Analyse why case endings are essential for accurate sentence interpretation in Arabic.

(Linked to SLO 5.10)

Long-Answer Questions

11. Analyse the formation of nominative case endings and explain their functions in subjects and predicates. (Linked to SLO 5.1, SLO 5.3)

12. Evaluate the role of the accusative case in marking objects and adverbials, with examples.

(Linked to SLO 5.4, SLO 5.6)

13. Assess the importance of the genitive case in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions. (Linked to SLO 5.7, SLO 5.9)

14. Construct and evaluate a sentence that combines nominative, accusative, and genitive cases, explaining the effect of case endings. (Linked to SLO 5.10, SLO 5.11)

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

Objective Questions

1. -u (damma).
2. -ayni.
3. Genitive case.
4. It marks the subject or predicate.
5. -īna.

Short-Answer Questions

6. Adverbials of time and place take the accusative case to show when or where an action occurs, e.g. سافرت يوم الجمعة ("I travelled on Friday").



7. Nominative singular nouns end with *-u* (damma), while accusative singular nouns end with *-a* (fatha).
8. Example: *كتاب الطالب* (“the student’s book”), where *التالب* is genitive.
9. Mixed case endings show grammatical roles clearly, e.g. *كتب الطالب الدرس في الكتاب* (“The student wrote the lesson in the book”).
10. Case endings prevent ambiguity by showing whether a word is subject, object, or governed by a preposition.

Long-Answer Questions

11. **Basic response:** Nominative endings mark subjects and predicates, e.g. *التالب مجتهد*.
Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note how nominative endings differ in dual (*-āni*) and plural (*-ūna/-ātun*) forms, and how they are used in Qur’anic verses to emphasise subjects.
12. **Basic response:** Accusative endings mark objects and adverbials, e.g. *قرأ الطالب الكتاب*.
Value-added response: Advanced learners may discuss how particles like *إن* also trigger the accusative, and how adverbials enrich sentence meaning by specifying time and place.
13. **Basic response:** Genitive endings mark nouns after prepositions or in possessive constructions, e.g. *قلم المعلم في البيت*.
Value-added response: Outstanding learners may highlight how the genitive case creates cohesion in complex sentences and is central to stylistic features in Arabic literature.
14. **Basic response:** Example: *قرأ المعلم الكتاب في المدرسة* (“The teacher read the book in the school”). Nominative marks the subject, accusative marks the object, and genitive marks the prepositional phrase.
Value-added response: Advanced learners may analyse how combining cases demonstrates syntactic precision, and how *i’rāb* reflects the richness of Arabic grammar by linking words seamlessly.



Part 5.1 Nominative case (al-Raf')

- Predicate.
- **مُجْتَهِدٌ**
- *-āni*.
- **قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ**
- To mark subjects and predicates in sentences.

Part 5.2 Accusative case (al-Naṣb)

- Object.
- *-a* (fathā).
- *-ayni*.
- **الطَّالِبَ**
- To mark the object of a verb and adverbials of time and place.

Part 5.3 Genitive case (al-Jarr)

- Genitive.
- *-i* (kasra).
- *-ayni*.
- **المُعَلِّمِ**
- To mark nouns following prepositions or in possessive constructions.

Part 5.4 Integrative applications

- They clarify grammatical roles and enhance meaning.
- **إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ**
- **قَرَأَ الْمُعَلِّمُ الْكِتَابَ فِي الْمَدْرَسَةِ**
- They prevent ambiguity and show precise relationships between words.
- It marks nouns governed by prepositions or ownership, complementing nominative and accusative roles.



General References

- Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holes, C. (2018). *Modern Arabic: Structures, Functions, and Varieties*. Routledge.
- Badawi, E., Carter, M. G., & Gully, A. (2016). *Modern Written Arabic: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Routledge.
- Qur'anic examples cited are from the *Mushaf al-Madina* (King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an).

Illustrations

- *Figure 5.1 Subject and predicate in nominative case*
 - AI-generated prompt: "Create a diagram showing an Arabic nominal sentence with subject and predicate marked in nominative case."
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: "Arabic grammar nominative case subject predicate diagram OER".
- *Table 5.1 Nominative case endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns*
 - AI-generated prompt: "Create a table showing nominative case endings for singular, dual, and plural Arabic nouns with examples."
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: "Arabic grammar nominative case endings table OER".
- *Box 5.1 Examples of nominative case in subject and predicate positions*
 - AI-generated prompt: "Generate a text box summarising examples of nominative case usage in Arabic sentences with translations."
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: "Arabic grammar nominative case subject predicate examples OER".
- *Figure 5.2 Subject and object in accusative case*
 - AI-generated prompt: "Create a diagram showing an Arabic verbal sentence with the object marked in accusative case."



- Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
- Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar accusative case object diagram OER”.
- *Table 5.2 Accusative case endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table showing accusative case endings for singular, dual, and plural Arabic nouns with examples.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar accusative case endings table OER”.
- *Box 5.2 Examples of accusative case in objects and adverbials*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of accusative case usage in Arabic sentences with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar accusative case objects adverbials examples OER”.
- *Figure 5.3 Examples of genitive case in Arabic*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing Arabic prepositional phrases and possessive constructions with nouns marked in genitive case.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar genitive case prepositional possessive diagram OER”.
- *Table 5.3 Genitive case endings for singular, dual, and plural nouns*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table showing genitive case endings for singular, dual, and plural Arabic nouns with examples.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar genitive case endings table OER”.
- *Box 5.3 Examples of genitive case in prepositional phrases and possessive constructions*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising examples of genitive case usage in Arabic sentences with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar genitive case prepositional possessive examples OER”.
- *Figure 5.4 Sentence analysis with mixed case endings*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a diagram showing an Arabic sentence with nominative, accusative, and genitive words highlighted.”



- Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
- Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar mixed case endings sentence diagram OER”.
- *Table 5.4 Examples of i‘rāb in authentic Arabic texts*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Create a table showing examples of Arabic case endings (i‘rāb) in Qur’an and literature with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar i‘rāb examples Qur’an literature OER”.
- *Box 5.4 Practice sentences combining nominative, accusative, and genitive cases*
 - AI-generated prompt: “Generate a text box summarising practice sentences combining nominative, accusative, and genitive cases with translations.”
 - Tool/platform: Microsoft Copilot image generation.
 - Suggested OER search string: “Arabic grammar practice sentences nominative accusative genitive OER”.

