

An Adaptation of Radford's Approach in the Categorization of Modern Standard Arabic Grammatical Categories

Introduction

Arabic is the official language of twenty Middle East and African countries, and is the religious language of all Muslims, regardless of their origin. Arabic differs from Indo-European languages syntactically, morphologically and semantically. It is a Semitic language whose main characteristic feature is that most words are built up from roots by following certain fixed patterns and adding infixes, prefixes and suffixes. It is an old language, and what is now known as Classical Arabic was standardized around fourteen centuries ago. The modern form of Arabic is called Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and it is the form used by all Arabic speaking countries in publications, the media and academic institutions. MSA is spoken by people from different Arab countries where the local dialect may not be mutually intelligible. MSA is a simplified form of Classical Arabic, and follows its grammar.

One of the main aims of Linguistics is to describe the grammars of natural languages. However, a principled description of the grammar of any language requires us to recognize that all the words in any language belong to a restricted set of grammatical categories.

In *Syntax: A Minimalist Introduction*, Andrew Radford provides us with ample evidence which illustrates one method of categorization of the words found in English. The evidence he presents is morphosyntactic in nature. This method that he has adopted for proving that specific words belong to specific categories is truly a very clear, objective and comprehensive method.

It would be quite interesting to see how applicable Radford's method would be to other natural languages such as Arabic. Hence, in this paper, an attempt will be made to characterize the main grammatical categories in modern standard Arabic by using a similar approach to that of Radford's. However, this task is not as simple as it may sound; for the nature of Arabic is different in many ways from the English language. For instance:

* Arabic is a Semitic language, and its basic feature is that most of its words are built up from, and can be analyzed down to roots. The exceptions to this rule are proper nouns and particles. Around 64% percent of roots are composed of three consonants (sometimes called radicals) and there are also roots consisting of two, four and five consonants. Words are built up from these roots by following fixed patterns that add prefixes, suffixes and infixes to the word. For example, the Arabic word **مدرس** “teacher” is built up from the root **درس** “study”.

* Arabic also differs from Indo-European languages in that it contains three numbers instead of the more common two numbers. So as well as singular and plural, there is also the dual that is used for describing the actions of two people.

* Another notable verbal attribute that is fundamental to Arabic but does not normally appear in Indo-European languages is the jussive mood. The purpose of the jussive is to express a command in the first or third person.

* Furthermore, the way that definiteness is handled in Arabic is quite different. In Arabic nouns are marked for definiteness by the prefix that is the definite article, unlike in English, where the article itself can be definite or indefinite. In Arabic there is no indefinite article.

* There is also the difference in the verb tenses or aspects. Verbs are defined in ancient Arabic grammar as being perfect, imperfect or imperative. This classification is an important part of Arabic, and trying to mould Arabic verbs to fit the traditional past, present and future tenses of Indo-European languages would be very unnatural.

It is quite apparent, even from these few examples, the great differences that clearly exist between the Arabic and English language. Nonetheless, Radford's concept of categorizing languages according to their morphological and syntactic properties is quite a comprehensive and “universal” method which should not be dismissed so easily, regardless of the vast differences found between languages. In the end, this is the aim of all linguists, isn't it? The search for universal properties between languages is, without a doubt, made easier by utilizing such methods in the description of natural languages.

The Morphosyntactic Approach

According to Radford, when attempting to categorize words, we need to provide morphological, as well as syntactic evidence, to prove that a certain group of words do, indeed, belong to the appropriate category. The question we must ask now is: What is, in reality, considered as morphological and syntactic evidence?

Inflectional and derivational morphology provide us with evidence for categorizing words, in that certain types of inflectional or derivational affixes attach only to certain categories of words. Syntactic evidence, likewise, helps us to assign words to categories by utilizing a number of syntactic strategies.

1a. Morphological Evidence: Inflectional Morphology

Inflectional properties relate to different forms of the same word. Whereas English has a very poor system of inflectional morphology, Arabic is a highly inflective language. For example, adding the Arabic suffix *ون* to the word *مدرس* "teacher" gives the word *مدرسون* "teachers" which indicates the masculine plural; the feminine plural of that same word is *مدرسات*. This system that studies how words are constructed from roots, and describes the patterns they follow is called *صرف*. When teaching Arabic grammar to students, Arabic grammarians and linguists have always used the Arabic system of inflectional morphology.

1b. Morphological Evidence: Derivational Morphology

Arabic also has a very rich derivational morphology system whereby words are derived from other words. This is the reason behind the infinite number of words in Arabic because we can add an endless variety of morphemes to the basic triliteral root *فعل* to derive many different forms of words such as *يفعل - فاعل - فعول - ستفعل - مفاعل -* etc. Once words with affixes are recognized, one can begin the process of categorization.

2. Syntactic Evidence

More often than not, many problems arise with morphological criteria, and therefore it is unwise to rely solely on morphological evidence in determining the appropriate categories for words; our morphological evidence must constantly be checked against syntactic evidence. Basically, students are presented with a sentence, and for each word they must provide a description of it based on its position within the sentence. For example, given the sentence *درس الولد* "the boy studied", students would have to say that the first word is the perfect verb, while the second word is the nominative subject.

Arabic grammarians traditionally analyze all Arabic words into three main grammatical categories, unlike English which according to Radford, has five lexical grammatical categories in addition to a number of other functional categories. These 3 main categories are further sub-categorized into more detailed parts-of-speech which collectively cover the whole of the Arabic language. The three main categories are nouns, verbs and particles. However, since our aim in this paper is to follow Radford's approach in the categorization of the Arabic language, it doesn't hurt to try and apply his concept of the segmentation of categories into lexical categories and functional categories, while at the same time keeping intact the traditional analysis of Arabic words. In fact there is a famous poem that actually starts with the verse: *the word or language is one of three, noun, verb and particle*. It is from these three main categories that the rest of the language is derived.

According to Radford, the words that belong to lexical categories are those words that have lexical/descriptive content; however, functional categories are those words that essentially have grammatical function. When trying to establish which categories in Arabic are lexical and which are functional, we find that verbs and nouns as well as other sub-categories such as adjectives and adverbs would clearly be considered to be lexical categories. However, when we come to the particle which is the third main category in the Arabic language, we find that they are not as clear-cut as the other categories.

As for particles, many are found in the Arabic language. Now, we must ask ourselves; are particles to be considered as functors or as lexical items? The one definite thing one can say about Arabic particles is that they are not inflected and that their major function is to change the meaning of the sentences they are used in. However, this is the only thing we can be sure of. After taking a close look at Arabic particles, it seems that our task of categorizing all types of particles as either functional or lexical categories will not be possible. What is apparent is that some particles will have to be considered as functors and others as lexical items. This seems like an appropriate solution, but even then, we are bound to run into some exceptions. For example, at first glance, we could say that prepositions such as *على* and *مع* should be considered a lexical category because Radford states that prepositions are to be considered as such. However, on the same page that Radford argues that prepositions are a lexical category; he also says that one test to apply to words to see whether they have descriptive content or not is to see whether they have antonyms. In his book, Radford gives the example that a preposition such as *inside* has the antonym *outside*; hence, prepositions are a lexical category because prepositions have antonyms. This all sounds very convincing at the beginning, but what about those prepositions that are found in Arabic as well as in English that *do not* have antonyms such as *على (on)*? Are we to consider these exceptions? And at the same time, one can not deny the fact that prepositions do carry descriptive content; not grammatical function. Now, a decision must be made. For now, prepositions will be considered a lexical category for two reasons; one is that this is how Radford has categorized them and we should try to stick as much as possible to his categorizations in order to come up with as many similarities between languages as possible – as this is every linguist's goal. And secondly, if the functional category is related to grammatical function, then the Arabic prepositions do not fit this description. Yes, we will run into various obstacles in our journey of categorizing particles into functional and lexical categories, but in the end we must make a decision – a decision which is based on as much evidence as possible.

As such, we have now established that nouns, verbs, and some particles as well as other sub-categories such as adjectives and adverbs will all be considered as lexical categories. Now turning to functional categories, we also have several in Arabic, most of which are found in English, yet some only exclusively found in Arabic. First, the lexical categories in Arabic grammar will be discussed.

LEXICAL CATEGORIES

~ NOUNS ~

A noun (الأسماء) in Arabic is a name or a word that describes a person, place, thing, or idea.

Inflectional Evidence:

Arabic nouns inflect for gender and number.

{1} Arabic nouns can have either masculine or feminine gender. The commonest indication of a feminine noun is the ending (h - هـ) or (t - ة), e.g. father / والده / **Samer's mother** / والدته سامر and ليلي (as in المقصورة) and as in (حسناء) as in the extended connected form of the name.

{2} Arabic nouns can either be singular, dual or plural. The **dual** is formed by adding the suffix (ان) or (ين) to the masculine singular, e.g., **a boy** ولد → ولدان / ولدین or by dropping the case ending feminine singular (h - هـ) or (t - ة) and adding (تان) or (تین), e.g., a teacher معلمة → معلمتان / معلمتين .

The **plural** masculine noun is formed by adding the suffix (ون) or (ین) to the masculine singular, e.g., **a cook** طبّاح → طبّاحون / طبّاحین , however, most feminine plural nouns are formed by adding the suffix (ات) to the feminine singular after dropping the (h - هـ) or (t - ة) if there is one, e.g., **a cook** طبّاحة → طبّاحات

To summarize, the suffixes (h - هـ) or (t - ة) usually indicate a sing. fem. N
the suffixes (ان) or (ین) usually indicate dual masc. N
the suffixes (تان) or (تین) usually indicate dual fem. N
the suffixes (ون) or (ین) usually indicate plural masc. N
the suffix (ات) usually indicates plural fem. N

If we look closely at the highlighted suffixes (ین) above, we find that this same inflection is used to mark the dual and plural masculine nouns. This may cause some confusion on the written level; however, they are phonologically pronounced differently.

Another point worth mentioning is that in addition to the "regular" nouns mentioned above, "irregular" nouns are also found in Arabic. Such nouns are considered irregular because they do not follow the usual patterns of, e.g., pluralization. Such nouns are sometimes also called "broken nouns" because internal change is involved. For example: سن → أسنان

Derivational Evidence:

Traditionally the Noun class in Arabic is subdivided into Derivatives and Primitives.

Primitives are nouns that are not derived from any other category such as proper nouns and names of places, rivers, mountains, etc. and these are called أسماء العلم in Arabic such as (فاطمة – القاهرة – النيل - الخ)

Derivatives are:

{1} nouns derived from verbs, e.g., زهور from زهر

{2} nouns derived from other nouns, e.g., حساب from حساب

In English, the process of deriving a noun from another grammatical category is quite an easy process which simply requires the affixation of particular derivational affixes. However, Arabic derivational morphology is not so clear-cut. One of the main problems that linguists face is that some letters that appear to be affixes are in fact part of the word.

Syntactic Evidence:

The syntactic attributes of nouns are as follows:

(1) Person: 1 [first] 2 [second] 3 [third]

(2) Case: N [nominative] A [accusative] G [genitive]

(3) Definiteness: D [definite] I [indefinite]

We can tell that a noun is definite if it is a proper nouns, has the definite article (ال) prefixed to it, or is made definite by being in an إضافة construction or in the genitive case (i.e. an indefinite noun followed by a definite one), e.g., لون السيارة.

Another way of determining that a noun is definite is from its occurrence in simple verbless sentences such as القلم مكسور / ليلى نائمة. The subjects of such sentences are always definite nominative nouns.

Arabic nouns can also be in the accusative case when the sentence begins with a transitive verb. If we apply the criteria of distribution, we are able to determine that the set of words which can terminate a sentence in the following position marked _____ , as in: كسر أحمد _____ is an accusative noun. For example:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| كسر أحمد النافذة | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | (N) |
| كسر أحمد ذهب | <input type="checkbox"/> | (V) |
| كسر أحمد في | <input type="checkbox"/> | (Pre) |
| كسر أحمد جميل | <input type="checkbox"/> | (Adj) |

This is one of the tests that Radford used in defining nouns. Fortunately, we were able to successfully apply the same test on Arabic nouns.

Another syntactic test is substitution. If we have a morphologically irregular noun (e.g. أسنان), which can be substituted by a regular noun (e.g. معلمة), the irregular form is considered to have the same categorical status as the regular noun which can replace it, and so is, too, a noun. For example: رأيت معلمة الطفل - رأيت أسنان الطفل.

The group of words, (ليس- صار - كان : كان و أخواتها), which are used in conjunction with nominal sentences, clearly indicate that a noun exists in the sentence, and that the syntactic position of this noun is the word that immediately follows كان or one of her sisters, as in the following sentence: صار الطالب مجتهدا .

Furthermore, a special group of particles exists in Arabic called (ان و أخواتها). This group of particles also help us to determine which words are nouns. If we examine Arabic sentences which contain ان or one of her sisters, we will find that the word that immediately follows these particles belong to the noun category, as in:

ان الله غفور رحيم

Another way we can tell that words belong to nouns is through the utilization of demonstrative pronouns: (هذا - هذه - هذان - هاتان - هؤلاء). The word that immediately follows a demonstrative pronoun in Arabic is a noun, e.g., هذه شجرة الليمون .

Moreover, if we have a noun-predicate construction (e.g. الولد نظيف), then we are able to confirm that the word preceding the predicate is indeed a noun. But, how do we know that we have such a structure in the first place? The predicate is actually an adjective (الصفة), but is not considered as one because in the above sentence, the word following the noun does not agree in definiteness with the noun, which is one of its conditions; it also cannot be a (حال) because it requires a verb in the sentence; hence, the word نظيف can only be a predicate here. And since we now have proved the existence of the predicate, we confidently can determine that the word preceding it belongs to the noun category.

One of the unique features of Arabic is the existence of yet another exclusive group of nouns, which are in their own right primitive nouns. This group is called (أبو , أخو , حمو , ذو , فو : الأسماء الخمسة), e.g. يعمل محمد و حموه في تجارة الذهب .

Furthermore, we can use null-subject sentences (جمل مبنية للمجهول) in determining that certain words are nouns. Upon the examination of several sentences of this construction, we find that the word that immediately follows the verb, is a noun. Let's look at the following set of sentences :

- (1) تربي الخيل للحروب والزينة (N)
 (2) تزرع الأشجار للحصول على الأخشاب (N)
 (3) وزعت الجوائز على الطلاب الناجحين (V)

In all the above sentences, the first word of each sentence is indeed a verb, and the words that follow these verbs are nouns.

One final way of knowing that a noun is in the sentence is to look for (النداء) construction in the sentence. For example, in the sentence: (يا سعيد), يا is a particle that only accepts a noun after it.

~ VERBS ~

An Arabic verb can be defined as any word that refers to an action or occurrence in time. As a starting point, information will be provided for distinguishing the class of verbs in general.

Verbs are categorized into three main parts:

1. [perfect] 2. [imperfect] 3. [imperative]

The definition of perfect verbs not only includes the equivalent of English past tense verbs (i.e. to describe acts completed in some past time) but also describes acts which at the moment of speaking have already been completed and remain in a state of completion, describes a past act that often took place or still takes place (i.e. *commentators agreed (have agreed and still agree)*), describes an act which is just completed at the moment by the very act of speaking it (*I just sold this*), and describes acts which are certain to occur that can be described as having already taken place (mostly used in promises, treaties and so on)

The imperfect does not in itself express any idea of time; it merely indicates a begun, incomplete, or enduring existence either in present, past or future time. While the imperative verbs order or ask for something to be done in the future.

Standard Arabic employs two devices to indicate future time: one is the independent word **sawfa**, the other is the prefix **sa-**, both of which precede the verb.

Examples of verbs include:

- First person, singular, neuter, perfect verb 'kasartu' "I broke".
- First person, singular, neuter, indicative, imperfect verb 'aksiru' "I break"
- Second person, singular, masculine, imperative verb 'aksir' "Break!"

Inflectional Evidence:

All verbs inflect for person, gender, and number.

- (i) Gender: M [masculine] F [feminine]
 (ii) Number: Sg [singular] Pl [plural] Du [dual]
 (iii) Person: 1 [first] 2 [second] 3 [third]

PREFIXES			
<i>Person/gender</i>	<i>number</i>		
	Sg	Pl	Du
1	?-...	n-...	x
2M	t-...	t-... -uu(na)	t-... -aa(ni)
2F	t-... ii(na)	t-... -na	t-... -aa(ni)
3M	y-...	y-...-uu(na)	y-...-aa(ni)
3F	t-...	y-...-n	t-...-aa(ni)

SUFFIXES			
<i>Person/gender</i>	<i>number</i>		
	Sg	Pl	Du
1	...-tu	...-naa	x
2M	...-ta	...-tum	...-tumaa
2F	...-ti	...-tunna	...-tuma
3M	...-a	...-uu	...-aa
3F	...-at	...-na	...-ataa

There is one consistent rule for Arabic verbs and that is that there must be subject-verb agreement in gender,
 e.g., ارتدى أحمد ثوباً / ساعدت الفتاة أمها ,

Derivational Evidence:

Most Arabic verbs are actually unaugmented trilateral verbal roots (roots consisting of three consonants). Dozens of other words are derived from a single root, all with predictable related meanings. These roots are mostly verbs in the past tense (perfect verbs), third person singular, masculine gender. Thus, (كتب) ('he wrote') consists of the three consonants **k – t – b** with vowels placed in between. These three consonants remain in the same order in any word derived from this root. The following is only a very short list of possible derivations:

<i>Perfect verb k-t-b</i>	<i>English Translation</i>	<i>Type of derivation</i>
Katab	He wrote	From verb to verb
Kabat	She wrote	From verb to verb
Kattabat	She caused someone to write	From verb to verb
Katabna	We wrote	From verb to verb
Takaatabu	They wrote to each other	From verb to verb
Kitaab	Book	From verb to noun
Kutub	Books	From verb to noun
Maktuub	A letter	From verb to noun
Kaatib	Writer	From verb to noun
Maktab	Office	From verb to noun
Kuttaab	writers	From verb to noun
Maktabah	Library	From verb to noun

As we can see, different affixes are added to the basic triliteral root in order to derive words with different forms which, hence, belong to different grammatical categories. These affix additions follow certain patterns; therefore, one of the clearest indications that a word indeed belongs to the verb category is by looking at its consonant and vowel pattern.

Since Arabic, unlike English, has a highly complex system of derivational morphology, derivations do not only occur on the syntactic level, e.g.,

English: happy/adjective → happiness/noun

Arabic: سعد / verb → سعادة /noun);

derivations also play a big role in modifying the shades of meaning of any given root on the semantic level. Such morphosemantic derivations are not mentioned by Radford because the English language simply lacks such semantic derivations.

Hence, we now have two indicators on the derivational level of determining whether a word belongs to the verb category or not; certain *morphosemantic* derivational patterns exist as well as a large number of *morphosyntactic* derivational patterns.

The main morphosemantic derivational patterns will be illustrated below. Then, the three main morphosyntactic patterns of verbs from which all the other verbal patterns are derived will also be listed.

EXAMPLES OF MORPHOSEMANTIC DERIVATIONAL PATTERNS OF VERBS

Pattern 1 : Lengthen the middle radical e.g. قَدِمَ → قَدِمَ
Meaning is modified: another agent caused it to happen

Pattern 2: Prefix st e.g. st C1 C2 C3 علم → ستعلم
Meaning is modified: reflexive

Pattern 3: Prefix ء e.g. ء C1 C2 C3 أنزل → أنزل
Meaning is modified: gives a causative meaning to root

Pattern 4: Prefix t to pattern 2 e.g. t C1 C2 C2 C3 تحسّن → تحسّن
Meaning is modified: reflexive meaning

Pattern 5: Prefix t to pattern 3 e.g. t C1 v: C2 C3 توافق → توافق
Meaning is modified: reciprocal reflexivity

Pattern 6: Prefix n to pattern 1 e.g. n C1 C2 C3 نَسَحَبَ → سَحَبَ
Meaning is modified: passive of pattern1

MORPHOSYNTACTIC DERIVATIONAL PATTERNS OF VERBS

The three main patterns are as follows:

	<i>Basic Patterns</i>	<i>Perfect form</i>	<i>Imperative form</i>
Basic Root CCC	CaCaC	فتح درس كسر	iCCaC → افتح uCCuC → ادرس iCCiC → اكسر
	CaCa	رمى	iCCi → ارمي
	CaCC	ظن حس	CuCC → ظن CiCC → حس
	CaaC	قال سار نام	CuuC → قول CiiC → سير CaaC → نام

Examples of other verb patterns (which are derived from the three basic patterns above) are: CaCCaC (e.g. درّس) , taCaaCaC (e.g. (تبادل), etc.

As for the imperfect verb in Arabic, it is easily derived from the imperative form by adding a set of prefixes and sometimes suffixes to the imperative form, e.g. كل → يأكل (imperative : "eat" becomes imperfect "he is eating" just by adding a prefix.

However, there are a group of verbs that are considered as exceptions because they are based on four-consonant roots (quadrilateral roots). These are far fewer in number and have regular, consistent derivations.

There are several quadrilateral roots; however, the two most commonly used roots are the following:

- (1) C1 C2 C3 C4 e.g. نحرّج
- (2) C1 C2 C1 C2 e.g. قفصقّص

Thus, we can consider the above patterns pure derivational evidence for the verb category.

Syntactic Evidence:

One way of telling that a word belongs to the verb category is by examining preceding words. For example, if the particles (لم) or (سوف) precede a word, then this indicates that the following word will be a verb. But what is even more interesting is the fact that we can even tell what type of verb it is. Here (لم) or (سوف) are true indicators that the following verb is an imperfect verb, as in the following Quranic verse: / لم يلد ولم يولد

The Arabic language is considered by many linguists mainly a V –S- O language. Since the majority of sentences in Arabic are verbal sentences (الجملة الفعلية), we will find that we have many sentences with the following construction: أمل الباب ____ . If we try to apply Radford’s distribution test here, we will find that if we try to put any word from any category other than a verb in the space marked by ____, it becomes ungrammatical.

- (1) طرقت أمل الباب
- (2) حزينة أمل الباب / الفتاة أمل الباب *

Arabic also has another type of sentence structure; one which begins with a noun, so we call these nominal sentences (الجملة الاسمية). Such a sentence begins with a noun called اسم and a second part which is the predicate خبر, e.g. الليل مظلم . In this sentence, the noun is “the night” and the predicate is “dark”. Upon closer inspection of the predicate, we find that the adjective مظلم here is derived from the trilateral verbal root ظلم . We are close now to concluding a certain fact about words that belong to the verb category, but before we state our result, several more sentences should be examined.

- (1) الطائرة مسرعة
- (2) الحج فريضة على المسلم
- (3) مي تطبخ الغداء

It is safe to say that yet another way to determine that a word belongs to the verb category is to now confirm the fact that the trilateral root of a predicate following a noun in a nominal sentence does, indeed, belong to the verb category. Briefly, the predicate itself is not a verb in every case, but it is definitely derived from a word belonging to the verb category.

A special group of words, which exclusively belong to the verb category are a group called (كان و أخواتها) , which are used in conjunction with nominal sentences. These words (ليس—كان - صار) are considered verbs because we can derive the perfect, imperative, and imperfect forms, all except for ليس which is a static verb, but still is considered a verb nonetheless.

Moreover, in Arabic there are a group of words called relative pronouns (الأسماء الموصولة). These words are quite relevant when looking for syntactic proof for the existence of what words belong to the verb category. This group includes the following words: الذي – اللذان – اللاتي – اللتان – التي – الذين – اللذان . What we find is that the word that immediately follows one of these الأسماء الموصولة , undoubtedly, belongs to the verb category, as we will see in the following sentences:

- (1) أختي أمل التي غسلت الملابس
- (2) روان و هدى اللتان استقبلتا الضيفات
- (3) المعلمات الاتي أعدن الحفلة

All the underlined words above immediately follow الأسماء الموصولة and are definitely verbs, which also apparently must agree with الأسماء الموصولة that they follow in gender and in number.

Furthermore, Arabic includes sentences that are called null-subject sentences (جمل مبنية للمجهول), e.g. in the following sentence: شرح الدرس . We find that there is no overt subject. But the relevancy of such structures lies in that when we have a null-subject sentence, the first word of this type of structure belongs to the verb category. In order to strengthen our claim, let's look at the following set of sentences:

- (1) (v) تربي الخيل للحروب والزينة
- (2) (v) تزرع الأشجار للحصول على الأخشاب
- (3) (v) وزعت الجوائز على الطلاب الناجحين

In all the above sentences, the first word of each sentence is indeed a verb.

Adjectives & Adverbs

Arab grammarians do not recognize adjectives and adverbs as separate parts of speech; they do, of course, speak about grammatical functions of that nature.

Adjectives:

As for adjectives, there are roughly two types; **الصفة** & **الحال** . The difference between them is a syntactic difference discussed later and a semantic difference; **الصفة** is almost a permanent modification of the noun, but **الحال** is a modification that will most likely change suddenly because it lasts for only a limited time.

Inflectional Evidence:

Adjectives inflect for gender (e.g. جميل – جميلة) and number (جميل - جميلان) – except that when nouns refer to plural things or animals, the adjective is put in the feminine singular, e.g. الكتب الجديدة .

Derivational Evidence:

In Arabic, there are no primitive adjectives and this is the main reason why adjectives are not considered one of the main grammatical categories in Arabic. However, adjectives are amply derived from nouns and verbs.

For example, we have the following adjective that is derived from a noun: ذكي from the noun ذكاء → .

Sometimes, there are even regular patterns for deriving an adjective from a noun, e.g., the addition of the suffix -ي , nouns are easily transformed into adjectives (جنوب - جنوبي / مصر - مصري).

Many adjectives are also derived from verbs. For example, the adjective نظيف is derived from the verb نظف , and كريم from كرم , etc.

Syntactic Evidence:

The main point to be mentioned about Arabic adjectives is that they follow, not precede, the noun they modify.

Here, it also becomes important for us to see how the two different types of adjectives are syntactically different.

As for الصفة , it agrees with the noun it modifies in number and in gender (e.g. رأيت النجمتان الساطعتان في السماء), as well as the fact that they must agree in definiteness and indefiniteness (e.g. المعلم الذكي - الرجل ظالم).

On the other hand, الحال agrees with the noun it modifies only in number and gender, but not in definiteness. Another peculiarity to this type of adjective is that it is always in the accusative case, as in the following sentence: يستقبلهم البائع مبتسما .

In Arabic, just as in English, adjectives can be stacked with the addition of و between the adjectives, e.g., هذه الطالبة مؤدبة و مجتهدة و هادئة و الخ .

Adverbs:

There are many sub-categories in Arabic grammar that serve the function of adverbs.

Sometimes the adverbial function is served by an adjective describing a verbal noun derived from the same root as the verb of the sentence: **verb + VN from the same root (as object) + adj.**

For example: صرخت أُمي صراخًا عاليًا . This type of “adverb” is called **المفعول المطلق** and is always in the accusative case. The function of this type is to intensify the meaning of the verb.

Another type of category which we can subsume under the adverb category is called **المفعول لأجله**. This is a verb in the accusative case which shows the reason behind the occurrence of the verb, as in the following sentence: . سافر خالد إلى المصيف طلباً للراحة .

Adverbs of time and place are nouns in the accusative case that show when (ظرف زمان) or where (ظرف مكان) the verb took place. This type of category is called **المفعول فيه** .

Example of an adverb of time: شرب المريض الدواء صباحاً .

Example of an adverb of place: يقف الخطيب فوق المنبر .

One final category that will be discussed here is **المفعول معه** . The words that belong to this category are nouns that immediately follow و which carries the meaning "with". These words are also considered as adverbs because they inform "with what" the action took place, as in the following sentence: . أنا سائر و النيل .

All these types of adverbs seem to modify the verb in different ways and that is why we have conveniently grouped them together under the adverb category. However, they are all considered as semantic categories because they serve the *function* of an adverb which can only be understood from the context of the sentence.

Briefly said, adjectives and adverbs are not recognized by Arab grammarians as separate categories because adjectives and adverbs are, in totality, all derived from both verbs and nouns. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to say that, e.g. adverbs are a sub-category of verbs because there are words that function as adverbs, but are not derived from verbs; and thus, do not belong in the verb category. We'll just conclude here by saying that adjectives and adverbs are considered two main subcategories in Arabic Grammar.

~ PARTICLES ~

The subcategories of particles are:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. prepositions | Example: في | "in" |
| 2. adverbial | Example: سوف | "shall" |
| 3. conjunctions | Example: و | "and" |
| 4. interjections | Example: يا | "you" |
| 5. exceptions | Example: سوا | "except" |
| 6. negatives | Example: لم | "not" |
| 7. answers | Example: أجل | "yes" |
| 8. explanations | Example: أي | "that is" |
| 9. subordinates | Example: لو | "if" |
| 10. interrogatives | Example: هل | "Are" |
| 11. accusative | Example: كي | "so" |
| 12. Jussive | Example: لا | "don't" |

All these particles appear in Arabic either as individual words, or as clitics attached to the following word.

Particles, in themselves, carry slight meaning; however, they complete the meaning of the sentence by linking what comes before and after them. Particles become quite meaningful when used with other words from other lexical categories. Particles are not inflected and there are three types.

The first type only precede nouns, e.g. دخلت في المدرسة , the second only precede verbs, e.g., as found in the Quranic verse:

لم يلد ولم يولد / هل أنت مريض ؟ - هل جاء الأستاذ ؟ .

As we've already discussed above, some particles will be considered as lexical categories, and thus will be analyzed in this section; and the remaining particles will be considered as functional categories, and hence, will be clarified later under the section of functional categories.

As for one of the most important particles in Arabic, the prepositions (حرف عامل), they change (حروف الجر), e.g., أتمشى في الريف (مجرور), e.g.,

. The most commonly used prepositions are:

من - إلى - عن - على - في - الباء - اللام

One way we can prove that prepositions actually do have descriptive content is that some prepositions are interchangeable like في and الباء, and so we can equally use them to convey the same meaning; however if we try to use, e.g. على, the sentence will be semantically incorrect, as illustrated in the following sentences:

- (1) يلمع البرق في السماء (2) يلمع البرق بالسماء
(3) يلمع البرق على السماء *

As such, prepositions are better characterized as a lexical category due to the lexical distinctions they present.

The following particles should also be subsumed under lexical categories because they all have descriptive content:

Type of Particle	Particles	Example	Syntactic function
conjunctions	الفاء - ثم - الواو - أو - أم - لا - بل - لكن - حتى	غسلوا الشارع و مسحوه	These particles come between words (معطوف عليه) which precede them and other words (معطوف) which follow them. Both معطوف عليه and معطوف must agree in case.

answers	كلا - أجل - etc.	هل تريد أن تنام؟ أجل	These particles do not have any syntactic function.
accusative	أن - لن - كي - إن - حتى - لام التعليل - فاء السببية	أريد أن أقابل المدير	The imperative verb changes into the accusative case when it is preceded by one of these particles
interrogatives	هل - من - كيف متى - أين - etc.	أين أمل؟ أين يدرس أحمد؟	These particles are used in front of nouns and verbs
Jussive	لم - لما - لام الأمر - لا الناهية - إن	لا تلعب بالنار	The imperative verb changes into the geminated case when it is preceded by one of these particles

FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES

The second type of grammatical categories are called functional categories because the words belonging to these categories essentially have grammatical functions.

PARTICLES

The following particles mainly serve a grammatical function and this is the reason for including them under the functional categories.

Type of Particle	Particles	Example	Syntactic function
adverbial	سوف	سوف يأكل التفاحة	This particle precedes the imperative verb and indicates future time
interjections	يا	يا حارس البستان	This particle precedes a noun
exceptions	إلا - غير - سوى خلا - عدا - حاشا	زار الطلاب القلعة إلا وليدا	The noun that follows one of these particles is the "exception" and is in the accusative case
negatives	لا	لا راد لما قضاه الله	This particle precedes the nominative subject and makes it accusative and changes the predicate into the nominative case.

explanations	أي	أكل أحمد على المنضدة أي الطاولة	This particle explains what comes before it
subordinates	لو- إذا - إن etc.	سأحضر لك هدية لو سافرت	These particles are used in conditional sentences
interrogatives	هل - من - كيف متى - أين - etc.	أين أمل؟ أين يدرس أحمد؟	These particles are used in front of nouns and verbs

DETERMINERS

The first functional category is what Radford refers to as the category of determiner. Such words modify the noun which follows or precedes them. In Arabic, we have several types of determiners such as: 1. the definite article (ال) as in: الأطفال سيكون

2. demonstrative pronouns, as in: هذا تلميذ و تلك تلميذة
3. personal pronouns, as in: قلبي لونه أحمر

Radford states that since both adjectives and determiners assume the same syntactic positions (i.e. before the noun in sentences 1 & 2 and after the noun in sentence 3), why can't determiners be subsumed under the category of adjectives. It seems that the same reasons that apply for English determiners also apply for Arabic determiners. To prove our point, two of Radford's tests will be used in determining the "fate" of Arabic determiners.

The first test is to put a lexical word (i.e. adjective) in front of several nouns, then to put a functional word (i.e. determiners) in front of the same nouns, and then see if both adjectives and determiners accept, semantically, the same set of nouns:

1. هذه طفلة - قطعة - سمكة - نافذة - مشكلة أكولة
2. هذه \ ال \ تلك طفلة - قطعة - سمكة - نافذة - مشكلة

In sentence 1, we clearly see that the adjective can only be used to modify certain types of nouns; this is because its descriptive content is such that it is only compatible with an expression denoting an entity that has the ability to eat. By contrast, determiners, like those in sentence 2, lack specific descriptive content, and hence can be used to modify any kind of noun.

Another thing that Radford points out is the fact that many determiners, unlike adjectives, can not only be used to modify a following noun expression, but can also be used on their own. This criterion also applies in Arabic as in the following sentences:

أنا أفضل هذا الكتاب - أنا أفضل هذا

But we must be careful about making generalizations because Arabic quantifying determiners such as *كل - بعض* cannot be used on their own, e.g., *أنا أفضل كل* this is an ungrammatical sentence.

Thus, it seems appropriate to conclude that determiners constitute a functional category, and adjectives a lexical category.

PERSONAL PRONOUNS

The second type of functors are personal pronouns. We consider them part of the functional categories because they inflect for the nominative and objective cases, unlike the lexical category of nouns.

Example of a nominative personal pronoun: *هو يخاطبني*

Example of an objective personal pronoun: *أعطيته إياه*

They are also inflected for number, person and gender. For example, *هما* is a personal pronoun for the third person dual neutral (masculine or feminine) .

There are two kinds of pronouns in Arabic; detached and attached. Detached nouns are always in the nominative case such as *هو* "he" and attached pronouns, in the form of a clitic, can be in the nominative or accusative case to indicate, for example, the direct object of a verb such as *كلمهم*, or even to indicate the possessive case in nouns such as *قلمي* . Personal pronouns can also be attached to prepositions such as *فيها* .

One could argue that pronouns should be considered a lexical category; possibly a sub-category of nouns. However, Radford makes the reason behind not doing so quite clear. He states that if we are to consider nouns and pronouns the same, then the following three sentences should be considered grammatical. For example:

- (1) أحمد يخاطب فيصل - فيصل يخاطب أحمد
- (2) هو يخاطب أحمد
- (3) إياه يخاطب فيصل * (ungrammatical)

But, this is not the case for sentence 3. The reason behind this ungrammaticality is that pronouns, unlike nouns, inflect for case.

Radford, hence, argues that personal pronouns simply encode sets of grammatical properties, as represented in the table below:

Detached		Attached to Perfect Verbs		Attached to Nouns
Person	Nominative	Nominative	Accusative	Possessive
<i>Sing.</i>				
1	أنا	-ت	-ني	-ي
2 m	أنت	-ت	-اك	-اك
2 f	أنت	-تي	-يك	-يك
3 m	هو	-	-و	-و
3 f	هي	-ات	-ها	-ها
<i>Plural</i>				
1	نحن	-نا	-نا	نا
2 m	أنتم	-تو	-كم	-كم
2 f	أنتن	-تن	-كن	-كن
2 m	هم	-و	-هم	-هم
3 f	هن	-ن	-هن	-هن

Thus, the above personal pronouns are clearly functional words because they lack descriptive content and their interpretation lies heavily on the linguistic context of the sentence or utterance. These pronouns simply convey the grammatical properties of person, number, gender, and case.

AUXILIARIES

In Arabic, there does exist a group of words which do seem to have the same function as English auxiliaries, such as يريد – يجب – يستطيع . These words inflect for number and gender, e.g. تريدان . What is even more interesting is that we can derive nouns such as (e.g. يريد –إرادة) and adjectives (يستطيع – مستطيع) .

Arabic auxiliaries, just like their English counterparts, are followed by infinitival phrases (e.g. يريد أن – يستطيع أن) or they can just be followed by a noun derived from the infinitive phrase (e.g. يستطيع أن يقفز becomes يستطيع القفز →) .

We could say that auxiliaries should be subsumed under the verb category. This claim becomes even stronger by realizing the fact that almost none of Radford's tests are successful in determining that auxiliaries should be put in a category different from the verb category. However, one cannot just simply say that auxiliaries should be subsumed under verbs. This is due to the fact which we mentioned above and that is that Arabic auxiliaries must be

followed either by an infinitival phrase or a noun derived from an infinitive; however, verbs are not obliged to be followed by such structures, which is apparent in the grammaticality of the following sentence containing a verb: المعلم يرى الطلاب .

COMPLEMENTIZERS

The last type of functional category which Radford discusses is that of complementizer. In such structures, there are a group of words whose function is to introduce complement clauses. This group of words is called الأسماء الموصولة , such as: الذي - الذين - التي - الخ..... . In the sentence: أقدر النساء اللواتي يربين أبناءهن , the complementizer introduces the complement clause.

As we can see, what makes Arabic complementizers special is the fact that they inflect for number and gender.

In conclusion, this paper offers a simple presentation of the lexical and functional categories in Arabic Grammar by means of following Radford's approach. Many times it was possible to adequately use his tests and arguments in order to provide morphosyntactic evidence for categorizing Arabic words appropriately; nonetheless, other times certain problems arose which could only be dealt with by sticking to the traditional analysis of the Arabic language and coming up with tests which fit the nature of Arabic. However, what is truly surprising after completing such a task is the discovery of the abundant similarities found between Arabic and English where one least expects it. Radford's approach has proved, to a large extent, that a linguistic description of the grammar of any language can easily involve similar methods and techniques across different languages. This is quite promising; for every linguist's dream is to be able to "understand" any language, even if they don't *really* understand it. This orientation towards universality will, hopefully, facilitate a greater understanding of the world's languages.

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