



استوديو العربية

ARABIC-STUDIO.COM

Part C

Basic Arabic Grammar

Comprehensive Arabic Grammar for Beginners

Saqib Hussain



استوديو العربية
ARABIC-STUDIO.COM

Course Code: TAS004C

Basic Arabic Grammar

PART C

Saqib Hussain

© Saqib Hussain 2011. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or otherwise, including photocopying, recording, Internet, or any storage or retrieval system without prior written permission from the copyright holder.

Contents

	Introduction.....	2
21	كَانَ and Verb Tenses.....	3
22	عَلَمٌ and its Sisters.....	11
23	Active and Passive Participles.....	18
24	Exotic Adjectives.....	26
25	The Comparative and the Superlative.....	32
26	The Subjunctive.....	38
27	The Jussive.....	45
28	The Imperative and the Vocative.....	51
29	The Passive.....	56
30	Derived Forms.....	63
	Answer Key.....	71
	Video Errata.....	86

Introduction

This is the third part of a series of four courses (*Basic Arabic Grammar: Parts A - D*). By the end of the fourth course students should be able to recognise almost all of the grammatical constructions in any Arabic text, and understand the text with the use of an appropriate dictionary.

This third part focuses on using verbs and adjectives. There are ten video lessons which accompany this textbook. Students will also need the accompanying Anki cards to derive maximum benefit from this course.

This grammar course assumes that students have completed *Basic Arabic Grammar: Part A* and *Part B*.

It is suggested that students work through the ten chapters in this course in the following manner:

1. Read through each chapter;
2. Watch the video lesson for the chapter;
3. Re-read the chapter - you should now have a thorough understanding of the main grammar points covered;
4. Memorise the vocabulary for the chapter using the vocabulary lists and Anki (see the documents *Understanding the Vocabulary Lists* and *Using Anki* for how to set up Anki flashcards on your computer and smartphone);
5. Attempt all of the translation exercises in writing, check your answers in the Answer Key, and make sure you've understood any mistakes that you made;
6. As you work through the textbook, periodically review the translation exercises from prior chapters until you're able to complete them orally, without hesitation.

21 كَان and Verb Tenses

A The Verb Tables for كَان

The verb *to be* in Arabic is كَان (يَكُونُ). This is slightly different to the verbs we've come across so far, as it has an *ا* as its middle radical, which changes to *و* in the imperfect. This is an example of a hollow verb, which will be covered in Chapter 33. For now, you should just learn its conjugation tables, which are given below, without worrying about seeming anomalies.

The Perfect Table		Singular	Dual	Plural
3rd Person	Masculine	he was كَان	they _{DLm} were كَانَا	they _{PLm} were كَانُوا
	Feminine	she was كَانَتْ	they _{DLf} were كَانَتَا	they _{PLf} were كُنْنَ
2nd Person	Masculine	you _{SRm} were كُنْتَ	you _{DLm} were كُنْتُمَا	you _{PLm} were كُنْتُمْ
	Feminine	you _{SRf} were كُنْتِ	you _{DLf} were كُنْتُمَا	you _{PLf} were كُنْتُنَّ
1st Person		I was كُنْتُ	We were كُنَّا	

The Imperfect Table		Singular	Dual	Plural
3rd Person	Masculine	he will be يَكُونُ	they _{DLm} will be يَكُونَانِ	they _{PLm} will be يَكُونُونَ
	Feminine	she will be تَكُونُ	they _{DLf} will be تَكُونَانِ	they _{PLf} will be يَكُنْنَ
2nd Person	Masculine	you _{SRm} will be تَكُونُ	you _{DLm} will be تَكُونَانِ	you _{PLm} will be تَكُونُونَ
	Feminine	you _{SRf} will be تَكُونِينَ	you _{DLf} will be تَكُونَانِ	you _{PLf} will be تَكُنْنَ
1st Person		I will be أَكُونُ	We will be	نَكُونُ

B كَانَ in the Nominal Sentence

كَانَ can be used to change the tense of a nominal sentence, by moving it into the past (if we use the perfect tense), or the future (if we use the imperfect). In such constructions we have to put the predicate into the accusative¹.

Consider the example sentences below:

The house is big

الْبَيْتُ كَبِيرٌ

The house **was** big

كَانَ الْبَيْتُ كَبِيرًا

The new houses **will be** big and beautiful.

تَكُونُ الْبُيُوتُ الْجَدِيدَةُ كَبِيرَةً وَجَمِيلَةً

¹ This is similar to the way ordinary verbs work, where the object is in the accusative. For example, in both of the following sentences, the word *doctor* is in the accusative:

(1) Zaid hit a doctor.

(2) Zaid was a doctor.

The difference between them is that in (1) *Zaid* and the *doctor* are two separate beings; as such, the doctor is on the receiving end (i.e. he's the object) of the action (i.e. the verb) carried out by Zaid. In (2), *Zaid* and *doctor* refer to the same being, so it would not be correct to call *doctor* the "object" the verb "to be". In such sentences, rather than a subject and an object, we have a subject and a predicate (also called a subject predicative).

C كَانَ without a Predicate

When كَانَ is used without a predicate, it carries the meaning *there was/were* in the perfect, and *there will be* in the imperfect:

There was a small problem

كَانَتْ مُشْكِلَةً صَغِيرَةً

There was a man in the garden

كَانَ رَجُلًا فِي الْبُسْتَانِ

There will be a race tomorrow

يَكُونُ سَبَاقٌ غَدًا

D كَانَ with other verbs

Using the perfect and imperfect forms of كَانَ in conjunction with other verbs produces a variation of tenses. An optional قَدْ is sometimes introduced, which doesn't affect the meaning.

With كَانَ

Main Verb	Tense Formed	Example
Perfect	Pluperfect	He had gone كَانَ (قَدْ) ذَهَبَ
Imperfect	Past Habitual	He used to go كَانَ يَذْهَبُ
	Past Progressive	He was going كَانَ يَذْهَبُ

With يَكُونُ

Main Verb	Tense Formed	Example
Perfect	Future Perfect	He will be gone يَكُونُ (قَدْ) ذَهَبَ
Imperfect	Future Progressive	He will be going يَكُونُ يَذْهَبُ

The standard word order is: *kāna-subject-(qad)-verb-object*. Both كَانَ and the main verb in the sentence have to follow the rules for verbs given in Chapter 5. Hence, when using the standard word order, if the subject is explicitly mentioned, then كَانَ will always be singular because it comes before the subject, whereas the main verb will agree with the subject in number because it comes after the subject.

Consider the sentences below:

The two Bedouin **had entered** the house

كَانَ الْبَدَوِيُّانِ دَخَلَا الْبَيْتَ

These dogs **used to play** in the streets

كَانَتْ هَذِهِ الْكِلَابُ تَلْعَبُ فِي الشُّوَارِعِ

The girls **will have gone** to school

تَكُونُ الْبَنَاتُ دَهَبْنَ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ

E Other Verbal Prefixes

سَ and سَوْفَ

We have already seen that the imperfect is used for both the present and the future tense. If we want to specify that we are using it for the future, we can prefix it with سَوْفَ or سَ, the latter of which is written joined on to the verb.

Note the following rules about these particles:

- Nothing can come between these particles and their imperfect verb;
- We cannot use these particles together with a negation. So, when we use لَا to negate the imperfect verb, we have to get rid of the سَوْفَ or the سَ.

Consider the example sentences below:

I will go to the market today

أَذْهَبُ إِلَى السُّوقِ الْيَوْمَ /
سَوْفَ أَذْهَبُ إِلَى السُّوقِ الْيَوْمَ /

I will not go to the market today

سَأَذْهَبُ إِلَى السُّوقِ الْيَوْمَ
لَا أَذْهَبُ إِلَى السُّوقِ الْيَوْمَ

قَدْ

When قَدْ is used with the perfect, it adds a kind of finality or emphasis to the verb, which can often be translated as *already*, and/or by introducing the auxiliary verb *have*.

The children **have (already)** left the house

قَدْ خَرَجَ الْأَوْلَادُ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ

I've **(already)** done that

قَدْ فَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ

When قَدْ is used with the imperfect, it adds a sense of doubt or possibility, which can be translated as *might* or *may*.

The children **might** follow you

قَدْ يَتَّبِعُكَ الْأَوْلَادُ

I **might** do that

قَدْ أَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ

لَ

لَ can be used at the beginning of a sentence, by being attached to a noun or a verb, or even to the particle فِي, to emphasise the statement. This emphasis can often be translated as *certainly* or *definitely*.

We'll **definitely** follow you to the mosque

لَنَتَّبِعُكَ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ

He **certainly** heard you

لَقَدْ سَمِعَكَ

Vocabulary

side PL	جَانِبٌ جَوَانِبُ
strange; stranger PL	أَجْنَبِيٌّ أَجَانِبُ
journey PL	سَفَرٌ أَسْفَارٌ
island, peninsula PL	جَزِيرَةٌ جَزَائِرٌ
race (e.g. horse-race)	سِبَاقٌ
Bedouin PL	بَدَوِيٌّ بَدَوٌ
service PL	خِدْمَةٌ خِدْمَاتٌ
court PL	مَحْكَمَةٌ مَحَاكِمُ
middle, centre PL	وَسْطٌ أَوْسَاطٌ
witness PL	شَاهِدٌ شُهُودٌ
religion PL	دِينٌ أَدْيَانٌ
skin	بَشْرَةٌ
well PL	بَيْتْرٌ آبَارٌ
miser PL	بَجِيلٌ بُجَلَاءُ
cold [<i>adj.</i>]	بَارِدٌ
excellent	جَيِّدٌ
to be able (to) VN	قَدِرَ [ـ] (على) قُدْرَةٌ
to follow (s) VN	تَبَعَ [ـ] (هـ) تَبَعًا
to tell the truth (to about) VN	صَدَقَ [ـ] (هـ) (في) صِدْقًا
to remain silent VN	سَكَتَ [ـ] سُكُوتًا

Translation Exercises

Exercise 21A

- ١ كَانَ هَذَا الْجَانِبُ نَظِيفًا وَكَانَ ذَانِكَ الْجَانِبَانِ وَسَخِينِ.
- ٢ كُنْتُ أَذْهَبُ مَعَ عَرِيبٍ إِلَى السَّفَارَةِ الَّتِي هِيَ فِي بِنَاءٍ كَبِيرٍ فِي وَسْطِ الْمَدِينَةِ.
- ٣ سَيَكُونُ السَّفَرُ طَوِيلًا وَقَدْ تَكُونُ الطَّرِيقُ ضَيِّقًا.
- ٤ يَكُونُ أَوْلَائِكَ الرِّجَالُ قَدْ رَجَعُوا مِنْ تِلْكَ الْجَزِيرَةِ عِنْدَمَا نَدْخُلُ مَدِينَتَهُمْ.
- ٥ قَدْ يَكُونُ سَبَاقٌ فِي مَدْرَسَةِ ابْنَتِي عَدَا.
- ٦ يُحْسَبُ الشَّيْخُ خِدْمَتَكَ مُهِمَّةً جَدًّا وَنَافِعَةً لَهُ فِي هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامِ الصَّعْبَةِ.
- ٧ كَانَتْ الْمَحْكَمَةُ فَوْقَ مَسْجِدٍ قَدِيمٍ وَكَانَ الشَّاهِدَانِ يَجْلِسَانِ مَعَ الْقَاضِي لَمَّا دَخَلَتِ الْبِنْتُ مَعَ أَبِيهَا.
- ٨ كَانَ الدِّينُ مُهِمًّا جَدًّا لِأَجْدَادِنَا.
- ٩ كَانَ لَوْنُ بَشَرَتِهِ جَمِيلًا وَكَانَ وَجْهُهُ حَسَنًا وَكَانَ عَاقِلًا جَدًّا.
- ١٠ كَانُوا يَأْذُنُونَ لِلنِّسَاءِ فِي أَخْذِ الْمَاءِ مِنَ الْبُئْرِ الْجَدِيدِ قَبْلَ الرِّجَالِ.
- ١١ دَرَسْتُ مَعَ أَبِيهِنَّ فِي الْجَامِعَةِ. مَا كَانَ صَدِيقًا لِي.
- ١٢ مَا كَانَ اسْمُ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي نَزَلْنَاهَا أَمْسٍ؟ كَانَتْ بَارِدَةً جَدًّا.
- ١٣ هَذَا جَيِّدٌ جَدًّا. سَوْفَ تَفْرَحُ النِّسَاءُ كَثِيرًا عِنْدَمَا يَسْمَعْنَ هَذَا الْخَبَرَ.
- ١٤ كُنْتُ أَسْمَعُ الْأَسْرَاءَ مِنَ الْمَحَلِّ الَّذِي أَسْرُونِي فِيهِ. لَا أَسْمَعُهُمُ الْآنَ.
- ١٥ سَتَتَّبَعُكَ زَيْنَبُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ الْيَوْمَ.

Exercise 21B

1. The teacher used to remain silent when the students laughed at her.
2. The two boys had told the truth to the Imam, so he didn't become angry with them.
3. Will the soldiers follow us to the embassy? Yes!
4. The room was very big, and the house was excellent.
5. I have already prohibited you_{SRm} from going with those boys to their house. Why are you asking me about this now?
6. The well was in the North, and the peasants were searching for it in the South.

7. He had left his religion and the religion of his ancestors, so the people hated him and his new religion.
8. He lay down on his bed when he heard the soldiers in the middle of the night.
9. What will you_{Srf} wear to the court tomorrow?
10. The Bedouin will not be able to return to the desert after this.
11. The governor's house will be on this side of (*lit.* “from”) the island, and the sultan's palace will be on that side.
12. The young men used to consider the journey from their villages to the great university in Cairo very slow.
13. That famous man was a stranger in our country.
14. There was a star in the sky last night, which I was looking at when the angel appeared.
15. I reached the house of a friend of mine two days ago. He had gathered my books for me before my arrival, and placed them in my room.

This is a preview only.

**For the full course, which
includes video lessons
and Anki flash cards,
please visit:**

Arabic-Studio.com