

البابُ الرَّابِعُ Chapter 4

Gender

4.1 الصِّيغَةُ (Word form)

Most Arabic words are produced from a three letter root. ك ت ب (k-t-b) for example are the root letters for the words كِتَابٌ (book) and كِتَابَةٌ (writing). ك ل م (k-l-m) are the root letters of the words كَلَامٌ (speech) and كَلِمَةٌ (word). Words are produced from their roots by adding, dropping or changing letters and vowels. Arabs use the letters ف ع ل (f-l) to map صِيغٌ (word forms). ف ع ل is called المِيزَانُ الصَّرْفِيُّ (the morphology template). Note the following صِيغٌ (forms) using ف ع ل .

فَعْلٌ	←	قَمَرٌ , وَالدُّ , خَيْرٌ
فَعِيلٌ	←	جَدِيدٌ , طَرِيقٌ
فَعْلَةٌ	←	كَلِمَةٌ , نَكْرَةٌ , مَلِكَةٌ
فَعْلَةٌ	←	مَرَأَةٌ
فُعْلَةٌ	←	جُمْلَةٌ
مَفْعَلَةٌ	←	مَعْرِفَةٌ
أَفْعَلَةٌ	←	امْرَأَةٌ

4.1.1 Active and Passive Participles

The صِيغَةُ (form) 'فَاعِلٌ' is used to produce the 'active participle' from the root. An active participle is a noun or adjective that refers to the 'doer' or active agent of the action denoted by the root. The active participle is called اسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ .

For example, the root ك ت ب (k-t-b) denotes the action of 'writing', so the active participle كَاتِبٌ refers to 'one who writes' / 'writer'. The root ف ه م (f-h-m) denotes the action of 'understanding' so the active participle فَاهِمٌ refers to 'one who understands'.

The صِيغَةُ (form) 'مَفْعُولٌ' is used to produce the 'passive participle' from the root. A passive participle is a noun or adjective that refers to the 'done to' or passive agent of the action denoted by the root. The passive participle is called اسْمُ الْمَفْعُولِ .

For example, the root ك ت ب (k-t-b) denotes the action of ‘writing’, so the passive participle مَكْتُوبٌ refers to something ‘written’. The root ف ه م (f-h-m) denotes the action of ‘understanding’ so the passive participle مَفْهُومٌ refers to something ‘understood’.



The active participle has a meaning very close to the imperfect verb.

هُوَ جَالِسٌ He is sitting
(huwa jaalis^{un})

يَجْلِسُ He is sitting
(yajlisⁿ)

The active participle refers to the *physical state* of the one sitting and the imperfect verb refers to the *act* of the one sitting.

4.2 Producing الْمُؤنَّثُ (the feminine) from الْمُدَّكَّرُ (the masculine)

There are two genders in Arabic, مُدَّكَّرٌ (masculine) and مُؤنَّثٌ (feminine).

(nouns and adjectives) that are مُدَّكَّرٌ (masculine) can be made مُؤنَّثٌ (feminine) by suffixing ة / ة (تاء مَرْبُوطَةٌ , taa^{un} marbuuTa^{un}).

The letter preceding ة / ة has فَتْحَةٌ over it.

مُؤنَّثٌ Feminine	مُدَّكَّرٌ Masculine
إِنْسَانَةٌ Human	إِنْسَانٌ Human
أُسْتَاذَةٌ Professor	أُسْتَاذٌ Professor
ابْنَةٌ Daughter	ابْنٌ Son
مَلِكَةٌ Queen	مَلِكٌ King
جَدِيدَةٌ New	جَدِيدٌ New
كَبِيرَةٌ Big	كَبِيرٌ Big

★ As a general rule, we should assume that,

- 1) الأَسْمَاءُ (nouns) cannot be made مُؤَنَّثَةٌ (feminine) by attaching ة / ة to the end. For example, رَجُلٌ (man) does not become رَجُلَةٌ and وَلَدٌ (boy) does not become وَلَدَةٌ. Exceptions to this such as ابْنٌ and مَلِكٌ will be indicated in the vocabulary lists.
- 2) الصِّفَاتُ (adjectives) can be made مُؤَنَّثَةٌ (feminine) by attaching ة / ة to the end unless otherwise indicated.

4.2.1 There are a number of exceptions to rule 2 above, in which the feminine of certain صِفَاتُ (adjectives) is not produced by attaching ة / ة .

(a) Words of the intensified Active Participle form فَعُولٌ

From the root ص ب ر (S-B-R) which denotes ‘being patient’, we have the اسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ (active participle) صَابِرٌ (patient). The feminine is صَابِرَةٌ .

مُحَمَّدٌ صَابِرٌ

Muhammad is patient
(muhammad^{um} Saabir^{um})

مَرْيَمٌ صَابِرَةٌ

Maryam is patient
(maryam^u Saabirat^{um})

The فَعُولٌ form produces an intensified active participle. The word صَبُورٌ (very patient) is an intensified form of صَابِرٌ (patient). From the root ج ه ل (J-h-l) which denotes the action of ‘being ignorant’, we have the active participle جَاهِلٌ (ignorant). The feminine of جَاهِلٌ is جَاهِلَةٌ . The word جَهُولٌ (very ignorant) is an intensified form of جَاهِلٌ (ignorant).

Words of the intensified active participle form فَعُولٌ are not made مُؤَنَّثَةٌ (feminine) by attaching ة / ة . The فَعُولٌ form is used for both الْمَذَكَّرُ وَالْمُؤَنَّثُ (masculine and feminine).

مُحَمَّدٌ صَبُورٌ

Muhammad is very patient
(muhammad^{um} Sabuur^{um})

مَرْيَمٌ صَبُورٌ

Maryam is very patient
(maryam^u Sabuur^{um})

(b) Words of the form فَعْلَانٌ .

From the root غ ض ب (gh-D-b) which denotes ‘being angry’, we have the اسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ (active participle) غَاضِبٌ (angry). The feminine of غَاضِبٌ is غَاضِبَةٌ .

رَجُلٌ غَاضِبٌ An angry man
(rajul^{un} ghaaDib^{un})

امْرَأَةٌ غَاضِبَةٌ An angry woman
(imra'at^{un} ghaaDibat^{un})

The فَعْلَانُ form produces a synonym of the اسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ (active participle). The word غَضِبَانُ (angry) is a synonym of غَاضِبٌ (angry).

Words of the form فَعْلَانُ are not made مُؤَنَّثٌ (feminine) by attaching ة / ة (the feminine) is of the form فَعْلَى . The feminine of غَضِبَانُ is غَضِبَى .

رَجُلٌ غَضِبَانُ An angry man
(rajul^{un} ghaDbaan^{un})

امْرَأَةٌ غَضِبَى An angry woman
(imra'at^{un} ghaDbaa^{un})

It may be useful to remember the names سَلْمَانُ (m) ← سَلْمَى (f) to help us recall this form.



Orthography

Some مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine) nouns end in يَ- (an) or اَ- (aa). This letter is not a ي (ya). It is called أَلِفٌ مَقْصُورَةٌ (alif^{un} maqsuurat^{un}) and is a type of alif. The ordinary alif is called أَلِفٌ مَمْدُودَةٌ (alif^{un} mamduudat^{un}). If an اسْمٌ (masculine noun) ends in أَلِفٌ مَقْصُورَةٌ , such as the word 'مُتَنَبِّئٌ', it changes to an أَلِفٌ مَمْدُودَةٌ when another letter such as ة is suffixed, producing مُتَنَبِّئَةٌ .

مُبْتَدَأٌ مُتَنَبِّئٌ A dual subject
(mibtada^{un} muthanna)

كَلِمَةٌ مُتَنَبِّئَةٌ A dual word
(kalimat^{un} muthannaat^{un})

4.3 Identifying gender

* We should assume that,

- 1) Words ending in ة / ة are مُؤنَّث (feminine) unless told otherwise
- 2) Words not ending in ة / ة are مُذكر (masculine) unless told otherwise.

4.3.1 Masculine words ending in ة / ة

Exceptions to rule 1 above are 'خليفة' (caliph), 'طلبة' (students) and 'أساتذة' (professors) which end in ة but are مُذكر (masculine) because they refer to males. A صفة (adjective) describing any of them must therefore be مُذكر (masculine).

خليفة جديد	A new caliph	(khaleefat ^m jadeed ^m)
طلبة جدد	New students	(Talabat ^m judud ^m)
أساتذة جدد	New professors	(asaatidhat ^m judud ^m)

4.3.2 Feminine words which do not end in ة / ة

The following are exception to rule 2 above:

(a) Certain أسماء (nouns) are مُؤنَّث (feminine) by convention.

أرض	Earth	شمس	Sun
الأرض واسعة	The earth is wide	الشمس شديدة	The sun is strong
			(al-arD ^u waasi ^c -at ^m)
			(ash-shams ^u shadeedat ^m)

(b) الأسماء (nouns) referring to مُؤنَّث (feminine) beings are مُؤنَّث (feminine).

مريم	Mary	أم	Mother	بنت	Girl; daughter
		هي بنت جميلة	She is a beautiful girl		(hiya bint ^m jameelat ^m)

(c) Names of places are often but not always مُؤنَّث (feminine).

مصر	Egypt (f)	دمشق	Damascus (f)	العراق	(Iraq) (m)
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مِصْرٌ قَدِيمَةٌ	Egypt is ancient	(miSr ^u Qadeemat ^{um})
دِمَشْقٌ بَعِيدَةٌ	Damascus is far	(dimashq ^u ba ^ʿ eedat ^{um})
العِرَاقُ بَعِيدٌ	Iraq is far	(al- ^ʿ iraq ^u ba ^ʿ eed ^{um})

(d) Parts of the body, especially those that occur in pairs are often مَوْثٌ (feminine).

عَيْنٌ	Eye	رِجْلٌ	Leg
الرَّجْلُ قَوِيَّةٌ	The leg is strong	(ar-rijl ^u Qawiyat ^{um})	

(e) As we noted in chapter one, non-human plurals are grammatically considered to be feminine and singular.

هِيَ كُتُبٌ جَدِيدَةٌ	They are new books	(hiya kutub ^u jadeedat ^{um})
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In poetry, we often find non-human plurals treated as feminine plural – a personification of sorts.

هُنَّ كُتُبٌ جَدِيدَاتٌ	They are new books	(hunna kutub ^u jadeedaat ^{um})
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Students at this stage should not attempt any poetry.

4.4 Interesting things about gender

4.4.1 Sometimes attaching ة / ة to an اسْمٌ مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine noun) does give us an اسْمٌ مُؤَنَّثٌ (feminine noun), but this is not the مَوْثٌ (female) counterpart of the الاسْمُ الْمَذَكَّرُ (the masculine noun).

كِتَابَةٌ	writing (not female book!)	كِتَابٌ	book
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4.4.2 Certain words bear the same meaning whether they are مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine) or مُؤَنَّثٌ (feminine) in form. Note that the feminine form is not the masculine made feminine. حَالَةٌ is not the feminine of حَالٌ. They are two different words that have the same meaning.

حَالٌ / حَالَةٌ	State/condition
مَحَلٌّ / مَحَلَّةٌ	Place

Some words undergo a change in nuance when made مُؤنَّث (feminine), usually becoming more abstract and intangible.

Method	طَرِيقَةٌ	←	طَرِيقٌ	Path
Status/rank	مَكَانَةٌ	←	مَكَانٌ	Place

4.4.3 Certain words can be both مُذَكَّر (masculine) or مُؤنَّث (feminine) without changing form.

بَلَدٌ طَيِّبٌ / طَيِّبَةٌ	A good town	(balad ^{um} Tayyib ^{um} / Tayyibat ^{um})
طَرِيقٌ طَوِيلٌ / طَوِيلَةٌ	A long path	(Tareeq ^{um} Taweel ^{um} / Taweelat ^{um})

4.5 Gender Agreement فِي الْجُمْلَةِ الْإِسْمِيَّةِ (in the noun sentence)

In general, الْخَبَرُ (the predicate) must agree with the مُبْتَدَأُ (subject) in gender.

4.5.1 If الْخَبَرُ (the predicate) is a صِفَةٌ (adjective), it always agrees with the مُبْتَدَأُ (subject) in gender.

مِصْرٌ قَدِيمَةٌ	Egypt is ancient	(miSr ^u qadeemat ^{um})
الشَّمْسُ شَدِيدَةٌ	The sun is strong	(ash-shams ^u shadeedat ^{um})
أَنْتَ جَمِيلٌ	You are handsome	(anta jameel ^{um})
أَنْتِ جَمِيلَةٌ	You (f) are good	(anti jameelat ^{um})

4.5.2 If الْخَبَرُ (the predicate) is an اسْمٌ (noun) that has a مُؤنَّث (feminine) form or counterpart, it must agree with the مُبْتَدَأُ (the subject) in gender.

مُحَمَّدٌ أَسَاطِدٌ	Muhammad is a teacher	(muhammad ^{um} ustaadh ^{um})
مَرْيَمٌ أَسَاطِدَةٌ	Mary is a teacher	(maryam ^u ustaadhat ^{um})
الرَّجُلُ مَلِكٌ	The man is a king	(ar-rajul ^u malik ^{um})
الْمَرْأَةُ مَلِكَةٌ	The woman is a queen	(al-mar'at ^u malikat ^{um})

4.5.3 There are some masculine *nouns* that do not have a مُؤنَّثٌ (feminine) form or counterpart bearing the same meaning. Examples are, مَكَانٌ (m), بَلَدٌ (m) and مِصْرٌ (m). When one of these nouns is الخَبِيرُ (the predicate), it cannot agree with a مُؤنَّثٌ (feminine) مُبْتَدَأٌ (subject) in gender.

الأَرْضُ مَكَانٌ وَاسِعٌ

The earth is a wide place
(al-arD^u makaan^{un} waasi^{cin})

مَكَّةٌ بَلَدٌ طَيِّبٌ

Makkah is a good town
(makka^t balad^{un} Tayyib^{un})

دِمَشَقٌ مِصْرٌ حَمِيْلٌ

Damascus is a beautiful city
(dimashq^u miSr^{un} jameel^{un})

There are also some feminine nouns that do not have a مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine) form bearing the same meaning. Some examples are طَرِيقَةٌ (f), بِلَادٌ (f) and بَلَدٌ (f) it need not agree with المُبْتَدَأُ (the subject) in gender. When one of these nouns is الخَبِيرُ (the predicate), it cannot agree with a مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine) مُبْتَدَأٌ (subject) in gender.

العِرَاقُ بِلَادٌ قَوِيَّةٌ وَحَمِيْلَةٌ

Iraq is a strong and beautiful country
(al-iraq^u bilaad^{un} Qawiyyat^{un} wa jameelat^{un})

المفردات

Vocabulary

Chapter 4 – Gender

إِنْسَانٌ	man, human being	insaan ^{un}
الْإِنْسَانُ	Man(kind)	al-insaan ^u
إِنْسَانَةٌ	woman, human being (<i>f</i>)	insaanat ^{un}
إِنْسٌ	Mankind	ins ^{un}
خَلِيفَةٌ (خُلَفَاءُ)	caliph; vicegerent	khaleefat ^{un} (khulafaa ^u)
مَلِكٌ (مُلُوكٌ)	king	malik ^{un} (muluuk ^{un})
مَلِكَةٌ (مَلِكَاتٌ)	queen	malikat ^{un} (malikaat ^{un})
أُمٌّ (أُمَّهَاتٌ)	mother	umm ^{un} (ummahaat ^{un})
ابْنٌ (أَبْنَاءٌ ، بَنُونَ)	son	ibn ^{un} (abnaa ^{un} , banuuna)
ابْنَةٌ (بَنَاتٌ)	daughter	ibnat ^{un} (banaat ^{un})
بِنْتٌ (بَنَاتٌ)	girl; daughter	bint ^{un} (banaat ^{un})
مِصْرٌ	Egypt (<i>f</i>)	miSr ^u
مِصْرٌ (أَمْصَارٌ)	city	miSr ^{un} (amSaar ^{un})
دِمَشْقٌ	Damascus (<i>f</i>)	dimashq ^u
مَكَّةٌ	Makkah (<i>f</i>)	makkat ^u
الْعِرَاقُ	Iraq	al-‘iraaq ^u
عَيْنٌ (عُيُونٌ)	eye (<i>f</i>)	‘ayn ^{un} (‘uyun ^{un})
رِجْلٌ (أَرْجُلٌ)	leg (<i>f</i>)	rijl ^{un} (arjul ^{un})
أَرْضٌ (أَرَاضٍ / الْأَرَاضِي)	earth; land; ground (<i>f</i>)	arD ^{un} (araaD ⁱⁿ / al-araaD ⁱⁿ)
طَرِيقٌ (طُرُقٌ , طُرُقَاتٌ) *	path (<i>m & f</i>)	Tareeq ^{un} (Turuq ^{un} , Turuqaat ^{un})
طَرِيقَةٌ (طَرَائِقٌ)	method	Tareeqat ^{un} (Taraa’iq ^u)
حَالٌ (أَحْوَالٌ)	state, condition	Haal ^{un} (aHwaal ^{un})
حَالَةٌ (حَالَاتٌ)	state, condition	Haalat ^{un} (Haalaat ^{un})

* طُرُقَاتٌ (paths, TuruQaat^{un}) is the plural of طُرُقٌ (paths, Turuq^{un}), which is the plural of طَرِيقٌ (path, Tareeq^{un}). This is known as جَمْعُ الْجُمُوعِ (plural of plurals).

* مَكَانٌ (أَمَكِنَةٌ , أَمَاكِينُ) *	place	makaan ^{un} (amkinat ^{un} , amaakin ^u)
مَكَانَةٌ (مَكَانَاتُ)	status, rank	makaanat ^{un} (makaanaat ^{un})
مَحَلٌّ (مَحَلَّاتُ)	place; shop	maHall ^{un} (maHallaat ^{un})
مَحَلَّةٌ (مَحَلَّاتُ)	place	maHallat ^{un} (maHallaat ^{un})
مَرِيَمُ	Mary (<i>prop. name</i>)	maryam ^u
** بَلَدٌ (بِلَادٌ , بُلْدَانُ) **	town (<i>m or f</i>)	balad ^{un} (bilaad ^{un} , buldaan ^{un})
بِلَادٌ (بُلْدَانُ)	country (<i>f</i>)	bilaad ^{un} (buldaan ^{un})
طَيِّبٌ (طَيِّبُونَ)	good (<i>m</i>)	Tayyib ^{un} (Tayyibuuna)
طَيِّبَةٌ (طَيِّبَاتُ)	good (<i>f</i>)	Tayyibat ^{un} (Tayyibaat ^{un})
صَابِرٌ (صَابِرُونَ)	patient (<i>m</i>)	Saabir ^{un} (Saabiruuna)
صَابِرَةٌ (صَابِرَاتُ)	patient (<i>f</i>)	Saabirat ^{un} (Saabiraat ^{un})
صَبُورٌ (صَبِيرٌ)	very patient (<i>m or f</i>)	Sabuur ^{un}
عَالِمٌ (عُلَمَاءُ)	scholar (<i>m</i>)	ʿaalim ^{un} (ʿulamaa ^u)
عَالِمَةٌ (عَالِمَاتُ)	scholar (<i>f</i>)	ʿaalimat ^{un} (ʿaalimaat ^{un})
جَاهِلٌ (جُهَلَاءُ , جَاهِلُونَ)	ignorant (<i>m</i>)	jaahil ^{un} (juhalaat ^u , jaahiluuna)
جَاهِلَةٌ (جَاهِلَاتُ)	ignorant (<i>f</i>)	jaahilat ^{un} (jaahilaat ^{un})
جُهُولٌ	ignoramus, v. ignorant (<i>m or f</i>)	jahuul ^{un}
غَضَبَانٌ (غَضَابِي)	angry (<i>m</i>)	ghaDbaan ^u (ghuDaabaa)
غَضَبِي (غَضَبِيَّاتُ)	angry (<i>f</i>)	ghaDbaa (ghaDbayaat ^{un})
شَدِيدٌ (شِدَادٌ)	severe, strong (<i>m</i>)	shadeed ^{un} (shidaad ^{un})
شَدِيدَةٌ (شَدِيدَاتُ)	severe, strong (<i>f</i>)	shadeedat ^{un} (shadeedaat ^{un})
قَوِيٌّ (أَقْوِيَاءُ)	strong (<i>m</i>)	qawiy ^{un} (aqwiyaa ^u)
قَوِيَّةٌ (قَوِيَّاتُ)	strong (<i>f</i>)	qawiyat ^{un} (qawiyaaat ^{un})

* مَكَانٌ (أَمَكِنَةٌ , أَمَاكِينُ) is جَمْعُ الْجُمُوعِ (plural of plurals is amaakin^u).

** بِلَادٌ (countries, bilaad^{un}) is the plural of بَلَدٌ (town, balad^{un}), but بِلَادٌ means 'a country', not 'towns'. بُلْدَانٌ (countries, buldaan^{un}) is the plural of بَلَدٌ. It is جَمْعُ الْجُمُوعِ.

Exercise 4.1

Express in English

١. مَكَّةُ بَلَدٌ قَدِيمَةٌ*
٢. قَرَأَ الْعُلَمَاءُ الْكِبَارُ الْكُتُبَ وَفَهَمُوا فَهْمًا طَيِّبًا
٣. أَصَحِيحَةٌ هِيَ؟ نَعَمْ هِيَ جُمْلَةٌ صَحِيحَةٌ*
٤. مَتَى سَنَقْرَأُ عَنِ الْأُمَّهَاتِ فِي الْعِرَاقِ؟
٥. الْخَلِيفَةُ رَجُلٌ قَوِيٌّ
٦. مُحَمَّدٌ صَبُورٌ وَمَرِيْمٌ صَبُورٌ*
٧. الْإِنْسَانُ خَلِيفَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْوَاسِعَةِ
٨. جَلَسَتِ الْبَنَاتُ الصَّغِيرَاتُ فِي الْمَدْرَسَةِ وَقَرَأْنَ الْحُرُوفَ : ا ، ب ، ت ، ث
٩. الْعَالِمُ صَبُورٌ وَالْجَهُولُ غَضَبَانٌ
١٠. يَقْرَأُ الْأَوْلَادُ الصَّغَارُ وَالْبَنَاتُ الصَّغِيرَاتُ الْكُتُبَ
١١. كَيْفَ الْحَالُ يَا مَرِيْمُ . لِمَاذَا جَلَسْتَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ فِي الشَّمْسِ؟
١١. مَنْ أَنْتُمْ؟ نَحْنُ الطُّلَابُ . وَأَيْنَ أَنْتُمْ؟ نَحْنُ عَلَى الطَّرِيقِ

Exercise 4.2

Express in Arabic

1. Iraq is a beautiful country.
2. The scholar caliph understood the ancient book.
3. It is a good new method.
4. Is Egypt far? Yes, it is far.
5. The king is angry and the queen is angry.
6. Did the female student read the writing?
7. They are men and we are men.
8. They are scholars and you are students
9. The sun is strong. Is the sea far?
10. Who sat and read a book? A very patient girl sat and read a long book.
11. Is Egypt not far from Iraq?