8

Word Forms

Participles

1 Think of English words like 'writer', 'writing', 'written'. The first one names a person *doing an action*; the second describes such a person. The third describes a thing *suffering an action*.

All three are derived from a verb (in this case 'to write'), but they are not verbs themselves. They are either *nouns* or *adjectives*.

Arabic has such words too, and they are numerous and useful. We call them **participles**. The ones referring to *a person or thing doing an action* (e.g. 'writer', 'writing' in English) can be called **active participles**. The ones referring to *a person or thing suffering an action* (e.g. 'written' in English) can be called **passive participles**.

Both active and passive participles can be used as either nouns or adjectives, as long as the context makes sense.

Arabic participles have recognisable patterns, fortunately not too many to learn. Here are the main ones, grouped according to a model, with examples, which you will find helpful. Obviously, a verb has both active and passive participles only where both would make sense or be useful. For many verbs, only one of the two is in common use. The columns shown below (active on the right, passive on the left) reflect this fact. In the recorded pronunciation, the active is heard first.

Approach this list in the same way as you did the irregular plural patterns listed in Lesson 7. What is familiar will stick in your memory straight away, giving you the pattern. Practice, and inquisitiveness, will help you to apply the pattern more widely.

Read and write groups (a) to (f):

Passive (suffering the action)	**Active** (doing the action)
(a) model *kātib* (active), *maktūb* (passive):	
مكتوب ملتوب *maktūb* written	كاتب كتّاب كاتب كتّاب *kātib kuttāb* writer, clerk
	سائق سائق *sā'iq* driver
	عامل عمّال عامل عمّال *9āmil 9ummāl* workman
	لازم لازم *lāzim* necessary
	حاضر حاضر *ḥāḍir* present, ready
مفتوح مفتوح *maftūḥ* open(ed)	
ممنوع ممنوع *mamnū9* prohibited	
مشغول مشغول *mashghūl* busy ('busied')	
معلومات معلومات *ma9lūmāt* (pl.) information ('things known')	

Open *S52.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (a).

(b) model *mumaththil* (active), *mumaththal* (passive):

ممثّل	*mumaththil* representative	ممثّل	*mumaththal* represented
مفتّش	*mufattish* inspector		
معلّم	*mu9allim* teacher		
مدرّس	*mudarris* instructor		

Open *S53.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (b).

(c) model *musā9id* (active), no common passive:

مساعد	*musā9id* assistant
مسافر	*musāfir* traveller
محامي	*muḥāmī* lawyer
محاسب	*muḥāsib* accountant
مناسب	*munāsib* appropriate

Open *S54.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (c).

(d) model *mursil* (active), *mursal* (passive):

مرسل	*mursil* sender	مرسل	*mursal* sent
معطي	*mu9tī* donor	معطيات	*mu9ṭayāt* (pl.) data ('things given')
مفيد	*mufīd* useful		
مهمّ	*muhimm* important		

Open *S55.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (d).

(e) model *muntákhib** (active), *muntákhab** (passive):

منتخب	*muntákhib* elector	منتخب	*muntákhab* elected
مشترك	*mushtárik* participant	مشترك	*mushtárak* joint, common
متّحد	*muttáḥid* united		
منتظر	*muntáẓir* waiting (for)	منتظر	*muntáẓar* awaited

* NB: irregular stress (see 5/4) in this group.

Open *S56.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (e).

(f) model *mustakhdim* (active), *mustakhdam* (passive):

مستخدم	*mustakhdim* employer	مستخدم	*mustakhdam* employed, employee
مستقبل	*mustaqbil* (radio/TV) receiver	مستقبل	*mustaqbal* future
مستعدّ ل	*musta9idd li* ready for		

Open *S57.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (f).

You can see that

- a few active participles of group (a) in the masculine form have an irregular plural, almost all other participles (passive of group [a] and active/passive of groups [b] to [f]) having regular plurals. Remember that all regular plural endings (7/2) take the stress of the word.
- in groups (b) to (f), the only difference between the active and passive forms is in the last vowel: ***-i-*** for the active and ***-a-*** for the passive. Unfortunately everyday Arabic writing does not show this important distinction. There is a way of marking it, but it is seldom used outside school textbooks. We have to be guided by the context.
- group (e) has irregular stress (i.e. on a short vowel followed by a single consonant).

The participle can be made feminine, dual, definite and/or plural, as usual:

معلّمة\معلّمات *mu9allima mu9allimāt* teacher(s) (f.)
سائقين\سائقون *sā'iqīn/sā'iqūn* drivers
الكاتبان *al-kātibān* both the clerks

Exercise 1 Read aloud the participles listed after each model:
(a) model كاتب: وارد arriving, طالب student, كامل complete, عارف knowing
(c) model مساعد: محافظ conservative, مقابل facing
(f) model مستخدم: مستعمل user, مستثمر investor, مستأجر tenant
What is the last vowel in all these participles? How do you know?
Exercise 2 Read aloud these passive participles:
مكسور broken, مستنكر rejected, مسلّح armed, مقترح proposed
The answers to these exercises follow paragraph 4 below.

Verbal Nouns

2 Think of the English word 'inspection'. It comes from a verb ('to inspect') but is itself a noun, denoting the *activity* of the verb. Arabic has countless nouns of this kind; they are known as **verbal nouns**. We know the verbal noun 'inspection' in Arabic, from Lesson 6: it is تفتيش *taftīsh*.
Verbal nouns are important in Arabic. We meet them constantly in notices etc. The ones corresponding to group (a) participles (model كاتب\مكتوب) are irregular in form, but those corresponding to the participle groups (b) to (f) are regular, following known models in the same way as do the participles.
The following list is not intended for learning outright. Treat it mainly as reference material; some of it is familiar already. **Read and write** groups (a) to (f), listening to and repeating each group in turn after writing:
(a) irregular (several patterns are found; the words are best learned simply as nouns):

كتابة كتابه *kitāba* (the act of) writing
وصول وصول *wuṣūl* arrival
عمل أعمال عمل أعمال *9amal 'a9māl* work, labour

Open *S58.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (a).

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(b) model *taftīsh*:

تفتيش تفتيش *taftīsh* inspection
تعليم تعليم *ta9līm* tuition, education
تنظيم تنظيم *tanẓīm* (the act of) organisation

Open *S59.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (b).

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(c) model *musā9ada*:

مساعدة مساعده *musā9ada* help
محاسبات محاسبات *muḥāsabāt* (pl.) accounts
مغادرة مغادره *mughādara* departure

Open *S60.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (c).

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(d) model *'irsāl*:

إرسال إرسال *'irsāl* despatch
إدارة إداره *'idāra* administration
إضراب إضراب *'iḍrāb* strike

Open *S61.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (d).

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(e) model *intikhāb*:

انتخاب انتخاب *intikhāb* election
اشتراك اشتراك *ishtirāk* participation
انتظار انتظار *intiẓār* wait

Open *S62.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (e).

NB: The stress here is regular, falling on a long vowel followed by a single consonant. Contrast with *participle* group (e) above.

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(f) model *istikhdām*:

استخدام استخدام *istikhdām* employment, recruitment
استقبال استقبال *istiqbāl* reception

Open *S63.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat** group (f).

NB: In group (d) the verbal noun always begins *'i-* (with *hamza*), whereas in groups (e) and (f) the verbal noun always begins with a weak vowel *i-*. (Lesson 3 explains weak vowels.)

All the verbal nouns can of course form *relatives* (Lesson 4) by adding ...ي . **Read and write:**

تعليمي تعليمي *ta9līmī* educational, tutorial
الاشتراكيين الاشتراكيين *al-ishtirākīyīn* the socialists

Open *S64.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Abstract nouns

3 You will also find *abstract nouns* (i.e. nouns denoting a quality or state), ending in ...ية *-īya*, i.e. with a form identical to the corresponding feminine relative. The word إمكانية *'imkānīya* (6/2) is one such word. **Read and write**, and remember if you can, these useful abstracts:

الاشتراكية الاشتراكيه *al-ishtirākīya* socialism
الديموقراطية الديموقراطيه *ad-dīmuqrāṭīya* democracy

Open *S65.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Other written styles

4 As in the Roman alphabet, so in the Arabic alphabet there are various styles or typefaces. Here are various letter and number forms; first in the style used in this book:

ا ء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك ك لل مم نن هههه ه و يي ي
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

Another style often found in good print:

ا ء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك ك لل مم نن ههه ه و يي ي
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

Newspaper headlines:

اء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك ك لل مم نن ههه ه و يي ي
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

Typewriting, found in older documents:

ا ء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك لل مم نن ههه ه و يي ى
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

Two decorative styles found on buildings and monuments:

ا ء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك لل مم نن ههه ه و يي ي
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

ا ء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك ك لل مم نن ههه ه و يي ي
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

And a style based on a very common form of educated handwriting:

ا ء بب جج درسس صص ط ععع ع ففف ق كك ك لل مم نن ههه ه و يى ى
١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

In this last style you may encounter different handwritten shapes for certain final or isolated letters. Note the following:

ش ش ر ر ق ق و و ض ض ص ص ن ن ه ه

Exercise 3 Read aloud these verbal nouns:
تجديد renewal, استقلال independence, تدريس instruction, اجتماع meeting,
إصلاح reform, تمويل financing, مناسبة occasion, انتقال transfer
The answers to the exercises are found immediately below.

Answers to Exercises

1 (a) *wārid, ṭālib, kāmil, 9ārif* (c) *muḥāfiẓ, muqābil* (f) *musta9mil, mustathmir, musta'jir*
The last vowel is *-i-,* since from their meaning these participles are active.

2 *maksūr, mustankar, musallaḥ, muqtáraḥ*

3 *tajdīd, istiqlāl, tadrīs, ijtimā9, 'iṣlāḥ, tamwīl, munāsaba, intiqāl*

Tests

1 Some of the following words are new. Pronounce each one and identify it either as a masculine active participle or a verbal noun. Don't worry about the meaning; it is the form that counts:
(a) تقديم (b) راكب (c) مراسل (d) إنذار (e) مستعمل (f) شامل (g) افتتاح
(h) سامع (j) مدرّس (k) استثمار

2 Write:
(a) *munāsaba* (b) *intikhābī* (c) *mudarrisīn* (d) *9ummāl* (e) *tanẓīm*

3 Here are five active participles. Give the corresponding verbal nouns. Read aloud and translate the participles and verbal nouns:
(a) مفتّش (b) مشترك (c) مرسل (d) مساعد (e) مستقبل

4 Read aloud:
(a) الاستقبال (b) مدرسة للبنات (c) مصر والعراق (d) ايران (e) القاهرة

Summing up

Participles and verbal nouns are important forms which you will see in abundance on signs and the like. Being able to identify them will make it easier to guess their meaning, if you know another word with the same three-letter root; and to pronounce them.

We have now finished studying isolated words. Next, we start putting them together in meaningful expressions ('structures').

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