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A DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMAR OF LIBYAN ARABIC

A Dissertation  
submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School of Georgetown University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Languages and Linguistics

By

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Washington, D. C.

September 1976

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GRADUATE SCHOOL



The dissertation of Abubaker A. Elfitoury entitled

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## A DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMAR OF LIBYAN ARABIC

Abubaker A. Elfitoury

The theme of this paper is a linguistic study of Libyan Arabic, the variety of Arabic spoken in the North African country of Libya, particularly the dialect spoken in Tripoli. The study deals descriptively with the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the dialect.

In the phonology part, sounds are classified and described in articulatory terms as well as in terms of their distribution, clustering, and their influence on each other. A characteristic set of velarized consonants is treated separately and compared with the corresponding plain ones, *via à vis* their positions and their relationship to the neighboring sounds in the same word and the same syllable.

Morphologically, the word is described in terms of its root (strong, hollow, and defective) and the pattern of vowels inserted between the radical consonants of that root. A triliteral verb in its third person masculine singular form is considered the minimum basic form from which other words may be derived. From such a verb, eight forms or 'measure' of verbs are derived in Libyan Arabic, through the process of affixation and change in the vowel patterns. Verbs are inflected for tense, gender,

number, mood, and person. The perfect and imperfect tenses are indicated by attaching certain affixes to the form of the verb. Each tense carries its own usages and meanings.

From nouns, a certain number of verbal noun patterns, instance nouns, unit nouns, and feminine nouns are derived. Nouns are also divided into singular, dual, and plural, with the latter subdivided into 'sound' and 'broken' plural.

Also included under morphology are treatments of numerals, interrogatives, conjunctions, pronouns, and adjectives. From verbs various patterns of participles (active and passive) are derived.

Syntactically, an attempt is made to study the types of sentences of Libyan Arabic and the types of clauses within each type of sentence. Treatments of negation, interrogation, and transformation into passive are also related to the syntax of the sentence. Agreement between various parts of the sentence (mainly between nouns and adjectives, and verbs and pronouns) is also treated and considered an important feature. Equally characteristic of Libyan Arabic is the modification of a noun by another noun, a phenomenon linguists usually call 'annexion' in reference to the fact that a noun is annexed to another. A noun in Libyan Arabic is modified by a noun, an adjective, a particle, a demonstrative, and many other elements. The most common of all is the noun-adjective modification structure.

Other particles associated with nouns (such as the vocative /ya/), as well as nouns that have specific meanings, are touched upon in this study.

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PREFACE

The Arabic described in this paper is the kind of Arabic used in everyday conversation by the dwellers of the city of Tripoli, the largest city in Libya, located on the western coast of the country. This paper is not intended to be a study of the kind of Libyan Arabic spoken in the eastern regions since the latter differs, particularly in its phonology, from the one discussed here.

All that is intended in this paper is to list and tabulate, by the descriptive structural method, the main features of this dialect as it is spoken today. This, as far as I know, is the first attempt, in English, to study this dialect in a purely linguistic sense. It is hoped that this study will be the point of departure for more detailed and systematic studies of this dialect and other dialects of Arabic in general. It is hoped also that other models of linguistics will be applied to it.

This paper is a short reference grammar for all those who want to learn something about Libyan Arabic, particularly teachers, linguists, and students of Semitic languages or dialects.

The material used in this paper comes from taped samples of conversations and other native-spoken material. It was checked against my idiolect and those of my friends.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the completion of this paper, especially the members of my committee: Dr. R. R. Macdonald, Dr. S. Sara and Dr. W. Erwin of Georgetown University, for their patience in reading the paper and for their valuable advice.

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September 1976

PART I  
PHONOLOGY

## CHAPTER I

### CONSONANTS

Libyan Arabic has thirty-four consonants, a number of which are velarized (or emphatic). Table 1 shows the consonants of Libyan Arabic described in articulatory terms. The velarized consonants are marked by a dot under the corresponding nonvelarized consonants, with the exception of /ħ/ which is not considered a velarized consonant.

The consonants in the table occur in contrast to each other in such minimal pairs as the following:

b-d	/bal/ 'mind, attention'	/dal/ 'the letter 'd''
b-m	/bās/ 'only'	/mās/ 'he touched'
b-w	/blad/ 'country'	/wlad/ 'boys'
m-w	/ṣāmmır/ 'he closed tightly'	/ṣāwwır/ 'he took pictures'
θ-f	/θanya/ 'a second'	/fanya/ 'vanishing'
t-k	/tmıl/ 'you (M) get bored'	/kmıl/ 'it ended'
d-g	/dima/ 'always'	/gima/ 'value'
š-z	/šhār/ 'he went out'	/zhār/ 'kind of perfume'
s-ṣ	/sef/ 'sword'	/ṣef/ 'summer'
s-s	/sim/ 'poison'	/šim/ 'smell! (imperative)'
t-n	/tar/ 'revenge'	/nar/ 'fire'
d-n	/dayır/ 'he is doing'	/nayır/ 'bright'
d-l	/dam/ 'it lasted'	/lam/ 'he blamed'
r-l	/rāwwın/ 'he mixed'	/lāwwın/ 'he colored'
ṛ-ḷ	/ṛaṣ/ 'head'	/ḷaṣ/ 'ace'
k-g	/kle/ 'he ate'	/gle/ 'he fried'
q-ʔ	/qısmāh/ 'dividing'	/ʔısmāh/ 'his name'
x-ħ	/xāmra/ 'concrete'	/hāmra/ 'red (Feminine)'

TABLE 1

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveopalatal	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops V1 Vd	b			t d	·t ·d			k g	q		ʔ
Fricatives V1 Vd		f (v)*	(θ)** (ð)(ð̣)	s z	·s ·z	ʃ ʒ			x χ	ħ	h
Nasals Vd	m ṃ			n							
Laterals Vd				l ḷ							
Flap Vd				r ṛ							
Semivowels	w						y				

\*The voiced labiodental fricative [v] is very rare in Libyan Arabic. It may be heard only in such borrowed words as: varanda (porch), villa, etc. In all other cases /f/ is used.

\*\*The sounds in parentheses are used in scattered rural areas in the east and the west but may be heard in the speech of people from those areas migrating to the city of Tripoli.

⸑-⸑	/ʕsäl/ 'honey'	/ʕsäl/ 'he washed'
h-ḥ	/harīb/ 'escaping'	/ḥarīb/ 'he fought'

Since many of the sounds in Libyan Arabic differ substantially from those in many other languages, it may be worthwhile describing them articulatorily. The phonetic symbols used here are those that are widely used by American linguists. Phonemes are written between slant lines; allophonic variants between square brackets. The wedge sign over the vowel indicates a short vowel.

### Stops

A stop is a sound that is formed by a complete closure of the air passage through the mouth. Libyan Arabic has the following stops:

/b/: a voiced bilabial stop. Produced, like its English counterpart, with the lower lip against the upper lip. It may become voiceless when it occurs before a voiceless obstruent; e.g. /ḥäbs/ 'jail', /bṣäl/ 'onions'. Otherwise it is always voiced. Its position in a word like all consonants of Libyan Arabic may be initial, medial, or final.

/bahi/ 'good'  
/säbʕa/ 'seven'  
/ḥlib/ 'milk'

/t/: a voiceless dental stop. Produced with the tip of the tongue against the back of the upper teeth. It is different from the English stop which is alveolar; i. e. the tongue touches the area beyond the upper teeth.



/tarix/ 'history'  
 /ktab/ 'a book'  
 /ħut/ 'fish'

/d/: a voiced dental stop. Produced with the tip of the tongue touching the upper teeth while the vocal bands are vibrating.

/dima/ 'always'  
 /bde/ 'he began'  
 /blad/ 'country'

/k/: a voiceless velar stop. Produced with the back of the tongue touching the velum (the soft palate area). It tends to be palatal before front vowels and velar before back vowels.

/ktiba/ 'writing'  
 /fluka/ 'boat'  
 /xuk/ 'your brother'

/g/: a voiced velar stop. Produced with the back of the tongue touching the velum while the vocal bands are vibrating. It becomes palatal before front vowels and velar before back vowels.

/gird/ 'monkey'  
 /mıgly/ 'fried'  
 /ṭrig/ 'road'

/q/: a voiceless uvular stop. Produced with the back of the tongue contacting the uvula in such a way that the flow of air is stopped. The normal Libyan reflex of Standard Arabic /q/ is /g/; /q/ does occur, however, in a few proper names and words of religious connotation, such as:

/qätär/ 'Qatar'  
 /älqiyama/ 'resurrection day'

┌ /dɪmǎšq/ 'Damascus' ┐

/ʔ/: a voiceless glottal stop. Produced by a complete closure of the vocal bands followed by a sudden release of the air. It does not exist as a sound unit in English but it is close to the initial of the word 'ouch'. In Libyan Arabic it may occur initially, medially, or finally. Initially its presence is random and noncontrastive. In many instances the stop cannot be heard unless the word is preceded by a preposition or some other particle. Also, initially it occurs often in imperative forms of verbs. It may be heard in the following words when they are pronounced in the Standard Arabic pronunciation:

/ʔǎrnɪb/ 'rabbit'  
 /sʔǎl/ 'he asked'  
 /wǎbaʔ/ 'epidemic disease'

Generally speaking stops are aspirated or unaspirated in free variation when they occur initially in a stressed syllable. Also, they may be released or unreleased in free variation when they occur finally.

### Fricatives

A fricative is a sound that is produced when the breath stream is caused to pass through a narrow constriction in the mouth creating audible friction. Libyan Arabic has:

/f/: a voiceless labiodental fricative. Produced with the lower lip contacting the upper teeth. It is always voiceless except when it occurs ┌ ┐

before a voiced obstruent, where it becomes voiced, e.g. /fʒāl/ ‘radish’.

The voiced counterpart /v/ exists only in foreign words used by speakers living mainly in the cities. People living in the countryside use the voiceless fricative.

/flus/ ‘money’	/vālvula/ ‘valve’
/ʔāsfir/ ‘yellow’	/kurva/ ‘curve’
/sef/ ‘sword’	/katšāviti/ ‘screwdriver’

/θ/: a voiceless interdental fricative. Produced with the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower teeth. It is not very common in the speech of Libyans. In the city of Tripoli and its vicinity it is consistently replaced by the dental stop /t/. The following examples may be heard in the speech of those in Tripoli but belong to areas where such sounds are used.

/θmānya/ ‘eight’
/ʔānθa/ ‘female’
/θulθ/ ‘one third’

/ð/: a voiced interdental fricative. Produced with the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower teeth while the vocal bands are vibrating. It is very rare in Libyan Arabic. People consistently use /d/ instead of /ð/. However, the following examples may still be heard in some areas around Tripoli:

/ðel/ ‘tail’
/wvðin/ ‘ear’
/yaxid/ ‘he takes’

/s/: a voiceless dental fricative. Produced with the tip of the tongue

near the back of the upper teeth, creating a narrow constriction through which air flows with audible friction.

/smin/ 'fat'  
 /fsad/ 'corruption'  
 /nas/ 'people'

/z/: a voiced dental fricative. In producing it the tip of the tongue approaches the back of the upper teeth while the vocal bands are vibrating.

/zman/ 'old times'  
 /rizg/ 'fortune, property'  
 /loz/ 'nuts'

/š/: a voiceless alveopalatal fricative. Produced with the blade of the tongue almost touching the area on the borders of the alveolar ridge and the palate, creating a channel through which air flows. It may be voiced when it occurs before a voiced obstruent; e.g. /šdug/ 'cheeks'.

/šahi/ 'tea'  
 /maši/ 'he is walking'  
 /mvrš/ 'glass'

/ž/: a voiced alveopalatal fricative. Produced with the blade of the tongue almost touching the area on the borders of the alveolar ridge and the palate, forming a channel through which air flows, while the vocal bands are vibrating.

/žlām/ 'large scissors'  
 /džaž/ 'chicken'  
 /taž/ 'crown'

/x/: a voiceless uvular fricative. English has no equivalent, but the final sound of the German 'Bach' is very close to it. It is produced with the back of the tongue almost touching the area between the velum and the beginning of the uvula, leaving a channel through which air flows creating audible noise. It becomes slightly more forward before front vowels and more back before back vowels.

/xayɪf/ 'he is afraid'  
 /duxxan/ 'smoke, tobacco'  
 /wʂäx/ 'dirt'

/ɣ/: a voiced uvular fricative. Produced with the back of the tongue almost touching the border area between the velum and the uvula, forming a channel through which air flows, while the vocal bands are vibrating. It becomes slightly more forward before front vowels and more back before back vowels.

/ɣali/ 'expensive'  
 /sɣir/ 'small, young'  
 /fruɣ/ 'became empty'

/ħ/: a voiceless pharyngeal fricative. It is heard when the pharyngeal walls shrink together forming a narrow channel through which air passes with force. There is no equivalent to this sound in English.

/ħmar/ 'donkey'  
 /bħär/ 'sea'  
 /milħ/ 'salt'

┌ /ʕ/: a voiced pharyngeal fricative. It is the voiced counterpart of the ┐  
preceding sound with less audible noise when the air flows through the  
channel. The vocal bands are vibrating.

/ʕruʂa/ 'bride'

/naʕʒa/ 'ewe'

/baʕ/ 'he sold'

/h/: a voiceless glottal fricative. It is heard when air passes through  
the glottis making a breathy sound. Similar to the first sound of English  
hope. It may be voiced intervocalically or before voiced obstruents.

/hdiyya/ 'a present'

/sahl/ 'easy'

/xällih/ 'leave him'

### Nasals

A nasal sound is one that is produced when the breath is interrupted at  
some point in the mouth while the velum is lowered to allow the air to pass  
through the nose. Libyan Arabic has:

/m/: a voiced bilabial nasal. It is produced with the two lips coming  
together while the nasal passage is open. It becomes labiodental when it  
occurs before /f/ but remains bilabial elsewhere.

/moz/ 'bananas'

/smah/ 'his name'

/nom/ 'sleeping'

/n/: a voiced dental nasal. It differs from the corresponding English  
┌ nasal only in the fact that the latter is alveolar. It may vary in articulation ┐

according to the consonant following it; but remains dental prevocally or in final position.

/nas/ 'people'  
 /tnin/ 'two'  
 /ʕen/ 'eye'

### Laterals

A lateral sound is one which is produced when the flow of air is halted at the center in such a way that it is forced to flow along the sides of the tongue. Libyan Arabic has two laterals, one of which will be dealt with here and the other treated under velarized consonants:

/l/: a voiced dental lateral. In its production the tongue contacts the upper teeth with air flowing along the sides of the tongue. If we use the English distinction between clear (plain) and dark (velarized) /l/ we find that this corresponds to the English clear /l/. It may be voiceless when it occurs before voiceless obstruents; e.g. /lsan/ 'tongue', /ltämmu/ 'they got together'. It is voiced elsewhere.

/lon/ 'color'  
 /mliḥ/ 'good, fine'  
 /ḥawil/ 'he tried'

### Flaps

A flap is a sound produced with the tip of the tongue making a quick tap against the upper teeth. Libyan Arabic has two flaps, one of which will be

dealt with here and the other treated under velarized consonants.

/r/: a voiced dental flap. When the tongue taps quickly against the area just behind the upper teeth this sound results. When doubled or in final position it becomes a trill because its clustering involves more than one tap by the tongue against the upper teeth.

/riħ/ 'wind'  
 /xriħ/ 'autumn'  
 /far/ 'mouse'

#### Semivowels

/w/: a high back rounded semivowel. Produced with the lips rounded and the dorsum of the tongue raised.

/wen/ 'where'  
 /ʕawid/ 'he repeated'  
 /ʒrew/ 'puppy (diminutive)'

/y/: a high front unrounded semivowel. Produced with the lips spread apart and the front of the tongue raised high.

/yakıl/ 'he eats'  
 /byad/ 'charcoal'  
 /šây/ 'nothing'

#### Velarized Consonants

Libyan Arabic, like other Arabic dialects, has a set of velarized consonants. A velarized consonant may be defined as one that is produced with the blade of the tongue somewhat depressed while the back is slightly



raised, narrowing the velar channel. In the pronunciation of velarized consonants there is also more muscular tension involved.

The consonants  $\text{ṭ}$   $\text{ḍ}$   $\text{ḡ}$   $\text{ṣ}$   $\text{ẓ}$   $\text{ḷ}$   $\text{ṁ}$   $\text{ṛ}$  are velarized in Libyan Arabic. When one of them occurs in a word it causes the velarization of all other consonants in the same syllable and in certain circumstances even in the whole word. It may be convenient, therefore, to label  $\text{ṭ}$   $\text{ḍ}$   $\text{ḡ}$   $\text{ṣ}$   $\text{ẓ}$   $\text{ḷ}$   $\text{ṁ}$   $\text{ṛ}$  as “primary velarized consonants”, and the ones velarized under their influence as “secondary velarized consonants”.<sup>1</sup> All plain consonants in Libyan Arabic may be velarized because of the influence of the primary velarized ones, but no velarization sign will be written under these secondary velarized consonants in this paper.<sup>2</sup>

All the primary velarized consonants are phonemically distinct from their plain counterparts:  $\text{t}$   $\text{d}$   $\text{ḡ}$   $\text{s}$   $\text{z}$   $\text{l}$   $\text{m}$   $\text{r}$ . The following are minimal pairs contrasting the two sets:

<u>Plain</u>	<u>Velarized</u>
/tin/ ‘figs’	/ṭin/ ‘clay, mud’
/daḥ/ ‘he broadcasted’	/ḍaḥ/ ‘he was lost’
/yāḡbāḥ/ ‘he slaughters’	/yāḡḡbāḥ/ ‘he calls on’
/säb/ ‘he insulted’	/ṣäb/ ‘he poured’

<sup>1</sup> Ernest Abdel-Massih, An Introduction to Moroccan Arabic (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1973), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Primary velarized consonants may occur anywhere in a word and constitute an indispensable part of the root. Secondary ones are limited in distribution, mainly in the vicinity of a velarized consonant.

/bällah/ 'he wetted it'	/bälläh/ 'by God, oath'
/malitäh/ 'his fortune'	/malitäh/ 'his sweater'
/räf/ 'he quivered'	/räf/ 'shelf'
/zoz/ 'husband'	/zoz/ 'two'

These may be described in articulatory terms as follows:

/ṭ/: the velarized counterpart of /t/. Produced with the tip of the tongue touching the beginning of the alveolar ridge. The center of the tongue is lowered while the dorsum is somewhat raised.

/ṭasa/ 'a glass'  
 /bätin/ 'stomach'  
 /käbbut/ 'coat'

/ḍ/: the velarized counterpart of /d/. The tongue touches the front area of the alveolar ridge. The center of the tongue is depressed while the back is raised.

/ḍäy/ 'light'  
 /bḍaḍa/ 'merchandise'  
 /mriḍ/ 'sick'

/ḏ/: the velarized counterpart of /ð/. Produced with the tip of the tongue between the teeth. The central part of the tongue is depressed; the back is raised. In the speech of most people it is often replaced by the emphatic alveolar stop /ḍ/, although the interdental may be used by few speakers here and there in different areas.

/ḏuhr/ 'noon'  
 /muḏahära/ 'demonstration'  
 /ḏliḏ/ 'thick'

┌ /ʃ̣/: the velarized counterpart of /s/. Produced with the tongue a little farther back than /s/, still forming a narrow constriction through which air flows creating audible friction. The central part of the tongue is depressed; the back is raised. ┐

/ʃ̣wani/ 'plates'  
/bʃ̣ara/ 'joking'  
/hʃ̣ms/ 'chick peas'

/ẓ/: the velarized counterpart of /z/. It is produced a little farther back than /z/; i. e. with the tip of the tongue touching the area immediately behind the upper teeth, creating a passage through which air passes with friction. The center of the tongue is depressed; the back is raised.

/ẓmät/ 'he swallowed'  
/bẓe/ 'he paid'  
/ṛuz/ 'rice'

/ḷ/: the velarized (or dark) counterpart of the plain /l/; produced farther back than the latter. The tongue touches the upper teeth, the air flowing along the sides. The center of the tongue is depressed; the back is raised.

/ḷamba/ 'bulb'  
/bälläh/ 'by God'  
/ḍul/ 'shadow, shade'

/ṁ/: the velarized counterpart of the voiced bilabial nasal /m/.

Air passes through the nasal passage while the oral passage is blocked.

The lips are closed; the center of the tongue is depressed, while the back is

raised. It becomes labiodental when it occurs before /f/ but remains bilabial elsewhere.

/m̥ra/ 'a woman'  
 /ʒum̥ʕa/ 'Friday'  
 /yʕum̥/ 'he swims'

/r̥/: the emphatic counterpart of the plain flap /r/. Produced farther back in the mouth with the tip of the tongue tapping against the area behind the upper teeth. The center of the tongue is depressed; the back is raised. It becomes a trill when doubled.

/r̥aḥ/ 'he got lost'  
 /ʕur̥m/ 'heap'  
 /ʕar̥/ 'disgrace'

### Consonant Clusters

Libyan Arabic has two-consonant clusters and three-consonant clusters with the former more prevalent. In consonant clusters the articulation of each consonant is completed and no intervening vowel occurs to break up the cluster. The two-consonant clusters may be initial, medial, or final:

#### Initial

/bruda/ 'breeze, cool air'  
 /tlata/ 'three'  
 /drus/ 'lessons'  
 /gbāl/ 'he accepted'  
 /sbul/ 'corn'  
 /ʃke/ 'he complained'  
 /ʒbād/ 'he pulled'  
 /ʕrig/ 'he drowned'

┌ Medial ┐

/xuḍra/ 'vegetables'  
 /nāḥla/ 'bee'  
 /žibna/ 'cheese'  
 /mutʕa/ 'enjoyment'  
 /yisbiḡ/ 'he advances'  
 /ʔārdāh/ 'his land'  
 /fārʕa/ 'short'  
 /mānfa/ 'exile'  
 /dānga/ 'drums'

Final

/bizzäbt/ 'exactly'  
 /ʕilm/ 'knowledge'  
 /ḥārg/ 'burn'  
 /ḥārb/ 'war'  
 /ḍuṛṣ/ 'molar tooth'  
 /ḥižr/ 'lap'  
 /gārš/ 'piastre'  
 /tāmṛ/ 'dates'

Three-consonant clusters are found in initial and medial position only:

Initial

/nžrāḥ/ 'he is wounded'  
 /nsmāʕ/ 'he is heard'  
 /nxnāg/ 'he is strangled'  
 /ntfāx/ 'it (M) is inflated'  
 /nṭrāḥ/ 'he lay down'

Medial

/mgāʕmza/ 'she is sitting'  
 /miṭʔātrṣin/ 'they are arrogant'  
 /mādrsa/ 'school'  
 /yistāʕžlu/ 'they hurr̄y up'

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## CHAPTER II

### VOWELS

Libyan Arabic has a total of eight vowels, five long: i, e, a, u, o and three short: ɪ, ə, and ʊ. Many of these vowels have allophonic variations. Before are the vowels in tabular form, with descriptions thereafter.

TABLE 2

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Low high	ɪ		ʊ
Mid	e		o
Low	ə	a	

#### Long Vowels

Libyan Arabic vowels do not have a diphthongal quality and, generally speaking, they are tenser than the English vowels.

All long vowels become shorter when they occur in final position. All long vowels become shorter before a stressed syllable.

┌ /i/: a high-front unrounded vowel. Similar to the English vowel in seat, and even closer to the French vowel in vite 'quick'. ┐

/e/: a mid-front unrounded vowel. It is longer than the English vowel in laid, but without any diphthongization.

/ʃret/ 'I bought'  
/kleb/ 'dog (diminutive)'

/a/: a low-central vowel; produced farther front in the mouth than the English vowel in father. It becomes more retracted in the vicinity of a velarized consonant.

/har/ 'hot'  
/fnar/ 'lighthouse'  
/dyar/ 'rooms'

An allophone of this vowel is [æ]. It is used in the environment of no velarized consonants.

[bǎggæɫ] 'grocer'  
[fǎllæh] 'farmer'

/o/: a mid-back rounded vowel, longer and involves more lip rounding than the English vowel.

/hol/ 'hear'  
/mola/ 'owner'  
/lon/ 'color'

/u/: a high-back rounded vowel. Similar to the English vowel in boot.

/ful/ 'beans'  
/mus/ 'knife'  
/sbul/ 'corn'

Short Vowels

Libyan Arabic short vowels occur finally only rarely but they do occur initially and medially.

/ɪ/: a low-high front unrounded vowel. Phonemically different from /i/ and contrasts with it.

/brɪd/ 'became cool'  
 /sɪlʃa/ 'merchandise'  
 /ybɪs/ 'became dry'

A nonphonemic variant of /ɪ/ is a short, slightly centralized and round vowel between [ə] and [ɪ]. It occurs in such words as /fällɪs/ 'went bankrupt', /yăbʃɪt/ 'he sends'. Hereafter this will be written /ɪ/ whenever it occurs.

/ä/: a low-front central vowel. It is longer than the English schwa, although in final position it comes close to it.

/häfta/ 'party'  
 /därs/ 'lesson'  
 /mäktɪb/ 'office'

An allophonic variant of this vowel is [ɛ], close to the English vowel in egg. It occurs in the environment of an unstressed closed syllable.

[dorek] 'your turn'  
 [ktabek] 'your book'  
 [ʃaher] 'staying late at night'

/u/: a low-high back rounded vowel, similar to the English vowel in

put.



/(?)ummək/ 'your mother'  
 /ymuṣṣ/ 'he sucks'  
 /dʊll/ 'shade'

These vowels contrast with each other as follows:

#### Long vowels

i-e:	/grina/ 'epilepsy'	/grena/ 'we studied'
i-a:	/yṣir/ 'it happens'	/yṣar/ 'left'
i-u:	/ṣris/ 'groom'	/ṣrus/ 'pride'
i-o:	/lim/ 'lemon, oranges'	/lom/ 'blaming'
e-a:	/xdena/ 'we took'	/xdana/ 'he took us'
e-u:	/žrena/ 'we ran'	/žrulāh/ 'they ran to him'
e-o:	/len/ 'until'	/lon/ 'color'
a-u:	/ṣras/ 'weddings'	/ṣrus/ 'pride'
a-o:	/gam/ 'he lifted'	/gom/ 'people'
u-o:	/fuz/ 'win, (imperative)'	/foz/ 'dice'

#### Short vowels

i-ā:	/hibb/ 'love, (imperative)'	/hābb/ 'pimples'
i-u:	/sill/ 'pull out (imperative)'	/sull/ 'tuberculosis'
ā-u:	/bāṣd/ 'after'	/buṣd/ 'distance'

#### Contrasts between short and long vowels

i-i:	/lim/ 'gather! (imperative)'	/lim/ 'oranges'
ā-a:	/šārṣi/ 'legal'	/šarṣi/ 'my street'
u-u:	/ruṣ/ 'rice'	/ruz/ 'weigh! (imperative)'

#### Diphthongs

Libyan Arabic has the following sets of diphthongs.

┌ Fronting diphthongs ┐

/iy/:	/miyya/ 'hundred'	/xṭiyya/ 'mistake'
/ay/:	/ḥayra/ 'puzzled, Fem.'	/rayḥa/ 'lost, Fem.'
/uy/:	/buy/ 'my father'	/xuy/ 'my brother'
/äy/:	/šäy/ 'nothing'	/ḥäy/ 'alive'

Retracting diphthongs

/ew/:	occurs mainly in diminutive forms:	
	/žrew/ 'puppy, dim.'	/ḥlew/ 'good, sweet'
/aw/:	/ḥawlit/ 'she tried'	/ṣawdit/ 'she repeated'
/äw/:	/ʔäwnäh/ 'there he is'	/äwṣir/ 'more difficult'
/uw/:	this diphthong is the least common:	
	/mr <u>u</u> wwa/ 'courtesy'	/d <u>u</u> wwa/ 'speech, argument'

Stress

Stress in Libyan Arabic is, to a large extent, predictable. Stress rules may be summarized in the following:

1. Primary stress is assigned to the final syllable if it has either of the following:

- a. A long vowel followed by a consonant, as in:

/duxxán/ 'tobacco, smoke'  
 /mäzkúm/ 'having cold'  
 /firán/ 'mice'

- b. A short vowel followed by two consonants:

/läṣwíšt/ 'I turned'  
 /ḥaríbt/ 'I fought'  
 /färríšt/ 'I furnished'

2. If each of the last two syllables has a short a vowel followed by a

└ single consonant stress falls on the antepenult. ┘

2. /mʊsáʕāda/ 'aid'  
 /bǎrāka/ 'blessing'  
 /māhkāma/ 'court'

3. In all other cases stress falls on the penult.

- /nūšrʊb/ 'we drink'  
 /yistāržāʕ/ 'he recalls, gets back'  
 /yitmāhtku/ 'they are not serious'  
 /mɪtbāhdla/ 'she is in bad condition'  
 /mʊstāšfa/ 'hospital'

### Phonetic Change

#### Assimilation

Assimilation is a common phenomenon in the speech of Libyans. The most common type is regressive. The following examples are the most common types, and are by no means exhaustive.<sup>1</sup>

#### Non-velarized to velarized

- |          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| td → dd  | /tdʊr/ → /ddʊr/ 'it hurts'  |
| tṭ → dṭ  | /tṭir/ → /dṭir/ 'it flies'  |
| st → dṣt | /māstra/ → /māṣṭra/ 'ruler' |

#### Voiceless to voiced

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| td → dd | /tdāwwɪr/ → /ddāwwɪr/ 'she looks for'          |
| tz → dz | /tzāwgɪt/ → /dzāwgɪt/ 'It is painted'          |
| kg → gg | /žak gābl/ → /žag gābl/ 'he came to you first' |

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<sup>1</sup>For more details and elaboration see Ester Panetta's 'L'Arabo Parlato a Bengasi,' Vol. II, Bengasi, 1943.

Voiced to voiceless

gk → kk	/tɾɪgkʊm/ → /tɾɪkkʊm/ 'your (Pl.) way'
dt → tt	/žăŋɪdtha/ → /žăŋɪttha/ 'I stretched it'

Point of articulation

nb → mb	/krɒnb/ → /krɒmb/ 'cabbage'
nf → mf	/nfläg/ → /mfläg/ 'it burst'

Other

ts → ss	/tsägmit/ → /ssägmit/ 'it straightened'
tž → žž	/tžăwwız/ → /žžăwwız/ 'he got married'
nr → rr	/mɪn rah?/ → /mɪr rah/ 'who saw him'
ln → nn	/wşulna/ → /wsunna/ 'our arrival'
nl → ll	/mnɪn lɪk/ → /mɪnɪl lɪk/ 'where did you get, (the right to . . .)'

PART II  
MORPHOLOGY

## CHAPTER III

### ROOTS AND PATTERNS

Most Arabic words consist of a basic number of consonants and a variety of vowels that may be inserted between those consonants. The consonantal body is normally called the root of the word while the variety of vowels are called patterns. The structure of words of Libyan Arabic will be understood best if we adhere to these two basic morphological concepts. Roots usually carry a general idea of the meaning of the word, while the patterns may specify it. The root /xnb/, which has something to do with 'stealing', for example, may be used with different vowels giving various specific meanings as follows:

/xnàb/ 'he stole'  
/xanīb/ 'thief'  
/xnibà/ 'theft'  
/xīnba/ 'stealing'  
/māxnub/ 'stolen'  
/yīxnīb/ 'he steals'

Roots in Libyan Arabic may be divided into triliteral roots (i. e. those consisting of three radical consonants), quadriliteral roots and, very rarely, roots of more than four radicals. The triliteral root is the most common type, followed by the quadriliteral. Both may be further subdivided into strong roots and weak roots. The first are those that consist of consonants

only; the second are those that may include a vowel besides the consonants.

The vowel may occur medially or finally.<sup>1</sup> Included under strong roots are what is called doubled roots; i. e. roots in which two of the radicals are identical. Following is an example of each type and its subdivisions. Each root has the general meaning indicated.

### Trilateral roots

#### Strong

/fth/ 'opening'  
/hrb/ 'escaping'  
/smʃ/ 'hearing'

#### Weak

/dVx/<sup>2</sup> 'getting dizzy'  
/lVm/ 'blaming'  
/mšV/ 'going'  
/rgV/ 'climbing'

#### Doubled

/mss/ 'touching'  
/šdd/ 'holding'  
/hss/ 'feeling'

### Quadrilateral roots

#### Strong

/drhb/ 'rolling'  
/xrbš/ 'scribbling'  
/tržm/ 'translating'

#### Weak

/mškV/ 'shuffling (cards)'  
/tVrx/ 'dating (historically)'  
/hVhV/ 'singing (baby) to sleep'

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<sup>1</sup>For more details see Richard S. Harrell, A Short Reference Grammar of Moroccan Arabic (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1962).

<sup>2</sup>V stands for a vowel. Any long vowel may occur in that position.

┌ Doubled ┐

/drdr/ 'sprinkling'

/mʃmʃ/ 'rinsing'

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└



## CHAPTER IV

### THE VERB

#### Derivation

Libyan Arabic has a definite number of derivational measures,<sup>1</sup> or classes (to be discussed in detail later), for verbs, for associated adjectives, and nouns. These measures correspond to the Standard Arabic measures which are numbered I to X, with the first being simple and the rest derived from it. For convenience, the radical consonants of the root are symbolized as follows: 'F' for the first radical: 'ʕ' for the middle, and 'L' for the last one. For example, a verb like /xnäb/ 'he stole' will be symbolized 'FʕäL'. For doubled verbs the symbols Fʕʕ will be used. For quadriliteral root the last symbol 'L' will be repeated.

Libyan Arabic has eight of the ten standard Arabic measures of the triliteral verbs. It does not have measures corresponding to the Standard Arabic measures IV and IX. The eight measures are as follows.

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<sup>1</sup>Measures are patterns against which forms of the verb are derived from the basic form, which is the first measure.

Measure I Verbs

This measure is the simplest and the most common of all. It has the patterns /FṢṢL/ for strong verbs, /FäṢṢ/ for doubled verbs, /FṢe/ for final-weak verbs, and /FaL/ for middle-weak verbs.<sup>1</sup> Examples:

Strong verbs

/Ṣrāf/ 'he knew'  
/ḥmug/ 'he became  
          furious'  
/smm/ 'he became fat'

Final-weak verbs

/rme/ 'he threw'  
/ige/ 'he found'

Doubled verbs

/häll/ 'he opened'  
/rādd/ 'he returned  
          (transitive)'  
/däss/ 'he hid'

Middle-weak verbs

/dar/ 'he did'  
/xan/ 'he betrayed'  
/žab/ 'he brought'

Measure II Verbs

The verbs of this measure are characterized by the doubling of the middle radical. Most are transitive verbs with the pattern /FäṢṢäL/ or /fäṢṢIL/.

Strong verbs

/sälläh/ 'he fixed, repaired'  
/bättl/ 'he dismissed'  
/šäffir/ 'he whistled'  
/sämmim/ 'he poisoned'

---

<sup>1</sup>Middle-weak verbs are also called 'hollow' verbs; final-weak verbs are called 'defective'. Both terms are used in this paper.

The hollow verbs<sup>1</sup> of this measure take -yy or -ww as the doubled middle consonant.

/täyyıb/ 'he cooked'  
 /zäwwıř/ 'he married, (trans.)'  
 /säyyıb/ 'he left'  
 /zäwwıg/ 'he painted'

The defective verbs have the pattern /Fäffa/.

/řälla/ 'he elevated'  
 /dänna/ 'he moved close'  
 /řälla/ 'he prayed'

As it is noticeable from the examples above, the doubled middle consonant in all the verbs is preceded and followed by a vowel. The preceding vowel is /ä/ while the following vowel may be /ä/ or /ı/. This measure has no doubled verbs as a separate subclass since the doubling is a characteristic of the verbs of this measure in general.

### Measure III Verbs

The pattern for this measure is /FařıL/ or /FařäL/. Only a limited

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<sup>1</sup>Or, to state the case more precisely, those verbs which correspond to hollow verbs of Measure I:

#### Measure I

/řab/ 'It is cooked'  
 /dar/ 'he turned'

#### Measure II

/täyyıb/ 'he cooked'  
 /däwwır/ 'he turned, (trans.)'

There are, strictly speaking, no hollow verbs in Measure II since the middle position is filled with a (double) consonant.

number of verbs, mainly transitive, have this pattern. It remains the same for strong verbs and hollow verbs, with the middle consonant for the latter being -y or -w. For defective verbs it is /Faʔa/.

Strong and hollow verbs

/saməh/ 'he forgave'  
 /ʕarık/ 'he fought, reprimanded'  
 /xaşım/ 'he argued with'  
 /ʕawın/ 'he helped'  
 /ʕayın/ 'he examined'

Defective verbs

/hada/ 'he came close'  
 /ʕada/ 'he antagonized'  
 /nada/ 'he called'

Measure V Verbs

The patterns for this measure are /tʔäʕʕIL/ for strong and hollow verbs and /tʔäʕʕa/ for defective verbs. Hollow verbs take -yy or -ww as the doubled middle consonant. This measure differs from Measure II in having a prefixed t-. The t- usually changes the meaning of the verb into semi-passive and sometimes into reflexive. While Measure II verbs may mean something like 'to cause to do something', Measure V verbs indicate 'entering the state' caused by Measure II verbs. It may also mean 'to do something oneself', e. g. /tʕällım/.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mary C. Bateson, Arabic Language Handbook (Washington, D. C. : Center for Applied Linguistics, 1967), p. 33.

Strong and hollow verbs

/tʰäššiš/ 'he became upset'  
 /tmärrin/ 'he trained (himself)'  
 /tläwwin/ 'it became colored'  
 /thäyyir/ 'he became puzzled'<sup>1</sup>

Defective verbs

/tnähha/ 'he removed (himself)'  
 /thänna/ 'he became relieved'  
 /twäffa/ 'he died'

Measure VI Verbs

This measure has the same pattern as Measure III plus a prefixed t-.  
 The pattern for strong and hollow verbs is /tFaʃiL/ (and rarely /tFaʃuL/).  
 The pattern for defective verbs is /tFaʃa/. The verbs of this measure have  
 a reciprocal meaning.

Strong and hollow verbs

/tnašif/ 'he argued (with somebody)'  
 /tharib/ 'he fought (with somebody)'  
 /tšawur/ 'he consulted (with somebody)'

Defective verbs

/tšafa/ 'he settled the matter (with somebody)'  
 /traða/ 'he became reconciled (with somebody)'  
 /tbara/ 'he played (against somebody)'

---

<sup>1</sup>In many instances the t- assimilates to the following consonant. It may be an assimilation of voiceless to voiced (/tdärrib/ → /ddärrib/ 'to train (oneself)') or it may be a total assimilation (/tsäwwug/ → /ssäwwug/ 'to go to the market place').

Measure VII Verbs

This measure is the same as Measure I with a prefixed n-.<sup>1</sup> It has a semi-passive, and sometimes reflexive, meaning. Its patterns are as follows: /nFʃǎL/ for strong verbs, /nFǎʃʃ/ for doubled verbs, /nFaʃ/ for hollow verbs, and /nFʃe/ for defective verbs.

Strong verbs

/nžbǎd/ 'it was pulled'  
 /nzbǎt/ 'it was controlled'  
 /nhrǎg/ 'it was burned out'

Hollow verbs

/ndar/ 'it was done'  
 /ngal/ 'it was said'  
 /nbaʃ/ 'it was sold'

Doubled verbs

/ndǎss/ 'It was hidden'  
 /nʃǎbb/ 'It was poured'  
 /nbǎll/ 'It was wetted'<sup>2</sup>

Defective verbs

/nšre/ 'It was bought'  
 /ngre/ 'It was read'  
 /nbze/ 'It was paid'

Measure VIII Verbs

This has the pattern /FtʃǎL/ for strong verbs, /Ftǎʃʃ/ for doubled verbs, /Ftaʃ/ for hollow verbs, and /Ftʃe/ for defective verbs. It differs from Measure I in that it has an infix -t- after the first radical.

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<sup>1</sup>In the speech of some people the prefix is m-.

<sup>2</sup>When the n- is followed by a voiced bilabial stop the n- usually assimilates to it, creating an /m/ effect; e.g. /nbne/ → /mbne/ 'it was built'.

Strong verbs

/ltʃäb/ 'it was played'  
 /ntfäx/ 'it was inflated'  
 /ltähäm/ 'it was welded'

Doubled verbs

/ltämm/ 'It was gathered'  
 /ltäzz/ 'he was dismissed'  
 /ftäkk/ 'he was relieved'

Hollow verbs

/xtar/ 'he chose'  
 /štag/ 'he was nostalgic'

Defective verbs

/sthe/ 'he became shy'  
 /btle/ 'he was plagued'

Measure X Verbs

This measure has the prefix st-. For strong verbs the pattern is /stäFʃIL/, for doubled verbs it is /stFäʃʃ/; for hollow verbs /stFaʃ/; and for defective verbs the pattern is /stäFʃa/.<sup>1</sup>

Strong verbs

/stäʃžib/ 'he wondered'  
 /stämlik/ 'it became haunted'  
 /stäblid/ 'he became stupid'

Doubled verbs

/stḥägg/ 'he deserved'  
 /stmärr/ 'he continued'  
 /stlädd/ 'he enjoyed the  
 taste'

Hollow verbs

/strah/ 'he rested'  
 /stfai/ 'he was optimistic'

Defective verbs

/stäbla/ 'he was plagued by'  
 /stärxa/ 'he slowed down'  
 /stäʃna/ 'he took care of'

<sup>1</sup>Some weak middle roots also take /stäFʃIL/ where the *l* is usually /-w/ or /-y/; e.g. /stahwɪn/ 'he underestimated', /stäʃwɪl/ 'he became wild'.

Quadriliteral Verbs

Quadriliteral verbs are divided into simple forms and derived forms. The pattern for the simple strong verbs is /FǎʕLlL/ (sometimes /FǎʕLǎL/) and only rarely /FǎʕLlL/. For hollow verbs (in which the weak item is usually the second) the pattern is /FoʕlL/; for defective verbs it is /Foʕa/ or /FǎʕLa/.

Strong verbs

/dǎrhǎb/ 'he rolled'  
/ʕǎrbǎt/ 'he put in sequence'  
/dǎrʒǎḥ/ 'he swung'  
/xǎrbǎʕ/ 'he scribbled'

Hollow verbs

/torǎx/ 'he dated, historically'

Defective verbs

/mǎʕka/ 'he shuffled (cards)'  
/hoha/ 'he sang (baby) to sleep'

There are many reduplications in quadriliteral roots. In some verbs the second and the fourth radicals are repeated; e. g. /ʕǎlwǎl/ 'he turned upside down'. In a few other verbs the first and the third are reduplicated; e. g. /bǎrbǎʕ/ 'he dug out', /ṭǎrtǎʕ/ 'he shattered'. In still other verbs we find multiple reduplication; i. e. the first and the third as well as the second and the fourth, all in the same word, e. g. /ṭǎḡṭǎḡ/ 'he knocked', /fǎṭfǎṭ/ 'he crushed.'



### Derived Quadrilateral Verbs

Derived verbs are formed by prefixing a t- to the simple quadrilateral verbs in the same way as Measure V trilateral verbs are derived from Measure II. The addition of t- gives the meaning of semi-passive. The patterns are the same as those of the simple verbs plus the prefix t-.

#### Strong verbs

/txārbiš/ 'it was scribbled'  
/ddārhrb/ 'it was rolled'  
/ddāržah/ 'it was swung'

#### Hollow verbs

/ttorix/ 'it was dated'  
/tṣobin/ 'it was washed'<sup>1</sup>

### Inflection

Verbs in Libyan Arabic are inflected for the following:

Tense: Perfect and imperfect

Mood: Indicative and imperative

Number: (Singular (S) and plural (Pl.))

Gender: Masculine (M) and feminine (F)

Person: First, second, third.

Inflectional affixes may be prefixes, suffixes, or a combination of both. The perfect tense is indicated by attaching suffixes; the imperfect by prefixes (and in some cases also by suffixes). An inflectional affix is added to a verb stem (which is, of course, a combination of a root and a pattern).

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<sup>1</sup>No derived defective verbs have been observed in Libyan Arabic.

Verb stems may be divided into: (a) strong stems, which end in a short vowel plus a consonant, such as /ḥbās/ 'he jailed'; (b) doubled stems in which the last radical is doubled, such as /bāll/ 'he wetted'; (c) hollow stems (those ending in a long vowel plus a consonant), such as /mat/ 'he died'; (d) defective stems, ending in a vowel, such as /xde/ 'he took'.

### The Perfect Tense

#### Strong Verbs

The perfect tense of strong verbs is formed by the addition of suffixes to verb stems. The suffixes are:

I	-t
we	-na
you (MS)	-t
you (FS)	-ti
you (Pl.)	-tu
he	-∅
she	-It
they	-u

These suffixes may be added to the eight measures of the triliteral verbs and to the quadriliteral verbs. Some internal changes may result but, as we will see, the patterns are in general quite consistent. The following example is an inflectional paradigm of a Measure I verb:

┌ /šrāb/ 'he drank' ┐	
I	/šrābt/ <sup>1</sup>
we	/šrābna/
you (MS)	/šrābt/
you (FS)	/šrābti/
you (Pl.)	/šrābtu/
he	/šrāb/
she	/šurbit/
they	/šurbu/

As may be seen from this paradigm, the third person masculine singular lacks any kind of suffix ( $\emptyset$  indicates lack of inflection). This same form is considered the simple form from which all others are derived. Arabic does not have an infinitive form as in English. The third person masculine singular of the perfect is therefore considered the base form.

In the third person feminine singular and the third person plural form the stem vowel not only shifts back to a place between the first and the second radicals but also changes to /u/ in some verbs (like /šrāb/) and to /i/ in others, like the following:

/skān/ 'he lived (at)'	
I	/skānt/
we	/skānna/

---

<sup>1</sup>Note that the forms for the second person masculine singular and the first person singular are identical in the perfect tense.

you (MS)	/skänt/
you (FS)	/skänti/
you (Pl.)	/skäntu/
he	/skän/
she	/sɪknɪt/
they	/sɪknu/

This shift is characteristic of verbs of Measures I, VII, and VIII. Examples:

Measure VII:

	/nɾäd/ 'he was dismissed'	/nhäs/ 'he was jailed'
I	/nɾädt/	/nhäst/
we	/nɾädna/	/nhäsna/
you (MS)	/nɾädt/	/nhäst/
you (FS)	/nɾädti/	/nhästi/
you (Pl.)	/nɾädtu/	/nhästu/
he	/nɾäd/	/nhäs/
she	/nɾädɪt/	/nhäsɪt/
they	/nɾädu/	/nhäsu/

Measure VIII:

	/ntšäb/ 'he stood upright'	/rtšäd/ 'he shivered'
I	/ntšäbt/	/rtšädt/
we	/ntšäbna/	/rtšädna/
you (MS)	/ntšäbt/	/rtšädt/
you (FS)	/ntšäbti/	/rtšädti/
you (Pl.)	/ntšäbtu/	/rtšädtu/
he	/ntšäb/	/rtšäd/
she	/ntšäbtɪt/	/rtšädtɪt/
they	/ntšäbtu/	/rtšädtu/

In Measures II, III, V, VI, and X, this vowel shift does not occur.

Instead the vowel of the second syllable drops completely. The following

are examples:

## Measure II:

	/šăkkır/	'he closed'
I	/šăkkirt/	
we	/šăkkırna/	
you (MS)	/šăkkirt/	
you (FS)	/šăkkirti/	
you (Pl.)	/šăkkirtu/	
he	/šăkkır/	
she	/šăkkirt/	
they	/šăkkru/	

## Measure III:

	/samăḥ/	'he pardoned'
	/samăht/	
	/samăḥna/	
	/samăht/	
	/samăhti/	
	/samăhtu/	
	/samăḥ/	
	/samḥt/	
	/samḥu/	

## Measure V:

	/tmărrın/	'he trained (himself)'
I	/tmărrınt/	
we	/tmărrırna/	
you (MS)	/tmărrınt/	
you (FS)	/tmărrınti/	
you (Pl.)	/tmărrıntu/	
he	/tmărrın/	
she	/tmărrınt/	
they	/tmărrnu/	

## Measure VI:

	/tşarık/	'he fought (with somebody)'
	/tşarıkt/	
	/tşarıkna/	
	/tşarıkt/	
	/tşarıkti/	
	/tşarıktu/	
	/tşarık/	
	/tşarıkt/	
	/tşarku/	

## Measure X:

	/stăşzil/	'he hurried'
I	/stăşzilt/	
we	/stăşzilna/	
you (MS)	/stăşzilt/	
you (FS)	/stăşzilti/	
you (Pl.)	/stăşziltu/	

he	/stǎʒrɪ/
she	/stǎʒlɪt/
they	/stǎʒlu/

### Doubled Verbs

Verbs with a doubled final radical of Measures I, VII, VIII, and X have the vowel /e/ inserted before the suffixes, in the perfect tense, in all the persons except the third person feminine singular and the third person plural.

Examples:

#### Measure I:

	/dǎff/ 'he pushed'
I	/dǎffet/
we	/dǎffena/

you (MS)	/dǎffet/
you (FS)	/dǎffeti/
you (Pl.)	/dǎffetu/

he	/dǎff/
she	/dǎffit/
they	/dǎffu/

#### Measure VII:

	/ndǎrr/ 'he was hurt'
I	/ndǎrret/
we	/ndǎrrena/

you (MS)	/ndǎrret/
you (FS)	/ndǎrreti/
you (Pl.)	/ndǎrretu/

he	/ndǎrr/
she	/ndǎrrɪt/
they	/ndǎrru/

#### Measure VIII:

	/ltǎff/ 'he wrapped (himself)'
I	/ltǎffet/
we	/ltǎffena/

you (MS)	/ltǎffet/
you (FS)	/ltǎffeti/
you (Pl.)	/ltǎffetu/

#### Measure X:

	/sthǎgg/ 'he deserved'
I	/sthǎgget/
we	/sthǎggena/

you (MS)	/sthǎgget/
you (FS)	/sthǎggeti/
you (Pl.)	/sthǎggetu/

he	/lʔäff/	/stḥägg/
she	/lʔäffit/	/stḥäggit/
they	/lʔäffu/	/stḥäggu/

### Hollow Verbs

Hollow verbs are so called because they have the long vowel /a/ before the final consonant in place of the second radical. When the perfect tense suffixes are added to these verbs the vowel changes into /u/ or /i/, unpredictably, in the first and second persons--that is, where the suffixes begin with a consonant. Hollow verbs are found in Measures I, VII, VIII, and X. Examples:

#### Measure I:

	/fag/ 'he woke up'	/ṣam/ 'he fasted'
I	/figt/	/ṣumt/
we	/figna/	/ṣumna/
you (MS)	/figt/	/ṣumt/
you (FS)	/figti/	/ṣumti/
you (Pl.)	/figtu/	/ṣumtu/
he	/fag/	/ṣam/
she	/fagit/	/ṣamit/
they	/fagu/	/ṣamu/

#### Measure VII:

	/nxan/ 'he was betrayed'	/nhaz/ 'he was biased to'
I	/nxunt/	/nhızt/
we	/nxunna/	/nhızna/
you (MS)	/nxunt/	/nhızt/
you (FS)	/nxunti/	/nhızti/
you (Pl.)	/nxuntu/	/nhıztu/

he	/nxan/	/nhaz/
she	/nxanit/	/nhazit/
they	/nxanu/	/nhazu/

## Measure VIII:

	/xtar/ 'he chose/	/ltam/ 'he was blamed'
I	/xtirt/	/ltvmt/
we	/xtirna/	/ltvna/
you (MS)	/xtirt/	/ltvmt/
you (FS)	/xtirti/	/ltvmti/
you (Pl.)	/xtirtu/	/ltvmtu/
he	/xtar/	/ltam/
she	/xtarit/	/ltamit/
they	/xtaru/	/ltamu/

## Measure X:

	/stfar/ 'he felt ashamed' of'	/stʒad/ 'he became furious'
I	/stfirt/	/stʒvdt/
we	/stfirna/	/stʒvna/
you (MS)	/stfirt/	/stʒvdt/
you (FS)	/stfirti/	/stʒvdti/
you (Pl.)	/stfirtu/	/stʒvdtu/
he	/stfar/	/stʒad/
she	/stfarit/	/stʒadit/
they	/stfaru/	/stʒadu/

Defective Verbs

Defective verbs are those that end in the vowels /e/ or /a/. In verbs ending in /a/, this changes to /e/ before the suffixes of the first and second persons. In all verbs, the final /e/ or /a/ is dropped before the feminine



and plural third person suffixes. These changes occur in all eight measures of trilateral verbs and in quadrilaterals.<sup>1</sup> The following are examples from Measure I and X.

Measure I:		Measure X:	
	/mše/ 'he went'		/stārxa/ 'he relaxed'
I	/mšet/		/stāršet/
we	/mšena/		/stāršena/
you (MS)	/mšet/		/stāršet/
you (FS)	/mšeti/		/stāršeti/
you (Pl.)	/mšetu/		/stāršetu/
he	/mše/		/stārxa/
she	/mšit/		/stāršit/
they	/mšu/		/stāršu/

### The Imperfect Tense

The inflectional affixes of the imperfect tense may be prefixes, suffixes, or a combination of both. The imperfect affixes are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>This applies also to such rare biliteral verbs as /zě/ 'he came' and /re/ 'he saw', which are conjugated as follows:

I	/ret/
we	/rena/
you (MS)	/ret/
you (FS)	/reti/
you (Pl.)	/retu/
he	/re/
she	/rit/
they	/ru/

Notice that in the third person feminine and plural the second radical drops completely and the suffix is attached to a monoradical stem.

I	n(ɪ/ǎ/U)
we	n(ɪ/ǎ/U) . . . u
you (MS)	t(ɪ/ǎ/U)
you (FS)	t(ɪ/ǎ/U) . . . i
you (Pl.)	t(ɪ/a/U) . . . u
he	y(ɪ/a/U)
she	t(ɪ/a/U)
they	y(ɪ/a/U) . . . u

Suffixes are always vowels. Prefixes may be consonants alone or consonants plus one of the vowels enclosed in parentheses. Prefixes are consonants alone if the verb stem begins with a single consonant; and a consonant plus one of the vowels if the stem begins in a cluster of two consonants or more. As shown in the following examples (from Measure I), prefixes are combined with suffixes only in the second person feminine singular form and in the plural forms.

	/häll/ 'he opened'	/rbät/ 'he tied'	/lšăb/ 'he played'
I	/nhill/	/nurbu/	/nălšăb/
we	/nhillu/	/nurbtu/	/nălšbu/
you (MS)	/thill/	/turbu/	/tălšăb/
you (FS)	/thilli/	/turbti/	/tălšbi/
you (Pl.)	/thillu/	/turbtu/	/tălšbu/
he	/yhill/	/yurbu/	/yălšăb/
she	/thill/	/turbu/	/tălšăb/
they	/yhillu/	/yurbtu/	/yălšbu/

When this combination of prefixes and suffixes are added to different verbs some changes take place in different measures. The following are examples of those changes.

┌ Strong Verbs ┐

When the imperfect tense affixes are added to strong verbs the stem vowel drops in the second person feminine singular and in all the plural forms, creating a cluster of three consonants in the middle. This is true of strong verbs of all measures except VII and VIII. The following is an example of Measure II.

	/ṣäffir/ 'he whistled'
I	/nṣäffir/
we	/nṣäffru/
you (MS)	/tṣäffir/
you (FS)	/tṣäffri/
you (Pl.)	/tṣäffru/
he	/yṣäffir/
she	/tṣäffir/
they	/yṣäffru/ <sup>1</sup>

In Measures VII and VIII the stem vowel does not drop but, instead, it changes its position. It moves back to a place between the first and second radicals instead of its previous position between the second and the third. This happens in the second person feminine singular and in the plural forms; that is, with any (vowel) suffix.

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<sup>1</sup>Notice that in the plural forms and in the second person feminine singular the F is doubled, in the pronunciation of Libyans, despite the fact that it occurs before a consonant; it is, therefore, different from /nsafri/ 'we travel', /tsafri/ 'you (FS) travel', etc.

	/ndrāb/	'he was hit/	
I	/nʊndrʊb/		
we	/nʊndʊrbu/		
you (MS)	/tʊndrʊb/		
you (FS)	/tʊndʊrbi/		
you (Pl.)	/tʊndʊrbu/		
he	/yʊndrʊb/		
she	/tʊndrʊb/		
they	/yʊndʊrbu/		

When the imperfect prefixes are added to stems beginning with w- or y- the prefixes merge with these sounds, resulting in a long high back vowel for w- and long high front vowel for y-; e. g.

	/wgāf/	'he stood'		/ybīs/	'it became dry'
I	/nʊgʊf/			/nibīs/	
we	/nʊgʊfu/			/nibisu/	
you (MS)	/tʊgʊf/			/tibīs/	
you (FS)	/tʊgʊfi/			/tibsi/	
you (Pl.)	/tʊgʊfu/			/tibusu/	
he	/yʊgʊf/			/yibīs/	
she	/tʊgʊf/			/tibīs/	
they	/yʊgʊfu/			/yibusu/	

### Hollow Verbs

In hollow verbs of Measure I, the stem vowel in the imperfect is different from the stem vowel in the perfect. The stem vowel /a/ in the perfect changes, unpredictably, to /i/ in such verbs as /fag/ → /yfig/ 'he wakes up' and to /u/ in such verbs as /bas/ → /ybus/ 'he kisses'. In still other verbs the /a/ does not change at all. Examples:

/a/ → /i/		/a/ → /u/	
	/fag/ 'he woke up'		/bas/ 'he kissed'
I	/nfig/		/nbus/
we	/nfigu/		/nbusu/
you (MS)	/tfig/		/tbus/
you (FS)	/tfigi/		/tbusi/
you (Pl.)	/tfigu/		/tbusu/
he	/yfig/		/ybus/
she	/tfig/		/tbus/
they	/yfigu/		/ybusu/
/a/ → /a/			
	/bat/ 'he spent the night'		
I	/nbat/		
we	/nbatu/		
you (MS)	/tbat/		
you (FS)	/tbatu/		
you (Pl.)	/tbatu/		
he	/ybat/		
she	/tbat/		
they	/ybatu/		

### Defective Verbs

In defective verbs the final vowel of the stem (normally /e/ or /a/) changes to /i/, eliminating the distinction between masculine and feminine in the second person singular. This is the case in defective verbs of Measures I, II, III, and VIII, and in quadriliteral verbs such as /hoha/ 'he sang (the baby) to sleep'. Examples:

┌	Measure I:	Measure II:	┐
	/šre/ 'he bought'	/hälla/ 'he sweetened'	
	I            /nišri/	/nhälla/	
	we           /nišru/	/nhällu/	
	you (MS)    /tišri/	/tħälla/	
	you (FS)    /tišri/	/tħälla/	
	you (Pl.)    /tišru/	/tħällu/	
	he            /yišri/	/yħälla/	
	she           /tišri/	/tħälla/	
	they          /yišru/	/yħällu/ <sup>1</sup>	

## Measure III:

## Measure VIII:

	/nada/ 'he called on . . .'	/rtme/ 'he lay down'
I	/nnadi/	/nirtmi/
we	/nnadu/	/nirtmu/
you (MS)	/tnadi/	/tirtmi/
you (FS)	/tnadi/	/tirtmi/
you (Pl.)	/tnadu/	/tirtmu/
he	/ynadi/	/yirtmi/
she	/tnadi/	/tirtmi/
they	/ynadu/	/yirtmu/

The quadrilateral /hoha/ 'he sang (the baby) to sleep':

I	/nhohi/
we	/nhohu/
you (MS)	/thohi/
you (FS)	/thohi/
you (Pl.)	/thohu/

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<sup>1</sup>Notice that the /i/ is omitted when the plural suffix is attached.

he	/yhohi/
she	/thohi/
they	/yhohu/ <sup>1</sup>

Defective verbs of Measures V and VI do not change at all in the imperfect. Their stems are, therefore, identical to those of the perfect, ending in /a/. This /a/ is dropped before the suffix /i/ or /u/. Examples:

Measure V:		Measure VI:	
	/tʃǎšša/ 'he dined'		/twǎffa/ 'he died'
I	/nitʃǎšša/		/nitwǎffa/
we	/nitʃǎššu/		/nitwǎffu/
you (MS)	/titʃǎšša/		/titwǎffa/
you (FS)	/titʃǎšši/		/titwǎffi/
you (Pl.)	/titʃǎššu/		/titwǎffu/
he	/yitʃǎšša/		/yitwǎffa/
she	/titʃǎšša/		/titwǎffa/
they	/yitʃǎššu/		/yitwǎffu/

A different group of defective verbs is the one in which the final vowel (usually /e/) changes to /a/. This includes all verbs of Measures VII, and some verbs of Measure I. Examples:

Measure VII:		Measure I:	
	/ntse/ 'it was forgotten'		/gre/ 'he read, studied'
I	/nntsa/		/nǎgra/
we	/nntsu/		/nǎgru/

<sup>1</sup>Also conjugated in the same way (i. e. with /i/ at the end) are biliteral verbs such as /že/ 'he came' which becomes /yži/, /yžu/, etc.

you (MS)	/tɪntsa/	/tǎgra/
you (FS)	/tɪntsi/	/tǎgri/
you (Pl.)	/tɪntsu/	/tǎgru/
he	/yɪntsa/	/yǎgra/
she	/tɪntsa/	/tǎgra/
they	/yɪntsu/	/yǎgru/

### Inflection of the Imperative

The imperative forms of verbs are identical with, or close to, the basic forms of the second person of the imperfect. Some exceptions will be noted later in the chapter. Imperative forms of verbs may be divided into two groups: (a) a group that is formed from the imperfect by replacing the consonantal element of the prefix by a glottal stop (leaving the vowel element intact). This group includes: the strong and defective verbs of Measure I and all the verbs of Measures VII, VIII, and X. Examples:

#### Measure I

Strong verbs:

<u>Imperfect</u>	<u>Imperative</u>
/tʊʂrub/ 'you (MS) drink/	/ʔʊʂrub/!
/tʊʂrbi/ 'you (FS) drink/	/ʔʊʂrbi/!
/tʊʂrbu/ 'you (Pl.) drink/	/ʔʊʂrbu/!

Defective verbs:

/tɪrmi/ 'you (MS) throw'	/ʔɪrmi/!
/tɪrmi/ 'you (FS) throw'	/ʔɪrmi/!
/tɪrmu/ 'you (Pl.) throw'	/ʔɪrmu/!



┌ Measure VII

Strong verbs:

/tuntʌg/ 'you (MS) get loose'	/ʔuntʌg/!
/tuntʌgi/ 'you (FS) get loose'	/ʔuntʌgi/!
/tuntʌgu/ 'you (Pl.) get loose'	/ʔuntʌgu/!

Doubled verbs:

/tindäss/ 'you (MS) hide (yourself)'	/ʔindäss/!
/tindässi/ 'you (FS) hide (yourself)'	/ʔindässi/!
/tindässu/ 'you (Pl.) hide (yourself)'	/ʔindässu/!

Hollow verbs:

/tingam/ 'you (MS) get picked up'	/ʔingam/!
/tingam/ 'you (FS) get picked up'	/ʔingami/!
/tingamu/ 'you (Pl.) get picked up'	/ʔingamu/!

Defective verbs:

/tinḥri/ 'you (MS) bend'	/ʔinḥri/!
/tinḥni/ 'you (FS) bend'	/ʔinḥni/!
/tinḥnu/ 'you (Pl.) bend'	/ʔinḥnu/!

Measure VIII

Strong verbs:

/täxtälif/ 'you (MS) differ'	/ʔäxtälif/!
/täxtälifi/ 'you (FS) differ'	/ʔäxtälifi/!
/täxtälifu/ 'you (Pl.) differ'	/ʔäxtälifu/!

Doubled verbs:

/tiftäkk/ 'you (MS) become relieved'	/ʔiftäkk/!
/tiftäkki/ 'you (FS) become relieved'	/ʔiftäkki/!
/tiftäkku/ 'you (Pl.) become relieved'	/ʔiftäkku/!

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┌ Hollow verbs: ┐

/tɪhtaz/ 'you (MS) need'	/ʔɪhtaž/!
/tɪhtazi/ 'you (FS) need'	/ʔɪhtaž/!
/tɪhtazu/ 'you (Pl.) need'	/ʔɪhtažu/!

Defective verbs:

/tɪstɪhi/ 'you (MS) become shy'	/ʔɪstɪhi/!
/tɪstɪhi/ 'you (FS) become shy'	/ʔɪstɪhi/!
/tɪstɪhu/ 'you (Pl.) become shy'	/ʔɪstɪhu/!

### Measure X

Strong verbs:

/tɪstǎʃbɪd/ 'you (MS) enslave'	/ʔɪstǎʃbɪd/!
/tɪstǎʃbɪd/ 'you (FS) enslave'	/ʔɪstǎʃbɪd/!
/tɪstǎʃbɪd/ 'you (Pl.) enslave'	/ʔɪstǎʃbɪd/!

Doubled verbs:

/tǎstǎʃɪdd/ 'you (MS) get ready'	/ʔǎstǎʃɪdd/!
/tǎstǎʃɪddi/ 'you (FS) get ready'	/ʔǎstǎʃɪddi/!
/tǎstǎʃɪddu/ 'you (Pl.) get ready'	/ʔǎstǎʃɪddu/!

Hollow verbs:

/tɪstfal/ 'you (MS) become optimistic'	/ʔɪstfal/!
/tɪstfali/ 'you (FS) become optimistic'	/ʔɪstfali/!
/tɪstfalu/ 'you (Pl.) become optimistic'	/ʔɪstfalu/!

Defective verbs:

/tɪstǎtna/ 'you (MS) except'	/ʔɪstǎtna/!
/tɪstǎtni/ 'you (FS) except'	/ʔɪstǎtni/!
/tɪstǎtnu/ 'you (Pl.) except'	/ʔɪstǎtnu/!

(b) A group that is formed by omitting the imperfect prefixes from the second person forms, without making any other changes. This group includes: the

┌ doubled and hollow verbs of Measure I and all the verbs of Measures II, III, ┐

V, and VI. Examples:

Measure I

Doubled verbs:

Imperfect

/tʃɪdd/ 'you (MS) count'  
 /tʃɪddi/ 'you (FS) count'  
 /tʃɪddu/ 'you (Pl.) count'

Imperative

/ʃɪ dd/!  
 /ʃɪ ddi/!  
 /ʃɪ ddu/!

Hollow verbs:

/ddir/ 'you (MS) do'  
 /ddiri/ 'you (FS) do'  
 /ddiru/ 'you (Pl.) do'

/dir/!  
 /diri/!  
 /diru/!

Measure II

Strong verbs:

/tʃälläh/ 'you (MS) farm'  
 /tʃällhi/ 'you (FS) farm'  
 /tʃällhu/ 'you (Pl.) farm'

/fällah/!  
 /fällhi/!  
 /fällhu/!

Hollow verbs:

/tnäwwır/ 'you (MS) lighten'  
 /tnäwwri/ 'you (FS) lighten'  
 /tnäwwru/ 'you (Pl.) lighten'

/näwwır/!  
 /näwwri/!  
 /näwwru/!

Defective verbs:

/txälli/ 'you (MS) leave'  
 /txälli/ 'you (FS) leave'  
 /txällu/ 'you (Pl.) leave'

/xälli/!  
 /xälli/!  
 /xällu/!

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┌ Measure III ┐

Strong verbs:

/tmanăʃ/ 'you (MS) object'	/manăʃ/!
/tmanʃi/ 'you (FS) object'	/manʃi/!
/tmanʃu/ 'you (Pl.) object'	/manʃu/!

Hollow verbs:

/tsayır/ 'you (MS) go along with'	/sayır/!
/tsayri/ 'you (FS) go along with'	/sayri/!
/tsayru/ 'you (Pl.) go along with'	/sayru/!

Defective verbs:

/tʃadi/ 'you (MS) antagonize'	/ʃadi/!
/tʃadi/ 'you (FS) antagonize'	/ʃadi/!
/tʃadu/ 'you (Pl.) antagonize'	/ʃadu/!

Measure V

Strong verbs:

/tɪtbärrıd/ 'you (MS) cool (yourself)'	/tbärrıd/!
/tɪtbärrıdɪ/ 'you (FS) cool (yourself)'	/tbärrıdɪ/!
/tɪtbärrıdu/ 'you (Pl.) cool (yourselves)'	/tbärrıdu/!

Hollow verbs:

/tɪtʃäyyır/ 'you (MS) change'	/tʃäyyır/!
/tɪtʃäyyırı/ 'you (FS) change'	/tʃäyyırı/!
/tɪtʃäyyırıu/ 'you (Pl.) change'	/tʃäyyırıu/!

Defective verbs:

/tɪtʃädda/ 'you (MS) have lunch'	/tʃädda/!
/tɪtʃäddı/ 'you (FS) have lunch'	/tʃäddı/!
/tɪtʃäddıu/ 'you (Pl.) have lunch'	/tʃäddıu/!

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┌ Measure VI ┐

Strong verbs:

/titʃarɪk/ 'you (MS) fight'	/tʃarɪk/!
/titʃarki/ 'you (FS) fight'	/tʃarki/!
/titʃarku/ 'you (Pl.) fight'	/tʃarku/!

Hollow verbs:

/titʃawɪn/ 'you (MS) cooperate'	/tʃawɪn/!
/titʃawni/ 'you (FS) cooperate'	/tʃawni/!
/titʃawnu/ 'you (Pl.) cooperate'	/tʃawnu/!

Defective verbs:

/titbara/ 'you (MS) compete with'	/tbara/!
/titbari/ 'you (FS) compete with'	/tbari/!
/titbaru/ 'you (Pl.) compete with'	/tbaru/!

Among the few verbs that have irregular imperative forms are the two biliteral verbs /ʒe/ 'he came' and /re/ 'he saw'. In the imperatives of these two verbs, totally different stems are used; e. g.

/ʒe/	/re/
/tʃala/ 'you (MS) come!'	/ʔiʃbāh/ 'you (MS) see!'
/tʃali/ 'you (FS) come!'	/ʔiʃbhi/ 'you (FS) see!'
/tʃalu/ 'you (Pl.) come!'	/ʔiʃb̄hu/ 'you (Pl.) see!' <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>/šbāh/ is actually an independent verb of its own, synonymous with /re/. Since /re/ has no imperative form the imperative of the other verb is used instead.

The Inflection of /kle/ and /xde/

The two verbs /kle/ 'he ate' and /xde/ 'he took' are irregular in their inflection and behavior. These are basically defective triliteral Measure I verbs, with the final radical being /e/. They behave as such when they are inflected for the perfect; e. g.

	/kle/	/xde/
I	/kle/	/xde/
we	/klena/	/xdena/
you (MS)	/klet/	/xdet/
you (FS)	/kleti/	/xdeti/
you (Pl.)	/kletu/	/xdetu/
he	/kle/	/xde/
she	/klt/	/xdit/
they	/klu/	/xdu/

When they are inflected for the imperfect, however, they become strong verbs with the different stems: /-akl/ and /-axd/. Example:

	/kle/	/xde/
I	/nakɪl/	/naxɪd/
we	/naklu/	/naxdu/
you (MS)	/takɪl/	/taxɪd/
you (FS)	/takli/	/taxdi/
you (Pl.)	/taklu/	/taxdu/
he	/yakɪl/	/yaxɪd/
she	/takɪl/	/taxɪd/
they	/yaklu/	/yaxdu/

┌ In the imperative they also have irregular forms that do not relate to the ┐  
imperfect forms. The stem in the imperative has /u/ as the middle radical  
and therefore behaves like a hollow stem; e. g.

	/kle/	/xde/
Imperative:	/kui/! 'you (MS) eat'	/xud/! 'you (MS) take'
	/kuli/! 'you (FS) eat'	/xudi/! 'you (FS) take'
	/kulu/! 'you (Pl.) eat'	/xudu/! 'you (Pl.) take'

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## CHAPTER V

### NOUNS

#### Derivation

##### Derivation of Verbal Nouns

A verbal noun is the noun that is derived from a verb. It often has the meaning of an 'action' or 'state', and in few instances, of action combined with its result. Verbal nouns normally have abstract meanings but many have acquired concrete meanings through different processes.

There are a number of patterns by which verbal nouns are derived. These patterns vary according to the verb measure in question. Measure I verbs, for example, have a wide variety of verbal noun patterns and they cannot all be predicted. What follows is the patterns of most of the measures in Libyan Arabic arranged in numerical order, with examples.

##### Measure I Patterns

This measure has the following patterns for verbal nouns:

A. Strong verbs: /FäʕL/

Doubled verbs: /Fäʕʕ/ ~ /Fäʕʕan/

Hollow verbs: /Foʕ/ ~ /Foʕan/, /Feʕ/ ~ /Feʕan/

Defective verbs: /Fäʕi/, /FäʕLa/



Examples:

Strong verbs

/nbăḥ/ 'it barked'  
/drăb/ 'he hit'  
/smăṣ/ 'he heard'

Doubled verbs

/mădd/ 'he stretched'  
/rădd/ 'to give back'  
/lämm/ 'to gether'

Hollow verbs

/dab/ 'it melted'  
/mal/ 'it bent'  
/han/  
/daṣ/

Defective verbs

/žre/ 'he ran'  
/mle/ 'he filled'  
/nse/ 'he forgot'  
/she/ 'he forgot'

Verbal nouns

/näbh/ 'barking'  
/dărb/ 'hitting'  
/sămṣ/ 'hearing'

/mădd/ ~ /măddan/ 'stretching'  
/rădd/ ~ /răddan/ 'giving back'  
/lämm/ ~ /lämman/ 'gathering'

/dob/ ~ /doban/ 'melting'  
/mel/ ~ /melan/ 'bending'  
/ihana/  
/idaṣa/

/žări/ 'running'  
/mäli/ 'filling'  
/näswa/ 'forgetting'  
/sähwa/ 'forgetting'

B. Strong verbs: /FiṣiL/

Hollow verbs: /Fiṣa/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/kdăb/ 'he lied'  
/lṣăb/ 'he played'

Hollow verbs

/har/ 'he became puzzled'  
/ḡar/ 'he became jealous'

Verbal nouns

/kdiḥb/ 'lying'  
/liṣiḥb/ 'playing'

/hira/ 'puzzlement'  
/ḡira/ 'jealousy'

┌ C. Strong verbs: /FuʃuL/

Doubled verbs: /Fuʃʃ/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/bxäl/ 'he was stingy'

/ḍhāk/ 'he laughed'

Verbal nouns

/buɣul/ 'stinginess'

/ḍuhuk/ 'laughing'

Doubled verbs

/ʃäšš/ 'he cheated'

/ʃušš/ 'cheating'<sup>1</sup>

D. Strong verbs: /FäʃɪL/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/hläf/ 'he swore'

/žbād/ 'he pulled'

/ʃgäd/ 'he tied'

/hālɪf/ 'swearing'

/žäbrɪd/ 'pulling'

/ʃägɪd/ 'tying'

E. Strong verbs: /FʃälL/

Examples:

/glɪg/ 'he lost patience'

/tʃäb/ 'he got tired'

/gläg/ 'loosing patience'

/tʃäb/ 'tiredness'

F. Strong verbs: /FʃuL/

Examples:

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<sup>1</sup>Pattern A of the doubled verbs may be used as a verbal noun for this verb too.

┌ Strong verbs ┐

/xṭām/ 'he passed by'	/xṭum/ 'passing by'
/hrāb/ 'he escaped'	/hrub/ 'escaping'
/zrāg/ 'he sneaked out'	/zrug/ 'sneaking out'

G. Strong verbs: /FɪʃLa/ ~ /FuʃLa/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/xnāb/ 'he stole'	/xɪnba/ 'stealing'
/xṭāb/ 'he announced his engagement'	/xṭba/ 'engagement'

H. Strong verbs: /FʃaL/

Hollow verbs: /FʃaL/, /FʃaLa/

Examples:

<u>Strong verbs and hollow verbs</u>	<u>Verbal nouns</u>
/rgād/ 'he slept'	/rgad/ 'sleeping'
/hbɪl/ 'he became crazy'	/hbal/ 'craziness'
/tab/ 'it became cooked'	/tyab/ 'cooking'
/sam/ 'he fasted'	/syam/ 'fasting'
/zar/ 'he visited'	/zyara/ 'visiting'

Measure II Patterns

Measure II has the following verbal noun patterns:

- A. Strong verbs: }  
Defective verbs: } /FʃaLa/

┌ Examples:

Strong verbs and defective verbs

/däbbır/ ‘he thought of something’	/dbara/ ‘thinking’
/fälläh/ ‘he farmed’	/flaha/ ‘farming’

Defective verbs

/wäşşā/ ‘he gave a message’	/wşaya/ ‘giving a message’
/käffa/ ‘it satisfied’	/kfaya/ ‘satisfying’

B. Strong verbs: /tɪFʃiL/

Defective verbs: /tʊFʃe/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/xällit/ ‘he mixed’	/tixlit/ ‘mixing’
/bärrid/ ‘he cooled’	/tribrid/ ‘cooling’
/lämmid/ ‘he collected’	/tilmid/ ‘collecting’

Defective verbs

/wärra/ ‘he showed’	/tuwre/ ‘showing’
/gäwwa/ ‘he strengthened’	/tugwe/ ‘strengthening’

Verbal nouns

C. Strong verbs: /FʃaL/

Defective verbs: /Fʃe/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/sällim/ ‘he greeted’	/slam/ ‘greeting’
/källim/ ‘he talked to . . .’	/klam/ ‘talking’

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┌ Defective verbs ┐

/šanna/ 'he sang'  
/šälla/ 'he prayed'

/šne/ 'singing'  
/šle/ 'praying'

Measure III Patterns

The verbal noun patterns for Measure III are as follows:

A. Strong verbs: /mFaʃLa/

Defective verbs: /mFaʃe/ ~ /mFaʃa/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/ʃayn/ 'he examined'  
/sayır/ 'he tolerated'  
/harıb/ 'he fought'

/mʃayna/ 'examining'  
/msayra/ 'toleration'  
/mharba/ 'fighting'

Defective verbs

/ʃana/ 'he suffered'  
/raða/ 'he reconciled'

/mʃane/ ~ /mʃana/ 'suffering'  
/mrade/ ~ /mrada/ 'reconciliation'

Verbal noun patterns for Measure V are the same as those of

Measure II.

Measure VI Patterns

For the verbal noun of Measure VI, the patterns of Measure III are normally used. However, the following pattern is also heard, although rarely.

A. Strong verbs: /täFaʃuL/

Examples:

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Strong verbs

/tʃawɪn/ 'he cooperated'  
/tlaʃəb/ 'he cheated'

Verbal nouns

/təʃawvɪn/ 'cooperation'  
/tələʃɒb/ 'cheating'

Measure VII Patterns

The verbal noun patterns for Measure VII are the following:

A. Strong verbs: /nFɪʃaL/

Hollow verbs: /ʔɪFaʃa/

Examples:

Strong verbs

/nsəʒəm/ 'he got along well'      /nsɪʒam/ 'getting along well'  
/nʒəməs/ 'he indulged'            /nʒɪmas/ 'indulgence'

Hollow verbs

/nhan/ 'he was insulted'            /ʔihana/ 'insult'  
/ndaʃ/ 'it was broadcasted'        /ʔidaʃa/ 'broadcast'

Measure VIII Patterns

Verbal noun patterns for verbs of Measure VIII are quite rare. Only

/ʔɪFtɪʃal/ is found. Examples:

/ʔɪstəməʃ/ 'he listened to'        /ʔɪstɪmaʃ/ 'listening'  
/ʔɪntəsəb/ 'he belonged to'       /ʔɪntɪsəb/ 'belonging to'  
/ʃtad/ 'he got used to'            /ʔɪʃtɪyad/ 'getting used to'  
/xtar/ 'he chose'                    /ʔɪxtɪyər/ 'choosing'

## Measure X Patterns

The verbal noun patterns for Measure X are as follows:

A. Strong verbs:

/ʔɪstɪfʕaL/

Defective verbs:

Verbal nouns of all defective verbs of Measure X have /ʔ/ as a final consonant.

Hollow verbs: /ʔɪstɪfaʕa/

Examples:

### Strong verbs

/ʔɪstāržā ʕ/ 'he got back'

/ʔɪstāhmɪd/ 'he thanked (God)'

### Verbal nouns

/ʔɪstɪržā ʕ/ 'getting back'

/ʔɪstɪħmad/ 'thanking (God)'

### Defective verbs

/ʔɪstāʕla/ 'he felt superior'

/ʔɪstātna/ 'he excepted'

/ʔɪstɪʕla ʔ/ 'feeling superior'

/ʔɪstɪtna ʔ/ 'excepting'

### Hollow verbs

/ʔɪstāʕan/ 'he asked the help  
of'

/ʔɪstāʕa ʕ/ 'he was able to'

/ʔɪstɪʕana/ 'asking the help of'

/ʔɪstɪʕa ʕa/ 'being able to'

## Quadriliteral Verb Patterns

Simple and derived quadriliteral verbs have the following verbal noun patterns:

A. Sound verbs: /tʕɪʕLiL/

Weak second radical verbs: /tʕoʕiL/

┌ Examples: ┐

Sound verbs

/šǎlbŭg/ 'he splashed'	/tšilbig/ 'splashing'
/zǎlbǎh/ 'he tricked'	/tzilbih/ 'tricking'
/lǎflif/ 'he wrapped'	/tliflif/ 'wrapping'
/bǎšbrš/ 'it sprinkled'	/tbršbiš/ 'sprinkling'

Weak second radical verbs

/torix/ 'he dated (historically)'	/ttorix/ 'dating'
/šogir/ 'he insured'	/tšogir/ 'insuring'
/txoxim/ 'he became crazy'	/txoxim/ 'becoming crazy'

Derivation of Instance Nouns

An instance noun is one that indicates a specification (or a specific instance) of the action described by the verbal noun from which it is derived.

Instance nouns may be derived from verbal nouns by the addition of the suffix /-a/. In verbal nouns ending in /-aC/, the vowel becomes short (i. e. /ǎ/) and occurs between the first and second radicals. Examples:

Verbal noun

/tɨʂkir/ 'closing'  
 /tɨšim/ 'being shy/  
 /bǎlʂ/ 'swallowing'  
 /skat/ 'being silent'

Instance noun

/tɨskira/ 'one closing'  
 /tɨšima/ 'one embarrassment'  
 /bǎlʂa/ 'one swallow'  
 /sǎkta/ 'one period of silence'

Derivation of Feminine Nouns

Feminine nouns may be derived from the corresponding masculine nouns by the addition of the suffix -a. Nouns included in this category are



those indicating human beings and some animals. Examples:

Masculine nouns

/sādiq/ 'friend'  
/fallah/ 'farmer'  
/xdim/ 'servant'

Feminine nouns

/sādiqa/  
/fallaha/  
/xdima/

In stems that end in - $\check{V}$ C the short vowel is usually dropped:

/ṣaḥub/ 'an acquaintance'	/ṣaḥba/
/ṣamīl/ 'worker'	/ṣamla/
/mudārris/ 'teacher'	/mudārrsa/

If the stem ends in /-i/ the latter changes to -y. Examples:

/muḥami/ 'lawyer'	/muḥamya/
/gadi/ 'judge'	/gadya/

Derivation of Unit Nouns

Unit nouns are those that indicate a unit or a piece of substance, e. g.

/zītun/ 'olives'	/zītuna/ 'one olive'
/dillaṣ/ 'water melon'	/dillaṣa/ 'a water melon'
/lḥām/ 'meat'	/lḥama/ 'a piece of meat'

Occupational Nouns

Certain nouns referring to occupations may be derived from other nouns by the addition of /-ži/; e. g.

/kundra/ 'shoes'	/kundraži/ 'shoe repairman'
/gāhwa/ 'coffee'	/gāhwaži/ 'coffee maker'
/saṣat/ 'watches'	/sāṣadži/ 'watch repairman'

## Inflection

### Gender

Nouns in Libyan Arabic may be masculine or feminine. In general feminine nouns are: (a) those that end in /-a/; e.g. /ṭāġiyya/ 'hat', /ṣunīyya/ 'plate', /džaža/ 'chicken', etc.; (b) those that have feminine referents; e.g. /ʔumm/ 'mother', /ʔuxt/ 'sister', etc.; (c) some parts of the body; e.g. /ʕen/ 'eye', /bāṭn/ 'stomach', /rižl/ 'leg', etc.; (d) some miscellaneous nouns such as: /šāms/ 'sun', /mṭār/ 'rain', /ʔārnīb/ 'rabbit', etc.

Masculine nouns are: (a) those that end in /-e/; e.g. /sme/ 'sky', /šše/ 'supper', /hbe/ 'ashes'; (b) those that end in /-i/; e.g. /kursi/ 'chair', /šāskri/ 'military man', /krarši/ 'carriage driver'. Included in this are those that end in /ži/, listed on page 71. (c) Those that end in /-u/; e.g. /žiru/ 'puppy', /fīlu/ 'cold', /dālu/ 'leather bucket'; (d) those that end in a consonant, other than the feminine nouns in (b), (c), (d) above; e.g. /māktīb/ 'office', /fāllāḥ/ 'farmer'.

### Number

There are three numbers in Libyan Arabic: singular, dual, and plural.

Singular. A singular noun is the one that refers to one person or object.

Dual. The dual number refers to two persons or objects. It is formed by the addition of the suffix /-en/ if the noun ends in a consonant and /-ten/

if the noun ends in /-a/, the latter dropping. Other changes in the stem are as follows: In monosyllabic nouns ending in /-ṼC/ the final consonant is doubled when the dual suffix is attached; e. g.

/dkār/ 'male'	/dkārren/ 'two males'
/bḥār/ 'sea'	/bḥārren/ 'two seas'
/žmāl/ 'camel'	/žmällen/ 'two camels'

In other nouns ending in /-ṼC/ the short vowel is dropped when the suffix is attached; e. g.

/Ṣuruf/ 'branch'	/Ṣurfen/ 'two branches'
/ḥābīs/ 'prison'	/ḥābsen/ 'two prisons'
/ḥābīl/ 'rope'	/ḥāblen/ 'two ropes'

When the noun ends in /-a/ the suffix is /-ten/ and that final /-a/ is dropped.

/saṣa/ 'an hour'	/saṣten/ 'two hours'
/säyyara/ 'a car'	/säyyarten/ 'two cars'
/ḥužra/ 'a room'	/ḥužrtten/ 'two rooms'

When the noun ends in /-ya/ or /(-l)yya/ these are replaced by /-i/. If it ends in /-wa/ or /(-u)wwa/ these are replaced by /-u/.

/wlīyya/ 'a woman'	/wlīten/ 'two women'
/šārya/ 'a buy'	/šāriten/ 'two buys'
/lābwa/ 'a lioness'	/lābuten/ 'two lionesses'
/duwwa/ 'a talk'	/duten/ 'two talks'

When the noun ends in /-e/, the latter is replaced by /-a/ and a /-w/ is inserted before the suffix; e. g.

/ṣše/ 'supper'	/ṣšawen/ 'two suppers'
/rde/ 'kind of Libyan dress'	/rdawen/ 'two dresses'
/ṣze/ 'a period of mourning'	/ṣzawen/ 'two periods of mourning'

When the noun ends in /-i/ or /-u/, a /-y/ or /-w/ respectively, is inserted before the suffix;

/gaḍi/ 'judge'	/gaḍiyen/ 'two judges'
/tarzi/ 'tailor'	/tarziyen/ 'two tailors'
/filu/ 'colt'	/filuwen/ 'two colts'
/dālu/ 'leather bucket'	/dāluwen/ 'two buckets'

Plural. The plural number in Libyan Arabic refers to more than two persons or objects. There are two types of plurals: sound plurals are formed by the addition of a suffix; broken plurals are formed by internal vowel changes, with or without suffixes.

### Sound Plurals

A sound plural is formed by attaching one of three suffixes: /-in/, /-a/, or /-at/, each of which is used with a large variety of nouns.

The suffix -in. Plurals formed by this suffix are called masculine sound plurals because most of the nouns that take this suffix are masculine. The following types of nouns and adjectives take this plural: (a) all adjectives (functioning like nouns) that are derived from proper nouns by the addition of /i/: /ʔurdni/ 'Jordanian', /ʔurdniyyin/, /məṣri/ 'Egyptian', /məṣriyyin/, etc. (b) Participles (except those of Measure I); e.g. /māzkum/-/māzkumin/ 'having cold', /mıslım/ 'Moslem'-/mıslmin/. (c) Nouns that indicate behavior or profession; e.g. /bāwwab/-/bāwwabin/ 'janitors', /kāddab/ 'liar' -/kāddabin/, /ṭābbax/ 'cook' -/tābbaxin/.

┌ The suffix -a. This forms plurals when it is added to human masculine nouns of the pattern CṼCCaC, some of which may have alternative plurals ending in -in; e. g.

/fällah/	/fällaha/ ~ /fällahin/	'farmers'
/binnay/	/binnaya/	'builders'

It may also be added to certain human masculine nouns ending in /-i/, where /-yy/ is inserted before the suffix; e. g.

/gähwaži/	'coffeemaker'	/gähwažryya/
/şnayşi/	'artisan'	/şnayşryya/
/ḥrayri/	'silk weaver'	/ḥrayryya/

The suffix -at. Since this suffix is used mostly with feminine nouns, it is called the feminine sound plural suffix. It is normally attached to a great many singular nouns ending in -a (replacing this ending), regardless of whether the final -a is a result of a derivation process or original in the word; e. g.

/ḍārba/	'a hit'	/ḍārbat/
/wāzza/	'a goose'	/wāzzat/
/tbiba/	'lady doctor'	/tbibat/
/ḥṿžra/	'a room'	/ḥṿžrat/
/katıba/	'female writer'	/katıbat/

This suffix is also attached to nouns ending in -e. When it is attached to these (singular) nouns its final vowel changes to -a and a /-w/ is inserted before the suffix; e. g.

/ʕde/	'lunch'	/ʕdawat/
/sle/	'prayer'	/slawat/
/šte/	'winter'	/štawat/

Some masculine nouns of various patterns take the suffix -at for plural:

/xīṭab/ 'letter'	/xīṭabat/
/iltīmas/ 'petition'	/iltīmasat/
/ḥāmmam/ 'public bath'	/ḥāmmamat/

### Broken Plurals

Libyan Arabic has numerous patterns for broken plurals. But some broken plurals do not fall into any systematic pattern, and, consequently, the plurals of those nouns will have to be learned as individual items. Below are the most common patterns of broken plurals of Libyan Arabic.

(a) The plural pattern /FṡaLiL/. This accounts for a great portion of plural nouns and corresponds to singular nouns of four consonants, regardless of whether that singular noun is from a quadriliteral root or a trilateral root plus suffix; e. g.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
/gīndil/ 'torch'	/gnadil/
/birwiṭa/ 'wheel barrow'	/brawiṭ/
/ṣāndug/ 'box'	/ṣnadig/
/kurrasa/ 'note book'	/kraris/
/burraka/ 'hut'	/brarik/

(b) The plural pattern /FṡaLṼL/; e. g.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The final short vowel of the plural is identical to the final short vowel of the singular noun; i. e. if the final vowel of the singular is /i/ the short vowel of the plural will be /i/.

/dāfdır/ 'notebook'	/dfadır/
/mäskın/ 'home'	/msakın/
/takum/ 'set'	/twakum/
/dbiḥa/ 'slaughtered sheep'	/dbayāḥ/
/mähbıs/ 'vase'	/mhabıs/

(c) The plural pattern /FʕaL/. This corresponds to many singular noun patterns. Among them are the following:

Singular pattern /FVʕL/

/kuds/ 'heap'	/kdas/
/kābš/ 'ram'	/kbaš/
/bınt/ 'girl'	/bnat/
/wild/ 'boy'	/wlad/

Singular pattern /FuʕUL/ ~ /FuʕäL/

/švʕul/ 'business'	/šʕal/
/hvfok/ 'good for nothing'	/hfak/
/rubäʕ/ 'quarter'	/rbaʕ/
/subäʕ/ 'finger'	/šbaʕ/

Singular pattern /FVʕLa/

/šurra/ 'bundle'	/srar/
/šıbka/ 'net'	/šbak/
/gäʕa/ 'large plate'	/gʕaʕ/

Miscellaneous singular patterns include:

/fil/ 'elephant'	/fyal/
/naga/ 'female camel'	/nyag/
/žmäl/ 'camel'	/žmal/
/šahıb/ 'friend'	/šhab/

(d) The plural pattern /FʕaLi/. This is used for singular nouns of the pattern /FVʕLa/:

/kiswa/ 'suit'	/ksawi/
/šākwa/ 'leather bag'	/škawi/
/gisma/ 'luck'	/gsami/

The same plural pattern may be used for other miscellaneous singular nouns:

/lela/ 'night'	/lyali/
/sanya/ 'farm'	/swani/
/surriyya/ 'shirt'	/swari/
/ḥoli/ 'Libyan dress for men'	/ḥwali/

(e) The plural pattern /FʕuL/. This is a very common pattern, used mainly for the singular patterns: /Fäʕʕ/, /FäʕL/, /FeL/, /Fiʕʕ/.

/ḥädd/ 'luck'	/ḥdud/
/xäšm/ 'nose'	/xšum/
/zärf/ 'envelope'	/zruf/
/xet/ 'thread'	/xyut/
/žeb/ 'pocket'	/žyub/
/simm/ 'poison'	/smum/

(f) The plural pattern /FuʕʕaL/. This is the pattern of many active participles of form I verbs referring to human beings (used as nouns):

/ḥakim/ 'ruler'	/ḥukkam/
/žahil/ 'uneducated'	/žuhhal/
/zabıf/ 'officer'	/zubbaf/
/ʕamil/ 'worker'	/ʕummäl/

(g) The plural pattern /FiLan/. This is mainly the plural for the singular pattern /FVL/.

goz/ 'sand dune'	/gizan/
/nar/ 'fire'	/niran/
/žar/ 'neighbor'	/žiran/
/ḥet/ 'wall'	/ḥitan/
/sas/ 'wall'	/sisan/



(h) The plural pattern /FuʃLan/, /FiʃLan/. These are plurals for the singular patterns /FʃaL/, /FʃuL/, /FaʃiL/ and /Făʃi/:

/draʃ/ 'arm'	/dirʃan/
/xruf/ 'lamb'	/xirfan/
/rahib/ 'priest'	/roḥban/
/žăċi/ 'kid goat'	/židyan/

(i) The plural pattern /FʃiL/:

/hila/ 'trick'	/hyil/
/tasa/ 'glass cup'	/tyis/ <sup>1</sup>
/midra/ 'a shovel'	/mdir/

(j) The plural pattern /FuʃLa/:

/ysir/ 'prisoner of war'	/yusra/
/bʃir/ 'blind'	/buʃra/
/ʃrib/ 'stranger'	/ʃurba/

Besides the previous patterns, Libyan Arabic has some rarer ones and has individual broken plurals that do not follow any consistent patterns. I have ignored all those in my treatment.

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<sup>1</sup>This is rare.

## CHAPTER VI

### ADJECTIVES

#### Derivation: Participles and Their Patterns

Participles are adjectives derived from verbs and closely related to them in meaning. There are two kinds of participles: active participles and passive participles. The first has the meaning of 'having done the action indicated by the verb'; the second means 'having undergone the action indicated by that verb'.

Libyan Arabic has the following participle patterns.

#### Measure I Participles

The pattern for strong verbs of Measure I is /FaʕɪL/ with slight variations. For doubled verbs the pattern is /Fäʕʕ/, while in defective verbs the final -ɪl is replaced by -i. In hollow verbs a /-y/ occurs as the second consonant of the pattern.

The passive participle patterns for Measure I verbs (Measures I, VIII, and X are the only measures that have distinct forms for the passive participle in Libyan Arabic) are /mäʕʕuL/ for strong, doubled, and hollow

┌ verbs and /mäFʕi/ for defective verbs;<sup>1</sup> e.g. ┐

<u>Strong verbs</u>	<u>Active participle</u>	<u>Passive participle</u>
/fhäm/ 'he understood'	/fahım/ 'having understood'	/mäfhum/ 'understood'
/ʕzäm/ 'he invited'	/ʕazım/ 'having invited'	/mäʕzum/ 'invited'

#### Doubled verbs

/ʕădd/ 'he counted'	/ʕadd/ 'having counted'	/mäʕdud/ 'counted'
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#### Hollow verbs

/zad/ 'he added'	/zayıd/ 'having added'	/mäzyud/ 'added'
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#### Defective verbs

/rhe/ 'he ground'	/rahi/ 'having round'	/märhi/ 'ground'
/ʕfe/ 'he pardoned'	/ʕafi/ 'having excused'	/mäʕfi/ 'excused' <sup>2</sup>

### Measure II Participles

The patterns for Measure II are:

Strong verbs: /mFăʕʕVĻ/<sup>3</sup>

Defective verbs: /m.Făʕʕi/

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<sup>1</sup>In all other measures the passive participle is identical to the active participle.

<sup>2</sup>Some Measure I verbs do not have passive participles, e.g. /fat/ 'he passed', /šaf/ 'he saw', but these are very few.

<sup>3</sup>V̇ in the pattern indicates a short vowel identical to the final short vowel of the verb to which the participle corresponds.

Strong verbs

/färrıʕ/ 'he emptied'  
 /şälläh/ 'he repaired'  
 /därrıg/ 'he hid'

Defective verbs

/däwwa/ 'he lighted'  
 /näḥḥa/ 'he removed'  
 /ʕädda/ 'he offered lunch'

Active/passive participle

/mfärrıʕ/ '(having) emptied'  
 /mşälläh/ '(having) repaired'  
 /mdärrıg/ '(having) hidden'

/mḍäwwi/ '(having) lighted'  
 /mnäḥḥi/ '(having) removed'  
 /mʕäddi/ '(having) offered lunch'

Measure III Participles

The patterns for Measure III are:

Strong verbs: /mFaʕV̄L/

Defective verbs: /Faʕi/

Strong verbs

/saʕıd/ 'he helped'  
 /şarāḥ/ 'he was frank with'  
 /dawwım/ 'he continued'

Defective verbs

/maša/ 'he walked with'  
 /dawa/ 'he cured'  
 /ḥaka/ 'he talked to'

Active/passive participle

/msaʕıd/ '(having) helped'  
 /mşarāḥ/ '(having) been frank'  
 /mdawwım/ '(having) continued'

/mmaši/ '(having) walked with'  
 /mdawi/ '(having) cured'  
 /mḥaki/ '(having) talked to'

Measure V Participles

The patterns for Measure V are:

Strong verbs: /mıtfäʕʕV̄L/

Defective verbs: /mıtfäʕʕi/

Strong verbs

/tmärrin/ 'he exercised'  
 /thärrik/ 'it moved'  
 /tsäwwug/ 'he went to the  
 market'

Active/passive participle

/mitmärrin/ '(having) exercised'  
 /mithärrik/ '(having) moved'  
 /mitsäwwug/ '(having) gone to the  
 market'

Defective verbs

/tšädda/ 'he exceeded the  
 limit'  
 /tšäšša/ 'he dined'  
 /tmäšša/ 'he went for a walk'

/mitšäddi/ '(having) exceeded the  
 limit'  
 /mitšäšši/ '(having) dined'  
 /mitmäšši/ '(having) gone for a walk'

Measure VI Participles

The patterns for Measure VI are:

Strong verbs: /mitFašǂL/

Defective verbs: /mitFaši/

Strong verbs

/tšarık/ 'he fought'  
 /tšaläh/ 'he reconciled'  
 /tnašif/ 'he argued with'

Active/passive participle

/mitšarık/ '(having) fought'  
 /mitšaläh/ '(having) reconciled'  
 /mitnašif/ '(having) argued with'

Defective verbs

/thaša/ 'he avoided'  
 /tmada/ 'he exceeded the  
 limit'

/mithaši/ '(having) avoided'  
 /mitmadi/ '(having) exceeded the  
 limit'

Measure VII Participles

The patterns for Measure VII are:

Strong verbs: /minFšıL/

┌ Doubled verbs: /mɪnFǎʃʃ/

Hollow verbs: /mɪnFaL/

Defective verbs: /mɪnFʃi/

Strong verbs

/nʃhǎn/ 'it was crushed'

/nʃlag/ 'it was freed'

/nʃwǎʒ/ 'it was bent'

Active/passive participle

/mɪnʃhɪn/ '(having) been crushed'

/mɪnʃliɡ/ '(having) been freed'

/mɪnʃwiʒ/ '(having) been bent'

Doubled verbs

/nfǎʃʃ/ 'it was deflated'

/nsǎll/ 'it was pulled out'

/nfǎkk/ 'it was dismantled'

/mɪnfǎʃʃ/ '(having) been deflated'

/mɪnsǎll/ '(having) been pulled out'

/mɪnfǎkk/ '(having) been dismantled'

Hollow verbs

/nzah/ 'he moved aside'

/nhar/ 'he collapsed'

/mɪnzah/ '(having) moved aside'

/mɪnhar/ '(having) collapsed'

Defective verbs

/nhʃe/ 'it was stuffed'

/nʃme/ 'he became blind'

/nʃtle/ 'it was painted'

/mɪnhʃi/ '(having) been stuffed'

/mɪnʃmi/ '(having) become blind'

/mɪnʃtli/ '(having) been painted'

Measure VIII Participles

The participle patterns for Measure VIII are:

Strong verbs: active participle: /mʊFtǎʃɪL/

passive participle: /mʊFtǎʃǎL/

Doubled verbs: /mʊFtǎʃʃ/

Hollow verbs: /mɪFtaʃ/

Defective verbs: /mɪFtʃi/

<u>Strong verbs</u>	<u>Active participle</u>	<u>Passive participle</u>
/ʃtäbär/ 'he considered'	/mʊʃtäbır/ 'having considered'	/mʊʃtäbär/ 'considered'
/ʃtämäd/ 'he depended on'	/mʊʃtämıd/ 'having depended'	/mʊʃtämäd/ 'depended'
/ʃtäräf/ 'he confessed'	/mʊʃtarıf/ 'having confessed'	/mʊʃtäräf/ 'confessed'

#### Doubled verbs

/htämm/ 'he paid attention'	/mʊhtämm/ '(having) paid attention'
/ʃtäzz/ 'he was proud of'	/mʊʃtäzz/ '(having) been proud of'
/htäžž/ 'he protested'	/mʊhtäžž/ '(having) protested'

#### Hollow verbs

/htar/ 'to get puzzled'	/mıhtar/ '(having) got puzzled'
/ʃtad/ 'to hunt'	/mıʃtad/ '(having) hunted'

#### Defective verbs

/ntse/ 'to be forgotten'	/mıntsi/ '(having) been forgotten'
/nṭre/ 'to be mentioned'	/mıṅtri/ '(having) been mentioned'

#### Measure X Participles

The participle patterns for Measure X are as follows:

Strong verbs: /mıstăFʃıL/

Doubled verbs: /mʊstăFʃıL/ ~ /mıstFăʃʃ/

Hollow verbs: /mʊstăFiʃ/ for active participles and /mıstăFaʃ/ for passive participles<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In Measure X only hollow verbs have distinct forms for the passive participle.

┌ Defective verbs: *mistăFʃi/* ┐

Strong verbs

*/stărzig/* ‘he looked for living’  
*/stăržil/* ‘he acted like a man’

Active participle

*/mistărzig/* ‘(having) looked for living’  
*/mistăržil/* ‘(having) acted like a man’

Doubled verbs

*/stăʃidd/* ‘he prepared  
 (himself)’  
*/stăbădd/* ‘he became a  
 dictator’  
*/sthăgg/* ‘he deserved’

*/mʊstăʃidd/* ‘(having) prepared  
 (himself)’  
*/mʊstăbidd/* ‘(having) become a  
 dictator’  
*/misthăgg/* ‘(having) deserved’

Hollow verbs

*/stăfad/* ‘he benefited from’

Active participle

*/mʊstăfid/* ‘having  
 benefited’

Passive participle

*/mʊstăfad/* ‘benefited’

*/stăhan/* ‘he underestimated’

*/mustăhin/* ‘having  
 underestimated’

*/mʊstăhan/* ‘underesti-  
 mated’

Defective verbs

*/stăšwa/* ‘he belittled’  
*/stăwla/* ‘he dominated’

Active participle

*/mistăšwi/* ‘(having) belittled’  
*/mistăwli/* ‘(having) dominated’

Simple Quadriliteral Verbs

The simple quadriliteral verbs have the following participle patterns:

Strong verbs: */mFăʃLṼL/*

Defective verbs: */mFoʃi/*

Sound verbs

*/šărbıt/* ‘he put in sequence’  
*/kărkır/* ‘he dragged’  
*/dăržăh/* ‘he swung’

*/mšărbıt/* ‘(having) put in sequence’  
*/mkărkır/* ‘(having) dragged’  
*/mdăržăh/* ‘(having) swung’



┌ Defective verbs ┐

/hoha/ 'to sing (the baby) to  
sleep'

/mhohi/ '(having) sung the baby to  
sleep'

Derived Quadrilateral Verbs

The derived quadrilateral verbs have the following participle patterns:

Strong verbs: /mitFǎɣLǂL/

Weak second radicals: /mitFoɣIL/

Strong verbs

/ddǎhwur/ 'he walked around'  
/tšǎfšif/ 'it burned'

Active/passive participle

/middǎhwur/ '(having) walked around'  
/mitšǎfšif/ '(having) burned'

Weak second radical

/tborid/ 'he showed dullness'  
/tšogir/ 'it was insured'

/mitborid/ '(having) showed dullness'  
/mitšogir/ '(having) been insured'

Comparative Adjectives

Comparative forms of adjectives are derived from regular adjectives according to these patterns:

Sound roots: /ǎFɣI l/

/ndif/ 'clean'  
/smin/ 'fat'

/ǎndif/ 'cleaner'  
/ǎsmm/ 'fatter'

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└

┌ Doubled roots: /ʔFäʕʕ/<sup>1</sup> ─┐

/bnin/ 'tasty'

/ʔbänn/ 'more tasty'

/hnun/ 'kind'

/ʔhänn/ 'kinder'

Hollow roots: /ʔFʕiL/

/liyyin/ 'fine'

/ʔälym/ 'finer'

/ʕen/ 'ugly'

/ʔšyın/ 'more ugly'

Defective roots: /ʔFʕa/

/faḍi/ 'empty, free'

/ʔfaḍa/ 'more empty'

/ḥami/ 'hot'

/ʔḥma/ 'hotter'

Nisba Adjectives

Nisba adjectives are derived from nouns (singular and plural), adjectives, and prepositions. The most common way to form a nisba adjective is by attaching the suffix /-i/, which may be added to the noun stem directly or may be preceded by some other elements and accompanied by a slight variation in the stem itself. The following are illustrations of such variations.

The suffix -i may be added directly to the stem, e. g.

/ʔädäb/ 'literature'

/ʔädäbi/ 'literary'

/fänn/ 'art'

/fänni/ 'artistic'

/šäxʕ/ 'person'

/šäxʕi/ 'personal'

or it may cause the loss of the final -a, if it is added to a word ending in such a vowel; e. g.

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└ <sup>1</sup>An exception to this is /ʕdid/ which has /ʔʕdid/.

 ─┘

/gähwa/ 'coffee'	/gähwi/ 'coffee brown'
/xiruʕa/ 'a kind of tree'	/xiruʕi/ 'brownish'

In still other cases /-w/ or /-aw/ is inserted before the nisba suffix; e. g.

/riʔa/ 'lung'	/riʔäwi/ 'belonging to lungs'
/miʔa/ 'hundred'	/miʔäwi/ 'centennial'
/dirna/ 'a town in Libya'	/dirnawi/ 'belonging to Derna'
/šärg/ 'east'	/šärgawi/ 'easterner'

A different, but rare, nisba suffix is -ani. What distinguishes this suffix from the preceding is that it is attached to many prepositions (and adverbs) as well; e. g.

/täht/ 'under, below'	/tähtani/ 'lower'
/bärra/ 'outside'	/bärrani/ 'outsider'
/räb/ 'God'	/räbbani/ 'original'
/ruḥ/ 'spirit'	/ruḥani/ 'spiritual'

### Inflection

Adjectives are inflected for gender and number. Like those of nouns, their plurals are divided into sound and broken plurals. Adjectives take the same suffixes as nouns, and their stems undergo the same changes when the suffixes are added.

Considering the masculine singular as the basic form, the inflectional suffixes for adjectives are as follows:

- a to form feminine
- in to form masculine sound plurals
- at to form feminine sound plurals

When these suffixes are added the stem vowel, if short, is dropped:

<u>Masculine singular</u>	<u>Feminine singular</u>	<u>Masculine plural</u>	<u>Feminine plural</u>
/mʃäkkır/ 'closed'	/mʃäkkra/	/mʃäkkrin/	/mʃäkkrat/
/mʃälläh/ 'repaired'	/mʃällha/	/mʃällhin/	/mʃällhat/
/mläwwın/ 'colored'	/mläwwna/	/mläwwnin/	/mläwwnat/

If the basic form ends in a long vowel followed by a consonant, no dropping of the vowel takes place:

/mäftuḥ/ 'open'	/mäftuḥa/	/mäfluḥin/	/maftuḥat/
/ʃıryan/ 'naked'	/ʃıryana/	/ʃıryanin/	/ʃıryanat/
/läṭif/ 'gentle'	/läṭifa/	/läṭifin/	/läṭifat/

If the basic form ends in /-i/, either a /-yy/ is inserted before the suffix;

e. g.

/mıgli/ 'fried'	/mıgliyya/	/mıgliyyin/	/mıgliyyat/
/qāwmi/ 'national'	/qāwmıyya/	/qāwmıyyin/	/qāwmıyyat/
/libi/ 'Libyan'	/libıyya/	/libıyyin/	/libıyyat/

or that final /-i/ is changed to /y/:

/bahi/ 'fine'	/bahya/	/bahyin/	/bahyat/
/faḍi/ 'free'	/faḍya/	/faḍyin/	/faḍyat/
/wati/ 'ready'	/watya/	/watyin/	/watyat/

If the basic form ends in /-u/ that /-u/ changes to /-w/ before the suffix; e. g.

/ḥılu/ 'sweet'	/ḥılwa/	/ḥılwin/	/ḥılwat/
/ṣābu/ 'strong'	/ṣābwa/	---	/ṣābwat/

<sup>1</sup>No masculine plural form of this adjective has been observed in Libyan Arabic.

┌ Broken Plurals ┐

The following adjective broken plural patterns are the most common ones and are by no means all of them.

1. /FʃaLa/

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
/ʃahran/ 'staying late in the night'	/ʃhara/
/sokran/ 'drunk'	/skara/
/ʒāʃʃan/ 'hungry'	/zwaʃa/

2. /FʃaL/

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
/ʃlid/ 'thick'	/ʃlad/
/sʃir/ 'little'	/sʃar/
/bʃid/ 'far away'	/bʃad/
/dʃrif/ 'small'	/dʃraf/

3. /FuʃāLa/

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
/fāqir/ 'poor'	/fuqāra/
/šārif/ 'honest'	/šurāfa/
/ʃābit/ 'silly, stupid'	/ʃubāṭa/

4. /FʃiL/

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
/ʒdid/ 'new'	/ʒdir/
/gdim/ 'old'	/gdim/

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└

┌ Adjectives of Color and Defect ┐

In Libyan Arabic there are adjectives that refer to colors and physical or mental defects. They have the patterns /ǎFʕIL/ for the masculine singular, /FǎʕLa/ for the feminine (/Foʕa/ or /Feʕa/ for hollow roots, and /FǎʕLa/ for defective roots of the feminine).<sup>1</sup> For plural the patterns are /foʕul/ or /FiʕIL/; e.g.

Singular

/ǎtriš/ 'deaf'	/tǎrša/	/tuʀuš/	/tǎršat/
/ǎdʕim/ 'gloomy looking'	/dǎʕma/	/duʕum/	/dǎʕmat/
/ǎzriġ/ 'blue'	/zǎrga/	/zuʀuġ/	/zǎrgat/

Hollow roots

/ǎswid/ 'black'	/soda/	/sud/	/sodat/
/ǎhwil/ 'crosseyes'	/hola/	/hul/	/holat/
/ǎbyid/ 'white'	/beda/	/bid/	/bedat/

Defective roots

/ǎʕma/ 'blind'	/ʕǎmya/	/ʕimi/	/ʕǎmyat/
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<sup>1</sup>The plural pattern for defective roots, of which only one has been observed, is /Fiʕi/.

## CHAPTER VII

### NUMERALS

#### From 1 Through 10

The numbers 1 through 10 in Libyan Arabic are as follows:

/waḥid/ 'one'	/sitta/ 'six'
/tnin/ ~ /zoz/ 'two'	/säbfa/ 'seven'
/tlata/ 'three'	/tmanyā/ 'eight'
/ärbfa/ 'four'	/tisfa/ 'nine'
/xämsa/ 'five'	/fašra/ 'ten'

The word /tnin/ 'two' is basically used in compound numerals and in counting. In other contexts the word /zoz/ is used instead; e.g. /zoz wlad/ 'two boys'. Also the dual form of the noun itself may be used to indicate the two number; e.g. /wilden/ 'two boys'. When a noun follows one of the numbers three through nine (i. e. those that end in -a) the final vowel of the numeral is dropped and (if they have the same point of articulation) assimilation between the last consonant of the numeral and the first consonant of the noun takes place; e.g. /tlad-dyar/ 'three rooms', /xäms - şwani/ 'five plates'.

#### Numbers from 11 Through 19

Numbers from 11 through 19 are as follows:

/hdaš/ 'eleven'	/ärbäštaš/ 'fourteen'
/tñaš/ 'twelve'	/xämštaš/ 'fifteen'
/tulottaš/ 'thirteen'	/şuttaš/ 'sixteen'

/säbʕtaš/ 'seventeen'  
 /tʊmʊntaš/ 'eighteen'  
 /tisʕtaš/ 'nineteen'

When followed by a noun the suffix /-il/ is attached to each of these numbers;

e. g. /xämʕtašil kälb/ 'fifteen dogs'.

### Decades

Numeral decades in Libyan Arabic are as follows:

/ʕiʕrin/ 'twenty'	/sittin/ 'sixty'
/tlatin/ 'thirty'	/säbʕin/ 'seventy'
/ärbʕin/ 'forty'	/tmanin/ 'eighty'
/xämsin/ 'fifty'	/tisʕin/ 'ninety'

Numbers between 21 and 99 are expressed by phrases consisting of a units number followed by the conjunction /-w/ 'and', followed by a tens number;

e. g. /ärbʕa w ʕiʕrin/ 'twenty-four', /tmanya w tlatin/ 'thirty-eight'.

### Hundreds

The hundreds are as follows:

/miyya/ 'one hundred'	/xäms-miyya/ 'five hundred'
/miten/ 'two hundred'	/sit-miyya/ 'six hundred'
/tlat-miyya/ (/tält-miyya/) 'three hundred'	/säbʕ-miyya/ 'seven hundred'
/ärbäʕ-miyya/ 'four hundred'	/tımın-miyya/ 'eight hundred'
	/tisʕ-miyya/ 'nine hundred'

When followed by nouns these numbers (except /miten/) have the suffix -t;

e. g. /ärbäʕ-miyyät ražıl/ 'four hundred men', /sit-miyyät ḥṣan/ 'six hundred horses'.



Thousands

The thousands:

/älf/ 'one thousand'	/sıt-älaf/ 'six thousand'
/älfen/ 'two thousand'	/säbŋ-älaf/ 'seven thousand'
/tıl̄t-älaf/ 'three thousand'	/tmanyā-älaf/ 'eight thousand'
/arbäŋ-älaf/ 'four thousand'	/tıŋŋ-älaf/ 'nine thousand'
/xäms-älaf/ 'five thousand'	/ŋäŋr-älaf/ 'ten thousand'

Larger Numbers

The word for million in Libyan Arabic is /mälyun/, with the plural /mlayın/ (or /mlayın/). Both words are treated as nouns. The numbers from one million to ten million are as follows:

/mälyun/ 'one million'	/sıt-mlayın/ 'six million'
/malyunen/ (/zoz mlayın/) 'two million'	/säbŋ-mlayın/ 'seven million'
/tıat-mlayın/ 'three million'	/tımın-mlayın/ 'eight million'
/ärbäŋ-mlayın/ 'four million'	/tıŋŋ-mlayın/ 'nine million'
/xäms-mlayın/ 'five million'	/ŋäŋr-mlayın/ 'ten million'

The Ordinal Numbers

One through 12 have independent ordinal forms. Except for 'first' and 'second', the forms have either the pattern /FaŋıL/ (for third, fifth, sixth, eighth, tenth) or /Faŋäl/ (for fourth, seventh, and ninth). The ordinals are as follows:

Masculine

/ʔäwwıl/ 'first'  
/tani/ 'second'  
/talıt/ 'third'

Feminine

/ʔäwwla/  
/tanya/  
/talta/

MasculineFeminine

/rabāʕ/ 'fourth'	/rabʕa/
/xamīs/ 'fifth'	/xamsa/
/sadiṣ/ 'sixth'	/sadsa/
/sabāʕ/ 'seventh'	/sabʕa/
/tamīn/ 'eighth'	/tamna/
/tasāʕ/ 'ninth'	/tasʕa/
/ʕašīr/ 'tenth'	/ʕašra/
/ḥadiš/ 'eleventh'	/ḥadša/
/taniš/ 'twelfth'	/tanša/

No ordinal forms for numbers above 12 are used in Libyan Arabic. Instead the cardinal numbers are used.

The Fractions

Except for 'half', fractions have the pattern /FuʕāL/ (for 'fourth', seventh', and 'ninth') and /FuʕīL/ for the rest. All forms are nouns in Arabic; they are as follows:

/nuṣ/ (also /nuṣṣ/) 'half'	/suḃāʕ/ 'seventh'
/tuṭīl/ 'third'	/tuṣmīn/ 'eighth'
/ruḃāʕ/ 'fourth'	/tuṣāʕ/ 'ninth'
/xumīs/ 'fifth'	/ʕušīr/ 'tenth'
/sudiṣ/ 'sixth'	

The plural of all the fractions has the pattern /FuʕaL/; e.g. /nfaṣ/ 'halves', /rbaʕ/ 'fourths' and so on.

Fractions above tenth are indicated by mentioning the upper cardinal number followed by the preposition /ʕle/ 'on' followed by the lower cardinal of the fraction; e.g. /tīn ʕle ṣāḃʕtaš/ 'two seventeenths'.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PRONOUNS

Pronouns in Libyan Arabic are divided into independent pronouns and pronoun suffixes. Both categories include different forms for the first, second, and third persons and for the plural and singular numbers. In the third person singular both independent and suffix pronouns distinguish between masculine and feminine gender. Independent pronouns, besides, have different masculine and feminine forms for the second person singular.

The pronouns in Libyan Arabic are as follows.

#### Independent Pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
First person	/ane/ 'I'	/hne/ 'we'
Second person $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Masc.} \\ \text{Fem.} \end{array} \right.$	/inta/ 'you' /inti/ 'you'	/intum/ 'you'
Third person $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Masc.} \\ \text{Fem.} \end{array} \right.$	/huwwa/ 'he' /hiyya/ 'she'	{/humma/ 'they' <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Libyan Arabic does not have a pronoun for the dual. The plural form is used whenever more than one person or object is referred to.

Pronoun Suffixes

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
First person:	-i, -yya, -y, -ni 'me, my'	-na 'us, our'
Second person:	-ik, -k 'you, your'	-kum 'you, your'
Third person:	-äh, -h 'his, him'	-hum 'them, their'
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">{</div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div>Masc.</div> <div>Fem.</div> </div> </div>	-ha 'her'	

The suffix pronouns are attached to verbs, nouns, prepositions, and some other particles. When they are attached to verbs they are equivalent to English object pronouns; e. g. /lhägni/ is translated as 'he followed me'. When attached to nouns they are equivalent to the possessive adjectives; e. g. /hoši/ 'my house'.

Libyan Arabic does not have the neuter pronoun 'it'. Instead the masculine or feminine third person pronoun is used; e. g. /rdästäh/ 'I kicked him/it'; /rdästtha/ 'I kicked her/it'.

The alternation between -i ~ -y, -ik ~ -k, and -äh ~ -h in the pronoun suffix paradigm depends on whether the stem to which they are attached ends in a vowel or in a consonant. The suffixes -i, -ik, and -äh are affixed to stems ending in consonants, while -y, -k, and -h are suffixed to stems ending in vowels:

Stems ending in a consonant

/žebi/ 'my pocket'  
 /žebik/ 'your pocket'  
 /žebäh/ 'his pocket'

Stems ending in a vowel

/šay/ 'my dinner'  
 /šak/ 'your dinner'  
 /šah/ 'his dinner'

The pronoun suffix -ni is used with verbs, while the suffix -yya is used with some prepositions, mainly those ending in vowels; e.g.

/lgani/ 'he found me'  
 /š läyya/ 'on me'

When pronoun suffixes are used with nouns ending in -en (other than the dual ending),<sup>1</sup> the final -n is usually dropped and the suffix -yya is used for the first person singular. Also the final /e/ changes to /a/ in the first person singular; e.g.

/yden/ 'hands'

Singular

/ydäyya/ 'my hands'  
 /ydek/ 'your hands'  
 /ydeh/ 'his hands'  
 /ydeha/ 'her hands'

Plural

/ydena/ 'our hands'  
 /ydekvm/ 'your hands'  
 /ydehvm/ 'their hands'

When the suffixes are used with the prepositions /šle/ 'on', /fi/ 'in', /li/ 'for, to' the suffix -yya is used in the first person singular, with the /-e/ in /šle/ changing to /-ä/; e.g.

/š läyya/ 'on me'  
 /liyya/ 'for me, to me'  
 /fiyya/ 'in me'

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<sup>1</sup> Pronoun suffixes cannot be attached to dual nouns in Libyan Arabic.

When the suffix -i (or any vowel-initial suffix) is added to the preposition

/min/ 'from' the final -n in the preposition is doubled; e. g.

/minni/ 'from me'  
 /minnik/ 'from you'  
 /minnäh/ 'from him'

For all other prepositions the first person singular ending is -i if they end in consonants, /-y/ if they end in vowels.

There are suffixed prepositional forms that are attached to the verbs and become a part of the verb. They are as follows:

/dar-li/ 'he did for me'	/dar-lna/ 'he did for us'
/dar-lik/ 'he did for you'	/dar-lkum/ 'he did for you'
/dar-läh/ 'he did for him'	/dar-lhum/ 'he did for them'
/dar-ilha/ 'he did for her'	

The ending /-it/ of the third person feminine singular of the perfect tense becomes /-at/ before a pronoun suffix beginning with a vowel; e. g.

/ḍurḅit/ 'she hit'  
 /ḍurḅatik/ 'she hit you'  
 /ḍurḅatäh/ 'she hit him'

### Indefinite Pronouns

Libyan Arabic has only a few indefinite pronouns. Those that are commonly used, either alone or combined with each other, are as follows:

/waḥid/ 'someone'                      /waḥid ražil/ 'a man'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Notice that /waḥid/ functions as an indefinite pronoun only if it precedes a noun; if it follows it, it will function as a numeral; e. g. /waḥid ražil/ 'a man' but /ražil waḥid/ 'one man'.

/kull/ 'everyone, all'	/kull waħrd/ 'everyone'
/ħādd/ 'someone'	/ma ħādd že/ 'nobody came'
/baħd/ (/lhadd/) 'somebody'	
/ħaža/ 'something'	/žitb ħaža/ 'I brought something'
/āš ma/ 'whatever'	/āš mā ddir ma yanfāħ/ 'whatever you do is useless'
/šāy/ 'nothing'	/ma fiš šāy/ 'there is nothing'

### Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns in Libyan Arabic are the following:

/hada/ (Masc.) 'this'	/hadak(a)/ (Masc.) 'that'
/hadi/ (Fem.) 'this'	/ħadik(a)/ (Fem.) 'that'
/hadu(ma)(ya)/ (Pl.) 'these'	/haduk(a)(ya)/ (Pl.) 'those'

for the plural forms of the demonstratives a variety of the forms above are used depending on individual preference.

The demonstrative /ha/ is used sometimes in place of all the near demonstratives (masculine and feminine, singular and plural); e. g.

/ha-ssāyyara/ 'this car F'
/ha-lhoš/ 'this house M'
/ha-ššar/ 'these children'

### Interrogative Pronouns

The following interrogative pronouns are used in Libyan Arabic:

/minu/ 'who', /ās/ 'what', /ama/ 'which', /šinu/ 'what', and /giddaš/ 'how much, how many'. All these (except /šinu/) may be combined with prepositions to form compound question words; e. g.

/mfa minu/ 'with whom'
/b-aš/ 'with what'

┌ /l-ama/ 'to which' ┐  
 /b-giddaš/ 'for how much'

/aš/ 'what' is used mostly with verbal sentences where it may function as a subject, an object, or the first part of an equational sentence; e. g.

/aš žădd/ 'what is new?'  
 /aš dirt/ 'what did you do?'  
 /aš āxbarik/ 'how is everything?'

In the speech of most Libyans /aš/ is used interchangeably with /šinu/ and has the same function in the sentence.

/ama/ 'which' is often followed by a noun; e. g. /ama ktab/ 'which book'. It may function as the first element in an equational sentence or as the object of a verbal sentence; and in both cases it requires that the third person pronoun be placed immediately after it; e. g.

/ama huwwa l-mudir/ 'which one is the director?'  
 /tibbi ama huwwa/ 'which one do you want?'

/giddās/ 'how much/many' may be used as a part of an equational sentence, as a direct object, or a subject of the verb; e. g.

/giddaš is-saḥa/ 'what is the time?'  
 /giddaš xdet/ 'how much did you take?'  
 /giddaš fdul/ 'how much remained?'

### Relative Pronouns

The following are the most common relative pronouns in Libyan Arabic, with sentences illustrating their usage:

┌ 1. /illi/ 'which, who, whom' ┐



┌ It may function as a subject or object; e.g. ┐

/il-ħmar /illi/ fi-ssanya/ 'the donkey which is in the farm'  
 /il-kārhba illi šrenaha/ 'the car we bought'

2. /aš ma/ 'whatever'

/sällifni aš ma šindāk min flus/ 'lend me whatever money you have'

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## CHAPTER IX

### PARTICLES

Under this heading prepositions, interrogatives, the relative marker and conjunctions will be dealt with.

#### Prepositions

The most common prepositions in Libyan Arabic are as follows:

1. /bi -/ 'with': It has an instrumental meaning (by means of, by, with).

It cannot stand by itself in a sentence; it is prefixed to the following word; e. g.

/mšena bi-ttāyyara/ 'we went by plane'  
/ftāḥnah bi-lmiftaḥ/ 'we opened it by the key'

2. /li -/ 'to, towards, for': It also is prefixed to the following word; e. g.

/mšet li-lhoš/ 'I went to the house (home)'  
/lhoš li-ližar/ 'The house is for rent'

3. /ben/ 'between, among'

/tfahmu benhum/ 'They settled it among themselves'  
/gsāmha ben ṣ-ṣar/ 'he divided it among the children'

When a plural suffix pronoun is attached, the stem may be /ben/ or

/benat-;/ e. g.

/lbād ben(at)hum/ 'he hid among them'

┌ 4. /ʃle/ 'on, over' ┐

It may take the form of the prefix /ʃa-/ when it is followed immediately by a noun with the definite article.

/il-wārga ʃa-lmäktib/ 'the paper is on the desk'  
/sällimt ʃleha/ 'I shook hands with her'

5. /ʃän/ 'about, away from'.

This preposition is rare. Most Libyans use /ʃle/ (above) in this sense.

/hkali ʃa l-qriṣṣa/ 'he told me about the story'  
/ʃaš bfid ʃänhum/ 'he lived away from them'

6. /fi/ 'in'

/il-mudarris fi l-fäṣl/ 'The teacher is in the class'  
/libya fi afriqya/ 'Libya is in Africa'

7. /mʃa/ 'with'

/mše mʃay/ 'he went with me'  
/gʃād mʃa ʔummäh/ 'he stayed with his mother'

8. /min/ 'from'

/hwwa min surya/ 'He is from Syria'  
/šraha min xuh/ 'He bought it from his brother'

9. /fog/ 'over, on top of'

/il-ḥoṣ fog iž-žbäl/ 'The house is on top of the mountain'  
/il-ktab fog iṣ-sāndug/ 'The book is on the box'

10. /li-/ 'belongs to'. This is different in meaning from the /li-/ in number 2.

/lḥoṣ hada li-xali/ 'This house is my uncle's'

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Relative Marker and Conjunctions

Relative Marker

/illi/ 'who, that, which'

/hada l-xanıb illi xnāb s-säyyara/ 'This is the thief who stole the car'

Conjunctions

/amta ma/ }  
/kull ma/ } 'whenever'

/kull ma yzi yzurni/ 'whenever he comes he visits me'

/amta ma täfda tʃala/ 'Come whenever you have time'

/len/ }  
/lähädd ma/ } 'until'

/šrāb len/ lähädd ma skır/ 'He drank until he got drunk'

/gäbl/ 'before'

/ʔišriha gäbl l-ʔihtıfıf/ 'Buy it before the celebration'

/bäfd/ 'after'

/mšena bäfd l-ʔıztımaʃ/ 'We went after the meeting'

/milli/ 'as soon as'

/milli šuftha ʃrāftha/ 'As soon as I saw her I recognized her'

/lämma/ 'when'

/kif ma/ 'as'

/ʃamilha kif ma tʃamıl l-ʔoxrin/ 'Treat her as you treat the others'

/zäy ma/ 'like, as'

/l-genah zäy ma xällenah/ 'We found it as we left it'

/ʃle xaṭır/ }  
/lıʔanna/ } 'because'

/ma ḥdāriš ʃle xaṭır/ lıʔanna ʔımmah mrida/ 'He did not attend because his mother is sick'

/kan/ 'if'  
/lāw/

/lāw nšufāh nuḍrḅāh/ 'If I see him I will hit him'

/kan žet tālgah/ 'If you come you will find him'

/bāss/ 'but, except that'

/mšet bāss ma lget ḥādd/ 'I went but I did not find anybody'

/baš/ 'in order to, for the purpose of'

/šafir li-āmrika baš yīšri sāyyara/ 'He went to America to buy  
a car'

/gid ma/ 'no matter how/what'

/gid ma gutlah ma baš yīs māš/ 'No matter what I told him he did  
not listen'

/ḥätta/ 'even'

/ma yžiš ḥätta wkan mšenalāh/ 'He will not come even if we go to him'

/kālla ~ ama/ 'as far'

/ane nžāht, kālla/ama huwwa šgvt/ 'I passed; as for him he failed'

/lakın/ 'but'

/šaf is-sāyyara lakın ma šrahaš/ 'He saw the car but he did not  
buy it'

/la . . . wla/ 'neither . . . nor'

/la že wla štādār/ 'He neither came nor apologized'

/mādam/ 'as long as, since'

/lazım yaxıd il-qıtar mādam yvskvn bīd/ 'He has to take the  
train since he lives far away'

/šle xatır/ 'because'

/ma mšetış šle xaṭır ma šmdiš wāgt/ 'I did not go because I do  
not have time'

/w/ 'and'

/xuy w uxti kanu fi māšr/ 'My sister and brother were in Egypt'

┌ /wen ~ kull ma/ 'whenever' ┐

/wen ma yšuf bint ykällimha/ 'Whenever he sees a girl he talks to her'

/ya . . . ya/ 'either . . . or'

/ya tgäš miz ya tmši/ 'Either sit or go'

### Interrogatives

The following interrogative words are used in Libyan Arabic. They all occur at the beginning of the sentence:

/škun/ 'who

/škun xāšš/ 'Who entered?'

/škun ha-rražil/ 'Who is this man?'

/šlaš/ 'why'

/šlaš biš t s-sanya/ 'Why did you sell the farm?'

/kif(aš)/ 'how'

/kif gdär ysafir/ 'How did he manage to travel?'

/amta/ 'when'

/amta wšilt/ 'When did you arrive?'

/wen/ 'where'

/wen tuskun/ 'Where do you live?'

Under interrogatives also are included all interrogative pronouns dealt with on page 99.

PART III

SYNTAX

## CHAPTER X

### VERB STRUCTURES

The following is a brief discussion of the tenses of the verb (perfect and imperfect), verb phrases, and the function and meaning of the active participle in a sentence.

#### The Perfect Tense

The perfect tense refers to an action that was completed in the past without any specific indication as to whether it was a recent or remote past. The usage of the perfect tense is equivalent to the English simple past tense except in a few minor cases when it may correspond to an English present although the form of the verb is past; e. g.

/fhämt wälla la? - fhämt/ 'do you understand?; I understand'  
/šuftäh wälla la? - šuftäh/ 'do you see him?; I see him'

In all other cases it refers to a completed action in the past; e. g.

/hässilt xidma fi l-ħkuma/ 'I got a job with the government'  
/krtbu xäms žwabat/ 'They wrote five letters'  
/skänna žänb l-mu ř äskır/ 'We lived by the camp'



## ┌ The Imperfect Tense ┐

The imperfect tense refers to an action that has not been completed.

A verb in the imperfect may be used to refer to a habitual action, progressive action, a future action, or to a timeless statement of fact.

1. In its simple form the imperfect form of a verb can be translated as either the English present simple tense or the present progressive. In the sentence /xuy yixdim fi l-wirša/ 'my brother works/is working in the workshop', the meaning may be stating the fact that my brother works in the workshop or it may be an indication of what he is doing the moment the statement is uttered.

2. The imperfect is also used to indicate habitual behavior performed by the subject, e. g.

/nägra şafhten kull lela gäbl n-nom/ 'I read two pages before sleeping everynight'

/ygä şmız fi d-dukkan fi l-şşıyya/ 'he sits in the shop in the afternoon'

3. A verb in the imperfect may refer to an action yet to take place; an adverb indicating future time is often used with the imperfect in this case;

e. g.

/nwällilik s-saşa tnin/ 'I'll come back to you at 2 o'clock'

/yžik şudwa/ 'He'll come to you tomorrow'

4. In certain other instances, mainly in complex sentences containing dependent clauses introduced by /w/, the verb of the independent clause is

the imperfect but the meaning is past time and the implication is that of emphasizing the content of the dependent clause or calling the attention to it; e. g.

/že maši w yřtir fi ršada/ 'As he was walking he hit a rock'  
 /šafäh min bfid w yřri fi žvrtäh/ 'He saw him from a distance  
 and ran after him'

### The Active Participle

Although the position of an active participle in a sentence is that of a predicate adjective (that, of course, makes it agree with the noun or pronoun to which it refers) and the sentence is necessarily an equational sentence, it may often be translated by a verb in English. The most common usages of the active participle are as follows:

(a) Equivalent to English progressive:

/ane rabäh/ 'I'm winning'  
 /hiyya mašya/ 'she's leaving'  
 /humma gařdin/ 'they are staying'

(b) Equivalent to English future: (a future time adverb is required in this case):

/ane msafir řudwa/ 'I am leaving (will leave) tomorrow'  
 /hwwa mwälli š-šähr ž-žay/ 'he is coming back next month'

(c) Equivalent to English present perfect tense with the adverb 'already':

/ane dafäř hägha/ 'I have already paid for it'  
 /hwwa fařir min bäkri/ 'He has already had breakfast'

Under this usage also included its usage in the sense of ‘have you ever

. . . , e.g.

/šayif l-qahira?/ ‘have you (ever) seen Cairo?’

/maši lil mātħif?/ ‘have you (ever) been to the museum?’

### Verb Phrases (Auxiliaries)

A verb phrase is a combination of two or more verbs having the same subject.

Auxiliaries. The most common type of verb phrases is the sequence of the auxiliary /kan/ ‘to be’ plus a verb in the perfect or imperfect depending on the meaning intended. /kan/ and all other auxiliaries always precede the main verb in a sentence. The following /kan/ structures are distinguished:

(a) In a structure that consists of the perfect tense of /kan/ and the active participle the indication is that of an action completed in the past before the occurrence of another action also in the past. It is the past perfect meaning; e.g.

/lāmma šuftāħ kan bayāħ lħoš/ ‘when I saw him he had (already) sold the house’

/wen källimtha kanit faħra/ ‘when I talked to her she had (already) had breakfast’

/lāmma žena kanu šarbin š-šahi/ ‘when we came they had (already) drunk tea’

When the active participle of verbs involving some kind of motion, such as /že/ ‘come’, /rfāħ/ ‘lift’ and the like, is used, the structure may be interpreted as past progressive; e.g.

/wen lageth<sup>um</sup> kanu raf<sup>sin</sup>āh <sup>ʃ</sup>le ktaf<sup>um</sup>/ 'When I met them  
 they were carrying it on their shoulders'  
 /lāmma xāš<sup>šet</sup> <sup>ʃ</sup>leha kan<sup>t</sup> šadda mus/ 'When I entered she  
 was holding a knife'

(b) When the perfect form of /kan/ and the imperfect form of another verb are combined together in a sentence the result is an ambiguous structure which may be translated as past progressive action or a habitual behavior; e.g.

/k<sup>unna</sup> n<sup>š</sup>āl<sup>hu</sup> fi s-sāyyārat/ 'We were fixing/used to fix (the) cars'  
 /kan y<sup>isk</sup>r/ 'he used to drink, /was drinking'  
 /k<sup>unt</sup> n<sup>š</sup>uf fih/ 'I used to see him/I was watching him'

(c) The imperfect form of /kan/, with the suffix /-š/ attached to it in a sentence indicates that the speaker is making and seeking confirmation for a guess that he has made. It may be translated as 'couldn't it be . . .'

/yk<sup>un</sup>iš g<sup>t</sup>ā<sup>f</sup>ha h<sup>ow</sup>wa, zā<sup>f</sup>ma?/ 'couldn't it be that he cut it,  
 do you think?'  
 /yk<sup>un</sup>iš xanbinha h<sup>um</sup>ma?/ 'couldn't it be that they stole it?'

Other auxiliaries. The following verbs function as auxiliaries and combine with other verbs forming verb strings:

(1) /g<sup>ʃ</sup>ād/ 'he remained'. When it is followed by the imperfect form of the verb the meaning is one of duration of the action; e.g.

/g<sup>ʃ</sup>ād y<sup>ib</sup>ki y<sup>zi</sup> sa<sup>f</sup>ten/ 'He kept crying (for) about two hours'  
 /g<sup>ʃ</sup> du y<sup>h</sup>ādrzu li <sup>ṣ</sup>-<sup>ṣ</sup>obā<sup>h</sup>/ 'They kept chatting til the morning'

This auxiliary may also be used with the active participle:

/g<sup>ʃ</sup>ādna rag<sup>d</sup>in <sup>ṭ</sup>ul n-nhar/ 'We slept all day'

(2) The verb /be/ 'he wanted'. The peculiarity of this verb is that, in its perfect form, it never occurs in the affirmative; it has to be in the negative. In the imperfect it does. In both forms it is always followed by the imperfect form of the main verb; e. g.

/ma-baš yxälliṣ l-hutel/ 'He didn't want to pay for the hotel'  
 /ma bitš tälṣib mṣay/ 'She didn't want to play with me'  
 /tribbu tirtāddu?/ 'Do you want to have lunch?'  
 /yibbi yixdim binnay/ 'He wants to work (as) a builder'

In its imperfect form this auxiliary often implies intention to do something, e. g.

/yibbi yimši li-l mādrsa lṣam ž-žay/ 'He wants (intends) to go to school next year'  
 /yibbi yälṣib mṣa fāriq l-žamīṣa/ 'He intends to play with the university team'  
 /yibbi yišri mākina ždida/ 'He intends to buy a new machine'

(3) The verb /bde/ 'he began'. This can only be followed by the imperfect form of a verb, and means that the action is in progress; e. g.

/bdena nımši li s-sināma mārra kull ʔusbuṣ/ 'We began to go (going) to the cinema once a week'  
 /bdeṭ kull mārra nitžännib fih/ 'I started avoiding (to avoid) him every time'

(4) The verb /gdar/ 'he was able to'. This has perfect and imperfect forms and may be followed by a verb in the perfect or imperfect. When it is in the perfect and the main verb also is in the perfect the meaning is that of 'could have . . .'; e. g.

/gdārna šrena wāḥda ždida/ 'We could have bought a new one'  
 /gdārt skānt fi l-mdina/ 'You could have lived in the city'

┌ If the auxiliary is in the perfect and the main verb in the imperfect the ┘  
 meaning is that of 'was/were able to . . .'; e. g.

/gdār yžibha fi lwāqt lmonasīb/ 'He was able to bring it in  
 the appropriate time'

/gīdru ykāmlu l-mubarah/ 'They were able to finish the match'

If both verbs are in the imperfect the meaning is that of 'can'; e. g.

/yīgdir ykālīm xuḥ fi-l māwduḥ/ 'He can talk to his brother  
 about the subject'

/yīgdir yāšrāḥlhōm māwqfāh/ 'He can explain his position to them'

/nīgdir ndir illi nribbih/ 'I can do whatever I want'

(5) The motion verbs /mše/ and /že/. These indicate past tense when they are in the perfect followed by a verb also in the perfect form. They mean simple present when they themselves are imperfect and are followed by a verb in the imperfect; e. g.

/mše xāšš lī ž-žeš/ 'He went and joined the army'

/že tzāwwiž min libya/ 'He came and got married (to some girl)  
 from Libya'

/yimšu yālhdu kull yom/ 'They go horse riding everyday'

/yžu yišru fi l-ḥlib min hne/ 'They came to buy milk from here'

Other verbs of motion used in the same way include /tāš/ 'go out', /zrāg/ 'sneak out', /xāšš/ 'enter', /tlāffit/ 'turn around', and a few others that involve some kind of motion.

(6) The auxiliary /lazīm/ 'must'. This has the meaning of obligation, equivalent to English 'should, must, ought to', when it is followed by a verb in the imperfect:

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/lazim waḥid yimši yšufāḥ/ 'Someone should go and see him'  
 /lazim tkālmāḥ gābl ras š-šāḥr/ 'You should talk to him before  
 the end of the month'

When it is followed by a verb in the perfect tense the meaning is that of  
 'must have';

/lazim mše liḥāmāl/ 'He must have gone to work'  
 /lazim laga xuh/ 'He must have met his brother'

(7) The auxiliary /ma-zal/ 'still'. It indicates continuation of the  
 action and is thus translated as a progressive tense. It may be followed only  
 by the imperfect form of the verb. This verb consists of two parts; /ma/,  
 a negative particle meaning 'not' and the stem /zal/ 'vanished, disappeared'.  
 Combined they mean 'still, yet, etc.' It only occurs in its negated form  
 conjugated with the appropriate subject.

/ma zal yimši/ 'He still goes, he is still walking'  
 /tṭaliba ma zalit tixdim/ 'The student (F) is still working'

(8) The verb /ṇad/ 'he began'. It may be used in both the perfect and  
 imperfect, but may be followed only by the imperfect form of the verb; e. g.

/lāmma šuftāḥ ṇad yizri/ 'When I saw him he started running'  
 /wen ma tkālmāḥ ynuḍ yibki/ 'Whenever you talk to him he starts  
 to cry'  
 /lukan ma yṇuḍiš ydirha nbāṭṭlāḥ/ 'If he does not do it I will  
 dismiss him'  
 /baḥd ma kle nad rgād/ 'after he ate he went to sleep'

Transitive verbs take objects; intransitives do not. Some verbs may take  
 two objects; e. g.

/ʕällim wıldäh n-nžara/ 'He taught his son carpentry'  
 /ʕte lbint säyyartäh/ 'He gave the girl his car'

Others may take an object and a noun complement, e. g.

/ʕäyyin şahbak musaʕid modir/ 'He appointed your friends  
 assistant manager'

Verbs may also take complements; e. g.

/tban şʕira/ 'she looks young'  
 /yban mrid/ 'he looks sick'



## CHAPTER XI

### THE NOUN

#### Modification Structures

A noun plus a modifier is called a noun phrase. The modifier may be a demonstrative, a numeral (cardinals and ordinals), a particle, a noun or an adjective (including comparatives).

#### Demonstratives

A noun may be modified by any of the demonstratives listed on p. 99. The demonstrative often precedes the noun if it is in the form of a prefix (i. e. /ha-/ and follows if it is independent.<sup>1</sup> It also agrees with it in gender and number; e. g.

/ha-lktab mɪs bəttal/ 'This book is not bad'  
/ha-lxubza ʃxuna/ 'This bread is fresh'

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<sup>1</sup>This is not, however, an invariable order. Independent demonstrative pronouns may (rarely) occur before the noun; e. g. /hada l-wild mrid/ 'this boy is sick', /haduka l-hyās žrd/ 'Those houses are new'.

┌ /s-sirwal hada mis mtäʕʕi/ 'These trousers are not mine' ┐  
 /l-wrag haduka l-lmʕʕällim/ 'Those papers belong to the teacher'

When the noun is modified by a demonstrative the noun is necessarily definite, i. e. takes the definite article, if the demonstrative precedes the noun, and the article or a pronoun suffix if it follows the noun.

### Numerals

A cardinal numeral may modify a noun and occurs commonly before it and rarely after it.<sup>1</sup> When the definite article or a demonstrative is to be added to the phrase the article is attached to the numeral itself and the demonstrative precedes it. If an adjective is to be added to modify the noun, it is placed at the end of the whole phrase; e. g.

/xäms krahib/ 'five cars'  
 /l-xäms krahib/ 'the four cars'  
 /ha-l-xäms krahib l-kbar/ 'these ten big cars'

The numeral /waḥid/ 'one' always occurs after the noun it modifies and is, therefore, an exception; e. g.

/ktab waḥid/ 'one book'  
 /dar wāḥda/ 'one room'

Ordinal numbers modify nouns and occur before or after the noun they modify if it is singular but only after it if it is plural. When the ordinal occurs before, it has the article, and the noun does not. Ordinals agree with the

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<sup>1</sup>When numerals occur after the nouns they modify, they agree with them in gender and number.

nouns they modify in gender, number, and definiteness when they follow them but they are in the masculine singular if they precede, regardless of the gender of the noun; e. g.

/l-mra r-rabʕa/ } 'the fourth woman'  
 /r-rabʕ mra/ }  
 /d-durʒat r-rabʕat/ 'the fourth steps'  
 /t-tullab l-äwlin/ 'the first students'

### Particles

The following particles function as noun modifiers. Some of them may have more than one function and may have been listed previously under a different grammatical category.

(a) The particle /häłba/ 'much, many, very'. When it modifies a noun it may occur before it or after it and means 'much, a lot of'. The noun must be a collective or mass noun.<sup>1</sup>

/häłba nas/ } 'a lot of people'  
 /nas häłba/ }  
 /ʕukkur häłba/ 'too much sugar'

(b) The particle /šwäyya/ 'little, few'. It modifies nouns and precedes them. When it is annexed to a noun the final /a/ is replaced by the suffix /-it/.

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<sup>1</sup>Including comparative adjectives in which case the particle follows the comparative adjective; e. g. /aṭwıl häłba/ 'a lot taller', /ʔäsmın häłba/ 'a lot fatter'.

/šwäyyit fähm/ 'a little understanding'  
 /šwäyyit mīḥ/ 'a little (bit of) salt'  
 /šwäyyit bnat/ 'few girls'

(c) The particle /ama/ 'which, what'. It modifies a noun and occurs immediately before it. The noun it modifies is necessarily indefinite; e. g.

/ʕtak ama ḥṣan?/ 'Which horse did he give you?'  
 /ama māḍrsa?/ 'what school, which school?'  
 /ama blad?/ 'which, what country?'

(d) The particle /kull/ 'each, every, all'. It modifies a noun and precedes it: e. g.

/kull ʔustad/ 'every professor'  
 /kull māžmuʕa/ 'each group'  
 /kull l-bant/ 'all the girls'

If it is to be placed after the noun it modifies, which is quite possible, a pronoun suffix referring to the noun is attached to it and the noun itself becomes definite. In this position it means 'all' or 'the whole'; e. g.

/l-ʕela kullha/ 'The whole family'  
 /l-lāžna kullha/ 'The whole committee'

### Annexion Structures

An annexion structure, in its simplest form, is a noun phrase consisting of two nouns in which the first noun is modified by the second. It may be simple or complex depending on the number of elements involved. It exceeds three constituents only rarely. The two-element annexion is the most common.

Simple Annexion

The simple annexion has two elements: the first term, which may be a noun or an adjective and the second term which may be a noun or a pronoun (usually demonstrative pronoun). The first term never has the definite article and cannot take a pronoun suffix, although in terms of meaning it may be definite. The second may be definite or indefinite and can take a pronoun suffix;

/kāl̄b s-suw̄wag/ 'the driver's dog'  
 /srir l-bint/ 'the girl's bed'  
 /hoš kinnas/ 'a garbage-man's house'  
 /dārbit āfma/ 'a blind man's hit'

When the first term is modified by an adjective (or any other element functioning like an adjective), that adjective is placed at the end of the whole structure; e. g.

/miftah̄ darna l- ʔābyd̄/ 'the white key of our room'  
 /sāyyarīt l-mudir l-ḥāmra/ 'the director's red car'

If the two terms of the annexion are of the same gender an ambiguity may result; e. g.

/wuld žarna s-sʕir/ 'our neighbor's small boy/our small neighbor's boy'  
 /dukkān xuy l-kbir/ 'my eldest brother's shop/my brother's big shop'

The first term of a simple annexion may be an adjective (or an active participle functioning as an adjective) in which case the whole structure functions like an adjective; e. g.

/kbir š-šdug/ 'big cheeked'  
 /kasāḥ r-ṛaṣ/ 'hard-headed'

The second term may be a demonstrative pronoun in a less common structure; e. g.

/ḥda ʕit hada/ 'this one's merchandise'  
 /ṭaṣit hadi/ 'this one's (F) glass'

### Complex Annexion

A complex annexion consists of three (or rarely more) terms of which the middle element is called the 'middle term'. It functions as a second term of the first and as a first-term for the third. In such a structure only the last term may take the definite article or a pronoun suffix; e. g.

/hoš wild n-nižžar/ 'the carpenter's son's house'  
 /ḥkayit xanib š-šānta/ 'the suitcase thief's story'  
 /māwduʕ hižrat l-bādu/ 'the subject of beduin migration'

Only rarely does a four-element structure occur; e. g.

/ḥkayit wāqf tāḍāxxul l- ʔāžanib/ 'the story of stopping foreign intervention'  
 /ṭlag bint wild ʕāmmāh/ 'the divorce of his cousin's daughter'

### /mtaʕ/-Construction

One structure that is considered similar in meaning to annexion is introduced by the particle /mtaʕ/ 'belonging to' between the terms of the annexion. This particle may be used in its independent form or as a stem for a pronoun suffix. In both cases it indicates possession; e. g.

/l-mäktib mtaʃ l-mudir/ 'the director's office'  
 /l-ḥšan mtaʃi/ 'my horse'

There is no difference in meaning between the direct annexion and the construction using /mtaʃ/. As a matter of fact many structures of the first type may be put together in the second type; e. g.

/ärd l-ḥkuma/  
 /l-ärd mtaʃ l-ḥkuma/ 'the government's land'

In a /mtaʃ/-structure, however, the first element may or may not take the definite article (e. g. /ärd mtaʃ ḥkuma/ 'a government's land') while in the direct annexion the first element never takes the article. When /mtaʃ/ is used in its independent form it occurs between the two nouns (or noun phrases); e. g.

/l-wrag mtaʃ l-muḥändis/ 'the engineer's papers'  
 /l-ḥurka l-kbira mtaʃ žarna/ 'our neighbor's big robe'  
 /l-ḥut mtaʃ l-mmäyya l-ḥilwa/ 'sweet water fish'

### The Vocative /ya/

The particle /ya/ is used with proper nouns and nouns that indicate titles or kinship relations. It is a form of calling the attention of the person spoken to; e. g.

/tʃala ya ʃli gäʃmız/ 'Hey, Ali, come and sit'  
 /ya ʔaxx mın fädlik ma d-däxxmıř/ 'Brother, please don't smoke'  
 /ya säyyırd hada mämnuʃ/ 'Sir, this is prohibited'

Use of /nāfs/ and /ruh/

The nouns /nāfs/ and /ruh/ ‘self, soul, character’ combined with a possessive pronoun suffix function like English reflexive pronouns; e. g.

/gtāl nāfsāh/ ‘He killed himself’  
 /rme ruhāh/ ‘He threw himself down’  
 /hurmit nafšha/ ‘She deprived herself (of)’

Use of /(w)žud/ and /ʕen/

The nouns /(w)žud/ ‘character, personality’ and /ʕen/ (literally means ‘eye’ but the implication is that of the whole character) preceded by the preposition /b-/ ‘with may be used in the sense of ‘personally or in person’; e. g.

/žani huwwa bžudāh/ ‘He came to me in person’  
 /šuftāh huwwa bʕenāh/ ‘I saw him in person’

The Adjective

Adjectives as Modifiers

Adjectives are placed after the nouns they modify and agree with them in gender, number, and definiteness as we will see below under Agreement.

If the noun is definite the adjective is definite; e. g.

/l- ʔātat l-gdim/ ‘the old furniture’  
 /l-muwaddfa ž-ždida/ ‘the new (F) employee’  
 /ʔārdna š-šīra/ ‘our small land’

If the noun is indefinite the adjective is indefinite too; e. g.



/bnaya fāxma/ 'a luxurious building'  
 /mmāyya ndifa/ 'clean water'

### Comparative Adjectives

The comparative forms are used in superlative usages in many different ways. One is when they occur followed by a noun to which they are attached in an annexion relationship; e. g.

/ākбір hutel fi l-mdina/ 'the biggest hotel in the city'  
 /āṣṣīr waḥīd fi l-māžmuʿa/ 'the youngest one in the group'  
 /āžmīl bint fi l-mādrsa/ 'the prettiest girl in the school'

Another way of indicating the superlative is by attaching the definite article to a regular adjective and placing an independent pronoun, agreeing with the subject, before it; e. g.

/säyyarti hıyya l-mliḥa/ 'my car is the best'  
 /ʕli huwwa l-kbir/ 'Ali is the eldest'  
 /l-bint hıyya ṣ-ṣīra/ 'the girl is the youngest'

Still a third way of making superlative is by using the comparative form of the adjective followed by a definite plural noun; e. g.

/xuh āḥsm r-rıżżala/ 'his brother is the best of men'  
 /faṭma hıyya ākbır l-bnat/ 'Fatma is the eldest of the girls'  
 /humma ašżaṣ l-żunud/ 'they are the bravest (of soldiers)'

### Comparatives as Modifiers

When a comparative modifies a noun it either precedes it or follows it. If the comparative precedes it is normally indefinite and constitutes with its

┌ noun an annexion structure. The meaning of such a structure is that of a ┐  
superlative, e. g.

/ăflăḥ wild/ 'the cleverest boy'  
/ăwṣır dărs/ 'the most difficult lesson'

If the noun is made definite (and this is less common in Libyan Arabic) it has to be changed into plural and the meaning will be that of superlative of excellence, i. e. showing the excellence of a certain thing among other equals.

When the comparative follows, the noun modified is often indefinite; e. g.

/ṣuda ägṣır/ 'a shorter stick'  
/buḡra äsmın/ 'a fatter cow'  
/flus äktır/ 'more money'

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## CHAPTER XII

### AGREEMENT

Adjectives agree with the nouns they modify; a verb agrees with its subject, and a pronoun agrees with its referent. This syntactic relationship is normally called agreement. Agreement involves not only considerations of gender and number, but other considerations as well.

#### Nouns and Adjectives

Adjectives agree in certain ways with nouns in gender, number, and definiteness. If the noun is masculine singular it takes a masculine singular adjective; if it is feminine singular it takes a feminine singular adjective. In Libyan Arabic, as in all other dialects and in Standard Arabic, the adjective follows the noun it modifies; e. g.

/dʊkkan ʃɪr/ 'small shop'  
/xeʃ rgig/ 'thin string'  
/roʃɪn gdim/ 'old window'  
/gaʃa wasʃa/ 'wide yard (F.)'  
/xɪʦa mliha/ 'good plan (F.)'

If the noun is dual (feminine or masculine, human or nonhuman) the adjective is in the broken plural form if it has one; e. g.

/daren kbar/ 'two big rooms'  
/kursiyyen ʃah/ 'two strong chairs'  
/ktaben humur/ 'two red books'

If the adjective has no broken plural form, however, the feminine sound plural form of the adjective is used with the dual; e. g.

/nagten šarfāt/ 'two old female camels'  
 /kālmtēn gwiyyāt/ 'two strong words'  
 /šāfḥten mīlyānāt/ 'two full pages'  
 /māktben faḍyāt/ 'two empty (vacant) offices'

If the noun is plural and has nonhuman referents the adjective is feminine (singular or plural; both are heard) or broken plural; e. g.

/brarik kbar/ 'big huts'  
 /radywat ždīd/ 'new radios'  
 /mdaris gdīma/ 'old schools'  
 /dyar mīlyānāt/ 'full rooms'

If the noun is masculine plural with human referents it takes masculine plural or broken plural adjectives. If the noun is feminine plural with human referents it takes feminine plural adjectives or broken plural adjectives; e. g.

/fāllaḥin naṣṭīn/ 'energetic farmers'  
 /wlad ṭwal/ 'tall boys'  
 /bāwwabin rāsmīyyīn/ 'official janitors'  
 /xīddamat sman/ 'fat maids'  
 /ṭbībat falḥāt/ 'clever doctors'  
 /bnat kbar/ 'big girls'

Comparative forms do not agree with the noun they modify. They are invariable in form; e. g.

/l-mādrsa akbīr mīn l-mālīf/ 'The school is bigger than the stadium'  
 /l-bnat aṣṣūr mīn l-ulad/ 'The girls are younger than the boys'  
 /l-ḥyaš awšāš mīn l-villat/ 'The houses are wider than the villas'

Definiteness

A noun is considered definite if:

- a. It is a proper noun; e. g. /maḥammīd/, /salāḥ/, etc.
- b. It has the definite article /il/<sup>1</sup> attached to it, e. g. /il-ḡāw/ 'the weather', /il-ḡālṭa/ 'the mistake'.
- c. It has a pronoun suffix attached to it, e. g. /ktabi/ 'my book' /dukkaniḵ/ 'your shop', etc.
- d. It is a first term of an annexion construction the second term of which is definite by means of any of the above-mentioned ways, e. g.

/dukkān ṣalāḥ/ 'Salah's shop'  
 /dukkān ṣādiqāḥ/ 'His friend's shop'  
 /dukkān il-mra/ 'The woman's shop'

An adjective modifying a definite noun is made definite by attaching the definite article to it; e. g.

/tunis il-xāḡdra/ 'Green Tunisia'  
 /il-māḡḥif t-tarixi/ 'the historical museum'  
 /sirwalāḥ ḡ-ḡdid/ 'his new trousers'  
 /hoṣ il-mra ḡ-ḡdid/ 'the woman's new house'

When the adjective functions as a predicate of an equational sentence, it takes no definite article regardless of whether the noun (or pronoun) it refers to in the subject is definite or indefinite; e. g.

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<sup>1</sup>Collectives are also treated as masculine singulars or feminine singular, and pronouns and verbs agree accordingly.

┌ /il-gāhwa murrā/ 'The coffee is bitter'  
 /ane mriḍ/ 'I am sick' ┐

### Pronouns and Verbs

There is no distinction in gender in the first person pronoun; gender can only be understood from the context; e. g.

/ane žăṣṣan/ 'I am hungry (M)'  
 /ane žăṣṣana/ 'I am hungry (F)'  
 /hne žăṣṣanin/ 'We (M) are hungry'  
 /hne žăṣṣanat/ 'We (F) are hungry'

If the first person plural pronoun includes males and females it is always treated as masculine.

A clue to whether the speaker is a male or a female is the form of the modifier used with the pronoun or noun. There is a distinction in number, of course, between first person singular and the first person plural, where the first refers only to the speaker and the second refers to more than one (including the speaker) of either sex.

The second person pronoun has feminine or masculine, singular or plural forms depending on the sex and number of person(s) addressed. The plural form is used to refer to more than one of either sex; the singular refers only to one person.

/inta bātāl/ 'you (M) are a champion'  
 /inti māžnuna/ 'you (F) are crazy'  
 /intum irtkällmu ṣārbi/ 'do you (Pl.) speak Arabic?'

In both the first and second persons if the pronouns are joined together by /w/ 'and' to function as a subject in a sentence, the verb is usually in the third person plural; e. g.

/ane w intum nälǧbu karṭa/ 'I and you (Pl.) play cards'  
 /inti w hne b-nimšu lmăṣr/ 'you (F) and we will go to Egypt'

In the third person if the subject is feminine singular the pronoun that refers to it, and also the verb, are in the feminine singular; if the subject is masculine singular, they will be in the masculine singular, e. g.

/lbnt tzăwwžit suwwag/ 'The girl got married to a driver'  
 /xalti zarit măṣr/ 'My aunt visited Egypt'  
 /l-bab nḥăli/ 'The door opened'  
 /lhṣan tla ǧ bărra/ 'The horse went out'

If the subject is plural or dual with human referents, the verb (and the pronoun) is plural; if it does not have human referents, the verb is either plural or feminine singular; e. g.

/žuna säyyarten mǧăbyat/ 'We received two car loads'  
 /l-biban nkvsru/ 'The doors broke'  
 /l-?ăxbar tulfıt fi l-blad/ 'The news spread in the country'  
 /l-mădarıs ŝăkkrıt bākri/ 'The schools closed early'

## CHAPTER XIII

### SENTENCE TYPES

Sentences in Libyan Arabic may be divided into simple, compound, and complex. The first consists of one independent clause; the second of two or more independent clauses joined together with a conjunction; the third of two or more clauses of which only one is independent, the others subordinate.

Simple sentences may be subdivided into equational sentences, verbal sentences, and topic and comment sentences. Each of these subdivisions has characteristics that distinguish it from others.

#### The Simple Equational Sentence

A declarative equational sentence consists of a subject and a verbless predicate in juxtaposition. The subject slot may be filled by a definite noun (with or without modifiers), a pronoun or a demonstrative. The predicate may be a noun, a pronoun, an adjective, an adverb, or a prepositional phrase. There is no linking copula between the two parts but it is implied in the semantics of the sentence; e. g.

/lḥṣan sʕir/ 'the horse is young'

/š-šebani mištažāf/ 'the old man is not feeling well'

/hada wildi/ 'this is my son'

/hadi hyya/ 'this is it/she'



In a simple equational sentence the subject comes first except when the sentence begins with an interrogative word, or when the predicate is a preposition with a pronoun suffix attached to it; e. g.

/minu l-ʃris/ 'who is the groom?'  
 /šinu ha-ddāwša/ 'what is this noise?'  
 /mʃak xāms nfar/ 'five persons are with you'  
 /fiha sit dyar/ 'It has six rooms'

### The Verbal Sentence

A declarative verbal sentence is one that contains a verb. It may also contain an expressed subject, an object, and various modifiers. If not expressed, the subject may be indicated by the inflection of the verb; as a matter of fact, a verbal sentence may consist of only one word, i. e. a verb in which the subject is signaled by inflection and an optional object, in the form of a pronoun suffix, attached to it, e. g.

/ʃzāmtha/ 'I invited her'  
 /lāzzuhum/ 'They sent them out'

If the subject is expressed, it may be a noun or pronoun or a combination of a noun or pronoun plus the inflection of the verb; e. g. /l-wild (hwwa) drāb l-kālb/ 'the boy hit the dog'. The subject may precede or follow the verb; e. g.

/tʊlʃu n-nsawin/ 'The women got out'  
 /n-nsawin tʊlʃu/

If the subject is a pronoun it receives primary stress and has the meaning

of emphasis and contrast, e. g.

/ħumma lɾɿbu l-kura/ 'They played football (not the others)'  
 /ħuwwa hrāb mɿl-ħābs/ 'He escaped from jail (not others)'

### Sentence Negation

Sentence negation in Libyan Arabic is expressed by attaching prefixes and/or suffixes or by introducing certain negation particles. An equational sentence is negated by introducing the particle /mɿš/ 'is not' between the subject and the predicate; e. g.

/l-žāw mɿš hɿlu/ 'the weather is not nice'  
 /l-ħos mɿš kbir/ 'the house is not big'

A verbal sentence is negated by prefixing /ma/ and suffixing /-š/ to the verb if it ends in a vowel and /-ɿš/ if it ends in a consonant.

/ma-ṭlāšɿš bārra/ 'I didn't go out'  
 /ma-yušrubiš fi l-gāhwa/ 'he doesn't drink coffee'  
 /ma mšāš li-lħāfla/ 'he did not go to the party'

In place of, or together with, the suffix /-š/ other particles such as /šer/, /illa/, /kan/ may be used with verb forms. In this case they will mean 'nothing but, only' and they are often interchangeable; e. g.

/ma-šrenaš illa waħid/ 'we only bought one'  
 /ma-kāllimɿš šer l-mra/ 'he only spoke to the woman'  
 /ma-tāšrifiš kan l-mudir/ 'she only knows the manager'

The prefix /ma-/ may be combined with other elements to express negation in different ways; e. g.

/ma-ža(š) hədd/ 'nobody came'  
 /ma-lgaš haža/ 'he found nothing, he didn't find anything'

If the verb has an auxiliary, the prefix and the suffix are attached to the auxiliary, not to the main verb; e. g.

/ma-ʃumriš rgəšt/ 'I never danced'  
 /ma-yibbiš yurgud/ 'he doesn't want to sleep'  
 /ma-yigdruš yugʃdu/ 'they can't stay'

If the verb form is imperative the second person (singular or plural) form of the imperfect tense of that form is used in negation; e. g.

<u>Imperative</u>	<u>Negative</u>
/ʔimšu/ 'Go (Pl.)!'	/matimšuš/ 'Don't go (Pl.)!'
/ʔugʃud/ 'Stay!'	/matugʃudiš/ 'Don't stay!'
/kuli/ 'Eat (F.)!'	/matakliš/ 'Don't eat (F.)!'

In rare examples when the prefix-suffix combination is attached to prepositions and adverbs, the helping vowel /i/ is added to the suffix /š/ and the /š/ becomes doubled, e. g.

/ma fiš haža/ 'There is nothing'  
 /ma fišši šəy/ 'There is nothing in it'  
 /l-het ma ʃlešši šəy/ 'The wall has nothing on it'  
 /l-məktib ma wrašši šəy/ 'The desk has nothing behind it (in its behind)'

A sentence containing the particle /ʃindi/ 'at, to have' may be negated by either attaching the /ma-š/ combination or by introducing the negative particle /miš/ and in each case it has a different meaning, e. g.

/l-flus miš ʃindi/ 'I don't have the money (somebody else may have it)'  
 /ma ʃindiš flus/ 'I don't have money (at all)'

### Interrogation

Questions are formed by either: (a) rising intonation, or by (b) using a question word, i. e. by using one of the interrogative pronouns or adverbs; e. g.

/smāʃt l-ḥkaya?/ 'Did you hear the story?'  
 /amta ḥāwɪltu ?/ 'When did you move?'  
 /šmu ḥāṣṣil?/ 'What did he get?'

Questions that are made by rising intonation usually require a 'yes-no' type of answer. Those made by introducing a question word are answered by giving a specific body of information. The interrogative word (or phrase) is usually placed at the beginning of the sentence, although there are instances where it occurs at the end, e. g.

/žet mʃa škun ?/ 'who did you come with?'  
 /šretha bgiddaš ?/ 'you bought it for how much?'

### The Topic-Comment Sentence

A topic-comment sentence is one that consists of two parts: a topic, usually a noun, pronoun, or a demonstrative, and a comment, normally an equational or verbal sentence, in which there is a pronoun referring back to the topic, serving as a comment on the thing talked about. Examples in which the comment is a verbal sentence:

/d-dukkan, šakkirtāh min zman/ 'I closed the shop a long time ago'  
 /ḥne, ma nigdruš nimšu/ 'we cannot go'  
 /hada/ ma nthāmlaš/ 'I cannot tolerate this'

In these examples the topics are placed at the beginning of the sentences and separated by a pause from the verbal sentences that serve as comments for those predated topics. Also the topics correspond to the underlined pronouns in the comment sentences. Examples in which comment is an equational sentence:

/žarna, xuh mriḍ/ 'our neighbor's brother is sick'  
 /Ali, ʔummāh mūdārrsa/ 'Ali's mother is a teacher'

The topic-comment sentence can be freely negative, passive, imperative, and interrogative. It is treated as any other verbal sentence.

#### Compound Sentences

A compound sentence is one that consists of two independent clauses joined by a conjunction. The clauses are independent in the sense that if the conjunction is removed each clause can stand as a major sentence; e. g.

/yḥibb l-bint lakm ma-yigdirš yitzāwwižha/  
 'He loves the girl but he can't marry her'

/tsällif flus mīl-bānk w šre sāyyara/  
 'He borrowed money from the bank and bought a car'

The two clauses joined together in a compound sentence may be only two words, each with the subject signaled by inflection and the object (if any) attached to it in the form of a suffix; e. g.

/šafni lakm tžännrbtāh/ 'He saw me but I ignored him'

## Complex Sentences

A complex sentence is one that consists of two or more clauses one of which is independent and the others dependent or subordinate. The dependent clause may function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

### Noun Clauses

A noun clause is one that does the work of a single noun in a sentence. It may function as a subject, as an object, or as an object of a preposition (usually /illa/ 'except'). The conjunctions that introduce a noun clause are: /kawn-/ followed by a pronoun suffix,<sup>1</sup> and /illi/ 'that who, which'. /kawn-/ cannot be left out in a sentence while /illi/ may be when its clause functions as an object; e. g.

As a subject'

/illi žibtāh ma sāddiš/ 'What you brought was not enough'  
 /illi yḥāṣṣlāh yvṣrfāh/ 'Whatever he gets he spends'  
 /kawnāh mrvḍ hada miš ṣvdr/ 'that he got sick is not an excuse'

As an object:

/nset kawḥa mitzāwža/ 'I forgot that she is married'  
 /smāṣt illi ḥuwwa yixnib/ 'I heard that he steals (he is a thief)'  
 /nāhsab(āh) l-ḥoš nbaṣ/ 'I thought the house was sold'

If the verb takes two objects only the second object can be a clause; e. g.

/ṣāllim wildāh yṣāllāh l-krahīb/ 'He taught his son how to fix (he fixes) cars'.

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<sup>1</sup>The pronoun usually agrees with the subject of the clause.

As an object of preposition:

/gulli äyy haža illa l-ħoš nbaʕ/ 'tell me anything except (that) the house was sold'

/šaddigt kull šäyy illa ħkayit buh mat/ 'I believed everything except that his father died'

A noun clause may function as an object with no conjunction introducing it;

e. g.

/smäʕt ş-şar yälʕbu/ 'I heard the children playing'

In this sentence the word /ş-şar/ functions not only as an object of the verb /smäʕt/ but also as a topic for the clause /yälʕbu/ as well.

The conjunction /illi/, when used to introduce the noun clause, usually specifies the thing talked about. It may, however, be used to indicate general matters; e. g.

/illi yʕiš ya ma yšuf/ 'he who lives sees a lot'

/illi yħibbik ħibbäh/ 'Love the one who loves you'

A different kind of noun clause is the interrogative. Interrogative noun clauses are those that are introduced by interrogative pronouns or adverbs. All the pronouns and adverbs listed on pages 99 and 106 may introduce such clauses; e. g.

/ma ʕräʕtış kif ttärbgit/ 'I did not know how it exploded'

/kan trbbiha gulli gıddas tädfäʕ/ 'If you want it tell me how much you want to pay'

/tmännetäh šräħli ama wäħda/ 'I wish he had explained to me which one'

A yes-no question may be incorporated into a sentence as a subordinate

clause by introducing the conjunction /kan . . . wälla la/ which translates as 'whether or not', e. g.

/ma-ndriš kan hällha wälla la/ 'I don't know if he opened it or not'  
 /lazim näřrfu kan xdahum wälla la/ 'we have to know whether he took them or not'

In some situations the first part of the conjunction (i. e. /kan/) is left out and only /wälla la/ is used; e. g.

/ma galitliš tıbbiha wälla la/ 'She didn't tell me (whether) she wants it or not'

### Adjectival Clauses

Adjectival clauses are mainly relative clauses modifying a nominal in the independent clause and containing a pronoun (or a verb) referring back to that nominal and agreeing with it. Adjectival clauses are introduced by the relative pronoun /illi/ 'that, who, whom, which',<sup>1</sup> e. g.

/r-ražil illi yuskın hne mat/ 'The man who lives here died'  
 /šäddu l-xanıb illi xnäb s-sařa/ 'They arrested the thief who stole the watch'

If the noun modified by the adjectival clause is indefinite the relative clause is not usually introduced by /illi/; e. g.

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<sup>1</sup>When the clause is introduced by /illi/ it is necessarily of the defining type, i. e. specifies what is talked about. Incidentally /illi/ here is the same as that which introduces the noun clause but here it has a defining function.



/nibbi moṭu timši mīten kilo/ 'I want a motorcycle (that) runs  
two hundred kilometers'

/ndāwwir fi kundra tʃiṣ ḥālba/ 'I am looking for a pair of  
shoes that lives long'

### Adverbial Clauses

An adverbial clause is one that modifies the verb of the main clause. It may be an adverbial clause of time, manner, reason or place, depending on the type of conjunction used.

(a) Clause of time. The conjunctions are as follows: (the particle /ma/ following many of them is close in meaning to the English 'ever' in whenever, whatever, etc. The conjunctions may be used with or without /ma/): /amta ma/ 'whenever', /kullma/ 'whenever', /len/ 'until', /liḥādd ma/ 'until', /gābl/ 'before', /bāʃd/ 'after', /mādam/ 'as long as', /milli/ 'as soon as', /lāmma/ 'when'. Some of these conjunctions are synonymous and interchangeable. Interchangeability is indicated below by the alternation sign ~, e. g.

/nsafru amta ma dži zoṣti/ 'We will travel when my wife comes'

/kull ma yakil yomrud/ 'Whenever he eats he gets sick'

/ražena len(-liḥādd)ma žu kullhom/ 'We waited until they  
all came'

/šretha gābl ma tišri l-ḥoš/ 'I bought it before she bought  
the house'

/šrābtha bāʃd ma tʃāššet/ 'I drank it after I had supper'

/mādam ma mšaš lazim ykun mriḍ/ 'As long as (since) he  
didn't go he must be sick'

/milli šuftāh ʃrāftāh/ 'As soon as I saw him I recognized him'

(b) Clauses of manner. The conjunctions are: /kif(ma)/ 'as',  
/zäy(ma)/ 'like'. These two conjunctions are interchangeable, e.g.

/žre zäy ma(~ kif ma)yizri l-ḥṣan/ 'He ran like a horse (as the  
horse runs)

/dar kif ma(~ zäy ma)ḡunnaläh/ 'He did as we told him (to do)'

(c) Clauses of reason. The conjunctions are: /šle xaṭir/ 'because',  
/li ʔänna/ 'because', e.g.

/räwwäh šle xaṭir kämmil šuḏläh/ 'He went home because he  
finished his work'

/šḡvt šle xaṭir ma xdäs l-imtiḥan/ 'He failed because he didn't  
take the exam'

/baḡha li ʔännäh ma ḡdärš ysugha/ 'He sold it because he  
couldn't drive it'

/ḡdärt l-mḡhadra li ʔännha mḡhimma/ 'I attended the lecture  
because it is important'

(d) Clauses of place. These are introduced by the conjunction /wen ma/  
'where'.<sup>1</sup>

/lgaha wen ma ḡatṭha/ 'he found it where he (had) put it'

/lwahid yḡiš wen ma yälga rizḡäh/ 'One lives wherever he  
finds his living.'

### Conditional Clauses

A conditional clause consists, in Libyan Arabic, of two parts: the  
main clause, usually the one that includes the conditional particle, and the

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<sup>1</sup>This is an overlapping in the usage of the conjunction /wen/. It may  
be used in the sense of 'when', e.g. /wen ma nšufah nsallim šleh/ 'whenever  
I see him I greet him'; or in the sense of 'where' as in /mšetläh wen ma  
lyixdim/ 'I went to where he works'.

result clause, the one that tells what the result would be, had that condition been fulfilled.

The conditional particles that introduce the conditional clause are: /kan/, /lukan ~ wkan/ and /lăw/, the last less common. They all mean 'if'.

Although the determination of whether the condition indicated is real or unreal can only be achieved by understanding the overall context. The following generalizations hold to a certain extent for Libyan Arabic, although, admittedly, they are not invariable.

Conditional clauses may indicate unreal (impossible to fulfill) conditions or real conditions (those that are possible to fulfill). Clauses expressing unreal conditions are introduced by /kan/ and /lukan/ (which is sometimes abbreviated as /wkan/); those expressing real condition by /lăw/.

Unreal condition. This is indicated in Libyan Arabic by putting the verbs of the main clause and the result clause in the perfect tense and introducing the particle /ra/ plus a pronoun suffix<sup>1</sup> before the verb of the result. This particle has the meaning 'would/might have', e. g.

/lukan žani rani ŧtetăh flus/ 'If he had come to me I would have given him money'

/wkan mše rahu haşşilha/ 'If he had gone he would have gotten it'

/kan smăŧha rahu galli/ 'If he had heard it he would have told me'

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<sup>1</sup>Or /kan/ plus a pronoun suffix.

┌ Real condition. This is indicated by the introduction of /lǎw/. The ┐  
 verb of the main clause may be in the perfect or imperfect but the verb of  
 the result is necessarily in the imperfect. In this case the clause refers to  
 a present or future condition depending on the context; e. g.

/lǎw tži nǎŕtihalık/ 'if you come I'll give it to you'  
 /lǎw ma žaš nbiŕha/ 'if he does not come I'll sell it'

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