

علم الصرف

Arabic terminology



Arabic Terms

The following are some of the Arabic terms used frequently in this book. It would be advisable to learn them thoroughly as they are frequently used throughout the book.

Term	Meaning
فتحة	A diacritical point — denoting the sound of ‘a’.
ضمة	A diacritical point - — denoting the sound of ‘u’.
كسرة	A diacritical point - — denoting the sound of ‘i’.
سكون ، جزم	A diacritical point - — that serves the purpose of joining two letters in pronunciation
مفتوح	A letter having a fathah, e.g. (ف)
مضموم	A letter having a dammah, e.g. (ض)
مكسور	A letter having a kasrah, e.g. (ك)
ساكن ، مجزوم	A letter having a sukûn or jazm, e.g. (س)
حركة	The three diacritical points, fathah dammah and kasrah are each called a harakah
متحرك	A letter having a harakah, e.g. (ف)

فاء الكلمة	The first root letter of a word, also referred to as consonant or radical, e.g. the (ف) of (فَتَحَ)
عين الكلمة	The second root letter of a word, e.g. the (ت) of (فَتَحَ)
لام الكلمة	The third root letter of a word, e.g. the (ح) of (فَتَحَ)
صيغة	Word-form denoting the number, gender and mood of the verb
أبواب	(أبواب) is the plural of (باب) which refers to a category of verbs belonging to one class. The first verb of the perfect tense (الماضي) and the imperfect tense (المضارع), are used to indicate the diacritical points of the alphabets of the verbs.

The Types of Words

Term	Meaning	Example
كَلِمَةٌ	word	كِتَابٌ
اِسْمٌ	noun	رَجُلٌ
فَعْلٌ	verb	فَعَلَ
حَرْفٌ	particle – it is dependent on either an (اسم) or (فعل) in conveying its meaning	مِنْ

With regards to meaning and tense, a verb is of three types:

Term	Meaning	Example
الماضي	Indicates the occurrence of an action in the past tense. It is referred to as the perfect tense in English.	فَعَلَ - He did.
المضارع	Indicates the occurrence of an action in the present or future tense. It is referred to as the imperfect tense in English.	يَفْعَلُ - He is doing or he will do.
الأمر	a command	افْعَلْ - You do.

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Term	Meaning	Example
اللازم	Intransitive – does not require an object	يَمْشِي - He is walking.
المتعدي	Transitive - requires an object	يَفْتَحُ الْبَابَ - He is opening the door.

Positive and Negative

Term	Meaning	Example
إثبات	positive	يَفْعَلُ - He is doing.
نفي	negative	لَا يَفْعَلُ - He is not doing.

The terms (مثبت) and (منفي) are also used.

Active and Passive

Term	Meaning	Example
معروف	active tense – the doer of the action is known	يَفْعَلُ - He is doing.
مجهول	passive tense – the doer of the action is not known	يَفْعَلُ - It is being done.

Reference: From the Treasures of Arabic Morphology