

Arabic Speakers

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Developmental Features

Grammatical Differences

- The basic word order in a sentence is: subject:-verb-object (SVO).
- The first person pronoun is the same for masculine and feminine gender.
- The second and third person pronoun is different for masculine and feminine gender. Ten different person pronouns exist in Arabic.
- There is a definite article before a noun. (Two letters added to the beginning of a noun)
- A various selection of prepositions exist indicating the place, time, conditions and verb tense.
- There are verb tenses indicating past/present/future.
- Extra letters in a word are added to the singular form to make plurals or to indicate masculine or feminine gender.
- Adjectives come after the noun.
- Verb inflection signals gender.
- Arabic uses gender for all known nouns, no neutral ones.
- The first person adjective singular or plural is the same for masculine and feminine gender. This does not apply to the second and third person adjective singular or plural form.
- Arabic uses five specific prepositions as verbs; the right order is preposition + noun + verb. This preposition is a verb with tense (past/present/future).
- Arabic uses suffixes but no prefixes, consisting usually of one or two added letters. The suffix is different when used for masculine and feminine gender.

Script Features and Differences

- Arabic writing starts from right to left in a horizontal form.
- Arabic writing sits on the line.
- There are no capital letters in Arabic.
- Punctuation is similar to English except for comas which sit on the line instead of under the line.
- Space is left between words in a sentence.
- Letters change shape depending on whether they are at the start, in the middle or at the end of the word.
- Arabic has 29 letters - with 3 letter sounds which do not exist in English.

- Arabic does not distinguish between vowels and consonants; the use of a small sign on the top or under the letter indicates the pronunciation.

Typical Errors

- Incorrect use of auxiliary verbs: "I am gone for visiting the city" (instead of "I am going to the city").
- Incorrect use of personal pronouns.
- Difficulties in placement of noun-adjective: "My friend the bossy one" (instead of "My bossy friend").
- Inappropriate use of no, not, none, much, many etc.
- Inappropriate word order when using auxiliary verbs, adjectives.