

تبويب الوحدات الصرفية النافية في اللهجة العربية العراقية

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A Tabulation of Negative Morphemes in Iraqi Arabic

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المخلص

يهدف البحث الحالي الى دراسة الوحدات الصرفية النافية في اللهجة العراقية العربية. في هذه اللهجة، هناك ثلاث وحدات صرفية والتي تنفي الكلمات في هذه اللهجة وهي: ما ، مو و لا. هذا البحث هو محاولة لتوبيب الوحدات الصرفية النافية لأنه لا توجد دراسة محددة قد درست هذا الموضوع بوضوح على حد علم الباحثين. يهدف هذا البحث الى (1) دراسة قواعد اقتران هذه الوحدات الصرفية النافية (2) تحليل نفي المفردات والكلمات على العكس من الدراسات السابقة والتي تطرقت الى نفي الجملة (3) تبيان في اي قسم من اقسام الكلام يمكننا استعمال ما، مو و لا. تم التوصل الى النتائج التالية: (1) ما تستعمل لنفي الاسماء، الافعال، الصفات وحروف الجر. (2) ان الوحدة الصرفية النافية " ما " لا تستعمل بكثرة مع الصفات كما في قولنا: *ma:ʔajba*. مو طيبة (للمأكولات). (3) ان المورفيمات النافية ما و لا بالامكان استعمالها مع

الأفعال حتى وإن كانت في حالة الماضي أو المضارع مثل: *ma:qdru* وتعني ماكدرو وكذلك *ma:jqdru:n* وتعني ما يكدرن (4) أن الوحدة الصرفية النافية " لا " أيضا تستعمل مع الأفعال لتبيين الأمر المنفي كقولنا: *latʕab* وتعني لا تلعب و التي تشير إلى الشخص الثاني وقولنا أيضا: *lajʕab* لا يلعب والتي تشير إلى الشخص الثالث. (5) من الملاحظ أن الوحدة الصرفية "ما" توضع بعد أداة التعريف "ال" وهذا هو التابع الصرفي لهذين الوجدتين الصرفيتين. ومما يمكن ملاحظته أيضا بأن تتابع الوحدات الصرفية في هذا النوع من الاشتقاق يتتبع ترتيبا نظاميا كما في: *al faksʕ alma jsa'wi* والتي تعني الشخص الذي ما يسوي.

Abstract

The current work deals with negative morphemes in the Iraqi Arabic dialect. In this dialect, there are three morphemes that negate words, these are: *ma-*, *mu-* and *la-*. It is an attempt to tabulate negative morphemes because there is no specific study that described this subject to the best knowledge of the researchers. This paper aims at: (1) Studying the attachment rules of these three morphemes. (2) The study aims at analyzing word negation unlike previous studies that studied the sentential negation. (3) Showing with which parts of speech *ma-*, *mu* and *la-* are used. The paper has concluded that: (1) *ma-* is used with nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositional phrases. (2) the morpheme *ma* is not heavily used with adjectives in negation such as: *ma:tʕjba* = it is not delicious. (3) The morphemes *ma* and *la* can be used with verbs whether these verbs are in their perfective and imperfective forms such as: *ma:qdru* = they couldn't and *ma:jqdru:n* = they cannot. (4) *la* is used with verbs to indicate negative imperative such as: *latʕab* = don't play which refers to second person and *lajʕab* = he shouldn't play which refers to third person. (5) It is noticeable that *ma-* is put after the /al/. This is the morphological cluster of the two morphemes. It can also be noted that the sequence of the morphemes in this type of derivation follows a systematic order as in: *al faksʕ alma jsa'wi* = the person who doesn't do.

1. Transcription Symbols

The transcription symbols used in this study are mentioned at the end of this paper in the appendix. These symbols are adapted from Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics (2005) as cited in Jassim and Najm (2024).

2. Introduction

Arabic has a variety of dialects such as Palestinian, Jordanian, Kuwaiti, Saudi, Lebanese, and Iraqi etc. Each one of these dialects has its own phonology, morphology and syntax. For example, negation in Jordanian



Arabic can be indicated by four negative particles namely 'ma', ma...ʃ, and 'laa' (Al-Momani, 2011). In a study on negation in Palestinian and Moroccan Arabic, Hoyt (2005) indicated that sentential negation is represented by a combination of the two morphemes ma-... sh. They are either attached to a pronominal stem or they are attached to each other. Brustad (2000) tackled negation in four dialects which are: Egyptian, Moroccan, Syrian and Kuwaiti Arabic. She (2000) noted that "The western dialects, Moroccan and Egyptian, combine variants of ma- with /-ʃ/, while Kuwaiti and urban Syrian dialects use ma- and particles derived from it."

Aljumaily (2012) studied negation in Iraqi Arabic. He indicated that Arabic negation is expressed through particles. He argued that in Iraqi Arabic the particle /ma:/ indicates negation when attached to the verb phrase. In his paper, he discussed verbal negation in Iraqi Arabic. He stated that /ma:/ is a "common expression" used to negate the verbs whether they are perfective or imperfective. Najm (2012) sees that words can hold different parts of speech and occupy functions as well. So they can be negated. Many studies mentioned the importance of words and their positions in language and devoted books and papers to explain this importance.

It can be noticed that Aljumaily (2012) tackled the particles that indicate negation in Iraqi Arabic. This study tries to tackle this phenomenon morphologically by looking at the morphemes that denote negation in Iraqi Arabic by analyzing word negation without any reference to sentential level.

Ridha (2014) stated that la- falls into two types. When the vowel is long it is a particle and when the vowel is short it is a prefix. This classification is not correct because the writer treats these two classifications as two separate morphemes with the same meaning as he says:

"The first type is a separate negative particle la:- (long vowel) ... and the second type is a negative prefix (morphological negation) la- (short vowel)..."

Actually, this is not true because these two "types" are in fact one morpheme with two allomorphs. The definition and properties of the allomorphs suggest that these are not separate morphemes. Brinton and Brinton (2010) defined allomorphs as predictable variants of a morpheme. According to them, allomorphs are conditioned either phonologically or grammatically or in free variation. If we look at la:- and la- we find that they are in free variation. They aren't conditioned. Their use depends on the variety of the speaker. This indicates that Ridha's classification is not precise.

3. Methodology

In this study, the descriptive-analytic approach is followed. The data that is used in this study is gathered from real utterances of native speakers. It is collected from Facebook pages. The language that is written on Facebook is the same as the language that is spoken in everyday life. So data, which is gathered from different contexts, is considered genuine and authentic.

First, 115 examples containing negative morphemes are gathered from different Facebook pages. Second, the lexical items that contain negative morphemes are extracted then analyzed to arrive at their different properties.

4. Discussion

This study will discuss the different types of morphemes used for negation in Iraqi Arabic. As we have mentioned before, these morphemes can be attached to different parts of speech including nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositional phrases. Details and examples about these morphemes will be provided in the light of the available data.

4.1 The Morphemes *ma-*, *mu-* and *la* with Verbs

These morphemes are the most usual ones in negation. They are usually attached to verbs to form their negatives except the morpheme *mu-* which cannot be attached to verbs as indicated in the following examples:

1. *ma:jqdru:n* = they do not appreciate.

2. *la:jqdru:n* = they do not appreciate.

These morphemes are attached to verbs whether in perfective or imperfective aspect. As far as verbs in the imperfective aspect are concerned, they can be seen in the following examples:

3. *ma:jhtaḍḍ* = there is no need / he doesn't need.

4. *la:jhtaḍḍ* = he doesn't need.

5. *ma:jnmln* = they (female) are never boring.

6. *la:jnmln* = they (female) are never boring.

7. *ma:jgdar* = he cannot.

8. *la:jgdar* = he cannot.

9. *ma:jhm* = it doesn't matter.

10. *la:jhm* = it doesn't matter.

11. *ma:jstuyul* = it/he doesn't work.

12. *la:jstuyul* = it/he doesn't work.

The morphemes *ma* and *la* can be attached almost to all verbs in the imperfective aspect freely. However, if the verb is in the first person singular, the particle /*mā*/ is used instead as in the following examples:



13. ma: alʕab = I don't play.
14. ma: ʔri:d ʔnxutʕub = I (female) don't want to engage.
15. ma: ʔtyajar ʕla ʔhad = I don't/ never change on anyone.
16. ma: ʔdawx nafsi = I don't bother myself.
17. ma: ʔskut = I don't/will not be silent.

There is one exception to the rule where the negative morpheme *ma-* is used with first person singular. This case is in the negative question with the word *ʔdri* (I know), let us consider the following example:

18. mdri liʔn lu:ni al mufadʕal? = I don't know, maybe because it is my favourite colour.

The morphemes *ma* and *la* are added freely to all verbs in the perfective aspect whether in the first, second or third person as in the examples below:

19. ma: ʕasʕalaw ʕi:= they did not obtain anything.
20. laʕasʕalaw ʕi = they did not obtain anything.
21. ma: tiʕrgu = it does not burn him/ it.
22. la tiʕrgu = it does not burn him/ it.
23. ma: gʔa:ʕla = I (female) didn't say.
24. la gʔa:ʕla = I (female) didn't say.
25. ma: gdarit = I couldn't.
26. la gdarit = I couldn't.
27. ma: ʕa:ʕfta = I (female) haven't seen it/him.
28. la ʕa:ʕfta = I (female) haven't seen it/him.

Table (1): Uses of *ma* and *la* with verbs

	Perfective aspect			Imperfective aspect		
	1 st person (sing.+ pl)	2 nd person	3 rd person	1 st person singular	2 nd person	3 rd person
Negative morphemes <i>ma</i> and <i>la</i>	√	√	√		√	√
	√	√	√		√	√
	√	√	√		√	√
	√	√	√		√	√
	√	√	√		√	√

Ridha (2014) mentioned another use for the negative morpheme *ma-*. He stated that it is used with the future particle *raʕ* (will) and the present progressive prefix *da-* (be doing) , consider the examples below:

29. maraʕ ayfal ʕanha mʕl ʕi:ʕʕ alma'ra = I will not ignore it like the previous time.

30. mada'ʃu:f alnas ʃlu:n dajʔaxtʔxu:n bi:k = Don't you see how the people are constantly bumping into you?

In the same way the morpheme *la* can be used with the future particle *rah* (will) (less usual) and cannot be used with the present progressive prefix *da-*, as in the example below:

31. larah ayfal ʃanha mθl ʔi:tʃ alma'ra = I will not ignore it like the previous time.

The verb with the morpheme *la* indicates negative imperative and refers to second person *latlʃab* (don't play) and third person (*lajlʃab*) whether singular or plural. When the imperative is directed to second person it means don't do X as in the following examples:

32. latlʃab = don't play.

33. latlʃbu:n = don't play (plural addressees).

34. latlʃbi:n = don't play (singular female addressee).

35. latlʃabin = don't play (plural female addressees).

However, when the verb in the imperative is in the third person, the negative morpheme carries the meaning "don't let them do X" as in the examples below:

36. lajlʃabin = don't let them play (third person plural females)

37. lajlʃbu:n = don't let them play (third person plural males)

38. lajlʃab = don't let him play (third person singular male)

39. latlʃab = don't let her play (third person singular female)

Finally, the two morphemes *ma* and *la* can be used in one sentence to indicate negation, regard the following example:

40. maʔza Khalid wala Ahmed.

4.2 The Morphemes *ma-*, *mu-* and *la* with Nouns

Turning to the use of negative morphemes with nouns, it is found that the morpheme *ma* is not used with nouns except the noun *ʔhad* (someone). The only evidence that is found is *ma'had* (no one). The data indicates that the particles *mu* and *la* are most often used with nouns as in the following examples:

41. al balad mu baladhūm = the land is not their land (n.).

42. al balad la baladhūm = the land is not their land (n.).

However, the relative clauses accept the attachment of this morpheme. It is clear that in such kind of negation, the sentence comprises both the negative morpheme *ma-* and the relative clause by adding the definite article *al-* (the), except the morphemes *mu* and *la* which cannot be used in the examples below:

43. almajawi = the one who doesn't do.

44. *almajalʕab* = the one who doesn't play.
 45. *almajurkudʕ* = the one who doesn't run.
 46. *almajakul* = the one who doesn't eat.

The nouns are originally relative clauses but they are reduced to nouns. So originally it is *al faxsʕ al jsa'wi* (the one who does). This article is a morphological characteristic of nouns in Arabic (Ranginwala et al, 2013). It is noticeable that *ma-* is put after the */al/*. This is the morphological cluster of the two morphemes. It can be noted that the sequence of the morphemes in this type of derivation follows a systematic order. The article is attached to the nouns and the negative morpheme is attached mostly to verbs. So, the definite article comes first then the negative morpheme second. The word *jalʕab* (he plays) is a verb and *aljalʕab* (the one who plays) is a noun phrase. So when the definite article is present the negative morpheme comes to attach to the verbal base resulting in a negative noun.

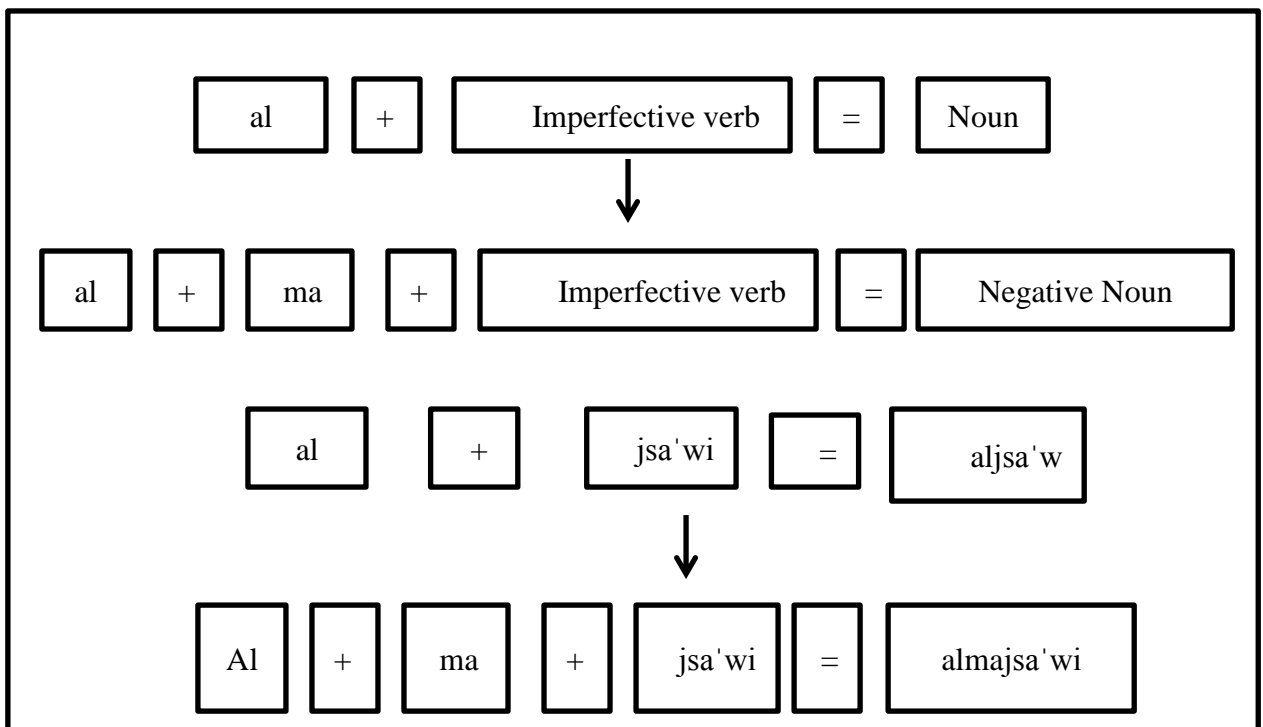


Figure (1) the process of converting verbs into nouns and negating them. The morphemes *ma*, *mu* and *la* are used freely with any past participle in Iraqi Arabic with no restrictions on their use with participles as in the examples below:

47. *ma maḍʕbu:r* = he is not obliged.
 48. *mu maḍʕbu:r* = he is not obliged.
 49. *la maḍʕbu:r* = he is not obliged.

50. ma maftu:h = it is not open.
51. mu maftu:h = it is not open.
52. la maftu:h = is not open.
53. ma masdu:d = is not closed.
54. mu masdu:d = is not closed.
55. la masdu:d = is not closed.
56. ma maktu:b = is not written.
57. mu maktu:b = is not written.
58. la maktu:b = is not written.

4.3 The Morphemes ma-, mu- and la with Adjectives

Before we start talking about negating adjectives, it is important to say that the status of the adjective in Arabic is controversial among Arab linguists. Classical Arab linguists state that in Arabic there are only three parts of speech namely nouns, verbs and particles. They consider the adjective as a subtype of nouns because it carries the properties of nouns. Modern Arab linguists have two points of view regarding adjectives. Some of them consider adjectives as a subtype of verbs while others consider them as an independent part of speech (Ma'ash, 2009). The morphemes mu and la can be used with adjectives as shown below:

59. mu: tʔbi:ʕj = he/ it is not natural (adj.)
60. la tʔbi:ʕj = he/ it is not natural (adj.)

According to Erwin (2004), the adjectives in Iraqi Arabic are restricted to participials, nisba, and colour and defect adjectives. However, there are adjectives that do not fall within these types as in the following examples:

61. tʔwi:l = long / mu tʔwi:l / la tʔwi:l = not long.
62. qasʔi:r = short / mu qasʔi:r / la qasʔi:r = not short.
63. sari:ʕ = quick / mu sari:ʕ / la sari:ʕ = not quick.
64. batʔi:ʔ = slow / mu batʔi:ʔ / la batʔi:ʔ = not slow.
65. chbi:r = big / mu chbi:r / la chbi:r = not big.
66. sʔyi:r = small / mu sʔyi:r / la sʔyi:r = not small.
67. qawi = strong / mu qawi / la qawi = not strong.
68. dʔaʕi:f = weak / mu dʔaʕi:f / la dʔaʕi:f = not weak.
69. hʔw = beautiful, sweet / mu hʔw / la hʔw = not beautiful, sweet.
70. qbi:h = ugly / mu qbi:h / la qbi:h = not ugly.
71. faqi:r = poor / mu faqi:r / la faqi:r = not poor.
72. zangi:n = rich / mu zangi:n / la zangi:n = not rich.

Adjectives in Iraqi Arabic do not take the morpheme ma- except the adjective *tʔajba* (it (female) is sweet/delicious) and *hʔw* (beautiful, sweet) which are negated by this morpheme.



4.4 The Morphemes *ma*, *mu* and *la* Prepositions

In Arabic, there are many prepositions as Al-Shamsan (1987) states them: *ila*: (to), *albaʔ* (in, at), *ʕla*: (on), *ʕan* (about), *fi*: (in, inside), *al'lam* (to), and *min* (from). In Iraqi Arabic, some prepositions take a different form. For example, *ila*: in standard Arabic is equivalent to *li* in Iraqi Arabic as in example (73) and *ʕla*: in standard Arabic is equivalent to *ʕal* as in example (74) below:

73. *li*bayet = to home

74. *ʕal*bayet = to home

The negative prefixes *ma*, *mu* and *la* are attached to a preposition as indicated in the following examples:

75. *ma bi:ha fi*: = it/she is ok/ there is nothing inside it.

76. *mu bi:ha* = not inside it.

77. *la bi:ha fi*: = it/she is ok/ there is nothing inside it.

These morphemes also occur with some prepositional phrases as indicated in the following examples:

78. *ma: ʕdha ʕalqa* = she doesn't have a ring.

79. *la ʕdha ʕalqa* = she doesn't have a ring.

80. *alsayara mu: ʕdhum* = the car is not with them.

In sentences where there is more than one negative element, the morphemes that are used are: /*ma*/ /*la*/ or /*la*/ /*wa-la*/. It is worth mentioning that the particle /*la*/ can be used in place of the particle /*ma*/ as in examples (81 a and b) and (82 a and b) below and the similar examples to negate the sentence with no difference in the structure as in the following examples:

81. (a) *ma: ʕdhum la: ziraʕah wa-la sʕnaʕah* = They have neither agriculture nor industry.

(b) *la: ʕdhum la: ziraʕah wa-la sʕnaʕah* = They have neither agriculture nor industry.

82. (a) *ma:kw ʔhad hi:na jgulw laʔ* = there is nobody here to say 'no' to him.

(b) *la:kw ʔhad hi:na jgulw laʔ* = there is nobody here to say 'no' to him.

The prepositional phrase *bi:ha fi*: (there is something with it/ there is something inside it) is negated with the morphemes *ma* and *mu* except *la* when the word *fi*: is attached to it. In this case, the preposition *albaʔ* (in) is negated with the negative morpheme *ma*, *mu* and *la*. These morphemes are attached to the inflections of the prepositional phrase as shown below:

83. ma bi: = (nothing inside it, with him /it).
84. mu bi: = (nothing inside it, with him /it).
85. la bi: = (nothing inside it, with him /it).
86. ma bi:jah = (nothing with me).
87. mu bi: = (nothing with me).
88. la bi: = (nothing with me).
89. ma bi:ha = (nothing inside/ with it or her).
90. mu bi:ha = (nothing inside/ with it or her).
91. la bi:ha = (nothing inside/ with it or her).
92. ma bi:hum = (nothing with them).
93. mu bi:hum = (nothing with them).
94. la bi:hum = (nothing with them).
95. ma bi:na = (nothing with us).
96. Mu bi:na = (nothing with us).
97. La bi:na = (nothing with us).

The other preposition that is negated by the morphemes ma and mu is ʕla: (on) when it is used in a specific meaning. They are not used with the preposition which refers to place. They are attached to the preposition when the latter is used in the meaning of "not get involved, none of X's business and don't worry" as indicated in the following examples:

98. ma ʕli:k = it is none of your business/ you are not involved.
99. mu ʕli:k = you are not involved / you are not mean you.
100. la ʕli:k = you are not involved / you are not mean you.
101. ma ʕlaja = it is none of my business/ I am not involved.
102. mu ʕlaja = I am not involved / I am not meant.
103. la ʕlaja = I am not involved / I am not meant
104. ma ʕli:hum = it is none of their (male plural) business/ they are not involved.
105. mu ʕli:hum = they are not involved / they are not meant.
106. la ʕli:hum = they are not involved / they are not meant.
107. ma ʕli:na = it is none of our business / we are not involved.
108. mu ʕli:na = we are not involved / we are not meant.
109. la ʕli:na = we are not involved / we are not meant.
110. ma ʕli:ha = it is none of her business/ she is not involved.
111. mu ʕli:ha = she is not involved / she is not meant.
112. la ʕli:ha = she is not involved / she is not meant.
113. ma ʕli:hn = it is none of their (females) business/ they are not involved.
114. mu ʕli:hn = they are not involved / they are not meant.
115. la ʕli:hn = they are not involved / they are not meant.



From the examples above (98-115), we can see that the attachment of one of the morphemes *ma*, *mu* and *la* to a word would take different meanings i.e. it may mean it is none of X business or X is not involved or X is not meant.

One can conclude from the speech above that these negative morphemes can be attached to almost all parts of speech to negate them; this can be clearly seen in the following table:

Table (2) the use of the negative morphemes with the parts of speech

Negative Morphemes	Parts of Speech			
	Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Prepositions
<i>la</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>ma</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>mu</i>	✓	✗	✓	✓

5. Conclusions

The present study has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Iraqi dialect has three basic morphemes for negation namely: *ma*, *mu* and *la*. Within the parts of speech certain nouns, adjectives, verbs and prepositions accept the morpheme and others do not. The morphemes *ma*- and *la* are added to a variety of words yielding different negative meanings but *la* is also added to imperatives to make them negative.

1. The morphemes *ma* and *la* can be used with verbs whether these verbs are in their perfective and imperfective forms such as: *ma:qdru* = they couldn't and *ma:jqdru:n* = they cannot.

2. The morphemes *ma* and *la* are added freely to all verbs in the perfective aspect whether in the first, second or third person such as: *ma:has'alaw ji* = they didn't get anything, *ma:tihrigu* = it doesn't burn him/it and *ma:g?a:jl* = she didn't say.

3. The negative morpheme *ma:* can be used with the particle /rah/ (will) and the present progressive prefix /da/ (be doing) such as: *ma:rah* = it/he won't... and *ma:dakul* = I am not eating .

4. The verb with the morpheme *la* indicates negative imperative and refers to second person *latlṣab* (you don't play) and third person *lajlṣab* (he doesn't play) whether singular or plural. When the imperative is directed to second person it means don't do X. But when the verb in the imperative is in the third person, the negative morpheme carries the meaning "don't let them (females) do X" as in: *lajlṣabin*.

5. It is found that the morpheme *ma* is not used with nouns except the noun *?ḥad* (someone). The only evidence that is found is *ma'ḥad* = no one.

6. The data indicates that the particles mu and la are most often used with nouns as in: al balad mu baladhum and al balad la baladhum = the country is not their country.
7. It is noticeable that ma- is put after the /al/. This is the morphological cluster of the two morphemes. It can also be noted that the sequence of the morphemes in this type of derivation follows a systematic order as in: *al faxs^s alma jsa 'wi* = the person who doesn't do.
8. The morphemes mu and la can be used with adjectives as in: mu: t^bbi:ʃj = not natural and la t^bbi:ʃj = not natural.
9. The negative prefixes ma, mu and la are attached to a preposition as indicated in: ma bi:ha ʃi: = it/she is ok/ there is nothing inside it, mu bi:ha = not inside it and la bi:ha ʃi: = it/she is ok/ there is nothing inside it.
10. We can make a series of negative morphemes of the same morpheme or two or more different morphemes in one sentence such as: la: ʃdhum la: ziraʃah wa-la sⁿnaʃah and ma: ʃdhum la: ziraʃah wa-la sⁿnaʃah = They have neither agriculture nor industry.
11. The preposition *alba?* (in) is negated with the negative morpheme ma, mu and la. These morphemes are attached to the inflections of the prepositional phrase as in: ma bi:, mu bi: and la bi:.
12. Sometimes we can use all the three types of negative morphemes ma, mu and la with the same word especially when the word is an adjective (but not all adjectives) and refers to a human being or a living creature at least, for example: ma maḏʒbur, mu maḏʒbur and la maḏʒbur = he is not obliged.
13. In some situations, the negative morphemes refer to a state of someone or something as in: mu: t^bbi:ʃj = he/ it is not natural (adj.) and la t^bbi:ʃj = he/ it is not natural (adj.).

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Appendix

Table (1) Shows Arabic Alphabet Transcription Symbols

Arabic character/ sound	Transcription in English	IPA equivalent	Arabic character/ sound	Transcription in English	IPA equivalent
أ	ʔ	ʔ	ض	ḍ	ḍ
ب	b	b	ط	ṭ	ṭ
ت	t	t	ظ	ẓ	ẓ
ث	ṭ	θ	ع	ʕ	ʕ
ج	j	ʒ	غ	ġ	ġ
ح	h	ħ	ف	f	f
خ	x	χ	ق	q	q
د	d	d	ك	k	k
ذ	ḏ	ð	ل	l	l
ر	r	r	م	m	m
ز	z	z	ن	n	n
س	s	s	ه	h	h
ش	š	ʃ	و	w	w
ص	ṣ	ʂ	ي	y	y
چ	ch	tʃ	ة	a/at	a/at