
Chapter 5: Exploring Sub-classes

Palestinian Arabic

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The data below are from Palestinian Arabic; however, the basic pattern is found in Standard Arabic as well. Column 1 contains feminine singular nouns. Column 2 contains 'generic' plural nouns; these cannot be combined with the numerals. Column 3 contains plural nouns that occur with the numerals 3 through 10 (Arabic nouns have special dual forms, which are always used alone or with the numeral 2). With numerals higher than 10, the singular nouns in column 1 are used. This only works for feminine nouns.

		'a group/quantity of ...		'a certain number of ...'	
bakara	'a cow'	bakar	... cows'	bakaraat	... cows'
balaṭa	'a tile'	balaṭ	... tiles'	balaṭaat	... tiles'
balaḥa	'a date (palm fruit)'	balaḥ	... dates'	balaḥaat	... dates'
baṣala	'an onion'	baṣal	... onions'	baṣalaat	... onions'
baṭṭiixa	'a watermelon'	baṭṭiix	... w'melons'	baṭṭiixaat	... w'melons'
beeḏa	'an egg'	beeḏ	... eggs'	beeḏa	... eggs'
burtkaana	'an orange'	burtkaan	... oranges'	burtkanaat	... oranges'
fuzduka	'a nut'	fuzduk	... nuts'	fuzdukaat	... nuts'
ḥabba	'a seed'	ḥab	... seeds'	ḥabbaat	... seeds'
looza	'an almond'	looz	... almonds'	lozaat	... almonds'
mooza	'a banana'	mooz	... bananas'	mozaat	... bananas'
ramla	'grain of sand'	ramil	... sand'	ramlaat	... grains of sand'
ruzza	'a rice grain'	ruz	... rice'	ruzzaat	... rice grains'
ṣaḏḏara	'a tree'	ṣaḏḏar	... trees'	ṣaḏḏaraat	... trees'
ṣaḥra	'a hair'	ṣaḥar	... hair'	ṣaḥraat	... hairs'
ṣummaama	'a melon'	ṣummaam	... melons'	ṣummamaat	... melons'

simsim	'a sesame seed'	simsim	... sesame'	simsimaat	... s'me seeds'
xassa	'a head of lettuce'	xas	... lettuce'	xassaat	... lettuce heads'
zatuuna	'an olive'	zatuun	... olives'	zatunaat	... olives'
ʕinba	'a grape'	ʕinib	... grapes'	ʕinbaat	... grapes'

- A. Are there noun classes evident in these data? If so, group the roots into classes, and give the evidence for your grouping. Are the sub-classes primarily structurally or functionally determined?
- B. Describe all the morphological rules that are operating in these data, and give an example of each one.
- G. Graduate student question: Do you notice anything surprising about these data? If so, can you "motivate" the surprising pattern?