Dalal and Amani

Grammar Notes and Phonetic Transcripts for The Arabic We Speak (V20210616)

Motivation

During my university years I learned Classical Arabic and I even took a certification. In 2021 I decided to revive my Arabic knowledge with a twist: spoken (colloquial) Arabic. First, I picked Egyptian Arabic and I have purchased a number of excellent books. However, I was not really happy with the material in the books, all were terribly boring and not really fun to learn from. Then I thought let's have a look what is available for Levantine. After joining a Facebook group I quickly found The Arabic We Speak | Hosts Dalal & Amani I listened to their 1st lesson (My Life 1), and exactly this was what I was looking for: a fun to listen and read material (audio and texts) for someone who has a fundamental understanding of Arabic grammar and fluency in Arabic alphabet.

I quickly found two quite useful book on Levantine Arabic grammar:

- Colloquial Arabic (Levantine) The Complete Course For Beginners Muhammad Al Masri (2016) has a number of useful grammar sections, and I realized that 90% of Egyptian Arabic grammar, which I picked up earlier from books like the brilliant Kullu Tamam, is applicable for Levantine. The differences like **biddi** vs **3ayiz** are mor refreshing than frustrating.
- A Course in Levantine Arabic by Ernest McCarus (1978, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor) is a gem (just like Ernest Adbel-Massih's excellent (free) book on Egyptian Arabic from Ann Arbor, too) has a full grammar coverage of Levantine.

In this booklet, I give grammar explanations as well as phonetic transcript to the lovely texts from Dalal and Amani. Apart from the Al-Masri and McCarus books, I use Lingualism books extensively:

- Levantine Arabic Verbs - Lingualism.com which has conjugation tables and brutally great grammar sections. L numbers refer to the page in this book.
- Palestinian Arabic Verbs - Lingualism.com the vowelling of the conjugation is a bit different from the conjugations given in the Levantine Arabic Verbs book. Dalal and Amani is closer to the Palestinian style. P numbers are references to this book. Both of these bokks have a number of sample sentences and accompanying audio.

I have zero interest in Modern Standard Arabic in this project, so what I provide here is pure colloquial grammar adapted from these sources for the great audio and video from Dalal an Amani.

Phonetic Transcript

When I learned Egyptian Arabic, I found that phonetic transcript makes memorizing and familiarizing colloquial Arabic a lot easier, even when you know how to read and write Arabic text, like I do. I am not talking about romanization or Englishization, I am talking about precise transcript of the audio as much as possible with all the phonetic intricacies of spoken Arabic: elisions, assimilation, long vowel shortening, stress shifting, all of which make colloquial Arabic so special. Arabic Script is provided by Dalal and Amani, so I am not replicating it here. Nevertheless, M.Aldrich has an excellent Levantine Arabic Orthography - Lingualism.com how he uses Arabic for phonetic accuracy in his publications.

I use one symbol for a phoneme (so I use **x** instead of kh, **G** instead of gh, or **š** instead of sh). Definitely, I am far from the phonetic precision that Ernest McCarus presented in his book, nevertheless; just have a look at his work and you will understand what is a scientifically precise phonetic transcription system.

In this booklet I use these special letters for transcription:

- **3** for the letter 3ayn ع
  - The IPA symbol is [ʕ], and it is used in the McCarus book, too.
- **G** for Gayn غ instead of ɣ, ġ, 8 or gh
- **H** (instead of 7 or ħ (see M. Aldrich)) for that impossible-to-pronounce-by-a-non-Arab H ح
- T, S, Z, D for emphatic versions of t, s, z and d respectively ط ص ظ ض
  - The vowels (especially **a**) in a word containing **r** ر are mostly pronounce emphatic, too.
- **š** for šiin ش instead of sh, or ʃ
- **j** (as in English *jar*) or **ž** (as in French *jour*) for jiim ج in Egyptian it is pronounced as g
  - I used **ž** only in a couple of times to show that **j** is actually pronounced as **ž.**
- **x** instead of 5 or kh خ; x is the IPA symbol and used in all serous books on colloquial Arabic.
- **aa**, **ee**, **ii**, **uu**, **oo** for long **a, e, i, u, o**
  - Vowels in any transcript are approximations only; the difference between **a** and **e**, or **e** and **i** are not clear, and it's up to the listener to decide. The audio files are the ultimate reference, but even you listen one thousand times sometimes, simply, you cannot decide.
- Emphatic **a** is printed with bold italic.
- **'** - an apostrophe - for glottal stop ء ق instead of **2** or the IPA standard ?
  - In Palestinian qaf ق is pronounced g.

Long vowel syllables are almost always stressed, where important I use underline (**3i<u>li</u>tna** *our family*) for stress. Dashes (-) are used just to show that the speaker connected the words without stopping between them.

My Life 1
Phonetic Transcript and Verbatim Translation

3endak 3eele kbiire?	Do you have a big family?
ana 3endi bint waHde ismha laara.	I have one girl, her name is Lara.
u-3endi sitt ixwaat u-sab3 ixwaan.	And I have six daughters and seven brothers.
u-wlaad-ixwaani u-ixwaati **Sar**-3adadhum xams u-talatiin.	The children of my brothers and sisters, the number of them became thirty-five.
bass-maa 3endi wala 3amaam wala 3ammaat **li'ennu** b*aaba* **keen** waHdaani l-ahlu, *alla* yirHamu.	But I have neither (paternal) uncles nor aunts, because dad was the only child of the family, God be merciful to him.
u-m*aama* akbar waHde been ixwaatha u-ixwaanha el-3ašara.	And mom is the oldest one between her ten sisters and brothers.
u-heek **bikuun** 3endi xemis xaalaat u-xemis ixwaal.	And so, I have five (maternal) aunts and uncles.
u-mumkin bass **elte'i** b-wlaadhum fil-munasabaat ilx*aaSSa*.	And it is possible only that I meet their children on the special occasions.
amma-wlaad u-banaat ixwaati u-ixwaani **bašuufhum** aktar **li'ennu** iHna-l-ixwe **binHibb**-i-**nzuur** ba3aD.	As for the children and girls of my aunts and uncles I see them a lot, since we the siblings like that we visit each other.
u-3endi bint uxt ismha-randa.	And I have a niece, her name is Rhonda.
u-ma **ba'dar ašuufha** ktiir **li'enha** 3ayše bi-am<u>i</u>rka u-ma **btiiji** ktiir 3ala 3ammaan.	And I cannot see her a lot, since [she is] living in America, and she doesn't come a lot to Amman.
u-kull-i-jduudi u jiddaati **maatu**, *alla* yirHamhum.	And all my grandfathers and grandmothers died, God be merciful to them.
šta'tilhum i-ktiir-i-ktiir.	

| | | I was longing for them a lot, a lot. | |

Vocabulary

the	il	and	w, u
family	3eele (pl. 3iyal)	at, I have, you have	3end, 3endi, 3endak
I	ana	big, old, oldest	kbiir, kbiire; akbar
one, someone, sole, only, single, isolated	waaHid, waHde	girl, daughter	bint, binteen, (pl. banaat)
Lara	laara	name	'ism (pl. 'asmaa)
sister	uxt (pl. ixwaat)	six	sitt
seven	sab3	brother, siblings	ax (pl. ixwaan, ixwe)
five	xams	boy, child	walad, waladeen, wlaad (sounds like ulaad) وْلاد
to become	**Saar**	thirty	talatiin
but, only	bass	number	3adad
neither ... nor	wala ... wala	no	maa, ma
paternal aunt	3amma, 3ammtu (pl. 3ammaat)	paternal uncle	3amm, 3ammu (pl. 3amaam)
maternal aunt	xaala, xaaltu (pl. xaalaat)	maternal uncle	xaal, xaalu (pl. 'ixwaal)
dad, mom	baaba, maama	because	li'ennu
solo	waHdaani	to be (was)	**keen, bikuun**
family, folks (see McCarus p 81)	'ahl	for	li, la
ten	3ašara	between	been
possible	mumkin	so	heek
in	fi	to meet up (VIII.)	**(i)lta'a bi**
special	xaaSS, xaaSSa	occasion	munaasaba (pl. -aat)
to see	**šaaf, bašuuf**	as for	amma
we	iHna	a lot, very, the most	ktiir, aktar
to visit	**zaar, nzuur**	to like	**Hibb, binHibb**
niece	bint uxt	each other	ba3D
living	**3aayis, 3ayse**	to be able	**'dar, ba'dar**
to come	**ija, btiiji**	in	bi
Amman	3ammaan	on, to, onto, into	3ala
		all	kull
grandmother	jidda (pl. jiddaati)	grandfather	jidd (pl. jduud)
to miss, long for (VIII.)	**(i)štaa'**	to die	**maat**

Personal Pronouns and Pronominal Suffixes

Independent personal pronouns are more commonly used in the absence of a conjugated verb: in isolation, before active participles, and in sentences without a verb. The verb *to be* is not normally expressed in the present tense in Arabic. **miin? ana?** *Who? Me?* **huwwa laazim yaakul** *He must eat* **hiyya Hilwa ktiir** *She is very beautiful*.

Pronominal suffixes can be added to prepositions like **3end** *at, near* or nouns (possessive suffixes) like **ism** *name* or verbs like **šaaf** *to see* (direct object suffixes) and conjunction like **li'enn** + subject pronouns.

The extra **i** in **is̲i̲mha** is to avoid three consonant clusters (see McCarus p20, p64, p65, p74, p82), in Egyptian Arabic it is **ism̲a̲ha**.

	Personal Pronouns	Pronominal Suffixes with **3end** عند *at, near*	Possessive Suffixes with **ism** إسم *name*	Direct Object Suffixes with **šaaf** شاف *he saw*
1st Sg.	ana أنا *I*	3end**i** عندي *at me; I have*	ism**i** إسمي *my name*	šaaf**ni** شافني *he saw me*
1st Pl.	iHna إحنا *we*	3end**ina** عندنا *at us; we have*	isim**na** إسمنا *our name*	šaaf**na** شافنا *he saw us*
2nd Sg.masc.	inta إنت *you*	3end**ak** عندك *at you; you have*	ism**ak** إسمك *your name*	šaaf**ak** شافك *he saw you*
2nd Sg.fem.	inti إنتي *you*	3end**ik** عندك *at you; you have*	ism**ik** إسمك *your name*	šaaf**ik** شافك *he saw you*
2nd Pl.	intu إنتوا *you*	3end**uku** عندكوا *at you; you have*	isim**ku** إسمكوا *your name*	šaaf**ku(m)** شافكوا *he saw you*
3rd. Sg.masc.	huwwa هو *he*	3end**u** عنده *at him; he has*	ism**u** إسمه *his name*	šaaf**u** شافه *he saw him*
3rd. Sg.fem.	hiyya هي *she*	3end**aha** عندها *at her; she has*	isim**ha** إسمها *her name*	šaaf**ha** شافها *he saw her*
3rd. Pl.	humma هم *they*	3end**uhum** عندهم *at them; they have*	isim**hum** إسمهم *their name*	šaaf**hum** شافهم *he saw them*

Here the pronunciation of family members in Jordanian Arabic. There is no helping **i**, so three consonant cluster is allowed vs in Egyptian where three consonant clusters are strictly forbidden. However, even in Jordanian three consonant cluster is not allowed with double consonants: compare Jordanian **ibinna** *our son* vs Egyptian **ibnina** *our son*.

	[Family]	Father	Mother	Son (ibin)	Daughter	Brother	Sister
my	3ilti	abuuy	ummi	ibni	binti	axuuy	uxti
our	3ilitna	abuuna	ummna	ibinna	bintna	axuuna	uxtna
your (sg.m.)	3iltak	abuuk	ummak	ibnak	bintak	axuuk	uxtak
your (sg.f.)	3iltek	abuuki	ummik	ibnik	bintik	axuuki	uxtik
your (pl.)	3ilitkum	abuukum	ummkum	ibinkum	bintkum	axuukum	uxtkum
his	3iltu	abuu	ummu	ibnu	bintu	axuu	uxtu
her	3ilitha	abuuha	ummha	ibinha	bintha	axuuha	uxtha
their	3ilithum	abuuhum	ummhum	ibinhum	binthum	axuuhum	uxthum

In Jordanian, it is possible to have a long vowel that does not have the stress: **haalitha** *her aunt*.

There are a number of other important and common situations where pronominal suffixes are used (McCarus p82, p101, p140, p161):

To want **bidd** + suffix بد	iyya + suffix إي	3ala على preposition + suffix *on sg/so*	leinn + pronoun suffix لإن *because*
biddi بدي *I want*	biddu iyyayy إياي *He wants me*	3aleyy علىّ *on me*	leinni لإني *because I ...*
biddna بدنا *we want*	biddu iyyaana إيانا *He wants us*	3aleena علينا *on us*	leinna لإنا *because we ...*
biddak بدك *you want*	biddu iyyaak إياك *He wants you*	3aleek عليك *on you*	leinnak لإنك *because you*
biddik بدك *you want*	biddu iyyaaki إياكي *He wants you*	3aleeki عليكي *on you*	leinnik لإنك *because you*
biddku(m) بدكوم *you want*	biddu iyyaaku(m) إياكو *He wants you*	3aleeku(m) عليكو *on you*	leinnku لإنكو *because you*
biddu بده *he wants*	biddi iyyaa(h) إياه *I want him*	3alee(h) عليه *on him*	leinnu لإنو *because (he) ...*
biddha بدها *she wants*	biddu iyyaaha إياها *He wants her*	3aleeha عليها *on her*	leinnha لإنها *because she*
biddhum بدهم *they want*	biddi iyyaahum إياهم *I want them*	3aleehum عليهم *on them*	leinnhum لإنهم *because they*

Feminine Ending Pronunciation with Pronoun Suffix

The nouns with feminine ending are pronounced as **t** when a suffix is added (McCarus p37) **3eele** + **i** is **3eelti** عيلتي *my family.* This happens in every possessive construct, too: **3eelt-i-'amaani** (instead of ~~3eele 'amaani~~ (عيلة أماني the -**i**-between the two words is to eliminate the three-consonant cluster in fluid speech (McCarus p136 the helping vowel i).

To have in Arabic: 3end + عند Pronominal Suffix

The prepositional construct **3end** + pronominal suffix (followed by an indefinite noun) is used to express possession (McCarus p32): **3endak 3eele kbiire?** *Do you have a big family?* **3endi sitt ixwaat** *I have six brothers.*

Masculine and Feminine Adjectives

The adjective must match the gender and definiteness of the noun it is linked to (McCarus p21, p34). The words ending with tamarbuuta are feminine and pronounced **a**, **e** or **i** depending on the speaker and dialect. In **3endak 3eele kbiire** the adjective **kbiir** كبير takes its feminine form **kbiire** كبيرة.

In **bint waHde** the noun **bint** *girl* is feminine so instead of **waahid** واحد *only, sole, one* the feminine form **wahde** واحدة is required. Note that in the Arabic text Dalal and Amani wrote وحدة which is not the classic Arabic spelling, they have adjusted the spelling وحدة to follow the long vowel shortening rules (McCarus p121). Most (if not all) pronunciation rules of Levantine are more-or-less the same as in Egyptian Arabic.

In **fil-munasabaat ilx*aa*SS*a*** the word **munasabbat** is in plural, and plural inanimate nouns are considered feminine grammatically.

Fronting of a Topic, Thematic Sentences, Topic and Comment

In every kind of Arabic, the main topic is placed in front position, and the rest of the sentence is referring back to the topic with pronominal suffixes: **hiyya ismaha lara** *She, her name is Lara* or with an even more stylish translation *As for she, her name is Lara*. McCarus explains this as topic + comment on p151. J.R. Smith in his MSA book p137 explains these as thematic sentences.

In **wlaad-ixwaani w-ixwaati Sar-3a̲dadhum xams u-talatiin** *the children of my brothers and sisters, the number of them became thirty-five* a definite genitive construct is the topic, which is followed by the "comment", the news which refers back to the front topic (**wlaad** *children*) with the pronoun suffix **hum** *their* in **3adadhum**.

The personal pronoun **iHna** *we* in **li'ennu iHna-l-ixwe binHibb-i-nzuur ba3aD** *...because we the siblings like to visit each other* (Note here the helping -**i**-) can be regarded as a topic, too.

Indefinite Relative Clauses

ana 3endi bint waHde ismha laara *Me, I have a daughter whose name is Lara* is a nice example, where **ana** is a front topic. This is a relative clause (McCarus p 192) since in Arabic, when the noun is indefinite the relative pronoun **'illi** *which, that, who* must not be used, **'illi** can only be used with definite nouns (see McCarus 180, 181).

Genitive Noun Constructs

A noun sequence is a genitive construct and only the last may have a definite article or a suffix, in which case the sequence is definite (McCarus p36). If the last noun in the sequence is indefinite, the entire sequence/construct is indefinite. A pronoun suffix makes a noun defined: **wlaad-ixwaani w-ixwaati** *the children of my brothers and sisters*.

The Conjunction li'ennu Because - لإنه or لإنو

li'ennu (see McCarus p161) itself means *because* followed by a clause. If the clause starts with a personal pronoun, it can be suffixed to **li'enn** replacing **u**: **ma ba'dar ašuufha ktiir li'enha 3ayše bi-amirka**. *I cannot see her a lot, since [she is] living in America*.

Plurals, Feminine Plurals, Broken Plurals

Arabic forms its plurals (nouns and adjectives) with either adding suffixes (external plural) or changing the shape of word (broken plurals, McCarus p103, p104, p173). The suffix **-aat** is a typical feminine plural maker: **munaasabaat** *occasions*. Most nouns and adjectives, however, have broken plurals that should learned along with the word itself: **walad** *a boy* - **wlaad** - *boys*

The Verbs Appearing in this Lesson

The P number in this booklet refers to the Palestinian the L number to the Levantine Arabic Verbs by Lingualism. To understand quickly conjugation model/pattern of a verb, it is worth mentioning that almost all Arabic words have three-consonant root and the words are formed by applying various patterns composed of vowels, infixes, prefixes and suffixes; these letters are called root letters/consonants. Verb conjugation, can be modelled with these patterns very well. The vocabulary/base form of an Arabic verb is its past tense singular 3rd person masculine. Weak letters are alif ا yaa ي and waw و. When the basic form has none of these letters, it is a sound verb, otherwise it is a defective, weak or hollow verb as for conjugation. Interestingly, in this lesson we have only one sound verb قِدِر *to be able* and even that has qaf which is pronounced as a glottal stop **'idir** *to be able* in (non-Palestinian) Levantine and Egyptian Arabic, which is for a native speaker is a fully functional consonant. Verbs are categorized into measures (other terminology are stems and forms), which are Roman numbered I, II, up to XI). In this lesson we have only two kinds of measures: measure I and measure VIII. Measures are shaped with infixes, middle consonant doublings, vowel lengthening and **t**, **n**, **s** and alif prefixes.

- sound measure I - is composed of three non-weak consonants and the conjugation prefixes and suffixes are added to it. Measure I is composed with the three root letters with the basic shape: قدر **qdr**
- hollow measure I - is composed of three letters but with an alif (long aa) in the middle: كان **kaan**
- defective measure I - is when the last root letter is weak: أجا **'aja**
  - this verb is irregular since the first letter is **a**
- geminate measure I - the last root letter is the same as the previous one: حب **Hbb**
- measure VIII is when an **i** prefix and a **t** infix is added to the basic shape: اشتاق **ištaaq** from the hollow شاق **šaaq**
  - This example is a hollow measure VIII
- defective measure VIII is when the last root letter is weak: إلْتقى **iltqa**

Verbs are brutally important in Arabic, and if you understand the morphology, you can recognize them within sentences, and you will be able to find the verb in a dictionary, otherwise you are lost. There is a good reason books are published just about Arabic Verbs. For example, the excellent Big Fat Book of Egyptian Arabic Verbs has more than 250 verbs with full conjugation tables and examples. Both the Palestinian Arabic Verbs and Levantine Arabic Verbs mentioned above are excellent source for a learner.

English	Verb Conjugation	Past, Imperfect	
to become (L53, P62)	hollow measure I	Saar, ySiir	صار يصير
to be (L76A, P84A)	hollow measure I	kaan/keen, ykuun	كان يكون
to meet up with (L49, P24)	defective measure VIII	ilta'a (see اشترى ištara *to buy*) yilti'i	إلْتقى ب يلتقي ب
to see (L48, P59)	hollow measure I	šaaf, yšuuf	شاف يشوف

to like (L20, P37)	geminate measure I	Habb, yHibb	حبّ يحِب
to visit (L40, P51)	hollow measure I	zaar, yzuur	زار يزور
to be able to (L73, P81)	sound measure I	'idir, yi'dar	قِدِر يِقدَر
to live (P62)	hollow measure I	3aaš (like صار *to become*), y3iiš, 3aayiš/3ayša	عاش يعيش عايش
to come (L1, P1)	irregular defective measure I	'aja, yiiji	أجا يِيجي
to die (L76, P84)	hollow measure I	maat (like كان *to be*)	مات
to miss, long for (L36, P17)	hollow measure VIII	ištaa' (like ارتاح *to rest*), yišta'	اشتاق يِشتَاق

Past Tense of Verbs

The lesson has the following verbs (**Saar, kaan, maat, šta'**) and sentences with past tense:

- wlaad-ixwaani u-ixwaati **Sar-**3<u>a</u>dadhum xams u-talatiin
  - *The children of my brothers and sisters, the number of them became thirty-five*
  - **Saar** *to become* is pronounced with a short **a** here.
  - The subject **3adad** *number* here comes after the verb.
- b*aaba* **kaan** waHdaani l-ahlu
  - *Dad was the only child of the family*
  - **kaan** pronounced **keen** in the video.
  - Here the subject **b**aaba comes before the verb, **aa** and **a** are emphatic.
- kull-i-jduudi u jiddaati **maatu**
  - *All my grandfathers and grandmothers died.*
  - The subject is plural and the verb is plural, too.
- **šta't-**il-hum i-ktiir-i-ktiir
  - *I missed [for] them a lot, a lot*
  - The suffix -**il-hum** is not part of the verb it is composed of the preposition **l** *for* and the personal pronoun suffix **hum** *them*.
  - The subject أنا *I* is implied, the suffix **t** takes the role of personal pronoun. The past tense **t** suffix is a bit ambiguous, nevertheless, in colloquial Arabic, since it could mean either *I* or *you* (masc.).
  - The verb اشتقتلهم is spelled with a silent leading alif just to conform to the traditional spelling of measure VIII verbs in the past tense.

As for conjugation Arabic has only two tenses Perfect and Imperfect (McCarus p44, p53, p65, p67). The past tense is formed with suffixes: **-it, -na, -ti, -tu** and **-u**. Hollow verbs have a long **aa** in 3rd person past tense forms, and has a short **u** in 1st and 2nd person forms. The verbs with two **i**'s (for example, **'idir** *to be able*) elide their first **i** when suffixes are added.

	daras *to learn* (McCarus p66)	**kaan** *to be* (McCarus p66, P84A)	**šaaf** *to see*	**'idir** *to be able*	**aja/aža** *to come*	**Habb** *to like*	**maat** *to die*
ana	darast	kun(i)t	šuft	'dir(i)t	jiit/žiit	Habbeet	
iHna	daras**na**	kunna	šufna	'dirna	jiina/žiina	Habbeena	
inta	darast	kun(i)t	šuft	'dir(i)t	jiit/žiit	Habbeet	
inti	daras**ti**	kunti	šufti	'dirti	jiiti/žiiti	Habbeeti	
intu	daras**tu**	kuntu	šuftu	'dirtu	jiitu/žiitu	Habbeetu	
huwwa	daras	kaan	šaaf	'idir	aja/aža	Habb	maat
hiyya	daras**at**	kaanat	šaafat	'idrat	ajat/ažat	Habbat	maatat

humma	darasu	kaanu	šaafu	'idru	aju/ažu	Habbu	maatu

McCarus listed **kunt** (same as in Egyptian Arabic) but P84A gives **kunit**, and L76A **kinit**, so there are pronunciation variants even within the Levantine region.

The pronunciation of **'dir(i)t** قدرت **dirna** قدرنا **dirti** قدرتي **dirtu** قدرتوا قدرتوا is special since qaf ق is pronounced as glottal stop in Levantine and Egyptian colloquial, and here a glottal stop is followed by a regular consonant: **'d** قد which is brutal to a non-Arab learner; for sg 3rd fem (hiyyi) in L73 **'idrit** *she was able to* is given instead of **'idrat**.

The verb normally precedes the subject and agrees with it in person, number and gender. In case of a compound subject the verb agrees with the first one or plural form. When the verb has a noun subject and object, the subject comes before the verb (McCarus p 68)

	(i)šta' *to miss, long for*	**ilta'a** *to meet up*	**zaar** *to visit*	**Saar** *to become*	**3aaš** *to live*
ana	(i)šta'it	ilta'eet	zurt	Sirt	3išt
iHna	(i)šta'na	ilta'eena	zurna	Sirna	3išna
inta	(i)šta'it	ilta'eet	zurt	Sirt	3išt
inti	(i)šta'ti	ilta'eeti	zurti	Sirti	3išti
intu	(i)šta'tu	ilta'eetu	zurtu	Sirtu	3ištu
huwwa	(i)štee'	ilta'a	zaar	Saar	3aaš
hiyya	(i)štee'it	ilta'at	zaarat	Saarat	3aašat
humma	(i)štee'u	ilta'u	zaaru	Saaru	3aašu

ilta'a *to meet up* is conjugated as **ištara** *to buy* and L49 lists the conjugation without the **i** prefix: **lta'eet, lta'ayna, lta'eet, lta'ayti, lta'aytu, lta'a, lta'it, lta'u**.

Imperfect Conjugation of Verbs

Here are the samples from the text, in all cases the imperfect comes after another verb (**Habb** *to like*, **'idir** *to be able*) or modal word (**mumkin** *possible*):

- mumkin bass **elte'i** b-wlaadhum fil-munasabaat ilx*aaSSa*
  - *it is possible only that I meet their children on the special occasions*
- iHna-l-ixwe binHibb-i-**nzuur** ba3aD
  - *we the siblings like that we visit each other*
- ma ba'dar **ašuuf**-ha ktiir
  - *I cannot see her a lot*

Imperfect is formed with prefixes: **e/a/i-** (depending on the dialect), **n/ni/nu-**, **t/ti/tu-**, and **y/yi/yu-** as well as suffixes: -, **-i** or **-u**. The 1st person singular (**ana**) may be prefixed with **a-** or **i-**. If the verb has a long vowel, the **i-** prefix is elided (see **šuuf**, **nšuuf**, etc). **inta** and **hiyya** forms are always the same. So, the prefix indicates person and number, the suffix gender and plural. The prefix is **n-**, **t-** or **y-** before one consonant or vowel, it is **ni/nu-, ti/tu-** or **yi/yu-** before two consonants.

McCarus (p91, p102, p103) calls imperfect as <u>subjunctive</u>, with a good reason: it conveys modality. The verb in the expression **alla yirHamu** *may God be merciful to him* is in imperfect (subjunctive), too, and is used for wishes.

	zaar *to visit*	**šaaf** *to see*	**ilta'a** *to meet up*	**daras** *to study*	
ana	**a**zuur	**a**šuuf/šuuf	alta'i/ilt'i/elte'i	adrus	
(n)iHna	**n**zuur	**n**šuuf	nilt(e)'i	nudrus	
inta	**t**zuur	**t**šuuf	tilt(e)'i	tudrus	

inti	**t**zuur**i**	**t**šuuf**i**	tilt(e)'i	tudrusi	
intu	**t**zuur**u**	**t**šuuf**u**	tilt(u)'u	tudrusu	
huwwa	**y**zuur	**y**šuuf	yilt(e)'i	yudrus	
hiyya	**t**zuur	**t**šuuf	tilt(e)'i	yudrusi	
humma	**y**zuur**u**	**y**šuuf**u**	yilt(u)'u	yudrusu	

Using Imperfect with mumkin

The imperfect form of verbs is typically used together with other verbs like **'idir** (**ba'dar**) or expressions like **mumkin** *possible*. The imperfect gives the basis for b-imperfect and future forms. The personal pronouns are not needed before Arabic verbs since the conjugated form itself contains the person.

- mumkin elte'i b-uulaadhum *It is possible that I [will] meet them*
- ma ba'dar ašuufha *I cannot see her*

The bi-Imperfect Conjugation

Here are the examples from the text:

- heek **bikuun** 3endi xemis xaalaat u-xemis ixwaal
  - o *so, I have five (maternal) aunts and uncles*
  - o In this text it is spelled as بكون **bikuun** *he/it is going to be* while the more traditional spelling بيكون **bikuun** of kaan in imperfect 3rd sg masc (huwwe), since morphologically the b prefix is simply added to the imperfect form **ykuun** + **bi** يكون **+ ب** the pronunciation in both case is the same **bikuun**. The spelling بكون is traditionally for **bakuun** *I am going to be* but in the audio she pronounced **bikuun** clearly.
- amma-wlaad u-banaat ixwaati u-ixwaani **bašuuf**-hum aktar
  - o *As for the children and girls of my aunts and uncles I see them a lot*
- iHna-l-ixwe **binHibb**-i-nzuur ba3aD
  - o *we the siblings like that we visit each other*
- ma **ba'dar** ašuufha ktiir
  - o *I cannot see her a lot*
- ma **btiiji** ktiir 3ala 3ammaan
  - o *she doesn't come a lot to Amman*

Bi-imperfect is the present tense of verbs in colloquial Arabic. It is constructed by simply adding a **b(a/i)-** before the imperfect form. In the 1st person singular (**ana** *I*) the **a** prefix is replaced with the **b**-prefix **ba**šuuf/**b**šuuf *I see;* in 3rd person singular masc (**huwwa** *he*) and plural the **y** sound is eliminated in the pronunciation, however, it is retained in the Arabic spelling **bišuuf** بيشوف *he sees*.

In some Levantine dialects **m-** is added to 1st person plural (niHna).

McCarus p112, p123 calls bi-imperfect as <u>indicative</u>, and for a good reason.

	kaan *to be*	**šaaf** *to see*	**ilta'a** *to meet up*	**aja** *to come*	**Habb** *to like*	**'idir** *to be able to*
ana	b(a)kuun	**ba**šuuf	**ba**lti'i	baaji	baHibb	ba'dar
(n)iHna	binkuun	**bin**šuuf	**bni**lti'i	bniiji	binHibb	bni'dar
inta	bitkuun	**bit**šuuf	**bti**lti'i	btiiji	bitHibb	bti'dar
inti	bitkuun**i**	**bit**šuuf**i**	**bti**lti'i	btiiji	bitHibb**i**	bti'dar**i**
intu	bitkuun**u**	**bit**šuuf**u**	**bti**lt'**u**	btiiju	bitHibb**u**	bti'dar**u**
huwwa	bikuun	**bi**šuuf	**bi**lti'i	biiji	biHibb	bi'dar

hiyya	bitkuun	**bit**šuuf	**btil**ti'i	btiiji	bitHibb	bti'dar
humma	bikuun**u**	**biy**šuuf**u**	**bi**lti'**u**	biiju	biHibbu	bti'daru

The bi-imperfect of **kaan** is used for habits or the future: **ma bkuun bilbeet ba3d-i-DDuhur** *I won't be at home in the afternoon*. **ma bakuun naayim** *I wont't be sleeping*.

Active Participle

Example from the lesson:

- ma ba'dar ašuufha ktiir <mark>li'enha</mark> **3ayše** bi-am<u>r</u>ka
    - *I cannot see her a lot, since [she] lives in America*

Active participles are formally adjectives that are constructed from verbs and has full verbal characteristics (McCarus p201). A participle has only three forms: sg. masc., sg. fem. and plural.

- عايش living (sg.masc.) **3aayiš**
- عايشة living (sg.fem.) **3ayša**
    - Because of the colloquial phonetic rules, the long aa is shortened and the **i** is elided.
- عايشين living (plural) **3ayšeen**
    - Because of the phonetic rules, the long vowel is shortened and the stress is shifted on the suffix.

Negating Verbs

Levantine Arabic Verbs book (2017) p111 says, that the negative of all tenses is formed by adding ما **ma(a)** before the verb (and any future or progressive particle).

Note, however, that the Palestinian style of negating is very similar to Egyptian (MacCarus p126, p152). While the perfect tense is normally negated with **ma**... **-š**, either of these parts may be omitted. You will thus hear **ma 'ajaaš**, **ma 'aja** and **ajaaš** all meaning *he didn't come*. Some speakers, likewise, use **ma** with the imperfect like **ma bifhamš** which is equivalent to **bifhamš** *he doesn't (ever) understand*. Palestinian Arabic Verbs p115: The negative of both the bare imperfect and the bi-imperfect is formed by adding the suffix ش **-(i)š** to the verb, or adding the particle **ma/maa** ما before it.