

00 - Quickstart

Learning nahw analytically

Table of contents

Introduction

1. Expected outcomes - What these notes can (and cannot) help with
 - A. For both reviewer and middling students
 - B. For the reviewer
 - C. For the middling
2. What are the prerequisites to using these notes?
 - A. For the reviewer
 - B. For the middling

Reading these notes

3. What's the reading order for a table?
4. How do I 'read' the examples and hints to infer rules?
 - A. What kind of patterns in the examples?
 - B. Types of hints
5. Great! Which page should I begin with?

Other FAQs

6. License and Attribution

Introduction

1. Expected outcomes - What these notes can (and cannot) help with

A. For both reviewer and middling students

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ Convey the concept quicker | Generally speaking, this holds true due to the concise nature of the notes. |
| ✓ A deeper understanding of نحو rules | compared to a reference book, given identical time investment as more time is spent analyzing the examples than explanatory text. |
| ✗ Learning precise definitions | Use reference books for this. Precise definitions are only occasionally provided. |
| ✗ Cover all minutiae of نحو | Out of scope. The objective is to convey the core concepts. Plus, I am not that qualified. |
| ✓ Providing numerous examples for each case | I have collated examples from ibn Hisham's شرح قطر الندى and from نيل المنى. Some topics have more examples than others. |
| ✓ Convey rule hierarchy for easier ingestion | See Chapter 12, 37 or 42 for examples on what this means. |
| ✓ Easier comparison of rules | The tables and the examples within are laid out so as to easily compare and contrast similar rules |
| ✓ Expose gaps in your knowledge so you can fill them in | because you cannot deduce the rule from the examples till you know the underlying concepts |
| ✗ Replace classical references | These notes are for either 1) reviewing or 2) a stepping stone to read classical books |
| ✓ Proficiency in recognizing their | when practiced with other texts and examples |

usage in other texts

✗ Writing or speaking proficiently as it requires more than just knowing **نحو** rules

B. For the reviewer

✓ Easier to review with, and make recalling concepts and examples far quicker than when using a reference book.

C. For the middling

- ✓ Learning the rules conceptually since you are expected to analyze the sentences and infer the rules.
- ✓ Expose gaps in your knowledge so you can fill them in because you cannot deduce the rule from the examples until you know the underlying concepts
- ✓ Make it easier to understand a classical sharh afterwards These notes can be used as a stepping stone for reading classical books.
- ✗ A roadmap to learn Arabic grammar, ordered from simple to complex topics These notes are provided only as content (*how* to study) without a roadmap (*what* to study first). The latter is left up to the teacher to decide. I do not have any data to recommend a roadmap.

For the self-learner, perhaps the difficulty level given for each table is one mechanism you can use to decide what to study first.

C. For the teacher

Please see the section '[How to use these notes for teaching نحو - Expected outcomes](#)' in the Wiki

2. What are the prerequisites to using these notes?

A. For the reviewer

All that is required is that you understand how to 'read' the tables in the notes. Please go through the related sections in the Wiki and you are set.

B. For the middling student

The more you know of the following, the easier the time you will have:

1. You know your sarf tables or can at least recognize sing, dual and plurals in the common forms.
2. You know **إعراب** and its various types: الواو، الياء، الألف، كسرة، ضمة، فتحة etc.
3. You are able to parse basic Arabic sentences into their constituent parts. **مبتدأ، خبر، فاعل، مفعول، حال**. These are only mentioned where a rule cannot be deduced otherwise.
4. You have a solid beginner vocabulary. Difficult sentences are translated.

Reading these notes

3. What's the reading order for a table?

Read **Table heading** → Study the **Observe** columns and hints → Try deducing rules yourself → Check against **Infer** column

1. When to use singular form of فاعل?

| Infer | Observe ① | Observe |
|---|---|---|
| Regardless of فاعل being sing, dual or plural 1. If فاعل is مذكر ⇒ مفرد مذكر is فعل 2. If فاعل is مؤنث ⇒ مفرد مؤنث is فعل | حَضَرَ الرجلُ ✓ حَضَرَ الرجلانِ ✓ حَضَرَ الرجالُ ✓ حَضَرَ الرجلانِ ✗ حَضَرُوا الرجالُ ✗ يَحْضُرُ الرجالُ ✓ | قامتُ هُنْدُ ✓ قامتُ الهِنْدَانِ ✓ قامتُ الهِنْدَاتُ ✓ قامتُ الهِنْدَانِ ✗ قامتُ الهِنْدَاتُ ✗ تَقُومُ الهِنْدَاتُ ✓ |

1. **Table heading** - indicates the topic addressed and is vital to know what patterns you should focus on.
2. **Observe** columns, its examples and hints - Analyze these without looking at **Infer**. How to analyze **Observe** is explained in the next section.
3. Deduce as much as possible of a rule using the examples and the provided hints.
4. **Infer** column should be used to check your inferences and when reviewing

Activity Now try this out on the above table. It's one of the simplest ones.

REMEMBER! Focus first on **Table heading** and **Observe** column, not the **Infer** column.

4. How do I 'read' the examples and hints to infer rules?

In short, by analyzing **patterns** in the examples and with assistance from the provided **hints**.

A. What kind of patterns in the examples?

Remember! First study the table heading. This is vital to know what patterns you should focus on:

- a. What is the form of a particular word category? (e.g. فاعِل أو مُكْرِم for a doer)
- b. What are the specific conditions of a word that causes a rule to activate?
 - i. Its gender or number? مذكر، مؤنث، مفرد، جمع
 - ii. Its definiteness? معرفة، نكرة، إضافة
 - iii. Its role? مبتدأ، خبر، فاعل، مفعول، حال
 - iv. Simple or compound? مركب، مفرد
 - v. Is the word being brought forward or delayed, or assumed?

Naturally, there are far too many patterns in any sentence. This is why hints are used to direct you in the right direction.

B. Types of hints

i. Indicating usage allowance, preference, and prohibition

Observe the icons in the table below.

- a. **Type 1** is used for examples if only correct/incorrect usage exists for them. Example: See [اسم الفعل](#)
- b. **Type 2** is now self-explanatory. Example: See [اسم الفاعل مؤنث](#)

| Type 1 | Type 2 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| ✓ Correct usage | ✓ Preferred |
| ✗ Incorrect usage | ✗ Not preferred |
| | ✗ Incorrect |

Providing correct and incorrect usages is an oft-used technique in these notes.

ii. Highlighting

To draw your attention to a key pattern in the examples that cause the rule, highlighting is used to indicate **correct** patterns or **incorrect** usages.

- a. Example: [what can be a فاعل](#)

iii. Multiple patterns

Sometimes, there are multiple patterns to compare and contrast in a table. In such a case, **Pattern 1** and **Pattern 2** will use different colors. If they occur elsewhere in the row, your attention will be called to **Pattern 1**, and to **Pattern 2**, so you can compare across them.

- a. Example: See [اسم التفضيل](#) on whether it should always be مفرد مذكر.

Note All highlight colors are RG-blind safe and photocopy-friendly (i.e. you can differentiate between them in B&W, so color printing is not necessary).

iv. Indicating order of words

Notations are sometimes used to hint at a rule. Observe the **Notation** columns and try to infer what each notation means.

| Meaning | Notation | Notation | Meaning | Notation | Meaning |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| هَلْ زَيْدٌ قَامَ أَبُوهُ | هَلْ + زَيْدٌ | هَلْ ... | هَلْ begins sentence | ∴ | Because |
| هَلْ comes after زَيْدٌ | هَلْ < زَيْدٌ | هَلْ ... | does not begin it | ∴ | Therefore |
| هَلْ comes before قَامَ | قَامَ > هَلْ | هَلْ ... زَيْدٌ | هَلْ and قَامَ are not consecutive | ⇒ | Implies |
| They are equivalent | قَامَ أَبُو زَيْدٍ ⇔ زَيْدٌ قَامَ أَبُوهُ | هَلْ زَيْدٌ هُ | هَلْ points to زَيْدٌ | | Or |

The above are building blocks and can be combined.

| Explanation | Condition |
|--|----------------------------|
| هَلْ starts the sentence, and is followed by زَيْدٌ. | هَلْ ... & هَلْ < زَيْدٌ ✓ |
| They are consecutive | هَلْ ... زَيْدٌ ✗ |

v. Indicating assumed words

Assumed words are grey amongst black text.

- a. Example: مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ أَنَا زَيْدٌ
 b. For more examples, see [حذف المبتدأ وجوفاً](#)

vi. Difficulty level of rule extraction

Note the **1** in the table

1. When to use singular form of فَعَلَ?

| Infer | Observe ① | Observe |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Regardless of فاعل being sing, dual or plural | حَضَرَ الرَّجُلُ ✓ | قَامَتْ هُنْدُ ✓ |
| هَلْ زَيْدٌ قَامَ أَبُوهُ | هَلْ زَيْدٌ قَامَ أَبُوهُ ✓ | هَلْ زَيْدٌ قَامَتْ هُنْدُ ✓ |

Each table will have one of these icons to indicate how difficult a rule is to extract.

Difficulty level

① Low ② Med ③ High

Difficulty depends on two factors:

1. Your background knowledge and skill
2. Limitations of the notation system to convey the complete rule (in which case, it's not your fault if you don't get it).

Use it as a barometer to either skip it, or pat yourself on the back if you get it right. Also, please remember that this is a [work in progress](#), so the assigned difficulty level may be inaccurate.

5. Great! Which page should I begin with?

The below topics are arranged from simple to complex (in terms of using the system). Work your way through them sequentially to ease into using these notes. As for the sequence of topics to study, these notes do not come with any recommendations for it:

[31 - الفاعل](#)

[45 - اسم الفاعل](#)

[47 - اسم التفضيل](#)

[42 - المستثنى](#)

[21 - المبتدأ والخبر](#)

[22 - أنواع تعدد الخبر، تقديم الخبر](#)

[23 - حذف المبتدأ](#)

Other FAQs

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| | |
|---------|---|
| Creator | Zahid Syed |
| Title | Learning nahw analytically |
| Page | https://github.com/zahidsyed/learning-nahw-analytically |