

Class Notes for Session 01

Section III of IV: Pronouns*

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[plural]	[dual]	[singular]	
جَمْعٌ	مُثْنِي	مُفْرَدٌ	
هُمْ they	هُمَا they two	هُوَ he	الْغَائِبُ [Absent]
هُنَّ they	هُمَا they two	هِيَ she	الْغَائِبَةُ [Absent (fem.)]
أَنْتُمْ ye	أَنْتُمَا ye two	أَنْتَ thou	الْمُخَاطَبُ [Addressee]
أَنْتُنَّ ye	أَنْتُمَا ye two	أَنْتِ thou	الْمُخَاطَبَةُ [Addressee (fem.)]
نَحْنُ we		أَنَا I	الْمُتَكَلِّمُ [Speaker]

Figure 1: *Separate form of الضَّمَائِرُ* [pronouns]

*These lecture notes are from the *Learn Qur'ānic Arabic* course being taught by Dr. Yusuf Kavakci at the Islamic Association of North Texas (IANT) in Richardson, Texas. Details and course materials are available online at [<http://www.iant.com/lqabasic.php>].

1 The Table of Pronouns

ضَمَائِرُ [pronouns]¹ may appear either in *separate* or in *connected* form. In *مُنْفَصِل* [separate] form, a ضَمِيرٌ stands by itself. Its *مُتَّصِل* [connected] form is that which occurs prefixed or suffixed to other words.

Figure 1 tabulates all the *separate* pronouns. Figure 2 presents the corresponding pronoun *suffixes* that indicate the accusative or genitive² case. Figure 3 combines the tables in Figures 1 and 2.

[plural]	[dual]	[singular]	
جَمْعٌ	مُتْنِي	مُفْرَدٌ	
هُم، هُمْ	هُمَا، هُمَا	هُ، هِ هُ، هِ	الْعَائِبُ [Absent]
هِنَّ، هُنَّ	هُمَا، هُمَا	هَا	الْعَائِبَةُ [Absent (fem.)]
كُمْ	كُما	كَ	الْمُخَاطَبُ [Addressee]
كُنَّ	كُما	كِ	الْمُخَاطَبَةُ [Addressee (fem.)]
نَا		نِي	الْمُتَكَلِّمُ [Speaker]

Figure 2: Pronoun suffixes that indicate accusative or genitive case

Note the following characteristics of the language:

1. There are only two genders: مُدَكَّرٌ [masculine] and مُؤَنَّثٌ [feminine]. No *neuter* gender.

¹ ضَمَائِرُ is plural of ضَمِيرٌ [pronoun]. By the term, pronoun, we mean *personal pronoun*, unless explicitly specified.

² نِي is never used in the genitive. But, this is a level of detail that we will pick up as we progress with this class.

[plural]	[dual]	[singular]	
جَمْعٌ	مُثْنِي	مُفْرَدٌ	
هُم، هُمْ	هُمَا، هُمَا	هُوَ، هُوَ، هِ	الْغَائِبُ [Absent]
هِنَّ، هُنَّ	هُمَا، هُمَا	هِيَ، هَا	الْغَائِبَةُ [Absent (fem.)]
كُم، أَنْتُمْ	كُما، أَنْتُمَا	كَ، أَنْتِ	الْمُخَاطَبُ [Addressee]
كُنَّ، أَنْتُنَّ	كُما، أَنْتُمَا	كَ، أَنْتِ	الْمُخَاطَبَةُ [Addressee (fem.)]
نَا، نَحْنُ		أَنَا، نِي	الْمُتَكَلِّمُ [Speaker]

Figure 3: الضَّمَائِرُ [pronouns]

- To signify number, there exists the مُفْرَدٌ [singular], the مُثْنِي [dual] (denoting two in number), and the جَمْعٌ [plural] (denoting three or more).
- Grammatical *person* is marked as الْغَائِبُ [Absent], الْغَائِبَةُ [Absent (fem.)], الْمُخَاطَبُ [Addressee], الْمُخَاطَبَةُ [Addressee (fem.)]³, or الْمُتَكَلِّمُ [Speaker].

2 The Table on Fingers

The table in Figure 3 needs to be etched to memory. Note that there are 5 rows in the table; 3 elements on each row except the last, which has only two (أَنَا and نَحْنُ). Here is how to list Figure 1 on your fingers; we can practice Figure 3 likewise.

³Note the change of meaning from masculine to feminine with the suffix *ة*, as in الغائبة and المخاطبة.

Hold up your right hand,
The palm facing you,
Fingers pointing upward.
*Begin with the Little Finger, move right toward the Thumb;
On each finger, move base to tip.*

The Little Finger— **الْغَائِبُ**
Point to the base segment with the right Thumb, and say, “هُوَ”
Move the Thumb to the middle segment, and say, “هُمَا”
Move to the top segment, and say, “هُمَّ”.

Next, the Ring Finger— **الْعَائِيَةُ**
Point to the base segment of the Ring Finger, and say, “هِيَ”
Move to the middle segment, and say, “هُمَا”
Now, Move to the top segment, and say, “هُنَّ”.

Likewise, **الْمَخَاطِبُ** goes on the Middle Finger,
الْمَخَاطِبَةُ on the Index Finger.
The Thumb has only two segments;
So, **أَنَا** goes on the base segment,
and **نَحْنُ** on the top.

3 Appendix

A *pronoun* is a word that takes the place of a noun in a sentence. For example, suppose we want to say: “Yusuf went (away).” We can say, instead, “*He* went (away),” if it is obvious from the context that we are referring to Yusuf. The word *he* and its like are classed as pronouns, in English—more specifically they are called *personal pronouns*.

In English, we use First Person (*I, we*), Second Person (*you*), and Third Person Pronouns (*he, she, it, they*). These pronouns have the form listed, when they are used as subject in a sentence—i.e., the subjective or nominative case. As object of a verb they take on a different form (*me, us, him, her, them*, etc.)—grammar books call this case, the objective or accusative. Again, in order to signify ownership or association we use *my, our, your, his, hers, their*, etc.—this case is called, the possessive or genitive.