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## **Textbook Review**

**Amalia Mokrushina, *Arabic Grammar: Tables and Exercises***

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Amalia Mokrushina's textbook, *Arabic Grammar in Tables and Exercises*, is designed for beginners and can also be utilized for more advanced students of Arabic for language maintenance and review. The author situates the main objective of the book in offering students a way to reinforce and internalize grammar topics through exercises ranging in difficulty. Mokrushina's work is an important contribution in addressing the persistent lack of high quality textbooks for students of Arabic, especially those promoting acquisition and utilization of grammar. At present, there aren't nearly enough materials that aim to boost accuracy in learners of Arabic. To address this void, a wide range of topics covered in *Arabic Grammar in Tables and Exercises* offer a wonderful resource for students who wish to practice grammar through diverse and well-articulated exercises, while also reviewing useful vocabulary.

The book is divided into 43 chapters-lessons, organized around different topics in grammar, syntax, and morphology. The chapters are subsequently united into three sections by the

difficulty level – beginning, intermediate, and advanced, with clusters of additional review exercises following each section. In the end, there is a test covering topics presented throughout the textbook.

The real value of *Arabic Grammar in Tables and Exercises* is its focus on self-learning, as it allows students to dissect the challenging grammatical issues and practice them through a variety of drills. Each chapter offers an overview of a grammar topic, highlighting the most important aspects or rules related to this topic; concrete examples showcasing how these rules work in a real setting; and a number of exercises which increase in difficulty and variety as the chapters progress. Such an efficient structure allows students to focus on the core aspects of the topic and solidify them through diversified practice. There is also a useful visual aspect to the text in that the most important grammatical elements and corresponding examples are highlighted in red. Some topics have longer explanations than others. For instance, Lesson 33 presents a detailed and highly organized overview of rules related to numbers, which is one of the most complex areas of Arabic grammar and usually requires substantial time and effort from students to fully comprehend and memorize. Many lessons contain detailed tables which not only help in memorizing particular categories, but also offer a big-picture perspective where students can start identifying repeating patterns. The table format is particularly useful in delivering such complex rules are conjugations of irregular “hollow” verbs (pp.171-173) or relative pronouns (p.183).

The first section of the textbook comprises 15 lessons which focus on topics related to nouns and their various categories. In her presentation of topics, the author uses blended approach by mixing and matching grammar (such as cases and gender) with syntax (nominative sentences, general negation), morphology (*hamzah* rules), and lexicology (colors). This diversity of form is particularly useful for beginners as it illustrates the different elements of Arabic linguistic system while also helping to avoid learning fatigue. Another interesting and useful feature of the author’s approach is combining “big” core topics, such as cases or pronouns, with “small” but highly important rules, such as the use of the word *kull* (which can mean “all” or “each, every,” depending on the accompanying grammar) or writing rules behind the words *aab*

("father") and *akh* ("brother"). The combination of big and small rules helps keeping students engaged with the material from chapter to chapter.

The second section covers topics of intermediate difficulty and consists of 13 lessons, all focusing on verbs. Particular emphasis here is given to verbal forms (*awzaan*) – a challenging topic which calls for continuous practice which Mokrushina generously provides in the form of numerous drills and exercises. Several essential rules on syntax are also included – the verbal sentence and types of verbal negation, as well as a separate lesson on future tense. This section is followed by a set of comprehensive exercises providing an additional opportunity to review and practice the aforementioned topics.

The third and final section has 15 lessons, most of which zoom in on syntax (such as relative clause, direct and indirect speech), irregular verbs, and other advanced-level grammatical categories, such as particles *qad*, *ma*, and *illa*. This section has the most detailed explanations and diversified exercises, aiming to challenge students and test their comprehension. The final test at the end of the textbook has a multiple-choice format and contains an answer key, giving an opportunity to learners to self-assess their knowledge and retention of the covered material.

In conclusion, Amalia Mokrushina's welcome contribution to the field of Arabic applied linguistics is both pedagogically noteworthy and timely, considering the continuing global importance of the Arab Middle East and North Africa. Taking into consideration its novel presentation of grammar topics and focus on self-learning, *Arabic Grammar in Tables and Exercises* is a valuable addition not only to Arabic Studies, but to the field of second language acquisition overall.