A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF ARABIC AND ENGLISH NOUN PLURAL MARKERS

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Abstract

This paper is attempting to explore the plural markers in both Arabic and English. The data collected qualitatively are sorted to meet the scope of this paper. Through contrastive analysis, it is discovered that there are numerous significant differences rather than similarities in terms of syllable count start, patterns of plural nouns in relation to gender, regularity, regular vs irregular plural and internal vowel change. Moreover, Arabic has some uniqueness in its plural marking system. Being well informed on all of these might pave the way for second or foreign language learners to comprehensively understand the plural marking system in Arabic and English.

Key words: Arabic, English, plural marker, suffix

INTRODUCTION

Understanding what contrastive linguistics and contrastive analysis is a paramount important prior to the discussion and analysis of plural markers in Arabic and English. Contrastive linguistic is ‘a sub-discipline concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or sub-systems of languages in order to determine both the differences and the similarities between them’ (Fisiak et al. 1978 cited in
Fisiak, 1981, p.v.). Contrastive analysis in this article is defined as ‘to research about differences and similarities between a limited number of languages carried out for ‘its own shake’ (Willems, Defrancq, Colleman & Noel, 2003, p.1). Saeed and Fatihi (2011) argue that contrastive analysis does help the translator and L2 in avoiding errors, solving the difficulties and minimizing interference, for it affords certain views, assumptions, explanations of some phenomena, such as creolisation and pidginisation of languages that are expected to assist the better bilingualism understanding. In simple way, contrastive analysis endeavors to see how “the same thing” can be said in other ways.

This morphological issue has grabbed some previous researchers’ attention. McCarthy and Prince (1999) have carried out research relating to the broken plural in Arabic, in which they do not only provide the issues about the Arabic broken plural in morphological aspect but also attempt to interconnect between morphology and phonology. Approximately a decade later, Haspelmath and Sims (2010) state that there are two morphological rules: concatenative and non-concatenative. When the words can be described through the morpheme-based model, these are going to be the concatenative rule. Whereas, when the words are not possible to be described through the morpheme-based model because it has zero-affix, internal change or others, it must belong to the non-concatenative rules approachable through word-based model. These universal morphological rules to plural either in Arabic and English have the regular and irregular forms. Therefore, those similarities and differences are worth investigating.

The contrastive analysis specifically on morphological analysis about inflectional morpheme has also been done. Saeed and Fatihi (2011) compared two systems of the inflectional affixes in Arabic and English. This study was focused on the inflectional affixes of verbs, plural nouns, adjectives, and genitive of nouns on these two languages. The study reveals seven areas of similarities and differences e.g. no gender and dual suffix in English while there is gender and there are dual affixes in Arabic.

In 2012, Jassem has specifically carried out research on the plural and gender markers of English and Arabic as well as German, French, and Latin. Through the analysis genetic relationship using lexical root theory, he claims that Arabic personal pronoun is the origin of other languages.

Exploring uncharted domain, this article attempts to compare the morphological process of word formation in English and Arabic. The analysis is primarily focused on the affixation attached in forming the plural nouns in both languages, particularly to the subsequent questions:

1. What are the differences and similarities of regular plural markers in Arabic and English?
2. How are the plurals in Arabic and English formed?

RESEARCH METHOD

The data are taken from journals and books available through internet search in which the plural patterns of nouns in Arabic and English are found. This data collection lies within qualitative research tradition (Heigham and Croker, 2009).
Litosseliti (2010) argues that qualitative research is concerned with structures and patterns, and how something is (p.52). In this case, the researchers analyze and interpret the data taken to reflect on and explore what they know, search for pattern, and try to create a full rich understanding of the research context (Heigham and Croker, 2009). As not much known about the comparison between noun plural markers in Arabic and English, this study is ‘exploratory and descriptive in nature to arrive at basic information and utilizes an interpretivist perspective’ (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982 cited in Farell, 2011, p.56). In this article, the relevant data for this research are put into tables and are analyzed right after.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Plurality in English

English has two number classes: singular and plural. Basically, in English, a noun which expresses more than one is simply called as plural noun. In this case, English plural nouns have two forms, regular and irregular (Azar, 1999).

**English Regular Plural**

The regular form commonly occurs rather than the irregular. In regular plural form, inflectional plural morphemes, such as –s and –es are attached to the singular nouns (Fromkin Rodman, and Hyams, 2011). In this case, the researchers have found a simple way to know whether the noun is ended by –s or –es as in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: The criteria of plurals using –s or -es</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Inflectional Morphemes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Criteria</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nouns that end in –sh, -ch, -s, -z, and –x</td>
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<td>Nouns that end in a consonant + -y will be spelled –ies in its plural form</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some nouns that end in –o</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some nouns that end in –f or –fe are changed into –ves to form the plural</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some nouns that end in –o</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some nouns that end in –f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The suffixes attached in the irregular nouns are like –i, -ae, and –a, borrowed from Latin and Greek. For instance, *fungus-fungi, vertebra-vertebrae, and bacterium-bacteria* (Carstairs, 2002). Usually, these borrowed inflectional suffixes are attached to the borrowed English nouns as well. The suffix –(r)en also occurs yet solely in some English words, such as, *ox-oxen, and child-children, brother-brothers* (Azar, 1999; Carstairs, 2002; Jassem, 2013).

The internal system change in plural form can be seen in the example *tooth-teeth, man-men, and mouse-mice*. It exhibits the allomorph of the root with different vowels from the singular which is also termed as ablaut (Spencer, 1994; Watson, 2002). Nevertheless, there are also some plural nouns which employ neither suffix nor vowel change, such as, *sheep, deer, fish, and trout*. This unchanged plural form is termed as zero-suffix (Carstairs, 2002).

In conclusion, the irregular plural form is exclusion to the English inflectional rule of plural formation. The term given to this phenomenon is *suppletion* (Carstairs, 2002; Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams, 2011). The irregular plurals in English form closed classes, which constitute a fixed list from which particular forms can be lost, yet new forms cannot be added. On the contrary, the regular plural forms are considered default endings which mean when new nouns are added into English, it is simply attached by –s or –es, such as *vuvuzela* becomes *vuvuzelas* (Lieber, 2009).

**Plurality in Arabic**

Unlike English number classifications which are divided into singular and plural, Arabic number class is categorized into three: singular, dual, and plural (Ryding, 2005). Thus, the Arabic plural starts from the count of three. As well as English plural, Arabic plural is classified into regular and broken (irregular) (Al-Ghalayini, 2011).

**Arabic Regular Plural**

To form the Arabic regular plural, the stem must be free from any additional letter. And it must be noted that the stem *(wazan)* of an Arabic word consists of three letters *هِجِيِّيَّة*، which are commonly represented with ل،ج،م. Every Arabic noun or adjective has a gender: masculine and feminine. Therefore, they employ different inflectional suffixes to form the plurals and usually do not have any internal change (McCarthey and Prince, 1999).
Arabic Masculine Regular Plural (Jama’ Mudzakkar Saalim)

Al-Ghalayani (2011) states that those employable nouns in masculine regular plurals are the sensible masculine proper nouns, whose bases do not end in [t], and the sensible masculine adjectives. For masculine regular form, the suffixes attached are -uuna (وان) when the nouns are in rafa’ (nominative case) position while -iina (نين) is added when the nouns are in nashab (accusative case) and jaar (genitive case). The examples and detail explanations are provided in the subsequent table;

Table 2: The affixes in Arabic masculine regular plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affixes</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-uuna</td>
<td>Rafa’</td>
<td>The subject</td>
<td>The Muslims came to the mosque.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The subject and predicate of an equational sentence (khobar)</td>
<td>The travelers are the writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The subject of kaana and its sisters</td>
<td>The journalists are selling the issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The predicate of inna</td>
<td>The children are amazed by the story of thousand and one night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Votive second term of construct</td>
<td>O the one who are longing to see his handsomeness!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-iina</td>
<td>Nashab</td>
<td>The object of a transitive verb</td>
<td>I saw the Muslims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The circumstance accusative (al-Haal)</td>
<td>They entered the office late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The subject and predicate of Zamma and its sisters</td>
<td>I believe the travelers (are) going to Mecca.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The subject of inna and its sisters</td>
<td>I said that the researchers were confused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The predicate of Kaana</td>
<td>The researchers are confused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>After verbs of transformation</td>
<td>They made the secular activist imprisoned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those rules are employed in the words which are not in the form of *mamdud*, *maqshur*, or *manqush*. If the words are *mamdud* (the last letter of a word is in the form of hamzah “ء”), the formulae are as follows:

1. When there is a sensible masculine noun in the form of feminine noun which ends in “ء”, the “ء” is turned into “و” such as, ورقَى (waraq‘) becomes وراقوون (waraq‘uun).

2. The suffix -uuna (وون) is attached if the “ء” is original. For instance, رجاء (raja‘) becomes رجاوون (rajaawuun).

3. When “ء” replaces ya’ (ي) or wawu (و), its plural form can be directly attached with -uuna (وون) or the “ء” is substituted with و (w). For example, the word رجاء (raja‘) can be either رجاوون (rajaawuun) or رجوون (rajaa‘uun).

When the word which ends in *alif* is found whether *layyinah* (ى) or not (ٍ) (it is simply called *maqshur*), the ى or ٍ is omitted yet it still maintains the *fatha* “َ” (short vowel [a] above the letter). Consequently, if it is attached with و- or -ين, it will be pronounced as -َا in *rafa‘* or -ا in *nashab* and *jaar* as like the word مصطفى (mushtafa) is pluralized into مصطفوون (mushtafauna) or مصطفىين (mushtafain).

However, if a word ends in *ya* (ي), its plural is formed by omitting the and the last letter before و- is given *damma* (ٌ) (short vowel [u] above the letter), such as قاضَى (qaadhii) converts into قاضوون (qaadhuuna). On the other hand, if the inflectional morpheme is -ين, the *kasra* “َِ” is placed in the last letter, for example, قاضي (Al-Ghalayini, 2011).

The preceding rules are applied when the nouns are not as the first term of an *idhaafa*. Nevertheless, if all these masculine regular plurals are placed as the first term of an *idhaafa* construction, the syllable na of the plural masculine disappears whether it is in the form of *rafa‘, nashab*, or *jaar* (Abu-Chacra, 2007). For instance:

a. Sound masculine plural normative: مُفْلَمْيِ السّرْطَان (مُفْلَمْيِ السّرْطَان + السّرْطَان)

b. Sound masculine plural accusative and genitive: مُفْلَمْيِ السّرْطَان (مُفْلَمْيِ السّرْطَان + السّرْطَان)

**Arabic Feminine Regular Plural (Jama’ Muannats Saalim)**

This type of plural commonly occurs and applies to a wide-ranging of Arabic noun classes, human and nonhuman, and adjectives as well. To form the regular feminine plurals is by adding the suffix -aat (اَت). Yet, it must be noticed that when the stem has *taa‘* *marbutha* (ة-), the suffix substitutes the *taa‘* *marbutha* (ة-). (Ryiding, 2005), for instance، قُوَّة (quwwa: power) converts to قُوَّات (quwwaat: powers)
Al-Ghalayani (2011) states that this plural transpires in one of these subsequent criteria:

1. **Feminine proper nouns** (‘alam muannats) e.g., هند (Hindun) → هندات (Hindunat), فاطمة (Fatima) → فاطمات (Fatimas)
2. The nouns whose last letter is taa’ ta’nis (taa’ marbutha “-ة”) e.g., شجرة (syajara: tree) → شجرات (syajarat)
3. The feminine adjectives which end in taa’ marbutha “-ة”) e.g., جميلة (Fatims)
4. The adjectives of the nonhuman masculine nouns e.g., حصان سابق (hishaan saabiq: racing horse) → حصان سابقات (hishaan saabiqaat: racing horses)
5. The verbal nouns (mashdar) which exceed three Arabic letters e.g., تعرف (ta’rif: definition) → تعرفات (ta’riifat: definitions)
6. The diminutive (tasghhir) of nonhuman masculine nouns e.g., دريهم (durahim: dirham) → دريهمات (durahimat: dirhams)
7. The words ذا or ذوي which is positioned before the nonhuman nouns, e.g., ذوات المسكن (dzawat al maskan: owners of house)
8. The borrowed words which have not been established or determined their plural patterns e.g., تلفونات (tilfuun: telephones) → تلفونات (tilfuunat: telephones)

Unlike the masculine regular plural which employs the different inflectional morpheme when they are nominative, accusative, or genitive, the feminine regular plural still employs the same suffix –aat (ات), but the sound ending takes kasra [i] as the nouns are either genitive or accusative, or damma [u] when the nouns are nominative (Ryding, 2005). For further elucidation, see the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affixes</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-aatu</td>
<td>Rafa’</td>
<td>The subject</td>
<td>The female laborers are undergoing the miserable life. Tajri asshaani’ aatu ila inhithati al hayaah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(nominative)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The subject and predicate of an equational sentence (khobar)</td>
<td>The telephones are new. At tilfuunatu jadiidaatun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The subject of kaana and its sisters</td>
<td>The women are still dominated. Laa tazaaal ‘aatiqaat imaa’an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The affixes in Arabic feminine regular plural
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The predicate of <em>inna</em></th>
<th>That the mothers are going to market.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Votive second term of construct</td>
<td>O the (female) students!</td>
<td>Ya ayatuhu at thaalibaati!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My father established the companies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The (female) workers entered the office late.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The subject and predicate of <em>Zanna</em> and its sisters</td>
<td>I believe the female students are busy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The libraries are large.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The predicate of <em>Kaana</em> and its sisters</td>
<td>If the high skies can be climbed up, I must meet her.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocative first term of construct (<em>Nida’</em>)</td>
<td>O Fatimas!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After verbs of transformation</td>
<td>The study of family leader made the Muslim women open-minded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The object of preposition</td>
<td>This company is one of the famous companies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The object of locative verb</td>
<td>I stood up in front of the (female) students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Inna al ummaaati zaahib aatu ila as suuqi*  
"إنّ الأمّهاتِ ذاهبات  إلى السوق"  
"That the mothers are going to market."

*Ya ayyatuha at thaalibaati!*  
"يا أيّتها الطالبات!"  
"O the (female) students!

*Assasa abii asy syarikaati*  
"أسس أبي الشركات!"  
"My father established the companies."

*Dakhalat al muwazzafaatu al idaarata mutaakhiraaati*  
"دخلت الموظّفات الإدارة متأخّرات"  
"The (female) workers entered the office late."

*Azunnu at thaalibaati masyghualaaatin*  
"أظنّ الطبيباتِ مشغولات"  
"I believe the female students are busy."

*Kaanat al maktabaatu kabiir*  
"كانت المكتبات  كبيرات"  
"The libraries are large."

*La’alla as samaawaaati al ‘aaliyaaati mash’uudaatun la uqaabiluhaa*  
"العاليات لعل السموات العالّات مصعودات لأقابلها"  
"If the high skies can be climbed up, I must meet her."

*Ja’alat addiraasah ‘an amiir al usrah as shaalibaati maftuhaaatin*  
"جعلت الدراسة عن أمير الأسرة الصالحات مفتوحات"  
"The study of family leader made the Muslim women open-minded."

*Hazithi syarikatun min asy syarikaati al masyhuurati*  
"هذه شركة من الشركات المشهورة"  
"This company is one of the famous companies."

*Quntu imama at thaalibaati.*  
"أقام أمام الطالبات"  
"I stood up in front of the (female) students."
The last term of an idhaafa construction
There are the houses of the (female) teachers.

There are some exceptional procedures to arrange the Arabic regular plural. If the nouns own hamza (ه) in the last letter (mamdud), the hamza is treated like forming duality in Arabic. Thus, the hamza can be omitted and is altered with waawu (و) or keep the existence of hamza. Then the suffix –aat is attached like the following examples:

a. Desert-deserts Shahraa’-shahrawaat
b. Reader-readers Qurraa’-qurraa’aat

As well as mamdud, if the nouns possess alif layyinah (ى) (maqshuurah), the alif layyinah is treated like forming duality in Arabic. Consequently, the alif layyinah is replaced with ya’ (ي) or waawu (و). For example:

a. Direction-directions Hudaa-hudaayaat
b. Tithe-tithes Zakat-zakawaat

From the above elaboration, it is known that to form the Arabic feminine regular plural is done by attaching the suffix. However, if the basic form’s middle letter of the singular noun consists of sukun, which represents the nonexistence of a vowel, the suffix -aat is not merely attached. It is a must to change that sukun into another diacritical mark (harakat). In this circumstance, Al-Ghalayani (2011) says that there are several ways to change the diacritical marks. They are:

1. The nouns which possess fatha in its first letter should change the second letter’s mark into fatha as well. For example:
   Prostration  prostrations Sajdatun  sajadaatun

2. When the first letter possesses damma, the second letter might:
   a. Employ damma as well as the first letter
   b. Employ fatha
   c. Keep the existence of sukun

Thus, the word خطوات, خطوة, خطوات can be خطوات, خطوة, خطوات. Arabic Broken Plural (Jama’ Taksiir)

Soudi et al (2007), cited in Saeed and Fatihi (2011), says, “The Arabic broken plural system is highly allomorphic”. It is known that this plural type involves the vowel pattern shift within the word stem, such as the English words, man-men, foot-feet, or tooth-teeth (McCarthy and Prince, (1999) and Ryding, (2005). Though, it sometimes might involve the affixation of extra consonant, which are commonly hamza or waaw. Al-Ghalayani (2011) also states that reduction of the letters happens in forming the Arabic broken plural. Unlike the English irregular plural which rarely occurs, the Arabic broken plurals (irregular) are frequently and mostly used (Abu-Chacra, 2007).

In this case, unlike the English irregular plurals which do not possess any exact pattern, the Arabic has numerous strict rules to form this plural type. The pattern will be symbolized by C for representing the consonant, V for vowel, and
VV for long vowel. Ryding (2005) has classified the patterns in accordance with the vowel change of the words and affixation into:

(1) Broken plural patterns which employ the sole internal vowel change

(1.1) Plural CuCuuC (fu’uul) is from singular:

1. CaCiC (fa’il, فعل), e.g. 
   Spleen/s  Kabid/kubud

2. CaCC (fa’l, فعل), whose the middle letter is not waaw, e.g. 
   Liver/s  Qalb/quluub

3. CiCC (fi’l, فعل), e.g. 
   Elephant/s  Fiil/fuyuul

4. CuCC (fi’l,فعل), whose second and third hijaiyyah letters are not alif, 
   waaw, or ya. e.g. 
   Army/ies  Jund/junuud

(1.2) Plural CuCCaaC (fu’aal) belongs to singular CaaCiC (faa’il), whose 
   last letter is not alif, waaw, or ya. For example:

   Writer/s  Kaatib/kuttaab

(1.3) Plural CiCaaC (fi’aal) belongs to singular:

1. CaCC (Fa’l, فعل), which does not have ya in the second letter, e.g. 
   Clothe/s  Tsaub/tsiyaab

2. CaCaC (fa’al, فعل), e.g. whose second hijaiyyah letters are not alif, 
   waaw, or ya, or which is not mudha’af, e.g. 
   Mountain/s  Jabal/jibaal

3. CiCC (fi’l, فعل), e.g. 
   Well/s  Bi’r/bi’aar

4. CuCC (fu’l,فعل), whose second letter is not waaw and third letter is not 
   ya, e.g. 
   Arrow/s  Rumph/rimaah

5. CaCiiC (fa’iil,فعل), whose third hijaiyyah letters are not alif, waaw, or 
   ya, e.g. 
   The sick/sicks  Mariidh/miraadh

6. CaCCaaC, CaCCa, CaCCaaCah (fa’laan, fa’la, fa’laanah/fu’laanah, فعلان، فعلان، فعلانة/فعلانة/فعلانة، e.g. 
   The thirsty ‘athsyaan, ‘athsya, 
   one/s ‘athsyaanah/’ithaasy

(1.4) Plural CuCaC (fu’al,فعل) is from singular:
1. CuCCah (fu’lah), e.g.
   Room/s Ghurfah/ghuraf

2. CuCCa (fu’la), e.g.
   Small one/s Shughra/shughar

(1.5) Plural CuCuC (fu’ul) is specialized to singular:
1. CaCuC (fa’uul), which functions as doer, e.g.
   Jealous one/s Ghayuur/ghuyur

2. CiCaaC (fi’aal), e.g.
   Book/s Kitaab/kutub

(1.6) Plural CiCaC (fi’al) is from singular CiCCah (fi’lah). For instance:
Piece/s Qith’tah/qitha’

(1.7) Plural CaCCaa (fa’laa) is from singular CaCiiC (fa’il). For example:
Dead Mayyit/mawttaa

(2) Broken plural patterns involving both vowel change and affixation of consonant
(2.1) Some of Plural of paucity (jam’ qillah) patterns: aCCuC (af’ul) and CiCCah (fi’lah) are considered to be applied in the assortment of three to ten substances. For instance:
   a. River/s Nahr/anhur
   b. Youth/s Fata/fitya

The singular CaCC (fa’l), CaCaC (fa’al), or hollow (ajwaf): CVVC (faal, fuul, fiil) are pluralized into jam’ qillah aCCaaC (af’aal). It indicates that this formation involves hamza with fatha to the stem and the alteration of vowel pattern to a long /aa/ between the second and third base. For instance:
   a. House/s Bait/abyaat
   b. Uncle/s Khaal/akhwaal
   c. Door/s Baab/abwaab

There are numerous borrowed words fitting this pattern, such as:
   a. Film/s Film/aflaam
   b. Mile/s Miil/amyaal

(2.2) Suffixation of nuun in plural CVCCaan (fa’laan/ fu’laan/ fi’laan), whose plural is fa’iil, fa’al, and fa’l. For instance:
   a. Neighbor/s Jaar/jiiraan
   b. Grass/es Khasyab/khusybaan

(2.3) Taa’ marbuutha is suffixed as the part of plural pattern. However, it does not imply the feminine gender.
(2.3.1) CaCaaCiCāh (fa’aalilah) functions as the plural of names of groups or profession borrowed from other languages:
- Philosopher/s Faylusuuf/falaasifah
- Leader/s Qaa’id/qaadah
- Reciter/s Raawin/ruwaat

(2.3.2) Plural CaaCa is applied as the plural of nouns derived from hollow verbs:
- Leader/s Qaa’id/qaadah
- Reciter/s Raawin/ruwaat

(2.3.3) The active participles derived from defective verbs (fi’il naaqish) are pluralized into CuCaat (fu’aat):
- Reciter/s Raawin/ruwaat

(2.3.4) The singular CaaCiC is turned into plural CaCaCah (fa’alah) which often alternates with CuCCaaC.
- Servant/s Khaadim/khada
- Corner Zaawiyah/zawaayaa

(2.3.5) Plural aCCiCah (af’ilah) goes to singular CVCaaC (fa’aal and fi’aal).
- Dirham/s (dirham) → Daraahim (daraahim)
- Paper/s (qirthaas) → Qaraathiis (qaraathiis)
- Ant/s (naml) → Anaamil (anaamil)
- Pattern/s (usluub) → Asaaliib (asaaliib)
- Experience/s (tajribah) → Tajaarib (tajaarib)

(2.3.6) Plural CaCaayaa (fa’aayaa) is used for certain feminine nouns, specifically the hamzated nouns. This type is inflexible and always ends with alif.
- Corner Zaawiyah/zawaayaa

From the preceding patterns, it must be highlighted that there are two kinds of broken plural: jam’ qillah referring to the nouns among three till ten, and jam’ katsroh applied to the above of ten items. In jam’ katsroh, shighat muntaha al-jumu’ is recognized, referring to all plural forms that are suffixed to two or three hijaiyyah letters, in which sukuun is placed over the middle letter (Al-Ghalayani, 2011). There are nineteen forms of shighat muntaha al-jumu’:

Table 4: Forms of shighat muntaha al-jumu’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patterns</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مفاعل</td>
<td>فعال (fa’aalil)</td>
<td>نجل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>فعال</td>
<td>قرطاس (qirthaas)</td>
<td>قرطاس (qirthaas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أفعال</td>
<td>نمل (naml)</td>
<td>أنامل (anaamil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>فعال</td>
<td>أسليب (asaaliib)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>تفاعل</td>
<td>تجربة (tajribah)</td>
<td>تجربة (tajribah)</td>
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<td>تفاعل</td>
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<td>تفاعل</td>
<td>تجربة (tajribah)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مفاعل</td>
<td>مسجد (masjid)</td>
<td>مسجد (masjid)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dirham/s
Paper/s
Ant/s
Pattern/s
Experience/s
Distribution/s
Mosque/s
There are several unique facts relating to Arabic broken plurals:

1. Plurals of the plurals
   This form usually employs the suffix of regular plural or is in the form of broken plural. For example:
   
   a. Houses **Buyout/buyuutaat**
   b. Strangers **Gharaiib/gharaabiin**
   c. Hands **Aydin/ayaad**

2. Plurals which have no singular form
   This occurs inasmuch as the singular form neither exists anymore nor is forgotten.

   **Wonders** **Ta’aajiib**

3. Plurals from modified roots

   **Women** **Mar’ah/nisaa’**
4. Plurals which occasionally mean singular happens in the Koran. For instance, the word ُفِلْكَ ُفِلْكَ ُفِلْكَ "represents singular in verse "فِى الْف لْكِ الْم شْح وْنِ" while the other verse "وَفِلْكُ التى تجري في البحر " signifies the plurality.

5. The nouns which are pluralized in broken form are sometimes treated as the regular plural form. For instance, it is found in the Koran the word "كَافِرٌ" (kaafir) is turned into "كَافِرُونَ" (kaafiruun) which represents the masculine regular plural and "كُفَّارٌ" (kuffaar) in surah Muhammad verse 38 which is the irregular (broken) form.

In case of the nouns are nominative, the last letter should be marked diacritically with ُدامْمُ (ُ). If the nouns are in genitive condition, ُكَسْرُ (ُ) is placed in the last letter. Whereas, when accusative occurs, ُفْتَحُ (ُ) should be positioned over the last letter (Hamid: 1994). For instance:

| Table 5: The position of diacritical mark in Arabic broken plural |
|---|---|---|
| Positions | Examples | Meanings |
| Nominative | _بَنيَ المساجد في تلك المدينة_ (buniya al masaajidu fi tilka al madinati) | The mosques were built in that country. |
| Genitive | _الفقراء يحتاجون إلى بيوت ليسكنوا_ (al fuqaraau yahtaajuuna ila buyuutin liyaskanuu) | The needy need houses to stay. |
| Accusative | _ذلك الجدل ينتج مسائل كثيرة_ (dzaalika al jidaal yuntiju masaaila katsiirotan) | That debate causes numerous problems. |

CONCLUSION

This paper has reviewed and explored the formation of noun plurals in Arabic and English. It is found that English plurals start from the count of two while Arabic plurals start from the count of three. Both of these languages also have regular and irregular patterns.

Unlike English, the Arabic irregular plurals (broken plurals) are more frequent and have the exact patterns which sometimes can be explained through morpheme-based model and word-based model. The affixation of regular plural in Arabic also engages the gender, such as –_يَنَى_ or –_وَنَة_ for masculine plural and –_اط_ for feminine.

It is also found that the English plural marking occurs solely in nouns. On the other hand, nouns and adjectives become the object of Arabic regular and irregular plural marking. The Arabic broken plural pattern sometimes solely employs the internal vowel change which might involve both vowel change and affixation of consonant. Some unique facts of plurality in Arabic occur such as: plurals of the plurals, plurals not having the singular form, plurals from modified roots, plural form which means singular and one noun which can be pluralized into regular and irregular form.
Based on the comparison, it can be argued that the plural marking system in both languages is dissimilar rather than parallel. Structurally, Arabic plural marking system is more complex rather than English. Thus, L2 or FL learners may find English plural markers easier to learn than Arabic.

REFERENCES


