

# Kikuyu and Arabic Morph, p. 1

adapted from Morris Halle and G. N. Clements (1984) *Problem Book in Phonology: A Workbook for Introductory Courses in Linguistics and in Modern Phonology*. MIT Press. Language information is from Ethnologue.

- I. The following forms illustrate two verb tenses in Kikuyu. High tone is indicated by ' and low tone is unmarked. We will be ignoring tone in this exercise.

	‘look at’	‘send’
<u>A. Current imperfect tense</u>		
1. ‘we are V-ing’	torɔɾaya	totomáya
2. ‘we are V-ing him/her’	tomorɔɾaya	tomotomáya
3. ‘we are V-ing them’	tomaróɾaya	tomatómáya
4. ‘they are V-ing’	márɔɾaya	mátómáya
5. ‘they are V-ing him/her’	mámórɔɾaya	mámótomáya
6. ‘they are V-ing them’	mámárɔɾaya	mámátómáya
<u>B. Current past tense</u>		
7. ‘we V-ed’	torɔɾiré	totomíré
8. ‘we V-ed him/her’	tomorɔɾiré	tomotomíré
9. ‘we V-ed them’	tomaróɾiré	tomatómíré
10. ‘they V-ed’	márɔɾiré	mátómíré
11. ‘they V-ed him/her’	mámórɔɾiré	mámótomíré
12. ‘they V-ed them’	mámárɔɾiré	mámátómíré

Ignoring tone, identify the following morphemes:

- 'look at'
- 'send'
- '1<sup>st</sup> person plural subject'
- '3<sup>rd</sup> person plural subject'
- '3<sup>rd</sup> person singular object'
- '3<sup>rd</sup> person plural object'
- 'current imperfect tense'
- 'current past tense'

Kikuyu is a Bantu language spoken by 5,347,000 speakers in west central Kenya.



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- II. The following forms illustrate a productive system of plural formation in Classical Arabic, one of the patterns of “broken” plurals. Following traditional transcription for Arabic, ḥ stands for [ħ], and otherwise a dot under a phonetic symbol indicates that the sound is “emphatic” (pronounced with velarization or pharyngealization). A doubled vowel is a long vowel (e.g. [aa]=[a:]). **Note to native speakers of Arabic:** Your answer should not be based on what you may have been taught in school about broken plurals. Approach the data as if this is a foreign language. You may discover something different from what you were taught.

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>	
1.	ḵundab	ḵanaadib	‘locust’
2.	sulṭaan	salaatiin	‘sultan’
3.	ṣuḥbuub	ṣaḥaabiiḥ	‘rain shower’
4.	nuwwaar	nawaawiir	‘white flowers’
5.	maktab	makaatib	‘office’
6.	miftaah	mafaatiiḥ	‘key’
7.	ḥankabuut	ḥanaakib	‘spider’
8.	ḵaḥmaariṣ	ḵaḥaamir	‘lazy old woman’
9.	safaṛḵal	safaariḵ	‘quince’
10.	ḥandaliib	ḥanaadil	‘nightingale’
11.	namuuḍaḵ	namaaḍiḵ	‘type’
12.	ḵudḵud	ḵadaaḵid	‘cricket’
13.	xaatam	xawaatim	‘signet ring’
14.	baaḥiṯ	bawaaḥiṯ	‘motive’
15.	ḵaamuus	ḵawaamiis	‘buffalo’
16.	qaanuun	qawaaniin	‘canon’

If you know that a particular noun has a broken plural, can you determine the plural form on the basis of the singular form? How? (In other words, what is the rule of broken plural formation in Classical Arabic?) If you are given the plural, can you determine what the singular form is?

Question to think about: Is the notion of morpheme (or affix) as we have been discussing it in this course a useful notion in describing this morphological pattern?

Arabic is a member of the Semitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic family, with 206,000,000 first-language speakers throughout the Middle East and North Africa.