

Sarf - The Irregular Verb - أَجَوَف

In the [last](#) post we learned about the 7 categories into which Arabic verbs can be grouped and then we saw how introduction of weak letters can cause verbs to become irregular i.e. cause their conjugations to differ from the normal conjugations of regular verbs. Now we will, Insha Allah, start going into details of each of the verb categories which deal with irregular verbs. Our first post deals with أَجَوَف

which, as you may recall, is a verb having واو or ياء at the ع position.

أَجَوَف verbs in Arabic Language come from either one of the 3 *baabs*: ضَرَبَ, نَصَرَ, or سَمِعَ .

Thus , قَالَ comes from the نَصَرَ *baab*, بَاعَ comes from ضَرَبَ *baab*, and خَافَ comes from

سَمِعَ *baab*. The very first thing when dealing with irregular verbs is to find the *actual* base letters in

it. Remember, irregular verbs are called irregular since one or more of their base letters have either

changed to some other letter or have dropped altogether due, mainly, to pronunciation issues. We will

now see how we can find the base letters in أَجَوَف verbs and during this exercise we will come up with a

rule to form irregular verbs in this category starting from their base letter.

The base letter in an irregular verb can be found by:

1. Looking at nouns formed from these verbs
2. Looking at the مُضَارِع of the irregular verb

Exposure to Arabic Language leads us to the fact that the 3 nouns formed from قَالَ and نَصَرَ, and

قَوْلَ (a saying), بَيْعَ (a transaction or a sale), and خَوْفَ (fear), respectively. Also, as we will learn shortly, the مُضَارِعِ of the three verbs also contain واو

in its middle. Thus, we can now derive the original verbs using this fact and the knowledge of *baab* from which each verb comes.

Original Form	Final Form
قَوْلَ	قَالَ
بَيْعَ	بَاعَ
خَوْفَ	خَافَ

Now we are ready to state our rule for dealing with active voice of the *أجوفَ* of ماضى .

Simple Change to *Alif* rule (Active ماضى) :

Whenever there is a *مُتَحَرِّكٌ* weak letter i.e. a واو or a ياء preceded by a *مَفْتُوحٌ* letter, change the واو or ياء to alif.

As you can see that this rule completely covers the conjugation given in the table above.

Now I will list the ماضى table for قَالَ which will throw up some more light on the treatment of أجوفَ

قَالَ	He said
قَالَا	They (two males) said
قَالُوا	They (more than two males) said
قَالَتْ	She said
قَالَتَا	They (two females) said
قَالْنِ	They (more than two females) said

قُلْتَ	You (male) said
قُلْتُمَا	You (two males) said
قُلْتُمْ	You (more than 2 males) said
قُلْتِ	You (female) said
قُلْتُمَا	You(2 females) said
قُلْتُنَّ	You(more than 2 females) said
قُلْتُ	I said
قُلْنَا	We said

Note the loss of *alif* from 6th conjugation onwards. Also, note the change from *fatha* to *dhamma*. The

alif is dropped because it is not easy to pronounce an *alif* followed by a سَاكِن letter because of the

introduction of an unnecessary مَد. The *dhamma* is introduced as a trace for the fact that it was a واو

which dropped from the verb. Similarly for بَيْعَ the 6th conjugation would be بَيْعَتْ , with the first

letter having a *kasra* (and onwards to the last conjugation) signifying that the dropped letter was a ياء .

For خَافَ , however, this simple rule does not apply in totality. The 6th conjugation here is خَافَتْ

rather than خَافَتْ , which one would expect. This is explained by the fact that in the case of خَافَتْ

the *kasra* signifies that the verb is مَكْسُورُ الْعَيْنِ (has a *kasra* on the ع position) because خَافَ

originates from the سَمِعَ baab, therefore its middle letter has to have a *kasra* on it. In this case we do

get a hint as to which letter was dropped.

To deal with the passive voice we recognize that the following are the starting points for the above

mentioned 3 verbs:

Original Form	Final Form
قُولَ	قِيلَ
بُيعَ	بِيعَ
خُوفَ	خِيفَ

Using the above table we can state the following rule for the passive ماضى of the أجوف type:

Whenever the ع position of a passive ماضى is a واو or ياء remove the vowel from the letter before it and transfer the kasra to this letter. Now, if the ع position is a واو change it to a ياء in accordance with the ميزان rule, which states that any واو which is ساكن and is preceded by a kasra will change to ياء

Note: 6th conjugation onwards the conjugations are same for both active and passive voice for the أجوف type

The مضارع for the أجوف type:

These come from the صحيح counterparts of the corresponding verb which means that the originals will rhyme with the corresponding baabs. The following table list the مضارع for the أجوف.

باب	أجوف for the مضارع
يَنْصُرُ	يَقُولُ
يَضْرِبُ	يَبِيعُ
يَسْمَعُ	يَخُوفُ

As is the case with the ماضى of the أجوف, changes occur in the final forms of these verbs due to

presence of weak letters. These changes are given below:

Original Form	Final Form
يَقُولُ	يَقُولُ
يَبِيعُ	يَبِيعُ
يَخُوفُ	يَخَافُ

These changes are governed by the following rule:

Whenever there is a *مُتَحَرِّكٌ* weak letter i.e. a *واو* or a *ياء* preceded by a *سُكُونٌ*, transfer the vowel from the weak letter to the letter before it. Now, if vowel being transferred is a fatha then change this letter to an alif.

This rule can conveniently be called:

Transfer the vowel - in case of fatha change to alif Rule

Below, I give the full conjugations for the *مُضَارِعِ* for the *أَجَوَفِ* using *يَقُولُ* as an example:

يَقُولُ	He says
يَقُولَانِ	They (two males) say
يَقُولُونَ	They (more than two males) say
تَقُولُ	She says
تَقُولَانِ	They (two females) say
يَقُلْنَ	They (more than two females) say
تَقُولُ	You (male) say
تَقُولَانِ	You (two males) say
تَقُولُونَ	You (more than 2 males) say

تَقُولِينَ	You (female) say
تَقُولَانِ	You(2 females) say
تَقُولْنَ	You(more than 2 females) say
أَقُولُ	I say
نَقُولُ	We say

Hopefully this brief introduction to أَجَوَفَ will be a good starting point for understanding irregularities

in Arabic verbs, Insha Allah.