

FUNCTION F: SAYING "NO"

MAA VERSUS MUU ♦ We have already learnt several ways to say "not" using the two particles of negation *maa* ما and *muu* مو. You have used *maa* ما to say things like

<i>maa fii...</i>	there is not...	ما في...
<i>maa béddi...</i>	I don't want...	ما بدّي...
<i>maa ʿandi...</i>	I don't have...	ما عندي...

and *muu* مو to negate simple (nominal) Arabic sentences, for example

<i>haada muu ghaali.</i>	That's not expensive.	هذا مو غالى.
<i>ana muu b-él-beet.</i>	I'm not at home.	أنا مو بالببيت.
<i>hiyye muu mʿallme.</i>	She's not a teacher.	هي مو معلمة.
<i>ana muu zaʿlaan.</i>	I'm not upset.	أنا مو زعلان.
<i>hénne muu saakniin b-él-Mezze.</i>	They don't live in Mezze.	هنّ مو ساكنين بالمزه.

1. Negate these sentences.

- a. *ana mén ostraalya.* أنا من استراليا.
-
- b. *lé-mʿallem mashghuul.* المعلم مشغول.
-
- c. *hénne saakniin b-él-Maalki.* هنّ ساكنين بالمالكي.
-
- d. *bédde qahwe.* بدّها قهوة.
-
- e. *ʿandi wlaad.* عندي أولاد.
-
- f. *fii masraf b-él-féndoq.* في مصرف بالفندق.
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MAA + L + ATTACHED PRONOUN ♦ Often *muu* مو is substituted with *maa+l+attached pronoun* ما+ل+ضمير, for example

<i>maali b-él-beet.</i>	I'm not at home.	مالي بالببيت.
<i>maala mʿallme.</i>	She's not a teacher.	مالها معلمة.
<i>maali zaʿlaan.</i>	I'm not upset.	مالي زعلان.
<i>maalon saakniin b-él-Mezze.</i>	They don't live in Mezze.	مالهن ساكنين بالمزه.

2. Which of the sentences in exercise two can you rephrase using *maa + l + attached pronoun*?

ABSOLUTELY “NOT” ♦ The words *mnoob* منوب and *abadan* أبداً at the end of a negative sentence to mean “not at all”.

<i>muu... mnoob</i>	not...at all	مو...منوب
<i>muu... abadan</i>	not... at all	مو...أبداً

3. Negate these sentences, for example

ana zaɣlaan⁶ ktiir. أنا زعلان كثير.

ana muu zaɣlaan mnoob. أنا مو زعلان منوب.

a. *ɛandi maɣaari ktiir.* عندي مصاري كثير.

b. *maɛi fraaɛa ktiir.* معي فراطة كثير.

c. *fii mēsh⁶kle kbiire.* في مشكلة كبيرة.

d. *haada għali ktiir!* هذا غالي كثير!

e. *hayy mniha ktiir!* هي منيحة كثير!

IDIOMS ♦ Two useful idiomatic phrases using *muu* مو and *maa* ما are

<i>muu shéghlak!</i>	none of your business!	مو شغلك!
<i>muu heek?</i>	isn't it?	مو هيك؟

muu heek مو هيك is the most common way of seeking agreement from or agreeing with someone in a casual conversation. It is much simpler to use than in English where you must change ‘isn’t it’ to ‘aren’t they’ and so on depending on the sentence. *muu heek* مو هيك does not change.

heek هيك is also used by itself to mean “like this” or “in this way”.

NOT "EVEN ONE" ➡ When used alone *wélla* لا و means simply "or". When used alone in a negative sentence it means "not even one", for example

<i>maa fii wélla waahed</i>	there isn't even one	ما في ولا واحد
<i>maa maʕi wélla frank</i>	I don't even have a cent on me	ما معي ولا فرنك.

Don't confuse this with the expression *la w allah* لا و الله which looks and sounds very similar but means "(believe me) no".

EITHER...OR ➡ You do not use *wélla* لا و or *aw* او if you want to say "either...or...". Instead, *ya.....ya.....* يا.....يا is used, for example

<i>ésmo</i>	His name is	اسمه
<i>ya Hasan ya Hussein</i>	either Hasan or Hussein.	يا حسن يا حسين.

NEITHER...NOR ➡ You do not use *maa* ما or *muu* مو if you want to say "neither...nor...". Instead, *laa.....w laa.....* لا.....لا is used, for example

<i>ét-taʕs mniih él-yoom,</i>	The weather's good today,	الطقس منيح اليوم،
<i>laa shoob w laa barʕd.</i>	it's neither hot nor cold.	لا شوب ولا برد.



4. Listen to these sentences and fill in the missing adjective.

- él-yoom ana laa zaʕlaan w laa _____* اليوم أنا لا زعلان و لا _____
- él-yoom ana laa moshghuul w laa _____* اليوم أنا لا مشغول و لا _____
- és-suux hoon laa ghaali w laa _____* السوق هون لا غالي و لا _____
- él-ʕarabi laa saʕb w laa _____* العربي لا صعب و لا _____
- beeti laa kbiir w laa _____* بيتي لا كبير و لا _____
- ét-taʕs laa shoob w laa _____* الطقس لا شوب و لا _____

THE WEATHER AND THE ATMOSPHERE ➡ Although in Syria, *ét-taʕs* الطقس is most commonly used in daily conversation about the weather, *él-jaww* الجو can also mean "the weather". So if you want to say the "atmosphere is nice" use the adjective *hélu* حلو, rather than *mniih* منيح which would mean "the weather is good".

NEGATIVE QUESTIONS ➔ To answer a negative question such as

maalo saaken b-él-Mezze? Doesn't he live in Mezze? ماله ساكن بالمزه؟

you can either say,

la, (maalo saaken b-él-Mezze), لا، ماله ساكن بالمزه،

hurwe saaken b-él-Maalki no, he lives in Malki. هو ساكن بالمالكي.

or, you can say

mbala! yes مبالا

(saaken b-él-Mezze.) (he does live in Mezze). (ساكن بالمزه.)

Note that you do not use *ee* ايه or *na'am* نعم to answer a negative question.



5. Listen to the conversation and fill in the missing words.

A *maalak* _____? أ مالك _____؟

B _____, *ana* _____, أنا _____، ب

ana mén _____ أنا من _____

Now work with a teacher or classmate and take it in turns to ask each other these questions.

a. *maalak ostraali?* *maalek ostraaliyye?* مالك استرالي؟ مالك استراليية؟

b. *maalak taalbe?* *maalek taalbe?* مالك طالب(ة)؟

c. *maalak métzawwej?* *maalek métzawwje?* مالك متزوج(ة)؟

d. *maa éandak éwlaad?* *maa éandek éwlaad?* ما عندك اولاد؟

e. *maa élak ékhwaa?* *maa élek ékhwaa?* ما لك أخوات؟

f. *maa ma'ek fraata?* *maa ma'ek fraata?* ما معك فراطة؟

