### Nouns and Adjectives

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Aramaic has 2 genders: Masculine (M), Feminine (F)
3 numbers: Singular (S), Plural (P), Dual (D)
3 states: Absolute (A), Construct (C), Emphatic (E)

It has NO definite or indefinite article. Determinacy is marked by ‘state’.
marked cases (Genitive, Dative, etc).

**Gender:**
The gender of a noun is usually marked by its ending. But there are exceptions! In such cases, feminine nouns include: names of lands, countries; abstract ideas, matters, states of affairs; parts of the body that come in pairs.

**Number:**
The number of a noun is marked by its ending.
A few ‘collective nouns’ which are singular in form refer to multiple individuals, and take plural verbs etc. e.g. מָן (qānîn) ‘sheep’; מָנְדָּה (gardā) ‘domestic staff’.
Some nouns are regularly used in the plural, the ‘pluralsia tantum’; רָחִים (raḥmîn) ‘affection’;
דָּמָיִים (domayā) ‘price’.
Only the noun has a dual form (not adjectives, pronouns, verbs). Duals cannot be distinguished from plurals (except DF) in unvocalised texts. It appears to be restricted to pairs of body parts, and the numbers 2 and 200. RARE!

**State:**
The state of a noun is marked by its ending.
The absolute state is used when the noun is indeterminate (‘a land’, ‘a woman’).
[For emphasis, the numeral ‘one’ may be added: e.g. שֵׁן הָגָד (šûr håd), ‘a wall’.]
It is also often used:

- a. with cardinal numbers: e.g. שָׁלשׁ (šômêš) ‘three shekels’.
- b. when following בָּל (kul), ‘all’, ‘every’, ‘each’.
- c. in distributive repetition; e.g. יָרִים יָרִים (yarîh yarîh), ‘month by month’;
- d. for predicative adjectives; e.g. שָׁרִים הַשָּׁרֶד (šârîm hâshârîd), ‘be strong!’

The emphatic, or determined, state is used when the noun is determinate (‘the land’, ‘the woman’), and also with attributive use of demonstrative pronouns; יָאוֹמָה (yâwma da Papua) ‘this day’. (The emphatic state may have evolved from a form with suffixed definite article.)

The construct state indicates the dependence or close relationship of a noun or adjective X on another, Y. In European languages this is usually rendered by ‘X of Y’, but in Semitic languages by ‘X of Y’, where X is in the construct, and Y is in the absolute or emphatic. It often indicates possession: בַּיָּת בָּיָת (bayt malkâ) ‘house of / the king’; תַּרְאֶה בָּית בָּיָת (tara’ baytâ) ‘gate of / the house’.
[For other categories, see Muraoka & Porten, §61.] It is possible to have a chain of nouns in the construct: e.g. יָאוֹמָה מַלְאֵק מִסְרִין (yâwmay malék mišrin) ‘the days of / the king of / Egypt’.
Genitive relationship:

There are several ways of indicating a genitive relationship in EA (e.g. 'house of God):

a. construct
   בְּמֵית הָאֱלָהָה  baytī ēlāhā

b. ְֹי
   בְּמֵית ְֹי הָאֱלָהָה  baytā ְֹי ēlāhā

c. proleptic pronoun + ְֹי
   בְּמֵית ְֶה ְֹי הָאֱלָהָה  baytēh ְֶה ְֹי ēlāhā

d. ְֹו
   בְּמֵית לֶה הָאֱלָהָה  bayit lēhā < ְֹו ēlāhā

Of these, (c.) with the anticipatory pronoun is usually restricted to combinations where the second noun is a proper noun; and (d.) is mostly found in legal texts, and usually with indeterminate (absolute) first noun.