**Al-Mustansiriyah University**

**College of Arts**

**Translation Department**

**Asst. Prof. Ahmed Qadoury Abed, Ph D**

**CONTRASTIVE GRAMMAR**

**Fourth Year/ Morning & Evening Classes**

**Lecture # 18**

**Gender in Arabic**

Arabic has two genders only where the masculine is the unmarked gender and feminine is the marked one. Therefore, there arethree feminine markers:

1. ة as in معلمة
2. ى as in ذكرى
3. ء or أ as in صحراء

So any feminine nouns without these three markers or any masculine nouns with these markers are used as example of the lack of coincidence between genders in language and sex in the outside world. Examples are the following:

1. Personal nouns having one of these markers are called مؤنث مجازي as in طلحة and the plural form is طلحات
2. Certain inanimate nouns are usually treated as feminine although they have no feminine marker as in بئر and كأس

Gender in Arabic is grammatical; it is really affected by the psychological factors. Therefore, it is not common to use two genders for the same noun on an emotive basis.

There is a kind of correlation between gender and number in Arabic: the generic noun is masculine plural , as in نحل while the singular is feminine as in نحلة .

Gender in Arabic also involves adjectives, which agree with the noun head:

الولد الذكي

الفتاة الذكية

Gender is also required if subject-verb agreement is stated:

جاء الرجل

جاءت الفتاة

But it is important to mention that when , in certain occasions, the subject follows and is separated from its verb by other elements of the elements, a masculine form of the verb is used as an unmarked form with a feminine subject:

ثم خرج في الحال النساء الى خارج المدينة

In modern Arabic, irregular plurals of inanimate nouns are treated as singular feminine for the sake of subject-verb agreement and pronoun substitution:

ظهرت الجبال

هذه الجبال

الجبال العالية