**Al-Mustansiriyah University**

**College of Arts**

**Translation Department**

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**Fourth Year/ Morning & Evening Classes**

**Lecture # 29**

**Genitives in English and Arabic**

The basic difference between English and Arabic genitive constructions is that the English genitive is premodififiers while the Arabic one is postmodification.

Premodification by –‘s genitive is often found in nouns heads which occur up the gender scale, as in Peter’s seat. Two types of genitives may be distinguished which often causes ambiguity: specific and generic. For example, ‘ a fisherman cottage’ means both:

- a cottage belonging to a particular fisherman , thus with specific reference

- a cottage similar to that belonging to the fisherman, thus with generic reference.

An adjective occurring between the determiner and the genitive may cause ambiguity:

-An old man's bicycle

May mean

-the man is old

-The bicycle is old

Similarly :

- these lovely ladies dresses

- these dresses belong to lovely ladies

- the lovely dresses belong to ladies

For Arabic genitives, nouns in genitives state or الاضافة are realized by the process of juxtaposition, i.e., the two nouns are place together and the second is governed in the genitive case حالة الجر. Arab grammarians distinguish two types of الاضافة:

* الاضافة الحقيقية او المحضة او المعنوية
* الاضافة غير الحقيقية او غير المحضة او اللفظية

In the real genitive الاضافة الحقيقية the two juxtaposed items are :

1. Real nouns
2. The first is always devoid of the definite article
3. The second item may be definite or indefinite and is always placed in the genitive case

* كتاب زيد
* حر الصيف
* فستان حرير
* خاتم ذهب

A number of semantic relations is expressed by real genitive:

* Possession كتاب الولد
* Material خاتم الذهب
* Subjective relation هروب السجين
* Objective relation مقتل الفيل
* Description كلية البنات
* Partitive sense بعض الرجال

In unreal genitive, the genitive consists of two items , the first of which is adjective or participle: حسن الوجه ، شديد البرودة ، قاتل الحشرات . In this type:

1. The second noun is usually definite
2. The first may be indefinite or definite: حسن الوجه or الحسن الوجه
3. There is a semantic difference between عينتان وااسعتان (two large eyes/ proper noun) and واسع العينين (a modifier consisting of two items in the genitive case).