CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Historical background

1. The Origin of Arabs

The Arabs belong to a family of ancient peoples known as the Semites, that is, the descendants of Shem (Sām), the eldest son of Noah (nūh) the Prophet. They comprise: al-babilīyūn, al-ašūrīyūn, al-kaldānīyūn al-amūrīyūn, al-kanānīyūn, al-fīnaqīyūn, al-arāmīyūn and others.

Kinship between these peoples was discovered for the first time as late as the middle of the nineteenth century when a study of their respective languages revealed striking points of resemblance. This resemblance was taken as reliable indication of their common origin, common language and common home.

Professor K.A. Fariq (1972) writes 'the Semites originally lived at one homeland, where they spoke one language. But when they immigrated to new lands and settled among new peoples, their speech changed partially or fully under the impact of the languages, current in their new homes. But do
we know the parent language, that is to say, the language which they spoke before emigrating? The answer is in the negative.’ However, a study of the Semitic languages shows that they are closely related in structure and grammar. Prominent points of resemblance among the semitic languages are:-

i  They form words from roots.

ii  Their root words are predominantly tri-consonant.

iii Their root words lend to derivations through modification of vowels and by means of prefixes, infixes and suffixes.

iv  Their normal order of words in a sentence is, first, the verbs then, the subject and, lastly, the object or predicate.

v  Most of them have nominal sentences.

vi  They have three numbers – singular, dual and plural, and three cases – nominative, genitive and accusative.

vii  Their nouns and adjectives have genders.
viii Their masculine nouns take feminine numerals and vice versa.

(ix) Their dual endings are similar.

(x) Nearly, all make a gender distinction in the second person as well, both singular and plural.

(xi) None of them has neuter gender.

2. **Pre-Islamic Arabs**

Traditionally, the pre-Islamic Arabs have been divided into three classes:

(i) *Al-ṭarab al-ṭāribah* (the genuine Arabs), also called baṣīdah (extinct),

(ii) *Al-ṭarab al-mutācarribah* (early naturalized Arabs),

(iii) *Al-ṭarab al-mustaṣāribah* (late naturalized Arabs).

2.1 *Al-ṭarab al-ṭāribah*

Al-ṭarab al-ṭāribah were the genuine Arabs whose progenitor was Iram, the son of Shem (Ṣām) and the grandson of Noah. They were dispersed over the whole peninsula and had become extinct long before Christ. Of their tribes, Ṣād (?ād) spread over al-Aḥqāf between al-Yaman and Ḥumān, Thāmuḍ
(θamūd) in western al-Hijāz, Tasm and Jadīs (al-Aḥqaf and al-yamāmah) Al-ṣamāliqah (spread over ḫumān, al-Bahrain, al-Hijāz, al-Īraq, Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt) and the Jurhum (Mekka) are famous.

2.1.2. Al-earab al-mutaarrībah

The mutaarrībah Arabs comprised the tribes living in al-Yaman and Hajar. They had descended from ya'rūb bin qaḥṭān. They were called mutaarrībah as they were not genuine and had acquired Arabic from the genuine Arabs.

2.1.3. Al-mustaēriah eaarb

The mustaēribah or the late naturalized Arabs were descendants of the prophet Abraham (Ibrāhīm), who had domiciled at Mekkah (Mecca) nineteen centuries before Christ. Here he contracted matrimonial relations with the local princes, who belonged to the tribe Jurhum one of the genuine Arabs. Amongst his progeny ʿadnān (ʿadnān) alone is famous. The mutaēribah Arabs or al-ʿadnāniyūn (ʿadnānis) as they are more popularly called, lived in the country ranging from Tiḥāmah to Mesopotamia in the north and al-Bahrain in the north-east.
3. **The Linguistic Situation on the eve of Islām**

On the eve of Islām about half a dozen dialects of the Sabaeo-Himyarid language group and differing materially from Arabic were current in parts of al-Yaman. Of them, al-musnad was the most important. But they were swept away by Islām and replaced by Arabic. The urban tribe Quraish to which Mohammad the Prophet belonged, lived at Makkah and spoke a refined dialect which was grammatically sound. It was in this dialect the Qurān was revealed.

4. **International Position of Arabic**

Professor K.A. Fariq (1972) writes “in the middle Ages, Arabic was the leading language of the world and occupied an international position similar to that of English at the present time. People of different nationalities spoke or wrote it in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Mediterranean. It was the language of politics, culture and that of a vast literature, comprehending history, biography, geography, medicine, economics, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, music, chemistry, physics, botany, optics and profane literature, besides the religious and legal sciences of the Muslims. The
foundation of Modern Civilization and its scientific advances rests to a considerable extent on the literature of Arabic”.

“During the middle Ages, it (Arabic) was spoken and written by all cultivated Moslems of whatever nationality they might be, from the Indus to the Atlantic; it was the language of the court and the Church, of Law and Commerce, of Diplomacy and Literature and Science”. “For many centuries”, says the modern American writer Philip Hitti, “in the Middle Ages it was the language of learning and culture and progressive thought throughout the civilized world. The languages of Western Europe still bear the impress of its influence in the form of numerous loan words. Its alphabet, next to Latin, is the most widely system in the world. It is one employed by Persian, Afghan, Urdu and a number of Turkish, Berber and Malayan languages”.

Even today, Arabic occupies the position of important language and is spoken by millions of people in Asia and Africa and is studied as a language of great civilization and religion throughout the world.
5. **Types of Arabic**

The designation "Arabic language" is applied to various types of Arabic: the one literary (classical) language, its descendant modern Arabic referred to as the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and the various contemporary spoken dialects.

R.E. Asher and J.M.Y. Simpson in "The Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistics" Vol. 1 write, "The view of many Arabs, particularly educated ones, is that Arabic is 'really' Classical Arabic, or its Modern descendant Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) – that is the language of all written Arabic from the seventh century on. Vernacular Arabic, which all speakers whatever their level of education use for all speech purposes apart from religious ritual and other forms of 'frozen' formulaic public speaking, is popularly regarded as a mere 'corruption' of classical or MSA which, some believe, the school system should attempt to eradicate".

Yushmanov (1961) writes, "Literary Arabic arose from the ancient poetic language of the Arabs. Ancient Arabia, where every tribe had its own idiom, used a unified language in poetry, and carefully preserved it from disintegration, which made the great conservatism and archaism of this language."
The Quran, written in the same language but with an admixture of Meccan peculiarities of Mohammad's speech became the model for the classical language, and the Arabs down to our own days use this language of the Quran, only slightly refurbished to meet modern requirements, in their press, literature, and political and social life."

6. Modern Arabic

Modern Arabic is the language, which is used by educated Arabs for formal spoken purposes. It is employed in formal public address, over radio and television and in religious ceremonial to ensure the linguistic unity of the Arab world. It transcends over numerous and widely diverse local dialects and provides a medium of communication over the vast geographical area. Indeed, it gives the Arab people of many countries a sense of identity and an awareness of their common cultural heritage.

Farida Abu-Haida in her paper "Shifting Boundaries: The Effect of Modern Standard Arabic on Dialect Convergence in Baghdad" (1992) writes "needless to say, in many Arabic countries MSA is becoming more readily available to a large number of speakers of Arabic through the spread of education
and mass media, especially television. The popularity of MSA has been dependent on religious, political and social factors. Because it is a modified speech variety of literary/classical Arabic the language of Quran, MSA is lingua franca of the whole Arabic world where a number of mutually unintelligible dialects occur. It is also a politically unifying force, providing a common denominator for Arabs from as far a field as Morocco and Oman, for example, knowledge of MSA gives people the means to become members “of the national majority, to acquire position (like jobs, official functions, and educational facilities” (Dressler and Wodak Leadolter 1977: 35), and helps them “to master the expository styles of science and bureaucracy, along with many other factors characteristic of ongoing urbanization” (Gumperz 1982: 38). Competence in MSA is also an indicator of one’s level of education. The more educated a person the better he/she is at using MSA (Ibrahim 1986: 118).

Abdel-Rahman Abu Malhim in his paper entitled “Code-Switching and Linguistic Accommodated in Arabic” writes “A considerable amount of linguistic research has concluded that Arab speakers of different dialects rely primarily on Classical Arabic (CA), the traditional language of the Qur’an, and
Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the written language of contemporary literature and journalism, when they converse with one another”.

7. The problem:

a. Most of the work has been carried out on the written Arabic, Spoken Arabic has drawn the attention of scholars long ago but most of them have directed their thinking to the study of the daily used languages in Arabic Societies, either colloquial or dialects and most of the contributions that have been added to the world linguistic library were in this area i.e. the Arabic Colloquial and dialects. The spoken form of Arabic is mostly ignored except of few attempts and effort that have been made like that of Richard S. Harrel on “Egyptian Radio Arabic”. Despite the scarcity of such studies, they were like the stone, which was thrown in motionless water since they are built up on the scientific methodology of Modern linguistic theory and analysis. However, the present study proves that Arabic in its clear spoken form is a living language and it has its own users who are spread over the world. It is the language of political/cultural and
civilized discourse by means of which the educated Arabs converse to each other and get their past/present ties and civilization.

b. Modern Arabic, to a very high degree, is same throughout the Arab world, at least in its morphology and syntax. There are minor differences in saying words, which differentiate the spoken form used in North Africa from that used in rest of the Arab world. But these differences are insignificant when compared to those between the regional dialects.

c. The main purpose has been to study and find the morphological structure of the language, how a word is structured, in what way it is structured, how a word is made up of discontinuous morphemes, what are the basic elements in the morphology of Arabic and how the non-concatenative morphology is ideal to account for the mammoth structure that the language has.

8. The Data:

The investigator used himself as informant, he also benefited from four educated Yemenis whose linguistic behaviour is judged to be /fasih/ 'clear', 'eloquent' through
several successive sittings. These four Yemenis prefer to be identified by names not but by jobs. They are as follows:

(i) A Yemeni Journalist,

(ii) Two college teachers and

(iii) A judge.

The present research is spread into Eight Chapters followed by Conclusion and Bibliography. The chapter on Phonology (Chapter II) gives an inventory of Arabic phonemes by the use of the minimal pair Phenomenon. It gives a short description about the classification of consonants according to their place and manner of articulation. It also sheds light on the vowels found in Arabic. The aim of this chapter is not to introduce a thorough study about the Phonological system of Arabic but to give an access to the subject-matter of the present study which is the morphological structure of Modern Arabic which necessarily requires knowledge and understanding of the phonemes of the language by means of which words are transcribed and structure is built up.

The third chapter is entitled “Morphology” which begins with a short definition about morphology and also delineates
two viewpoints which stand in conflict regarding the definition of the linguistic term "Morpheme". In this chapter we concentrated on the non-concatenative morphology through limiting the basic elements in the Arabic Morphology where roots were the vital point in our discussion.

The Fourth chapter dealt with the structure of nouns i.e., how nouns are derived from roots by means of different vowel patterns. We treated all the possibilities that a root has in creating nouns from the first to the tenth binyān. We ended this chapter with a discussion about the case system and how nouns are marked according to their grammatical functions in the whole structure of the language.

Chapter Five is about number and nouns where Arabic has three numbers: singular, dual and plural. We differentiated between the sound and broken plurals and sorted out the dual and sound plural markers that existed in the language.

In the Sixth chapter personal pronouns in Arabic have been discussed, as these pronouns play a vital role in the grammar of Arabic. Here we deal with the what is traditionally called in the grammar of Arabic as “Detached and Attached
Pronouns”. Detached may be taken semantically as equal with independent i.e., pronouns that can stand in isolation as free morphemes, whereas attached is the converse i.e. pronouns that are dependent or bound and suffixed to other morphological patterns.

The Seventh chapter dealt with the structure of verbs and how a single root is eligible to produce more than one verbal morphological pattern. We concentrated on the perfect and imperfect morphological patterns, the system of derivation, and the declension of Arabic verbs since verbs in Arabic are declinable. We also passed through the structure of the imperative and the future and ended the chapter with a discussion about passivization in Arabic.

In the Eighth chapter we attempted syntax through a short description about the type of sentences in the language, their word-order and we shed light on the relation existed between morphology and syntax through analysing the behaviour of the definite article at the level of a word and a sentence.