Number, Gender and Tense in Aljudhi Dialect of Mehri Language in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract—This research aims to investigate three linguistic aspects (Number-Gender-Tense) of Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language in Saudi Arabia which is considered as an endangered language belongs to the Semitic languages. Actually, the starting point is a personal experience toward Mehri language in Saudi Arabia. Then, the sample of study is ten old men whom are divided into two equal groups. I use quantitative and qualitative methods to observe and analyze data. In fact, I suggest many significant results for each linguistic aspect but the most ones are the following: Number, Aljudhi dialect must use the dual marker "Yathroh" for masculine and the dual marker "Yathrain" for feminine. Surprisingly, there are new four sounds in Mehri language which do not exist in Arabic phonological system- Gender, most of the verbs begin with the prefix [Di] and the suffix [-ət] is used to indicate for feminine-Tense, most of the verbs follow specific pattern such as (Past, the suffix [-ək]-Present, [CVCVC=C(O)CVC]-Future, the suffix [-onæ]. Ultimately, I hope this study has increased the knowledge about one of the endangered dialects occurred in Saudi Arabia. Further researches must be published in order to have a well-written system for Mehri language, particularly Aljudhi dialect.

Index Terms—endangered language, Mehri language, linguistic aspects (number-gender-tense), created sounds, dual, pluralization, grammatical patterns

I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, it was known that Arabic language was the only language which was used by people who lived in the Arabian Peninsula. Later on, there was a distinctive discovery in linguistics when a new language was found in the Arabian Peninsula, particularly in Yemen, Oman and southern region of Saudi Arabia. In fact, that language which is called Mehri language is an old language with a four thousand year of existence. This development caused many linguists to study the history of this spoken language. Actually, Mehri language is considered that it is "one of the Semitic language family" (Castagna, 2012). Alrowsa (2014) reports "100 thousand people speak Mehri in Southeast Yemen, the western part of Dhofar in Oman and the southern part of Saudi Arabia". In fact, the informant reported that "there are about 20 thousand of Mehri people who live in the southern region of Saudi Arabia such as Alkharkhir and Sharoorah". Most of them live in Alkharkhir province which is 900 kilometers away from Najran city and is considered as the capital city of Mehri tribe in Saudi Arabia. For different reasons, most of them are poor and uneducated. They prefer working rather than attending public schools.

A. My First Exposure with Mehri Language

The first exposure of Mehri language was in 2009, when I was an English teacher in Ibn Taimyah intermediate school in the night program for students who couldn't be regular students in the morning program. There were two students who were isolated and didn't interact with others. Actually, I observed that they spoke another language. Frankly speaking, I was surprised and then I asked them to talk about their language which was called "Mehri Language". Personally, what they said was considered as a victory and a great success which made me proud of the interesting experience I had. In fact, what happened was the starting point of questions and research about Mehri language. Actually, table (3.1) was the first paper on Mehri language I asked the two Mehri students to present and discuss it in 2009.

TABLE (3.1):
THE FIRST WORK IN MEHRI LANGUAGE IN 2009

اللغة الإنجليزية	اللغة المهرية - مؤنث	اللغة المهرية-مذكر	اللغة العربية	الرقم
0	شي لا	شي لا	صفر	0
1	طيت	طاط	واحد	1
2	ثريت	تروه	اثنين	2
3	شهليت	تشاتيت	ثلاثة	3
4	أربا	ربوت	أربعة	4
5	خيمه	خموه	خمسة	5
6	هت	يتيت	ستة	6
7	هوبا	يبيت	سبعة	7
8	ثموني	تمنيت	ثمانية	8
9	سبا	سبت	تسعة	9
10	أوشر	أشريت	عشرة	10

B. The Existence of Mehri People in Saudi Arabia

In 1985, it was mentioned that Mehri people were given the permission to settle down in Saudi Arabia. During that time, there was a political negotiation between the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the government of Yemen. Before that time, Mehri people used to travel without restrictions across the three countries Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen. After that date, because of political and sovereignty issues, Mehri people were geographically divided into three groups belonging to three different countries. In Saudi Arabia, Mehri people live in the southern region of Saudi Arabia that is in the northern border of Yemen.
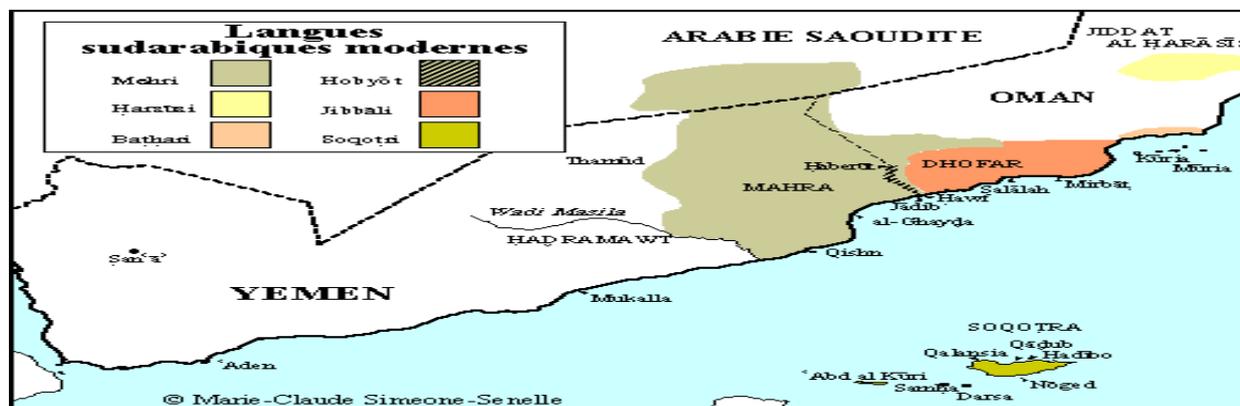
The Geographic Locations of MSA (Simeone-Senelle, 1997)

Actually, Alkharkher is the capital city of Mehri tribe. It is about 500 kilometers away from Sharoorah and 400 kilometers is the distance from Sharoorah to Najran. Personally, I was in Alkharkhir city in 2011. Fortunately, this trip was the inspiring motivation for searching of information about this tribe. From that time, I started creating relationship with some members of Mehri tribe. Moreover, I contacted one of Mehri people whom became my informant. Both of us met in Alokhdood Hotel in Najran city. Both of us were optimistic and enthusiastic to do a study paper about Mehri tribe in Saudi Arabia particularly on Aljudhi people for many reasons which will be presented in the next sections.

C. The People of Mehri Tribe, Aljudhi in Particular

Although Mehri people were cautious and worried from strangers, they were very kind and generous. However, if they knew you, they would behave as Bedouins and be very cooperative. In fact, the main Mehri tribe is divided into more than ten major tribes scattered between Oman, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. One of these tribes was Aljudhi tribe which my informant, Saleh Mohammed Aljudhi Almehri, is one of its well-known members. Moreover, he works as a channel connection between me and people of his own tribe. The second visit for this tribe was about seven months ago where fortunately I traveled to Sharoorah and many of Mehri people were there for governmental official procedures. Frankly speaking, it was my opportunity to observe and record some notices about Mehri people. For examples, they are thin with healthy bodies because they have to work hard to get money.

Most of Mehri people are monolingual except few educated persons who are bilingual. That is they speak Mehri and Arabic languages. Multilingual might be available with young Mehri who attend intermediate schools which enable them to use Mehri, Arabic and English. Recently, females of Mehri people cover their faces and wear "Abaya and Gatwa; the uniform of Saudi women". Speaking to females is forbidden and a non-Mehri visitor will be investigated. Incredibly, most of them sleep at nine or maximum ten o'clock in the evening.

In this project, choosing Aljudhi tribe was decided for many reasons. First, as the informant states "Aljudhi dialect is spoken by around thirty thousands of people, most of them traveled to Saudi Arabia and settled in Alkharkhir city", he adds " I know some old men who still remember the purest Mehri language". In addition, I choose this tribe because most of the studies have been published about the tribes of Mehri in Yemen and Oman. Also, the existence of the tribe in Saudi Arabia will help me to save more time, effort and costs. As a result, Mr. Saleh Mohammed Aljudhi Almehri, both the informant and the translator, and I discussed a lot in order to draw the main headlines to accomplish this task effectively. Obviously, my supervisor, Dr. Abdulwahid Alzomer: an English professor in the Faculty of Languages and Translation in King Khalid University, is familiar with the procedures I follow in order to do my paper worth. In fact, his support and instructions are significant for this work. This work will search for clarification on the three linguistic aspects of Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language: Number - Gender - Tense

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As it is known, Mehri language is spoken by people living in the boarders of three countries that is Oman, Yemen and recently Saudi Arabia. Actually, what I reported above depends on personal and practical experience. In other words, I assumed that Mehri tribe was ignored by social and linguistic scholars and researchers. Fortunately, when I started searching about Mehri people on internet, hundreds of articles and researches are available either free or not.

Although I was surprised that many researches and studies have been conducted on Mehri tribe, this research aims at highlighting some linguistic aspects on Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language in Saudi Arabia which have never been investigated by other researchers

In fact, there are hundreds of publications about Mehri language conducted in Oman and Yemen for many reasons which won't be stated in this research. It is reported that Mehri language is considered as "an endangered language" which is spoken by minority of population on the South Arabian Peninsula. In fact, It is a spoken language and there are many attempts to draw a well-constructed morphological and phonological system of this language. Moreover, this language is one of other five languages, Alrowsa (2014) stated "'Eastern' branch. This includes Bathari, harsusi, Hobyot, Jibbali, Mehri, and Soqotri.", found in the Arabian Peninsula and unfortunately these languages are endangered. Mehri language is considered as "one of the Semitic language family" (Castagna, 2012). He adds "Mehri language is spoken by about 100.000 people in Oman, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, which is part of the Modern South Arabian (MSA) branch of the Semitic language family." In addition, Claude & Senelle (2013) supported Sima's (2001) view's which states that Mehri language is endangered. That is Claude & Senelle (2013) concludes" All the Modern South Arabian Languages are endangered to variable degree which make urgent a more extensive investigation" and Sima (2001) reports" a considerable amount of changes regarding the social status endangered the Mehri language". Moreover, Alrowsa (2014) indicates that "All of these languages continue to be spoken, though all are under threat and several are endangered". Also, in Sima's (2001) article, although it is an experimental trip to Mehri areas, he considers T.V as a threat factor of Mehri language which needs to be reexamined. There was a comparative study between Mehri and Hobyot languages which draws some valuable findings. Although the writers, Claude & Senelle(2013), ignore Mehri people in Saudi Arabia, it highlights the similarities and differences between Mehri variety spoken in Oman and that spoken in Yemen. Although Alrowsa (2014) has an interesting informative research, there are few points which might be suggested to be re-examined. For example, Alrowsa (2014) says that he couldn't travel to Mehri region because of political tension between Yemen and Saudi Arabia while peace and positive relationship was stable at that period of time. Moreover, I think the sample of study is not enough because of number of interviewees (10 people only) and their ages (more than 20 years while it is expected to meet more people who are elder in age). Also, he uses technology in collecting data such as skype but it is not clear if Mehri language is considered as the purest and original language of Mehri people. These points can't be inconsistent with the value and significance of this study.

III. OBJECTIVES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This paper is supposed to clarify three significant aspects. Actually, it is an attempt to answer the following questions:
1- How does Aljudhi dialect inflect number? (Number)
2- How does Aljudhi dialect inflect masculine and feminine? (Gender)
3- How does Aljudhi dialect inflect the tense? (Tense)

The significance of this work is obviously known through previous paragraphs which can be summarized as follows. First, Mehri language is considered as one of the endangered languages of Semitic languages in the Modern South Arabian (MSA). Apparently, this research is mostly the first and only paper on Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language in Saudi Arabia for many reasons, see "Introduction" section. Also, the source of information is reliable and independent. Moreover, there is an attempt to investigate Mehri language and tribe for the benefit of both government and Mehri citizens. Hopefully, this paper may motivate other linguists to conduct further research and studies of Mehri language in Saudi Arabia.

IV. METHOD AND DESIGN

In this study, there will be an organized plan to get reliable findings as follows:

A. Participants

The data was collected with a help of an informant whose name was Saleh Mohammed Aljudhi Almehri. The informant was a connection channel between the researcher and people of Mehri because they did not cooperate or respond to non-Mehri people. Actually, the sample of population involved 10 male people who were above 45 years old and lived in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the southern region, particularly in Sharoorah and Alkharkhir provinces. The participants were divided into two equal groups. Each group had many separate meetings but under the same circumstances as possible.

B. Measures

Saleh Mohammed Aljudhi Almehri, the informant, helped me to do semi-structure interviews and to ask people to fill in a list of words in a well-organized form. The form consisted of around seventy singular nouns written in Arabic language for the first aspect of study, number. The second point of this study, gender, had a well-organized form of seventy different verbs to be addressed to masculine and feminine. Moreover, the tense was investigated by asking Aljudhi people to change 10 different meaningful sentences from past to present and future tenses. Although the informant had a great effort to convince Aljudhi people who were involved to record the interviews, the interviewees did not accept their voices to be recorded for personal reasons. The informant and I had many meetings before starting

data collection to develop the questionnaire, choose the target sample of population for this study with special restrictions, make a plan which was expected to deal with changes during the study and be very close to the stages of this study.

In fact, data collection took more time and effort which was caused by the absence of the informant who was in Oman for a month and because of the number of nouns and verbs to be investigated. As a result, about seven weeks of continuous work was spent to collect data from Aljudhi people of Mehri language. In fact, both the qualitative and the quantitative methods were used in this study. The quantitative method was used to count majority of responses. On the other hand, qualitative method was applied to observe other responses and is used to collect and register data.

C. Procedures

In order to accomplish this work, I started my task following specific procedures with the assistance and guidance of my supervisor, Dr. Abdulwahid Alzumer. First, the topic of this study was chosen as a result of evaluating my interest, significance of study, source of information, availability of data, background of study, findings to be concluded, uniqueness of the study etc. Second, my informant and I had many hard and continuous meetings to prepare the forms and study items, choose the sample, agree on the suitable time and place to do this task effectively. Actually, preparation stage took time and hard effort enhanced by enthusiasm. Third, the informant and I contacted the participants and arranged time and place as planned before. Then the meetings were planned to done in the same circumstances as possible as we could. Later on, both Mr. Saleh Mohammed and I decided to do the interviews in Najran city in his small office because the participants were already in Najran to get their Identification Cards. Full-time duty and the lack of financial support were considered as major obstacles. In the interview stage, while I explained for the participants the goal of this study and how it would benefit Mehri people in general, the informant translated my speech literally to their native language. The participants were divided into two equal groups that is five persons in each group. Precisely, I said a word in Arabic, the informant translated it to their native language, responses from each one was registered, I emphasized the pronunciation for many times of each seventy words. Moreover, about thirty percent of words and verbs were changed in order to draw rules which caused time and effort consuming for the informant, participants and myself. In addition, the interviews were conducted during my free time and when they were available. Many meetings had occurred and data was recorded as they pronounced them, using vowels in Arabic to confirm the correct and accurate utterances of words, verbs and sentences, and were observed through physical and facial expressions. Enough time was given for each person to think, say and repeat what he was required to say. In fact, the data, which was collected, was saved on a laptop of Lenovo company, core i3. The analysis of data was processed by counting the accurate and accurate translated words to Mehri language presented by majority of participants. Moreover, this data was analyzed in order to draw a relationship between the dialects of Mehri language or to highlight new views in this field to be investigated in the future by linguists in three aspects of Mehri language: (Number-Gender-Tense)

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Number in Aljudhi Dialect of Mehri Language

As it is mentioned above, more than seventy words were listed then the participants were asked to pronounce these words for singular, dual and plural patterns in order to draw a connection between singular, dual and plural words. The table (7.1.2) had seventy words to be changed into Dual and Plural of Aljudhi Dialect of Mehri Language.

TABLE (7.1.2):
SINGULAR-DUAL-PLURAL IN ALJUDHI DIALECT OF MEHRI LANGUAGE

No	Mehri Word	English Word	Mehri Dual	English Dual	Mehri Plural	English Plural
1	غِيج	Man	غِيج يَثْرُوه	Two men	غْيُوج	Men
2	أَجُوز	Old woman	أَجُوز يَثْرين	Two old women	أَجُوريز	old women
3	غِيجين	Boy	غِيجين يَثْرين	Two boys	قَلَّيِين	Boys
4	مُوتَّر	Car	مُوتَّر يَثْرُوه	Two cars	مُوتَرْت	Cars
5	بِيت	House	بِيت يَثْرين	Two houses	بِيُوت	Houses
6	ذَهِيب	Stream	ذَهِيب يَثْرُوه	Two streams	ذَهَوَّبَت	Streams
7	دَكُون	Groceries	دَكُون يَثْرُوه	Two groceries	دَكوكِن	Groceries
8	سِيكل	Bicycle	سِيكل يَثْرُوه	Two bicycles	سِيكلت	Bicycles
9	حُوز	Goat	حُوز يَثْرين	Two goats	هَارُون	Goats
10	ثِيويثَ	Sheep	ثِيويت يَثْرين	Two sheep	ثِوي	Sheep
11	بَقَرِيت	Cow	بَقَرِيت يَثْرين	Two cows	بَقَّار	Cows
12	جِنِيت	Bag	جِنِيت يَثْرين	Two bags	جُونِي	Bags
13	مَكتَب	Office	مَكتَب يَثْرُوه	Two offices	مَكوتِب	Offices
14	قَلِيم	Pen	قَلِيم يَثْرُوه	Two pens	قَلَومِت	Pens
15	خِيميت	Tent	خِيميت يَثْرين	Two tents	خِيم	Tents
16	غَرْفِيت	Room	غَرْفِيت يَثْرين	Two rooms	غَرِيف	Rooms
17	گِرَات	Ball	گِرَات يَثْرين	Two balls	كِرير	Balls
18	نَخْلِيت	Palm	نَخْلِيت يَثْرين	Two palms	نِيخَل	Palms
19	بِير	Well	بِير يَثْرين	Two wells	هَابْيُور	Wells
31	قُوبَر	Grave	قَبْرْ يَثْرُوه	Two graves	قْبُور	Graves
32	أَقَبِيت	Bird	أَقَبِيت يَثْرين	Two birds	أَقَاب	Birds
33	مَسْيُول	Riverbed	مَسْيُول يَثْرُوه	Two riverbeds	مْسِيلِيت	Riverbeds
34	حُودِي	Valley	حُودِي يَثْرين	Two valleys	هَاوْدِي	Valleys
35	أَجْلِيت	Tire	أَجْلِيت يَثْرين	Two tires	أَجِيل	Tires
36	سَات	Watch	سَات يَثْرين	Two watches	سَوتَّن	Watches
37	دَشْدِيش	Thobe	دَشْدِيش يَثْرين	Two thobes	دَشْودِش	Thobes
38	وَرْقَات	Leaf	وَرْقَات يَثْرين	Two leaves	وْرِيق	Leaves
39	مَجْلِيس	Sitting room	مَجْلِيس يَثْرين	Two sitting rooms	مْجَوْلِس	Sitting rooms
40	مَقْهُويت	Tea-room	مَقْهُويت يَثْرين	Two tearooms	مُقْوهِي	Tea-rooms
41	لَبْذ	Liver	لَبْذ يَثْرُوه	Two livers	هَالْبُوذْ	Livers
42	شبدِيت	Finger	شبدِيت يَثْرين	Two fingers	شِيبِيد	Fingers
43	قَلف	Container	قَلف يَثْرُوه	Two containers	قَلانات	Containers
44	صَاحِن *	Dish	صَاحِن يَثْرُوه	Two dishes	صْحِين	Dishes
45	صِفَرِيت *	Pot	صَفَرِيت يَثْرُوه	Two pots	صَفَورِي	Pots
46	يَصْفِير *	Snake	يَصَفِير يَثْرُوه	Two snakes	يْصَوْفِر	Snakes
47	صَار *	Deer	صَار يَثْرُوه	Two deer	صَابُور	Deer
48	تْبِووط	Fire	تْبِووط يَثْرين	Two fires	تْوطِين	Fires
49	ثْجرِيت *	Tree	ثْجرِيت يَثْرين	Two trees	تْجِير	Trees
50	رِيثَيت *	Serpent	رِيثَيت يَثْرين	Two serpents	رِييَّث	Serpents

* Words (44-50) are considered as odd letters in Arabic language, that is there are about four spoken letters in Mehri can't be written in Arabic language. As a result, both the informant and I suggest the written forms of two Mehri letters:

1- ص might be a new Arabic created letter acts as a representative for Mehri letter of:

Close to ʑ

ص+ز =

2- ث might be a new Arabic created letter acts as a representative for Mehri letter of :

ش+ث = very close to ʧ

Summary and Discussion

In Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language, we listed more than seventy words in order to conclude a clear connection between words. Although we changed about thirty percent of the words under investigation, a direct and general rule might not be inferred for non-Mehri speakers. However, comparing Aljudhi dialect with Ben Zabinut dialect of Mehri language might be useful to focus on similarities and differences which then increased the knowledge of how various dialects of Mehri language were spoken or written. According to Alrowsa (2014) study which was titled as "Question Formation in Mehri", I attempted to investigate the differences between the two dialects in specific aspects "Number-Gender". In fact, according to both table (7.1.2) and Ben Zabinut study, I thought it was important to examine each aspect briefly.

1.1 Word Formation" Number"

Surprisingly, first of all, it was believed that Arabic language was the only language in the Arabian Peninsula which was not true and researchers a long time discovered more than five endangered languages belong to the Semitic family. Moreover, people thought that Mehri language had a particular dialect which was denied by many researchers who supported that Mehri language had many varieties and might be classified by the tribe which used this variety. Actually, I noticed that there were some differences in using words to indicate one meaning for both Ben Zabinut and Aljudhi

dialects. After recording more than seventy nouns, it was assumed that some different nouns had the same meaning, table (7.1.3).

TABLE (7.1.3):
WORDS DIFFERENCES IN ALJUDHI AND BEN ZABINUT DIALECTS OF MEHRI LANGUAGE

No	English	Aljudhi Dialect	Ben Zabinut Dialect
1	Boy	Gaij	Humbrim
2	Goat	Hoose	Hawter
3	Pot	*ẓufrait	Qadr
4	Coal	Khah	Jumrate
5	Snake	*yaẓfair	Rechit
6	Deer	ẓar	Wail
* Look at table (7.1.2): suggested that ẓ=ص			

Moreover, I observed that there were many nouns in Aljudhi dialect which were either the same or very close to Arabic nouns, see table (7.1.4). In fact, I thought that researchers had to investigate this issue. That is they were supposed to clarify the origin of these nouns Arabic or Mehri languages.

TABLE (7.1.4):
SIMILARITIES OF NOUNS BETWEEN MEHRI AND ARABIC LANGUAGES

No	English	Aljudhi Dialect of Mehri Language	Arabic language
1	Old woman	أجوز	عجوز
2	House	بيت	بيت
3	Cow	بقريت	بقر
4	Pen	قيلم	قلم
5	Room	غرفيت	غرفة
6	Tent	خيميت	خيمة
7	Palm	نخليت	نخلة
8	Mosque	مسجيد	مسجد
9	Sitting room	مجليس	مجلس
10	Tire	أجليت	عجلة
11	Leaf	ورقات	ورقة
12	Grave	قوبر	قبر
13	Sail-boat	مركب	مركب
14	Eye	أين	عين
15	Lock	قافل	قفل

1.2 Dual

How did Aljudhi dialect change singular to dual? To answer this question, it was useful to take a look at table (7.1.2). Actually, the findings for the both studies-this study and the study done by Alrowsa (2014)-had different conclusions as follows:

TABLE (7.1.5):
DUAL NOUN: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ALJUDHI AND BEN ZABINUT DIALECTS

No	English Dual	Aljudhi Dialect	Ben Zabinut Dialect
1	Two+ masculine noun+ s (except irregular nouns)	Yathroh + masculine noun	Masculine noun + suffix /i/; ktawbi..
2	Two + feminine noun + s (except irregular nouns)	Yathrain + feminine noun	Feminine noun + suffix /i/; mesmuri..
3	Dual marker "Two" is compulsory	Dual marker "Yathroh" or "Yathrain" is compulsory.	Dual marker "Yathroh" or "Yathrain" is optional.
4	No changes on noun	No changes on noun	Changes occurred on noun

In fact, the difference of dual between the two dialects could be observed. Alrowsa (2014) concluded that "Dual marking on nouns is straightforward, adding an /-i/ suffix to the noun, regardless of the noun's gender", he stated "Dual marking on nouns is optional, however. It is fine for the noun to appear in the plural following by "two" and still trigger the dual marking on the verb. In fact, this is more common than marking dual on the noun itself." On the other hand, in Aljudhi dialect, gender of noun had a great significance in choosing dual marker "Yathroh" for masculine and dual marker "Yathrain" for feminine. Moreover, these dual markers were necessary. In addition, the main word had no changes and was followed by the dual marker either "Yathroh" or "Yathrain". Thus, table (7.1.3) shows the differences between Aljudhi dialect and Ben Zabinut dialect of Mehri language.

1.3 Plural

Pluralization of both Aljudhi and Ben Zabinut dialects in particular, and pluralization of Mehri language in general were the most difficult aspect in grammatical system. Although I tried to change so many words in order to find out a rule for changing words from singular to plural, words could be classified into many groups and each group had its own grammatical rule. Thus, in Alrowsa's (2014) study of Ben Zabinut dialect, he inferred many grammatical rules in the formation of plural words. In other words, there were about at least eighteen grammatical rules in Alrowsa's research.

For example, he classified the change of plural patterns into two forms. The first form was called "the internal plurals which have no affix and instead the base is modified to form the plural" stated by Alrowsa (2014). It was called *"Broken Plural"* which commonly used in Mehri language, particularly Aljudhi dialect. Actually, it was not possible to review every kind of "Broken Plural" because it was unexpected process and did not follow specific morphological rules. Thus, it was a complicated duty to investigate "Broken Plural". The second form was known as "the internal plurals where the base is modified by having an affix. Internal plurals are more common than external plurals especially with masculine nouns. Some nouns have qualities of both, employing a suffix as well as internal change." (Alrowsa, 2014).

On the other hand, I believed that Aljudhi dialect had to share the obstacle of increasing numbers of grammatical groups. In other words, it was mentioned that Ben Zabinut dialect had about eighteen classified group to form plural words which might occur in Aljudhi dialect. Actually, according to the observation of the table (7.1.2), it was clearly assumed that the plural words could be categorized into many groups, even more than eighteen groups found in that study. As a result, it was useful to list the internal changes of words which had been concluded in the study of Alrowsa (2014). For example, the changes took place in the following suffixes: [-in, -on, -ət, -eit, -tən, -tVn, -otən, -o:C, CCo:Ci, -awC, -məCowCəC, -CCajC, -æC, -etc.], and the prefix [hæ-]. Similarly, Aljudhi dialect might have these suffixes involved, or it might have more other suffixes which can be deduced from the table (7.1.2). Finally, it was complicated task for non-Mehri speakers to have specific rules for changing words into plural forms.

B. Gender in Aljudhi Dialect of Mehri Language

One of the distinctive features of Mehri language in general and Aljudhi dialect in particular was how Mehri people address masculine and feminine using verbs. Generally, Alrowsa (2014) and I had to accept the available classification for verb stem which was suggested by Rubin (2010) and Watson (2012). Actually, Alrowsa (2014) reported that "both Rubin (2010) and Watson (2012) have pointed out, there are up to five different forms of the verb for any particular root." He added "The majority of roots have three consonants and I will stick to the patterns for these roots". As a fact, the five forms of the verbs were to be: Basic stems, D/L-stem, H-stem, ʃ-stem, T-stem. Definitely, Aljudhi dialect had the same classification for many reasons. For instance, the following table (7.2.6) consisted of seventy verbs to be used for masculine and feminine in order to deduce specific features of gender effects in the formulation of verbs.

TABLE (7.2.6):
GENDER IN ALJUDHI DIALECT OF MEHRI LANGUAGE

No	Mehri Verb	English Verb	Masculine in Mehri	Masculine in English	Feminine in Mehri	Feminine in English
1	دِيتِيوْ	Eat	تووه	He eats	تروت	She eats
2	دِيقَوفد	Come down	قُوفد	He comes down	تَقُوفد	She comes down
3	ديوَيح	Run	دْحوه	He runs	تُّويح	She runs
4	دِيخيز	Refuse	خُزُوه	He refuses	تْخيز	She refuses
5	دِيقُهوب	Come in a.m.	قُهيب	He comes in a.m.	تَقُهُوب	She comes in a.m.
6	دِيجهوم	Travel	جُهِيم	He travels	جُهُمُون	She travels
7	دِيشْداني	Pray against you	شْدُوه	He prays against you	شْدَوت	She prays against you
8	دُوَلَمِه	Bicycle	ولَمِيه	He bicycles	وَلَمَّه	She bicycles
9	دِينوحِج	Play	نْحاج	He plays	نَحْجوب	She plays
10	دِيزور	Visit	زار	He visits	تْزور	She visits
11	دِينْغوم	Feel unhappy	نَغام	He feels unhappy	نَغموت	She feels unhappy
12	دِيبِيك	Lying	بُوه	He lies	بْدوت	She lies
13	يَشَلْبُود	Needle hits	شَلْبُود	He has a needle hits	شَلْبُدُوت	She has a needle hits
14	دِيخُوطب	Address (people)	خْطُوب	He addresses (people)	خَطْبُوت	She addresses (people)
15	دِبْنُّور	Hunt	بِيتَّر	He hunts	بتَّرُوت	She hunts
16	دِيقَروز	Go in a.m.	قرور	He goes in a.m.	قَرُّوت	She goes in a.m.
17	دِيوَمَر	Say	أمُور	He says	أمْرُوت	She says
18	دَلِيقَف	Hold	لِقَف	He holds	لَقَفوت	She holds
19	دِيزْهُود	Feel not greedy	زَهد	He feels not greedy	زَهْدُوت	She feels not greedy
20	دِيسْلُوم	Become a Muslim	أسلم	He becomes a Muslim	سَلَمُوت	She becomes a Muslim
21	دِيشْدويَن	Take medication	شْدِيدِي	He takes medication	شْدُدِيُوت	She takes medication
22	دِيدْويِمن	Attend work	دْويم	He attends work	دُمُوت	She attends work
23	دِيخُوبز	Make bread	خْبوز	He makes bread	خَبْزُوت	She takes bread
24	دِيسوق	Drive	سْوق	He drives	سَقُوت	She drives
25	دِيسوبِق	Race	سْبوق	He races	سَبْقُوت	She races
26	دِيسِيم	Search	سْمُوه	He searches	سْمُوت	She searches
27	دَهْبُود	Hide	هْبُود	He hides	هَبْدُوت	She hides
28	دلْتِيغ	Kill	لَتِيغ	He kills	مْتَوت	She kills
29	دِيوزْمَه	Give	وزمْكَه	He gives	وزمْكس	She gives
30	دِيشْقَرور	Admit	شْقَرور	He admits	شَقْرُوت	She admits
31	دِيمَرْقَن	Make broth	مُورق	He makes broth	مرْقُوت	She takes broth
32	دِيسُوبْط	Hit	سْبُوط	He hits	سِبْطُوت	She hits
33	دِيفِيثّ *	Have lunch	فتَّوه	He has lunch	فتَّوت	She has lunch
34	دِيتّلول*	Carry	تَّل	He carries	تَّلوت	She carries
35	دِينَفَثّ*	Go in p.m.	نَفوث	He goes in p.m.	نَفَثّوت	She goes in p.m.
36	دِيظَحُوك*	Laugh	ظَحَاك	He laughs	ظَحْكوت	She laughs
37	دِيظَطُّوب*	Blame	ظَطّب	He blames	ظَطُّوت	She blames
38	دِيبَغَوظا*	Hate	بْغَاظ	He hates	بَغْظَه	She hates
39	دِيصُوق*	Call	صَاق	He calls	صَاقُوت	She calls
40	دِيقَوصِد*	Tell poetry	قَصَوْد	He tells poetry	قَصَدُوت	She tells poetry
41	دِصَوْر*	Stop	صَوْر	He stops	صَرُوت	She stops
42	دِيصَلِين*	Pray	صُولِي	He prays	صَلِيت	She prays
43	دِيصورُف*	Exchange	صْرُوف	He exchanges	صَرْفُوت	She exchanges
44	دِيُوصُول*	Arrive	وِصَّل	He arrives	وَصَّلوت	She arrives
45	دِيخُوص*	Feel pain	بْخَاص	He feels pain	بَخْصُوت	She feels pain
46	دِيحْدُوذ	Pull	حَدّ	He pulls	حَدُوثّ	She pulls
47	دِيغوصِب*	Impose	غِصُوب	He imposes	غِصْبُوت	He imposes
48	دِينْهُور	Help	بْهِير	He helps	بْهْروثّ	She helps
49	دِيقَيصُوص*	Cut	قَيصّ	He cuts	قَيصُّوتّ	She cuts
50	دِينَثّوكّ*	Bite	نِثّكّ	He bites	نِثّكوت	She bites

* See table (8.1.2)

* ظ = non-Arabic letter, very close to ط + ض

Summary and Discussion

Although the seventy selected verbs were to be substituted with other thirty different verbs in order to conclude practical rules, these rules might not be clear enough for non-Mehri native speakers. On the other hand, table (7.2.6) indicated specific characteristics in addressing masculine and feminine. In other words, there were obvious marks for both genders. For example, most of the main verbs of Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language begin with the prefix [Di-] which could not be found in Ben Zabinut dialect according to ALrowsa (2014). Moreover, the suffix [-ət] of most of spoken verbs indicated that the addressee should be feminine. In addition, most of the verbs in Aljudhi dialect included three main consonants. Also, it might be possible to assume that many verbs had different forms in both Aljudhi and Ben Zabinut dialects in which table (7.2.7) introduces some examples.

TABLE (7.2.7):
DIFFERENT FORMS OF THE SAME VERB IN THE TWO DIALECTS

No	English Verb	Aljudhi Dialect	Ben Zabinut Dialect
1	Pick	Dinasf	Autgut
2	Come	Digofed	Qhob
3	Say	Diyawmer	Tmir
4	Buy	*yeshtome	Dshun
5	Stop	*diẓore	Netkef
* It is recommended to revise table (7.1.2)			

C. Tense in Aljudhi Dialect of Mehri Language

In this section, the tense of Aljudhi dialect was to be discussed briefly. That is how people of Aljudhi tribe of Mehri language changed meaningful sentences from past to present and to future tense. In order to achieve this objective, my informant and I suggested more than ten sentences. Next, the participants were asked to change the sentence from past tense to present tense and then to the future tense. Necessarily, we intended to make the sentences in past, present and future tenses in Arabic language then they were required to translate these sentences accurately. Moreover, the same components of the sentences were presented in all tenses except verbs. In other words, we used the same words in each sentence but we changed only the verbs for each sentence. As a result, each verb had to have three sentences, one was in the past tense, the second was in the present tense and the last was in the future tense. In fact, we insisted to have the same components of the sentences in order to focus on the changes that took place on verbs. However, a great attention was paid for the main verbs and the participants were asked to repeat the verbs many times in order to record the accurate pronunciation. Of course, the following table (7.3.8) may clarify this point.

TABLE (7.3.8):
TENSE – PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE - IN ALJUDHI DIALECT OF MEHRI LANGUAGE

No	English Verb	Tense	Sentence in English Language	Sentence in Mehri Language
1	Go	Past	I <u>went</u> to school last week.	Huh <u>kunhik</u> mudresait usbou hawli. هُوه كَنْحِكَ مَدْرسِيت أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>go</u> to school every day.	Huh <u>konah</u> mudresait kul nhoor. هُوَهْ كُونَحْ مَدْرسِيتْ كَلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>go</u> to school next month.	Huh <u>kunhona</u> mudresait warkh mgobel. هُوه كَنْحُونا مَدْرسِيتْ وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
2	Play	Past	I <u>played</u> football last week.	Huh <u>nhajk</u> kurrat usbou hawli. هُوَهْ نْحَجْكَ كَرَّاتْ أَسْبُو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>play</u> football every day.	Huh <u>nohej</u> kurrat kul nhoor. هُوَهْ نُوحِجْ كَرَّاتْ كَلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>play</u> football next month.	Huh <u>nuhjona</u> kurrat warkh mgobel. هُوَهْ نَحْجُونَا كَرَّاتْ وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
3	Write	Past	I <u>wrote</u> the lesson last week.	Huh <u>kutabk</u> dars usbou hawli. . هُوَهْ كَتْبَكَ دَارْسْ أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>write</u> the lesson every day.	Huh <u>koteb</u> dars kul nhoor. هوه كُوتِبْ دَارْسْ كُلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>write</u> the lesson next month.	Huh <u>ktobona</u> dars warkh mgobel. هُوَهْ كَتْبُونَا دَارْسْ وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
4	Watch	Past	I <u>watched</u> football last week.	Huh <u>galagk</u> mobarah usbou hawli. هُوه غَلَقْكَ مُبَارَاةْ أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>watch</u> football every day.	Huh <u>goleg</u> mobarah kul nhoor. هُوَهْ غُولِقْ مُبَارَاةْ كُلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>watch</u> football next month.	Huh <u>goleg</u> mobarah warkh mgobel. هُوَهْ غَلْقُونَا مُبَارَاةْ وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
5	Use	Past	I <u>used</u> internet last week.	Huh <u>amlak</u> internet usbou hawli. هُوَهْ أَمْلَكَ إِنْتَرْنِتْ أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>use</u> internet every day.	Huh <u>amool</u> internet kul nhoor. هُوَهْ أَمُولْ إِنْتَرْنِتْ كَلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>use</u> internet next month.	Huh <u>amlona</u> internet warkh mgobel. هُوَهْ أَمْلُونَا إِنْتَرْنِتْ وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
6	Swim	Past	I <u>swam</u> last week.	Huh <u>sabahk</u> usbou hawli. هُوه سَبَحْكَ أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>swim</u> every day.	Huh <u>soobih</u> kul nhoor. هُوَهْ سُويِح كُلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>swim</u> next month.	Huh <u>sobhona</u> warkh mgobel. هُوه سَبْحُونَا وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
7	Jump	Past	I <u>jumped</u> last week.	Huh <u>dalfak</u> usbou hawli. هُوَهْ دَلْفَكَ أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>jump</u> every day.	Huh <u>dolif</u> kul nhoor. هُوَهْ دُولِفْ كُلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>jump</u> next month.	Huh <u>dalafona</u> warkh mgobel. هُوه دَلْفُونَا وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.
8	say poems	Past	I <u>said</u> poems last week.	Huh <u>gasadk</u> usbou hawli. هُوه قَصَدْكَ أَسْبو هَاوْلِي.
		Present	I <u>say</u> poem every day.	Huh <u>gosed</u> kul nhoor. هُوَهْ قُوصِدْ كُلْ نْحُورِ.
		Future	I will <u>say</u> poem next month.	Huh <u>gasadona</u> warkh mgobel. هُوه قَصَدُونَا وَرْخْ مَقُوبِل.

Summary and Discussion

To investigate the tenses in Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language, we intended to use first person singular "I" with different verbs. Each verb had to be changed into past, present and future tenses with making necessary changes. Actually, Alrowsa (2014) highlighted the future tense when he stated that "In Mehri future. First, the first common singular. are characterized by the suffix –onæ." On the other hand, according to Aljudhi dialect, some verbs had particular forms to be applied. For example, according to table (7.3.8), some of the main verbs had to have the suffix [-ək] in the past tense such as kunhi<u>k</u>, nhaj<u>k</u>, galag<u>k</u>, amla<u>k</u>, sabah<u>k</u>, dalfa<u>k</u> etc. While in the present tense, the main verbs which were presented in the table (7.3.8) indicated that these verbs followed a particular order in the formation of present tense [CVCVC= C(O)CVC] such as k<u>o</u>neh, k<u>o</u>teb, s<u>o</u>beh, g<u>o</u>sed, l<u>o</u>bed etc. Apparently from the table (7.3.8), we had to support Alrowsa's (2014) conclusion which claimed that some of the verbs in the future tense were" characterized by the suffix –onæ." Such as gasad<u>ona</u>, dalaf<u>ona</u>, sobh<u>ona</u>, aml<u>ona</u>, ktob<u>ona</u> etc. In fact, other verbs should be examined intensively because these particular forms might not be acceptable for other verbs.

VI. CONCLUSION

Fortunately, a researcher had done his best to explore Mehri language which was unique in its topic, aspects, location etc. In this study, I had tried to investigate the morphology of Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language which was considered as an endangered language. However, many articles and research had been revised which caused to increase the

knowledge of this distinctive language with its particular varieties. Moreover, this work could be considered as a field study. Actually, to refer to ALrowsa (2014) because it was a relevant study and recently published. In fact, it was noticed that the findings of this work, which was about Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language in Najran province, might have three different views.

As a result, the first view indicated that the argues of the two papers were very close and they had an agreement on some items such as eighteen groups for the pluralization of nouns, see table (7.1.2), the suffix [-ət] of verbs for addressing feminine in table (7.2.6), the suffix [-onæ] of some verbs in future tense as in table (7.2.8) etc. The second view implied controversial issues which required more investigation and focus. Actually, I would like to summarize some findings of each linguistic aspect as followed:

A-Number:
1- A word might have two different forms among various dialects of Mehri language, see table (7.1.3)
2- It was observed that Arabic and Mehri languages used similar or very close words but unfortunately the origin of them weren't investigated, see table (7.1.4)
3- The usage of dual marker was compulsory. The dual marker "Yathroh" was used for masculine while the dual marker "Yathrain" was used for feminine, see table (7.1.5)
4- Unlike other studies, it was reported that in Aljudi dialect the suffix [i] was not found in dual form, see table (7.1.2)
5-I suggested new Arabic letters to represent the four new sounds in Mehri language which did not exist in Arabic phonological system, see table (7.1.2)

B-Gender:
1- The prefix [Di-] began most of the verbs in Aljudhi dialect of Mehri language, see table (7.2.6)
2- The suffix[-ət] of verbs was used for feminine, see table (7.2.6)
3- A verb might have two different forms among various dialects of Mehri language, see table (7.2.7)

C-Tense:*It is suggested that many verbs in Aljudhi dialect should follow specific grammatical patterns:

1-Past Tense: Some of the main verbs had to have the suffix [-ək] such as kunhik, nhajk, galagk, amlak, sabahk, dalfak , see table (7.3.8)

2-Present Tense: Some of the main verbs in Aljudhi dialect should apply this pattern: [CVCVC= C(O)CVC] such as koneh, koteb, sobeh, gosed, lobed, see table (7.3.8)

3-Future Tense: Some of the main verbs were characterized by the suffix [–onæ] such as gasadona, dalafona, sobhona, amlona, ktobona, see table (7.3.8)

Although I had faced many challenges which restrict this work such as time, financial support etc., I assumed that this research had contributed to different significant issues which required serious investigation on the endangered Semitic languages, particularly Mehri language such as: the three aspects (Number, Gender, Tense), the similarities of the usage of nouns between Arabic and Mehri languages and the four new sounds which did not exist in Arabic phonological system. I concluded that linguists were to be the ones who should preserve these ancient languages and try to inseminate the knowledge related to them. Ultimately, the writer aspired to live with Aljudhi tribe for many months in order to study their language, lifestyles, culture.

VII. Limitation

This work had many restrictions which might decrease the ability to accomplish the task perfectly. For example, the main obstacle was the time availability because the participants were far away from my resident about 300 to 700 kilometers, I had other two courses in King Khalid University which required hard work and lastly it was suggested that this kind of studies required more time. Moreover, the lack of financial support had affected my achieved goal of discovering the desired knowledge about this language. For example, traveling costs for more than nine times and staying with Mehri people for days demanded special budget. Another restriction could be the dialect of the female of Mehri people was not investigated for social restrictions. Although there were many studies and researches about Mehri language, it was believed that a clear unified written system of various dialects of spoken Mehri language was not available in both English and Arabic languages. In addition, modernization affected their pronunciation and led them to distort the purity and originality of Mehri language. As it was experienced, the negative attitude of Mehri people toward strangers had reduced the exposure of people to this under-research variety of language.

Appendices

The Participants' Names:
1-Mubarak Ahmed Saeed Aljudhi Almehri.
2-Muhammed Mubarak Ali Aljudhi Almehri.
3-Salem Sa'd Ali Aljudhi Almehri.
4-Saleem Salem Muhdi Aljudhi Almehri.
5-Abdullah Mohammed Solem Aljudhi Almehri.
6-Mohammed Sa'd Ali Aljudhi Almehri.
7-Ahmed Salem Bakhait Aljudhi Almehri.

8-Ali Saeed Abdullah Aljudhi Almehri.
9-Ali Salem Abdullah Aljudhi Almehri.
10-Mohammed Saeed Bakhait Aljudhi Almehri.

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