

# Teaching of The Arabic Language in South African Schools - Nature of Language and Methodology

By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master of Arts**

in the subject

**Arabic**

at the

**University of South Africa**

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February 2008

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# Declaration

I declare that: “**Teaching of The Arabic language in South African Schools - Nature of language and Methodology** is my own work and all the sources that I have used and quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references”

Shaukat Dawood

Date

## **Acknowledgements**

My heartfelt thanks and gratitude goes out to the following People without whom this dissertation would not be possible; I am greatly indebted to my promoter, Dr I E Jaffer, for his constant encouragement, support, expert advice, sincere guidance and never ending patience. I feel greatly indebted to his tutorship and for patiently guiding me through the research.

I would also like express my deep appreciation I Professor Y Dadoo for facilitating my prompt registration and for his valuable guidance in selecting the topic.

Much gratitude is owed to my colleagues who advised me throughout my research, to Miss Rashida Seckam for proof reading and editing, Mr I Amod for his insight and useful suggestions, Mr M Ataya for proof reading the Arabic text and for his valuable contribution; invariably when I had any doubts about any aspect of Arabic structure or the correct usage of grammar I consulted with him.

To my family for patiently enduring the long hours I spent away from them and for their never ending support and encouragement, especially to my wife, Safina Dawood, who through her caring support and typing skills made it possible for me to finish this project.

February 2008

## Abstract

Since gaining academic status in South African schools, the Arabic language has always been under the spotlight. In Gauteng Schools, the focus of discussion is the validity of the *Nāšī`ēn* as a prescribed Text book and the methodology best suited to achieve linguistic competence in the language.

In order to teach the language, an accurate observation of the Arabic language by means of phonetics and psychology is a prerequisite, hence the practical study of language or the study of philology is scrutinized.

In the literature study, the research discusses different interconnected themes i.e. how the brain acquires language; developments into teaching methods; it asks can language be learnt by imitating native speakers; are we born with the innate ability to learn a second language.

A review of current methodology is undertaken. Suggestions are pragmatically motivated rather than being theoretically motivated. The eclectic approach is preferred with the intention of providing the most efficient access to Arabic forms and structures.

The educational implications are discussed with a view to formulate language principles on which recommendations and suggestions can be formulated.

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## Transliteration

The Arabic script is written from the right to the left. The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 letters (harf, pl.huruf) and 29 letters if the Hamza is taken as a separate letter. The letters are all consonants. The Alif, Waw and Yā are also used as long vowels or diphthongs.

The following system of transliteration gives Arabic characters the approximate phonetic sounds they represent.

### THE ARABIC ALPHABET

Arabic Alphabet	Names of letters	Transcription (small letters)	Transcription (capital letters)
أ	'alif	a	A
ب	Bā'	b	B
ت	Tā'	t	T
ث	Thā'	th	Th
ج	Jīm	j	J
ح	Hā	h	H
خ	Khā'	kh	Kh
د	Dāl	d	D
ذ	Dhal	dh	D
ر	Rā'	r	R
ز	Zay	z	Z
س	Sīn	s	S
ش	Šīn	š	Š
ص	āSD	ś	Ś
ض	Ḍād	ḍ	Ḍ
ط	T	ṭ	T

ظ	<b>Ẓā'</b>	ž	<b>Ž</b>
ع	<b>ʿAin</b>	`	`
غ	<b>ĠAin</b>	ğ	<b>Ġ</b>
ف	<b>Fā'</b>	f	<b>F</b>
ق	<b>Qāf</b>	q	<b>Q</b>
ك	<b>Kāf</b>	k	<b>K</b>
ل	<b>Lām</b>	l	<b>L</b>
م	<b>Mīm</b>	m	<b>M</b>
ن	<b>Nūn</b>	n	<b>N</b>
ه	<b>Hā</b>	h	<b>H</b>
و	<b>Waw</b>	w	<b>W</b>
ی	<b>Yā</b>	y	<b>Y</b>
ء	<b>Hamza</b>	'	'

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By S Dawood

Master of Arts

Subject: Arabic

Supervisor I E Jaffer

## **Summary**

Since gaining academic status in South African schools, the Arabic language has always been under the spotlight. In Gauteng Schools, the focus of discussion is the validity of the *Nāsi`ēn* as a prescribed Text book and the methodology best suited to achieve linguistic competence in the language.

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**Key Words:**

Education

Methodology

*Nāšī ēn*

Arabic

Language Teaching

Functional

Intonation

Grammar

Eclectic Approach

Morphology

# Chapter one

## Introduction

### 1.1 Problem formulation and programme of the research study

Whilst a child's first language is acquired in a comfortable, relaxed, familiar atmosphere encouraged by familiar others; the scenario of learning is distinctly different. The first language is usually acquired informally; intuitively and subconsciously, from the surrounding environment and circumstances. Learners often learn the second language at school, in a formal teaching situation, where they have to consciously learn its rules and structure (Mall M, 2001: 1).

What is the object in the teaching of modern languages? Why do we have our native tongue? Certainly to get the most out of a life within the community of our fellow country men, in order to exchange thoughts, feelings and wishes with them, both by receiving something of their physical contents and communicating to them something that dwells in us. Language is not an end in itself, just as little as railway tracks; it is a way of connection between souls and a means of communication (Jespersen O, 1967: 4).

Debates concerning educational reform tend to be impassioned, intense and repetitive. For decades, two models of education coexisted in uneasy peace; when debates arose, they invariably pitted the model in practice against an appealing, but less used alternative. These models might be called the *teacher-centred* and the *active approaches* respectively. The former is the more traditional with deep roots in our educational system. This approach relies on the teacher passing information to the student, which usually implies

that the expert dictates while the student records and memorises. The latter is a new model commonly known as **Outcomes Based Education (OBE)**.

Tutoring is an extremely efficient method of transferring information, even with low retention rates; it is a powerful tool, especially when conveying complex concepts, facts and theories. However, lectures are of limited value if the goals of education are to go beyond mere information transfer. The argument is that, through mere lectures, developing clinical judgement, enhancing critical skill, and shaping artistic sensibility are difficult to achieve. On the other hand, preparing students to think independently is proving to be an enormous challenge. Following this, if it is the aim of education to assist students to grow and forge their own identities, then the teacher centred model lacks the ability to appeal.

Presently, students are frustrated with formal education. For too many of them, class time has become more of a chore than a pleasure. Not surprisingly these criticisms have initiated, in South Africa, an alternative model of education, officially known as the **Outcomes Based Education (OBE)**. Various other names have been known to go by it including *active learning, self directed learning, student centred education, humanistic education, and progressive education*. The basic tenet being that the student must actively be involved in the learning process. The core concept of the **OBE** system is learning, not *personal tutoring*. The learning of Arabic, as a second language, introduces a completely new perspective. Teachers no longer exercise control over class time. They do not speak as frequently or as commandingly. The student takes greater responsibility to articulate and develop ideas. In such situations discussions and jointly sponsored projects substitute for lectures. The teacher's role is to facilitate and guide the student. This means that the

instructor has to change his outlook in tutoring and use new tools and skills(Christensen, Garvin & Sweet, 1991:5).

Speaking about reform in schools, Ashman and Conway brings to our attention that since the mid 1980's, there has been a growing awareness of the need to move away from the traditional focus on teaching content and student re-representation of that content in examinations. In support of this view they quote, Gardner:-

*“Students dutifully learn the symbolic, notational and formal conceptual accounts that are presented in a scholastic setting; when the identical eliciting circumstances appear; they can spew back the correct answers .... By and large, knowledge acquired in school helps one to progress in school, but its relation to life outside school is not well understood by the student, and perhaps not even by the teacher. The credentials provided by the school may bear little relevance to the demands made by the outside community.”*

(Gardner H, 1990:93)

## **1.2. The Arabic language**

Arabic is the language of some 200 million Arabs. A further 1.4 billion people speak some sort of Arabic. The Arabic language is part of the Semitic language group. Living members of this language family are Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac and Amharic. Extinct languages such as Assyrian, Babylonian, Canaanite, and Phoenician are also Semitic (Bateson M C 1967:50-58).

In the seventh century (A.D) Muhammad (SAW), the Messenger of God and the final Prophet of the followers of Islam, was given the Qur'ān, which constituted a Holy Book for his followers, the Muslims. The text of this sacred book, the Qur'ān has remained unaltered for the past 1400 years. It was standardised by the third Caliph Uthmān, but arguably not a single letter was omitted or added. Arabic subsequently became the official language of the new Islamic Empire that emerged in unassuming Mecca (Ryding KC, 2005:3).

In the new Islamic Empire the Arabic language was given due attention. The Arabic writing system was redefined to facilitate easier reading, especially after non Arabs adopted Arabic as their religious language. In many instances these new converts had cast off their own mother tongues to adopt Arabic as their own, as in the case of Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco etc. Other nations integrated Arabic into their own mother tongue by replacing many words with Arabic substitutes as observed in the case of Urdu, Persian, Hausa, Somalia, the Turkish languages etc. In fact what was once during the pre-Islamic era, an unknown primitive Arabic script, written by a handful of its native speakers, progressed to such an extent that many communities adopted the Arabic script as their own. Many languages were now being written by means of the Arabic script.

As the Islamic Empire expanded and flourished, so did the Arabic language. The scholar Ryding states;

*“When Europe was still in darkness during the medieval period, From the seventh through the twelfth centuries, the Arabic speaking world and the Islamic Empire expanded and flourished, centred first in Mecca*



*and Medina, then Damascus and Baghdad. Arabic became an international language of culture, scientific writings and research, diplomacy and administration from the Iberian Peninsula in the West to Central and South Asia in the East stretched the world of Islam and the influence of Arabic.”*

(Ryding K.C. 2005:3)

When the Empire weakened with the fall of Spain, with the inroads of the Crusaders, the Mongol invasions and the weakening of the Muslim Empire, followed by the creation of independent Muslim States, Arabic still continues to remain dominant in North Africa, the levant, the fertile crescent and the Arabian Peninsula.

### **1.2.1. The History of Arabic in South Africa.**

Muhammed Haron mentions that the Muslims of South Africa form a small, but significant number, 1.4% of a total of 38 million. At an academic level Arabic is taught at three different levels.

1. University level.
2. Muslim Theological institutions.
3. School Level.

(Mohamed Y, 1997:28-40)

#### **1.2.1.1. Arabic at South African Universities**

The Arabic departments, at the various universities, have no doubt played a vital role in contributing to the teaching and learning of Arabic in South Africa. It is interesting to note that the University of Pretoria (A predominantly Afrikaans University) preceded all other South African Universities in offering Arabic at university level. The Department of

Semitics at the University of Pretoria was established as early as 1955 and what is even more interesting as Yasien Mohamed states,

*“The first academic who introduced Arabic as a subject in the Department of Semitics at the University of Pretoria (hereafter UP) and later at Unisa, was the Dutch scholar, namely, Professor Adrianies van Selms”.* (Mohamed Y, 1997:39)

At UNISA, Arabic under the Department of Semitics was spearheaded by yet another non Muslim and non Arab scholar, namely, Professor J.J Gluck (1963). At the Rand Afrikaans University Professor J.A Naude introduced Arabic in the Department of Semitics. It was only much later that the University of Durban Westville in 1975 offered Arabic and then UWC in 1982. (Mohamed Y, 1997:39)

The question is what prompted these scholars, who obviously have no religious affinity to the Arabic language, to show such profound interest in the Arabic language at such a high level? To make sense of this it is necessary to trace the events from the 10<sup>th</sup> century to current.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the study of Semitic languages began as an off shoot of Biblical scholarship, Jewish scholars in an attempt to revive the Jewish language began studies of various Semitic languages. Zammit says that under the impetus of Muslim philology, the first steps in Semitic studies were made:

*“Grammatical and lexical comparative studies of various Semitic language were undertaken, theories were formulated and the first Hebrews grammars and lexica were produced.”* (Zammit M R, 2002: 3)

Among the scholars who contributed to the reincarnation of the Jewish language were Ibn Quray'sh, Judah, Huyyūğ, Ibn Ğanāh and Ibn Bārūn (Kaltner J: 1996:5-11). Since then a number of studies were undertaken by both Jewish as well as Biblical Scholarship in what later became known as comparative Semitic studies (Zammit M R, 2002: 4).

Hence it is inferred that the promotion of Arabic as we have witnessed in South Africa and also globally, was the result of the need to investigate other Semitic languages of which did not enjoy the same historical privilege as Arabic. Zammit confirms this:

*“The choice of Qur’ānic Arabic was prompted by the need to secure a reliable lexical corpus based on a source which is well fixed in time and place and which enjoys widespread consensus as to its linguistic validity.”*

(Zammit MR, 2002:5)

#### **1.2.1.2. Arabic at South African Muslim Theological Seminaries**

At a Dārul - `Ulūm (Muslim Theological Seminaries) level there is no doubt that Arabic is taught at a very high level. However at these institutions, it remains a language of the book and not a language of communication. While Arabic is studied in great detail, more effort is concerted on the linguistic study of the language. A graduate is able to regulate much information about the syntactic, semantic, etymological aspect of the sentence but does not fair well in the communicative aspect of the language. This is due to multiple reasons;

1. The goal of Muslim Theological Institutions is essentially not focused on enhancing communicative skills.

2. Education at Muslim Theological Institutions is for the most part targeted towards understanding Classical texts of Qur'ān and Hadith, where grammatical proficiency is a prerequisite, hence more emphasis on morphology, philology semantics, syntax etc.

3. Lastly, Urdu as a language is given greater preference than Arabic. Consequently all or most lectures are conducted in Urdu in preference of Arabic, even Arabic grammar is learnt via the Urdu language.

The reasons are obvious; all or most of the current theological institutions were established by graduates of the Indo-Pak Subcontinent. An unchanged syllabus as taught in the Indo-Pak subcontinent was imported and implemented with little or no change. Therefore at these institutions Arabic is to a considerable extent confined to the classroom; seldom being spoken or any research conducted in the written script. However, the need to change the status quo is the concern of many theologians and the past few years has seen a change in this approach.

It is interesting to note that a trend to change the status quo has been pioneered at Dar-ul-`Ulūmn Newcastle as early as 1945, where English is the medium of instruction in the early stages and a combination of English and Arabic in the advanced stages. A similar trend has been followed in the Western Cape; two Cape Town based institutions the Darul-Arqam institute and the Islamic college of Southern Africa were formed; both institutions used English in the first and second year levels and phased in Arabic from the third year onwards. These two institutions have now merged to form a unified institution with University status commonly known as the International Peace University. In Gauteng, the Jami`at-e-`Ulema, who have by far the largest number of members than any other

theological body in Gauteng, have also taken the forefront in changing the status quo, i.e. by establishing Jāmia' `Ulūm-Al-Islamia (Mayfair-2006); a theological institution whose language of instruction is English in preference to the traditional Urdu. In taking this bold step the Jami`at-e-`Ulema have gone against popular trend, and rightly so.

### **1.2.1.3. Arabic at South African Schools**

This dissertation focuses, at school level; on some of the contemporary problems of teaching the Arabic language and will attempt to find possible solutions to the shortcomings. Our predecessors made great efforts to have Arabic included as a school subject. Finally, in 1975, after numerous attempts, earnest petitions and applications finally the sacred language of the Muslims i.e Arabic was given academic status. This was a major breakthrough for the Arabic language and Muslims of South Africa. Initially there was an overwhelming interest by the Muslim community to include Arabic as a third language at schools (Mohamed Y 1997:122). However, the implementation of Arabic brought Muslims, academics, educators and learners to realize the need to promote and develop the language, with teacher training, support material and continuous assessment of its successes and shortcomings. This initiated a series of professional development programmes, workshops and seminars across the country: namely: a workshop was convened in 1984 in Kwazulu, Natal. These professional development programmes, workshops and seminars were prompted by inadequate teaching methods that resulted in learners dropping the subject at Senior Secondary phase (Ebrahim N, 1984: 1). The seminar was followed by an orientation course aimed at improving methodology, held in 1985 at the Stanger Madressah School (Kathrada N E, 1985:1). Ebrahim suggested at this orientation course that there is a need to shift the focus from grammar to communication

(Ebrahim N, 1986: 2-3). The Association of Muslim Schools (AMS) conducted numerous seminars on the approach of teaching Arabic. In March 1996, Irshad Amod conducted a series of seminars at the following schools: – Nur-ul-Islam, Lenasia and Johannesburg Muslim School (Mall M 2001:7-8). While all these programmes were held at provincial level they ultimately culminated in the first major national seminar and workshop held in 1994 at the University of Western Cape. The Seminar was held with the objective of identifying and evaluating the history of Arabic in South Africa, while appraising the various methodologies, to share in practical problems as well as possible solutions to successful teaching methods (Mohamed Y, 1997: xiii-xiv).

This dissertation is a continuation of the spirit of research in influencing deliberations concerning teaching methodologies and techniques. It is hoped that it will contribute to the academic discussion of teaching methodology and hopefully be a catalyst for further deliberations in the future.

### **1.3. Why learn Arabic?**

The significance of Arabic is due mainly to the following factors:

- Arabic is the language of the Qur’ān.
- Arabic is the first language for approximately 200 million people (Mohamed Y, 1997: xiii).
- Whilst another one billion Muslims have some basic knowledge of Arabic (Mohamed Y, 1997: xiii).

- The Arab countries cover a huge geographic area spreading from the Atlantic Ocean, from Morocco in the West through the entire North African region and covering most of the Middle East.
- Twenty-one Arab countries represent about one seventh of the United Nations (Raja T.N, 1978:6) Arabic is also one of the official languages of the United Nations (Dalby D, 2000: 1).
- The influence of Arabic and the spread of Islam to Spain in the West.
- The Arabs contributed significantly in the fields of religion, philosophy, literature, education, linguistics, astronomy, algebra, architecture, and medicine.
- The enormous wealth of the Arab countries has contributed to the economy of the world.
- The migration of thousands of Arabs (students, businessmen, tourists) to different parts of the world has its social and economic effects. Since 1994 a fair number of Arab immigrants have migrated to South Africa. For the past 20 years, a large number of Arab families migrated particularly to the North and South Americas and European countries. Migrant families are noted to cluster together to form communities of their own, which helps to preserve their mother tongue. This provides a forum for the locals to communicate with them in the target language, thus creating a ready made, “language laboratory”.
- Economically Arabs are contributing to the business sector. Many Arabs are trading in Islamic garments; Arab owned shops in Gauteng are springing up more frequently than before, mainly in Mayfair and Lenasia.
- The economic and technological projects and developments in the Arab World provide great opportunities for both Arab and non-Arabs in the fields of

education, business, tourism, agriculture, industry, medicine, and other sciences.

A non-Arab desires to learn the Arabic language for some of the following reasons:

- To fulfil a personal desire and satisfy his particular needs and interest. Jewish scholars such as Sa'adiya Goan, Ibn Qurayš, Judah Hayyuğ, Ibn Ğanāh, and Ibn Bārūn utilized the Arabic language to revive the lost Jewish language. With Arabic as the main source lexical comparative studies of various Semitic languages were undertaken, theories were formulated and the first Hebrew grammar and dictionary were produced (Zammit M R, 2002:3).
- To interpret his personal life experience, traditions, literature, culture and thought in a foreign language. Christian scholarship in an attempt to understand the bible in its language of revelation initiated comparative Semitic studies and developed a Semitic lexicography (Zammit M R, 2002:3).
- To have a better understanding of world culture (in this case the culture of the Arab world) through a foreign language. Historians are intrigued by Arabic and comparative Semitic studies to interpret the long and distinguished literary history of several archaic Semitic languages which have left written records of compelling interest and importance for the history of civilization (Ryding K C, 2005:1).
- To promote one's own profession and/or opportunities in relation to some aspect of the Arabic language or the Arab World. Mohamed verifies this:-

*“With the opening up of South Africa to the rest of world, people are appreciating its importance for international communication,*



*both politically and economically. The new opportunities for jobs as translators, traders, journalists and ambassadors are impelling people, Muslims and non Muslims, to pursue Arabic studies.”*

(Mohamed Y, 1997:7)

#### **1.4. The history of Arabic in South African Schools**

The Arabic scene in the 1970's changed radically from that of the 1950's and before that period. The major reason for this was the endeavours of an organisation such as the Durban based **Arabic Study Circle** established in 1950 – (hereafter ASC). The ASC, after making numerous attempts to have Arabic included as a school subject, were able to witness the implementation of Arabic – for the first time in 1975 in the Kwazulu Natal and Gauteng regions. This was an important milestone for Muslims because their sacred language had been given the necessary academic acceptance by the governmental educational authorities. In the Department of Education & Culture – House of Delegates (for Indians) Arabic was included under the Eastern languages Group, namely Gujerati, Hindi, Urdu, etc; and in the Department of Education and Culture – House of Representatives (for Coloured/ Malays) it was considered a third language alongside German, French and Latin. For the first time, in the 1960's, Arabic became recognized as a school subject in the Cape Muslim Mission Schools, this was due to the efforts of Dr Abdullah Abdurahman; who was concerned with both the secular and Islamic education of Muslim children. However, the focus of Islamic Education was more on the mere recitation of the Qur'ān than on learning Arabic as a language of communication.

Although the Cape preceded other provinces in the legacy of Islamic learning, it was only as recent as 1992, that Arabic was introduced in a Cape School, namely, Spine Road Senior Secondary. Whereas even before this, Arabic became a recognised subject in the schools of Kwazulu Natal and Gauteng, Arabic also became popular in mosque based classes and community colleges in the Cape (Mohamed Y, 1997:34-36).

### **1.5. Factors that prompted the research**

As an Arabic language teacher in a Muslim school, the researcher is intrigued by the lack of clearly defined principles in the teaching of Arabic to South African learners. Many students often conclude that Arabic is a difficult language; as they experience major difficulties in learning the language elements (writing, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar) and of language skills (listening, reading, writing, speaking). This warrants an appraisal of teaching methodology and evaluation of the strength and weaknesses of the Arabic programmes currently implemented in Gauteng schools.

There is an urgent need for a standard text book explaining grammar rules in a simple and functional manner, including graded passages to develop the reading skills and understanding techniques of the learner.

There have been noble attempts by various South African scholars to design Arabic grammar texts. Mr Abdul Samad Abdul Kader prepared *Miftāhul Qur'ān* (the key to the Qur'ān – Part One) which is a translation of Qur'ānic Verses. In 1985 he wrote *Arabic is Fun* (5 booklets) following the deductive approach (Mohamed Y; 1997: 49).

In 1984, Nasr Ebrahim produced an Arabic guide, which is essentially a vocabulary and phrase book. In the 1980's Moulana Nami produced a booklet '*Mifhul Qur'ān*' to teach basic Arabic structures. Moulana Razak prepared the '*Modern Arabic Reader*' for Standard two and three learners respectively. In Johannesburg, A.S.J Bassiouni published 'Learn the language of the Qur'ān and Islām (Mohamed Y, 1997: 49).

These publications and many others were produced to teach the Arabic Grammar, and not specifically to serve as a set work at school level. Hence, these publications in spite of being noble attempts do not qualify to be prescribed works at high school level. None the less they serve as important reference books for the teacher.

One such book which deserves mention is Mohamed and Haron's "*First Steps in Arabic Grammar*". In the words of the authors:

*"What makes this book pedagogically valuable is the variety of Exercises, which are neither based purely on the translation grammatical approach nor on the direct approach, but are to some extent an integration of both methods. The personal ability and orientation of the teacher will determine the approach."*

(Mohamed Y & Haron M, 1989: 111)

The book covers many basic principles of Arabic Grammar in a simple and concise manner. In addition, the explanations are easy to follow. The authors took great care to present new grammatical features in a gradual and step by step approach. This book is very useful, as a reference book, for the teacher when teaching Arabic grammar. But, its use is

limited to Arabic grammar only and does not contain graded passages to assist the reading and comprehension skills of the learner.

The *Nāšī' en* syllabus, while it contains graded passages, is not conducive to local readers as it covers the themes which are better understood by Arab readers than South Africans. What are required are *graded passages* which are relevant to the South African context. Text book writers could introduce topics on the lion, the elephant, Mr Mandela, the Zulu's and other aspects relating to South Africa. These topics, South African students can relate to, and are familiar to their environment.

According to Mall:-

*“many teachers of Arabic are aware of the existing problem, and numerous discussions at teacher seminars, workshops and professional development programmes have taken place over the years, but the problem has either not been seriously tackled or plans of action have not been implemented.”*

(Mall M, 2001:7)

A paper presented in 1984 by Ebrahim, states that inadequate methods of teaching the language have resulted in learners dropping the subject at Senior Secondary Phase. He further suggests that in order to arouse greater interest, love and appreciation for the language the “thematic approach” must be adopted (Ebrahim N, 1984:1).

The Association of Muslim Schools (AMS) has conducted seminars for the same purpose. Irshad Amod, in March 1996, co-ordinated a programme for the development of an Arabic

syllabus and textbook. He visited the Nur ul Islam school in Lenasia, Johannesburg Muslim School in Johannesburg and the Pretoria Muslim School in Laudium. Unfortunately to date on a national level nothing has materialised nor appeared in print form (Mall M, 2001: 8).

### **1.6. Formal statement of the problem**

There appears to be a general consensus that there are problems with the teaching and learning of Arabic as a second or foreign language, despite the fact that Arabic is taught in South Africa at high school level since 1975, at matric level from 1979 and as a higher grade subject since 1992 (Mohamed Y, 1997:34-35). Also most learners are exposed to Arabic in their prayer and recitation of the Holy Qur`ān from an early age. Another concern seems to focus on, the methodologies used in presenting the *Al Arabiyyah linnāsi`ēn*-(Arabic for teenagers), hereafter referred to as “*Nāsi`ēn syllabus*”, to South African learners. The following issues serve as the formal statement of the problem.

1. Is the *Nāsi`ēn* syllabus suitable for South African learners?
2. If the *Nāsi`ēn* is suitable to be taught at South African Schools, then, must certain changes will be necessary to facilitate its implementation?
3. Investigate the most suitable methodology applicable to South African learners.
4. If the *Nāsi`ēn* is amended will it maintain its originality?
5. The extent of change required in this approach.

### **1.6.1. Background to the *Al Arabiyyah linnāšī`ēn*-(Arabic for teenagers)**

In the 1980's the *Al Arabiyyah linnāšī`ēn*-(Arabic for teenagers) syllabus was developed under the auspicious of the Riyadh University by the highly respected linguist Mahmoud-al-Seini et al. The series was commissioned by the Saudi Arabian government and was motivated by the need to teach the Arabic language to foreign speakers (Hammoud, S 1999). The first print was successfully published in 1983.

The salient feature of the series is that, it is well designed and thorough in content and methodology, it employs only the Arabic language and instruction is not mediated through English or any other language. A holistic approach of skills integration is used; every chapter introduces a prose or dialogue Passage which forms the basis for further discussion to promote the four linguistic skills of language. The first two books are purposely designed to promote speaking skills. While Modern Standard Arabic is given preference to classical Arabic, Islamic terminology is given due preference to enable the learner to pursue further studies in the Islamic sciences. Every effort has been made to benefit from current research developments and the language renaissance that has influenced language teaching since the 1950's, this is clearly indicative in the presentation of the material which moves away from classical textbook arrangement. Another significant feature of the series is that the teachers' manual guides the educator through the learning process which compensates for lack of experience in teaching a foreign language (Seini M I, 1983). With all the efforts put in the series it is not surprising that the *Al Arabiyyah linnāšī`ēn*-(Arabic for teenagers) is one of the most valuable contemporary textbooks, and is used widely in many countries to teach the Arabic language.

### **1.7. Aims of the research**

The aim of this research is to determine why learners in Private Muslim Schools in South Africa are finding it difficult to learn the Arabic language. To investigate the decrease in the number of learners selecting Arabic as a specialized or elective subject.

The research consists of 3 sections

**-The study of the Linguistic Science.**

**- Literature Review**

**-Empirical study**

The aim of studying the linguistic sciences is to show that there must necessarily be a fundamental difference between language and literature. These two terms have become almost inextricably confusing to the uninitiated. The investigation of the literature study will analyse the theories of language acquisition and investigate the teaching methodologies employed by the teacher to teach a second and foreign language. Then, it will investigate the teaching of *Nāšī`ēn* in Muslim Private Schools in South Africa. This will determine if the implementation of *Nāšī`ēn* is suitable for teaching Arabic in South African Schools or whether the teachers are incompetent in the language.

### **1.8. Demarcation of the study**

Since the researcher is an Arabic teacher based in the Gauteng Province, this study will be confined to this province. Due to its geographical location, schools in this province would be more easily accessible than elsewhere. The study focuses on Muslim Private Schools essentially because the aim of these schools was to create a forum for the promotion of the

Arabic Language in an Islamic/Arabic environment, as this was difficult to implement at State Schools.

### **1.9. Format of Research**

The following programme will be followed to achieve the aims of this study.

#### **\* Chapter One - Introduction**

The paradigm shift in learning is discussed; that there is a growing awareness of the need to move away from the method of teaching content and student re-representation of that content in examinations. How would this impact on the learning of the Arabic language? When emphasis is no longer on content and acquiring a body of right knowledge; but the emphasis is on learning how to learn, where learning is a process (a journey) and not a product (destination); where learning processes do not have a relatively rigid structure in the context of prescribed curriculum, but, processes have flexible structures with varied starting points and mixed learning experiences: Where priority is given to self concept (the belief a person has about himself and the way in which he interacts with the world) as a key determinant of successful learning and not on performance; where the emphasis is not on the external world, but the inner experiences provide contexts for learning; where education is seen as a lifelong process and only partially related to schools; where the teacher is not only the instructor and imparter of knowledge but a learner too, one who learns from the student.

The educational reforms in South African Schools implemented in 2006 to replace the old one will certainly impact on the teaching of Arabic language in terms of curriculum content and method of presentation. It will be interesting to see how teachers, learners and



examiners will face this challenge. One thing for certain, it will certainly place demands on the current structures.

## **\* Chapter Two**

In this chapter it will be shown that there is a distinction between the practical and theoretical study of languages – between learning to understand, read, speak and write a language and studying its history and etymology.

The practical study of languages on a scientific basis, or the science of philology, which is the accurate observation of language by means of phonetics and psychology will be discussed.

There is also a notion that the study of any given language should proceed on a basis of lexicology; or the study of words and grammar or a combination of the two. However, the two subjects are bound together and are interdependent. The main object of this chapter is to undertake research on the most important components of language on the basis of philology. The Philologists define what language is, while the Phoneticians give us the most accurate information concerning sounds and the methods of teaching them. The Lexicologists explain the nature of words, including their etymological, morphological, and semantic and ergonomic aspects.

## **\* Chapter three**

Literature study and discussion of the methods used in second and foreign language teaching. Specific reference to the teaching of Arabic in Muslim Private Schools will be made.

**\* Chapter four**

This chapter deals with the empirical investigation. It will discuss the evaluation of the grammatical features and structures, focussing on the process of implementation rather than quantifiable accounts. It also discusses, the diverse theories of presenting grammatical exercises, the general procedure of the *Nāšī`ēn*, and the implementation, progress and retrogression of the Arabic language.

**\* Chapter five**

The results of the empirical investigation will be presented in this chapter. The formation of basic grammar principles and suggestions will be put together. The general procedure used to improve on the *Nāšī`ēn* will also be discussed.

**\* Chapter six**

The conclusion, the educational implications of the research will be considered and recommendations, based on the findings will be made. It will synthesize and integrate all the information collected.

## Chapter Two

### Nature of Language

#### 2.1 Introduction

Language is the medium by which thoughts are conveyed from one person to another, consequently all words or combination of words used *orally* or by *writing* must be considered as coming within the scope of language. At present, however language stands in the domain of natural phenomena, its development and evolution generally depends not on the artifice of man but upon the dictates of fashion. It is the exception rather than the rule for man to make the words he uses; he is content to use the words that have already obtained currency in that particular part of the globe in which he finds himself. The only aspect of language in which the conscious will of man will manifest itself is that concerned with its graphic representation. The alphabet alone is artificial; the literary aspect is artistic, and the rest is natural science. It is very important to have a good understanding of the nature of language. It matters little to the student of linguistics, whether any particular word or expression is sanctioned by classical authority; slang and pedantism, vulgarism and flower of speech, elegant expression or coarse metaphor, all these from the moment that they serve as effective mediums of thought are elements of language (Palmer H E, 1968:10).

There are basic principles that any teacher needs to know which will enable him to teach the Arabic Language in a correct and professional manner. For example, the fact that language is distinct from the art of literature, there must be a fundamental difference

between language and literature, that literature is the history and practice of the written form of a language which has become classical, but is not the science itself. The linguistic science known as philology is a comparatively recent one. After a thorough study it was discovered that languages are subject to evolution in sound, form and meaning; that languages generally evolved from a parent language. It is known that French has been gradually evolved from the popular Latin of Gaul, and Italian and other Romance languages were modern offshoots of Latin, but Latin itself instead of being a God given language was simply the daughter of some unknown mother, likewise the same could be said about Greek. There are children languages, ancestral languages, sister languages, and that languages possesses uncles and cousins (Palmer H E, 1968:10).

It appears that the learning of a foreign language must proceed on a philological basis and not on a literary one, because when one endeavours to learn *foreign literature*, one must first acquaint oneself with the *language itself*, just as when we started learning the *literary form* of our own tongue we were already acquainted with the *language itself*. In this chapter the researcher will, after completing an intensive study of available literature, present an overview on the nature of language.

## **2.2. What is considered a word?**

Language consists essentially of lexicological units popularly supposed to be words, but the term word is vague and its definition requires further clarification. The student sees the study of language as synonymous with the study of the elements or units of which it is composed. These units are generally understood to be words. Arguably the question to be answered is what is a word? What possible definition can we give which will adequately

describe what we understand by this term? This is a fundamental question of identity and must be understood clearly before we can proceed to any form of classification.

### 2.2.1. The semantic, orthographic and etymological aspect of a word

Is the word **يذهب** identical to the word **يذهبون** ? The answer is either affirmative or negative, let us say that **يذهبون** is merely the inflected form of ‘yazhabu’ in the same way that **(goes)** is merely the inflected form of **(go)**, just as **trees** is the inflected form of **tree**. Based on the etymological composition we may well say that **يذهب** and **يذهبون** are the inflection of the same root word **ذهب** . However this may be true for all other purposes except the orthographic and semantic aspect of the word. When further explained, take the word **(bear)** (animal) and **(bear)** (support) are two distinct words with an entirely separate history, although orthographically they are identical. It does not need etymology to tell us this, but it is our semantic interests that suffice to appraise us of such facts.

Similarly etymology tells us that **like** (similar to) and **like** (to be fond of) are not two different words, but two semantically differentiated varieties of one and the same word. Two words may be identical or entirely different and distinct individuals when considered respectively from the standpoint of etymology or semantics. To sum up, we find ourselves in the presence of three separate factors. The first of these factors, graphic continuity, is manifested by our ability to demarcate on rational grounds of affixes (as-ness-able-less-fully), *simple decomposable vocables* (as dog, take, good), *compounds* (as sunlight, understand, lovely) and intimate word groups (as, of course, at last, leave off, last week).

The second factor is that of inflectional identity. The third factor, which may be termed the differentiation of semantic cognates, tends to prove that one and the same vocable constitutes as many separate words as there are meanings contained in it. Palmer is of the opinion that to avoid misunderstanding and self-contradiction is to make up our minds to replace the elusive term word by three fixed terms, **monolog**, **polylog**, and **miolog** whenever we wish to differentiate (Palmer H.E, 1968:17).

### **2.3 . The word as construed in the Arabic Language**

Arabic like, Modern Hebrew (as spoken and written in Israel), Amharic and other spoken languages of Ethiopia, Aramaic dialects currently in parts of Syria and Iraq, and Maltese, belongs to the Semitic group of languages.

*“The characteristic feature of Semitic languages is their basis of consonantal roots, mostly trilateral (three lettered). Variation in shade of meaning is obtained, first by varying the voweling of the simple root, and second by the addition of prefixes, suffixes and in-fixes. Thus, from the root salima, to be safe (literally, he was safe) we derive sallama, to deliver; aslama, to submit (also to turn muslim); istalama, to receive, istaslama, to surrender; salamun, peace; satamatun, safely, well being; and muslimun, a muslim.”* (Haywood & Nahmad; 1993:1)

Most word forms (morphology), in the Arabic Language are derived from trilateral roots, and retaining the three basic consonant, are associated with meaning patterns, (semantics), Haywood and Nahmad are of the opinion that this assists in the acquisition of vocabulary

and partly compensates for the difficulties arising from the lack of correlation between Arabic words and European Roots.

Ernesto Macaro in his work *‘Teaching and learning a second language’* talks about the necessity of having a system of word categorization. In this way it is then possible to explore what words do (Macaro E, 2003: 63). Arabic Grammar textbooks mention three broad categories of words: *Nouns, function words and verbs*. For the purposes of learning Arabic as a second language and making learning easier for the student, it is useful to discuss two categories of words; *high frequency* and *low frequency words*. High frequency words are function **words** such as:

إلي - من - هذا - هذه - ذلك - تلك - فوق - تحت - أمام - خلف

They do not have a clear semantic meaning rather they carry grammatical meaning. *Function Words* are distinguished from content words like, nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc. While content words are constantly subject to change in form, we could not change function words without changing the language; they hardly change or have inflections with a few exceptions like:

هو - هي - هذا - هذه

Ernesto Macaro states that:-

*“The fact that virtually all functional words are in the 2,000 most frequently used words (at least in English) would lead us to determine that they should be taught in L2 classrooms and taught early. Without them our learners cannot function in the foreign language.”*

(Macaro E; 2003: 64)

The other category of words are *low frequency* words, they are *academic words* or *technical words*. These become important words once the learner has gone beyond the intermediate language learning phase and proceeds into area study: physiology, economics, geology etc. Therefore it would make sense to ensure that the curriculum in its initial stages has a high content of high frequency words, and at the same time a selection of selected low frequency vocals. Keeping in line with Palmers definition of what is a **word**, i.e. monologs, polylogs and miologs; these words may be classed under the following headings:-

### 2.3.1. Function words and syllables

- **Prepositions: forms, common meaning, and examples:**

- |   |                    |   |
|---|--------------------|---|
| * | من /min/ “from”    | جاء من البيت<br>He came from the house.                 |
| * | إلى / ilā/ “to”    | ذهب إلى البيت<br>He went to the house.                  |
| * | على / `alā/ “on”   | وضع الكتاب على الطاولة<br>He put the book on the table. |
| * | في /fii/fi/ “in”   | الولد في الغرفة<br>The boy is in the room.              |
| * | عن / `an / “about” | سالت عن الولد<br>I asked about the boy.                 |
| * | مع / m`a / “with”  | مشيت مع الولد<br>I walked with the boy.                 |

- **Prepositional syllables: form, common meaning and examples:**

- |   |               |                                     |
|---|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| * | ب / bi / “in” | كان بمكتبه<br>He was in his office. |
|---|---------------|-------------------------------------|



- \* ك / kā / “like” هو كأطفال  
He is like a child.
- \* ل / li / la / “for” للولد، له  
For the boy, for him
- \* ت / tā / ”by” (for oaths) تالله  
By Allah
- \* و / wa / “by” (for oaths) والله  
By Allah

• **The / kāna / Group: Forms, Meanings, and examples:**

- \* كان / kāna / ”was” كان الولد مجتهدا  
The boy was conscientious.
- \* أصبح / aŠbaha / “became” أصبح التلميذ معلما  
The student became a teacher.
- \* أضحى / aḌHā / “became” أضحى الرجل شجاعا  
The man became courageous.
- \* أمسى / amsā / “became” أمسى الرجل شجاعا  
The man became courageous.
- \* ظل / ŽaLLa / “remained” ظل المدينة أمينا  
The city remained peaceful.
- \* بات / bāta / “remained” بات الولد خائفا  
The boy remained fearful.
- \* صار / ŠāRa / “became” صار الرجل تاجرا  
The man became a trader.
- \* ليس / laysa / “is not” ليس الطقس حارا  
The weather is not hot.
- \* ما زال / mā zāla / ما زال الطقس باردا  
The weather is still cold.

- \* ما برح / mā bariĥa / “still is”      ما برح الطقس حارا  
The weather is still hot.
- \* ما أنفك / ma ’anfakka / “still is”      ما أنفك الولد خائفا  
The boy is still fearful.
- \* ما فتية / mā fati’ a/ “still is”      الولد ما فتية كسولا  
The boy is still lazy.
- \* ما دام / mā dāma / “still is”      ما دام الطقس باردا  
The weather is still cold.

• **The predicate of the above words may also be:**

- \* A nominal sentence, as in      كان القمر نوره قويا  
The light of the moon was strong.
- \* A nominal phrase, as in      كان الولد في المدرسة  
The boy was in the school.
- \* A verbal sentence, as in      كان الولد يدرس دروسه  
The boy was revising his lessons.

• **The إن / inna /Group: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* إن / ’inna / “that”      إن التاجر غني  
Certainly the trader is wealthy.
- \* أن / ’anna / “that”      علمت أن التاجر غني  
I knew that the trader is wealthy.
- \* كأن / ka ’anna / “as though”      جلس كأنه ملك  
He sat as though he was a king.
- \* ولكن / walākinna / “but”      البنت كسولة ولكن الولد مجتهد  
The girl is lazy but the boy is diligent.
- \* ليت / layta / “would”      ليت الرجل طيب  
If only he would be good.

\* لعل / la` alla / “may be”  
لعل الأكل حاضر  
Maybe the food is ready.

• The predicate of the above words may also be:

\* A nominal sentence, as in  
إن القمر نوره قوي  
Verily the sun, (its light) is bright.

\* A nominal phrase, as in  
أن التلميذ في المدرسة  
That, the student is in school.

\* A verbal sentence, as in  
أن الولد يلعب  
The boy is playing.

• The كاد / kāda / Group: Forms, Meanings and Examples:

\* كاد / kāda / “was about”  
كاد المعلم يدخل الفصل  
The teacher was about to enter the class.

\* أو شك / awšaka / “almost”  
أوشك القمر أن يطلع  
The moon almost appeared.

\* عسى / asa / “hope”  
عسى أن ينجح  
He hopes to succeed.

\* شرع / šara`a / “began”  
شرع أن ينجح  
He began to succeed.

\* أنشأ / anša`a / “began”  
انشأ التلميذ يفهم الدرس  
The student began to understand the lesson.

\* أخذ / akhaza / “began”  
أخذ المعلم يتكلم  
The teacher began to talk.

\* هب / habba / “began”  
هب الولد يلعب  
The boy began to work.

\* بدأ / bada`a / “began”  
بدأ العامل يشتغل  
The employee began to work.

\* جعل /ja`ala/ “began” جعل المعلم يتكلم  
The teacher began to chat.

\* قام /qāma/ “began” قام الولد يلعب  
The boy began to play.

• **Jussive Governors: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

\* لم /lam/ “did not” لم يكتب  
He did not write.

\* لما /lammā/ “had not” أخذت الامتحان و لما أدرس  
I took the examination and I had not studied.

\* ل /li/ “let” ليدرس  
Let him study.

\* لا /lā/ “do not” (negative imperative) لا تلعب  
Do not study.

• **There are twelve two –verb governors:**

\* إن /ʾin / “if” إن تدرس تنجح  
If you learn you will pass.

\* إذما /ʾidh mā / “if” إذما تدرس لا تنجح  
If you do not study you will not pass.

\* من /man/ “who (ever) من يدرس تنجح  
Who so ever studies succeeds.

\* أي /ʾayyan/ “who (m) ever” أي تضرب أضرب  
Who ever strives will succeed.

\* ما /mā/ “what (ever) ما تزرع تحصد  
What ever you sow you will reap.

\* مهما /mahmā/ “whatever” مهما تطلب تأخذ  
What ever you ask for you will receive.

- \* أيان تطلب تأخذ / 'ayyāna/ “whatever”  
What ever you ask for you will receive.
- \* متى تصل أذهب /matā/ “when (ever)”  
When you arrive I will go.
- \* أينما تذهب نذهب /'aynamā/ “whenever”  
Where ever you go we go.
- \* أنى تذهب نذهب /'anna/ “whenever”  
When ever you go we go.
- \* حيثما تذهب أذهب /haythumā/ “wherever”  
Where ever you go, I go.

• **Subjunctive Governors: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* قلت له أن يدرس / 'an/ “to, that”  
I told him to study.
- \* لن يدرس دروسه / lan/ “will not”  
He will not learn his lessons.
- \* إذن تتجح / idhan/ “then, therefore”  
Then you will pass.
- \* أدرس كي تتجح / kay/ “to, in order to”  
I am studying in order to pass.
- \* أدرس لكي تستفيد / likay/ “to, in order to”  
I am studying to gain.

• **Conjunctions: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* دخل ثم جلس / thumma/ “then”  
He entered then he sat.
- \* أريد ورقة أو دفترًا / 'aw/ “or”  
I want a piece of paper or a note book.
- \* أريد ورقة أم دفترًا / 'am / “or”  
I need a piece of paper or a note book.

- \* لا / lā اقرأ كتابي لا كتابه  
Read my book not his book.
- \* بل / bal/ “but” ليس فقيرا بل غنيا  
He is not poor but well-to-do.
- \* لكن /lākin/ “but” لم يدرس لكن نجح  
He did not revise but he passed.
- \* إما---أو /’ imma/...../?aw/ “either ....or” أراد إما دفترًا أو كتابًا  
He wanted either a notebook or a book.
- \* ولا /laa/.../walaa/ “neither ....nor” لا هذا و لا ذاك  
Neither this nor that.

• **Conjunction Syllables: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* و /wa/ - “and” أكلت تفاحة و برتقالة  
I ate an apple and an orange.
- \* ف /fā/ “and (then)” دخل فجلس  
He entered then he sat down.

• **Question Tags: Forms, Meanings and Examples:**

- \* هل /hal/ “do” هل دروسه كاملة؟  
Are his lessons complete?
- \* ما /mā/ “what” ما هذا؟  
What is this?
- \* ماذا /mādhā/ “what” ما ذا طلبت؟  
What did you request?
- \* أين /’ayna/ “where” أين ذهب؟  
Where did he go?
- \* متى /matā/ “when” متى وصل؟  
When did he arrive?

- \* كيف /kayfa/ “how” كيف سافر؟  
How did he travel?
- \* لم /lima/ “why” لم جاء؟  
Why did he come?
- \* لماذا /limādhā/ “why” لماذا جاء؟  
Why did he come?
- \* كم /kam/ “how many (much)” كم عمره؟  
How old is he?
- \* أي /’ayyu/ “which” أي كتاب عندك؟  
Which book is with you?
- \* من /man/ “who” من جاء؟  
Who came?

**There is one question syllable:**

- \* أ /’a/ - “do” أ ذهب الولد إلى السوق؟  
Did the boy go to the market?

**• Call Words: Forms, Meanings, and Examples**

- \* يا /yā/ “O” يا أولاد  
O boys!
- \* أيها /’ayyuhā/ “O” أيها الأولاد تعال  
O boys come!
- \* يا أيها /yā ’ayyuhā/ “O” يا أيها الأولاد تعال  
O boys come!

**• Attention Words: Forms, Meanings, and Examples**

- \* ألا /’alā/ “.....” ألا إنه قد جاء  
Indeed he has come.
- \* أما /ammā/ “.....” أما أنك كريم  
Certainly you are generous.

- \* ها /hā/ “here”  
ها قد جاء  
Yes, he has come.
- \* يا /yā/ “.....”  
يا ليتني كنت معك  
If only I was with you.

• **Adverbial Words: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* مذ /mudh / “since”  
مذ أتى  
Since he came.
- \* منذ /mundhu/ “since”  
منذ شهرين  
Since two months (two months ago)
- \* نحو/nahwa/ “towards”  
نحو البيت  
Towards the house.
- \* قبل/qabla/ “before”  
قبل الظهر  
Before midday.
- \* بعد/ba’da/ “after”  
بعد الظهر  
After midday.
- \* فوق/fawqa/ “over, above”  
فوق البيت  
Over the house.
- \* تحت/taHta/ “under, beneath”  
تحت الطاولة  
Under the table.
- \* قرب/qurba/ “near, beside”  
قرب الزاوية  
Near the corner.
- \* حيث/haythu/ “where”  
حيث لعب  
Where he played.
- \* حين/hiina/ “when”  
حين لعب  
When he played.
- \* أمام/amāma/ “in front of”  
أمام الناس  
In front of the people.
- \* قدام/quddāma/ “in front of”  
قدام الناس  
In front of the people.



\* خلف /khalfa/ “behind” خلف الباب  
Behind the door.

• **Negative Words: Forms, Meanings and Examples:**

\* لم /lam/ “not” لم يدرس  
He did not study.

\* لما /lammā/ “not” لما يأت  
He did not come.

\* لن /lan/ “will not” لن يدرس  
He will not study.

\* ما /mā/ “not” ما جاء  
He did not come.

\* لا /lā/ “not” لا يدرس  
He is not studying.

\* لا /lā/ “do not” لا تلعب  
do not play.

\* إن /in/ “not” (archaic) إن أكل احد إلا هو  
He did not eat.

• **Conditional Words: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

\* إن /in/ “if” إن تكلمت  
If you spoke.

\* لو /law/ “if” لو ذهب  
If he went.

\* لولا /lawla/ “if it were not for” لولا البرد لذهبنا  
If it were not for the cold we would have went.

\* لوما /lawma/ “if it were not for” لوما البرد لخرجنا  
If it were not for the cold we would have gone out.

- \* أما /'ammā/ “as to, but for”  
أما المعلم فحضر  
As for the teacher, he attended.

• **Request Words: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* ألا /alā/ “won’t”  
ألا تذهب معنا  
Won’t you go with us?
- \* أما /amā/ “won’t”  
أما تبقى معنا  
Won’t you remain with us?
- \* لو /law/ “if...would”  
لو تذهب معنا  
If you would go with us.

• **Words of Exception: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* إلا /illā/ “except”  
جاء الكل إلا سليما  
Everybody came except Salem.
- \* غير /gayru/ “except”  
جاء الكل غير سليم  
Everybody came except Salem.
- \* سوى /siwā/ “except”  
جاء الكل سوى سليم  
Everybody came except Salem.
- \* عدا /`adā/ “except”  
جاء الكل ما عدا سليم  
Everybody came except Salem.
- \* خلا /khalā/ “except”  
جاء الكل خلا سليما  
Everybody came except Salem.
- \* حاشا /HāŠā/ “except”  
جاء الكل حاشا سليم  
Everybody came except Salem.

• **Words of Assurance and Probability: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* قد /qad/ “may, have”  
قد درس, قد يدرس  
He may have studied /he may be studying.

- \* إن - أن  
 إن التاجر غني, علمت أن الولد مجتهد  
 Certainly the trader is wealthy, I know that the boy is hardworking.

• **Syllables of Assurance and Probability: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* ل /la/ - “verily”  
 لأنت شجاعا  
 Verily you are courageous.

- \* ن -- لا /la....’anna/ “verily....will”  
 لأدرسن الدرس  
 Verily I will study the lesson.

• **The Definite Article: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* ال /al/ - (unassimilated) “the”  
 القمر جميل  
 The moon is beautiful.

- ا /a? – (assimilated by geminating the consonant) “the”  
 الشمس قوية  
 The sun is bright.

- \* (complete assimilation) “the”  
 وقفت في الشمس  
 I stood in the sun.

• **Word and Syllable of Futurity: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* سوف /sawfa/ “shall, will”  
 سوف يصل  
 He shall arrive.

- \* س /sa/ - “shall, will”  
 سيصل  
 He shall arrive.

• **Miscellaneous Function Words and Syllables: Forms, Meanings, and Examples:**

- \* نعم /na`am/ “yes” (in answer to affirmative questions)  
 نعم, جاء  
 Yes, he came.

- \* بلّى, جاء /balā/ “yes” (in answer to negative questions) Yes, he came.
- \* لا, لم يأت /lā/ “no” No, he did not come.
- \* كلا لم يأت /kallā/ “no” No, he did not come.
- \* وصل الولد أيضا /ayḌan/ “too, also” The boy also came.
- \* وصل فلان /fulānun/ “so and so” so and so arrived.
- \* قال كيت و كيت /kayta wakayta/ “such and such” (for things said) He said such and such.
- \* بضع ساعات /biḌ`u/ “some, few” A few hours.
- \* آه لو كنت معي /`aahi/ “oh” Oh, if only you were with me.
- \* ما أجمل الطقس /mā/ “how” How beautiful is the weather.
- \* كتبت كلمات نحو كلمات /nahwa/ “such as” I wrote such as....
- \* دخلت القاعة وإذا الرجل هناك /wa`idha / “and lo” I entered the hall and lo the man was there.
- \* إنما الود مجتهد /ma/ “extra, neutralizing syllable” The boy is hardworking.
- \* هلا تدرسون دروسكم /hallā/ “would” (for urgency) Would you not learn your lessons?
- (Raja T.N, 1978:53-64).

On average a native speaker possesses a vocabulary of about 50 000 words (Aitchson; 1994) Nations (2001). Research indicates that in order to gain pleasure the second

language user, thereafter known as (L2) should be able to understand at least 98% of the tokens in a text. In order to read a fully authentic academic text, the L2 user will need to know at least 15 000 words (Nation I S P; 2001: 20). This is clearly beyond the scope of most students in foreign language learning contexts. Ernesto Macaro (2003) limits the word count to about 3000 word families and makes a distinction between reading for pleasure and reading for the purposes of increasing language competence. That a much smaller number of words are required for language competence:-

*“That a threshold level of high frequency words families, somewhere around the 1500 mark will be achievable in say, seven years of language study. That is words that are fully known. A further 1,500 words may be needed to engage fully with academic tasks.”* (Macaro E, 2003: 65-66)

The question of how best we learn vocabulary has most theorist and educators divided. Should we teach vocabulary by the rote method, or should we interact with students in the classroom and expect them to “pick” up the vocabulary, or by inferring meaning from context.

Ellis, N. (1995) proposes four hypotheses

1. The strong implicit hypothesis. This claims that the meaning of a new word is “acquired totally unconsciously as a result of abstraction from repeated exposures in a range of activated contexts”.
2. The weak implicit hypothesis. Vocabulary is mostly learnt subconsciously but at least some conscious ‘noticing’ of a new word has to take place.

3. The weak explicit hypothesis. We cannot be taught all the L2 words we know but we can teach ourselves by selectively attending to lexis and using a variety of strategies to infer its meaning from context.

4. The strong explicit hypothesis. The application of a range of strategies is a necessary condition of acquisition: noting the new word; attempting to infer the meaning from context; consolidating via repetition and association.

According to research evidence, Daniels found that with lower – secondary students there were clear benefits to vocabulary growth in intensive exposure and active involvement in L2 interaction (Macaro E, 2003:72). Nonetheless there is just so much vocabulary to learn in a formal Muslim school situation, with little or no possibility of spending time in the target language community. Further, the cost benefit of creating language laboratories is a far fetched idea at the moment. With regards to acquiring vocabulary by deriving meaning from context, research has demonstrated that students with higher verbal ability can correctly guess unknown words, depending on the number of occurrences of a word in a text; the helpfulness of the surrounding text itself; (Sternberg R, 1987: 89-105). Other studies have shown that students were unable to get the meaning of an unknown word from context. However the availability of *natural text* was lacking and contributed to the non Acquisition. In a study Knight undertook to ascertain whether vocabulary was best learnt by deriving meaning from context and what the variables were, she found the following:-

1. All subjects learnt more new words when exposed to them in context than when they were not exposed to them in context. This difference remained when tested two weeks later.

2. High verbal ability students learnt more words than low verbal ability students.
3. High verbal ability students, in the text where they had to supply their own definition (or L1 equivalent) learnt more vocabulary than did low – verbal – ability students.

(Knight S, 1994: 99)

Prince argues that ‘the inability of the weaker group to transfer knowledge represents a clear limit to the usefulness of their otherwise impressive ability to learn words with their translations’ (Prince P, 1996: 93). They may have been over-dependent on translation links and may have failed to develop certain processing strategies crucial to the effective use of context. Their persistent reliance on L1, stemming from a desire to understand quickly, is one cause that may lead to ineffective learning. This is quite a strong claim to make from the available evidence. The implications of this cluster of results are that students can learn vocabulary from context and that some students are better at this than others. Nonetheless, to claim that recourse to mental translation is a poor learning strategy would have to be substantiated by further research.

#### **2.4. The role of the dictionary in vocabulary acquisition**

Knight also set up the reading of text on a computer such that some participants were able to access the dictionary and others were not. The computer was also able to track the number of times the participant accessed the electronic dictionary. She found:

1. Those who had dictionaries as well as the context **learnt** most vocabulary.

2. Those participants with access to dictionary scored better at supplying a definition of the word than those without access to the dictionary. This was highly predictable as the dictionary would give accurate L1 equivalents.
3. High-verbal-ability students used the dictionary more than low-verbal-ability students. It is found that, low-verbal-ability students benefited more from dictionary access. This suggests that the high-verbal-ability students need not have looked up some of the words as they had already managed to infer the words from its context. They were just checking – probably unnecessarily (Knight S, 1994: 99).

The implications of these results are that a combination of inferring meaning from content and dictionary use strategies will achieve the greatest vocabulary. Ernesto Macaro states:

*“However, an additional metacognitive strategy will have to be used: students will have to evaluate to what extent it is worth looking up words, despite the time this takes, in order to acquire a richer vocabulary. Clearly, teachers should be prepared to offer different strategy training to different types/levels of learners or to help them make evaluative decisions about which strategies to use at which times.”*

(Macaro E, 2003: 74)

In the school situation each text in the *Nāši`ēn* follows a series of vocabulary exercises based on the text. The question is whether referring to the dictionary is the best way to enable selective attention to be focussed on a new word without resorting to functional exercises, as employed by the *Nāši`ēn*. A study by Paribakt and Wesche would seem to confirm the notion that students made vocabulary gains when, in addition to reading the text, they engage in various vocabulary exercises. This would infer that students should not



be discouraged from solely using dictionaries or vocabulary lists when attempting unseen comprehension passages, nor should they be expected to guess from the context. Rather a combination of inferring from the context and dictionary use strategies will achieve the greatest vocabulary acquisition. (Paribakt T.S & Wesche M.B 1996:52,155-78)

## 2.5. Sounds

From the point of view of phonetics the unit of language is sound. The phonetian is concerned chiefly with classification of sounds according to the manner in which each is articulated. From the point of phonology the unit of language is the phoneme. Each language possesses a set of phonemes, most of these generally coincide with the phonetic unit (i.e. the sound); others are or may be intimate sound combinations, such as (ei) (as in the word day) or German (ts) (as in the word zehn). Simply stated a sound that the phonetian detects is called phonic and in any one language there are hundreds of phonic (sounds). A person is by nature trained to hear the significant sound features (the phonemes in his own language). Palmer says that there is a significant difference between a phoneme and a sound:

“One of the differences between the *phoneme* and the *sound* lies in the fact that the sound is absolute, a thing-in-itself, a fixed quantity of a physiological and acoustic nature, whereas the phoneme is relative, not a fixed entity, but the result of a long historical development varying and variable in its nature.”

(Palmer H.E, 1968:20)

Language cannot be separated from sound, and that is the sum of the matter;

*“only he who hears the foreign language within himself in exactly or approximately the same way as a native hears it can really appreciate and enjoy not only poetry where phonetic effects must need always play an important part, but also all the higher forms of prose.”*

*(Jespersen O, 1967:145)*

There is the theory that sounds can be learnt by mere imitation, this is especially true in the case of children learning the sounds of their own language. Indeed the untrained adult seems to be often absolutely incapable of imitating an unfamiliar sound or even an unfamiliar combination of familiar sounds. Nor can minute distinctions of sound be disregarded especially in Arabic where distinctions of sound would mean distinction of meaning as in the words.

* Sword	سيف	Summer	صيف
* Dog	كلب	Heart	قلب

We see from the above examples that the significant sound distinctions of meaning may be very minute, at least to the unaccustomed ear. To a native ear they always seem considerable. Hence the common problem in learning pronunciation in a foreign language is hearing and producing the distinctive contrasts between the different sound features. The most significant sound features and contrasts in the Arabic language have to do with **consonants, vowels, stress and intonation.**

### 2.5.1. CONSONANTS

The Arabic consonants are thirty in number. Here the reference is not to the consonants found in the Arabic alphabet but rather to the consonants as they sound orally (Raja T.N, 1978:10). A list of the consonants is indicated below:-

1.	b	ب / bābun/	“door”	باب
2.	t	ت /tājun/	“crown”	تاج
3.	d	د /diikun/	“cock”	ديك
4.	F	ط /FāRa/	“he flew”	طار
5.	D	د /DāRun/	“hall”	دار
6.	k	ك /kiisun/	“bag”	كيس
7.	q	ق /qalamun/	“pencil”	قلم
8.	a	أ /ana/	“I”	أنا
9.	f	ف /fiilun/	“elephant”	فيل
10.	th	ث / thumma/	“then”	ثم
11.	dh	ذ / dhailun/	“tail”	ذيل
12.	s	س /sinnun	“tooth”	سن
13.	z	ز /zāla/	“it vanished”	زال
14.	Š	ش /Šiin/	“China”	شين
15.	Ž	ظ /Žanna/	“he thought”	ظن
16.	Š	ش /Šamsun/	“sun”	شمس
17.	J	ج /jū`un/	“hunger”	جوع

18.	kh	خ /khubzun/	“bread”	خبز
19.	Ĝ	غ/Ĝanamun/	“sheep”	غنم
20.	H	ح /Hūtun/	“whale”	حوت
21.	`	ع/`ala/	“on”	علي
22.	h	ه /huna/	“here”	هنا
23.	m	م /man/	“who”	من
24.	n	ن /nāma/	“he slept”	نام
25.	l	ل /lā/	“no”	لا
26.	L	ل/aLLāhu/	“God”	الله
27.	r	ر/ranna/	“he rang”	رن
28.	R	ر/HāRRun/	“heat”	حار
29.	w	و/wajada/	“he found”	وجد
30.	y	ي/yasma`u/	“he hears”	يسمع

In a study conducted by Elliot; in which he investigated whether explicit pronunciation instruction improved pronunciation, it was found that since the 1960s and 1970s pronunciation skills was dropped from the curriculum and was “left out” from the teacher’s repertoire of duties. This was because pronunciation skills, these days, are acquired implicitly via the tape recorder, television and radio. In a study carried out by Elliot on two groups of undergraduate university students studying L2; the one group was given special pronunciation treatment while the other group was only corrected when an utterance was unintelligible. Elliot found:

1. At pre-test there were no significant differences between the pronunciations of the two groups.
2. At post-test there were significant differences between the two groups. There was a high gain in pronunciation accuracy in the experimental group.
3. At pre-test both attitude and F1 significantly related to pronunciation ability.
4. At post-test attitude and F1 were no longer significant predictors of pronunciation ability. Treatment was the stronger predictor of good pronunciation. 92% of the students in the experimental group were positive about the intervention.

(Elliot R. A, 1995: 530-42)

This study proves that special pronunciation treatment does improve pronunciation skills. This would be especially true when the L2 is Arabic. A native speaker of English, due to the phonological habits he has developed would encounter a number of pronunciation problems in the process of learning standard Arabic where there is a fine distinction between:

ط / t / (in contrast with ت / t /),	طين - تين
ض / d / (in contrast with د / d /),	ضرب - درب
ص / Š (in contrast with س / s /),	صيف - سيف
ظ / D / (in contrast with ذ / δ /),	ظفر - زفر
ل / L / (in contrast with ل / l /),	الله - بالله
ر / R / (in contrast with ر / r /),	الرحمان - نالرحمان
ق / q / (in contrast with ك / k /),	قلب - كلب
/a/ (in contrast with /k/ and /q/),	قانون - كافر

### 2.5.1.1. Consonant Clusters

No initial or final consonant clusters are found in Modern Literary Arabic. Only two segment medial consonant clusters exist. Theoretically, each one of the consonant phonemes can exist in a cluster with any of the other consonants. A few examples are given below:

'b /ta'bēn/	تأبين	jt /mujtama`a/	مجتم
'th /ma'thūr/	مأثور	jr /majrūh/	مجروح
'r /bi`run/	بئر	jn /majnūn/	مجنون
bt /mubtallun/	مبتل	Hb /mahbūb/	محبوب
bs /Habsun/	حبس	Hs /taHsēn/	تحسين
bq /`abqā /	أبقى	HD /maHdūd/	محدود
tr /mitrās/	متراس	kht /makhtūm/	مختوم
t` /mat`ūb/	متعوب	khz /makhzan/	مخزن
tl /`atlafa/	أتلف	khf /makhfā/	مخف
thb /`ithbaat/	إثبات	dkh /madkhal/	مدخل
thq /`athqal/	أثقل	dr /madrasa/	مدرسة
thn /`athna/	أثنى	dl /`adlā/	أدلى
dhb /madh bah/	مذبح	Fb /maṭbūkh/	مطبوخ
dh` /madh`ūr/	مذعور	T` /maT`ūn/	متعون
dhn /mudh nib/	مذنب	Fy /`atyab/	أطيب
rt /martaba/	مرتبة	Žf /`ažfaRa/	أظفر
rd /qirdun/	قرد	ŽL /`ažLama/	أظلم

ry /maryam/	مريم	Žn /mažnūn/	مظنون
zr /mazrū´/	مزروع	RŚ /fuRŚa/	فرصة
zm /muzmin/	مزمّن	RḌ /ʿaRḌun/	أرض
zh /tazhū/	تزهو	RF /khuRFūm/	خرطوم
sj /masjid/	مسجد	LH /maLHūž/	ملحوظ
sr /musri´/	مسرع	LŚ /ʿaLŚaqa/	ألصق
sw /aswaʿ/	أسوأ	L` /FaL`ah/	طلعة
Št /maŠtā/	مشتى	´j /ma´jūn/	معجون
Šg /maŠgūl/	مشغول	´r /ma´rūf/	معروف
Šw /maŠwii/	مشوي	´m /ʿa´māl/	أعمال
Śb /miŚbāh/	مصباح	gŠ /magŠūŠ/	مغشوش
ŚR /muŚRi´/	مصرع	gf /ʿagfala/	أغفل
Śg /aŚgā/	أصغى	g /ʿaglā/	أغلى
Ḍj /ʿaḌja`a/	أضع	ft /miftāh/	مفتاح
Ḍ` /ʿaḌ`afa/	أضعف	fr /ʿafraza/	أفرز
Ḍw /ʿaḌwaa´/	أضواء	fk /maf kūk/	مفكوك
Qb /maqbul/	مقبول	wḌ / mawḌi´/	موضع
Qt /maqta/	مقتل	wk /mawkib	موكب
Qh /maqha/	مقهى	wh /ʿawhama/	أوهم
Kt /maktab/	مكتب	y´ /yay´Asu	بيأس
ks /maksūr/	مكسور	yq /ʿayqana/	أيقن
kw /mukwā/	مكوي	yn /ʿaynamā/	أينما

l' /mal'ān/	ملأن	nt /'intaf`a	إنتفع
l` /mal`ūn/	ملعون	nm /'inmā'/	إنماء
ly /'alyan/	الين	n´ /'in`akafa/	انعكف
mt /'amti`a/	أمتع	ht /'ihtamma/	اهتم
mF /'amFaRa/	أمطر	hm /mahmūm /	مهموم
mk /'imkān/	إمكان	hw /'ahwā/	أهوى

### 2.5.1.2. Consonant Length

The duration of time in which a sound is produced is called Consonant Length. This does not refer to the *speed* at which a person speaks, but, rather, the relative *length* of time in which each separate sound is produced, as compared with a longer or shorter time in which the same sound or other sounds may be produced in the stream of speech. In the Arabic Language variation in the relative length of sounds produces a variation in meanings, therefore lengths is a significant feature of sound modification. This leads us to conclude that it is phonemic, and conversely non phonemic, would mean that variation in relative length of sounds produces no variation in meaning.

### 2.5.2. The Arabic Vowels

The Arabic vowels are six in number. No glides are included in these vowels. Three of them, however, are geminates (clusters) of the same vowel. Germination here indicates the relative length of the vowels. In addition to the six vowels, there are two diphthongs or glided vowels: /ay/ and /aw/.

/i/	/min/	“from”	من
-----	-------	--------	----



/ii/	/fiil/	“elephant”	فيل
/a/	/Šāb/	“young man”	شاب
/aa/	/bāb/	“door”	باب
/u/	/kun/	“is” (imp.)	كن
/uu/	/hūt/	“whale”	حوت
/ay/	/kay/	“in order to”	كي
/aw/	/aw/	“or”	أو

### 2.5.3. Arabic Stress

Stress may be interpreted as the amount of effort required to pronounce a sound. This force is relative; that is depending on the strength and weakness of the effort in relation to the other forces of breath in the utterance.

Raja puts them in the three categories in order of loudness

- a primary stress symbolized by [ ´ ]
- a secondary stress symbolized by [ ` ]
- a weak stress symbolized by no mark.

He claims that these three stress levels are predictable, based on the number and the type of syllable in a word (Raja T.N, 1978:10).

#### 2.5.3.1. Word Stress Patterns

- If a word consists of **one short syllable**, this syllable takes a primary stress (unless the syllable represents a preposition or some other function word in a long utterance). For example: /min/ “from”

- If a word consists of **two short syllables**, the first syllable takes a primary stress and the second syllable takes a weak stress. For example: /sámak/ “fish”
- If a word consists of **three short syllables**, the first syllable takes a primary stress and the other syllables take weak stresses. For example: /sámaka/ “a fish”.
- If a word consists of **four short syllables**, the second syllable takes a primary stress and the other syllables take weak stresses. For example: /samákatun/ “a fish”.
- If a word consists of **five short syllables**, the third syllable takes a primary stress and the other syllables take weak stresses. For example: /kalimátunā/ “our word”.
- If a word consists of **one long syllable**, this syllable takes a primary stress. For example: /šáRT/ ‘bet’, /FāR/. ‘He flew’.
- If a word consists of **two long syllables**, the second syllable takes primary stress and the other syllable takes a secondary stress. For example: /miftáah/ “key”.
- If a word consists of **three long syllables**, the third syllable takes a primary stress and the other two syllables take secondary stresses. For example: /sijjàadáat/ “carpets”.
- In a **combination of short and long syllables**, if a word consists of **two or three syllables**, the last long syllable takes a primary stress. Any other long syllable takes

a secondary stress and all short syllables take weak stresses. For example: /káatib/ “writer”, /katáabun/ “book”.

- In a **combination of short and long syllables**, if a word consists of **four syllables**, the second syllable takes a primary stress (unless the third or fourth syllable is long). Any other long syllable takes a secondary stress and all short syllables take weak stresses. For example: /màdrásatun/ “school”, /`akalúuha/ they ate it”.
- In a **combination of short and long syllables**, if a word consists of **five syllables**, the third syllable takes a primary stress (unless the fourth or fifth syllable is long). Any other long syllable takes a secondary stress and all short syllables take weak stress. For example: / màdrásatunā / “our school”, /minŠàaruhúnna/ “their (f.) cutting saw”.
- In a **combination of short and long syllables**, if a word consists of **six or more syllables**, the last long syllable takes a primary stress. Any other long syllable takes a secondary stress and all short syllables take weak stresses. For example: /`ihtimàamuhúnna/ “their (f.) interest”, /`istiqbàalàatuhúnna/ “their (f.) receptions”.

#### **2.5.4. Arabic Intonation**

By intonation is meant the changes in the pitch of the voice while producing speech. They are relative to each other and vary from person to person. However what is notable is that it is not the pitch levels by themselves that give rise to meanings beyond the context

meaning of words, but a combination of different pitches or levels of intonation and their formation of pitch glides or *pitch contours* that does that. Levis says that intonation makes an independent contribution to the meaning of utterances shaping meaning drastically and dramatically. He argues that this change in meaning by the change in pitch of utterances makes the study of intonation by the L2 learner vital. (Levis J. M, 1999: 37 – 64)

Raja claims that in the Arabic Language there are four relative phonemic pitch levels. A pitch contour occurs when in the stream of speech, the speaker glides from one pitch level to another, accompanied by a stress. Hence the pitch levels are relative to stress. He divides the pitch levels into four categories 1 – 4 (from lowest to highest respectively), the pitch contours are introduced by a small zero sign, symbolizing the primary stress.

\*/dhahaba lwaladu 'ila ssūqi  
 °3-2- °3- 2- °3- 1

“The boy went to the market.”

ذهب الولد الي السوق

\*/waahid 'ithnān thalātha 'aRba`a khamisa  
 °2-3 2 °2-3 2°2 –3 °2- 3- °3- 1

“One, two, three, four, five.”

واحد, اثنان, ثلاثة, اربعة, خمسة

\*/waahid 'thnān thalaatha `aRba`a khamisa/  
 °3- 2- °3-2- °3-2- °3-2- °3- 1

“One, two, three, four, five.”

واحد, اثنان, ثلاثة, اربعة, خمسة

\*/yā sāmi/  
 °4- 1 °4- 1

“Oh, Sami!”

يا سامي

\*/jaa`a/ /man/ /`alwaladu/ /na`am/  
°3- 1 °2- 3 2 °2-3 °3- 1

“He came.” “Who? The boy?” “Yes”

هو جاء, من؟ الولد, نعم

\*/`indama dhahabtu `ila lbayti wajattu Ikitāba/  
°3- 2- °3- 2- °3- 2 °3- 2- °3- 1

“When I went home, I found the book.”

عندما ذهبت إلي البيت وجدت الكتاب

\*/`ištara ytu kutuban wahibran wa aqlāman wa waraqan/  
2°3- 2 °3-2- °3- 2- °3- 2- °3- 1

“I bought books, ink, pencils, and paper.”

إشتريت كتباً و حبراً و اقلاماً و ورقاً

\*/ra`aytu saami/ /man/ /saami/  
2°3- 2 °3- 1 °2- 3 °3- 1

“I saw Sami.” “Who?” “Sami.”

رأيت سامي, من؟ سامي

\*/ra`aytu šakhšan/ /man /saami/  
2 °3- 2 °3- 1 °3- 1 °3- 1

“I saw a person.” “Who?” “Sami.”

رأيت شخصاً, من؟ سامي

\*/hal sāmi filbayti/ /laa/  
2 °3- 2- °2-3 °3-1

“Is Sami at home?” No”

هل سامي في البيت, لا

Levis offers a simplified form of intonation for teachers to work with consisting of two primary elements.

- Nuclear stress – the focus being on only one word, for eg, what did **YOU** see?
- Final intonation- for eg, what did you *see*?

Interestingly Ernesto Macaro states that based on research evidence available and studies on intonation no evidence clearly states that intonation improves communication competence. He proposes that if learners can develop strategies which encourage them to use tools of intonation it will compensate for lack of language in a given situation as well as assist them to make the meaning much clearer to the listener. Hence intonation may not take priority in learning skills but can be learnt at later stages to improve elucidation of meaning. He claims that these three stress levels are predictable, based on the number and type of syllables in a word (Macaro E, 2003:209).

## **2.6. Organic and Acoustic**

Sweet says that describing the actions of the organs of speech by which sounds are produced, i.e the relative positions of tongue and palate by which the sound is produced is referred to the organic side of phonetics. The acoustic side describes and classifies them according to their likeness to the ear and explains how the acoustic effect of each sound is the necessary result of its organic formation, as when we call (s) a hiss sound or sibilant, and explain why it has a higher pitch – a shriller hiss- than the allied hiss – consonant (s) in she (Sweet H, 1972:6).

When learning a foreign language the organic and acoustic sense must be cultivated, by recognizing each sound by ear and also recognizing the organic positions by which it is

produced. This recognition being affected by means of the accompanying muscular tensions.

### **2.6.1. Organics**

Before beginning the study of foreign sounds, it is important to get a clear idea of the relations of our own sound system to other sounds in general, especially to learn to realise what is anomalous and peculiar in our own sound system. One would soon realize that the Arabic Language does not have the (P) sound and it is synonymous with the (b) sound as in **پاکستان** (Pakistan)

Each language has its own organic basics and the organic of English and French or Italian and Portuguese are as distinct, as they can well be. Hence the importance of a clear conception of the character of each basis, and their relations to one another.

### **2.7. Isolation of sound**

Isolation of sound would mean isolating the vowels in the word for example:

( باب ) Would for two isolated parts be ( با - ب ). This approach is of a great help when learning foreign sounds and will afford the pupil an easier method of learning pronunciation than by repeating it any number of times undivided.

### **2.8. Sentences**

We express our thoughts in sentences. Sentences are complete units of thought, they are decomposable into component parts (each of which may be still decomposed) and may (as clauses) constitute parts of other sentences (Palmer H.E, 1968:22).

The fallacy that most people make is that, “if I learn two hundred words a day, I shall have a perfect knowledge of the language within a short space of time”. There is no doubt that the collection of word families is a valuable way of enriching one’s vocabulary, but the beginner is not concerned with isolated words, but with their combinations into natural and beneficial sentences. Palmer is of the opinion that the enriching of one’s vocabulary should be left to a comparatively late stage in the study of language, especially in the study of most derivatives and compounds, or at least until a certain mastery of the language has been achieved.

### **2.8.1. Detached sentences; Context**

Sweet says,

*“We speak in sentences, but we do not generally speak in detached sentences; we speak in concatenation of sentences. In ordinary speech sentences are connected together in the form of a dialogue, which, again, often consists of an alteration of questions and answers. In books, sentences are joined together into larger groups called paragraphs, which again form chapters, which again constitute a complete connected text.”*

(Sweet H, 1972:99-100)

Sweet concludes that the main foundation of the practical study of languages should be connected texts (sentences in a paragraph), whose study must, of course, be accompanied by grammatical analysis. However we cannot dispense with detached (a single sentence) sentences completely. In grammar, the rules must be illustrated and justified by examples, which may strengthen the learner’s hold of the rule. Sweet warns that in employing



detached sentences we must be careful to employ only those sentences which will really bear detaching. He quotes Storms remarks (Forbedret Undervisning 17) with special reference to modern languages:

*“It is but little relief in the study of a difficult grammar to have ruminated hour after hour dry, detached sentences without a trace of connection, indeed without intelligible meanings.”* (Cited in Sweet H, 1972:101)

For example **“the young friend of the old man, the old and sagacious teacher,”** are rather exaggeratedly literary and nonsensical at times. Arab Grammarians define a sentence as a group of words spoken in the Arabic Language that is beneficial and self explanatory (Al-Hashmi A, 1936; 9-10).

### 2.8.2. Sentence Stress

In the Arabic language, sentence stress plays an important part in the meaning the speaker wishes to elicit. A single sentence construction contains the same words with different sentence stress will elicit various meanings. The examples mentioned exemplify this fact:

صا حبي لم يشتتر سجادات

- /Šāhibi lam yaštar sijjādāt/ “My friend didn’t buy carpets.” (Maybe my uncle did.)
- /Šāhibi lam yaštar sijjādāt/ “My friend didn’t buy carpets.” (Emphasizing the negation.)
- /Šāhibi lam yaštar sijjādāt/ “My friend didn’t buy carpets.” (Maybe he borrowed them.)

- /Šāhibi lam yaštar sījādāt/ “My friend didn’t buy carpets.” (Maybe he bought drapes.)

## **2.9. Conclusion**

Words sounds and sentences are important because they are the means of accessing language, and are the most important building blocks of language. For all purposes indepth knowledge of high frequency words will have to be consolidated and reinforced early in the programme. Exposure to high frequency words should also be achieved early in the programme.

Thought should be given to promote teaching and learning conditions like establishing language laboratories with audio visual aids. Short and intensive courses with the focus of assisting progression from receptive to productive skills should be incorporated into the programme, especially that learners are in most cases unable to visit the target country.

Dictionaries and word resources should be an integral part of vocabulary learning. Students should be trained to use metacognitive strategies to infer meaning from content. However, no strategy should be discounted from the leaning process, be it rote learning, translation or keyword association. As for pronunciation skills we are never to neglect it as it promotes the production and communication of meaning.

## Chapter Three

### Literature study

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter will explain a functionalist approach to language, and further concentrate on the study of smaller approaches, known as functional grammar or structural functional grammar.

Given the dominance of the *formalistic* approach or the *grammar translation* approach, a fresh look at the methodology best applicable for the teaching of the Arabic language is necessary. This study will endeavour to show that the approach of *Nāšī`ēn* is essentially a functional one.

The primary aim is to present a general discussion of the *functional* approach in relation to the *cognitive* and *formal* approach. Yasien Mohamed states that Arabic textbooks reflect two broad approaches, the classical and the modern, the cognitive and communicative approach (Mohamed Y, 1997:10). Dadoo refers to them as the textual (or cognitive) approach and the functional (or communicative) approach (Dadoo Y, 1992: 81-84). The relevance of these two approaches will be better appreciated after close observation of the current methodologies employed in Islamic schools in the Gauteng area. The official prescribed textbook for senior secondary level is the *Nāšī`ēn*. This study will endeavour to show that the *Nāšī`ēn* essentially employs both textual and functional approaches.

### 3.2. Language as communication

The starting point for the functionalist is that language is an instrument for communication between human beings (Butler C.S, 2003:2). Halliday shares a similar view:

*“Language arises in the life of the individual through an ongoing exchange of meanings with significant others.”*(Halliday M A K, 1978:1)

Van Valin also holds a similar view that any informal survey of non – linguistics on the primary function of language would generally indicate that language is used mainly for communication (Van Valin R D, 2000:319).

Chomsky refutes the above claim that communication is the essential purpose of language. He maintains that the use of language may be: a mediated resolution of a problem, an informal conversation of a phatic kind intended only to maintain social contact, or talking to an unresponsive audience. He further maintains that language in this case must remain non-communicative (Chomsky N, 1980:229-230).

Butler asserts that Chomsky’s interpretation misses the point and that such uses of language are probably regarded as parasitic on normal communication. In support of his view he quotes Dik:

*“The primary aim of natural language is the establishment of inter-human communication; other aims are either secondary or derived.”* (Butler C S, 2003:4)

In conclusion it may be said that language is a social fact, which occurs in the life of an individual through an ongoing exchange of meaning and understanding of others. In the development of a child, as a social being, language plays a vital role. Language is the most

vital means through which the modes of living are transmitted to him. He learns to live as a part of society within diverse social groups and eventually adopts its culture. This does not evolve through instruction, nor is he taught the principles on which social groups are organized. This occurs indirectly through accumulated experience of numerous events whereby his behaviour is guided and moulded. All this takes place through the medium of language. (Halliday M A K, 1978:9). This indicates that we are taking a functional view of language and are interested in what language can do or rather what the speaker, child or adult can do with language

The functionalist approach lays emphasis on language as a means of communication, and mainly with the relationship between *linguistic patterning and context of use*. Butler insists that:

*“If linguistics under the functionalist views are seriously concerned to explicate language as communication then it must take as its object of study the whole complex of multi-levelled patterning which constitutes a language. Furthermore, it must relate that complex of patterns to their use in communicative activities.”*

(Butler C S, 2004: 4)

### **3.3. The object of study**

The *formalistic* or *grammar translation* method or *generative grammar*, as frequently referred to in grammar books, is very much different to the *functional method* as well as the *cognitive method*. For formalists, a language is ‘*a set of structural descriptions of sentences, where a full structural description determines (in particular) the sound and meaning of a linguistic expression*’ (Chomsky N, 1977:81).

An important factor in the processing of language is whether grammars are autonomous with respect to factors outside them or rather to be explained in terms of external factors. At the heart of the debate is the *autonomy of syntax*. According to Butler, formalists have argued that the concept of language is too vague and greatly influenced by socio-political considerations to be of any use in linguistics (Butler C S, 2003:4).

For the formalist, language must be presented as a set of rules. Linguistic ability lies in being able to arrange these rules in forming and interpreting new sentences. These rules, in their various arrangements, specify the structure of each sentence of a language; instinctive mastery of them is what constitutes knowledge of a language. Grammar presents a system of rules (Chomsky N, 2003:377). The *Functionalist* regards language as a resource for creating meaning. These *grammars* endeavour to describe language in authentic use and so focus on the text and contexts. They are concerned not only with the structure of the sentence but also how these structures construct the meaning (Gerot L and Wignell P, 1994:6).

The object of this chapter is to outline the basic principles of the functional theory and its relation to the cognitive theory as opposed to the formal theory.

### **3.4. Cognitive grammar**

Cognition refers to knowing and thinking and hence involves the taking in, storing, retrieving, transforming and manipulating of information that is obtained through the senses. It further includes perception, awareness, judgement, the understanding of

emotions and obviously also memory and learning. In brief, cognition involves the utilising of the brain or knowledge acquired which will form building blocks in the process of learning and problem solving. There is a huge amount of information stored in the brain. The information is in the form of facts, that is, knowledge of how to deal with the environment, using an array of strategies that helps to remember what provisions are required; also complex routines which relieve the cognitive burden of day to day activities. For example, you may have a particular way of going to work or of completing your daily work schedule (Ashman A F and Conway R N F; 1997:41).

For this reason it may be inferred that knowledge refers to the *facts* and the *procedures* used to perform a task. Both are important in any learning situation because what is learned, and how it is learned, is based upon what a person already knows. Furthermore, a person's ability to learn is dependent on the context in which the learning occurs.

### **3.4.1. Human cognition**

Discussing the aspect of human cognition, Dickenson and Givon state that human cognition is based on the assumption of shared background information and it is on this basis that human communication proceeds. The information that speakers may assume that hearers share with them falls into three major categories; they are:

- a.) The *shared cultural world view*, as coded primarily in the shared conceptual lexicon. Psychologists recognize it as the permanent semantic memory.
- b.) The *shared current speech situation*, as a mental model, known to psychologists as the working memory or current focus of attention.

c.) The *shared current discourse*, as a mental model, is known to psychologists as the **episodic memory**. (Givon T, 1997:93)

The salient characteristic of the **episodic memory** system are as follows:

- a) It is extremely malleable and involves further processing, reprocessing and reorganization of stored information.
- b) It has a limited capacity processor in which storage space and processing activity compete.
- c) Existing information is periodically transferred into a more permanent episodic memory, making space for new information.
- d) It is a link between the short capacity memory and long term episodic memory.

The first two of these mental models and its systematic use in social communication are fundamental to humans and were utilised by humans since time immemorial. The last model is a developing model in human species and is important as it represents **episodic** (specific and declarative) information which comes in from both *visual* processing and *communication*. The relevance of this memory system lies in the fact that both verbal and non verbal input is cognitively analysed by the brain, i.e. learning from experience and planning for the future (Givon T, 1984:94).

### **3.4.2. Autonomy and functional explanation**

Cognitive Grammar proposes that lexicon morphology and syntax form a continuum of symbolic units, whose purpose is to structure conceptual content for expressive purposes. Therefore, it is incorrect to speak of grammar in isolation of meaning. The segmentation of



grammatical structure into various components is rejected (Langacker RW. 1987:35). Cognitive grammar rejects the claim that the linguistic system is autonomous. Butler, due to his view regarding the explicitly cognitive nature of grammar, does not find this surprising. He confirms that the kind of cognitive relationships which Langacker refers to is *functional* (Butler C S, 2005).

According to Langacker, cognitive grammar ensures that a large number of stock phrases, familiar collocations, formulaic expressions and standard phrases, which are in their thousands in various languages, are not ignored. It argues that knowing these conventional expressions is essential to speaking the language well, obtaining full knowledge of the grammar of a language does not guarantee fluency, but learning its full complement of conventional expressions is probably by far the greatest task involved in mastering the language (Langacker C S, 1987:35).

It is apparent that cognitive grammar is moving away from the traditional grammar translation method. The focus of the latter is on the grammatical structure, emphasising discrete components, which naturally encourages the investigator to concentrate on grammatical structure - phrases, clauses, sentences, assembles in accordance with general rules - often in isolation from meaning.

### **3.4.3. Innateness and language acquisition**

Another notion of the cognitive system which cannot be ignored is the claim that semantic structure is not universal and is *language specific* to a considerable degree. Furthermore, semantic structure is based on conventional imagery and is characterised relative to

knowledge structures (Langacker R W, 1987:2). This is in reply to the Chomskyan model of *Universal Grammar*. According to Chomsky, the brain is designed by genetic endowment with certain structural properties; *universal grammar* is itself a system of rules, principles and conditions that are partially determined by parameters which specify those respects in which in the language is free to vary (Chomsky N, 2003:368). Butler while commenting on the Chomskyan model argues that the solution proposed rests on what is acknowledged as ‘*the property of stimulus*’ argument. Young learners quickly acquire constructions which they could not possibly have learnt by generalisation from the language which surrounds them in their everyday lives; this is because little evidence is available in linguistic input for such generalisations to be plausible. If it is accepted that such constructions cannot be learned from actual linguistic evidence. The basis for these constructions must already be available to the child in the form of **innate** principles which, taken together, constitute a genetically pre-programmed language acquisition device. Since an average child can learn any language, given a suitable environment, these principles cannot be confined to a specific language but must constitute, according to the Chomskyan programme, a *Universal Grammar*, which is common to all languages (Butler C S. 2003:25). Further research by functionalist suggests that the acquisition of language phenomena relies largely on the innateness of more general **cognitive** capacities rather than to involve the assumption of **innate** capacities. Lakoff summarises the position:

*“It is an open empirical question for us just what is and is not innate. In general we assume a great deal of innate conceptual structure and processing capacities, and we take these as forming the basis for linguistic universals.”*

(Lakoff G, 1991:55)

In conclusion, it may be said that in the debate between the *formalist* and *cognitive* grammar, the functionalists have taken a moderate path. Van Valin observes that functionalists' have taken a constructionalist position; in that the child actually constructs the grammar in his or her language, whereas the formalists maintain the adaptationalist position. Van Valin further asserts that if the child adapts the principles of *Universal Grammar*, then the only learning involved is the acquisition of vocabulary (Van Valin RD,1991a:9).

Beedham summarises the debate between formalist and cognitive grammar:

*“The debate about the extent to which language is innate and the extent, to which it is learned, like sin, will always be with us. Much of the evidence cited in the debate can be used by both sides to justify. But it has little to do with day to day construction of formal models which explain syntactic structure, except perhaps as a means of adding some plausibility to the procedure. The innateness hypothesis and the plausibility which it may or may not bring is very much in the background; to refute it certainly does not begin to address the problems inherent in the generative method. An indication of criticism of generative grammar based on competence / performance and the innateness hypothesis being wrong is the fact that after 45 years of such criticism generative grammar survives almost unscathed.”*

(Beedham C. 1984:72-73)

### **3.5. Basic principles in functional grammar**

Among the many cross-twining and intertwining developments characterising modern linguistics, one which stands out rather clearly is a shift of interest away from a purely

formal approach to language, towards more functionally, pragmatically and discourse orientated conceptions of the nature of human language. For the sake of argument, one may establish an opposition between a formal paradigm and a functional paradigm for linguistic research (Dik S C, 1978:4-5).

The functional paradigm like the cognitive paradigm is characterised by the fact that syntax cannot be regarded as autonomous with regard to semantics. The very essence of syntax is that it provides the means of creating meaningful expressions. Consequently it facilitates verbal interaction as compared to the formal paradigm, where syntax is regarded as the central core of linguistic organisation, and the rules and principles determining syntactic structure are judged to be autonomous with respect to their semantic content of the linguistic expressions.

Here we will endeavour to show that the grammar employed in the *Nāši`ēn* conforms to the requirements imposed by the functional paradigm. The grammar in *Nāši`ēn* is not just a pragmatic theory but a theory of grammatical organization and thus capable of being incorporated in a theory of verbal interaction.

### **3.5.1. A Functional Semantic Approach to Language**

Suzanne Eggins says that language is functional in two main respects,

- Firstly it raises functional questions about language. Systemists ask how people employ language. (i.e. what do people do with language), which requires the observance of real examples in language practice. Systemists are interested in authentic speech and writing of people interacting in natural social contexts

- Secondly it interprets the linguistic system functionally. Here Systemists ask about the structure of language.

Eggsins further outlines the two dimensions of the functional semantic approach. Firstly, what are the possible choices that people can make, i.e. what are the possible meanings they form? In doing this, we describe the linguistic system. Secondly, what is the function of the choice they made, i.e. why did they choose to create that meaning? This describes how language is used in different social contexts and achieves various cultural goals. It enables us to talk about linguistic choice not as “*right*” or “*wrong*”, as in the traditional prescriptive approach to language. Instead we refer to choices as appropriate or inappropriate to a particular context (Eggsins S; 1994:22).

The first point refers to everyday social interaction, where people write or talk in a language in order to create meaning with each other, making the function of language a semantic one. Answering the second question, will prompt us to differentiate between various types of meaning in language; that is how many different forms of meaning do we use language to make, or how is language arranged to make meaning (Eggsins S. 1994:2). The language events, language and context, structure and systems that are employed in the *Nāšī`ēn* are essentially functional because it deals mainly with modern *literary Arabic* which essentially lends itself to the two dimensional language used in the functional semantic cognitive approach. Haron mentions that modern literary Arabic is of contemporary interest and its style is simpler because of its shorter sentences and paragraphs, while classical style is often characterised by poetic prose. Haron states:

*“Modern standard Arabic lends itself to using the modern approach to teaching which is not only easier, but also more enjoyable because of its emphasis on spontaneous oral communication.”* (Mohamed Y, 1997:18)

Halliday argues that language is structured to make three main forms of meanings simultaneously; *experimental*, *interpersonal* and *textual* meanings as well as our ability to deduce context from text (Eggins S, 1994: 3).

The most important issue in linguistic theory is the nature of meaning. Langacker regards meaning as a cognitive phenomenon. The emphasis on meaning with conceptualising brings into conflict cognitive grammar with other major systems. Langacker further states that language is symbolic in nature; it presents an option to the speaker, for either personal or communicative purposes, a set of signs or expressions, which associates a semantic presentation of some kind with a phonological representation (Langacker R.W, 1987: 5).

This follows the focus on meaning to virtually all linguistic concerns, thereby emphasising meaning instead of form. In brief, it may be said that language users do not interact to exchange in sounds, words or sentences but rather interact to create meaning; to make sense of the world and of each other.

### **3.5.2. The function of language as a semiotic system**

The semiotic system is a linguistic system for the purposes of making meaning. Suzanne Eggins (1994; 22) contends that this is achieved in two ways. Firstly, a semiotic system orders content, which is not ordered by nature but by choice, contrary to our notion that we see language as a natural naming device. We tend to think of our dimensions of reality as



- **A declarative statement: - subject – verb –predicate**

*The boy is going to the market .*

الولد يذهب الى السوق

- **An interrogative :- question tag – subject – verb – predicate**

*Is the boy going to the market?*

هل الولد يذهب الى السوق ؟

- **An imperative :- no subject – no finite**

*Go!*

اذهب !

- **A nominal sentence: - subject –verb –object**

*Muhammad went to the market.*

محمد ذهب الى السوق.

- **A verbal sentence :- verb - subject –object**

*Muhammad went to the market.*

ذهب محمد الي السوق.

Suzanne Eggins argues that functional grammar is the apparatus by which oppositions and choices are realized. This is achieved by a particular sequencing of a number of grammatical elements, here the elements of; **subject, finite(verb) and predicator** or the **verb, subject, object**. The functional apparatus enables that the choice *declarative statement*, for example is realized by sequence of elements: **subject** followed by the **finite verb**. For example:

*The boy is going to the market.*

الولد يذهب إلى السوق.

**The boy** (subject) - **is** (finite verb) - **the market** (predicator)



Whereas the choice *interrogative* has the elements of subject and finite in the opposite order as:

*Is the boy going to the market ?* هل الولد يذهب إلى السوق؟

The *imperative* is realized by the omission of the subject and the finite element, leaving only the predicator:

*Go!* اذهب

In the grammatical system, these choices are realized by structures, in which each choice is realized in the order and arrangement of grammatical roles played by the words.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, it may be said that the basic approach employed in the *Nāši`ēn* is functional, because:

*It takes a pragmatic view of the nature of language* in that linguistic expressions are not arbitrary formal objects, but their properties are sensitive to, and co-determined by, the pragmatic determinants of human verbal interaction. The content is considered to be explainable in terms of the conditions and purposes for which it is applicable.

*It attaches primary importance to functional relations at different levels in the organization of grammar* in that language is regarded as a medium which human beings employ to reach certain goals. These goals lie in the establishment of a variety of patterns of social interaction. The combination of dialogues in *Nāši`ēn* achieves the goal of communicating information to interpreters as well as to change these interpreters in certain

ways. These changes may be purely mental or emotional as when the knowledge, convictions, or the feelings of interpreters are influenced by change.

*It wishes to be practically applicable to the analysis of diverse aspects of language and language use.* The language in *Nāšī`ēn* is functionally explainable in that it is purpose related. It is clear to understand why the languages are arranged the way they are, in the light of the uses to which they are utilized. The pragmatic adequacy of the language in *Nāšī`ēn* will be better appreciated when one understands the differences between the classical and modern literary Arabic. The grammatical organization of the language fits in with a wider theory of verbal interaction. The selected passages and dialogues in *Nāšī`ēn* are presented in a language style that when used by given speakers in a given situation, communicate certain messages to speakers.

Dik states:

*“It does not restrict the notion of grammar to isolated sentences, but seeks to clarify how sentences can be integrated into coherent texts and how linguistic expressions relate to non linguistic settings.”*

(Dik S C; 1983:6).

*Psychological adequacy.* The grammar in *Nāšī`ēn* is to a large extent closely related to psychological models of linguistic competence and linguistic behavior. It shows how speakers go about constructing and formulating terminology and how interpreters go about processing and interpreting linguistic expressions. Dik brings to attention that: Itagati and Prideaux presents evidence to the effect that the speakers point of view in retelling a story significantly influences the choice of the primary participant in the story, it forms the roles

of agent and subject. Lalleman argues, on the basis of the accomplishments of Dutch and Turkish children in a story telling task, that there are at least two distinguished aspects of story telling competence: the competence of getting the content across, and that of expressing the content in the correct grammatical form (Dik S C. 1983:7).

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Role of Methodology in Language Acquisition**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter is characterised by the informal observation of the current methodologies implemented in Islamic schools within the Gauteng area. It is apparent that this phenomenon is subject to analytical examination. A methodical collection of data will follow about these phenomena, which will form the empirical basis for theoretical development and subsequently conceptualisation. Among the diverse theoretical models implemented currently, one theoretical model will be discussed, which will account for the initial available data and enable further empirical investigation and prediction. These theories and predictions will further be matched against additional data. Refinements will be made to improve its observation at adequacy.

A further endeavour will be followed by comparing alternate models, in order to determine their fits of divergence and the nature of the evidence that distinguishes them empirically. Thereafter formalization will take place.

Langacker contends that present day linguists appear to be quite advanced. He states that there are well articulated theories, whose valedictory comparison and formalization have received considerable attention. In spite of this he contends that linguistic theory has been built on inadequate conceptual foundations (Langacker RW, 1987:32). It is apparent that insufficient effort goes into critical examination of deep rooted assumptions, into uncovering the source of apparent dilemmas, in the case of the decline of students selecting Arabic as a Matric subject. The department of Arabic Studies conducted a study at the

Spine Road Secondary School, in 1992. The researcher underlined some of the problems students' encountered in learning Arabic. The problems enumerated are:

- The pace followed by the teacher was too fast for learners without any Arabic background to assimilate these new notions.
- Pupils found difficulty in distinguishing between the different forms that Arabic letters formed in a word or sentence.
- A lack of writing skills by many pupils, including Muslims.
- They lacked confidence to raise questions or express their problem.
- The common problem was the volume of new vocabulary that pupils need to master. (Mohamed Y, 1991:124)

Sixteen years has passed since this study was conducted and it was followed by further research on the approaches and experiences at schools. Great efforts were undertaken to promote the Arabic Language and make it an easier subject for learners and attract students to study the Arabic language at schools. Despite this, the teaching and learning of Arabic still poses a major problem to both teacher and learner alike. This chapter aims to discuss and offer solutions to some of the dilemmas currently faced in the teaching and learning of the Arabic language.

#### **4.1.1. Teaching the Arabic grammatical system**

Native speakers encounter a number of grammatical problems while learning the Arabic language. This may attributed to the grammatical habits developed in learning a native language.

## 4.2. Functional words and syllables

In the Arabic language, functional words and syllables are employed more for their grammatical function than for its meaning. This brings about the issue of the **context – text connection**. Gerot and Wignell explain the context – text connection with a proposition that all meaning is based on situations and circumstances in:

- a context of situation
- a context of culture

Knowing the context of a situation makes the sentence or utterance more intelligible to the receptor.

Knowing the context of culture determines what we can mean through:

1. being ‘who we are’
2. doing ‘what we do’
3. saying ‘what we say’ (Gerot L and Wignell P; 1994:10)

Context of situation can be specified through use of the registered variables: **field**, **tenor**, and **mode**.

**Field** refers to what is going on, including *activity focus* (nature of social activity) and *object focus* (subject matter). The field specifies what is going on within the environment of communal interaction and the area under discussion.

**Tenor** looks at the shared relationships between those participating. These are specific in terms of:

*Status of power* (mediator roles, peer or hierarchic association);

*Affect* (extent of like, dislike or neutrality);

*Contact* (rate of recurrence, duration and intimacy of social contact)

When Muslims greet each other saying ‘peace be upon you or *'ṣabāh al khair'* (good morning). This act is very much a cultural one and clearly indicates social relationships.

**Mode** denotes the method and how language is being used; whether the channel of communication is spoken or written or that language is being used as a mode of action or reflection.

The context of situation can be reconstructed where there is a methodical affiliation between *context* and *text*, bearing in mind three types of meaning as expounded by Halliday: ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Gerot L and Wignell P; 1994:10).

#### 4.2.1. Prepositions

The Arabic word من - min is more often than not translated as **from**. Consider the words خائف من الكلب which is translated as ‘afraid **of** the dog’. The word على -alā is usually translated as **on**, علي مكتبه is ‘**on** his table’ and on the contrary على شرفه is ‘**in** his honour’. Raja says that similar examples are to be found for other prepositions. This is likely to present problems to the English speaker, as prepositional syllables do not exist in English (Raja T N, 1978:85). The Arabic language is characterized by prepositional phrases; consequently words are traditionally classified as nouns, verbs or preposition (Al Hashmi A, 1936:8). The surest way to mastering the use of prepositions is to learn the language functionally i.e. in context.

#### 4.2.2. The كان and إن groups

While appropriate equivalents in the English language are effortlessly found, their usage in the Arabic language presents two problems: the *order of the words* in the sentences

containing these functional words and the *relation of the subject and the predicate* in these sentences. The most appropriate way to attempt the problem is to initially master the syntactic structure of the nominal sentence without a verb. It is found to be useful to teach كان and its nominal sentence (present tense sentence) jointly, in table form that is to illustrate the contrast. Once the learner realises that there is indeed a distinction between the two sentences, it becomes easier for the student to conceptualise the difference between the present and the past. This is indicated in the example below:

<b>Present</b>	<b>past</b>
الطريقُ طويلٌ The road (is) long.	كان الطريقُ طويلاً The road was long.
الولدُ حاضرٌ The boy (is) present.	كان الولدُ حاضراً The boy was present.
قصرُ الملكِ ضخمٌ The King's palace (is) huge.	كان قصرُ الملكِ ضخماً The king's palace was huge.

#### **4.2.3. The jussive and subjunctive governors**

Most of the jussive and subjunctive particles have equivalents in English. The (minor) problem here is the influence of these words on the endings of other words in the sentence (Raja T N, 1978:85). The jussive and subjunctive governors do not convey a particular semantic content; relatively it is a mood of the verb necessary in written Arabic under specific circumstances (Ryding K C, 2005:158).



#### 4.2.4. Conjunctions and conjunction syllables

Most of these words have equivalents in English and their usage is very similar. They present no real problem except in form. However conjunctions are not always translatable, they sometimes perform strictly grammatical functions rather than adding semantic content. Ryding K C states that *sentences after the introduction* are often initiated with the conjunction wa- و 'and'. This format is considered good style in Arabic, although it is more often than not not translated into English, given that English style as a rule advises against starting a sentence with 'and'. We exemplify this with a few examples: (Ryding K C, 2005:158).

و غادر القاهرة أمس مساعد وزير الدفاع.....  
(And) the assistant minister of defence left Cairo yesterday.

و وصل الرئيسان إلى العاصمة أمس....  
(And) the two presidents arrived in the capital city yesterday.

Further the conjunction Wa- و in the Arabic language is used in a 'list' where as in English a comma is used to separate items:

منها مصر والأردن و الكويت و لبنان و قطر و عمان.  
Among them are Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, and Oman.

Lastly (Rammuny R M, 1980: 14) states that in the English language it is perfectly appropriate to use short sentences while in the Arabic language it would be dull and repetitious. Hence to avoid repetition and to maintain a balance between form and content, statements could be combined together by connectors and conjunctions. Compare the two passages below:

The style is short sentences without employing connectors and conjunctions;

سكن رسول الله في مكة. كان أنصار و مهاجرين في المدينة بعد الهجرة. رجع النبي إلى مكة بعد الهجرة. زاد عدد المسلمين بعد رجوعه. بدأ النبي يكون مجتمعا إسلاميا. أصبح للمجتمع الإسلامية قوانين و دستور.

Now compare the passage after it has been edited by employing connectors and conjunctions;

في أول عهد النبوة سكن رسول الله في مكة وبعد الهجرة إلى المدينة وجد فيها أنصار له بالإضافة إلى المهاجرين معه و هناك أسس النبي مجتمعا إسلاميا لها قوانين و دستور.

In conclusion the researcher has found that most passages written by English speakers are monotonous, largely because they lack variation in sentence length and structure. This can be attributed largely to the inability to use connectors and conjunctions.

#### **4.2.5. Interrogatives, call words, attention words and adverbial words**

Most interrogatives, call words, attention words and adverbial words have equivalents in English. They present no real problem except in form.

#### **4.2.6. Negative words**

The Arabic language has a greater variety of negative words which may present a slight problem for native speakers of English. This can be overcome by the continuous practice of these words and a greater exposure to the language.

#### **4.2.7. The definite article**

This presents a problem for English speakers especially where the English language does not use the definite article where Arabic does. For example:

'Reading'	القرءة
'Writing'	الكتابة
'Sugar'	السكر
'King Henry'	الملك هنري
'The weak man'	الرجل الضعيف

There is no indefinite article in the Arabic language; the presence of nunation at the end of the noun indicates indefiniteness (Haywood J A and Nahmad H A, 1993:22). For example بيت (baytun) means 'a house' and رجل (rajulun) 'a man'. The use of the definite in the Arabic language is a complicated issue and has been a concern for both teachers and students alike. The researcher observed that the definite article is used more often in the Arabic language than it is used in the English language. We indicate this with the introduction of the generic use of the definite article.

#### 4.2.7.1. The generic use of the definite article

Karin C Riding asserts that in the **English** language, the **generic** use of the noun often **omits** the **definite** article, for example 'life is beautiful,' 'squirrels like nuts,' 'elephants never forget,' 'seeing is believing.' He states, that in English, *an indefinite article is used to refer to something in general* and that as 'a noun is a part of speech'. He then mentions that, in Arabic, the contrary is true, and *the definite article is used when referring to something in general* (Ryding K C, 2005:158). We present the generic rule with a few examples:

القراءة مفتاح العلم

الشاي يزرع في افريقيا

**Reading** is the key to **knowledge**

**Tea** is planted in Africa

**Without applying the generic rule**

*The reading is the key to **the** knowledge & **the** tea is planted in Africa.*

It may be observed that without the application of the generic rule the translation is incorrect and even sometimes absurd. The researcher, as an Arabic teacher at FET level, has found from experience that the Generic Application is invaluable. Students are made aware, that, as a common rule, a noun referred to in general is translated in the definite. Admittedly, this concept may not be true for all purposes of teaching the Arabic grammatical system. However for the purposes of Further Education Training (F.E.T) level, taking into deliberation that grammar is not expounded upon in great detail, it strongly necessitates its adoption in F.E.T grammar books. Consider the following examples:

المهم هو العمل

لا أحب المفاجعات

The important thing (is) **work**.

I dont like **surprises**

أحب التنظيم في العمل

المنافسة قوية

I like organization at **work**.

**Competition** is strong

The use of the definite and the indefinite in the Arabic language is a complex issue and no general rule can be adopted. A comprehensive knowledge of the Arabic grammar system is necessary to understand the concept of the definite and its application it in its correct context. The continuous practice of the language is the only solution to overcome the problem. Al-Hashmi states that the noun in terms of definiteness and indefiniteness is divided into two categories:

1. The undefined noun- which is regarded as the original word.
2. The defined noun - which is regarded a secondary or a derived word.

He further states that the articles of the defined noun are seven in number and are mentioned in order of importance (Al-hashmi A, 1936: 77).

- Pronouns
- Nouns
- Demonstrative Nouns
- Relative Nouns
- The Definite Article
- The Genitive Construction
- The Vocative Particle

#### **4.3. Problems related to word forms (morphology).**

Here the issue is mainly one of two things or a combination of both: the form and the concept it represents. Below is a list of the different categories of the forms and the nature of the problem.

- **Nouns**

The basic problem of the noun is the derivational forms. The English language has principally two forms, the singular and the plural. The addition of the Arabic dual compounds the difficulty. A practical way addressing the problem is to progress from the singular to the plural, and once proficiency in the usage of forms has been obtained, the dual may be introduced.

Another difficulty encountered is the declension of nouns. It is the second declension, to which belong most proper names, certain adjectival and broken plural forms, that has no nunation (سفراءُ-تعبانُ) presents a challenge for students. In this case, the

genitive declension is the same as the accusative declension in most proper names, indefinite nouns and adjectives. For example:

Ambassadors came.	جاء سفراءُ
I saw ambassadors.	رأيت سفراءَ
This is a present from Mecca s ambassadors	هذه هدية من سفراء مكة

David Cowan advises that:

*“By practice in reading well-edited books, the student will learn to which declension a proper name will belong.”* (Cowan D, 1958: 30)

Karin C Ryding admits that declension is one of the most challenging inflectional categories in Modern Standard Arabic. He cites the following reasons: it depends on the rules of syntax; in many ways it is outmoded; colloquial forms of Arabic do not have case markings, so the case is used only in written Arabic. The declension also presents a problem for native speakers. Ryding advises that the case system be learned through formal instruction (Ryding K C, 2005:166).

#### **4.4.The case ending rule**

For the purposes of teaching F.E.T learners, where learners are not expected to compose complicated sentences, the case ending rule is introduced. The rule states: In a verbal sentence (verb- subject- object sentence): the subject of the verb is nominative; the remainder of the sentence is always accusative except if the noun is an object of a preposition or the second noun of an iḌāfa construction (which will normally be nouns in

the genitive case). An example of the application of this rule is found in a passage from the *Nāši`ēn*

يذهب والدُ سليمان في الصباح الي العاصمة لبييع الفاكهة ثم يعودُ في المساء يحملُ لوازمَ البيتِ من  
سكر وخبز و لحمٍ ، و يحضر معه بعضَ الحلوي أيضاً .  
يحب سليمانُ المزرعة ، وفي أيام العطلة يذهبُ مع إخوته إليها ، ويقضون هناك يوماً سعيداً ،  
ينظفون المزرعة و يسقونها و يساعدون والدهم في العمل . و في العصر يعودون إلي البيتِ  
يحملون البرتقالَ و التفاحَ و العنبَ .

The first sentence in the first paragraph reads:

يذهب والد سليمان في الصباح الي العاصمة لبييع الفاكهة .

The noun and proper noun (والدُ سليمان) is the subject of the sentence, therefore, according to the rule the remainder of the sentence should be accusative, as both nouns that follow (الصباح - العاصمة) are objects but follow the prepositions, thus both nouns take the genitive form. The noun (الفاكهة) is neither the subject nor the object of the genitive, consequently it will take the accusative form following the rule that 'after the subject the remainder of the sentence is always accusative except if the noun is an object of a preposition or the second noun of an iDāfa construction'. (ثم) is a conjunction and therefore undeclinable. (يعود) is a present tense verb, not preceded by any governors and will remain nominative. (المساء) is the object of a preposition and likewise be genitive. The above rule is acceptable and applicable for most contextual passages at F.E.T level in current available text books. The

researcher has found that the application of the above rule to be simple so as to be comprehended by learners and practicably applicable.

#### ▪ **Pronouns.**

The problem of pronouns are the various forms and their concepts:

- The dual pronouns هما and انتما
- The distinction between the masculine-feminine in the second person singular pronouns أنتَ and أنتِ
- The distinction between the masculine-feminine in the second person plural pronouns أنتم and أنتما
- The central demonstrative pronouns أولئك and ذلك ، ذاك
- The dual relative pronouns ألتان and ألتان
- The masculine-feminine distinction in the singular and plural relative pronouns اللواتي – ألتين and ألتني - ألتني

#### **4.5. Verbs.**

Verbs in the Arabic Language differ from that in English and the basic issue here is the derivational forms.

- The comparison of qualities: - The basic issue here is the great variety of forms for qualities. The limited form for comparison does not present any problem.
- Gender: - The distinction between the forms and the grammatical masculine-feminine in all nouns and qualities.



- Number: - The basic problems here are the various forms and the concept of the dual.

**4.6. Problems related to syntactic structures.** The basic problem mentioned after each syntactic category:

- Nominal sentences (with no verb) as in

الطريق طويل

The road is long

العالم قرية صغيرة

The world is a small village

The basic problem here is that the nominal sentence is verb-less. The Arabic verb ‘to be’ (kāna) is not on the whole used in the present tense indicative: it is merely understood. It begins with a noun phrase or pronoun and is completed by a comment or predicate which may take a diverse class of words or phrases: nouns, phrases, predicate adjectives, pronouns, or prepositional phrases. Ryding refers to nominal sentences as equational sentences because the subject and predicate “equate” with each other and balance each other out in complete proposition or equation (Ryding K C, 2005: 59).

- Verbal sentences with the subject following the verb as in:

ذهب الأولاد إلى المدرسة

The boys went to school.

ذهب الولد إلى المدرسة

The boy went to school.

- Verbal sentences (with the receivers preceding the performers of actions) as in:

ضربني الولد

The boy hit me.

أعطتهم التمرينات

She gave them the exercises.

- **Modifiers (following the head word) as in**

شارع واسع

A wide street

رجل شجاع

A brave man

Similar to the learning of pronunciation, the learning of grammar is practical and not a theoretical activity. The objective in teaching the Arabic grammatical system is to establish in the students natural habits in the use of the linguistic instruments (function words and syllables, word forms and syntactic structures) of the language. The Arabic patterns are of special significance and are structurally different from their English counterparts. These should be emphasised in the practical drills given to students rather than in the explanations expounded upon by the teacher.

#### **4.7. The content of Exercise Materials**

In general, there are four types of grammar exercises that can be given to students in order to obtain the objective mentioned above:

- Completion exercises that aim at assisting students to recognise and produce the desired form presented in a given expression.
- Pattern practice exercises that aim at developing basic automatic/natural habits. These exercises include substitution exercises which aim at developing skills in the replacement of items in larger grammatical structures.
- Transformation exercises that aim at developing skills in varying grammatical structures (word forms or word order) from one pattern to another.

- Production exercises which aim at developing skills in producing diverse grammatical structures. (Raja T N, 1978: 89)

The following are some examples of grammar exercises with an indication about their type:

- **Function words.** Fill the blanks in the following sentences with their appropriate prepositions (completion):

1. ذهب المعلم ---- بيته ---- مكتبه ---- المدرسة.

2. مشيت ---- أبي ---- الدكان ليشتري ---- الملابس.

- **Pronouns.** Supply the right form of the pronoun in the following sentences (completion, production).

1. حضر اطلاب و (كان) (يحمل) (كتب).

2. قالت المعلمة (أن) تريد الذهاب إلى (بيت).

- **Plurals.** Change the following sentences into the plural form (transformation, production):

1. راجع الطالب درسه.

2. جلست البنات على كرسيها.

- **Duals.** Change the following sentences into the dual form (transformation, production):

1. يأكل الولد اكله.

2. أخذت كتابا من الفتاة الصغيرة.

- **The كان and إن groups.** Read the following sentences, starting with the كان and then repeat them starting with إن (pattern practice, production):

1. الطقس حار.

2. الولدان المجتهدان ناجحان.

- **The كاد group.** Complete the following sentences, using the words in parentheses (pattern practice, completion, production):

1 . كاد الولد (وصل)

2 . شرع المعلم (شرح)

- **Negatives.** Change the following sentences into the negative form using لم and لن (pattern practice, transformation):

1 . يدرس درسه في المساء.

2 . يجلسون إلي مائدة الطعام كل صباح.

- **Questions.** Change the following statements into questions, using the question askers in parentheses (pattern practice, transformation):

1 . وصل الكاتب إلي جنوب إفريقيا.(من)

2 . لعب الولد كرة القدم مع أخيه.(مع من)

- **Nominal sentences** (expanded). Repeat the following sentences using new words each time (pattern practice):

1 . الطقس حار.

2 . ---- بارد.

- **Verbal sentences.** Repeat the following sentences using a new word (pattern practice):

1 . أكل الود تفاحة في الصباح.

2 . -- -- برتقالة -- -- .

- **Phrases.** Complete the following sentences, beginning with the words in the parentheses (completion, production):

1 . جاء الخبر (من)---.

2 . ذهب جارنا إلي بيته (بعد).

- **Modification.** Use the correct form of the modifier in the parentheses and place it correctly in the sentence (pattern practice, production):

1 . (جميل) رأيت فتاة تلعب في الملعب.

2 . (طويل) شاهدت اللاعبين في المدرسة.

Al-Fawzaan states that it is possible to differentiate between three main types of exercises:

- a. Exercises developing automatic habits (pattern exercises).
- b. Exercises that require some knowledge of the content.
- c. Exercises that encourage free speaking.

He also says that while contemporary scholars are unanimously agreed upon; that any successful second language programme should embrace the three main types of exercises mentioned above, there is however a difference of opinion on the order to follow. The point of contention is, should we begin with exercises developing automatic habits and then proceed to exercises requiring some basic knowledge of the meaning of that content? i.e. The approaching of exercises cognitively, or, should we at this very primary stage, taking into consideration that the student still has a long way to go in the learning of the language, concentrate on developing automatic habits of pattern and practice, paying no or little consideration to meaning. The argument here is to enable the learner to learn correct pronunciation which is so vital in the early stages of the language and at the same time enabling him to grasp the basic grammatical structure of the language, with a view in mind, that the objective here is mastery of pattern and not meaning (Al Fawzaan A R, 2007:51-69).

Before discussing communication skills, there must be a distinction between controlled communication skills and spontaneous communication skills. The former being the first point of language learning, a learner makes conversation using a limited vocabulary and

sentence construction. Spontaneous communication skills means that the learner has acquired sufficient vocabulary to converse on a wide variety of topics. As far as encouraging spontaneous communication skills, it does not feature much in the early stage of language and must essentially follow pattern exercises and exercises requiring understanding of content. Hence its proper place would be in the intermediate and advanced stages of the language. Before endeavouring to examine the approach of the *Nāšī`ēn* let us examine the scope of pattern exercises and exercises requiring the understanding of meaning.

Automatic pattern exercises take the form of *listen carefully and repeat*. Here the teacher is the central figure and takes a role model position, any inability on his part will feature negatively on the learning process. A cassette player or recorded text is also used to complement the teacher. The main feature of this approach is that it relies largely on drill work either in small groups or repetition of the entire class. Below are some examples of **automatic pattern exercises**:

*Listen carefully and then repeat:-*

I am writing the weekly report	أنا أكتب التقرير الأسبوعي
We are writing the weekly report	نحن نكتب التقرير الأسبوعي
He is writing the weekly report	هو يكتب التقرير الأسبوعي
She is writing the weekly report	هي تكتب التقرير الأسبوعي
You (m) are writing the weekly report	أنت تكتب التقرير الأسبوعي

*Replace a suitable word in the sentence with the word in parenthesis:-*

Do you have water?	هل عندكم شاي؟ (ماء)
Do you have coffee?	هل عندكم ماء؟ (قهوة)
Do you have juice?	هل عندكم قهوة؟ (عصير)
Do you have milk?	هل عندكم عصير؟ (حليب)
Do you have ice cubes?	هل عندكم حليب؟ (ثلج)
Do you have soft drinks?	هل عندكم ثلج؟ (مرطبات)
Do you have tea?	هل عندكم مرطبات؟ (شاي)
	هل عندكم شاي؟

After examining the scope of pattern exercises, it is apparent that it promotes mastery of the phonetic aspect of the language. The learner is also by continuous repetition subconsciously introduced to the grammatical structure of the language. The negative aspect is that none or little focus is placed on the understanding of content.

### Exercise requiring understanding of content

*Read the passage carefully and the attempt to answer the questions that follow:-*

حضر السيد عصام من جنوب إفريقيا إلى المملكة العربية السعودية؛ درس اللغة العربية في جامعة الرياض؛ و بعد اربع سنوات عاد إلى بلده و هو الآن رجل كبير في الحكومة.

1- من أين السيد عصام؟

2- أين درس؟

3- هل حصل على شهادة جامعية؟

4- هل هو طالب الآن؟

In exercises that require understanding of meaning, as compared to pattern exercises, the learner has some control over the answer and is able to give more than one answer to the question. Likewise the learner will fail miserably to give a correct answer except by having a fair knowledge of the grammatical structure in addition to understanding the meaning of content.

After a perusal of the major Arabic programmes employed in South African schools, like the *Al-`Arabiyyah li al-Ḥayā* and *The Nāsi`ēn*, the researcher agrees with Al-Fawzaan that, majority of the popular and successfully implemented second language Arabic programmes employ the three main types of exercises mentioned above. Based on the approach of these programmes mentioned above, it is assumed that the point of contention between the various second language Arabic programmes is, whether we should start the beginner with pattern exercises or with exercises requiring understanding of meaning?

Second language programmes like, *Al-`Arabiyyah li al-Ḥayā* employ automatic pattern exercises immediately after the passages or dialogues as the first point of exposure. This is followed by exercises requiring understanding of the meaning of content. Hence, it is inferred that the *Al-`Arabiyyah li al-Ḥayā* follow the view, that, the beginner in Arabic should be inundated with pattern exercises and only when he has gained mastery in pattern exercises; then only should exercises that require understanding of meaning be introduced.

The *Nāsi`ēn* employs the approach which has exercises of meaning introduced to the beginner before exercises of pattern. This approach implies that when a student is exposed to exercises of pattern he is the able to learn pattern with meaning. Arabic grammatical



structure is likewise learnt with meaning. This is fundamentally the core difference between the two approaches. The researchers view is that the approach of exposing the beginner to exercises requiring understanding of content and then exercises of pattern with cognition is the correct view. Therefore, the investigation leads to the conclusion that the *Nāṣi`ēn*, having employed the approach of presenting exercises requiring understanding of content immediately after its passages and then pattern exercises with cognition, is the approach that would lead to the best results. This approach is congruent with the functional approach of language, that we view language as a resource for making meaning (Gerot L and Wignell P, 1994:6). This further strengthens the view that that the *Nāṣi`ēn* essentially employs the functional approach.

#### **4.8. Conclusion**

The object of grammatical study is not the acquisition of rules but a practical command of the language itself. Following this, examples should not be intended solely to illustrate rules but rather be pragmatically motivated to understanding the language. Therefore grammar is a practical activity not a theoretical one. Raja says that:

*“The object in teaching the Arabic grammatical system is to establish in students the automatic habits in the use of the linguistic instruments (function words and syllables, word forms, and syntactic structures) of the language. Of special significance are the Arabic patterns that are structurally different from their English counterparts. These should be emphasised in the practical drills given to students rather than in explanations expounded by the teacher.”*

(Raja T N, 1978:88)

It is suggested that in the first stage of learning the Arabic grammatical system, the mechanical method be employed, where a huge amount of grammatical information is conveyed, not through rules but indirectly through examples. This ensures that when the learner does eventually learn the rule theoretically, he would have had prior practical exposure to it. From the above observation the following is deduced:

- A Grammatical Rule without an example has no practical use.
- The example can always be logically related to the rule it illustrates.

It is also suggested that when teaching grammar, examples should never be translated; the learner is more often than not tempted to rely on the translation instead of a conscientious analysis of the example. This approach would ensure that the learner studies the example methodologically, prompting him to make comparisons of previous knowledge.

Following the functional approach, paradigms in the elementary stages should never be presented to the learner in table form, except after each inflection has been exhausted with examples in a contextual form. Tabulations should be regarded as a summing up of what has already been learnt indirectly.

Lastly grammatical descriptions should be presented in language that is understandable to learners, linguists, as well as interested laypeople. Descriptions must be useful, readable, and readily understandable. Arabic newspapers and magazines could be used as a main resource for topics and examples of current everyday Arabic writing practice.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Suggestions and recommendations**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The aim of the literature study was to analyse the most important language components(Chapter Two) and diverse methodologies (Chapter Three) used for teaching a second language, and to make a comparison on current methodologies used in language textbooks with special reference to the *Nāšī`ēn*. The investigation was aimed at determining the methodology implemented in the *Nāšī`ēn* (Chapter Three) and whether it was best suited to be used in South African schools.

There appears to be a host of theories offering insights into different aspects of language methodologies. No single approach lends itself to be called an ideal approach. Awareness of these diverse approaches, together with experience will permit the teacher to select an eclectic approach with the benefit of elasticity enabling him to choose the best suited technique for any given circumstances.

#### **5.2.1. Grammar - translation method**

There is no doubt that the grammar – translation method holds a central position in South African academic institutions. It emphasises form and structure of the language instead of meaning, as a result it fails to achieve communicative competence (c.f. 3.3. The object of study). The dwindling numbers of learners selecting Arabic can be attributed to the employment of this method (c.f. 4.1. Introduction). In search of a suitable alternative language educators experimented with the inductive approach to teaching grammar. This

approach also created numerous problems as it necessitated native teachers of the language. The seventies saw a huge amount of interest in teaching methodologies and a need to move away from the grammar - translation method, as well as, the direct method. It culminated in the communicative or functional method, which forms the basis of recent Arabic textbooks and syllabi resulting in a more holistic approach to language acquisition (c.f. 1.4. Factors that prompted the research).

### **5.2.2. The eclectic approach**

The eclectic approach would enable the teacher to have access to an assortment of theories. Arabic textbooks are generally based on the classical or direct approach. The eclectic approach would enable the teacher to merge the two approaches to achieve communicative, comprehension and writing competence without ignoring the importance of translation. This ensures that lessons can be prepared to be pragmatically motivated and not theoretically motivated (c.f. 3.5.4 Conclusion; *It takes a pragmatic view of the nature of language*).

### **5.3 Is the *Nāšī`ēn* ideally suited to be implemented in South African schools?**

The *Nāšī`ēn* being essentially based on the functional cognitive methodology would be an adequate starting point, and an important reference book to direct the teaching process to achieve language competence. It serves the purpose of rote learning having an element of meaningfulness as in Arabic expressions; Repetition as employed by the *Nāšī`ēn* is an important tool to build confidence and will promote successful communicative skills. Passages in the *Nāšī`ēn* are perfect for role playing situations i.e. the dialogue component. In the elementary level, role playing and dialogue situations could begin in a structured

way but within a consequential social context. This would later expand in the intermediate level in a spontaneous way with free expression, promoting individual differences and aptitude (c.f. 3.5.4. Conclusion; *It attaches primary importance to functional relations at different levels in the organization of grammar*).

This research verifies that the *Nāšī`ēn* is invaluable as a reference book for the teacher and a vital textbook for the student. The *Nāšī`ēn* has been primarily formulated to cater for second language students living within an Arabic culture. Consequentially numerous passages in the *Nāšī`ēn* have little or no contextual relevance to the South African outlook (cf 1.4 factors that prompted the research). Based on this there is a dire call to re edit its passages with the aim of attaining contextualization. This would be a simpler option than formulating an entire new textbook, thereby opening the door for further investigation and promoting the spirit of research.

#### **5.4. Principles of Grammar teaching and suggestions.**

##### ***Basic principles of grammar teaching:***

- Educators and learners must give attention to the use of grammatical features rather than deliberate about them.
- In focussing on the use of grammatical characteristics, educators and learners must become mindful that verbal mastery is the basis of language learning.
- Grammar teaching must be an internal part of each lesson, not a disconnected subject to be taught independently and autonomously.
- The four learning skills must be treated as two groups: group one (listening and speaking) and group two (reading and writing).

- The thematic approach must be followed. All aspects of language should follow a pre selected theme.
- The use of dictionaries must not be discounted nor must language become synonymous to learning words only.
- Minute distinctions of sound cannot be disregarded especially in Arabic where distinctions of sound would mean distinction of meaning.

**5.4.1. Based on the above we suggest the following *Implications*:**

- Since grammar is part of language and cannot be detached from it, grammar must be an integral part of every lesson, though it may be more emphasised in certain lessons than in others.
- Grammar must be presented functionally; the *pattern* followed in the *Nāṣi`ēn* is ideally suited as a basis of presenting grammar functionally (c.f. 3.5.4. Conclusion).
- Oral mastery is fundamental in gaining competence of a foreign language, it follows that in teaching grammar functionally; oral mastery (listening and speaking) must precede the other two skills i.e. reading and writing. Exercises must be completed orally in class. Oral work can be done individually, in small groups, or by choral responses of the entire class.(c.f. 4.7 The objective in teaching the Arabic Grammatical System)
- Listening and speaking will form an integral part of the elementary level, while reading and writing being the focus of the advanced level with a combination of all four skills encompassing the intermediate level. Implying that in the initial stages 'group one' will be given utmost priority comprising of not less than 75% of the syllabus. In the advanced level, 'group two' will receive primary importance

compromising a minimum of 75% of the syllabus. In the intermediate juncture the teacher will utilise discretion as per progress with the general rule of even distribution.

- Functionally, language must in spirit be dealt with as one subject, not as different parts of the same subject. Selection of topics must fundamentally be thematic and contextually in line with the general theme. The teacher must select items or lessons in a particular book that coincides with the selected theme in the development of the course. Grammar books have a certain order. The teacher need not follow this order. The teacher must select the part or parts that will contribute to speeding up first communicative and then writing skills.
- In the elementary stage written grammar exercises may be given sparingly, which should be done at home for the most part. The principle to follow here is to ask students to write the exercises that they have first mastered on the oral level.

#### **The role of dictionary use**

- When attempting unseen comprehension passages, for all intents and purposes learners must be encouraged to use dictionaries and vocabulary lists. A combination of inferring from the context and dictionary use strategies will achieve the greatest vocabulary acquisition (c.f. 2.4 The role of dictionary in vocabulary acquisition). This would ensure that guessing from content is limited and controlled by the educator as per his approach.

#### **Sounds**

- A native speaker of English, due to the phonological habits he has developed, would encounter a number of pronunciation problems. In the process of learning standard Arabic, pronunciation must be part of any Arabic programme. Change in

pronunciation, variation of length, intonation; pitch levels organic and acoustic senses make an independent contribution to the meaning of utterances and shaping meaning drastically and dramatically. This would be especially true when the L2 is Arabic (c.f. 2.5 Sounds).



## Chapter Six

### Conclusions

#### 6.1 Educational implications

Every person is endowed by nature with certain capacities which enables him, *without the use of his studial capacity, conscious reflection or reasoning*, to assimilate and use the spoken form of language, i.e. to understand what is said and to express what we wish to say by speaking. This ability is achieved by deliberately training ourselves to use our spontaneous and inherent powers of assimilation. Consequently assimilation can be achieved by simple effort and concentration. For this reason, educators, in the elementary level, who advise to learn by medium of eyes, i.e. basing knowledge on spelling and reading, inhibit the ears from fulfilling their natural function (c.f. 3.4.3. Innateness and language acquisition).

Intonation is of great importance and forms an integral part of language study. In many languages and especially the Arabic language speech with incorrect tones is sometimes half intelligible and occasionally completely unintelligible. If intonation is not taught in the early stages then correct intonation will be difficult to acquire at a later stage. Language is a habit forming process and the habit of speaking with wrong tones is a bad habit.

The sentence and not the word is the unit of language. If mastery of a set number of working sentences is obtained, then, by the process of disintegration and substitution we can create many others. Hence we can recognize them and use them in rapid speech.

Enriching one's vocabulary should be left to a later stage especially in the study of most derivatives and compounds (c.f. 3.4.2. Autonomy and functional explanation).

Because irregular forms are used as often as regular ones; in the interest of gradation all necessary irregular forms should be included in the early stages. The teacher is advised to teach irregular forms contextually rather than formulating rules with numerous exceptions. Selection of irregular forms should be confined to Modern Standard Arabic instead of the classical form.

In learning the Arabic language we should follow the natural order in which we learnt our own language; that is, we should begin by learning the spoken language then proceeding to the literary language. Stated simply, language is functional; consequently the study of language form, alone, cannot fully explain systematic language use. Functionally language should be arranged systematically to make meaning through our choices and use of words, thereby making sense of our meanings (c.f. 3.2. Language as communication).

## **6.2. Future Research Implications**

For practical reasons the investigation was conducted by comparing the formal and functional approach. A replication of the investigation could be done including the diverse theories of language acquisition. An empirical investigation could be carried out to ascertain which methodology is most commonly used by Arabic language teachers.

Now that this study has highlighted the necessity of rewriting or re-editing the *Naši'en* to contextualize it, thereby making it more conducive to South African learners; a study could

be carried out to ascertain to what extent this change is necessary. Will it or will it not alter the identity of the *Nāšī`ēn* as a Saudi Arabian compilation?

Since very modest research has been conducted in the area of teaching Arabic in South African schools and especially on the methodology best suited to teach the Arabic language, this study could create the impetus *for further scientific study in this field. This research will effectively contribute to a better understanding of the functional theory of language and its affinity to the successful application of the Nāšī`ēn syllabus.*

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## Acknowledgements

My heartfelt thanks and gratitude goes out to the following People without whom this dissertation would not be possible; I am greatly indebted to my promoter, Dr I E Jaffer, for his constant encouragement, support, expert advice, sincere guidance and never ending patience. I feel greatly indebted to his tutorship and for patiently guiding me through the research.

I would also like express my deep appreciation to Professor Y Dadoo for facilitating my prompt registration and for his valuable guidance in selecting the topic.

Much gratitude is owed to my colleagues who advised me throughout my research, to Miss Rashida Seckam for proof reading and editing, Mr I Amod for his insight and useful suggestions, Mr M Ataya for proof reading the Arabic text and for his valuable contribution; invariably when I had any doubts about any aspect of Arabic structure or the correct usage of grammar I consulted with him.

To my family for patiently enduring the long hours I spent away from them and for their never ending support and encouragement, especially to my wife, Safina Dawood, who through her caring support and typing skills made it possible for me to finish this project.

February 2008

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