TEACHING OF ARABIC TO LEARNERS IN MUSLIM PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND BOTSWANA

by

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I declare that: "TEACHING OF ARABIC IN MUSLIM PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND BOTSWANA is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references."

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Munira Ahmed Mall

15 July 2001
Date

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FOR:

my husband, my best friend, who tirelessly supported and motivated me,

my son, who patiently endured my many hours of study and accepted my preoccupation with the research, ever so obligingly,

and my parents, who instilled in me the confidence to continually strive and encouraged me to pursue my studies.

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"Say: Surely my prayer, all my acts of worship, my living and my dying are all for the Almighty alone, the Lord of the whole universe."

(Al-Qur'an 6:162)

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Degree: Master of Education
Subject: Didactics
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SUMMARY

Many learners of Arabic in Southern Africa have been unable to achieve communicative competence. An investigation into a possible link between teaching methodology and Arabic acquisition was undertaken.

In the literature study, theories of language acquisition and related teaching methodologies and approaches were scrutinized. A questionnaire was developed to determine current practices in the teaching of Arabic.

The results of the empirical investigation indicated that grammar-translation is the dominant teaching method. Majority of the learners are taught in a medium other than Arabic, have inadequate exposure to Arabic native speakers, are given very little opportunity to communicate in the language and spend the largest proportion of time translating to and from Arabic.

The educational implications of the findings are discussed, and guidelines regarding methods of improving the acquisition of all four skills in Arabic are provided, both for teachers at schools and at tertiary academic institutions.

KEY WORDS:
Arabic, Muslim School, second language acquisition, foreign language acquisition, language teaching methods, four language skills, speaking Arabic, communicative competence.

DIE ONDERRIG VAN ARABIES AAN LEERDERS IN MUSLIM PRIVATE SKOLE IN SUID-AFRIKA EN BOTSWANA

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Vak: Didaktiek
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OPSOMMING

Meeste leerders van Arabies in Suidelike Afrika bereik nie kommunikatiewe bevoegdheid in Arabies nie. 'n Ondersoek na 'n moontlike verband tussen die onderrigmetodes wat tans gebruik word en die verwerwing van Arabies is in hierdie studie onderneem.

In die literatuuroorsig is 'n aantal taalverwerwingsteorieë en verbandhoudende onderrigmetodologieë ondersoek. 'n Vraelys is ontwikkel om huidige praktyke met betrekking tot die onderrig van Arabies te bepaal.

Die resultate van die empiriese ondersoek het aangedui dat die grammatika-vertaalmetode die dominante onderrigmetode is. Die meerderheid leerders word nie deur middel van Arabies onderrig nie, word nie voldoende aan Arabiese moedertaalsprekers blootgestel nie, het min of geen geleentheid om in Arabies te kommunikeer nie en bestee die meeste van hul tyd aan die vertaling uit en na Arabies.

Die opvoedkundige implikasies van die bevindinge is bespreek en voorstelle vir die verbetering van onderrigmetodes in Arabies is gemaak vir sowel onderwysers by skole en vir tersiêre onderwysinstellings.

Sleutelbegrippe:
Arabies, Muslim skole, tweedetaalverwerwing, vreemdetaalverwerwing, taalonderrigmetodes, taalvaardighede, kommunikatiewe bevoegdheid.

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Chapter One

Problem formulation and programme of the research

1.1. Introduction

Language is important for all human beings as it is the best instrument for communication. It allows us to understand each others thoughts, express our convictions and ideas, and preserve our values and experiences. In short, it is pivotal to life and learning. Language is culture-bound, as members of the same culture use the same language symbols for communication (Raja 1984:1). We can, however, interact and communicate across cultures if we learn how to use language structures and symbols of other languages.

Whilst a child's first language is acquired in a comfortable, relaxed, familiar atmosphere, encouraged by familiar others; the scenario of learning a second language is markedly 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.

Learning a foreign language can be even more complicated, as it is usually far removed from the learner's immediate environment and society. It is rarely spoken by others in the vicinity, so it is seldom heard by the learner (unlike a second language). Thus, it is taught in a very formal manner, and in unnatural circumstances which can contribute to a tense atmosphere and make it extremely difficult for the learner to acquire the language.

Second and foreign language teaching is a common phenomenon and although much research has been conducted in this field, many areas still require attention. In this dissertation one such area, namely that of acquiring Arabic as a second or foreign language will be investigated.

1.2 Background to the study

Arabic is one of the most spoken languages in the world. It is the fifth ranking language after Chinese, English, Hindi-Urdu and Spanish-Portuguese and it has been one of the official languages of the United Nations since 1973 (Dalby 2000:1). In Africa, the total number of Arabic speakers accounts for one-third of Africa's inhabitants, while politically, Arabic speaking countries number one fifth of the total number of states in Africa. Also, Arabic is widely used, and has influenced a number of African languages (Jadwat 1998:72). Approximately forty to fifty percent of the words in both Swahili and Hausa are of Arabic origin, according to Majid (1987:1).

Arabic is the official language of more than 200 million people and it is the language of religious practice for more than one billion Muslims (Mohammed 1997:xiii). It is also the official second language of countries like Iran, Pakistan and the Philippines (Jadwat 1998:73). Arabic has become an international language primarily because of the universal nature of Islam. It has successfully retained its classical and standard nature as embodied in the Qur'an, chiefly because of the nature of the language and the sustained attempts made by Muslims and Arabic grammarians to prevent it from being corrupted by different dialects and the effects of colonization.

As Arabic is inextricably linked to Islam, it has been taught in South Africa since the advent of the first Muslims in 1658 (Mohamed 1997:xiii). The impetus for learning the language took on new dimensions in South Africa, particularly since the abolishment of apartheid in 1994. People began to realise that Arabic is an essential tool towards establishing international links with Africa and the Middle East in particular (Mohamed 1997:xiii).

People in Botswana have also acknowledged this as a result of international links established with North African countries like Libya. Although Muslims first arrived in Botswana in 1872, the interest in Arabic developed much later. No serious attempts were made to teach the language formally, until 1979.

1.2.1 Historical development of Arabic in Muslim educational institutions in South Africa and Botswana

Muslims are only approximately 1.4% of the South African population and form 0.4% of the population in Botswana (Bin Mohd Noor 2000:2). As a result of constant striving to maintain their Islamic heritage, Muslims developed institutions which provided Islamic instruction.

In South Africa, religious schools, which were often attached to mosques were established. In 1793 the first organised madrassah (religious school) was established by Tuan Guru in Dorp Street, Cape Town (Mohamed 1997:2). Primarily, these madaaris (pl. madrassah) provided elementary Islamic education with no focus on the teaching of Arabic (Haron 1997:28).

As the need arose, Muslims began establishing independent bodies that developed madaaris in the various provinces of South Africa, such as *Lenasia Muslim Association* (LMA) in Johannesburg (1962), *Al-Jami'a Co-ordinating Council of Madaris* in Cape Town (1983), and *Islamic Educational Organisation of South Africa* (IEOSA) in Durban (1984) (Haron 1995:155). Most of these organisations made significant attempts to teach Arabic as a language. A number of techniques and texts were developed to this end, amongst them were the LMA's *Language of Islam*, which was the first in a series of texts, and IEOSA's *Ta'leemul Qira-ah wal-Kitabah* (The teaching of Reading and Writing), which was based on the 'look-say' method of language introduction. Numerous educare centres, which catered for pre-school children, were also established. Such institutions introduced Muslim children to the Arabic alphabet and numerals (Mohamed 1997:30).

In Botswana, the Muslim community built the *Crescent School* (1962), in Lobatse, at which they subsequently established the first madrassah in 1964. However, the first formal attempt to teach Arabic was only made in 1979 at *Madrassah Quwatul Islam*, established under the auspices of the *Islamic Council of Botswana*, in Gaborone. This establishment operated independently only for a period of about two years. When it amalgamated with *Madrassah Himayatul Islam* in 1981, Arabic ceased to be taught as a language, until it was re-introduced in 1992.

1.2.2 Arabic in schools

In South Africa, the prospects for Arabic changed tremendously in the seventies, chiefly because of organisations such as *The Arabic Study Circle* (established 1950 in Durban), which strove for the implementation of Arabic in state schools under the *Department of Indian Affairs*. In 1975 Arabic was offered for the first time as a school subject in Kwa Zulu Natal and Gauteng. This was a milestone for the Muslim community as it was an indication that the government had finally recognised them.

Arabic was taught in South African state schools, first from standard six (1975), and later from standard two progressively. The language was introduced together with other 'Indian languages' (like Gujerati, Tamil, Urdu and Hindi), by the *House of Delegates*. Although some Muslims chose Urdu and Gujerati as it was their mother-tongue, most felt that it was unnecessary for their children to learn an 'Indian' language. They gave preference, primarily for religious reasons, to the learning of Arabic. While Arabic was offered in government schools as a matriculation subject it was not offered on the higher grade until 1992 (Mohamed 1997:34-35).

Arabic was first recognised as a school subject in the Cape in the early sixties at the Cape Muslim Mission Schools, primarily due to the efforts of Dr. Abdullah Abdurahman whose vision was to combine secular and Islamic education under one roof (Mohamed 1997:4). However, the focus even then was on teaching Qur'anic recitation, rather than Arabic as a language of communication. It was formally introduced as a language only in 1992 in the Cape, at *Spine Road Secondary School*. This school had requested permission to teach Arabic once in 1985, and twice in 1987 (February and May), but was refused by the *Department of Education and Culture* at each request (Mohamed 1997:108). The first two primary schools to offer Arabic in the Cape were *Mohammadiya* and *Habibiya* (Mohamed 1997:105). In all these schools Arabic was introduced as a foreign language.

With the advent of the first Muslim Private School, *Islamia College*, (previously known as *Habibya Girls' College*) in Cape Town, established in 1983, Arabic became an important area of curriculum development and planning, as it is a compulsory subject for all learners from grade one (Adam 1993:12). To date there are

sixty-five Muslim private schools in South Africa, Botswana and Zambia, most of which are under the auspices of the *Association of Muslim Schools* (AMS) established in 1989.

The main purpose for the burgeoning of Muslim schools was to create a truly Islamic system embracing an integrated system of education which would produce a new generation of young men and women who will not lose touch with their own tradition, and who will study literature and fine arts, social sciences and natural sciences from the Islamic point of view (Adam 1993:10). These schools have thus incorporated the curricula of the secular school and that of the religious school within an Islamic ethos.

1.2.3 Arabic in universities

The first university to introduce Arabic was the *University of Pretoria* (UP) in 1950 followed by *University of South Africa* (UNISA) in 1963 under Professor Adrianus van Selms. The *University of Durban-Westville* (UDW) introduced it in the early 1960s and the *University of Western Cape* (UWC) in 1975. All of these courses were initially offered according to the 'grammar-based' approach. Some institutions revised the approach and a gradual movement towards a communicative and conversational approach began (Mohamed 1997:39).

1.3 Awareness of the problem

Arabic was, and still is, a foreign language for most learners, for although most of them hear the language in the form of prayer and recitation, from birth, few can communicate in it. Many learners are able to 'read' from the text of the Qur'an (which is in Arabic) fluently, but with no understanding or comprehension (Allen in Mohamed 1997:9).

In Islam it is essential for Muslims to recite the Qur'an (albeit without understanding) for spiritual upliftment and blessings. Thus most institutions teach learners to 'read' Arabic in a parrot-like manner, primarily for religious reasons. While learners may be able to recite the Qur'an fluently, they are unable to communicate

effectively in Arabic or even understand what they hear (Majid 1987:3). Learners merely speak out words which are printed, with no understanding, interpretation or perception of what is being read. This skill, primarily acquired for the purpose of reciting the Qur'an is then transferred to the study of the language, in general. According to Allen, while the texts used in Arabic language teaching have been successful in developing recitation skills they do not constitute genuine reading ability, as they do not develop comprehension (Mohamed 1997:9). This phenomenon is called 'barking at print'. When learners bark at print, they read aloud and may read very fluently, but they do not understand the meaning of the written message (Wessels & Van den Berg 1998:201).

The goal of teaching a second or a foreign language has been defined as enabling "the learner to behave in such a way that he/she can participate to some degree and for certain purposes as a member of a community other than his/her own" (Corder 1993:27). To achieve this then, the learner should acquire receptive as well as productive skills in language use. Receptive skills include the ability to understand and read the language, whilst productive skills include the ability to speak and write in the language (Byrne 1976:8-9). If any of these skills are not acquired, then full literacy of the second or foreign language has not been achieved.

The case for Arabic is peculiar because, though the current focus of teaching Arabic is on the acquisition of receptive skills (reading and understanding), even these skills are not being acquired effectively. Learners are merely 'barking at print'. This phenomenon is disconcerting when one considers that Muslim children hear Arabic from birth. They are taught to perform ritualistic prayer in it, and are expected to recite from the Qur'an fluently, yet most fail to understand it, or communicate in it.

1.4 Factors that prompted the research

As a language teacher in a Muslim school, the researcher is intrigued by the lack of communicative competence in Arabic and would like to establish the reasons for this phenomenon.

Many individuals, who have successfully acquired the four language skills in Arabic, have not learned it

through the schooling system. Some of these individuals have acquired Arabic in foreign countries whilst others have learned it through Muslim seminaries in South Africa (see also Mohamed 1997:144). This suggests that the teaching methodology which is used in schools may be the reason for this dilemma.

Many teachers of Arabic are aware of the existing problem, and numerous discussions at teachers' 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. One such example is that of a workshop that was held in Kwa-Zulu-Natal in 1984 where a paper was presented on, *Teaching Arabic - Thematic Approach*, in which it was stated, "...since the inception of Arabic in Secondary Schools, inadequate methods of teaching the language have resulted in learners dropping the subject at the Senior Secondary Phase, ... with this in mind we would like to arouse greater interest, love and appreciation for the language by introducing the thematic approach" (Ebrahim 1984:1).

Yet another attempt aimed at improving Arabic teaching methodology was made during an orientation course held for Arabic teachers at *Stanger Madressa* School in Kwa-Zulu-Natal in 1985. It was stated that "(Since) Arabic is a living language - a language of political, social, cultural and scientific expression - parroting of syntax and laws of grammar are no more useful, maximum benefits may be derived through the use of audio-visual and other scientific teaching aids" (Kathrada 1985:1). In a paper read by Ebrahim (1986:3), it was suggested that the teaching approach could be a problem:

> Students who have received several years of formal Arabic teaching, frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language, and to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or written mode. Since it seems that the problem lies in the approach of teaching Arabic, what is needed is a shift in the focus of attention from the grammatical to the communicative properties of the language (Ebrahim 1986:2-3).

The *Association of Muslim Schools (AMS)* has also conducted seminars for the same purpose. One such example is a *Programme for the Development of Arabic Syllabus and Textbooks* which was co-ordinated by Irshad Amod in March 1996 at the following affiliated schools: *Nurul Islam* - Lenasia; *Johannesburg*

Muslim School - Johannesburg; *Pretoria Muslim School* - Laudium.

Despite these and numerous other discussions the teaching methods haven't changed significantly and the problem of not achieving communicative competence in Arabic still remains unresolved. Very little scientific research has been conducted in this area. Thus, with a study like this one, the researcher hopes that the problem areas may be clearly and scientifically highlighted and a starting point for change may be provided.

1.5 Formal statement of the problem

There appears to be general agreement that there are problems with the teaching and learning of Arabic as a second or foreign language. Despite the fact that most learners hear Arabic in the form of prayer and recitation from birth, and are formally taught Arabic from the first grade, they fail to achieve communicative competence in the language. One area of concern seems to centre around the teaching methodology used in schools. The following four questions can therefore be considered as the formal statement of the problem:

1. How does language acquisition occur, especially second and foreign language acquisition?

2. Which approaches and methodologies are the most appropriate for teaching a second and foreign language?

3. How is Arabic taught in private Muslim schools in South Africa and Botswana?

4. How do teachers' perceptions of the aims of teaching Arabic, their own fluency in the language and their beliefs about second and foreign language teaching impact on their teaching practice?

1.6 Aim of the research

The aim of this research is to determine why learners in private Muslim schools in South Africa and Botswana fail to achieve communicative competence in Arabic. The research consists of two sections, a literature study and an empirical section.

The aim of the literature study is twofold: firstly, to analyse theories of language acquisition and secondly to

investigate teaching methodologies used to teach second and foreign languages.

The aim of the empirical investigation is to examine how Arabic is being taught at Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana. It attempts to determine what teachers regard as the aims and objectives of teaching Arabic, and if the teaching methodology currently used could be a contributing factor to learners' communicative incompetence in Arabic.

1.7 Demarcation of the study

Since the researcher has been an Arabic teacher in South Africa and Botswana, it was decided to use these two countries for this study. Due to their geographical location, schools in these countries would be more easily accessible than those elsewhere.

The decision to focus on Muslim private schools was made because of the increasing number of such schools, and because they provide an attractive alternative for the Muslim learner. Further, the researcher, being involved in a Muslim private school, feels intuitively attracted to the problems faced by them. Also, Arabic is an essential part of the curriculum in most Muslim private schools, whilst this is not so in state schools.

1.8 Plan of the study

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

- **Chapter 2**

This chapter will be devoted to a literature study on the theories of first, second and foreign language learning and acquisition and pertinent issues will be discussed.

- **Chapter 3**

A literature study and discussion of the methodology used in second and foreign language teaching will be presented. Specific reference to the teaching of Arabic will be made.

- **Chapter 4**

This chapter will be concerned with the empirical investigation. This includes the formulation of hypotheses, a discussion of the population, and a description of the measuring instruments used in the investigation. The general procedure followed in the empirical investigation will also be discussed.

- **Chapter 5**

The results of the empirical investigation will be presented in this chapter.

- **Chapter 6**

In this final chapter the educational implications of the research will be considered and recommendations, based on the findings will be made. It will synthesise and integrate all the information collected.

Chapter Two

Theories of language acquisition

2.1 Introduction

The multilingual and multicultural nature of South Africa and Botswana with their diverse populations should serve them well in the decades ahead. However, a variety of languages spoken in a country invariably brings along a variety of second language issues and problems. Teaching programmes have to cater for these languages and this places a huge responsibility and an immense burden on such programmes. Since teaching methods are based on the practical application of theories, it is very important to have a good understanding of the theories of language acquisition. Theories provide a framework of general principles and suggest which factors, or combination of factors, contribute to the success or failure of the second or foreign language learner. To ensure that language teaching programmes are effective, an in-depth study of theories on language acquisition and teaching methodologies related to them needs to be conducted.

There appear to be many theories of language acquisition, some explanatory and others descriptive, rather than a single comprehensive theory. The various theories offer insights into different aspects of language acquisition. In this chapter the researcher will, after completing an intensive study of available literature, present an overview on language acquisition and learning. The first section will consist of a discussion on the differences between first, second and third language and consider whether there is a distinction between learning and acquiring a language. The second section will focus on various theories of language acquisition/learning.

2.2 Differences between first, second and foreign language

2.2.1 First language (L1)

First language (L1) is a person's native language and is often referred to as the *mother tongue*. L1 refers to the very first language that someone learns to use from birth, usually from parents, and it is the preferred language of that person (Robinson 1996:765). Baker (1995:233) states that the term 'first language' is used in different, overlapping ways, and can mean either the first language learned, the stronger language, the mother tongue, or the language most used. He further points out that the term 'mother tongue' is often used ambiguously. It could mean the language learned from the mother, the L1 learned (irrespective of 'from whom'), the stronger language at any time of life, the 'mother tongue' of the area or country or the language most used by the person (Baker 1995:237).

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:2) explain that terms such as 'mother tongue' and 'first language' could be problematic because in some societies children learn a 'father tongue'. If children are adopted at a very young age, they may forget their L1 completely, and the adopted language will become their L1. However Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:2) prefer to use 'first language' to refer to that language that a child learns first and which is maintained throughout his or her life. McLaughlin (1984:10), also defines languages according to chronological acquisition. He states that the L1 is that language which is chronologically first, even though it may belong to a brief stage of the child's development and may subsequently be forgotten and never used. He acknowledges that this definition may not be ideal since it can happen that the language that is learned second, hence the *second language (L2)*, could become the individual's main language, or only language of daily conversation. McLaughlin (1977:438) prefers to make the distinction between L1 and L2 on the basis of chronology rather than on the basis of facility in a language, since facility may change in the course of time or in differing circumstances. If McLaughlin's definition is used when distinguishing between L1 and L2, then

one must question how does one make distinction between L1 and L2 when a child attains equal proficiency in two languages simultaneously? This may happen in cases where a child's mother and father speak two different languages, or when the child's minder speaks a language different from the parents. According to McLaughlin (1977:438) in such cases distinction between the languages is arbitrary, but the mother's language is conventionally seen as the child's L1.

2.2.2 Second language (L2)

Second language (L2) is a language that a person in a multilingual community acquires from others (Robinson 1996:765). Often the person is able to understand and speak fluently in the language. Mitchell and Myles (1998:1) define L2 learning to include the learning of any language to any level, provided only that the learning of the L2 takes place sometime later than the acquisition of the L1. Baker (1995:236) explains that the term is used in different, overlapping ways, and can mean the second language learned (chronologically), the weaker language, a language that is not the mother tongue or the less used language. According to him the term is sometimes used to cover third and further languages (Baker 1995:237).

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:4) suggest that although any language learned after the L1 can be seen as an L2, social circumstances can influence the learning of subsequent languages to the extent that the learner will become almost fully bilingual whether the L2 was learned right after the first, or as a third or fourth language. In such a case then, the classification of the language depends firstly, on the reason for acquisition and secondly, on the social status of the language (Kilfoil & Van Der Walt 1997:4). According to them a language may be regarded as an L2 when it is used as a medium of instruction, or when it is the common language amongst speakers of diverse languages, as is the case with English in both South Africa and Botswana.

In both countries English is regarded as the *lingua franca* (common language). Hence its status in the

community elevates it to an L2. This occurs despite practical examples that question whether it is in fact the learner's L2. In numerous instances in Botswana, a Setswana speaking child may have learned English after Khalanga, but is taught through the medium of English (which is in fact the learner's third language). Numerous examples are mentioned by Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:5) in this regard; among them: Setswana or Zulu may be the L2 of an Afrikaans speaking child because they are more exposed to these languages in their community, yet they are taught English (which is in fact the learner's third language) as their L2. Hence the classification L2 is based on the status of the language in the community and not on the question whether it is the learner's L2.

Through cross cultural influences and the interweaving of communities, people acquire second and third languages, as is evident in South Africa and Botswana. This process can take place in a natural setting or through formal classroom instruction, either in childhood or during adulthood. In this regard Ellis (1984:1) refers to the variety of L2 development 'acquisitional types' which exist because of a variety of learning contexts. Ellis (1984:1) quotes Wode's (1980a) list of four 'acquisitional types' which relate to second language development:

1.   Bilingualism or trilingualism, i.e. the concurrent acquisition of two or more languages.

2.   Naturalistic L2 acquisition, i.e. the non-simultaneous acquisition of an L2 without any formal instruction.

3.   Foreign language teaching, i.e. the L2 acquisition that occurs in the context of providing formal instruction.

4.   Relearning L2

2.3 The distinction between second and foreign languages

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:4) like Mitchell and Myles (1998:1) further differentiate between *second* (or third/fourth/fifth) and *foreign* language (FL). Their distinction is based on exposure to the language. Whilst a learner may be exposed to a second (or third/fourth) language outside the classroom, via local users or speakers of the language; learners have limited exposure or contact with a foreign language, possibly through literature, radio or television. Despite this Mitchell and Myles (1998:1-2) include foreign language (FL) under the general term of second languages since, "the underlying learning processes are essentially the same for more local and for more remote target languages, despite differing learning purposes and circumstances". Robinson (1996:765) too defines FL according to degree of exposure. He sees it as a language that may be learned but is foreign to the learner, since there would be minimal exposure or direct contact with native speakers of that language. This scenario could be applied to the learning of Arabic in Southern Africa.

Ellis (1984:2) believes, that although traditionally distinction is made between L2 and FL, the basis on which the distinction is made is not useful, since like FL learners, L2 learners may have almost no contact with speech communities. (This is apparent in some rural areas of South Africa and Botswana where learners learn English as a second language, but where there are no mother tongue speakers of English in the area.) Ellis (1984:2) therefore prefers to distinguish between a 'pure' language classroom "(where the learner is totally dependent on instruction) and an 'impure' classroom (where instruction is supplemented by varying degrees of exposure)".

Ellis (1997:3) further believes that the term L2 is not intended to contrast with FL because whether a language is learned naturally as a consequence of living in a foreign country, or whether the language is learned in a classroom through instruction it is still generically an L2. He therefore defines L2 as well as FL acquisition as "the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom,"

(Ellis 1997:3).

2.3.1 Arabic, a second language or a foreign language

It is difficult to classify Arabic in South Africa and Botswana as either an L2 or an F1 because although Arabic may not be used widely for communicative purposes in these two countries, learners are exposed to the language from birth. In fact, it is the first language that Muslim children hear at birth. They hear it even before their mother-tongue. The call to prayer (Adhaan) is recited in Arabic, into the child's ears as soon as he/she is born. Thereafter the child is constantly exposed to the language in the form of ritualistic prayer, supplications, invocations, and the daily recitation of the Holy Qur'an which occur in most Muslim homes. The child is also taught these recitations (without meaning or comprehension) almost as soon as the first words are uttered. Further, the child is expected to recite the Qur'an for spiritual blessings, albeit without understanding. This instruction usually begins at home, during the preschool years.

It is nevertheless unusual for an individual to be exposed to Arabic in a communicative context. With the advent of *Digital Satellite Television* in recent years, the Arabic channel, *ART Africa*, has made it possible for viewers in South Africa and Botswana to be exposed to native speakers of Arabic, through television. However, this is a pay-channel and therefore all learners do not necessarily have access to it.

As is evident from the discussion in 2.3 the distinction between second and foreign languages is mostly based on contact with the language outside the classroom. Since the learning processes are essentially the same many researchers have included FL under L2, so for the purposes of this study the researcher too chooses to do the same. This is in line with the current tendency to refer to any additional language acquired, other than the mother tongue, as an 'additional language'. However, the distinction between pure language classrooms, where the learner is totally dependent on instruction, and impure classrooms, where instruction is

supplemented by varying degrees of exposure, as made by Ellis, is acknowledged.

Since Arabic is an additional language learned in South Africa and Botswana, it will be considered as a second and foreign language for the purposes of this study. To ensure that a comprehensive study is made both foreign and second language learning and related teaching methodologies will therefore be examined.

2.4 Learning versus acquiring a second language

Some writers on second language acquisition, like Krashen (1981) make a distinction between L2 acquisition and L2 learning. This is done to distinguish people who learn an L2 naturalistically (that is, from exposure to the L2 in their daily lives) from people who learn an L2 in the classroom. According to this distinction naturalistic learners 'acquire' an L2, but tutored learners 'learn' it (Towell & Hawkins 1994:6). Hence, Ellis (1985:6) explains that some researchers use the term acquisition to refer to 'picking up' an L2 through exposure, whereas the term learning is used to refer to the conscious study of the L2. However, he uses the terms interchangeably as he does not believe that there is a real distinction between subconscious and conscious learning and therefore defines L2 acquisition as the "... subconscious or conscious process by which a language other than the mother-tongue is learned in a natural or tutored setting" (Ellis 1985:6).

McLaughlin (1984:10-11) too uses the terms interchangeably, because he believes that reliance on the situational context is not satisfactory, and reasons that one can 'acquire' language in a classroom setting, or 'learn' the rules in informal situations from native informants. So he prefers to make a distinction between naturalistic, untutored second-language learning, as opposed to second language-learning in the classroom (McLaughlin 1984:11).

According to Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:6) the distinction between acquisition and learning has not stood

up to scientific investigation. They explain as follows:

It has been found that, even if learning and acquisition are different processes, they are interwoven: that means, for example, that people 'pick up' the language while they receive formal instruction. Ultimately one can only conclude that students generally learn what they are taught: whether teachers encourage communication activities in the classroom (thereby fostering *acquisition*) or exploit student's ability to formulate and deduce rules (thereby fostering *learning*), students should learn to communicate both fluently and accurately.

Towell and Hawkins (1994:6) agree with this point of view as they are of the opinion that the evidence to support the distinction between 'acquisition' and 'learning' is not strong enough.

For the purposes of this study, language acquisition will refer to the process whereby the learner acquires the language as a **subconscious** or **conscious** process in a **natural** or **tutored** setting. 'Acquisition' and 'learning' will therefore be used interchangeably throughout.

2.5 The four language skills as a means to achieving communicative competence

'Communicative competence' can be broadly defined as, what a speaker needs to know to communicate appropriately within a particular speech community. Saville-Troike (1996:362) explains that communicative competence involves knowing, not only the language code but also what to say to whom, and when to say it appropriately in any given situation. Nasr (1972:7) and Leschinsky (1983:11) further elucidate that communicative competence depends on the acquisition of four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These promote communicative competence, which is the criterion for success in second language instruction (Leschinsky 1983:10-11).

The first skill, that of listening and understanding, is the basis of language acquisition and learning. Together with reading, they form the receptive language skills, whilst speaking and writing form the productive skills. In order for a learner to produce anything in the target language he/she has to first receive comprehensible messages, i.e. a learner should be able to understand the language when it is spoken by native speakers. If sufficient messages are received in context, in the target language, then the learner may be able to understand and comprehend these messages or instructions and gradually respond to them by speaking in the target language (develop productive skills) (Bryne 1976:5). The learner should then be able to speak the language "correctly, fluently, spontaneously and naturally in everyday situations" (Leschinsky 1983:11).

Reading, being a receptive skill, reinforces listening, as it helps to expand vocabulary and gives the learner more exposure to the language and a chance to see how the language works. Initially, while reading may not be fluent, it would still assist in reinforcing the receptive skills and expanding the learner's knowledge of the language and its culture, paving the way for the emergence of the productive skills (Byrne 1976:7). The learner should therefore be able to read the language fluently with clear understanding. Writing is generally the last of the skills that is acquired, and it is an indication of a high level of fluency, as it focuses more on the structure of the language than does speaking. An accomplished learner should develop *functional writing competence* and be able to arrange thoughts logically and clearly according to the nuances and tone of the language (Leschinsky 1983:11-12).

Each skill reinforces the other and promotes the development of the language. Therefore they should not be taught in isolation. This point is emphasized in the report of the *Work Committee: Languages and language instruction* (RGN-HSRC Investigation into Education 1981: Chapter 3, Par. 3.2):

> There is an urgent need for a change of emphasis away from the isolated teaching of the separate components of a syllabus (grammar, comprehension, composition, literature as a subject of study in its own right), to an approach that puts the learner very clearly at the centre, because it is he who

must master the knowledge and the skills under the guidance of the teacher (translation).

According to Lyon (1996:43) and Odendaal (undated:2) an L2 is most successfully learned when learners have the opportunity to use the language and communicate naturally. Odendaal (undated:3) also states that language acquisition is made easier if the learner concentrates on the message rather than on using the correct form. Thus the importance of language as a functional skill is evident.

Since language is culture bound, it is necessary for learners to become "familiar with the situations in which the speakers of the language use it, as well as with the sounds, words and grammatical system" (Nasr 1972:3). Therefore language cannot be learned isolated from its context. Teachers of FL and L2 must carefully examine the methodology they use and ensure that the language is taught in a way that allows learners to be exposed to as much natural use of the language as possible within the classroom. This would help develop both receptive as well as productive skills.

Learners are exposed to Arabic through reading and listening, but in most cases very little opportunity exists for them to utilise the language and communicate through it naturally. Limited communication may take place within the classroom situation, but since the learner is not exposed to native Arabic speakers its acquisition may be constrained. In the majority of cases in South Africa and Botswana learners of Arabic are unable to acquire all four language skills.

2.6 Theories of first language acquisition

Various theories contain assumptions about the learning abilities of human beings, the conditions under which learning takes place, and what is learned (Menyuk 1987:243). Various schools of theorists have, over the years, attempted to explain how L1 is acquired. Each theory has a specific focus as its point of departure, but

attempts to explain and account for a group of common ideas that have been gathered on language development. In this section the researcher will examine each of the main theories briefly.

2.6.1 Behaviourist theory

The Behaviourists explain all behaviour, including language learning, as a modification of simple reflexes, through the formation of habits, to form more complex units of behaviour. According to this view language is acquired through stimulus-response conditioning, where "appropriate communicative behaviour is reinforced by parents, with the child's responses shaped to achieve closer approximations to intelligible speech" (Bochner, Price & Jones 1998:8). It is thus based on the psychological viewpoint that any kind of behaviour can be learned through providing *stimulus* and conditioning the *response* through repeated *reinforcement* of the desired response (Larson-Freeman & Long 1991:55). Lindfors (1987:97) states that behaviourist theory is based on the following:

- children are born with an innate, genetic capacity for acquiring a language

- the environment shapes an individual's learning of language

- reinforcement of responses, emitted as a result of particular stimuli, shapes language acquisition

- progressive selection (from simple to complex) of responses is reinforced.

While the behavioural approach has been instrumental in promoting the development of programmes to assist children with learning difficulties, with techniques such as modelling, imitation and reinforcement, it does not account for the large amount of language a child acquires in the short space of time. Nor does it explain how a child is able to produce language that is grammatically correct without previously having heard it. Behavioural techniques also do not effectively promote the initiation of contact and do not recognise the mental or cognitive aspects of learning, nor do they account for the universal sequence of language development (Mitchell & Myles 1998:25).

2.6.2 Nativist theory

According to nativist theory a child's mother-tongue is learned naturally and subconsciously in familiar, comfortable surroundings through interaction with familiar adults. There is no pressure or stress involved. The language is learned at the child's own pace, with very little correction from adults, and virtually no emphasis on correct grammar usage. As Montessori (1992:100) says, the child continually 'absorbs' the language from birth, and is after some time able to express himself/herself in the language of the community.

Like Montessori, Towell and Hawkins (1994:58) believe that, "all infants acquire their first languages *rapidly* (barring physiological impairment, and given normal exposure to language)". These infants also acquire them *effortlessly* through exposure, and *uniformly,* with *remarkable success.* They acquire the L1 despite the fact that there is very little or no correction of errors by adult speakers of the language (Towell & Hawkins 1994:59). Other researchers like, Pye (1983), Slobin (1979), and Schiff (1979), all cited in Towell and Hawkins (1994:59-60) have found that even when infants are ignored, or not spoken to by the adults around them (so they do not get as much exposure to the language); they still acquire their L1 rapidly, uniformly, effortlessly and with remarkable success. This is astoundingly the case even for infants who have deaf parents and get much less exposure to the language when compared with infants who have hearing parents.

Some theorists like McNeill (1970) and Chomsky (1986) have proposed the view that language acquisition is a natural process which involves an inherent *language acquisition device* (LAD) (Bochner, et al. 1998:6). According to this view, children have an inherent knowledge of basic grammatical relationships which they have to use to learn a particular language. From this the conclusion is drawn that the structural properties of all languages are the same and the infant has an innate ability and knowledge of these structures. However, Menyuk (1987:25) states that when the course of a particular child's language development is examined in detail and compared to another, both similarities and differences in development are apparent.

The nativist view primarily emphasises human biological development to account for language acquisition. There is limited emphasis on the role of the environment.

2.6.3 Cognitive theory

According to this view language development and cognitive structures develop through the active participation of the child. The principal point in cognitive theory is that "the child develops knowledge of the world in general (nonlinguistic knowledge) and then 'maps' this knowledge onto language categories and relations" (Menyuk 1987:254).

The cognitive approach has similarities to the nativist's view in that both Chomsky and Piaget believed that linguistic knowledge gradually becomes available to the child through heredity and maturation (Bochner, et al. 1998:9). The difference is that while the nativists emphasised inherent factors, the proponents of the cognitive approach emphasised the contribution of experience to the process of language acquisition. However, Piaget (1962:35) claimed that "regardless of environment, the growth of logical thinking takes place in a fixed sequence of stages", and those stages after the sensori-motor period are exclusive to humans. So the cognitivists claimed that the human being has an innate capacity to develop logical thought, while the nativists claimed that humans have an innate capacity for language development. While both are of the view that there is a universal sequence in the development of language, the cognitivists hold the view that language development is dependent on development of logical thought, which is sequential and universal (Menyuk 1987:256).

2.6.4 Interactional theory

It is generally accepted that children learn to speak through interaction with familiar adults. From birth infants

exhibit behaviour that encourages responses from caregivers who interpret their signals as communicative and respond accordingly. This is the basis of language development according to the interactionists, since every instance of language that the young child encounters is contextualised in a real situation and for a real purpose (Freeman & Freeman 1992:4). Children learn concepts, practise new skills and have the opportunity to imitate familiar others through games and activities, which involve use of words, and hence acquire language. The interactional approach to language development integrates physical, social and cognitive aspects of the child's experiences in acquiring language concepts (Bochner, et al. 1998:12).

2.7 Second language acquisition

Ellis (1985:4) believes that L2 acquisition stands in contrast to L1 acquisition as it is the study of how learners learn an additional language after they have acquired their mother tongue. L2 acquisition refers to all the aspects of the language a learner needs to master, and generally focusses on how a learner performs in the language rather than how competent he/she is. The production of the language is carefully examined in order to determine the extent of competence. Ellis (1985:5) defines competence as "the mental representation of linguistic rules which constitute the speaker-hearer's internalized grammar", and performance as "the comprehension and production of language".

There have been a number of theories adopted by researchers in L2 acquisition towards explaining the complexity of this phenomenon. As is the case with theories on L1 acquisition, each theory has a specific focus as its point of departure and attempts to explain common ideas on L2 development.

2.7.1 Behaviourism and the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

An early attempt to account for some of the observable phenomena of L2 acquisition has come to be known as

the *contrastive analysis hypothesis*. It resulted from the meeting of two approaches; structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology. Structural linguistics provided detailed linguistic descriptions of particular languages from a collection of utterances produced by native speakers (Towell & Hawkins 1994:17), while behaviourist psychology (Bloomfield 1933; Skinner 1957; Thorndike 1932; and Watson 1924) explained language learning through habit formation (Mitchell & Myles 1998:23). According to the latter a habit was formed when a particular stimulus was regularly linked with a particular response. If the stimulus occurred fairly frequently, the response became practised and therefore automatic (Brown 1987:21).

The neo-behaviourism of Skinner proposed a different account of how habits can be formed. Brown (1997:21) explains Skinner's point of view as follows:

> He argued that it was the behaviour that followed a response which reinforced it and thus helped to strengthen the association. The learning of a habit, then, could occur through *imitation* (i.e. the learner copies the stimulus behaviour sufficiently often for it to become automatic) or through *reinforcement* (i.e. the response of the learner is rewarded or punished depending on whether it is appropriate or otherwise, until only appropriate responses are given.

It was believed that imitation and reinforcement were the means by which the learner identified the stimulus-response associations that constituted the habits of the L2. Habit-formation theory dominated discussions on L2 acquisition up to the 1960s. One of its major attractions was that it provided a theoretical account of how the learner's L1 impacted onto the process of L2 learning (Brown 1997:21).

When learning an L2, those habits that have been learned for the L1, have to be replaced and some kind of interference may occur. Mitchell and Myles (1998:24), Ellis (1985:7) and Zobl (1982:171) state, that when the structures of the L1 and L2 are similar, learning will take place easily. This is referred to as 'positive transfer'. However when the two languages differ in structure 'proactive inhibition' may occur, making the

learning process difficult. In order to learn the L2 through the development of new habit formation, the learner would then have to overcome proactive inhibition.

To facilitate the learning of L2, L1 and L2 would then have to be compared (contrastive analysis) to determine which 'habits' were the same and which were different (Towell & Hawkins 1994:18; Larson-Freeman & Long 1991:53). Teachers were encouraged to determine and predict areas of difficulty and focus on these areas to overcome negative transfer. A procedure called 'contrastive analysis' was developed to establish linguistic differences between L1 and L2 and to predict what problems the learner of a particular L2 would face (Ellis 1985:7). It could be assumed from this, that errors could be expected in those areas in which the learner's L1 differed from the L2 in structure. This approach was rooted in the practical need to teach an L2 in the most effective way, and it was believed that the teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what the real problems are and can provide for teaching them (Brown 1987:23).

However, according to Ellis (1985:24) errors were not restricted to this area only and non-linguistic variables, like setting and qualitative differences between learners, were isolated to determine the cause of interference. According to Marton (1980) a 'naturalistic' setting, where learners are surrounded by speakers of the target language, facilitates positive transfer, as opposed to a tutored setting, where learners would be surrounded more by L1 than L2 (Ellis 1985:24). The second possible variable according to Taylor (1975), is qualitative differences between learners and their stage of development, since younger learners and older learners did not make the same number of errors (Ellis 1985:24). The contrastive analysis hypothesis implied that learners with different L1s would then learn L2 in different ways, because they would experience different difficulties as a result of negative transfer.

Since the contrastive analysis hypothesis took the position that a learner's L1 interferes with the acquisition of

the L2, it proposed the idea that when the structure of the L2 differed from that of L1, errors would reflect the structure of the L1. If a native English speaker was learning Arabic as L2, and repeatedly made a mistake with the position of noun and adjective by inverting the order (in English the adjective comes before the noun, whilst in Arabic it is vice versa), when trying to communicate in Arabic, then this process would be called 'negative transfer'. Likewise 'positive transfer' took place when the structure of the L1 was the same as that of L2, and hence influenced the speaker to choose the correct pattern automatically (Zobl 1982:172). As a result of this reasoning, linguists assumed that a comparison of a learner's L1 and L2 should reveal areas of difficulty which would help teachers to plan effectively for lessons. This would be based on the unlikely assumption that everyone in the class had the same L1.

According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982:97-98) the contrastive analysis hypothesis was very appealing to common sense, so researchers had overlooked some of the important data:

- The majority of the grammatical errors do not reflect the learner's L1 in either children or adults.

- Errors made by L2 learners in grammar are comparable to both L1 and L2 - this should not be the case if 'positive transfer' was indeed taking place.

- Judgement of L2 learners on grammatically correct L2 sentences are more related to L2 structure than to the L1 structure.

- There seems to be more influence of the L1 in phonological errors rather than grammatical ones. However, the larger number of L2 phonological errors made by children are similar to those made by monolingual L1 learners, as compared to those that may be traced to L1.

From the above data, it is evident that only a small portion of L2 errors may be linked with L1 and this therefore calls the contrastive analysis hypothesis into question (Ritchie & Bhatia 1996:5).

Gradually the perceived role of the L1 began to change when it became apparent through observation, that the

number of errors made in L2 performance that could be attributed to L1 interference was indeed very small.

In Dulay and Burt's study (1974) it was found that less than 5% of errors in L2 learners' speech could be attributed to their L1 (Dulay et al.1982:98). Numerous other studies since, have also shown a low incidence of errors that may be attributed to learner's L1. Research conducted on adults have also yielded similar results. They have led to the conclusion that non-phonological errors observed in adults do not reflect the adult's L1, even though the proportion of errors that reflect L1 is larger in adults than in children. According to Dulay et al. (1982: 104) adult studies that were conducted in both host and foreign language environments indicate that foreign language environments seemed more susceptible to L1 influence, probably due to the lack of exposure to naturally occurring language, although there is no conclusive proof to this effect. Interestingly, research by Hendrickson (1977), Plann (1977), Cohen and Robins (1976) reveal that error correction and heavy drilling, as was suggested by contrastive analysis tenets, had very little effect on the quality of learner's speech (Dulay et al. 1982:104).

The study made by LoCoco (1975) indicated that between 5% to 18% of errors in L2 would not have been made by learners if 'positive transfer' from their L1 had indeed taken place (Dulay et al. 1982:104). Other studies by Berko (1958), Natalicio and Natalicio (1971), Hernandez-Chavez (1972) and Richards (1971), all cited in Dulay et al. (1982:104-105), Zobl (1982:176) and Mitchell and Myles (1998:30) support the findings of LoCoco. These findings prove that neither negative nor positive transfer takes place between L1 and L2 learning.

Studies that attempted to explore the effect of differences between L1 and L2 on learner's judgements of grammatical correctness, revealed mixed results. Ioup and Kruse (1977) state that "contrary to the contrastive analysis hypothesis, sentence type, rather than native language background is the most reliable predictor of error" (Dulay et al.1982:106). Larson-Freeman and Long (1991:61) as well as Dulay et al. (1982:107) discuss Schachter's (1974) research conducted on university English L2 (ESL) students. Schachter found that

Persian and Arabic speakers produced about twice as many relative clauses in their compositions as did Japanese and Chinese students, but they made nearly twice as many errors in the relative clauses, as compared to Japanese and Chinese speaking students. Schachter (1974) suggested that contrastive analysis may help to explain these results. He reasoned that since relative clause structure in English is similar to that in Arabic and Persian, these students attempted to use them albeit incorrectly. However, relative clause structure must have been too confusing and totally different from the L1 of the Japanese and Chinese speaking students, so they refrained from its use.

Kleinman (Dulay et al.1982:107) presented results that supported Schachter's, but he suggests that contrastive analysis alone cannot predict which structures will or will not be used. This is also supported by the research of Whitman and Jackson (Larson- Freeman & Long 1991:56). Personality factors like anxiety, confidence, and willingness to take risks also provide indications as to which structures students are likely to use and those they are likely to avoid.

Not only was the criticism levelled at contrastive analysis, behaviourism also got its fair share of reproof. One of the greatest problems with the behaviouristic approach to L2 acquisition was its inability to explain how a learner was able to use sentences that he/she was not exposed to before. This concern heralded the change in focus from structural linguistics to generative linguistics (Mitchell & Myles 1998:25). Chomsky (1959) who was one of the proponents of the latter approach criticised the behaviourist approach through his criticism of Skinner's (1957) view of language learning (Mitchell & Myles 1998:25). He based his criticism firstly on the fact that children create new sentences through internalized rules that they are able to apply. Secondly, Chomsky (1987) hypothesized that children have an innate faculty that enables them to discover rules given a body of speech (Mitchell & Myles 1998:26). He postulated this on the basis that even though children are not usually corrected on the grammatical form of L1 used, and yet they are able to apply complicated rules.

2.7.2 The Natural Order Hypothesis

The growing rejection of contrastive analysis led researchers in the late sixties and early seventies to turn to the idea of *staged development* and *cross-learner systematicity* (Towell & Hawkins 1994:23). According to Towell & Hawkins (1994:23) Corder (1967) and Selinker (1972) played an important role in stressing the autonomy of the L2 learner's mental grammar. This was supported by Roger Brown's 'morpheme study', which shows that children from three different backgrounds acquired morphemes in the same order, although their rate of acquisition differed (Mitchell & Myles 1998:27; Krashen 1981:51; Towell & Hawkins 1994:23-24).

These results supported the emerging view in linguistic theory at that time, that a large part of human linguistic ability is innate. L1 acquisition and the eventual grammatical knowledge attained by native speakers is determined by abstract internal mental structures , and is considerably under-determined by the input (Towell & Hawkins 1994:24). This gradually led to the idea that human beings learned language through universal grammar (cf **2.7.3 Second language acquisition based on Universal Grammar (UG))**.

The work of Brown soon attracted L2 researchers. Dulay and Burt (Towell & Hawkins 1994:24; Hatch 1978:353) were the first to investigate the acquisition of grammatical morphemes in L2 English. They used a technique called 'Bilingual Syntax Measure', where three groups of Spanish speaking children, in different locations of the United States were presented with a series of cartoon drawings and were questioned on them. Their results showed a similar 'order of accuracy' in the use of English grammatical morphemes, although this order was different from the acquisition order found by Brown for L1 learners of English (Towell & Hawkins 1994:24-25; Hatch 1978:359).

Dulay and Burt (1974) confirmed these results when they repeated the study with native speakers of

Cantonese, as did Bailey, Madden and Krashen (1974) with their study on adult L2 learners of English with varying L1s (Towell and Hawkins 1994:25; Hatch 1978:363-364). It was concluded from these findings that both child and adult learners of the same L2, differing L1 backgrounds and learning in different conditions of exposure (naturalistic, classroom and mixed environments), developed accuracy in grammatical morphology in a 'natural' order (Towell & Hawkins 1994:25; Hatch 1978:363-364) . Various other studies confirmed that systematic staged development in L2 acquisition occurs.

2.7.3 Second language acquisition based on Universal Grammar (UG)

In vehement opposition to the behaviourists, Chomsky claimed that children followed some kind of pre-programmed, internal route in acquiring language (Mitchell & Myles 1998:29). Chomsky (Brown 1987:18) criticises Skinner's reinforcement theory of language learning which sees the child as a passive receiver of language. He believed that the child is an active producer, who constantly forms hypotheses based on input received, and tests them in speech or comprehension. As the child's language develops so the hypotheses are continually revised. The child constructs his/her own rules and then gradually adapts them in the direction of the adult system.

Chomsky and those working in a broadly Chomskyan framework note various factors which they claim support the idea that humans are innately (i.e. genetically) endowed with universal language-specific knowledge, or what Chomsky calls 'Universal Grammar' (Larson-Freeman & Long 1991:228). This theory claims that language principles (such as structure-dependency) and parameters (eg. pro-drop or non-pro-drop) are built into the mind. Learners do not need to learn structure-dependency because their minds automatically provide it for any language they meet, whether it is English, Chinese or Arabic (Cook 1992:117). Chomsky suggested that there existed some sort of universal grammar for all languages, and children acquired language through similar stages, expressing similar meanings through similar constructions and making similar errors.

His idea evolved from the following:

- The fact that children constantly created new sentences based on a set of internalized rules, so they could not have been imitating or reproducing the language of adults around them (as was suggested by Skinner).

- Since children were not usually corrected in the form of language they used, they must have an innate faculty which guided the learning of language (Mitchell & Myles 1998:25-26).

Chomsky (Greene 1986:67) is also the father of the *Generative-Transformational* School of thought. He believed that the *Generative-Transformational* grammar accounts for the ability of native speakers to form grammatical sentences they have never spoken before and also to interpret, as grammatical or ungrammatical, sentences they have never heard before. Generative refers to the rules for generalising whether or not sentences are grammatical while transformational rules generate more complex sentences by changing around the word order. An example given by Klein (1986:53) is, 'Jane hit the boy.' becoming 'The boy was hit by Jane.'

The hypothesis of UG was examined through longitudinal studies and error analysis which revealed that there are striking similarities in the way in which different learners learn L2, and the route resembled that of L1 acquisition. Thus the findings seem to support Chomsky's claim of the existence of a universal grammar.

Major criticism of this approach centres around the fact that the object of study is the sentence and its internal structure. "It studies language somewhat in a vacuum, as a mental object rather than a social or psychological one" (Mitchell & Myles 1998:69). Hence it views the learner as a "receptacle for the UG blueprint" rather than as a social individual with varied characteristics (Mitchell & Myles 1998:69). Also UG has been exclusively concerned with the developmental route followed by learners acquiring an L2, without concern for any of the social or psychological variables.

However, UG is extremely useful for linguistic analysis and has enabled researchers to develop hypotheses that may be empirically tested. It has also successfully described, established and explained some facts about the stages and systematicity L2 learners go through for second language acquisition (SLA).

2.7.4 Krashen's Monitor Theory

Krashen's theory which is based on staged development evolved in the early seventies. It was the first attempt to provide a comprehensive model for L2 acquisition and was one of the best known and most influential theories of L2 acquisition in the seventies and early eighties. According to Towell and Hawkins (1994:25-26) and Mitchell and Myles (1998:35) Krashen developed five hypotheses that suggested that the course of second language acquisition (SLA) is determined by innate principles of linguistic knowledge. The hypotheses were:

- the Acquisition-learning Hypothesis

- the Monitor Hypothesis

- the Natural Order Hypothesis

- the Input Hypothesis

- the Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen makes a definite distinction between language *acquisition* and *learning* through his *Acquisition-learning Hypothesis*. *Acquisition* accounts for learners' *acquired* L2 knowledge, that occurs *subconsciously* through meaningful communication in a naturalistic setting. *Learning* is a *conscious* process, that facilitates error correction, and gives attention to the form of the language (Mitchell & Myles 1998:36; Larson-Freeman & Long 1991:240). According to Krashen (1985:8), L2 acquisition plays a far more important role than L2 learning because "our ability to use second languages comes mostly from what we have acquired, not what we have learned" (cf **2.4 Learning versus acquiring a second language**).

The second hypothesis, the *Monitor Hypothesis* evolved from the first. Krashen explained that when we learn

a language we consciously learn rules which are useful for editing what we wish to communicate. He called

this conscious process 'the monitor', and contrasted it with the unconscious or natural process which is

language acquisition. Learning was seen as the process that monitored the acquired utterances. Since real

conversations demand spontaneity and do not allow for constant monitoring, Krashen's *Monitor Hypothesis*

has been criticised (Mitchell & Myles 1998:37). Krashen also used the monitor to explain differences in

individuals. He stated that monitor 'under-users' made many errors but spoke fluently, while monitor 'over-

users' were afraid to make mistakes and produced stilted language.

According to Krashen's (1985:1) *Natural Order Hypothesis* rules of a language are acquired in a predictable

way with some rules coming early and others late. This was true for spontaneous, unplanned production of L2

learners, but the order seemed to change when the production was not spontaneous or when the learners were

allowed to plan productions (Towell & Hawkins 1994:26). Krashen (1985:1) believed that the order in which

the rules were learned was independent of the order in which rules are taught in language classes. This

hypothesis was strongly criticised because it did not take into account "well-documented cases of language

transfer, or of individual variability" (Mitchell & Myles 1998:37). It also received criticism because it was

almost exclusively based on morpheme studies with their known methodological problems, and which, as

Mitchell and Myles (1998:37) point out, "in any case, reflect accuracy of production rather than acquisition

sequences" (cf **2.7.2 The Natural Order Hypothesis**).

The *Input Hypothesis* is related to the *Natural Order Hypothesis*, in that learners must receive

comprehensible input for acquisition to take place. Krashen (1985:70) hypothesises that "all human beings

learn language in the same way: not by learning grammar rules or memorising vocabulary, but by

understanding messages encoded in the language - in other words by receiving *comprehensible input*." This

simply means that language is acquired by listening or reading for meaning rather than by speaking. Since

speaking is one of the productive skills, it is seen by Krashen (1985:39) as a result of language acquisition, and not a cause. The acquirer receives messages that are comprehensible because of the context of the messages.

Krashen's *Input Hypothesis* has been criticised for being vague and circular. He claims that acquisition takes place if comprehensible input is received, which in turn is claimed to have been received if acquisition takes place. Therefore the hypothesis cannot be tested independently (Mitchell & Myles 1998:38).

To account for differences in individual L2 learners who received the same input but showed differences in the acquired and learned knowledge of the L2, Krashen postulated the *Affective-filter Hypothesis*. He stated that all individuals are affected by motives, needs, attitudes and emotional states, and these may either inhibit or promote L2 acquisition. Thus if there is a high filter then L2 input will be prevented "from being converted to acquired knowledge ... and where people are less inhibited, the filter is 'lower', allowing a greater portion of L2 input to be converted to acquired knowledge" (Towell & Hawkins 1994:27; Mitchell & Myles 1998:38). Thus the 'affective filter' may prevent the comprehensible input from reaching the language acquisition device (LAD), which exists in every individual and is responsible for acquiring the language (Krashen 1985:10). This may occur if the acquirer perceives a threat, has a negative attitude to the language, or perceives the language as being difficult to acquire.

However, once the aural comprehensible input reaches the LAD and stimulates it, it results in what Krashen calls the 'din'. This is a jumble of sentences, statements, sounds, etc. of the language, in the mind, which takes some time to start up and also wears off after a few days. It makes it difficult for the acquirer to switch to different languages. Then follows what is called the 'silent period', during which time the acquirer is building competence in the language. Eventually the acquirer speaks in the language using appropriate grammar structure, and becomes increasingly fluent and articulate as speech develops. Thus the speech reinforces the

receptive period (Krashen 1985:38).

Based on the idea that comprehension is the key to language acquisition, Krashen (1985:70-71) conducted research to determine what assists and promotes comprehension, and found that background information is an enhancer of comprehension. By citing examples from Adams' (1982) study, Krashen explained his hypothesis. When Adams' subjects had to infer the meaning of the word *rouche* from a given number of sentences, the success rate showed that more subjects were able to provide the meaning of the word when they were given background information as compared with those who were only given the sentences to work from. Krashen (1985:71) proposed two generalizations from this: "comprehensible input is the cause of second language acquisition" and "extralinguistic information helps make input comprehensible and thus facilitates second language acquisition".

Krashen's hypotheses were an attempt at providing an alternative to contrastive analysis. In the 1980s when these hypotheses were tested and studied it was found that they did not adequately describe SLA. Firstly because of the rejection of contrastive analysis, the idea of transfer from L1 to L2 was totally disregarded and Krashen's acquired/learning hypothesis did not account for any transfer. Also, although the fact that learners acquired second language through stages was accounted for in Krashen's hypotheses, why learners go through stages was not explained. Thirdly, variability is crucially dependent on the 'monitoring' function of 'learned knowledge', but it has been shown by Hulstijn & Hulstijn (1984) that such variability exists in the absence of 'learned knowledge' (Towell & Hawkins 1994:32). In their study, Johnson and Newport (Towell and Hawkins 1994:30) found that there was a steady decline in their subjects' ability to achieve "native-like grammatical intuitions in the L2 with increasing age". This showed that the *Affective-filter Hypothesis* which stated that learner's motives, attitudes, emotional states, and inhibitions act as a screen or barrier to L2 acquisition; was not necessarily true. Krashen's theory has also been criticised for its lack of explanation of the internal workings of the LAD, where acquisition actually takes place (Mitchell & Myles 1998:38).

2.7.5 Critical period for language acquisition

2.7.5.1 Biologically based critical period hypothesis

Lenneberg (1967) argued that there is a *critical period* for language acquisition. This is associated with the completion of language lateralisation in the left hemisphere, which he claims occurs at puberty (Ritchie & Bhatia 1996:15). Penfield and Roberts' (1959) research shows that a child has a unique ability to learn a language or many languages before the age of nine because of 'brain plasticity' (Harley 1986:4). According to them a certain rigidity sets in after the age of nine making it difficult for the learner to acquire a language. However, since their conclusions were extrapolated from research conducted on the ability of a child and an adult to regain language after brain injury, other researchers assert that their results cannot be extended to include a healthy undamaged brain.

Harley (1986:6) mentions Lenneberg (1967), Chomsky (1965) and Mc Neill (1966) who are all of the opinion that environmental factors are not significant in the emergence of language. According to Lenneberg (Harley 1986:6) the close of the critical period for language acquisition is related to the "completion of cerebral lateralisation of language function", and since this develops progressively until it is complete at puberty, he places the critical period of language acquisition to be at puberty. Lenneberg (1967) therefore claims that automatic acquisition from mere exposure to an L2 seems to disappear after puberty and foreign languages have to be taught and learned through a conscious and laboured effort (Harley 1986:6). Dulay et al. (1982:87) explain Lenneberg's hypothesis as follows:

> The ability of the organiser to subconsciously build up a new language system deteriorates after puberty, when the brain's left and right hemispheres have developed specialised functions.

From recent research it is evident that the left hemisphere is more for language and other analytical functions, while the right is more for spatial and configuration. Since this lateralisation, according to Lenneberg (Harley 1986:6), only takes place around puberty, prior to puberty both hemispheres are used for language.

Lenneberg has also observed that foreign accents are difficult to acquire after puberty. Although the language may be learned, the intonations will not be the same as that of a native speaker's. Harley (1986:6-7) cites Scovel (1969) and Seiliger (1978) in support of this idea, as they too see puberty as the close of acquiring the accent of L2 as a native speaker. Ellis (1985:106) states that the age at which study of L2 commences is specifically relevant to pronunciation. He cites the study of Oyama (1976) to support this idea that younger learners do better at pronunciation.

However, the very basis on which Lenneberg based his evidence, i.e. cerebral lateralisation has been called to question by Krashen (1981:73), who concluded that lateralisation is completed much earlier, and that while a biologically based critical period may exist, it does not coincide with development of lateralisation. Others like Kinsbourne (1975) have stated that lateralisation is complete by the age of five. Whilst yet other researchers, like Whitaker, Bub and Leventer (1981) have cautioned that "there are no neurological correlates for a critical period for language acquisition that ends specifically at, or around, puberty," (Harley 1986:7). Molfese (1972) and Gardiner, Schulman and Walter's (1973) research of measuring activity in the brains of infants, found that speech stimulated more electrical activity in the left hemisphere, and hence concluded that there was no development of cerebral dominance. This is also supported by others who conducted similar research on foetal infants and found more activity in the left hemisphere when speech was the stimulus (Dulay et al. 1982:89).

Subsequently, researchers like Krashen (1981:75-77), have hypothesised that while there is a small degree of cerebral dominance that exists within the foetal infant, this becomes gradually more prominent and develops

increasingly with age. Likewise Brown and Jaffe (1975) argue that lateralisation may continue throughout

life, with greater specialisation developing with age (Dulay et al. 1982:90) .

It is evident that brain lateralisation definitely takes place before puberty and therefore any changes in L2

acquisition at puberty cannot be as a result of cerebral dominance. Although no conclusion can be reached

about the relationship of cerebral lateralisation or dominance and the acquisition of a language, puberty seems

to be the critical period after which a learner will not be able to acquire the language with the same

pronunciation as a native would.

2.7.5.2 Cognitively based critical period hypothesis

As a result of the inconclusiveness of a biologically based critical period for language acquisition some

researchers like Krashen (1975), Rosansky (1975) and Felix (1981) have hypothesized that Inhelder and

Piaget's cognitive stage of formal operations beginning around puberty may be the basis for the close of a

critical period for L2 acquisition (Harley 1986:8). Dulay et al. (1982:91) explain the formal operations period

as being when

> ... the formal thinker thinks in terms of general solutions to problems, in terms of rules rather than in
>
> terms of *ad hoc* solutions; he or she can arrive at abstract ideas without necessarily working through
>
> concrete objects; and he or she can 'step back' from his or her ideas and have 'ideas about ideas'.

Since formal operations relate to conscious learning, the individual's ability to acquire the language naturally

no longer exists. The learner has to learn the language consciously rather than acquire it as a child would.

This also explains why adults learn grammar faster than children. According to research, the formal

operations stage seems to be the age at which extensive metalinguistic awareness develops (Dulay et al.

1982:92).

When an individual is at the formal operations stage, the person has the ability to construct abstract hypotheses to explain phenomena, and this according to Krashen may inhibit the individual's natural language learning ability. He also hypothesises, based on Elkind's (1970) research, that formal operations are a consequence of personality changes that occur at puberty and these are a direct cause of the close of the critical period (Harley 1986:9). Since adolescents are very self conscious and vulnerable, they are therefore afraid to expose themselves and would rather rely on rules that they think are correct (according to L1). This interferes with L2 acquisition. According to Krashen they develop an 'affective filter' that inhibits L2 acquisition (Harley 1986:9).

Researchers such as Karmiloff-Smith (1979) have argued that L1 acquisition is also a form of problem solving, as children classify, sort and organise just as adults do when learning L2 (Harley 1986:12). If this is true, then the reasoning for the cognitively based critical period hypothesis as postulated by Krashen, is called to question. According to McLaughlin (1978) it is impossible to determine when an individual is operating with conscious rules or with unconscious rules and it is therefore not possible to test Krashen's *Monitor Model* (Harley 1986:13).

2.7.6 The role of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in second language learning

Cummins (1979) distinguishes between two kinds of language ability, CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) and BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) (Stevenson 1993:153). CALP is related to cognitive and academic skills while BICS refers to basic language proficiency that is developed naturally and that facilitates casual conversation. According to Krashen (1985:72), when children are provided with a good knowledge of the world through sound education they are being provided with what Cummins (1980,1981) calls CALP. CALP refers to the ability to use language in 'context-reduced' situations, the ability to use

language to discuss abstractions. Through CALP a person is able "to use language as an intellectual tool, to read for meaning and for pleasure, and to write, both to communicate with others and, perhaps more important, to clarify our thoughts and come up with new thoughts" (Krashen 1985:73 and supported by Freeman & Freeman 1992:23). Stevenson (1993:155) states that CALP is associated with formal language learning in the classroom and BICS "with naturalistic SLA".

While BICS is extremely important, it is seen as the first stage, as it facilitates interpersonal communication. Learners, however, do need to develop CALP to use the L2 for academic debate. Cummins encourages teachers to teach language in meaningful contexts so that authentic language acquisition can take place and because context is related to cognitive demand (Freeman & Freeman 1992:24-25). He believes that with time learners will be able to use the language in cognitively demanding situations because of previously context-rich exposure. This idea of providing a rich background is instrumental in promoting the whole language approach as "language is less cognitively demanding when it is more context-embedded," (Freeman & Freeman 1992:30).

Krashen (1985:73) agrees with Cummins's view that when CALP is developed in any one language, it can be applied to any other language that the person acquires. It makes input for the L2 more comprehensible. He cites the example of two children who are limited in their proficiency of English and who enter the fourth grade. The first child has a sound understanding of grade three mathematics which they both learned in their native languages, while the second child has a poor understanding of the subject. Upon entering the fourth grade, they are taught mathematics in English. The results show that the first child will gain a better understanding of mathematics and learn more English as well because the input received will be more comprehensible as a result of CALP and the greater knowledge of mathematics. This may be the reason for the better performance and successful English acquisition of children who arrive in the United States already with a sound education in their native language but with no English, as compared with those who arrive at a

younger age, with no English and no formal education in their native language, according to Cummins (Krashen 1985:74).

2.7.7 Recent approaches to second language acquisition

Theories on L2 acquisition have developed from various approaches. Among those approaches that have developed in recent years are the cognitive approach, the functional approach, input and interaction, sociocultural and sociolinguistic approaches. Within each of these approaches various theories have been postulated. The researcher will briefly examine the cognitive and the input and interactional approaches, since they seem to have played a pivotal role in SLA.

2.7.7.1 Cognitive approach

Cognitivists are primarily interested in "the learning component of second language learning" (Mitchell & Myles 1998:72). They see L2 learning as one instance of learning, and hence according to them it is imperative to understand how the human brain processes information and learns new information in order to understand SLA. They focus on the learner as an individual. Like UG theorists, they too are interested in the construction of L2 grammar, although not exclusively. Various theories within this approach are perceptual saliency, connectionism and information-processing models.

The perceptual salience theory is based on Dan Slobin's work. He suggests that the reason for the similarity in linguistic development in children, regardless of the language, is that humans are "programmed to perceive and organise information in certain ways" and it is this *perceptual saliency* that directs the learning process (Mitchell & Myles 1998:74). Anderson (1984, 1990), Pienemann (1987, 1989, 1992a, 1992b) and Quintero (1992) have adapted his theory for SLA.

Connectionism describes the brain as consisting of a network of complex neural links which are strengthened or weakened through activation or non-activation respectively (Mitchell & Myles 1998:79). Thus learning occurs through association rather than construction of abstract rules.

Information-processing models are developed on the idea that complex behaviour is built on simple processes. Thus learning of an L2 is viewed as the learning of a complex skill (Mitchell & Myles 1998:85).

2.7.7.2 Input and interaction

This approach views language in social terms, like sociocultural theory which sees language as a "tool for thought" and sociolinguistics which is the study of language in use (Mitchell & Myles 1998:161). Inspired by Krashen's input hypothesis, researchers proposed that if input was made more comprehensible, then it would be more useful and "better targeted at the particular developmental level and acquisitional needs of the individual learner" (Mitchell & Myles 1998:122). According to Mitchell and Myles (1998:128) this is the basic idea of the *Interaction Hypothesis* developed by Long (1996). A revised view of this hypothesis emphasises the link between input and the linguistic environment and internal factors within the learner, like selective attention and learner's processing capacities. It also brings to attention the contribution of negative feedback obtained in relation to the structure of the target language. According to Schmidt (1990, 1994) it is necessary for learners to pay attention to meaning in comprehensible input (as suggested by Krashen's input hypothesis) as well as to pay attention to language forms for acquisition to take place (Mitchell & Myles 1998:139).

2.8 Summary

In this chapter the researcher has discussed the differences between first, second and foreign languages and

presented the viewpoints of various researchers. Definitions for each of the concepts were provided, and the researcher's preferences were indicated. The issue of whether Arabic should be classified as a second or foreign language was debated. It was indicated that Arabic will be discussed under L2 because the learning processes are the same. However, the researcher indicated that foreign language learning and teaching methodologies would also be examined.

A discussion on the differences between learning and acquiring an L2 ensued, with the conclusion that the terms may be used interchangeably. The importance of productive and receptive skills in language learning was discussed, emphasising the need for all the skills to be developed for effective L2 acquisition. It was noted that since an Arabic speaking community did not exist in either South Africa or Botswana, it was very difficult for learners to develop all the skills in the language.

Theories of L1 acquisition were discussed briefly, with special focus on the nativist, behaviourist, cognitive and interactional approaches. Special mention of Montessori's and Krashen's ideas on the human being's innate ability for language acquisition was made. Theories on L2 acquisition were presented in great detail. *Contrastive analysis*, which developed from the behaviourist's psychological viewpoint was explained and criticised. In the discussion of the *Natural Order Hypothesis* it was indicated that different groups of L1 speakers of different ages displayed accuracy orders which were highly similar, suggesting to researchers that L2 morphology is acquired in a 'natural order'. Krashen's *monitor model*, which is based on five hypotheses, was discussed as an attempt to provide an alternative to *contrastive analysis*. This was followed by a detailed discussion on Chomsky's idea of *universal grammar*. A discourse on whether a critical period for language acquisition does in fact exist, was followed by an analysis of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS).

The chapter was concluded with an account of recent approaches to L2 acquisition. The cognitive approach

and the input and interaction approach in particular were discussed.

In the next chapter the researcher will present general and specific aims for L2 learning. This will be followed by an evaluative discussion on various second and foreign language teaching methodologies, since the focus of this study is the teaching of Arabic to learners in Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana.

Chapter Three

Methodology used in second and foreign language teaching with specific reference to Arabic

3.1 Introduction

The previous century saw the rise and fall of many approaches to language teaching. Any language teacher who has taught for a number of years will be acutely aware of this. Formerly it was essential for anyone who wanted to learn a language to surmount the task of learning a large number of often very complex grammar rules, and then translate into and from the foreign language. This was followed by a period of time when language learning was not considered an intellectual exercise or understanding of grammar rules, but it was a question of habit formation. Learners would be exposed to drill lessons until the correct use of grammatical structures became a habit. Then came the idea of teaching language through the use of a language laboratory. Later, the belief was promoted, that upon examination of how a language is learned, success in the language depended not on equipment such as the language laboratory, but rather on how the language is approached. Towards the end of the twentieth century came the idea of 'communicative language teaching' and 'notional/functional syllabi', which was followed by the idea of whole language teaching and immersion programmes.

Evidently, there are numerous approaches to language teaching with some more effective than others. Over the years numerous studies have been conducted and innovative teaching methods have been introduced. Also much research has been conducted on the methods in use. These studies reveal how effective or ineffective some of the techniques are. Methods used are linked with the aims of language teaching, for it is the aim that should dictate the method to be used.

In this chapter the researcher will discuss general aims of second and foreign language learning and teaching, followed by specific aims of the teaching and learning of Arabic in Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana. Thereafter an evaluative discussion of some of the commonly used language teaching methods and research on those methods will be provided. Finally a comprehensive discussion on the development of

Arabic teaching methodology specifically related to Southern Africa, will be presented.

3.2 Aims in second language instruction

The formulation of justified aims and objectives is vital for any learning experience. They guide and direct the activities and determine the way in which the teacher approaches and organises instruction (the methodology used) and are a measure of judging whether learning has in fact taken place. Aims are long-term goals while objectives are short-term lesson goals which should be in harmony with the aims. Objectives provide direction for learners and indicate the expected level of attainment for particular lessons and sections of work, with a view to achieving long-term aims ultimately (Fraser, Loubser & Van Rooy 1994:114). A framework of aims in second language instruction will be provided in this chapter.

The definition of language is related to the aims of language instruction. Language is an established group of signs and symbols to facilitate communication between human beings (Van den Aardweg 1993:133). It is a unique ability entrusted to the human race alone, and it can be used to discuss a wide range of topics (Comrie 2000:1). McLeod (1986:474) defines language as "a system for the expression of thoughts and feelings by the use of spoken sounds or conventional symbols". Thus the main purpose and function of language is communication. This is true for second as well as foreign language (Leschinsky 1983:9).

According to the report of the Work Committee: Languages and language instruction (RGN-HSRC Investigation into Education 1981: Chapter 3, Par. 3.8.1), the aim of second language instruction is stated as the intention to co-ordinate and promote the four language skills of the learner in order to facilitate the use of the second language as a medium of communication and to appreciate the language as a vehicle of culture. Communicative competence can be achieved through the acquisition of the four language skills (understanding, speaking, reading and writing), as was discussed in Chapter Two of this dissertation (cf 2.5 **The four skills as a means to achieving communicative competence**).

Ostojic (1975) stresses the importance of learners knowing that the L2 is a means for expressing thought

(Leschinsky 1983:10). They should be aware that the language may be used in real situations to receive and generate new expressions. Leschinsky (1983:13) emphasises the need to teach the four language skills through integration rather than in isolation. Therefore the methods of instruction should focus on an integrated approach to teaching L2, so that learners can acquire the language as a whole.

Rivers (1981:8) proposes seven broad aims for second and foreign language instruction:

- to develop learners' intellectual powers;

- to increase learners' understanding of how language functions, and through the study of an additional language make them aware of the functioning of their L1;

- to teach learners how to read another language with comprehension, to enable them to keep abreast with modern writing, research, and information;

- to enable learners to express themselves within another framework, linguistically and culturally;

- to enable learners to understand people across cultural barriers, by providing insight into their ways of life and thinking;

- to enable learners to communicate in their L2 or FL language with native speakers of the language.

Methods of instruction are dependent upon the aims and objectives of teaching the particular subject. For example if the aim of teaching an L2 or FL is for learners to attain the skill of writing, then the method of instruction will focus on the writing skill. On the other hand if oral proficiency is an important aim, then the oral approach to teaching the language will be used. Thus aims are inextricably linked with the choice of teaching methodology.

3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language

Mahomed (1987:5) highlights general and specific aims of language study adapting them from Trim (1984) and from a report of a working party of the British National Congress on Languages in Education on *Criteria for modern language examining at 16+*.

According to Mahomed (1987:5-6) the specific aims for the study of Arabic are to:

- extend the learner's horizon of communication beyond that of his/her own linguistic community;

- enable the learner to search for, discover and understand information relevant to own needs and interests through the medium of Arabic;

- enable the learner to realise the validity of other ways of organising, categorising and expressing experience, and of other ways of managing personal interactions;

- raise the learner's general level of language awareness, i.e. the characteristic properties and make-up of the learner's own language in relation to those of Arabic, and of the uses to which the language is put in everyday life;

- develop the learner's confidence, through a limited but successful experience of learning and using Arabic, in an ability to meet challenges posed by living in a foreign environment, even though temporarily (like during pilgrimage);

- enable the learner to mediate between monolingual members of the two language communities;

- enable the learner to imaginatively extend the repertory of roles the learner can construct and play within contexts in which Arabic can be used, such that he/she: (a) engages purposively and appropriately in those contexts; (b) reflects on the processes of language and of social interaction involved; (c) develops an understanding of the complexities of personal interaction in the social context;

- enable the learner to develop the study skills necessary to the effective, self-directed study of other languages in later life;

- bring the learner closer to the original sources of Islam via the medium of Arabic;

- increase the learner's understanding of Islam;

- develop an appreciation of, and love for, the Arabic language and literature;

- facilitate the learner's vocational tasks later in life;

- offer insights into the geography, history, culture and religion of the Arabic-speaking countries;

- facilitate the learner's understanding of Islam's primary and secondary sources of law, (i.e. the Qur'an and Hadith).

Dadoo (1990:81)) identifies two categories of objectives of Arabic learning for South Africans: religious and mundane. He states that for Muslims, religious reasons are paramount, while for non-Muslims economic opportunity motivates the learning of the language. Some of the religious reasons for learning Arabic are:

- understanding of the Divine Scripture;

- understanding all primary and secondary Islamic sciences, since majority are in Arabic;

- understanding Hadith which is a vehicle of Prophet Muhammad's thoughts;

- it is a symbol of Muslim unity as it is the only language for certain rituals like the calls to prayer (adhan), prayers (salaah), recitation of the Qur'an, the confession of faith and other religious formulae (Dadoo 1990:81).

Most private schools in South Africa and Botswana are affiliated to the Association of Muslim Schools. The aims as set out in the standards 2, 3, 4 and 5 syllabi for Arabic are as follows:

- to create in pupils a love for the Arabic language;

- to teach pupils to express themselves correctly and clearly in spoken and written Arabic, and to enable them to use Arabic with increasing ability and confidence;

- to introduce pupils to correct Arabic use, and to help them develop the necessary language skills which would contribute to effective learning, expression and communication;

- to teach pupils to read fluently and with understanding (Dawood, Amod & Kader 1996:2).

These aims correspond exactly with those set out in the House of Delegates syllabi for Standards 2, 3, 4 and 5, implemented from 1991 (House of Delegates 1990:1). Additionally the House of Delegates syllabus also stipulates that since "language competence grows through an interaction of listening, reading, talking, writing and experience," the various sections of the syllabus content "viz. Oral Communication, Language Study and Written Communication" should "be integrated and the subject should be treated as a whole" (House of Delegates 1990:1).

On examination of the various documents delineating the aims of Arabic learning and teaching, it is clearly evident that understanding is an extremely important skill that the learner must acquire, regardless of whether

the study of the language is motivated by religious or economic reasons. In all instances, the aim of studying

Arabic is to be able to comprehend the language and communicate in the spoken and written form.

3.4 Defining terminology commonly used in language teaching

Between the 1880s and the 1980s linguistics searched for the ideal method for L2 and FL teaching. From the

grammar-translation method through the audio-lingual method to the methods of the 1970s, attempts were

made to search for this ideal method of language teaching. In the latter part of the twentieth century, what

Brown (1994:158) calls a 'paradigm shift' in language teaching took place. This is "characterised by an

enlightened, dynamic approach to language teaching in which teachers and curriculum developers are

searching for valid communicative, interactive techniques suitable for learners pursuing specific goals in

specific contexts"(Brown 1994:158). As can be seen from Brown's explanation, terminology such as

approach and technique, are often used when referring to language teaching. In addition words such as

method, procedure, curriculum, syllabus, etc. are used in literature pertaining to language teaching and it is

therefore necessary to define and explain them.

The researcher uses the terminology according to Brown's (1994:159) description of its use in pedagogical

literature:

> *Methodology:* This is the study of pedagogical practices in general, including theoretical
>
> underpinnings and related research.
>
> *Approach:* Theoretical positions and beliefs about the nature of language and language learning, and
>
> the applicability of both to pedagogical settings.
>
> *Method:* A generalized, prescribed set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic
>
> objectives. Primarily concerned with teacher and learner behaviours and roles, and with objectives
>
> and materials. They could be broadly applied, for various learners in a variety of contexts.
>
> *Curriculum/syllabus:* This is a design for a particular language programme. It is concerned with
>
> objectives, sequencing, and materials to meet the needs of specific learners in a defined context. In
>
> addition to Brown's definition, Beauchamp (1982) quoted in Mahomed (1987:3) states that a

curriculum is a "written plan depicting the scope and arrangement of the projected educational programme for a school". Kruger (Mahomed 1987:3) further elucidates that a curriculum is "a selection and ordering of learning content which is planned as a programme in which there is a functional inter-relatedness between situation analysis, formulation of aims, goals and objectives, planned learning experiences, the actualisation of learning opportunities and evaluation," while a syllabus is "merely a list of content, and it does not suggest methods, activities and measures for evaluation".

Technique: Any of a wide variety of exercises, activities, or devices used in a language classroom to realise lesson objectives.

All the above definitions are also supported by Bashir (1982:159).

3.5 An evaluative discussion of second and foreign language teaching methodologies

Rivers (1981:26) distinguishes two distinct language approaches: formalists and activists. The first approach focuses on forms of the language while the second focusses on active or functional use of the language by learners. Formalists favour a passive classroom where there is emphasis on teaching the language and activists provide opportunities for learners to learn the language. This results in divergent approaches to teaching the four language skills. While the formalists emphasise the reading and writing skills, activists focus on speaking and listening as an accompaniment to reading and writing. Mahomed (1987:12) cites three major approaches to language teaching that were identified by Roberts (1982):

- the traditional approach;
- the humanistic approach;
- the communicative approach.

The traditional approach incorporates the grammar-translation method, the direct method, audio-lingual method, as well as the eclectic compromises that have emerged in the early seventies. According to Roberts (Mahomed 1987:14) the humanistic approach "stresses the creation of learning environments that minimise

anxiety, enhance personal security, and promote genuine interest through a deeper engagement of the learner's whole self". It is based on two assumptions: (a) the affective aspects of language learning are as important as the cognitive aspects, (b) language-learning problems can be addressed through psychology rather than linguistics. Other approaches, that fall under the umbrella of the humanistic approach, are the silent way, community language learning, delayed oral response, suggestopedia and total physical response. However, the communicative approach to language teaching propagates the idea that a particular method cannot be singled out to achieve communicative competence. Instead methods have to be selected according to the skill being taught. Nonetheless some methods that are commonly used in this approach are notional-functional syllabi, the cognitive code, immersion programmes and the eclectic approach.

As we stand at the threshold of a new millennium, we see the dawn of yet another era of language learning. The current emphasis is on learner-centred education, problem solving, holistic learning and knowledge construction and collaboration (Murphy 1999:20). While no distinct method of teaching is prescribed for this approach, it is necessary to take cognisance of the latest developments in L2 and FL learning.

3.5.1 The grammar-translation method

According to Bashir (1982:154), the main reason for having different language teaching methods is because of varying definitions of 'language' itself. The association of language with thought is reflected in the theoretical position that "teaching a language was equated with the teaching of its grammar whose categories are manifestations of rational thought" (Bashir 1982:154). This led to the development of the grammar-translation method. Three of the most important aims of the grammar-translation method, according to Leschinsky (1983:20), are to prepare the learner to understand literature in the L2, to enhance the understanding of the L1 and to enhance intellectual development. This method regards printed/written language as superior to spoken language, and literacy as superior to oracy. Learning about the form of the language is more important than learning how to use it effectively (Wessels & Van den Berg 1998:65).

Until after the Second World War the belief was that a very high level of general intelligence was required to

learn an L2 or FL (Hilton 1974:2). The very intelligent were taught the elementary phonic drill, followed by grammar, with very little oral work or pleasure reading. Learners studying an L2 or FL through this method learn grammar rules and exceptions, memorise paradigms and vocabulary lists and become reasonably capable at taking dictation and translating texts from the L2 or FL into the L1. The ability and proficiency in the language is measured by ability to translate to and from the target language and the L2 or FL is taught through the medium of the learner's L1 (Richards and Rodgers 1991:3-4; Rivers 1981:29-30; Leschinsky 1983:20; Mentel 2000:4).

Rivers (1981:31) states that since there is no emphasis on oral communication in this method, speaking skills are sorely lacking and there is very little practical use of the language. Little attention is given to accurate pronunciation, intonation and stress patterns. This method is limited because there is too much stress on knowing the rules and exceptions and minimal opportunity for expression of personal meaning (Stevenson 1993:109). The facilitator is the teacher and is regarded as the source of all knowledge and the learners are empty vessels that have to be filled (Wessels & Van der Walt 1998:63). Communicative skills are neglected and learners taught through this method are often confused when addressed in the L2 and FL, because they have had little practise in speaking and listening to it, and they may also be very embarrassed when asked to pronounce anything themselves (Jadwat 98:106-107). Often the language learned through this method is of a literary type and the vocabulary too detailed for learners with average ability.

Krashen (1985:131) believes that grammar plays a minute role in language acquisition - it is "a minor supplement to naturally acquired competence". He states that numerous studies like those of Hoyt (1906), Rapeer (1913), and Asker (1923), who reported low correlations between grammar tests and essay tests for high school students, prove that studying grammar has little or no effect on writing. (Krashen 1985:131). Krashen (1985:132) believes that students should be allowed to acquire grammar through reading, as this is more pleasant and has a higher success rate. According to Richards & Rodgers (1991:5) and Brown (1994:17), there is no theory, rationale or justification for the grammar-translation method even though it is still practised. Another negative factor according to Jadwat (1998:107) is that the role of the learner in the classroom is a passive one, for the greater part of the time.

The benefits of this approach to language teaching, according to Stevenson (1993:110) are:

● conscious rule application may contribute to increased accuracy in some situations;

● conscious linguistic knowledge may satisfy the curiosity of adult learners, and may increase their
  feeling of control over the learning situation.

While the grammar-translation method does achieve its aims with the intellectually endowed learners, who are able to translate texts and apply the rules they have learned, it does not focus on developing speaking skills. However, after several years of study, learners who have acquired an extensive vocabulary and grasped the structure of the language and have had the opportunity to live for a period of time in an area where the language is spoken may be able to achieve communicative competence in the language (Jadwat 1998:107-108).

3.5.2 The direct method

As a result of criticism against the grammar-translation method, linguists turned to developing new approaches to L2 and FL teaching. Theorists advocating the natural approach examined L1 acquisition and related its principles to L2 learning. They focussed on the natural development of the L1 and proposed that L2 should be taught in a corresponding manner. This led to the development of the *direct method* which advocated an active approach to language learning.

According to Wattenmaker and Wison (1980:8):

> The essential element of the direct method is the learning of grammar and vocabulary through
> meaningful use so that understanding is quickly internalized by means of personal experience

Most theorists shared beliefs that the new approach should be based on the following:

● oral work should be the focus of instruction;

● learners should hear the language before being exposed to the written form. Thus speech and listening
  comprehension were taught;

- sentences and words should be practised in context rather than in isolation and commonly used vocabulary should be taught through demonstration and association;

- grammar should be taught inductively, where learners have an opportunity to practise it within context before being taught the rules, rather than deductively, as was the case in grammar-translation;

- focus should not be translation;

- correct pronunciation should be emphasised (Richards & Rodgers 1991:8-10).

Thus, these theorists were of the opinion that learners learned an L2 or FL through understanding and use of the language, as this was the way in which children learned their L1. The method that developed at the time became known as the *direct method* which "advocated learning a new language through direct association of words and phrases with objects and actions, without the use of the native language by teacher or student" (Rivers 1981:32). Translation was abandoned, although grammar was learned functionally through practice based on the areas which were being continually used in speech. Speech preceded reading. Reading texts were based on subjects that were previously discussed orally, and learners were encouraged to deduce meanings through pictures or gestures if necessary. In short the aim was to develop the ability to think in the target language.

Although the direct method is a much more exciting way of learning a language, it has many disadvantages. Mahomed (1987:12) states that:

> It was not good enough for speaking with a native speaker. Reading and writing were deferred, sometimes for years. The gradation and sequence of materials were not based on realistic spoken speech.

While it allows for active participation of learners and encourages communication, it requires teachers who have native-like fluency in the language. As it is largely dependent on the teacher's skill, teachers who are not proficient enough in the language are unable to follow its principles. Since it overemphasised the similarity with L1 acquisition it failed to consider practical implications. Also its strict adherence to teaching in the target language was sometimes counter-productive (Richards & Rodgers 1991:10).

3.5.3 The reading method

One of the main problems of the direct method was that teachers did not have the necessary didactic insight and the required oral proficiency in the target language (Leschinsky 1983:26). This led to an investigation into L2 and FL instruction and the commission that was responsible for this recommended that there should be an extension of reading activities during instruction (Leschinsky 1983:26). This marked the development of the reading method of instruction.

The Coleman report (1929) published the results of an American study, funded by the *Carnegie Corporation* which examined L2 and FL teaching. The study commenced in 1923, and concluded that teaching conversation skills was impractical given time restrictions and the perceived irrelevance of foreign conversational skills (Murphy 1999: 28; Richards & Rodgers 1991:11; Rivers 1981:35). The report advocated that the aim of L2 and FL learning should be to achieve a reading knowledge, through the introduction of words and grammatical structures in simple texts. Thus as a result of this report, reading became the focus of instruction, particularly in the United States (Richards & Rodgers 1991:11).

Whilst minimal emphasis was placed on grammar, learners had to be taught to read passages with "direct apprehension of meaning, without a conscious effort to translate what they were reading" (Rivers 1981:35). Initially learners begin learning the language by developing oral skills, and by listening and speaking in simple sentences. This is continually reinforced through the reading of texts and through reading aloud by teacher and learners. According to Rivers (1981:36-37) the main part of the course is divided into *intensive* and *extensive* reading. *Intensive* reading is analytical and focusses on grammatical structure and the acquisition of vocabulary. Under strict supervision of the teacher, it encourages the learner to read in complete sentences and comprehend through inference. *Extensive* reading is individualised, allowing learners through graded readers to develop their reading ability independently. Comprehension is tested through questions rather than translation. Also learners are encouraged to learn about the cultural background of the language they are learning through group projects which entail further reading (Rivers 1981:37).

Like the grammar-translation method, the reading method effectively achieved its goals with learners of higher ability. However it proved to be extremely frustrating for others, especially those with reading problems in their native language. According to Rivers (1981:38) the reading method in the period following the Coleman Report produced students who were unable to comprehend and speak the language beyond the very simplest of exchanges. The system of graded-readers gave a false sense of accomplishment, and made quantity of pages read the focus rather than understanding and comprehension. It became evident that the over-emphasis on the reading skill was insufficient in the learning of L2 or FL. Jadwat (1998:90) believes that both the grammar-translation method and the reading method have produced students with an ability only to read and write Arabic, they disregard the two basic skills of understanding and speaking the language. This is probably one of the main reasons why learners who have studied Arabic through these approaches are unable to use Arabic functionally, i.e. to understand and speak Arabic.

3.5.4 The audio-lingual method

The United States' entry into World War II had a great impact on language teaching, especially in America, since the government commissioned universities to develop L2 and FL programmes that enabled learners to speak and understand the language within a fairly short period of study (Rivers 1981:38; Richards & Rodgers 1991:44). A specialised programme for the army was developed. This used intensive drilling, focussing on developing oral fluency in an L2 and FL (Brown 1994:70). This programme drew sufficient attention and eventually, together with structural linguistics, became the basis for the development of the audio-lingual method of teaching.

Charles Fries, director of the language institute at the University of Michigan in 1939, developed a teaching methodology based on structural linguistics (Richards & Rodgers 1991:46; Rivers 1981:39). Linguists attempted to describe sound patterns and word combinations of various languages. Language was taught, based on its structure, through systematic attention being given to pronunciation and sentence patterns. The former was taught through intensive drilling while practice of the latter became basic classroom technique. Across the Atlantic, British linguists independently developed a very similar approach called the *Oral*

Approach, the major difference being the emphasis on the structural comparison of languages *(Contrastive Analysis,* cf **2.7.1 Behaviourism and the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis**) by the Americans (Richards & Rodgers 1991:46).

The audio-lingual method developed from a combination of structural linguistic theory, contrastive analysis and oral procedures, together with the influence of behaviourist psychology. For the proponents of behaviourism, language was culturally determined and learned through habit formation. They viewed language as an object, separated from its user (Bashir 1982:155), and believed that since infants learned their L1 through reinforcement and reward from significant others, this could be extended to L2 learning (Rivers 1981:39). It was theorised that if learners could imitate a person's behaviour, then they could similarly be taught a language (Menyuk 1990:263) (cf **2.6.1 Behaviourist theory**).

Coupled with this perspective and the emphasis on communicating in an L2 and FL, the audio-lingual method evolved. It advocated aural training first, then pronunciation training, followed by speaking, reading and writing (Richards & Rodgers 1991:47). According to the audio-lingual approach an L2 is acquired "through the mechanistic formation of language habits by means of repetition, memorisation and patten drill" (Leschinsky 1983:29-30). However, Wattenmaker and Wilson (1980:10) state that the ideal way to learn an L2 and FL is to be immersed in the foreign culture, to hear native speakers use the language, to discover meaning, and then to use the language. Conversations and dialogues should not be memorised. They should provide functional vocabulary and teach meaningful grammar usage. Wattenmaker and Wilson (1980:10) suggest that this can be achieved through the audio-lingual method.

Rivers (1981:41-43) mentions the five points guiding teachers to apply this method that were developed by William Moulton:
- language is speech, not writing;
- it is a set of habits;
- teach the language and not about it;
- it contains structures that are commonly used by native speakers and not in textbooks;

- all languages differ.

Thus there was tremendous emphasis on spoken language and learners were exposed to colloquial forms of the language, rather than literary language. The application of Skinner's *Operant Conditioning* in psychology translated into memorisation and drilling in the audio-lingual method (Comrie 2000:2). This was an attempt to enable learners to have automatic control of the structure and framework of the language. Materials were designed to focus on specific problem areas of a particular language to alleviate contrastive difficulties (Rivers 1981:43; Brown 1994:71).

The audio-lingual method focussed on the development of all four language skills with particular emphasis on listening and speaking. It has been successful in developing comprehension and fluency and since reading and writing are based on the learners' developing knowledge of the structure of the language, these skills are also developed (Rivers 1981:46). However, problems may arise with drilling procedures, since learners were unable to apply skills learned in the classroom to communication outside (Richards & Rodgers 1991:59). Given a particular stimulus, learners may be able to provide a suitable response but be unable to apply these to varying situations. It therefore became necessary for learners to be provided the opportunity to practise drills in communication situations. Dialogues and drills should be carefully structured to ensure that learners are able to apply the structures to express their own meanings. Further criticism of this method resulted from Chomsky's (1966) criticism of behaviouristic view of language learning (Richards & Rodgers 1991:59). He insisted that human language was not the result of imitation but the development of an innate ability and since the theory was questioned, the teaching method also became questionable (cf **2.6.1 Behaviourist theory**).

Wessels and Van den Berg (1998:64) are of the opinion that although the goal of the audio-lingual method is communication, most of the time this does not happen because the facilitator provides the input and the learners' output is mere imitation.

Rivers (1981:47) believes that the audio-lingual method of teaching is more appropriate for younger learners who enjoy mimicking and role playing rather than explanations (as is the case with adults and those young learners of higher intelligence). This idea is also supported by Mahomed (1987:13). It may also be a useful

and effective method for the less gifted. This method also makes serious demands on the teacher as it is teacher-centred. It requires someone who speaks the language almost natively, to ensure effective modelling. To promote this, tape recorders and language laboratories became an essential part of the audio-lingual method (Richards & Rodgers 1991:57).

One of the problems with the audio-lingual method was that learners were not provided with the opportunity to use the language in a meaningful and communicative way, since the repetition of drills were a means of practising patterns rather than a meaningful exchange of messages (Lee & Vanpatten 1995:7). Learners were not allowed to say anything original, for fear of making errors, which could become bad habits. Since language was learned through habit formation, only correct utterances were encouraged.

The audio-lingual method is mainly blamed for the phenomenon of 'barking at print' (i.e. reading fluently but without understanding the meaning of the written message).

Wessels and Van den Berg (1998:201) set out the reasons for barking at print as follows:
- The audio-lingual method was dominant from the 1940s to the 1960s. This method is based on the belief that linguistic ability is acquired through imitation, and, therefore pattern drill and rote learning are its core.
- The audio-lingual method insists that learners speak well before being exposed to written texts.
- Many learners who were taught an additional language by means of the audio-lingual method acquired the phenomenon 'barking at print', because of the emphasis placed on memorising dialogues and sentences.
- 'Barking at print' often occurs when learners are taught decoding skills while comprehension and recall are largely ignored.

As most learners 'bark at print' when reading Arabic, they are unable to comprehend what they are reading and hence cannot utilise the vocabulary to communicate in Arabic. The learners are merely learning the structural pattern of the language and are therefore able to parrot it without understanding or application.

They learn to 'read' (especially the Qur'an,) through imitation and pattern drills, rather than through the use of contextual clues and acumen.

3.5.5 The audiovisual method

This method complements the audio-lingual method with regard to psychological and linguistic principles (Leschinsky 1983:41). Like the direct method, oral skills take preference here. Language is presented through visual materials (like slides, films, pictures etc.) which form an integral part of the language material. According to Girard (1974) quoted in Leschinsky (1983:41) the audiovisual method is extremely useful for initial instruction.

3.5.6 Community language learning

In the 1970s researchers recognised the fundamentally affective and interpersonal nature of all learning (Brown 1994:95). With the increased realisation of both cognitive as well as affective factors, a revolution in language teaching methods commenced. The first of these methods was developed by Charles Curran (1972). The community learning method of language teaching was based on Carl Roger's view of education, "in which students and teacher join together to facilitate learning in a context of valuing and prizing each individual in the group" (Brown 1994:95-96). The teacher becomes a counsellor or facilitator in this context, and does not pose any threats or limitations. Learners and their needs are the focus of attention (Brown 1994:96).

Every learner is regarded as a whole person in a community and all aspects of the personality are taken into consideration (Wessels & Van den Berg 1998:66). Learners are given complete freedom to talk about anything they want (Wattenmaker & Wilson 1980:20). They communicate in their mother-tongue and the utterance is translated by the facilitator into the L2 or FL. The learner repeats this. A peer then responds to this in the mother-tongue. This is once again translated into the L2 or FL by the teacher, repeated by the learner and so the conversation continues (Brown 1994:96; Wattenmaker & Wilson 1980:20). These

conversations are usually recorded for learners to listen to and inductively to gain information about the language. The conversational procedure continues until learners are able to communicate increasingly in the L2 or FL. Community language learning involves a small group of learners and is aimed at developing a community feeling (Wattenmaker & Wilson 1980:20).

While this approach has the advantage of developing autonomous learning, and a supportive peer group, there are some disadvantages. Since the method depends on the translation ability of the teacher, nuances of the language may be lost if accurate translation does not occur (Brown 1994:96). Also the inductive study of the language could pose to be a problem for learners. This could be alleviated by allowing the teacher to play a more active role through the direction of activities and some deductive learning. Further, in classes where learners represent many language backgrounds (which is usually the case in Arabic classes), the teacher has to be competent in all of the native languages represented, in order to be able to translate correctly (Brown 1977:371). In conclusion, while community language learning has brought a fresh approach to language teaching, it is clearly evident that the numerous problems that exist in the use of this approach, are not easily resolved.

3.5.7 Total physical response (TPR)

Total physical response (TPR) is another method of language teaching that was developed in the 1970s. It is a methodology developed around the coordination of speech with action. Thus the general objectives of TPR are to teach oral proficiency at a beginner's level (Richards & Rodgers 1991:91). This method was developed by James Asher (1977) who believed that since physical response and language learning were interlinked, new vocabulary would be easily remembered if it was associated with a particular physical action (Nieman 1996:32). He proposed that since children found it difficult to sit still and concentrate for long periods of time, they should be engaged in various classroom activities which are physical. In this method of language teaching learners carry out actions commanded by the teacher. First the actions are carried out by the teacher, while learners listen and watch. Then they are performed by the learners with the teacher (Lee & Vanpatten 1995:52).

Initially (approximately within the first ten hours) the learners remain silent but obey commands that are given by the teacher in the target language (Stevenson 1993:114). This involves the giving of instructions for learners to act out. After the initial stage learners verbalise instructions while acting them out (Brown 1994:99). The focus of teaching is on the imperative form of the verb, since Asher believed that it was "the central linguistic motif around which language use and learning are organised" (Richards & Rodgers 1991:88).

Unlike the grammar-translation method, TPR focussed on meaning rather than form of language. It provided Krashen's (1985) 'comprehensible input'. Like the direct method, grammar is taught inductively and selected according to classroom use as is vocabulary. In a typical classroom where TPR is being used, imperative drills used to elicit physical response and activity, are an essential feature. After the beginning stages conversational dialogues and other classroom activities like role playing and slide presentations are gradually introduced. The reasoning for this delay is because, according to Asher (Richards & Rodgers 1991:93), "everyday conversations are highly abstract and disconnected; therefore to understand them requires a rather advanced internalisation of the target language".

Asher based this method of teaching on his view that L2 learning in a developmental sense is a parallel process to L1 acquisition. He believed that since initial speech directed to young children consists of commands followed by their response through action, this should be recapitulated with L2 (Richards & Rodgers 1991:87; Brown 1994:98). Learners should be allowed a silent period to increase their listening comprehension ability, as is evident from comparative studies done in the United States in the listening comprehension of German students (Stevenson 1993:115). Asher further suggested that teachers should initially provide minimal correction through feedback, as is the case with parents when children are young. Gradually error correction should increase and mimic the development of L1 acquisition. Through this approach he emphasised the development of comprehension skills before productive skills.

The main limitation with this method is that although it was "especially effective in the beginning levels of language proficiency", it lost "its distinctiveness as learners advanced in their competence" (Brown 1994:99).

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However, Asher suggested that TPR be used together with other methods and techniques of teaching as it is compatible with many other methods (Richards & Rodgers 1991:97).

3.5.8 The natural approach

This method, also developed in the 1970s, was founded by Tracey Terrell (Krashen & Terrell 1983), and is based on Krashen's (1982) theories of SLA. In agreement with Asher's idea that learners would benefit from delayed speech, this approach advocated the use of TPR during the initial stages of L2 learning in an attempt to provide 'comprehensible input' which eventually triggers language acquisition (Brown 1994:99). Learners were allowed a 'silent period' during which they were exposed to everyday language situations. The aim was to develop interpersonal skills in the L2.

The main criticism of this approach was the emphasis on 'the silent period'. Researchers argue that since language is interactive, too much of emphasis on 'the silent period' could in fact interfere with the acquisition process (Brown 1994:100). However it is important also not to pressurise learners to produce the language too soon as this could also have an adverse effect.

3.5.9 Suggestopedia

This method was developed by Lozanov (1979), who claimed that human beings were capable of learning much more than what they gave themselves credit for (Brown 1994:97). He developed a learning method that "capitalised on relaxed states of mind for maximum retention of material" (Brown 1994:97). Music was central to his method. It also focussed on the decoration, furniture, and arrangement of the classroom as well as the authoritative behaviour of the teacher (Richards & Rodgers 1991:142; Nieman 1996:34). Suggestopedia focusses on developing an optimal learning environment and the development of advanced conversational proficiency in a short period of time.

According to Richard and Rodgers (1991:149),

> The primary role of the teacher is to create situations in which the learner is most suggestible and then to present linguistic material in a way most likely to encourage positive reception and retention by the learner.

This method received criticism by a number of researchers. Firstly Lozanov's experimental data was questioned. Then, the practicality of his method was questioned since comfortable chairs and music were not always available to teachers. However, Brown (1994:97) suggests that the idea of having a relaxed atmosphere and a relaxed mind may help to build learners' self confidence and hence facilitate learning.

3.5.10 The communicative approach (CLT)

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is best described as an approach to language teaching rather than a method (cf **3.4 Defining terminology used in language teaching**). It offers a broad perspective and theoretical stance about the nature of language learning and teaching. This approach evolved as a result of various insights made by psycholinguists, sociolinguists, applied linguists and educationists into the process of learning and teaching a language (Jadwat 1998:199). The major shift in language learning theories has been from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred approach. While CLT focusses on communicative competence and negotiation of learner's needs, the previous approaches to language teaching were more concerned with the rules of grammar and the structure of the language. According to CLT, the ability to manipulate the structures of language correctly is only one aspect of what is involved in learning a language.

According to Johnson (Jadwat 1998:201):

> There is 'a something else' that needs to be learned, and this 'something else' involves the ability to be appropriate, to know the right thing to say at the right time.

Essentially, this refers to the rules of use, the rules of communication, both spoken and written. It focusses on the functional use of the language which is intended to lead to communicative competence rather than

grammatical or linguistic competence only. Both linguistic and communicative competence need to be achieved when learning or acquiring an L2 or FL. Jadwat (1998:209) refers to Widdowson (1978) who is of the opinion that the best way to achieve this is to associate the teaching of the L2 and FL with topics drawn from other subjects in the school curriculum so that the learners' own experience of language can be extended into a different field of realisation.

CLT is based on the premise that the L2 is acquired in much the same way as the L1, subconsciously, through being exposed to large doses of the language within a context through which the acquirer is able to comprehend the messages. "While the learner listens to the language, the brain processes it: it assimilates, sorts, stores the language information subconsciously" (Odendaal undated:1). Thus, language is acquired holistically. The basis of CLT is that the language is taught through communication rather than language structure, so that the learners are able to communicate in it, rather than explain how it is structured grammatically.

The syllabus would thus include topics like 'introducing yourself', 'at the bus stop', rather than 'nouns', 'adjectives' and 'the verbal sentence'. In this approach the teacher is expected to provide opportunities for communication, adopting the role of an architect and resource person (Lee & Vanpatten 1995:12-13). This should involve real-life exchange of messages rather than the repetition of scripts (as was the case in the audio-lingual method) or questions and answers controlled by the teacher (Lee & Vanpatten 1995:8-9).

According to Brown (1994:245) and Rodgers, in Richards (1978:252) the distinguishing features of CLT are:
- emphasis on meanings of the message rather than formal structure;
- emphasis on communication rather than correctness;
- emphasis on problem solving, intuition, context interpreting strategies as opposed to modelling and memory;
- emphasis on creating content and utterance rather than on using content and situation;
- more emphasis on student-student interaction than on teacher-student interaction;
- emphasis on the use of extra-linguistic (games, enactments, etc.) and para-linguistic devices like

- gesture, tone and expression;

- ● emphasis on physical teaching environments that encourage group observation and participation rather than on physical arrangements that favour the teacher only;

- ● focus on positive first language transfer rather than on first language interference.

Since CLT emphasises the learner-centred approach, its emphasis on communication (particularly discussion) is aimed at achieving a balance between fluency and correctness. Unlike the audio-lingual approach, senseless memorisation is avoided, and there is emphasis on meaning and the transfer of meaning. In this approach everyday functional language use is taught in context (Swanepoel &Nieman 1999:30). Learners are encouraged to use the target language, both productively and receptively, in unrehearsed situations. This implies that the teacher has to be very proficient in the language, and could pose a problem for a non-native teacher of the language, as is the case for Arabic. However the problem may be overcome with the use of technology (like films, videos, television, computer software, audio tapes etc.) (Brown 1994:246). CLT is an approach that requires the integration of various techniques and methods of teaching to achieve communicative competence and seems to be the broadest and most practical approach discussed thus far.

3.5.11 Notional-Functional syllabi

This approach was a pre-cursor to CLT. The concept 'notion' refers to situations about which one communicates, for example speaking or writing about a particular topic, while 'function' indicates what one wishes to do with the language, for example to ask for or give directions, to greet someone, to express sympathy, etc.

Brown (1994:246) states that:

> the distinguishing characteristic of the notional-functional syllabus is its attention to function as the organising element of a foreign language curriculum.

Notional-functional syllabi was developed initially in the United Kingdom and grew in popularity in the

1970s. Wilkins (1972) proposed a functional or communicative definition of language which served as a basis for the development of communicative syllabi (Richards & Rodgers 1991:65). He explained that there were two types of meanings behind the communicative uses of language. The first he called notional categories, which included concepts such as time sequence, quantity, location, frequency; and the second category was communicative function which included requests, denials, offers, complaints etc. (Richards & Rodgers 1991:65). Several other researchers approached L2 teaching in a similar manner and eventually the communicative approach or the functional, or functional-notional approach (as it is also known) evolved.

This approach is viewed as the means of achieving communicative competence through the development of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. It is therefore seen as a comprehensive approach to language teaching rather than as a method, since it encompasses several methods of teaching.

Its theoretical basis has some of the following characteristics:

- language is a system for expressing meaning;
- the primary function of language is interaction and communication;
- language structure reflects its functional and communicative uses;
- primary units of language are categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse rather than grammatical and structural features (Richards & Rodgers 1991:71).

A typical course will consist of introductions, greetings, goodbyes, invitations, apologies, condolences, gratitude, compliments, congratulations, requests, commands, warnings, directions, offers, seeking permission, advice, intentions, pleasure, displeasure, expressing your opinion, asking people to repeat themselves, interrupting someone, changing the topic of conversation, according to Coffey (1983) (Brown 1994:247). Since the purpose of notional-functional syllabi is "functional, pragmatic communication between and among human beings", learners are taught appropriate communicative behaviour while acquiring the grammar of the language meaningfully (Brown 1994:247). In other words, learners are encouraged to express, interpret and negotiate meaning without being constrained to ensure grammatical perfection. They are

however, guided to ensure correct grammar use, without grammar being the focus of teaching, as in the grammar-translation method.

Notional syllabi have been criticised for presenting a series of functional units of language in isolation. Thus one of its critics, Henry Widdowson (1978) states that context is the most important aspect of functional language, rather than provision of functional units in a textbook (Brown 1994:248). Notional-functional syllabi are an integral part of CLT.

3.5.12 The cognitive code

Like notional-functional syllabi, the main focus of this approach is the development of the communicative skill. The aim is to offer the learner, language that will be needed in real communication situations.

According to Silva (1975) the cognitive code of learning is based on the following principles:

- to develop learners' competency to communicate in a creative and purposeful manner;

- since language learning is a conscious occurrence, understanding is of vital importance to the learner and it is imperative for the teacher to utilise the cognitive abilities of the learner;

- learners must be encouraged to communicate in the second language;

- language that occurs naturally in situations should be used;

- there should be sufficient exposure to the spoken and written forms of the language;

- making mistakes is an essential part of L2 learning;

- language instruction procedures should be meaningful and interesting;

- opportunities should be created for learners to use the language creatively and resourcefully so that their feelings and ideas can be reflected (Leschinsky 1983:50-52).

3.5.13 Immersion programmes

Immersion programmes imply:

> the use of the foreign language throughout the school day by teachers and students, for
>
> teaching the various subjects of the elementary school curriculum. Fluency in the language is
>
> expected after four or more years in the programme (Lipton 1992:2).

Research on L2 and FL learning indicates that learners who are exposed to classrooms, where the language is not taught, but is the medium of instruction, and where learners are allowed to understand, speak, read and write in the language, acquire the L2 and FL. Such programmes are called *immersion programmes*. They provide a 'natural environment' for L2 acquisition (Stevenson 1993:107). In classrooms where emphasis is on functional communication activities in real-life situations, and where words and expressions are taught within their context and culture, L2 and FL learning is achieved (Lipton 1994:154-155). There are two types of immersion programmes: full immersion and partial immersion. The former refers to programmes "that begin in kindergarten and extend into the upper grades" (Stevenson 1993:107). While partial immersion programmes may involve the L2 as the medium of instruction, but a few subjects may be taught in the L1.

Immersion programmes succeed very well, as can be seen from the Canadian immersion programmes which produced fairly fluent speakers of French (Krashen 1985:62; Stevenson 1993:107-108). The reason for this is because the focus is on the message rather than on grammar and vocabulary. Hence they provide Krashen's 'comprehensible input' which is vital to language acquisition.

3.5.14 The eclectic approach

This approach to teaching is most common. Teachers generally use a method that they are most comfortable with and that they have found most effective through experience, but from time to time experiment with new methods and techniques. They often combine different methods of teaching and adapt approaches to suit the particular needs of learners.

Eclecticists try to:

absorb the best techniques of all the well-known language-teaching methods into their classroom

procedures, using them for the purposes for which they are most appropriate (Rivers 1981:55).

Since no one theory or method of L2 or FL teaching is flawless, the eclectic approach seems to be the most

sensible and practical, as it can encompass a variety of methods and techniques, catering for the needs of a

particular situation. An L2 or FL teacher should be able to adopt various techniques and combine them to

expedite the acquisition of the four language skills, which are focal to the accomplishment of communicative

competence.

3.5.15 A new era of language learning

Towards the latter part of the twentieth century a new era of language learning has started emerging (Murphy

1999:19). While the focus is still on communicative competence and emphasis is placed on functional use of

the language, other aspects such as personal control of learning, individual and collective discovery, problem

solving, holistic learning and learner-centred education are also areas that have been identified.

Constructivism suggests an approach to teaching that:

gives learners the opportunity for concrete contextually meaningful experience through which they

can search for patterns, raise their own questions and construct their own models, concepts and

strategies (Murphy 1999:21) .

According to this approach the classroom is seen as a mini-society, a community of learners engaged in

activity, discourse and reflection. Thus interaction in the target language will influence the quality of language

learning. William and Burden (1997) propose that what each individual learns and how his/her language

system develops cannot be predicted since learners learn what is meaningful to them (Murphy 1999:22). It

therefore becomes necessary for teachers to grasp what learners see as important and meaningful. Further,

since education does not occur in isolation, the cultural, social, political and educational contexts will

influence the kind of learning that takes place (Murphy 1999:22).

It is therefore evident that teachers will have to provide a variety of language learning activities which allow for different learning styles and individual preferences and personalities. Another aspect that should be noted is the individual's self-concept, as this strongly influences the way in which a learner learns. Pusak and Otto (1997) have emphasised the holistic approach to language learning (Murphy 1999:32). They see students as lifelong learners who can develop critical thinking skills through collaborative group work, using performance-based assessment in a multi-disciplinary context through a broad language curriculum (Murphy 1999:32). The teacher's role becomes one of a mediator in a language classroom. He/She has to foster the right climate for individual respect, for confidence building for appropriate learning strategies and for learner autonomy.

3.6 Methods of teaching Arabic

Arabic teaching reflects the various approaches to language teaching. The audio-lingual, cognitive code, community learning, total immersion and functional-notional methods of teaching Arabic are being used (Mohamed 1997:7).

After the Second World War, the grammar-translation method (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**), which emphasised the development of learners' literary skills, was widely used. Arabic was treated as a dead language and was taught in the same way as the other Semitic languages. In the sixties, the University of South Africa, and in the early seventies, the University of the Western Cape, taught Arabic on the "basic assumption that mastery of the grammatical rules, will enable the learner to decipher texts and even manuscripts" (Mohamed 1997:7-8). The textbooks that were used were grammar based, providing exercises for translation. They were geared to "prepare the student for written expression" and as a result failed to equip learners with speaking skills (Mohamed 1997:8). Some of the texts that were used are:

- Thatcher, G.W. 1927. *Arabic Grammar.* New Delhi: Star Publications.

- Haywood, J.A. Nahmad, H.M. 1970. *A New Arabic Grammar of the Written Language*. London: Lund Humphries.

- Cowan, D. 1958. *Modern Literary Arabic*. London: Cambridge University Press (Mohamed 1997:8).

Nuruddin (1991a 26:10) states that the grammatical approach to learning Arabic involves the learning of a separate grammar rule in each new lesson. The teacher "explains how the rule works, where the rule is applicable and may list a few notable exceptions". This is usually followed by translation exercises which illustrate the mechanics of the new rule (Nuruddin 1991a 26:10). Vocabulary lists are an important feature of such a method. While this may be an effective means of appreciating the mathematical precision of the language, no attempt is made to nurture conversational fluency, (as was mentioned in **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**).

In an effort to improve the out-dated grammar approach of the sixties and seventies, a classroom grammar textbook was prepared by Mohamed and Haron (1989) for beginners, providing exercises that integrate the grammar-translation method and the direct method of teaching Arabic. This textbook became widely used in schools. A second textbook (1998) was produced as a follow-up. This is also being used in some schools (Mohamed 1997:12). Although these books were designed as alternatives to the old grammar books, with an attempt to teach grammar in context, they still remain essentially grammar textbooks, with a few conversations and dialogues. They continue to encourage the grammar-translation method, through their numerous exercises and vocabulary lists at the end of each chapter.

3.6.1 The development of Arabic teaching in America and its influence on international trends

In America, the influence of the audio-lingual method of language teaching produced more meaningful textbooks and readers in the sixties (Rouchdy 1992:211-217). The grammars of Farhet Ziadeh and Bayly Winder (1957) reflected an inductive approach to the teaching of Arabic grammar, but the exercises were still limited to the grammar-translation method. The book was accompanied by audio tapes, and introduced grammar through "passages of cultural and political interest" (Mohamed 1997:9).

The turning point in the teaching of Arabic in the United States commenced with the publication of

"Elementary Modern Standard Arabic" by Abboud et al. in 1968, since it presented Arabic grammar

through a series of texts and drills that were in the Arabic of the Arab world, accompanied also by audio tapes

(Rouchdy 1992:218). The revised version of this book (1974), became widely used even in South Africa

(Allen 1994:22).

These books attempted to present Arabic in both the spoken as well as the written form, unlike previous texts.

However, since the texts rely on the structural method of teaching language, the grammar patterns and

vocabulary are woven into structures to produce language. According to Campbell (1986), this does not

facilitate use of the language in the natural context (Mohamed 1997:9). Also learners play a passive role and

the skills of listening and speaking are secondary to those of reading and writing (Mohamed 1997:9).

Although this approach was a definite improvement on the traditional grammar-translation approach it failed

to achieve communicative competence.

3.6.1.1 Criticism of Abboud's approach to teaching Arabic

Allen (1994:28) criticises Abboud's system of teaching Arabic, suggesting that since it is textbook based, it

only focusses on academic achievement rather than language proficiency. He argues that it is the teacher, not

the textbook, that is central to language teaching. Although speaking and listening skills enhance reading and

writing, these are being sorely neglected. Allen (1994:28) also questions the genuine reading ability of the

learners. Mohamed (1997:10) agrees with this view and adds that not all language courses aim to develop all

four skills as some concentrate on one skill only. He cites the examples of Islamic seminaries in the Indo-Pak

subcontinent which concentrate on developing reading proficiency in Arabic.

3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic

Arabic textbooks are based on either the classical or the modern approach (Mohamed 1997:10). They are

identified by Dadoo (1990:82) as either the cognitive approach which emphasises textual understanding, or

the communicative approach emphasising the acquisition of speaking skills. The eclectic approach attempts to merge the two methods, in an effort to focus on the development of all four language skills. Palmer (1965:113) believes that the eclectic approach is in fact a third approach to language teaching as it accommodates different methods to be used at the different stages of language learning.

Mohamed (1997:11) supports Palmer's eclectic approach and proposes that modern standard Arabic be used as a medium of instruction rather than classical Arabic, as has been the practice. He believes that modern standard Arabic forms the basis for learning any other form of Arabic, be it classical Arabic or a particular dialect. He does, however, acknowledge the importance of classical Arabic, since it is the language of the Qur'an and the chief reason why Muslims want to learn Arabic. He believes, however, that to achieve the aim of speaking Arabic, learners need to be taught modern standard Arabic.

Batal (Rouchdy 1992:290) suggests how communicative competence can be developed in the classroom: authentic Arabic should be used in context; the target language should be the vehicle of instruction; students should express their ideas; errors should be tolerated; the social context is important for meaningful utterances; grammar and vocabulary should follow from function; students should interpret language as it is used by native speakers.

In an attempt to achieve communicative proficiency in Arabic, there has been a move towards the introduction of the oral component in Arabic teaching. Many textbooks currently being used in schools are selected in an effort to teach Arabic through the communicative method. Among them are *Al-'Arabiyyah li al-Naashi'in* and *Uhibbu al-'Arabiyyah* (I Love Arabic) both developed in Riyadh, for teaching Arabic to non-Arabs. These are texts based on the communicative method of teaching Arabic in modern standard Arabic. The former is being used in secondary schools in South Africa, as well as at some universities, like University of Western Cape and University of Durban-Westville, whereas the latter is designed for younger learners.

Nuruddin (1991a 26:12) believes this conversational method of teaching Arabic gives the learner the

advantage of being exposed to Arabic and assists the learner to "arabicise speaking habits". He urges teachers

to integrate the grammar-translation and the conversational method to achieve competence in all four skills.

Nuruddin (1991a 26:13) is of the firm opinion that neither the conversational nor the grammatical approaches

can suffice alone, and neither should be used "to the mutual exclusion of the other".

3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum

Mohammed (1997:13) states that despite the attention being given to communicative Arabic, examinations at

schools and universities are still based on the grammar-translation method. He suggests that:

> grammar should be taught and tested functionally at the secondary and tertiary level, and not the early

> primary school level where the direct method works more effectively with the primary learner who is

> receptive to spoken Arabic (Mohammed 1997:13).

Allen (1994:35) proposes a curriculum that is proficiency based, rather than textbook based. This idea is

supported in Rouchdy (1992:222). Goals for such a curriculum should be established in terms of skills,

especially the development of listening and speaking skills, as he believes that these provide the basis for

reading and writing. Like Mohammed, he too is of the opinion that grammar should be taught functionally,

and vocabulary should be introduced based on usefulness rather than degree of difficulty. This idea is

supported by Alosh, in Rouchdy (1992:283).

Alosh favours the eclectic method, that focusses on achieving the aims of the course. He suggests that L2 and

FL learners should acquire the language gradually via actual language use and not through language

description (Rouchdy 1992:275). The syllabus should be designed around language functions rather than

grammatical rules. Learners should develop the ability to do things with the language, like self-identification,

greeting, asking for information, etc. This then implies that activities must be introduced and initiated by the

instructor through the Arabic medium. Nuruddin (1992a 27:42) highlights the fact that for teachers to use the

conversational approach, they need to speak Arabic fluently, and since many of them are trained outside an

Arabic environment, special training for the acquisition of this ability is vital.

Nuruddin states (1992b 27:40) that:

> every teacher coaxing children to speak Arabic should himself/herself speak Arabic fluently,
>
> correctly, enjoyably and with great ease.

He asserts that since there are few persons locally who have mastered both the conversational and

grammatical approaches, the solution may be to provide learners with a conversation teacher and a grammar

teacher in tandem (Nuruddin 1991a 26:13).

3.6.4 Synthesis

The international trends in the teaching of Arabic indicate that there has been a serious lack of focus on the

productive skills. Learners are unable to achieve communicative competence in the language. This primarily

stems from the undue emphasis placed on learning the grammatical structure of the language, which has its

roots in the grammar-translation approach to teaching Arabic. Various researchers are concerned about this

phenomenon and they have tried to identify problem areas and offer possible solutions to the problem,

especially in the last decade. The current focus on the selection of teaching methodology clearly indicates that

there is no ideal method, but rather an eclectic approach should be adopted.

3.7 Choice and evaluation of methods

The choice and evaluation of a method of language teaching is usually made within the context of a language

programme. The first and foremost aspect of consideration is who the learners are, what their current level of

language proficiency is, what sort of communicative needs they have, and the circumstances in which they

will use the L2 or FL in the future. These questions need to be answered prior to the formulation of objectives,

choice of syllabus and teaching method.

Thus upon analysis of the needs, one can identify the type of language skills, the objectives of the programme

and the level of proficiency the learners should attain. Thereafter upon examining the aims and objectives of

various teaching methods and the kind of language proficiencies each seeks to develop, one may be able to find the particular method that would achieve such language learning. Only in rare instances will one particular method suffice. Usually a combination of methods and techniques will be used to achieve the goals. This is called 'informed eclecticism', where various features are selected, sometimes from different methods that relate explicitly to the particular programme's objectives (Richards & Rodgers 1991:158). Classroom activities and materials are hence accountable to goals and objectives and are selected according to how well they address the underlying linguistic skills and processes learners will need in order to attain the objectives of the programme (Richards & Rodgers 1991:157).

However, evaluation which addresses whether the aims and objectives of a particular language programme are being achieved, needs to be done. According to Richards and Rodgers (1991:159-160) answers to the following general questions should provide sufficient evaluation data:

- What aspects of language proficiency does the method address?
- Is the effectiveness of this method dependent on the age of learners (adults, children etc.)?
- Is the method most effective with elementary, intermediate or advanced learners?
- What kind of training is required of teachers?
- Under what circumstances does the method work best? (eg. Is it effective for learners from different cultural backgrounds?)
- How have teachers and learners responded to the method?
- How does the method compare with other methods?
- Do teachers using the method use it in a uniform manner?

There are various factors that require serious consideration when selecting the appropriate teaching methodology to ensure optimal effective learning. The teacher has to take these factors into consideration and design a course using, more often than not, a combination of teaching methods to achieve the specified aims and objectives.

3.8 Summary

Since aims of language teaching direct the learning process and guide the teacher towards developing a suitable approach, this was the first aspect that was dealt with in this chapter. A discussion of the aims of second language teaching with specific reference to Arabic in South Africa and Botswana ensued. Evident from various syllabi and literature on the subject, was the fact that Arabic, like any other language was taught for communicative purposes. Regardless of whether a learner studies Arabic for religious or economic reasons, the acquisition of both receptive as well as productive skills are essential. In this light it was necessary to examine various teaching approaches critically, to determine which were suitable for the teaching of Arabic in South Africa and Botswana. However, before embarking on a detailed discussion of teaching methods it was necessary to define terminology, such as methodology, approach, method, curriculum/syllabus and technique, so as to ensure accuracy and clarity of meaning.

Various language teaching methodologies have evolved over the years, some focussing on the acquisition of a particular skill, whilst neglecting other skills. Two distinct approaches, that of the formalists and activists were identified. While the formalists support a passive classroom, the activists favour a learner-centred approach, that affords learners the opportunity to learn the language, rather than about the language. It was also stated that while the formalists focus on the development of the reading and writing skills, the activists concentrate on speaking and listening skills.

The main approaches to language teaching were identified as the traditional approach, the humanistic approach, the communicative approach, and recent trends. Various methods within these approaches were discussed critically. The grammar-translation method, the direct method, the reading method and the audio-lingual and audio-visual methods all fall under the umbrella of traditional approaches to language teaching. Methods such as, community language learning, total physical response, the natural approach and suggestopedia are some of the methods within the humanistic approach. They focus on minimising stress on the learner through the creation of a suitable learning environment. The communicative approach, which is the third approach incorporates various methods. It encourages the use of whichever method that will promote the

acquisition of the skill being taught. The main aim of the communicative approach is the acquisition of all four language skills. Finally, recent approaches that focus on holistic learning and learner-centred education were also discussed. Thus an evaluative discussion of the various approaches and methods in L2 and FL teaching was presented. The conclusion was that since there is no ideal method to achieve specific aims and objectives of language learning an eclectic approach should be adopted. Different needs and situations require a variety of methods in order to achieve the stipulated aims.

Subsequently various methods used in the teaching of Arabic were discussed at length. Here too the conclusion reached promoted the use of a variety of methods to achieve specified aims. Hence the eclectic approach was favoured. Finally, brief guidelines on selecting and evaluating appropriate methods were presented.

In the next chapter, the researcher will determine and evaluate methods currently being used in the teaching of Arabic at selected Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana. A questionnaire was developed and sent out to glean the necessary information.

Chapter Four

The Method of the Empirical Investigation

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter a report is given about the research design used in this study. The research problem and aims of the investigation will be discussed. The chapter will also highlight the compilation and application of the questionnaire used in the research, and discuss the selection of subjects and the processing of data.

4.2 The research problem

The primary aim of this research project is to examine how Arabic is being taught at Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana and why pupils are able to attain only a degree of literacy even though learners are learning Arabic from grade nought through to grade twelve. In order to achieve this aim, empirical research, complemented by the literature study, was necessary. Various factors that were identified in the literature study will be investigated in the empirical study.

4.3 The purpose of quantitative research

The objective of quantitative research is to make objective descriptions of a limited set of phenomena and to determine whether the phenomena can be controlled through certain interventions. Research hypotheses are derived from theory. Data are collected and the researcher determines whether or not the data support the research hypothesis. Formulating research hypotheses from existing theory is a deductive process (Mouton & Marais 1990:115).

Quantitative research makes the assumption that the 'laws' that they can discover will lead to reliable prediction and control of educational phenomena (Borg, Gall & Gall 1993:195). They do this by searching for irregularities in the behaviour samples of individuals, through statistical analyses. Quantitative researchers believe that even though these trends do not allow for perfect predictions or control, they are strong enough to have practical value. Quantitative researchers use deductive reasoning, beginning with hypotheses and moving towards proving these. This research project will make use of statistical hypotheses.

When a statement is formulated without knowing whether there is any empirical warrant to accept it as reasonably valid or even true, this is a hypothesis (Mouton 1996:121). "A research hypothesis is a tentative statement of the expected relationship between two or more variables" (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:88). A hypothesis is more specific than a problem statement, in that it is a declarative statement that is clearly testable and indicative of expected results, for example, there is a positive relationship between review and retention. In quantitative research, a statistical (or alternative) hypothesis predicts the nature of the outcome of the statistical analysis of quantitative data in an investigation (Ho). This is tested against the null hypothesis (Ha). The null hypothesis is a statement postulating that no relationship exists between the variables being studied. If the null hypothesis is shown to be false then the researcher is able to accept that a significant relationship between the variables that are being studied, exists. (Mouton & Marais 1990:135). A good hypothesis may be derived from well-established theory or previous research or it may develop from first-hand observation and data collection. A good hypothesis is empirically testable, in that one must be able to specify clearly what data would provide support or rejection for it (Mouton 1996:124).

4.4 Research method

The research methodology to be used in this section is quantitative since this is an empirical investigation. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect data. Data was obtained from all Muslim private schools in South

Africa and Botswana, currently in operation. The questionnaire focussed on the following:

a) Background information on the teachers (eg. qualifications, experience and perceptions of their fluency and command of Arabic);

b) The status of Arabic at the various schools;

c) Aim of teaching Arabic;

d) Teaching methodology used;

e) Teachers' perceptions on how Arabic should be taught;

f) Examinations;

g) Medium of instruction.

Hypotheses, based on factors addressed in the literature study and the questionnaire will be formulated. A brief description of the procedures used to test these hypotheses will be given. This includes the selection of the sample, a description of the measuring instruments used, the procedure used in formulating and administering the questionnaire and finally the methods used in analysing the data.

4.5 Aim of the empirical investigation

The primary aim is to determine how and why Arabic is currently being taught at Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana. Secondary aims are to determine how teachers believe Arabic should be taught and what degree of literacy is currently being achieved in Arabic at Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana.

4.6 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated.

4.6.1. Hypothesis 1

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse number of years of experience in the teaching of Arabic and their rating of the importance of hearing authentic Arabic spoken during Arabic lessons.

Rationale

From the literature study it was found that in the sixties and seventies Arabic was taught primarily through the grammar-translation method. Some attempts were made to use the direct method and the communicative approach in the eighties and nineties, but Arabic was still primarily taught through the grammar-translation method (cf **3.6.1 The development of Arabic teaching in America and its influence on international trends**). The literature study has shown that the ideal way to teach an L2 and FL is to be immersed in its culture, hear native speakers speaking the language and learn functional use of the language rather than structure as propagated by the grammar-translation method (cf **3.5.4 The audio-lingual method**).

4.6.2 Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse number of years of experience in the teaching of Arabic and their rating of the importance of communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic lessons.

Rationale

According to the literature study, Nuruddin (1992a:42) accentuates the idea that if teachers are to use a conversational approach to teaching Arabic, then they need to be fluent speakers of the language. Since most teachers in South Africa and Botswana have learned Arabic without being exposed to an Arabic environment, it may be necessary for such teachers to undergo specialised training to develop fluency in the language (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). To facilitate language learning it is vital for learners to be allowed to use the language to convey meaning (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach**).

4.6.3 Hypothesis 3

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse academic qualifications and their rating of the importance of exposure to native Arabic speakers through television and video cassettes.

Rationale

According to Batal (Rouchdy 1992:290) learners should be exposed to native speakers of Arabic to develop communicative competence (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). Context is an important catalyst in language acquisition, as learners are able to interpret and understand the language better when used in context (cf **3.5.13 Immersion programmes**).

4.6.4 Hypothesis 4

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic lessons.

Rationale

According to the literature study it was found that learners have to be encouraged to do things with the language, like greeting, self-identification, etc. These activities should then be introduced and initiated by the teacher in the Arabic medium. For the development of the four language skills as a means to achieving communicative competence, it is necessary for learners to use the language functionally, through communication. Learners should be encouraged to express meaning while acquiring the language, as is advocated by the notional-functional approach (cf **3.5.11 Notional-functional syllabi**).

4.6.5 Hypothesis 5

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and

their rating of the importance of learning and applying grammar rules.

Rationale

In the literature study it was pointed out that learners are often unable to achieve communicative competence because undue emphasis is placed on the learning of the grammatical structure of the language (cf 3.5.1 **The grammar-translation method**). The goal of study in the grammar-translation method was to learn a language in order to be able to read its literature (Murphy 1999:10). Grammar was therefore taught deductively, with the learner's native language as the medium of instruction. Little emphasis was placed on speaking or listening to the L2 and FL. This approach was blamed for the failure of L2 and FL teaching and the majority of language teaching reforms in the late nineteenth century and throughout the first half of the twentieth century developed in opposition to grammar-translation according to Stern (1983) (Murphy 1999:10).

4.6.6 Hypothesis 6

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons.

Rationale

According to the literature study emphasis should be on use of vocabulary in meaningful situations, rather than memory work and rote learning (cf 3.5.4 **The audio-lingual method**). The audio-lingual method of teaching placed more emphasis on effective imitation, memorisation and response to model dialogues, than on understanding of meaning and use of language in natural contexts (Murphy 1999:14).

4.6.7 Hypothesis 7

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of exposure to native Arabic speakers through personal contact.

Rationale

According to the literature study, for learners to acquire communicative competence they need to be exposed to authentic Arabic in context (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). According to Batal (Rouchdy 1992:290) communicative competence and proficiency in Arabic may be achieved if learners are allowed to interpret language as it is used by native speakers. They should be encouraged to use the language in context as the social context is more important for meaningful utterances (cf **3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic**).

4.6.8 Hypothesis 8

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of communicating in Arabic with the teacher during Arabic lessons.

Rationale

Chapter One discusses the several attempts that have been made to shift the focus from the grammar based approach to the communicative approach in the teaching of Arabic through various seminars and workshops that have been held. For learners to acquire Arabic, they need exposure to the language, especially in the classroom (cf **3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic**). It therefore becomes vital for teachers to communicate in Arabic with learners.

4.6.9 Hypothesis 9

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of learning and applying grammar rules.

Rationale

Workshops and seminars have focussed on the need to shift from teaching Arabic grammar to developing

acquisition of all four language skills. According to Nuruddin (1992a:42) while the grammar-translation method concentrated on the transmission of structural rules and analysis of form, the more recent approaches emphasise function over form of the language (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method and 3.5.10 The communicative approach**). The idea that learners learn what is meaningful to them has become an important aspect of language teaching. According to the literature study an L2 or FL is learned successfully when learners have the opportunity to use the language naturally (cf **2.5 The four language skills as a means to achieving communicative competence**).

4.6.10 Hypothesis 10

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons.

Rationale

According to Chapter One attempts were made through workshops and seminars to introduce the thematic approach to teaching Arabic. The findings of the literature study reveal that learning of vocabulary lists out of context are an important feature of the grammar-translation method (cf **3.6.1 The development of Arabic teaching in America and its influence on international trends**). The reading method too focussed on vocabulary lists that facilitated the comprehension of texts from books (cf **3.5.3 The reading method**). This encouraged the mastery of reading proficiency rather than functional proficiency of the L2 (Leschinsky 1983:26-27). It is therefore imperative to learn vocabulary in context, so that it is meaningful for the learner and encourages application in other contexts.

4.6.11 Hypothesis 11

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three

years and their rating of the importance of translating to and from Arabic.

Rationale

According to Chapter One significant efforts have been made to move the focus of teaching away from translating to and from Arabic. Translating to and from an L2 and FL encourage learning of grammar structure rather than language proficiency.

4.6.12 Hypothesis 12

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse number of years of experience in the teaching of Arabic and their rating of the importance of teaching Arabic through the medium of Arabic.

Rationale

According to the literature study, modern standard Arabic should be used as the medium for instruction to promote acquisition of the productive skills of Arabic (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). Some of the more recent textbooks that are being used have been developed according to the communicative method. They advocate Arabic as the medium of instruction (cf **3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic**). The aim is to afford learners the opportunity to interpret the language in context and encourage the use of Arabic to express ideas and thoughts. According to research on FL learning, immersion programmes have been quite successful because the target language is the medium of instruction (cf **3.5.13 Immersion programmes.**)

4.6.13 Hypothesis 13

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of the teacher to follow textbooks in the teaching of Arabic.

Rationale

According to the literature study available textbooks are essentially grammar based, and fail to equip learners

with speaking skills in Arabic (cf 3.6.1 **The development of Arabic teaching in America and its influence**

on international trends). Also the textbooks do not facilitate the use of the language in its natural context, as

it promotes passivity on the part of the learners and teaches structure of the language rather than function (cf

3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic). The literature

study also indicated that the teacher, rather than the textbook should provide and generate opportunities for

teaching the language (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). This requires that the Arabic teacher be

a fluent speaker of the language.

4.6.14 Hypothesis 14

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three

years and their rating of the importance of spending more than 50% of time translating to and from Arabic.

Rationale

Since Arabic is taught primarily through the textbook, according to the literature study, the focus is on

translating to and from Arabic (cf **3.6 Methods of teaching Arabic**). Nuruddin (1991a:11) states that a

possible reason for reliance on this method of instruction is the teacher's inability to converse in Arabic. The

literature study revealed that translating to and from the L2 and FL does not promote acquisition of the

speaking and listening skills. Too much emphasis on this aspect inhibits the learners' ability to speak the

language.

4.6.15 Hypothesis 15

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three

years and their rating of the importance of basing examinations primarily on the knowledge of Arabic grammar and rules.

Rationale

According to the literature study examinations at schools and universities are still grammar based despite attention being given to the communicative Arabic (cf **3.6.4 Synthesis**). Aims of language study direct the approach and method used. If the learner's aim is to achieve language efficacy, then examinations should not aim to test knowledge of language usage structure. Such conflicting aims may impede the acquisition of Arabic (cf **3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language**).

4.6.16 Hypothesis 16

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse academic qualifications and their rating of the effectiveness of the communicative approach.

Rationale

According to the literature study there is a strong link between teaching methodology and achievement of communicative competence. Many experts in the field favour the communicative approach to be the most effective means of promoting the acquisition of all four language skills in Arabic. This approach seems to be broader than previous approaches and encourages the use of various teaching methods to facilitate the acquisition of language skills being taught (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach (CLT)**).

4.6.17 Hypothesis 17

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the effectiveness of the communicative approach.

Rationale

Various workshops that have been conducted have focussed on using the communicative approach to teaching Arabic. According to the literature study, experts favour the eclectic approach for the effective teaching of Arabic (cf **3.6.4 Synthesis**). Since the communicative approach focusses on the achievement of communicative competence, and encourages the use of a variety of methods to achieve specific aims, many believe that this approach is the most effective one for L2 and FL teaching (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach (CLT)**).

4.7 Measuring instrument used in the investigation

Questionnaires are a common technique used for gathering data. The subject responds to written questions through which reactions, beliefs and attitudes about a certain topic can be obtained. The researcher constructs a set of appropriate questions and asks the subject to complete the questionnaire. "A questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardised questions, can ensure anonymity, and questions can be written for specific purposes" (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:238). The objectives of the questionnaire will be based on the research problems and it must be indicated how the responses from each item will meet the objective.

Items included in a questionnaire can either be in closed form, in which the subject chooses between pre-determined responses, or in an open form, in which subjects write any response they want. The type of question to use depends on the objective of the question. Closed-form items are structured and are best for obtaining information and data that can be categorised easily (such as demographic information). These can be arranged in a checklist, which is a method of providing the respondent a number of options from which to choose. The item can require a choice of one of the several alternatives or respondents can mark as many words as apply. Checklists can also be used to ask respondents to answer *yes* or *no* to a question, or to check a category to which they belong (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 247-248). A disadvantage of using

structured items is that the researcher can lose accuracy and variability because of the spread of responses.

One type of closed-ended questions can make use of scaled items. A scale is a series of levels or values that describes various degrees of something. Scales are used very often in questionnaires since they provide fairly accurate assessments of beliefs and opinions. The *Likert-scale* is a frequently used scale in which the respondent is required to choose between different options regarding a particular statement. Likert-scale types are flexible as the descriptors on the scale can vary with the nature of the question or statement. The Likert-scale can include three to seven categories. When five or seven options are given, a middle or neutral category is included. The neutral category is included to make sure that the respondent is not forced to make an incorrect response. However, if the neutral response is not included, it is also possible that the respondent will not answer the question at all. Not including the neutral option also has its advantages as it often happens that respondents have a tendency to cluster their answers in the middle category (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:244-246).

A variation of the Likert-scale is the *Semantic Differential* scale. Adjective pairs are used in this scale. On either end of a single continuum one of the adjectives is placed as an anchor, without a series of descriptors in between. The scale is used to elicit descriptive reactions to a concept or object (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:246).

Open-ended items can be used if the purpose is to generate specific, idiosyncratic differences. Open-ended questions are usually used to obtain the most amount of information from the respondent. A disadvantage is that there is greater potential for error because of the possible ambiguity of what kind of answer will suffice. Also the recording of open-ended answers is more difficult than the recording of fixed answers. Often a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions are used depending on the objective of the question. Open-ended questions are used when respondents are required to describe subjective feelings or opinions.

Ranked items are used to prioritise items. If a Likert-scale is used to determine the effectiveness of five

teaching methodologies, a respondent can mark *very effective* for each one. The result would be that the

researcher will be unable to prioritise the information. If, however, the respondents are asked to rank-order the

five teaching methods in sequential order from most important to least important, then the researcher is able to

gather more information (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:246-247).

This study made use of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Four types of closed ended questions

were used. The first, was the checklist, used to obtain information related to demographic details. Questions

were asked and the respondent was provided with a number of options to choose from, or the respondent was

required to mark all options that were applicable. The second type of question with a closed response was

asked in the form of the Likert-type scale. A four-point scale was used in order to force respondents to make a

choice. These questions were used to determine Arabic teachers' opinions on how Arabic should be taught and

how Arabic is currently being taught. Another type of closed-ended question that was used is the semantic

differential scale. This was used to determine the extent to which learners in the Arabic class could speak to

each other in Arabic, and how committed they were to do so. The fourth type of closed-ended question used is

a rank-order. Here Arabic teachers were expected to rank given teaching methodologies from *least successful*

to *most successful*, to determine what they believed were the most effective methods to teach Arabic.

Open-ended questions were used to determine what teachers perceive as the major problem areas in the

teaching of Arabic in South Africa and Botswana.

4.7.1 The development of the questionnaire

A questionnaire was compiled using the information that was gathered in the literature study in connection

with the methods used in Arabic teaching, their effectiveness, the reasons for learners learning the language,

the teacher's ability to speak the language and the learner's ability to speak the language. The questionnaire aimed to obtain information concerning these areas and possibly identify other problem areas that were not apparent from the literature study.

4.7.2 The structure of the questionnaire

(i) Initial considerations

When an attempt is made to assess the effectiveness of teaching methodologies in use certain considerations should be taken into account when constructing the measuring instrument.

Firstly, the instrument should not be too time-consuming. To ensure that the questionnaire will be completed accurately and returned to the researcher it should not be too lengthy.

Secondly, the instrument should be of such a nature that any teacher of Arabic will be able to complete it without complications.

Thirdly, the instrument should be flexible in that it could be used for either a primary or a secondary school.

In the light of the above reasons, it would seem that an interview or any other descriptive method would not be practical as it would be too time consuming, standardisation and objectivity would appear impossible and the schools are too widespread for easy access. A questionnaire would therefore appear to be the most appropriate instrument in this instance.

(ii) Compilation of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of two sections with a total of fifty-one items. Section A focusses on the gathering of demographic details and background information about the teacher, the school and Arabic as a subject at the school and Section B is designed to elicit the Arabic teacher's opinion on how he/she believes Arabic should in fact, be taught (cf **Appendix A**).

The questionnaire was developed through consultation with experienced personnel. It was scrutinised before it was sent out by Mrs JC Jordaan (Department of Statistics, Unisa), Prof G D Kamper (Institute for Educational Research, Unisa), Dr GE Pienaar (Department of Educational Studies, Unisa) and Prof WJ Fraser (Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria).

Section A: The first eight questions focus on the teacher's personal information regarding qualifications and ability in Arabic. These provide a background profile of the teacher and included the teacher's own perceptions on his/her ability to speak Arabic. Questions twelve to seventeen focus on the position of Arabic at the school, relating to syllabus used, affiliations to organisations, type of school and medium of instruction for Arabic. Questions eighteen to twenty-one are designed to obtain information on Arabic examinations and their focus. These questions determine the role of grammar and speaking skills in Arabic. Questions twenty-two to thirty-three focus on learners' reasons for studying Arabic and their acquisition of the speaking skill. They also determine how much of focus there is on learning grammar rules, completing translations and actually being involved in speaking and listening to the language.

Section B: Questions thirty-four to forty-nine aim to elucidate teachers' opinions on how they believe Arabic should be taught. The questions also focus on the effectiveness of some of the methods commonly used in the teaching of Arabic. Questions fifty and fifty-one are open-ended questions that aim to elucidate other problem

areas.

(iii) Instructions accompanying the measuring instrument

The teachers selected for the sample were all given questionnaires containing all the items (cf **Appendix A**).

They were given instructions to complete the items, where they were asked to encircle the most correct

response. A covering letter was sent to the principal of each school requesting that they pass on the

questionnaire to the Arabic teachers on their staff and return the questionnaire to the researcher on or before

the stipulated due date (cf **Appendix B**). Fifty four questionnaires were mailed and thirty three completed

questionnaires were returned to the researcher.

4.7.3 Application of the questionnaire

All Arabic teachers at Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana were required to complete the

questionnaire. The results were evaluated and the hypotheses postulated were confirmed, negated or partially

confirmed. Prof S. Schulze of the Department of Further Teacher Education at Unisa did the statistical

analysis of the questionnaires.

4.8 Selection of the sample

In this study purposeful sampling was used. Purposeful sampling selects cases that will provide the most

information when studied in-depth. This type of sampling is used when the researcher does not desire to

generalise the information obtained to all such cases. The researcher searches for *information-rich*

respondents because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena that is being

studied (McMillan & Schmacher 1993:378).

Since there are currently only 60 Muslim Private Schools in Botswana and South Africa , it was decided to include every school in this study, so that the sample would be comprehensive. After preliminary investigations it was discovered that six of these schools did not have Arabic as part of their curriculum, so they were excluded from the study. All Arabic teachers at Muslim schools in both countries were requested to answer the questionnaire. The following Muslim private schools were used to conduct the research in South Africa and Botswana:

1. Al-Aqsa Muslim School - Lenasia	28. Mohammediya - Wynberg
2. Al-Azhar Primary - Kenwyn	29. Nasruddin Islamic School - Parkside
3. Al-Ghazzali College - Erasmia	30. Nizamia Islamic School - Pietermaritzburg
4. Al-Huda Muslim School - Klerksdorp	31. Northern Muslim School - Nirvana
5. Al-Nur Muslim School - Gaborone	32. Nurul Iman Muslim School - Zinniaville
6. Ambasssador's College - Bridgetown	33. Nurul Islam School - Lenasia
7. As-Salaam Educational Institute - Braemar	34. Nurul Hudaa - Belhar
8. Azaadville Muslim School - Azaadville	35. Orient Muslim School - Durban
9. Benoni Muslim School - Benoni	36. Phoenix Islamic School - Phoenix
10. Bosmont Muslim School - Maraisburg	37. Pietermaritzburg School for Girls - Pietermaritzburg
11. Central Islamic School - Laudium	38. Port Shepstone Muslim School - Port Shepstone
12. Crescent Girls - Durban	39. Pretoria Muslim School - Laudium
13. Darul Islam - Gatesville	40. Rahmaniyah - Cape Town
14. Habibiya - Rylands	41. Roshnee Muslim School - Roshnee
15. Highveld Muslim School - Kinross	42. Rynsoort Girls College -Benoni
16. Islamia College - Newcastle	43. Salt River Muslim School - Salt River
17. Islamic College - Rylands Estate	44. Scotchkloof Primary - Scotchkloof
18. Johannesburg Muslim School - Fordsburg	45. Siddique Junior Madressa - Elsies River
19. Ladysmith Islamic Educational Centre - Ladysmith	46. Siratul Haq Islamic School - Fodderville
20. Lenasia Muslim School (Jun Div) - Lenasia	47. Springs Muslim School - Bakerton

21. Lenasia Muslim School (Sen Div) - Lenasia	48. Strand School - Strand
22. Lockhat Islamia College (Jun Div) - Durban	49. Talfallah Primary - Sherwood Park
23. Lockhat Islamia College (Sen Div) - Durban	50. Tongaat Muslim School - Tongaat
24. Madrassatur Rajaa - Cape Town	51. Umzinto Muslim School - Umzinto
25. Madressa Noor for the Blind - Pietermaritzburg	52. Verulem Madressa School - Verulem
26. Middleburg Muslim School - Middleburg	53. Welkom Muslim School - Welkom
27. Mohammed Ebrahim School - Isipingo Beach	54. Zakariyya Muslim School - Stanger

4.9 Processing of the results

An item analysis was done for each of the items in the questionnaire as well as for the questionnaire as a whole. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Only those items for which a significant difference could be found, were discussed.

4.10 Conclusion

Chapter 4 discussed the research design for this study. It considered the research problem, the aim of the empirical investigation and the research method and tools. In this chapter, various hypotheses based on the literature study were formulated and the rationale for each hypothesis was presented. The compilation and application of the tools used, the selection of the sample and the processing of the results were also looked at in this chapter.

Chapter 5 will present the findings of the questionnaires. The statistical analysis and the testing of hypotheses will be completed in detail.

Chapter Five

Results of the investigation

5.1 Introduction

The results of the empirical investigation were processed on computer and were analysed according to the frequency analysis and the hypotheses that were propounded. Pearson Product-Moment correlations were used to test the hypotheses.

5.2 Professional profile

The first five questions of the questionnaire focussed on the general professional profile of the teacher. The key variables were overall teaching experience, experience in teaching Arabic, academic as well as professional qualifications and in-service training. The following tables present a profile of the respondents.

Table 5.1: Overall teaching experience

Number of years	Frequency	Percentage
between 0-4 years	7	21.2
between 5-9 years	9	27.3
between 10-14 years	8	24.2
15 years or more	9	27.3
total	33	100

According to table 5.1 there is more or less an equal distribution of Arabic teachers with regard to teaching experience. Seventeen teachers (51.5%) indicated that they had more than ten years of experience and sixteen teachers (48.5%) indicated that they have less than ten years of experience.

Table 5.2: Experience in teaching Arabic

Number of years	Frequency	Percentage
between 0-4 years	14	42.4
between 5-9 years	9	27.3
between 10-14 years	7	21.2
15 years or more	3	9.1
total	33	100.0

Table 5.2 indicates that while few teachers (9.1%) had more than 15 years of experience in teaching Arabic, the largest number of respondents (42.4%) had less than five years of experience. This correlates with the fact that many Muslim private schools have only been established over the last decade.

Table 5.3: Highest academic qualifications

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
grade 12 or A levels	7	21.2
BA degree with Arabic major	13	39.4
postgraduate in Arabic	3	9.1
other	9	27.3
total	32	97.0
missing system	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

The majority of the respondents in this study (75.8%) possessed academic qualifications that are relevant for Arabic teaching. While many respondents had a degree qualification (39.4%) and postgraduate qualifications (9.1%) presumably obtained from universities, 27.3% of the respondents chose 'other' as an option. They mostly indicated that they had obtained their qualifications from Muslim seminaries, i.e. Darul Ulooms.

Table 5.4: Post school diploma/certificate

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	6	18.2
no	27	81.8
total	33	100.0

81.8% of the respondents had no post school diplomas such as Further Education Diplomas (FED) or training certificates. 18.2% of the respondents indicated that they possessed post school diplomas or certificates.

Table 5.5: Teacher's diploma

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	9	27.3
no	24	72.7
total	33	100.0

A large number (72.7%) of Arabic teachers did not possess professional teaching qualifications. From the statistics in table 5.3 and 5.5 it is evident that while Arabic teachers in Muslim private schools are generally adequately qualified in Arabic they do not possess the professional qualifications to teach the language.

Table 5.6: Bachelor of Education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	8	24.2
no	25	75.8
total	33	100.0

Only 24.2% of the respondents possessed a post graduate degree in education.

Table 5.7: Post graduate teaching diploma with Arabic methodology

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	8	24.2
no	25	75.8
total	33	100.0

Table 5.7 enhances the statistics in table 5.5, as it clearly indicates that the majority (75.8%) of the respondents did not possess a professional qualification to teach Arabic. This reiterates the fact that while teachers of Arabic may be academically qualified in the language, only a relatively small number (about 24% of the respondents) have been trained to teach the language.

Table 5.8: Other qualifications

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	11	33.3
no	22	66.7
total	33	100.0

33.7% of the respondents in this study possessed suitable qualifications in Arabic, from Islamic institutions. While these teachers are knowledgeable in the language, they too do not possess the professional training to teach the language.

Table 5.9: In-service training

Attended seminars or workshops in the last 3 years	Frequency	Percentage
yes	26	78.8
no	7	21.2
total	33	100.0

When respondents were asked whether they attended seminars or workshops to improve and enhance the teaching of Arabic, 78.8% of the teachers responded in the affirmative while a very small number (21.2%) responded in the negative. This indicated a very positive trend in language teaching. It seems that teachers realised their shortcomings as far as professional qualifications are concerned and tried to keep abreast with the latest trends and techniques that are available in Arabic teaching, through regular in-service training.

5.3 Profile of the Arabic teacher

Questions six, seven and eight of the questionnaire related to the teacher's profile with regard to Arabic teaching. The key variables in this section of the questionnaire were the teacher's first language, preferred language of communication and the teacher's rating of his/her mastery of the four essential skills of language acquisition. The ensuing tables present the resulting profile of the Arabic teacher in Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana.

Table 5.10: Teachers' first language

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Afrikaans	3	9.1
Arabic	1	3.0
English	19	57.6
French	2	6.1
Gujerati	2	6.1
Memon	1	3.0
Urdu	2	6.1
total	30	90.9
missing system	3	8.1
total	33	100.0

It is evident that for the largest number of respondents (57.6%), English was their first language. Interestingly, Arabic was the first language of only one respondent. This is in keeping with the situation in South Africa and Botswana, where Arabic is either a second or foreign language for the population at large. These results also correspond with the literature study which indicated that Arabic is not an L1 for teachers' of the language (cf 3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum). Thus teachers of Arabic are not native speakers of the language. This could be a possible explanation for learners' inability to develop native-like fluency in Arabic.

Table 5.11: Teachers' preferred language of communication

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Afrikaans	2	6.1
Arabic	4	12.1
English	26	78.8
Other	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0

78.8% of the respondents preferred to use English as their language of communication, while only 12.1% of the respondents preferred to communicate in Arabic.

Table 5.12: Teachers' ability to speak Arabic

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
very good	10	30.3
good	7	21.2
average	7	21.2
poor	8	24.2
very poor	1	3.0

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
total	33	100.0

45.4% of the respondents rated their own ability to speak Arabic between average to poor, while 51,5% rated

their ability between good and very good. Only 3% rated their ability to speak the language as very poor.

These are extremely significant statistics as they reflect that a large proportion of Arabic teachers are not

confident of their own ability to speak Arabic. This could have a negative influence on their teaching

techniques. The statistics also support Nuruddin's (1991a:13) claim that most Arabic teachers are unable to

speak the language fluently (cf 3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum). This inability/lack of confidence

could be a possible explanation for teachers not teaching communicatively and hence failing to develop oracy

among learners.

Table 5.13: Teachers' ability to read Arabic with comprehension

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
very good	17	51.5
good	6	16.2
average	7	21.2
poor	2	6.1
very poor	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

67.7% of the respondents were fairly fluent readers of the language while 27.3% were average to poor readers

of Arabic and only 3% of the respondents rated their ability as very poor. A comparison of table 5.12 and

table 5.13 indicates that more teachers have acquired the skill of reading Arabic with comprehension rather

than speaking the language. This could probably relate to the fact that more emphasis was placed on the

acquisition of reading skills when these teachers studied Arabic. As a result they could also be more

comfortable with teaching reading and writing skills rather than listening and speaking skills.

Table 5.14: Teachers' ability to understand spoken Arabic

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
very good	12	36.4
good	6	18.2
average	10	30.3
poor	4	12.1
very poor	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

54.6% of the respondents rated their ability to understand spoken Arabic as good and very good, while 48.5% rated their ability as being between average and poor, a negligible proportion (3%) rated their ability to understand spoken Arabic as being very poor. The statistics in table 5.14 correlate with the statistics in table 5.12. A very small percentage (3%) of respondents were unable to understand spoken Arabic. The results show that a larger proportion of teachers are able to understand Arabic, rather than speak the language.

Table 5.15: Teachers' ability to communicate in Arabic through writing

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
very good	12	36.4
good	4	12.1
average	10	30.3
poor	6	18.2
very poor	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

Respondents' rating of their ability to communicate in Arabic indicated exact proportions (48.5%) for the categories of good combined with very good and average combined with poor. These results reveal that at least half of the teacher population do not possess good communicative skills in Arabic.

Tables 5.12 to 5.15 indicate that while the largest proportion of the respondents (67.7%) were able to read Arabic fairly fluently, a smaller proportion (54.6%) were able to understand spoken Arabic, an even smaller proportion (51.5%) were able to speak Arabic, and yet a smaller proportion (48.5%) were able to communicate in Arabic through writing. Thus reading in Arabic seems to reign supreme amongst the four skills of language acquisition, according to the rating of the respondents. This ties in with the focus of teaching Arabic according to the grammar-translation method. While the reading skill is emphasised, learners do not acquire the speaking and listening skills (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**). The possible implication is that Arabic teachers have learned the language through the grammar-translation method.

5.4 Demographic profile of schools

Questions nine to eleven of the questionnaire focussed on the demographic profile of the school at which the respondent was based. The key variables in the population profile were location of the school, type of school and school's official affiliations. The following tables provide statistics for each of these variables.

Table 5.16: Location of school

Country	Frequency	Percentage
Botswana	1	3.0
South Africa	32	96.9
Total	33	100.0

A large majority (96.9%) of the schools were located in South Africa. Only one school was situated in

Botswana. This was clearly evident from the literature study and information obtained from the Association of

Muslim Schools as well as from the questionnaires received.

Table 5.17: Type of school

Type of school	Frequency	Percentage
primary school	7	21.2
secondary school	3	9.1
combined primary and secondary school	21	63.6
other	2	6.1
total	33	100.0

63.6% of the respondents were from combined schools, while 21.2% of the respondents were from primary

schools. Only 9.1% of the schools in the study were secondary schools.

Table 5.18: Bodies the school is affiliated to

Body affiliated to	Frequency	Percentage
AMS	25	75.8
Jamiat ul Ulama	5	15.2
Al-Azhar	0	0.0
other	2	6.1
total	32	97.0
missing system	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

The largest number (75.8%) of Muslim schools in this study were affiliated to the Association of Muslim

Schools (AMS). 15.2% of the respondents were at schools that were affiliated to the Jamiat ul Ulama, and 6.1% were affiliated to other bodies.

5.5 Position of Arabic

Questions twelve to eighteen of the questionnaire were designed to obtain information on the position of Arabic at the school. The key variables in this section were medium of instruction, whether Arabic is taught as an L1, L2 or FL, which syllabus is used for instruction, type of examination, whether all examinations contain an oral component, what percentage of the examination contains an oral component and what percentage of the examination depends on knowledge of Arabic grammar. Tables 5.5.1 to 5.5.7 provide statistics for each of these variables.

Table 5.19: Medium of instruction for Arabic

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Arabic	2	6.1
Afrikaans	0	0.0
English	30	90.9
Other	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0

An astounding number (90.9%) of the schools in this study taught Arabic through the English medium, while only 6.1% taught Arabic through the medium of Arabic. 3% of the respondents taught Arabic through the medium of a language other than Arabic or English. The literature study revealed that when an FL is taught through the grammar-translation method the medium of instruction is the learners' L1 (cf **3.5.1 The**

grammar-translation method). This seems to be the case with Arabic. These statistics correlate with those obtained on teachers' ability to speak Arabic (cf **Table 5.12**). If teachers are unable to speak Arabic then they would obviously prefer to teach in a medium that they are comfortable with.

Table 5.20: Arabic as an L1, L2 or Fl

	Frequency	Percentage
first language	0	0.0
second language	2	6.1
foreign language	31	93.9
total	33	100.0

93.9% of the respondents taught Arabic as foreign language at their schools, while 6.1% taught it as a second language. Arabic is not an L1 for any of the learners in South Africa or Botswana. It is an additional language learned. This correlates with the findings of the literature study (cf **2.3.1 Arabic, a second language or a foreign language**).

Table 5.21: Syllabus used

Syllabus used	Frequency	Percentage
Education Department	6	18.2
AMS syllabus	1	3.0
Jamiatul-Ulama's syllabus	0	0.0
Al-Azha's syllabus	0	0.0
Cambridge syllabus	0	0.0
own syllabus at school	24	72.7
other	1	3.0
total	32	97.0

Syllabus used	Frequency	Percentage
Education Department	6	18.2
AMS syllabus	1	3.0
Jamiatul-Ulama's syllabus	0	0.0
Al-Azha's syllabus	0	0.0
Cambridge syllabus	0	0.0
own syllabus at school	24	72.7
missing system	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

The results obtained in table 5.5.3 indicate that 72.7% of the respondents use a syllabus that has been developed by the school. 18.2% of the respondents use the education department's syllabus, while only 3% use the Association of Muslim School's (AMS) syllabus. 3% of the respondents use a syllabus other than the two mentioned above. These statistics indicate that no standard syllabus is currently being used in the majority (72.7%) of Muslim private schools in Botswana and South Africa, and there is a need to develop a syllabus to cater for the unique needs of the Southern African learner.

Table 5.22: Type of examination

	Frequency	Percentage
national	17	51.5
international	2	6.1
both (national & international)	0	0.0
total	19	57.6
missing system	14	42.4
total	33	100.0

51.5% of the schools in this study wrote a national examination, while 6.1% wrote an international examination. No respondents wrote both a national as well as an international examination. While table 5.22

indicates 42.4% as a missing system, many of these respondents commented that their learners wrote no examination at all.

Table 5.23: Existence of an oral component in the examination

	Frequency	Percentage
yes, always	15	45.5
sometimes, but not always	14	42.4
no, never	4	12.1
total	33	100.0

Table 5.23 indicates that 45.5% of the respondents always included an oral component in the examination, while 14% sometimes included an oral component. Only 12.1% of the schools in this study never included an oral component in the examination.

Table 5.24: Percentage of oral component in the examination

	Frequency	Percentage
0-20%	15	45.5
21-40%	8	24.2
41-60%	6	18.2
61-80%	0	0.0
81-100%	2	6.1
total	31	93.9
missing system	2	6.1
total	33	100.0

Table 5.24 elucidates the results obtained in table 5.23. While 87.9% of the respondents include an oral component in the examination, 45.5% of these, only allocated between 0-20% of the examination to the oral

aspect. 18.2% allocated between 41-60% of the examination to the oral component, while only 6.1% allocated between 81-100%. These results show that the largest proportion of the Arabic examination (between 60-80%) consists of written work. This enhances the findings of the literature study where it was indicated that there is undue emphasis on the development of reading and writing skills and a lack of stress on speaking and listening skills in Arabic teaching.

Table 5.25: Percentage of the examination that is dependent on knowledge of Arabic grammar

	Frequency	Percentage
0-20%	6	18.2
21-40%	6	18.2
41-60%	6	18.2
61-80%	0	0.0
81-100%	10	30.3
total	4	12.1
missing system	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

30.3% of the respondents indicated that between 81-100% of the examination depended on knowledge of Arabic grammar, according to table 5.25. Equal proportions (18.2%) of respondents indicated that between 21-40% and 41-60% of the examination depended on knowledge of grammar. The literature study indicated that aims of FL teaching determine teaching methodology and are a means of evaluating the success of the learning process (cf **3.2 Aims in second language instruction**). Hence examinations should tie in with learners' aims for choosing the FL. Since both the literature study and the empirical investigation showed that learners want to achieve communicative competence in Arabic, examinations should test all four language skills, rather than be primarily grammar-based (cf **3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language** and **Table 5.26**).

5.6 Motivation to learn Arabic

Question nineteen of the questionnaire focussed on one key variable, reasons for choosing Arabic. The table below indicates the statistics obtained for this variable.

Table 5.26: Reasons for learning the language

	Frequency	Percentage
religious reasons	24	72.7
secular reasons	0	0.0
other reasons	9	27.3
total	33	100.0

According to 72.7% of the respondents, learners choose Arabic for religious reasons, while 27.3% indicated that they choose it for other reasons. According to Dadoo in Mohamed et al. (1991:81) Muslims learn Arabic primarily for religious reasons, while non-Muslims may be motivated to learn the language because of economic opportunities (cf **3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language**).

5.7 How Arabic is taught in the classroom

Questions twenty to twenty-five of the questionnaire focussed on the actual teaching of Arabic. The key variables in this section were the extent to which learners are able to communicate in Arabic, time spent on: translating to and from Arabic, listening to and speaking in Arabic, learning grammar rules and learning vocabulary. Other variables included learners' exposure to: informal personal contact of native Arabic speakers, radio and/or audio and television and/or video. Additional variables were the extent to which learners are committed to communicate in Arabic, whether learners are able to understand the Qur'an and the extent of their understanding. The following tables provide statistics for each of these variables.

Table 5.27: Ability to communicate in Arabic

Extent	Frequency	Percentage
to a lesser extent	18	54.5
a little	12	36.4
somewhat	3	9.1
to a larger extent	0	0.0
total	33	100.0

The majority (90.9 %) of the respondents indicated that learners' ability to communicate with each other in Arabic is either seriously or greatly limited. A very small percentage (9.1%) rated learners' ability in this aspect as being fair, while no respondents felt that learners' ability to communicate in the language was commendable. It is extremely significant that most of the respondents in this study indicated that learners had not developed the productive skills in Arabic. According to the literature study, successful language acquisition occurs when all four language skills are acquired. This is possible when learners are afforded the opportunity to use the language to communicate (cf **2.5 The four language skills as a means to achieving communicative competence**).

Table 5.28: Time spent by learners translating to and from Arabic

	Frequency	Percentage
0-24%	6	18.2
25-49%	6	18.2
50-74%	11	33.3
75-100%	8	24.2
total	31	93.9
missing system	2	6.1
total	33	100.0

According to table 5.28, the largest proportion (57.5%) of the respondents indicated that learners spent

between 50-100% of their time translating to and from Arabic. Only 36.4% of the respondents indicated that

learners spent between 0-49% of the time translating to and from Arabic. Since the emphasis of the grammar-

translation approach is on the development of the reading and writing skills, very little attention is given to the

speaking and listening skills (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**). Evidence of this can be seen from

table 5.27 and 5.28, which show that Arabic learners are not competent communicators of the language, as

they spend the largest proportion of their time translating to and from Arabic. This is essentially the greatest

weakness of this approach to L2 teaching.

Table 5.29: Time spent by learners listening to and speaking Arabic

	Frequency	Percentage
0-24%	21	63.6
25-49%	5	15.2
50-74%	6	18.2
75-100%	0	0
total	32	97.0
missing system	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

The statistics in table 5.29 indicate that the majority (63.6%) of learners in Muslim private schools in

Botswana and South Africa spend between 0-24% of their time listening to and speaking Arabic. Only 18.2 %

of the respondents indicated that learners spend between 50-74% of time listening to and speaking Arabic.

Since learners spend a negligible amount of time listening to and speaking Arabic, they have very little

practise and do not develop these skills. They may be very embarrassed and often confused when addressed in

Arabic (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**). In order to develop fluency in Arabic learners have to

use the language in its context, and be allowed to express thoughts, feelings and ideas in Arabic. The learner

needs to learn the functional use of Arabic in both the spoken and written form (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach**).

Table 5.30: Time spent by learners learning grammar rules

	Frequency	Percentage
0-24%	8	24.2
25-49%	8	24.2
50-74%	14	42.4
75-100%	3	9.1
total	33	100.0

The statistics in table 5.30 indicate that 42.4% of the learners spend between 50-74% of their time learning grammar rules. 9.1% spend between 75-100% of the time learning grammar rules, while 48.4% spend less than 50% of their time doing the same. According to the grammar-translation method, the aim of L2 learning was to read literature and develop mental discipline, through learning rules, paradigms, structure and exceptions. Thus, learners spend the largest proportion of the time on these activities rather than on oral work (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**).

Table 5.31: Time spent by learners learning new vocabulary

	Frequency	Percentage
0-24%	3	9.1
25-49%	7	21.2
50-74%	13	39.4
75-100%	10	30.3
total	33	100.0

According to the respondents 69.7% of learners spend between 50-100% of their time learning new

vocabulary, while 30.3% spend between 0-49% of their time doing the same. A distinctive characteristic of the grammar-translation approach is the learning of vocabulary lists for the specific purpose of correct and precise translation. Since the lists are learned out of context, only learners who are intellectually endowed are able to cope with this kind of instruction (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**).

Table 5.32; Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through informal personal contact

	Frequency	Percentage
yes	12	36.4
no	16	48.5
uncertain	5	15.2
total	33	100.0

According to the respondents in this study, the largest proportion (48.5%) of the learners are not exposed to native speakers of Arabic through informal personal contact. 36.4% of the learners are exposed to native speakers of the language, while 15.2% are uncertain about this fact. This study shows that learners are being taught Arabic through the grammar-translation method (cf **Table 5.27, Table 5.28, Table 5.29, Table 5.30** and **Table 5.31**), therefore the statistics in table 5.32 are not surprising because the method does not advocate exposure to native speakers as a vital component of L2 teaching. The development of the oral skills are not emphasised in this approach and learners are not given exposure to listening and speaking Arabic in the classroom, so there would be very little emphasis on contact with native speakers of the language (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**). Another possible reason for these results could be that since there is a lack of an Arabic speaking community, especially in South Africa, learners are unable to make contact easily with native Arabic speakers (cf **2.3 The distinction between second and foreign language** and **2.3.1 Arabic, a second language or a foreign language**).

Table 5.33: Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through radio and/or audio cassettes

	Frequency	Percentage
yes	12	36.4
no	13	39.4
uncertain	7	21.2
total	32	97.0
missing system	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

Table 5.33 indicates that 39.4% of the learners are not exposed to native speakers of Arabic either through radio or audio cassettes, while 36.4% are exposed to this. 21.2% of the respondents were unsure of this aspect. These statistics are indicative of the lack of emphasis placed on the development of the listening and speaking skills in Arabic, in keeping with the grammar-translation approach that is evidently being used for Arabic teaching. However, it must be noted that Arabic radio programmes are not easily accessible in South Africa and Botswana.

Table 5.34: Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through television and/or video cassettes

	Frequency	Percentage
yes	3	9.1
no	20	60.6
uncertain	8	24.2
total	31	93.9
missing system	2	6.1
total	33	100.0

60.6% of the learners are not exposed to native speakers of Arabic through television or video cassettes according to the respondents in this study. 24.2% of the respondents were uncertain about this aspect, while

only 9.1% indicated that learners are definitely exposed to native speakers of the language either through television or video. With the advent of *Digital Satellite Television* in Southern Africa, which has an Arabic channel (*ART Africa*), some Arabic learners can have access to television programmes that are broadcasted in Arabic by native speakers of the language (cf **2.3.1 Arabic, a second language or a foreign language**).

Table 5.35: Learners' commitment to communicate in Arabic

	Frequency	Percentage
to a lesser extent	17	51.5
a little	11	33.3
somewhat	5	15.2
to a larger extent	0	0.0
total	33	100.0

The statistics from table 5.28 to table 5.35 clearly indicate that the respondents in this study are primarily utilising the grammar-translation approach for teaching Arabic. According to table 5.35 the majority of the learners (51.5%) are not seriously committed to communicate in Arabic with each other, while 33.3% are a little committed and 15.2% are somewhat committed. The limitations of this approach have been discussed at length in the literature study (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**). Fundamentally, it limits the acquisition of communicative competence in any L2 or FL. The grammar-translation approach does not facilitate use of Arabic naturally, nor does it foster the development of listening skills, which form the basis of acquiring speaking skills. It focusses on the achievement of grammatical and linguistic competence and thereby seriously inhibits the procurement of the oral skills. For learners to be seriously committed to communicate in the language, they have to be confident in their ability to speak Arabic. This confidence may be developed through constant exposure, which can be achieved through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and being encouraged to use Arabic in various contexts, as is advocated by the communicative approach (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach (CLT)**). It is vital that none of the language skills be compromised if

the aim of study is to achieve communicative competence (cf **2.5 The four skills as a means to achieving communicative competence**).

Table 5.36: Learners' ability to read the Qur'an fluently

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	26	78.8
no	5	15.2
total	31	93.9
missing system	2	6.1
total	33	100.

According to the respondents, the majority (78.8%) of learners are able to read the Qur'an fluently, while only 15.2% of the learners are not fluent in Qur'an recitation. This corresponds with the literature study which showed that Muslim children are taught to recite the Qur'an from a very young age (cf **3.5.4 The audio-lingual method**).

Table 5.37: Learners' ability to understand the Qur'an

level of comprehension when reading the Qur'an	Frequency	Percentage
full comprehension	0	0.0
partial comprehension	4	12.1
little comprehension	17	51.5
no comprehension	8	24.2
total	29	87.9
missing system	4	12.1
total	33	100.0

Table 5.36 and table 5.37 indicate that while 78.8% of learners are able to recite the Qur'an fluently, only

12.1% of them have partial comprehension and 75.7% of the learners have little or no comprehension at all.

These statistics correlate with table 5.13 which indicated that a large (67.7%) proportion of Arabic teachers

are able to read Arabic. The results in table 5.37 expound the findings of the literature study (cf **3.5.4 The**

audio-lingual method). Muslim children are exposed to Arabic from birth and they are expected to recite the

Qur'an fluently to attain spiritual blessings. The learners are taught to read the Qur'an through mimicry and

pattern drills rather than through comprehension and contextual clues. This intriguing approach enables

learners to parrot the text without any understanding. While this is an acceptable practice where the recitation

of the Qur'an is concerned, they tend to apply this to the study of the language in general.

Another startling factor that should be considered is that although 72.7% of the learners choose to study

Arabic for religious reasons, according to the teachers in this study (cf **Table 5.26 Reasons for learning the**

language), little comprehension is achieved by only 51.5% of them. This substantiates the findings of the

literature study, which states that the chief reason for Muslim learners choosing to study Arabic, is religious

(cf **3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language**). Since this aim is obviously not

being achieved for the majority of learners, their learning experience must be seriously scrutinised. Aims are

meant to direct and guide the selection of appropriate teaching methodology, and are a means of judging

whether learning has in fact taken place (cf **3.2 Aims in second language instruction**).

5.8 Teacher's perceptions on how Arabic should be taught

Questions twenty-six, twenty-seven and twenty-eight of the questionnaire revolved around ascertaining

teachers' perceptions on how Arabic should be taught. The key variables in this section, ranged from the

importance of hearing authentic Arabic being spoken, to the teaching methodologies considered to be most

effective for the acquisition of Arabic.

Table 5.38: The importance of hearing authentic Arabic being spoken

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	0	0.0
important	6	18.2
very important	15	45.6
of the utmost importance	12	36.4
total	33	100.0

45.6% of the respondents believed that it is very important for learners to hear authentic Arabic being spoken, while 36.4% believed it was of utmost importance. 18.2 % of the respondents believed that it was important. Although these results indicate that the majority of respondents believe that learners should be exposed to authentic spoken Arabic, in practice a very small proportion actually attempt to do this (cf **Table 5.32 Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through informal personal contact, Table 5.33 Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through radio and/or audio cassettes and Table 5.34 Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through television and/or video cassettes**).

Table 5.39: The importance of learners communicating in Arabic with each other

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	0	0.0
important	10	30.3
very important	13	39.4
of the utmost importance	10	30.3
total	33	100.0

39.4% of the respondents rated the importance of learners communicating in Arabic with each other as being very important, while an equal percentage (30.3%) rated it as being important and of utmost importance. A comparison of the statistics in table 5.39 and table 5.35 reveal, that while teachers are aware of the importance of communication in Arabic among learners, a relatively small proportion are fostering such communication in class.

Table 5.40: The importance of learners communicating in Arabic with the teacher

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	0	0.0
important	10	30.3
very important	12	36.4
of the utmost importance	11	33.3
total	33	100.0

According to table 5.40, while 30.3% of the respondents believed that it was important for learners to communicate in Arabic with the teacher, 36.4% felt it is very important and 33.3% felt that this was of utmost importance. The statistics in table 5.12 indicate that 45.4% of the respondents rated their ability to speak Arabic between average to poor, so while these teachers know the value of communicating with learners in Arabic, they are obviously unable to effect this. This could possibly be the reason for their reliance on the grammar-translation method, since it does not emphasise the importance for teachers to speak to learners in Arabic. These results elucidate the findings of the literature study (cf **3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic**).

Table 5.41: The importance of learning and applying grammar rules

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	0	0.0
important	8	24.2

Response	Frequency	Percentage
very important	7	21.2
of the utmost importance	18	54.5
total	33	100.0

54.5% of the respondents believe that it is of utmost importance for learners to learn and apply grammar

rules, 21.2% felt it was very important, while 24.2% believed that it was important. Significantly more than

half of the respondents believe that it is of utmost importance for learners to learn and apply grammar rules.

These results correlate with those of table 5.30 which indicate that 51.5% of the learners spend more than

50% of the time learning grammar rules. Thus grammar seems to occupy a central position in Arabic teaching

in South Africa and Botswana.

Table 5.42; The importance of learning new vocabulary

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	0	0.0
important	7	21.2
very important	11	33.3
of the utmost importance	15	45.5
total	33	100.0

According to table 5.42, 45.5% of the respondents believe that it is of utmost importance for learners to learn

new vocabulary, while 33.3% believe it is very important and 21.2% of the respondents rated this aspect as

important. These statistics correlate with those of table 5.31, which show that most learners spend more than

half their time learning vocabulary. Since grammar plays a pivotal role in Arabic teaching, learning of

vocabulary lists (which is a feature of the grammar-translation method) also becomes important within this

approach to teaching Arabic (cf 3.5.1 **The grammar-translation method**). As was mentioned previously,

since these lists are usually learned out of context and are primarily used for translation of passages or

sentences it therefore does not necessarily imply that learners are able to express meaning in Arabic because

of the vast amount of vocabulary they are expected to learn. However, it is difficult to determine whether respondents meant learning of contextual vocabulary or isolated vocabulary lists, as the question did not cater for such ambiguity.

Table 5.43: The importance of translating to and from Arabic

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	0	0.0
important	3	9.1
very important	16	48.5
of the utmost importance	14	42.4
total	33	100.0

48.5% of the respondents indicated that translating to and from Arabic is very important, while 42.4% believed it was of utmost importance. Only 9.1% indicated that it was important. Since translating to and from Arabic forms an integral part of the grammar-translation approach, these statistics are not surprising. They support the results in table 5.28, which show that 57.5% of learners spend more than 50% of their time translating to and from Arabic. According to the literature study competence in an L2 is measured through learners' ability to translate correctly in the grammar-translation approach (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method**).

Table 5.44: The importance of exposure to native speakers of the language through personal contact

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	2	6.1
important	11	33.3
very important	15	45.5
of the utmost importance	5	15.2

Response	Frequency	Percentage
total	33	100.0

Only 15.2% of the respondents indicated that it is of utmost importance for learners to be exposed to native speakers of the language through personal contact, while 45.5% indicated that it is very important. 33.3% believed that it is important, while 6.1% believed that it is not important at all. While many of the teachers in this study are aware of the benefits of exposure to native speakers of Arabic, statistics in table 5.32 revealed that only 36.4% of learners were afforded this opportunity. A possible reason for this could be that since Arabic is not used for communicative purposes in South Africa and Botswana, a speech community is not easily available or not available at all.

Table 5.45: The importance of exposure to native speakers of the language through radio and/or audio cassettes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	3	9.1
important	16	48.5
very important	11	33.3
of the utmost importance	3	9.1
total	33	100.0

9.1% of the respondents rated exposure to native speakers of Arabic through radio and audio cassettes as not important. 48.5% of the respondents believed that it was important, while 33.3% believed it was very important. Only 9.1% of the respondents believed that it was of the utmost importance. These statistics correlate with those of table 5.33 which shows that only 36.4% were exposed to Arabic through these mediums.

Table 5.46: The importance of exposure to native speakers of the language through television and/or video cassettes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
not important at all	8	24.2
important	12	36.4
very important	11	33.3
of the utmost importance	2	6.1
total	33	100.0

According to table 5.46, 36.4% of the respondents rated exposure to native speakers of the language through television or video as important, while 33.3% rated it very important, and 6.1% believed it was of utmost importance. 24.2% of the respondents believed that this was not important at all. According to table 5.34 a very small proportion (9.1%) of the learners are exposed to Arabic through television or video cassettes.

Especially in the case of an additional language, where there is no available speech community, as is the case with Arabic in South Africa and Botswana, it is vital for learners to be exposed to native speakers through other mediums, like radio, television, audio and video cassettes. This would give learners exposure to Arabic in meaningful contexts and allow them to learn the nuances of the language, which will in turn equip them to communicate effectively in Arabic (Ellis 1997:4). Since it is evident from this study that learners are not given this type of exposure to Arabic, and the focus of teaching is on learning grammar rules and translation, it is not surprising then that learners are neither committed to speak the language nor are they able to communicate in it (cf **Table 5.35 Learners' commitment to communicate in Arabic** and **Table 5.27 Ability to communicate in Arabic**).

Table 5.47: Should the medium of instruction be Arabic

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	16	48.5
agree or strongly agree	17	51.5
total	33	100.0

Respondents seemed to be split about whether Arabic should be the medium of instruction. While 51.5% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this suggestion, a staggering 48.5% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this idea. Table 5.19 reveals that in 90.9% of the schools the medium of instruction is English. Perhaps the reason for this could be that since only 30.3% (cf **Table 5.12 Teachers' ability to speak Arabic**) of the respondents are able to speak Arabic well, the majority of the teachers are ill-equipped to teach through the Arabic medium. This could also be the reason why there is heavy reliance on the grammar-translation method, since the communicative approach and all other approaches that promote the acquisition of communicative competence necessitate that the L2 or FL be taught through its own medium (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach (CLT)**).

Table 5.48: Should learners spend more than 50% of the time translating to and from Arabic

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	13	39.4
agree or strongly agree	20	60.6
total	33	100.0

Another interesting response from respondents was whether learners should spend more than 50% of their time translating to and from Arabic. A startling 60.6% agreed with this, while only 39.4% disagreed. This further elucidates the results of table 5.43, where the majority of teachers indicated that it is important for learners to translate to and from Arabic, and supports the results of table 5.28, which show that learners spend most of their time in translations. However, if learners spend so much time translating to and from Arabic, the skills of speaking and listening are compromised. This could account for the fact that learners in

this study are unable to speak and communicate effectively in Arabic. To remedy this problem and facilitate

the achievement of communicative competence, it becomes necessary to effect a change in the teaching

methods used, so that all four skills receive adequate attention (cf **2.5 The four language skills as a means to**

achieving communicative competence). As is evident from the literature study, no one approach is ideal, so

teachers should be encouraged to adopt the eclectic approach to achieve the aims of Arabic teaching (cf **3.5.14**

The eclectic approach and 3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language).

Table 5.49: Should learners be taught all grammar rules to facilitate language acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	9	27.3
agree or strongly agree	24	72.7
total	33	100.0

Table 5.49 indicates that 72.7% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that learners should be taught all

grammar rules to facilitate language acquisition, while 27.3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this.

These results support those of table 5.41, and corroborate those of table 5.30 which reveal that learners do

spend a large amount of time learning grammar rules. However, the literature study has clearly indicated that

grammar plays an infinitesimal role in language acquisition and does not facilitate communication, even after

years of study, unless the learner has the opportunity to live within an Arabic speech community (cf **3.5.1 The**

grammar-translation method).

Table 5.50; Should the teacher spend more than 50% of the time communicating with learners in

Arabic

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	4	12.1
agree or strongly agree	29	87.9

Response	Frequency	Percentage
total	33	100.0

87.9% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the teacher should spend more than 50% of the time communicating in Arabic with the learners, while 12.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this. While there seems to be strong agreement among the respondents as regards this aspect of teaching (the results are supported by **Table 5.40 The importance of learners communicating in Arabic with the teacher**), statistics in table 5.29 indicate that exactly the opposite is taking place in class. Teachers are not teaching in the medium of Arabic, neither are they exposing their learners to native speakers of the language, and they are not spending time communicating in Arabic to learners (cf **Table 5.19 Medium of instruction; Table 5.32 Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through informal personal contact; Table 5.33 Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through radio and/or audio cassettes and table 5.34 Learners' exposure to native speakers of Arabic through television and/or video cassettes**). Once again a possible reason for this could be the teachers' inability to speak Arabic (cf **Table 5.12 Teachers' ability to speak Arabic and Table 5.14 Teachers' ability to understand spoken Arabic**).

Table 5.51: Should the teacher follow prescribed textbooks to direct the teaching process

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	16	48.5
agree or strongly agree	16	48.5
missing systems	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

The statistics in table 5.51 show that respondents were split about the importance of following prescribed textbooks to direct the teaching. While 48.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 48.5% also agreed or strongly agreed. Since most of the respondents indicated that the school had devised its own syllabus to cater for

unique needs of the learner (cf **Table 5.21 Syllabus used**), it can be assumed that there are a variety of textbooks and materials that are currently being used in Arabic teaching. In the literature study (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**), Allen (1994:35) proposed that the Arabic curriculum should be based on proficiency rather than a textbook. The teacher should initiate activities that encourage operational use of Arabic, through conversation while grammar should be taught functionally. Thus the teacher becomes more important than the textbook, since the teaching is directed by him/her.

Table 5.52: Is the achievement of communicative competence vital to the teaching of Arabic

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	2	6.1
agree or strongly agree	31	93.9
total	33	100.0

93.9% of the respondents in this study either agreed or strongly agreed that the achievement of communicative competence is vital to the teaching of Arabic, while only 6.1% strongly disagreed or disagreed. While there is overwhelming agreement that communicative competence is an important aim of Arabic teaching, the statistics clearly reveal that this aim is definitely not being achieved by most learners. The primary reason for this seems to be the reliance on the grammar-translation method, possibly because of teachers' inability to communicate in Arabic.

Table 5.53: Should examinations be based on the learner's knowledge of grammar rules

Response	Frequency	Percentage
disagree or strongly disagree	17	51.5
agree or strongly agree	16	48.5
total	33	100.0

Respondents were split with regard to their opinion on whether examinations should be based on knowledge of grammar or not. 51.5% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this, while 48.5% agreed or strongly agreed that examinations should be grammar based. Table 5.25 indicated that the Arabic examinations are primarily grammar based. Since Arabic is being taught through the grammar-translation method in most instances, learners are probably able to excel in such examinations. However, aims are a measure of judging whether learning has taken place, and since the main aims of learning Arabic are the achievement of communicative competence and the understanding of religious scriptures, it is this that the examinations should test (cf **3.2 Aims in second language instruction and 3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language**).

Table 5.54: Ranking of the grammar-translation method for successful language acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
least successful	4	12.1
occasionally successful	4	12.1
reasonably successful	17	51.5
most successful	7	21.2
missing systems	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

According to table 5.54, 72.7% of the respondents ranked the grammar-translation method as reasonably successful or most successful for language acquisition. Only 24.2% indicated that it is either the least successful approach or only occasionally successful for language acquisition. These results are extremely interesting when considering the respondents' understanding on how they believe Arabic should be taught (cf **Table 5.38 to Table 5.53**). If they follow their sensitivities, then they would definitely not teach Arabic via the grammar-translation approach or even rate this approach highly.

Table 5.55: Ranking of the audio-lingual method for successful language acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
least successful	0	0.0
occasionally successful	7	21.2
reasonably successful	12	36.4
most successful	12	36.4
missing systems	2	6.0
total	33	100.0

The majority (72.8%) of the respondents indicated that the audio-lingual approach is either reasonably or

most successful for language acquisition, while 21.2% indicated that it is only occasionally successful. Since

the audio-lingual method is based on the behaviouristic idea of imitation, it encourages memorisation without

focussing on meaning. It has therefore been blamed for the phenomenon of ' barking at print' (cf **3.5.4 The**

audio-lingual method). It is evident from tables 5.36 and 5.37, while learners are able to 'read' the Qur'an

fluently, most are merely parroting the text as they have little or no understanding of what they are 'reading'.

Whilst it is completely acceptable in Islam for Muslims to recite the Qur'an (albeit without understanding) to

attain spiritual benefit, they are urged to make an earnest effort to understand and implement its teachings in

their lives. Utilising the audio-lingual method of teaching Arabic will probably perpetuate this phenomenon of

reading without understanding, unless teachers are able to supplement their teaching with other methods. In

other words, they should use an eclectic approach to teach Arabic.

Table 5.56: Ranking of the immersion programmes for successful language acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
least successful	12	36.4
occasionally successful	11	33.3
reasonably successful	1	3.0
most successful	5	15.2

Response	Frequency	Percentage
missing systems	4	12.1
total	33	100.0

69.7% of the respondents indicated that immersion programmes are either the least successful or only occasionally successful for language acquisition, while only 18.2% indicated that it is either reasonably successful or most successful. Since this approach requires that other subjects should be taught through the medium of Arabic to facilitate Arabic acquisition, it is not a favoured approach, as very few Arabic teachers are native speakers of the language in both South Africa and Botswana (cf **Table 5.10 Teachers' first language** and **Table 5.11 Teachers' preferred language of communication**). Essentially, immersion programmes were effective for French in Canada because in some areas it is an L1 in that country and native speakers were teaching the language (cf **3.5.13 Immersion programmes**).

Table 5.57: Ranking of the communicative approach for successful language acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
least successful	1	3.0
occasionally successful	6	18.2
reasonably successful	11	33.3
most successful	12	36.4
missing systems	3	9.1
total	33	100.0

69.7% of the respondents ranked the communicative approach as either reasonably or most successful for language acquisition, while 21.2% regarded it as least or occasionally successful. The communicative approach is a very important language teaching approach. The aim is to create communicative competence and a balance between fluency and accuracy. If the majority of teachers believe that this approach is very successful, it is difficult to account for learners' inability to communicate in Arabic. However, since teachers

are using the grammar-translation method to teach Arabic, one can understand why communicative competence is not being achieved. The teachers' rating of the communicative approach contradicts their opinions on the importance of translation and learning and applying grammar rules (cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach (CLT)**).

Table 5.58: Ranking of the eclectic approach for successful language acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
least successful	0	0.0
occasionally successful	2	6.1
reasonably successful	9	27.3
most successful	21	63.6
missing systems	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

The largest proportion (63.6%) of respondents, ranked the eclectic approach as the most successful for language acquisition, while 27.3% ranked it as reasonably successful. Only 6.1% indicated that it was only occasionally successful. While the teachers' responses support the findings of the literature study, it is evident that they are not utilising this approach for the teaching of Arabic (cf **3.6.2 The eclectic approach, a means of achieving communicative competence in Arabic**).

5.9 Open questions

The last two questions in the questionnaire (cf **Appendix A**) were open-ended questions. These allowed respondents to provide any additional information with regard to the teaching of Arabic and make relevant suggestions.

The majority of the respondents expressed a need for a syllabus that catered for the demands of the Southern African learner. They suggested that more attention should be paid to the oral component, to facilitate acquisition of the speaking skill. Some of the respondents indicated that they would like to see more practical themes and more conversation around the environment being introduced in Arabic lessons to make the language a living language. Other respondents indicated that since a large proportion of learners studied Arabic for religious reasons (as is evident from table 5.26), it is imperative that learners should be familiar with Qur'anic vocabulary. This should not take the form of translation of set passages, which encourages memorisation, but rather expose learners to the vocabulary and its usage in various contexts.

Many respondents highlighted the need to train teachers in the communicative approach, as many have studied the language through the grammar-translation or audio-lingual method and are therefore lacking the expertise to teach according to the latest trends and techniques. They requested seminars, workshops and even refresher courses, specifically directed at developing the Arabic teachers' speaking skills, so that they would be more comfortable speaking the language to their learners. They indicated that since they are not confident speakers of the language they are unable to teach through the Arabic medium, and feel inadequately equipped to develop speaking and listening skills in learners.

Respondents also requested that universities, Muslim seminaries and other tertiary institutions at which Arabic is currently taught, seriously revise their syllabi to ensure that all four language skills are adequately acquired by students. They felt that most of these institutions relied too heavily on the grammar-translation method and hence their graduates taught learners through this approach. In some instances, respondents complained that since there was no oral component in the Arabic course they studied, they did not acquire communicative competence, nonetheless they graduated as Arabic teachers. Respondents also suggested that Arabic teachers should be adequately trained in practically teaching the language as a second and foreign language, and that the few lessons they were expected to deliver were insufficient proof of teaching

competence.

A few respondents indicated that until Arabic is taught through its own medium, there will always be problems with regard to the acquisition of the speaking skill. Individual respondents indicated the need for locally produced resources to teach the language. They felt that some of the textbooks being used were designed for first language speakers, while others were based totally on grammar-translation. Textbooks, accompanied by audio-visual aids would assist teachers to develop learners' comprehension and speaking abilities.

5.10 Testing of hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

5.10.1 Testing of Hypothesis 1

There is a significant difference between teachers with a diverse number of years of experience in the teaching of Arabic and their rating of the importance of hearing authentic Arabic spoken during Arabic lessons.

Table 5.59: Chi-square and significance of years of teaching experience in Arabic and the degree of importance teachers attribute to hearing authentic Arabic spoken during Arabic lessons

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	20.058	6	$p<0.01$

According to table 5.59 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 1%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with diverse teaching experience in Arabic with regard to

how important the teachers believed hearing authentic Arabic spoken during Arabic lessons is. The three

teachers who are most experienced believed that this is important. Nine of the least experienced teachers,

thought that this is very important. While all the respondents believed that learners should be exposed to

native Arabic speakers, the most experienced teachers rated this aspect as less important than the least

experienced teachers. A possible reason for this could be that the newly qualified teachers are more familiar

with the latest research findings with regard to exposure to native speakers of a language and the positive

impact this has on language acquisition for learners of the language.

5.10.2 Testing of Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference between teachers with a diverse number of years of experience in the teaching

of Arabic and their rating of the importance of communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic

lessons.

Table 5.60: Chi-square and significance of years of teaching experience in Arabic and the degree of

importance teachers attach to communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic lessons

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	15.890	6	$p < 0.05$

According to table 5.60 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that

there is a significant difference between teachers with diverse teaching experience in Arabic with regard to

how important they believe communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic lessons is. The three

teachers who were most experienced believed that this important. Seven of the least experienced teachers,

thought that this is of utmost importance. A possible reason for this could be that the most experienced

teachers have studied Arabic through the grammar-translation method and are therefore uncomfortable

communicating in Arabic while the newer teachers have been exposed to the recent trends in L2 and Fl

teaching and are therefore aware of the importance of communicating in the target language.

5.10.3 Testing of Hypothesis 3

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse academic qualifications and their rating of the importance of exposure to native Arabic speakers through television and video cassettes.

Table 5.61: Chi-square and significance of teachers with diverse academic qualifications and the degree of importance teachers attach to exposure to native Arabic speakers through television and video cassettes

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
32	17.234	9	$p<0.05$

According to table 5.61 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with diverse academic qualifications in Arabic with regard to how important they believe exposure to native Arabic speakers is. The largest proportion of teachers (eleven) who possessed a Bachelor's with Arabic as a major believed that this is important or very important. Four of the teachers with the lowest academic qualifications, thought that this is not important. Teachers who possess varied academic qualifications seem to be able to understand the importance of learner exposure to native speakers of the target language. A possible reason could be that this view stems from their varied knowledge on language teaching.

5.10.4 Testing of Hypothesis 4

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic lessons.

Table 5.62: Chi-square and significance of teachers a with postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and the degree of importance teachers attribute to communicating in Arabic with the teacher during Arabic lessons

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	6.815	2	p<0.05

According to table 5.62 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) with regard to how important they believe communicating in Arabic with the teacher during Arabic lessons is. Six teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic), believed that this is very important. Ten teachers without the postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) believed that this is of utmost importance. Thus all the respondents, regardless of their qualifications regarded this as an important aspect in the teaching of Arabic, while those with postgraduate qualifications rated it as less important than the others.

5.10.5 Testing of Hypothesis 5

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of learning and applying grammar rules.

Table 5.63: Chi-square and significance of teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and the degree of importance teachers attribute to learning and applying grammar rules

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	9.870	2	p<0.01

According to table 5.63 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 1%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic), with regard to how important the teachers believe learning and applying grammar rules is. The five teachers who possessed the postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) believed that this important. Seventeen of the teachers without the postgraduate qualification, thought that this is of utmost importance. A possible reason for this could be that since the additional qualification focusses on teaching techniques and methodology, teachers who possess this qualification are less focussed on grammar since they have a greater repertoire of

teaching methodologies to choose from.

5.10.6 Testing of Hypothesis 6

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons.

Table 5.64: Chi-square and significance of teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and the degree of importance teachers attribute to learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons

number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	9.806	2	$p < 0.01$

According to table 5.64 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 1%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic), with regard to how important the teachers believe learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons is. The eight teachers who possessed the postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) believed that this is important or very important. Fifteen of the teachers without the postgraduate qualification, thought that this is of the utmost importance. Once again a possible explanation for this could be that additional qualifications better equip the teacher for L2 and F1 teaching.

5.10.7 Testing of Hypothesis 7

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of exposure to native Arabic speakers through personal contact.

Table 5.65: Chi-square and significance of teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and the degree of importance teachers attach to exposure to native Arabic speakers through personal contact

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	13.398	3	p<0.01

According to table 5.65 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 1%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic), with regard to how important they believe exposure to native Arabic speakers is. The six teachers who possessed the postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) believed that this is very important. Eleven of the teachers without the postgraduate qualification, thought that this is important. Thus those who possessed additional qualifications were able to discern the importance of exposure to native speakers of Arabic.

5.10.8 Testing of Hypothesis 8

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of communicating in Arabic with the teacher during Arabic lessons.

Table 5.66: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended seminars and workshops in the last three years and their rating of the importance of communicating with the teacher in Arabic during Arabic lessons

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	7.117	2	p<0.05

According to table 5.66 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the past three years with regard to how important they believe communicating in Arabic with the teacher during lessons is. The twenty one teachers who have attended workshops and seminars believed that this is very important or of the utmost importance. Five teachers who have not attended workshops or seminars in the past three years,

thought that this is important. A possible reason for this could be that Arabic seminars and workshops have focussed on this aspect and motivated teachers to communicate in the language with learners.

5.10.9 Testing of Hypothesis 9

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of learning and applying grammar rules.

Table 5.67: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of learning and applying grammar rules

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	7.404	2	$p < 0.05$

According to table 5.67 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years with regard to how important the teachers believe it is to learn and apply grammar rules. Both, the eleven teachers who have attended workshops and seminars, as well as the seven who have not, believed that this is of the utmost importance.

This interesting result shows that Arabic teachers in general, rate learning grammar rules as a very important aspect in the teaching of the language. A possible reason for this could be that since they have learned Arabic through the grammar-translation method, they see this aspect as all important. Another possible reason could be the religious link to the language. If learners learn Arabic, primarily to understand the Qur'an, then grammar may play a significant role, for fear of misunderstanding and incorrectly translating the word of God Almighty.

5.10.10 Testing of Hypothesis 10

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three

years and their rating of the importance of learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons.

Table 5.68: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of learning new vocabulary during Arabic lessons

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	6.020	2	$p < 0.05$

According to table 5.68 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years with regard to how important the teachers believe it is to learn new vocabulary during Arabic lessons. The nineteen teachers who have attended workshops and seminars, indicated that it is either very important or of the utmost importance that new vocabulary is learned during Arabic lessons. Interestingly, the six teachers who have not attended workshops or seminars in the last three years, indicated that this is of the utmost importance too. Thus all Arabic teachers in this study believe that learning vocabulary is vital in the teaching of Arabic. Since the question did not distinguish the learning of isolated vocabulary lists from contextual vocabulary, it is difficult to establish what was understood by the respondents.

5.10.11 Testing of Hypothesis 11

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of translating to and from Arabic.

Table 5.69: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of translating to and from Arabic

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	6.876	2	$p < 0.05$

According to table 5.69 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that

there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years with regard to how important they believe it is to translate to and from Arabic. The fifteen teachers who have attended workshops and seminars, indicated that this is very important. Six teachers who have not attended workshops or seminars in the last three years indicated that this is of the utmost importance. Thus both groups of teachers believe that translating to and from Arabic is an important aspect of teaching Arabic, but those who have not attended recent seminars or workshops seem to give this aspect greater importance.

5.10.12 Testing of Hypothesis 12

There is a significant difference between teachers with a diverse number of years of experience in the teaching of Arabic and their rating of the importance of teaching Arabic through the medium of Arabic.

Table 5.70: Chi-square and significance of years of teaching experience in Arabic and the degree of importance teachers attribute to teaching Arabic through its own medium

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	8.692	3	$p < 0.05$

According to table 5.70 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with diverse teaching experience in Arabic with regard to how important they believe it is to teach Arabic through the medium of Arabic. The three teachers who are most experienced disagreed or strongly disagreed with this. Nine of the least experienced teachers also disagreed or strongly disagreed with this.

A possible explanation for this could be that since teachers are uncomfortable speaking the language, they disapprove of using Arabic as a medium of instruction. They possibly have limited vocabulary and very little exposure to the language themselves and as a result are ill-equipped to teach in medium of Arabic (cf **Table 5.12 Teachers' ability to speak Arabic**).

5.10.13 Testing of Hypothesis 13

There is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and their rating of the importance of the teacher to follow textbooks in the teaching of Arabic.

Table 5.71: Chi-square and significance of teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) and the degree of importance teachers attribute to following textbooks when Arabic teaching

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	7.477	2	$p<0.05$

According to table 5.71 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic), with regard to how important they believe it is to follow textbooks. The six teachers who possessed the postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea of following prescribed textbooks to direct the teaching process. Fifteen of the teachers without the postgraduate qualification, agreed or strongly agreed with the use of textbooks. A possible reason for this could be that teachers with the postgraduate qualification are more aware of the importance of the teacher rather than the textbook guiding the learning process.

5.10.14 Testing of Hypothesis 14

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of spending more than 50% of time translating to and from Arabic.

Table 5.72: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of spending more than 50% of time translating to and from Arabic

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	5.775	1	$p<0.05$

According to table 5.72 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years with regard to how important the teachers believe it is to spend more than 50% of time translating to and from Arabic. Of the twenty six teachers who have attended workshops and seminars, thirteen either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this, and the other thirteen either agreed or strongly agreed that more than 50% of time should be spent translating to and from Arabic. Seven teachers who have not attended workshops or seminars in the last three years agreed or strongly agreed with this. Accordingly, it is clear that translating to and from Arabic seems to be a practice that more than 50% of Arabic teachers believe is of importance, and obviously direct their learners towards this exercise. It is an area of grave concern, as it points to the fact that the choice of teaching methodology is possibly the reason why learners are unable to achieve communicative competence in Arabic.

5.10.15 Testing of Hypothesis 15

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of basing examinations primarily on the knowledge of Arabic grammar and rules.

Table 5.73: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the importance of examinations being primarily based on knowledge of Arabic grammar and rules

Number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	9.440	1	$p<0.01$

According to table 5.73 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 1%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops and seminars in the last three

years with regard to how important they believe it is to base examinations primarily on knowledge of Arabic grammar and rules. Seventeen teachers who have attended workshops and seminars disagreed or strongly disagreed with this. Seven teachers who have not attended workshops or seminars in the last three years agreed or strongly agreed with this. The implication is that the workshops and seminars have been discouraging this practice.

5.10.16 Testing of Hypothesis 16

There is a significant difference between teachers with diverse academic qualifications and their rating of the effectiveness of the communicative approach.

Table 5.74: Chi-square and significance of teachers with diverse academic qualifications and their rating of the communicative approach for teaching Arabic

number	chi-square value	df	significance
32	23.253	12	$p < 0.05$

According to table 5.74 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 5%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers with a diverse academic qualifications in Arabic with regard to how successful the teachers believe the communicative approach is for the teaching of Arabic. Five teachers who possessed a Bachelor's with Arabic as a major indicated that this method is most successful. Two teachers with a postgraduate education diploma (with Arabic) indicated that it is reasonably successful. Four of the teachers with the lowest academic qualifications (grade twelve or A-levels), thought that the communicative approach is reasonably successful. Therefore, it can be assumed that teachers who have upgraded their qualifications are more familiar with the trends and practices in second and foreign language teaching and hence promote the communicative approach.

5.10.17 Testing of hypothesis 17

There is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three

years and their rating of the effectiveness of the communicative approach.

Table 5.75: Chi-square and significance of teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years and their rating of the communicative approach for teaching Arabic

number	chi-square value	df	significance
33	14.959	4	p<0.01

According to table 5.75 the null-hypothesis may be rejected on the 1%-level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference between teachers who have attended workshops or seminars in the last three years with regard to how successful they believe the communicative approach is for the teaching of Arabic. Twelve teachers who have attended workshops or seminars indicated that this method is most successful. Three teachers who have not attended workshops or seminars indicated that it is reasonably successful. Thus the implication is that workshops and seminars have been promoting the use of the communicative method.

5.11 Summary

In this chapter results of the empirical investigation were presented and analysed. In the first section a detailed presentation of frequency analysis was made followed by systematic presentation of the hypotheses that were postulated according to the literature study. Each hypothesis was accepted or rejected on either the 1% or 5% level. Possible reasons for some of the results were also offered.

The following conclusions were arrived at after analysing the frequency tables and testing the hypotheses:

i.   There are a significant number of Arabic teachers that are not fluent speakers of the language and this is possibly the reason why they do not teach through the medium of Arabic or spend a significant amount of time promoting the acquisition of the speaking skill.

ii.   There is an urgent need to develop a syllabus that caters for the unique needs of the Southern African learner.

iii.   The internal and internal examinations are largely grammar based. Very little attention is given to the oral aspect of Arabic.

iv.   Teachers believe that the largest proportion of learners study Arabic for religious reasons.

v.   While the majority of learners are able to read the Qur'an fluently, they do so without understanding. Only a very small proportion are able to understand it to a small extent.

vi.   Learners spend more time translating to and from Arabic, learning grammar rules and new vocabulary than listening to and speaking Arabic.

vii.   Most learners are not exposed to native Arabic speakers formally, informally or through the medium of radio or television.

viii.   Learners are generally not committed to speaking Arabic, possibly because they learn the language primarily through the grammar-translation method and are not confident in their ability to speak the language.

ix.   While teachers perceive development of the communicative skills in Arabic to be important, more than half believe that learning and applying grammar rules and translating to and from Arabic, is of the utmost importance.

x.   A very large proportion of teachers believe that achieving communicative competence is vital to the teaching of Arabic and spending more than 50% of the time communicating with learners in Arabic is essential for effective teaching.

xi.   The eclectic approach is ranked as being the most effective approach to achieve communicative competence according to the respondents.

xii.   Teachers with diverse qualifications and those who have attended workshops or seminars believe that Arabic should be taught according to the communicative approach.

xiii.   Teachers with a postgraduate education diploma believe that a prescribed textbook should not direct the teaching process.

xiv.   Both inexperienced as well as experienced teachers rejected the idea of teaching Arabic through its

own medium, possibly because they are unable to speak Arabic fluently and confidently. Both the literature study as well as the empirical study show that developing Arabic teachers' conversational skill is a key issue that needs to be addressed.

Chapter six will focus on the educational implications of the literature study as well as the empirical investigation, recommendations for future research and problematic aspects of the study.

Chapter Six

Educational implications and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The aim of the literature study was to analyse learning of a second and foreign language (Chapter Two) and the various methodologies used for teaching, with special reference to Arabic (Chapter Three). The empirical investigation was aimed at determining how Arabic is currently being taught at Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana and whether all four language skills are being acquired (Chapter Four and Five). It also attempted to ascertain Arabic teachers' perceptions with regard to how Arabic should be taught.

There appear to be a motley of theories offering different insights into divergent aspects of language acquisition. These have resulted in a multitude of teaching methodologies of which no single approach lends itself to complete acquisition of the four language skills. Knowledge of these diverse theories and teaching methodologies, plus the insight gained from experience, will enable the teacher to choose an eclectic approach with the advantage of flexibility and the ability to choose the best method for any given circumstance. Such an avenue will give variety and help meet the wide range of individual and learner differences in an attempt to cultivate communicative competence.

As far as the empirical investigation is concerned it was not possible to locate suitable tests for all factors which emerged as important from the literature study. Of the factors it proved possible to test, the following appeared to be most important: teachers' qualifications and experience, teachers' ability to communicate in Arabic, reasons for studying Arabic, examinations, communicative ability of learners, teaching methodology used, syllabus used, medium of instruction, teachers' rating of the diverse teaching methodologies, identification of the important facets in Arabic teaching according to teachers' perceptions.

6.2 Some educational implications

6.2.1 Educational implications derived from the literature study

Since it is difficult to classify Arabic as either a second or foreign language in South Africa and Botswana, the literature study focussed on both L2 and Fl acquisition. Teaching methods for L2 and FL do not differ, and the current trend is to consider any language learned in addition to the mother-tongue as an 'additional language'. The terms acquisition and learning have been used interchangeably in this study, since literature on the subject indicated that while some researchers made a distinction between the terms, most used them interchangeably. The terms L1, L2 and FL were discussed in detail and analysed. After a detailed discussion of the various theories of language acquisition and the teaching methods, it became clear that while there were numerous approaches available for second and foreign language teaching, every approach had some drawbacks.

Each method concentrated on the achievement of particular aims. Thus where formal instruction is used, the reasons for learning the language would dictate the teaching methodology used. Teachers should design and plan the learning process and materials around the learners' aims for studying Arabic. It seems that the best approach to L2 and FL learning would be an eclectic one, as this approach encourages the use of diverse teaching methodologies. It is based on the idea that since no particular method is perfect, a combination of methods can facilitate the achievement of communicative competence. Arabic teaching has in the past focussed on the reading and writing skills, with little emphasis on speaking and listening, so the method(s) selected by the teacher should take cognisance of the acquisition of the four language skills.

6.2.1.1 An eclectic approach to teaching Arabic

Among the numerous theories of L2 acquisition, a few have occupied centre stage and made a marked impact on the development of teaching methodologies. Behaviourism and the contrastive analysis hypothesis received much attention until the early sixties. The behaviourist view is that language learning, in common with all learning, is a process of habit formation, relying on imitation, repetition and reinforcement with implications

of drills, practice and rote learning (cf **2.7.1 Behaviourism and the Contractive Analysis Hypothesis**). Contrastive analysis focussed on the comparison of the learner's first and second language with a view to being able to predict areas of difficulty. Once it became evident that the *Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis* could not explain many occurrences in language acquisition, a new school of thought that focussed on the universal acquisition of grammar emerged (cf **2.7.3 Second language acquisition based on Universal Grammar (UG)**). This was followed by Krashen's *Monitor Theory*, which was based on five hypotheses. The *Input Hypothesis*, was extremely significant, since it proposed the idea that in order for a learner to acquire a language, he/she must receive what Krashen called *'comprehensible input'*. In other words the focus on meaning was more important than on the structure of the language concerned (cf **2.7.4 Krashen's Monitor Theory**). While Krashen's hypotheses were criticised, they definitely contributed to the evolving theories on language acquisition.

While the sixties and seventies presented what is known as a formalistic approach to SLA, the next decade contributed an activist approach. The formalist approach favours a passive classroom where there is emphasis on teaching the reading and writing skills, and little focus on the learner's contribution and involvement in the teaching process. The activist approach emphasised listening and speaking skills and recognised the need for active involvement of learners to facilitate acquisition. Thus, the cognitive view maintains that all learning must be related to existing knowledge and must be meaningful. Other approaches that were discussed in this category are the functional approach and input and interaction (cf **2.7.7.1 Cognitive approach and 2.7.7.2 Input and interaction**).

The diverse theories led to the development of distinct teaching methodologies. The *grammar-translation* method occupied the central position until after the Second World War. It emphasises form and structure of the language rather than meaning and therefore fails to accomplish communicative competence. Arabic has been a victim of this approach even to this day and it is probably the main reason why learners are unable to speak Arabic even after years of study (cf **3.5.1 The grammar-translation method and 3.6 Methods of teaching Arabic**). In contrast, the *direct approach* emphasised the development of the oral skills and introduced an inductive approach to teaching grammar. While it encouraged learner participation, it required

teachers who were native speakers of the language (cf **3.5.2 The direct method**). This created numerous

problems and led to the development of a new approach, called the *reading method*, which once again

focussed on reading and writing skills. It produced learners who were again unable to communicate in the L2

or FL (cf **3.5.3 The reading method**). Subsequently, the *audio-lingual approach*, which is based on

behaviourism and contrastive analysis, focussed on the development of oral skills, through, imitation, drills

and memorisation. This approach is largely to be blamed for the phenomenon of 'barking at print' because

learners are not provided with opportunities to use the language naturally and for communicative purposes.

Learners were merely parroting the text with no comprehension and focus on meaning (cf **3.5.5 The audio-**

lingual method).

In the seventies the concern of the teaching methodologies was the interpersonal nature of learning, which led

to the development of approaches such as *community language learning, TPR, the natural approach* and

suggestopedia. Community language learning changed the position of the teacher to that of facilitator, so as to

minimise the stress of the learners (cf **3.5.6 Community language learning**). TPR emphasises the

development of speech with action, and proves to be very effective for young learners of an L2 or FL (cf **3.5.7**

Total physical response (TPR)). The natural approach focusses on the provision of 'comprehensible input'

and learners are given a 'silent period' during which they are supposed to acquire the L2 or FL and later

produce it (cf **3.5.8 The natural approach**). Suggestopedia highlights the development of a suitable and

comfortable environment for language learning (cf **3.5.9 Suggestopedia**).

Then came, what is often called the best approach for language learning, *the communicative approach*. This

encompasses various methods of teaching and focusses on the development of all four language skills

concurrently. It gives attention to the functional use of the language and use of the L2 or FL in the classroom

(cf **3.5.10 The communicative approach**). It forms the basis for methods such as *notional-functional syllabi,*

cognitive code and *immersion programmes*. All these are concerned with the acquisition of communicative

competence (cf **3.5.11 Notional-functional syllabi; 3.5.12 The cognitive code and 3.5.13 Immersion**

programmes). A new era of language learning dawned towards the end of the first millennium. The focus is

now on a *holistic approach*, which is learner-centred with the aim of achieving communicative competence (cf

3.5.15 A new era of language learning).

An eclectic approach would enable a teacher to use ideas from the assortment of theories (cf 3.5.14 **The eclectic approach**). Evidently multifarious teaching methodologies have evolved from theories of language teaching. Since Arabic textbooks are based on either the classical or the modern approach to language teaching, the former emphasising textual understanding and the latter the acquisition of speaking skills, a merging of both approaches would be ideal (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). An eclectic approach would enable the teacher to plan and direct the teaching process to achieve communicative competence. It is possible for rote learning to have an element of meaningfulness, for example learning vocabulary or expressions in Arabic, the meaning of which is fully understood. Repetition, seen as necessary meaningful practice, can build confidence which is helpful for successful communication. Role playing in a meaningful situation might make use of repetition to help learn certain phrases or expressions. For example in a 'restaurant' situation in which the customer wishes to order food, the dishes could vary as could the manner of ordering eg.

"Please could you advise me on the most popular dishes at this restaurant?"

"What do you have as your special for the day?"

"I would like to order your special for the day."

Similarly the replies could be equally varied eg.

"We have five dishes that we are renowned for, they are roast lamb, vegetable lasagne, tandoori chicken, sizzling steak and ants on trees."

"Today's special is roast lamb served with vegetables and either chips or fried rice."

"Sure, our special today is tandoori chicken served with naan or roti, which do you prefer?"

Such a role playing situation could begin in a structured way, with elements of the audio-lingual approach such as imitation and repetition but within a meaningful social context. This could continue in an unstructured way with free expression, giving scope for individual differences and abilities. Once the learner feels confident about different ways of requesting and replying, then such knowledge is available for transfer to other situations.

Following the current trend learners must be allowed to learn Arabic through such functional activities, rather than be taught through traditional methods. The skills of comprehension, speaking, reading and writing have to be taught simultaneously, with the focus on comprehension and speaking in the initial years. The 'reading' of Arabic, albeit without understanding, is much emphasised because of religious reasons. Much time and great effort is made to ensure that learners learn to recite the Qur'an from print. The ability to read will be more easily acquired if comprehension was included with it. Further, it will help learners to perceive the language as a living language, a language used for communication - a powerful tool for negotiating meaning and sense, for constructing and transforming the social and physical environments, rather than as a mere ritual.

6.2.1.2 Medium of instruction

Reviewing research findings, Nuruddin (1992a:42) concluded that an integration of the conversational and the grammatical approach was necessary to facilitate the acquisition of all four skills in Arabic (cf 3.6.3 **Developing an Arabic curriculum**). He highlights the fact that for teachers to do this they need to be fluent speakers of the language and need to teach through the medium of Arabic. It is vital for learners to be immersed in Arabic whilst in the classroom as this facilitates achievement of communicative competence. According to the literature study, it is crucial that the emphasis in second and foreign language teaching is on meaning rather than form of the language. The latter leads to phenomena such as 'barking at print', which inhibits the acquisition of listening and speaking skills and hence prevents learners from using the language for communicative purposes (cf 3.5.5 **The audio-lingual method**). Whilst learners may be adept at translating to and from Arabic, the majority are unable to communicate in Arabic, as they haven't been exposed to the language communicatively. If learners are taught through the Arabic medium, they will learn the nuances, express meaning, thoughts and ideas and gradually develop confidence in their ability to speak Arabic. A prerequisite for this would be teachers who are fluent in Arabic.

6.2.2 Educational implications derived from the empirical investigation

With regard to the empirical investigation the most important factors in the acquisition of Arabic as a second

and foreign language seem to be teachers' qualifications and experience, teachers' ability to communicate in Arabic, medium of instruction, teaching methodology used, reasons for studying Arabic, examinations, communicative ability of learners, syllabus used, teachers' rating of the diverse teaching methodologies and identification of the important facets in Arabic teaching.

6.2.2.1 Teachers' qualifications and experience

The results of the investigation show that although most of the teachers in Muslim private schools have less than ten years of experience, their qualifications are relevant for Arabic teaching, although the majority (72.7%) did not possess professional teaching qualifications (cf 5.2 **Professional profile**). It is therefore recommended that a professional teaching qualification should be a prerequisite for teaching Arabic in Muslim private schools. Teachers teaching without the necessary teaching qualifications should be encouraged to enrol for further studies.

6.2.2.2 Teachers' ability to communicate in Arabic, medium of instruction and teaching methodologies used

The results of the investigation reveal that a large proportion of Arabic teachers in Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana lack the confidence and ability to speak Arabic. These statistics correlate with the findings of the literature study which indicate that teachers are unwilling or unable to nurture conversational fluency in Arabic because of their incapacities and inadequacies in the language (cf 3.6.3 **Developing an Arabic curriculum**). Most of the Arabic textbooks are geared to prepare students for written expression and are therefore grammar based (Mohamed 1997:7-8) . Even though attempts were made to move away from this approach in the late eighties and early nineties, the grammar-translation method still seems to be the dominant mode of instruction where Arabic is concerned. Consequently, teachers trained within the Southern African context also learned Arabic through this approach (cf 5.9 **Open questions**). The grammar-translation method essentially fails to equip learners with speaking skills, and since they have very little or no opportunity of being exposed to native speakers of Arabic either formally or informally the problem is further compounded.

Further evidence of reliance on the grammar-translation method for teaching Arabic is evident from the results of the investigation. 90.9% of the schools taught Arabic through the English medium, 57.5% of the schools expected learners to spend between 50%-100% of their time translating to and from Arabic, 51.5% of the schools spent between 50%-100% of time teaching grammar rules (cf **5.5 Position of Arabic**), while 75.7% of the respondents believed the learning and application of grammar rules is either very important or of the utmost importance. A staggering 90.9% believed that translating to and from Arabic was either very important or of the utmost importance and 48.5% strongly disagreed that the medium of instruction should be Arabic (cf **5.8 Teachers' perceptions on how Arabic should be taught**).

These results show that Arabic is still being taught according to the grammar-translation method, through a medium other than its own, despite sustained attempts at reform. The speaking and listening skills are being sacrificed for reading and writing, and if the opinions of the teachers are a yardstick then this trend will continue. To break this vicious cycle the suggestion made by Nuruddin (1991a:13); to provide learners with both a conversational as well as a grammar teacher, may be useful (cf **3.6.3 Developing an Arabic curriculum**). Another possible option could be holiday courses, specifically designed to develop speaking skills of current teachers, as a means of encouraging the move towards conversational proficiency. Also teachers may need to receive additional training with regard to how to develop all four skills in the teaching of Arabic. Universities and other tertiary institutions should evaluate their Arabic curriculum with a view to producing teachers who are *au fait* with all four language skills.

Teachers need to speak Arabic confidently and with ease, to facilitate teaching the language through its own medium. This in itself will develop the speaking and listening skills of learners and grammar would then be taught functionally. Upon examination of the various factors, it becomes evident that the medium of instruction seems to be the underlying problem. This will not be resolved until Arabic speaking teachers are produced.

6.2.2.3 Reasons for studying Arabic

The results of the investigation indicate that majority (72.7%) of the learners study Arabic for religious

reasons (cf **5.6 Motivation to learn Arabic**). This supports Dadoo's (1991:81) premise that Muslim's learn Arabic primarily to understand the Qur'an and Hadith as well as primary and secondary sources of Islamic sciences (cf **3.3 Aims for the instruction of Arabic as a second or foreign language**). However, the disturbing fact is that these aims are not being achieved. The results of the investigation reveal that learners at an astonishing 75.7% of the schools have little or no comprehension of the Qur'an, although 78.8% of them were able to recite the Qur'an fluently (cf **5.7 How Arabic is taught in the classroom**). This supports the claim made in Chapter One (cf **1.3 Awareness of the problem**).

It has become evident from the results of the investigation that the focus of Arabic teaching currently, is the acquisition of receptive skills, i.e. reading and understanding. However, it is also apparent that even these skills are not effectively acquired. Learners' are unable to understand what they are reading (specifically where the Qur'an is concerned). Clearly, this points out the urgent need to upgrade the existing syllabus and teaching methods. Methods of instruction are dependent upon the aims and objectives of learning Arabic (cf **3.2 Aims in second language instruction**). Likewise a syllabus is designed to achieve set aims and objectives. Since some aims and objectives are not being achieved, there is a need to revisit both areas of Arabic teaching. It is recommended that learners be taught all four language skills concurrently and Qur'anic texts should be utilised to facilitate understanding and acquisition of Qur'anic vocabulary.

6.2.2.4 Examinations

The results of the investigation demonstrate that in 48.5% of the schools more than 40% of the examination is dependent on knowledge of Arabic grammar and rules, while only in 45.5% of the schools the oral aspect is an essential component of the examination (cf **5.7 How Arabic is taught in the classroom**). Further, in the schools that have the oral component as part of the examination, 69.7% of them base less than 40% of the examination on this component. This enhances the fact that greater emphasis is placed on the acquisition of the writing skill in Arabic teaching.

With the re-designing of the syllabus, examinations (internal, national as well as international) will also have

to change their focus. They will have to test the acquisition of all four skills rather than emphasise one more than the others. It is recommended that a greater proportion of the examination focus on the oral component, for both internal as well as external examinations. This should be kept in mind with the implementation of *Curriculum 2005/2021* in schools in South Africa.

6.2.2.5 Communicative ability of learners

According to the results of the investigation, 90.9% of the schools indicated that learners' communicative ability in Arabic was below average. The reason for this becomes clear when the statistics show that at 78.8% of the schools learners spend less than 50% of the time listening to and speaking Arabic, learners were exposed to native speakers of Arabic through radio and or audio cassettes only at 36.4% of the schools, at only 9.1% of them learners were exposed to native speakers of the language through television and or video cassettes, and learners were somewhat committed to communicating in Arabic at only 15.2% of the schools (cf **5.7 How Arabic is taught in the classroom**).

These results enhance the preceding findings, in that they accentuate the need to revisit teacher training, syllabi and teaching methodologies for Arabic. It is recommended that Arabic should be the medium of instruction and a concerted effort should be made to expose learners to native speakers through various available media. Also refresher teacher training programmes could be developed specifically to equip teachers with the latest teaching methodology and to nurture conversational skills. It is recommended that Arabic be the medium of instruction for such programmes.

6.2.2.6 Syllabus

72.7% of the schools in this study have devised their own syllabus for the teaching of Arabic (cf **5.5 Position of Arabic**). These syllabi have possibly been developed through a combination of a 'potpourri' of available teaching materials. While this is an invaluable stage in the development of a syllabus that uniquely caters for the Southern African situation, it is time to amalgamate and re-examine the needs of the learner in the Muslim private school. It is hoped that *Curriculum 2005/2021* in schools in South Africa has a balanced approach

and that schools in Botswana will follow suit and amend their Arabic syllabus accordingly.

6.2.2.7 Teachers' rating of the diverse teaching methodologies and identification of the important facets in Arabic teaching

While 51.5% of the respondents rated the grammar-translation method as reasonably successful, 63.6% rated the eclectic approach as most successful (cf **5.8 Teachers' perceptions on how Arabic should be taught**). It is therefore evident that the Arabic teacher population in this study is split with regard to the most appropriate method for teaching the language. After a closer look at the results we see that while most respondents rated exposure to native Arabic speakers through a variety of ways as being important, and that 87.9% agreed or strongly agreed that the teacher should spend more than 50% of the time communicating with learners in Arabic, and 93.9% agreed or strongly agreed that the achievement of communicative competence is vital to the teaching of Arabic, a surprising 72.7% either agreed or strongly agreed that learners should be taught all grammar rules to facilitate language acquisition (cf **5.8 Teachers' perceptions on how Arabic should be taught**). This betrays the fact that a large proportion of the teachers are still rooted in the idea that learning grammar rules is vital to acquiring Arabic, despite their awareness of the importance of nurturing communicative competence. This is once again possibly related to the fact that they were trained in this way and therefore find it difficult to move away from the emphasis placed on grammar.

It is therefore recommended that refresher courses for teachers be designed to focus on the communicative and eclectic approaches to language teaching.

6.3 Problematic aspects of the study

The fact that only 61% of the respondents returned the questionnaire, limits the validity of the results. Certain standard limitations are inherent in all self-report inventories according to Huysamen (1984:98):

- It is very difficult to assess the level of honesty with which teachers answered the questionnaire.

- It is also difficult to assess whether all the teachers interpreted all the items correctly.

- There may also have been individual teachers with other problems, such as illness on the day of testing or extreme anxiety, which may influence the results.

Through personal and telephonic communication the researcher found that some teachers felt unhappy about answering the questionnaire claiming that there were numerous outside forces that were responsible for the problems associated with the teaching of Arabic. They showed reluctance in having teaching methodology and their inability to communicate in the language to be identified as important contributory factors.

6.4 Future research possibilities

i.   For practical reasons the investigation was conducted using only teachers from Muslim private schools in South Africa and Botswana. A repetition of the investigation could be done using teachers from both private as well as public schools in this region, or Muslim private schools from other neighbouring countries could be included as well.

ii.   It is clear from the percentage of the respondents that a larger sample is required to validate the results.

iii.   The investigation only focussed on teachers' perspectives on the teaching of Arabic. A questionnaire could be designed for learners' responses to further authenticate the results obtained.

iv.   Another possibility for future research would be to devise some way of measuring both teachers' as well as learners' communicative ability in Arabic.

Since there has been very little research conducted in the area of Arabic teaching in Southern Africa, the results obtained in this study should create the impetus to continue scientific inquiry into this field. Knowledge obtained from this investigation contributes to our understanding of L2 and FL acquisition especially in the case of Arabic. This research will assist in the provision of effective help and guidance in Arabic teaching in Southern Africa.

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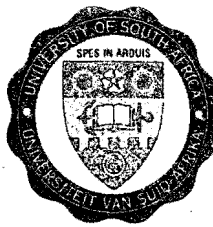Khan, S. 30 August 1999. *History of Muslims in Botswana.* Gaborone.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

03 November 2000

Dear Arabic Teacher

Questionnaire for a research project, entitled:

THE TEACHING OF ARABIC TO LEARNERS AT MUSLIM PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND BOTSWANA

Increasing developments and demands made by society pressurizes schools to constantly evaluate the existing curriculum. This further necessitates continual research into problems experienced in an attempt to find solutions. Arabic has been introduced at schools for more than a decade, and there have constantly been questions regarding the teaching methodology used and its effectiveness. This study attempts to determine whether the teaching methodology used in Arabic affects the communicative ability of students in the language. It also focusses on problems related to foreign language learning.

A questionnaire is one of the most effective ways of eliciting educator opinion. It would therefore be appreciated if you could answer the questionnaire truthfully to ensure that the information is creditable. Please bear the following in mind when completing the questionnaire:

- the questionnaire remains anonymous and the information will be regarded as confidential and will be used for research purposes only

- answer all questions by encircling the number corresponding with your response

- if you would like to change your response to a question, please do so by clearly crossing out the incorrect response and encircling your intended response

- the questionnaire should take about thirty minutes of your time to complete

- please return the completed questionnaire by e-mail (minaret@mega.bw) or fax (267) 311022, or in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope on or before 20 November 2000.

Thank you for your co-operation and valued opinion.

Yours faithfully

Munira Mall (student)

Dr. Marietha Nieman (Department of Educational Studies-UNISA)

Please answer the questions or evaluate the statements as far as possible by encircling the relevant number.

Example For Completing Section A: **Office Use Only:**

Question 1. Your gender?   **Respondent Number:**
If you are male then encircle 1 as follows:

Male	①
Female	2

1-3

Office Use Only:

1. Your teaching experience:

between 0-4 years	1
between 5-9 years	2
between 10-14 years	3
15 years or more	4

4

2. Number of years you have been teaching Arabic:

between 0-4 years	1
between 5-9 years	2
between 10-14 years	3
15 years or more	4

5

3. Your highest academic qualification (mark ONE ONLY):

Grade twelve or A levels	1
Bachelor's degree with Arabic as a major	2
Postgraduate qualification in Arabic (honours, masters, doctorate)	3
Other (please specify)...	4

6

1

4. Your professional qualifications:

	Yes	No
Post school diploma/certificate	1	2
Teacher's diploma/certificate or further educational diploma/certificate	1	2
Bachelor of Education	1	2
Post graduate education diploma with Arabic teaching methodology	1	2
Other (please specify)...	1	2

7-11

5. Have you attended any workshops/seminars related to the teaching and learning of Arabic in the last three years?

Yes	1
No	2

12

6. What is your **first language**, ie. the language you learnt to use from childhood?

Afrikaans	1
Arabic	2
English	3
French	4
Gujerati	5
Memon	6
Tswana	7
Urdu	8
Xhosa	9
Zulu	10
Other (please specify)	11

13

2

7. What is your preferred language of communication?

Afrikaans	1
Arabic	2
English	3
French	4
Gujerati	5
Memon	6
Tswana	7
Urdu	8
Xhosa	9
Zulu	10
Other (please specify)	11

14

8. Rate your ability in Arabic in the following fields:

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Ability to speak Arabic	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to read Arabic with comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to understand spoken Arabic	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to communicate in Arabic through writing	1	2	3	4	5

15-18

9. Your school is in:

Botswana	1
South Africa	2

19

3

10. Your school is a:

Primary school	1
Secondary school	2
Combined school (Primary and Secondary)	3
Special school	4
Other (please specify)	5

☐ 20

11. To which of the following bodies is your school affiliated to?

AMS	1
Jamiat ul Ulama	2
Al-Azhar	3
Other (please specify)................................	4

☐ 21

12. Arabic is taught at your school through the medium of:

Arabic	1
Afrikaans	2
English	3
Other (please specify)	4

☐ 22

13. At your school Arabic is taught as a:

first language	1
second language	2
third/foreign language	3
a combination of the above (please specify)...................	4

☐ 23

4

14. The syllabus used to teach Arabic is:

the Education Department's syllabus	1
the Association of Muslim School's (AMS) syllabus	2
Jamiat-ul-Ulama's syllabus	3
Al-Azhar syllabus	4
Cambridge syllabus	5
the school has devised its own syllabus to cater for unique needs	6
other (please specify)	7

24

15. Do pupils write a national or international examination in Arabic at the end of their schooling? (Applicable to secondary schools only).

National	1
International	2
Both	3

25

16. Do all Arabic examinations (internal or external) contain an oral component?

Yes, always	1
Sometimes but not always	2
No, never	3

26

17. If YES, or sometimes what percentage of the examination consists of the oral component?

0 - 20 %	1
21 - 40 %	2
41 - 60 %	3
61 - 80 %	4
81 - 100 %	5

27

5

18. What percentage of the examination (internal or external) depends on the learner's knowledge of Arabic grammar?

0 - 20 %	1
21 - 40 %	2
41 - 60 %	3
61 - 80 %	4
81 - 100 %	5

28

19. In your opinion, the majority of learners at your school choose to learn Arabic for:

religious reasons (eg to understand the Qur'an)	1
secular reasons (employment opportunities, etc.)	2
other reasons (please specify)	3

29

20. To what extent are the learners in your class able to communicate with each other in Arabic?

| To a lesser extent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | To a larger extent |

30

21. How much time do learners in your class spend on:

	0 - 24%	25 - 49%	50 - 74%	75 - 100%
translating to and from Arabic	1	2	3	4
listening to and speaking in Arabic	1	2	3	4
learning grammar rules	1	2	3	4
learning new vocabulary	1	2	3	4

31-34

6

22. Are the learners in your class exposed to native speakers of Arabic through any of the following:

	Yes	No	Uncertain
informal personal contact	1	2	3
radio and/or audio cassettes	1	2	3
television and/or video cassettes	1	2	3

35-37

23. To what extent are the learners committed to communicate with each other in Arabic in your class?

To a lesser extent	1	2	3	4	To a larger extent

38

24. Are the learners in your class able to read the Qur'an fluently?

Ye s	1
No	2

39

25. If YES, indicate which of the following apply to their ability:

They understand fully what they are reading	1
They understand partially what they are reading	2
They understand very little of what they are reading	3
They do not understand what they are reading at all	4

40

SECTION B:

Rate the following statements according to the degree of importance.

1=Not important at all	2= Important
3= Very important	4= Of the utmost importance

26. How important is it for learners to:

	Not important at all	Important	Very important	Of the utmost importance
hear authentic Arabic being spoken during Arabic lessons	1	2	3	4
communicate in Arabic with each other during Arabic lessons	1	2	3	4
communicate in Arabic with the teacher during Arabic lessons	1	2	3	4
learn and apply grammar rules during Arabic lessons	1	2	3	4
learn new vocabulary during Arabic lessons	1	2	3	4
translate to and from Arabic	1	2	3	4
be exposed to native speakers of Arabic through personal contact	1	2	3	4
be exposed to native speakers of Arabic through radio and/or audio cassettes	1	2	3	4
be exposed to native speakers of Arabic through television and/or video cassettes	1	2	3	4

41-49

8

27. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

     1= strongly disagree
     2= disagree
     3= agree
     4= strongly agree

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Learners should be taught Arabic through the medium of Arabic.	1	2	3	4
Learners should spend more than 50% of the time translating to and from Arabic.	1	2	3	4
Learners should be taught all the grammar rules to facilitate language acquisition.	1	2	3	4
The teacher should spend more than 50% of the lesson time communicating with learners in Arabic.	1	2	3	4
The teacher should follow prescribed textbooks to direct the teaching process.	1	2	3	4
The achievement of communicative competence is vital to the teaching and learning of Arabic.	1	2	3	4
Examinations should be primarily based on the learner's knowledge of Arabic grammar rules.	1	2	3	4

50-56

PLEASE TURN OVER....

9

28. Rank the following teaching methodologies from *least successful* to *most successful* for teaching and preparing learners for the final examination.

	least successful	occasionally successful	reasonably successful	most successful
Grammar-translation method: teaching grammar rules and the application thereof.	1	2	3	4
Audio-lingual method: teaching the language through oral drills, memorization and repetition.	1	2	3	4
Immersion programmes: using the foreign language throughout the school day for teaching the various subjects of the curriculum.	1	2	3	4
Communicative approach: learner-centred approach which focuses on achieving communicative competence by involving learners in simulated real-life exchanges.	1	2	3	4
Eclectic approach: a combination of different methods of teaching to suit the particular needs of learners.	1	2	3	4

57-61

29. Briefly indicate what changes you would like to see in the teaching of Arabic.

....
....
....
....
....

30. Please provide any additional information which you may regard as important for this research project.

....
....
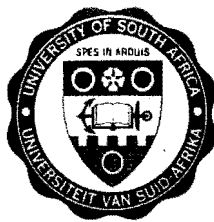..

Reminder Return Date: 30 November 2000

Thank you for your co-operation.

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Studies
Fax: (012) 429-4919

UNISA

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Departement Opvoedkundestudies
Tel: (012) 429-4585

The Principal

As-Salaamu Alaikum

03 November 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Permission for completion of questionnaire for research project entitled:

THE TEACHING OF ARABIC TO LEARNERS AT MUSLIM PRIVATES SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND BOTSWANA

Since the advent of Muslim schools Arabic has been an essential part of the curriculum. The professionalisation of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers has gathered pace in many parts of the world. There are numerous challenges and opportunities facing Arabic in Southern Africa in areas such as curriculum development and teaching methodology. This study attempts to evaluate the teaching of Arabic in Muslim schools with an aim to highlighting problem areas and offering solutions.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could ask **two senior** Arabic teachers at your school to complete the enclosed questionnaires and return them to the researcher **on or before 30 November 2000**, in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. Should your school have only one Arabic teacher then only one questionnaire may be completed and returned.

If there are any queries regarding the questionnaire kindly contact the researcher either by telephone, fax or e-mail at the following:

Telephone: (267) 303984 (office hours)
Fax: (267) 372905
Telephone: (267) 311022 (after hours)
Fax: (267) 311022
Cell: (267) 71635119
E-mail: minaret@mega.bw

Thank you for your co-operation and assistance

Yours faithfully

Munira Mall (student)

Dr. Marietha Nieman (Department of Educational Studies-UNISA)