



## Maria Persson

I am a reader/associate professor of Arabic and a scholar of Semitic languages with focus on linguistic studies. My academic teaching experience spans over more than two decades and I have taught most of these years at Swedish universities (1994-2000; 2010-2018). In addition, an important part of my teaching experience comes from eight years as a senior lecturer and head of the department for Modern Standard Arabic at a language school in the UAE and Oman (2002-2010). While living abroad, I stayed closely connected with Swedish universities in addition to actively taking part in international conferences and building an international research network. During this period, I was also employed as a part-time researcher in linguistics on externally funded projects located at Lund and Uppsala universities. During the academic year of 2010-2011, I worked as a senior lecturer of Arabic at Uppsala University. For most of my career, however, I have been employed by Lund University both as a PhD candidate and, as of January 2012, as a full-time senior lecturer/associate professor of Arabic, while also assuming the successive roles of Director of Studies, Head of Section and Head of Department. The Centre for Languages and Literature, with around 250 staff members and 3000 students, constitutes one of the largest departments at Lund University. In the autumn of 2017, I was appointed as Head of Department by the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology. The appointment was subsequent to nomination and elections involving all teaching and administrative staff at the department. Most important to me is the personal support of the staff members, displayed by a vote of 92% of the voting community in an unusually well attended election process.

In my capacity as a researcher, I have worked as a project leader collecting and analysing a large data base of spoken Gulf Arabic, and I have actively participated in two larger national and international research projects on clause linking in Semitic languages. Most of my research, both in dialectological studies and in other areas of research in Semitics, is corpus based and lies within the realm of typological syntactic studies, i.e. using authentic spoken/written language for research. Promotion to full professor is not available within Humanities at Lund University. However, in 2016 I was the runner-up for the chair in Semitic Languages at Uppsala University.

I am task oriented, dynamic, and self-driven. I have high standards and rarely leave an assignment until I am fully satisfied with the result. As a manager and project leader, I expect similar engagement from my co-workers. I am convinced that real growth in an organization comes from within. Hence, I believe in working in team-based structures, rather than top-down structures. When each one contributes with his abilities and skills in mutual development, a work environment is created where people grow and are empowered to reach their full capacity.

## 2. Curriculum vitae

PhD MARIA PERSSON  
Protokollgränden 40  
226 47 Lund, Sweden

Phone (mobile): +46-(0)72-208 89 04  
Phone (work): +46-(0)46-222 84 52  
E-mail: maria.persson@mellost.lu.se

Date of birth (1970-12-19)

### Education, degrees and recognitions

#### *Degrees and recognitions*

Bachelor of Arts (Arabic, Hebrew, ME Studies, Translation) 1994

Doctor of Philosophy in Semitic languages 2002

Reader (associate professor) in Arabic 2013

#### *Formal training in tertiary-level education (16,5 weeks)*

- a) Forskarhandledning. Introduktion, (Doctoral Supervision. Introduction), Lund Universitet, (1,5 weeks) 2013
- b) Att handleda uppsatser (Supervision of thesis writing), Lund University, (2 weeks) 2012
- c) Teacher Training Course, Uppsala University, (5 weeks) 2010/11
- d) Rösten som arbetsredskap (Voice as a Tool at Work), Uppsala University, 28/9 2010
- e) Franska, suggestopedi och Franska fortsättningskurs (Suggestopaedic teaching methods (French)), Lund University, (2 weeks) 1995/96
- f) Praktisk universitetspedagogik (University Didactics), Lund University, (3 weeks) 1995
- g) Kommunikation för doktorander (Communication, PhD students), Lund Univ., (3 weeks) 1995

#### *Leadership training*

- a) Ekonomispelet (Introduction to financial management for HoDs), 2018
- b) Introduktion av nya medarbetare (Introducing new co-workers), Lund University, 2016
- c) Utvecklingssamtal - introduktion för chefer, (Staff appraisal – introduction course for managers), Lund University, 2016
- d) Vad är en god arbetsmiljö - vad säger lagen? (Occupational safety and health legislation), Lund University, 2015
- e) Arbetsrätt (Labour legislation), 2015
- f) Ledning av pedagogisk verksamhet (Management in the pedagogical field), Lund University, September 2014 – April 2015.
- g) Konflikthantering och känsliga samtal (Conflict management). Lund University, 2014

#### *Other training in research and proficiency in the field (Semitic languages, linguistics)*

- a) Elementary Law for interpreters (Arabic), Katrineberg/Härnösand, 2005
- b) Interpretation in the medical field (Arabic), Studieförbundet, Lund. 2001
- c) Stage de perfectionnement en langue arabe pour la recherche, Institut Français d'Etudes Arabes de Damas, Syria. 1996-97
- d) Russian, introduction course, Lund University, 1994
- e) Interpretation within social security and insurance (Arabic), Axevalla, 1993
- f) Introduction course for interpreters, Axevalla. 1993

### **Positions held, appointments**

Senior lect. Assoc. prof. (LU) 100% (25% research)	13-07-01 – present
Senior lecturer (LU) 100% (20% research)	12-01-01 – 13-06-30
Senior lecturer (LU) 27%	11-09-01 – 11-12-31
Senior lecturer, research fellow, (UU) 80%,	10-08-01 – 12-07-31
Research fellow (UU) 20-25%	07-01-01 – 10-07-31
Research fellow (LU) 20-25%	06-01-01 – 11-12-31
Lecturer (LU) 25%	05-09-01 – 05-12-31
Lecturer of Arabic, Head of dept. for MSA, Teacher trainer (Al Jazeera, UAE and Oman), 100%	02-09-20 – 10-06-31
Chercheur associée. Institut Français d'Études Arabes de Damas, Syria (non-salaried appointment)	academic year 1997/98
Doctoral studentship position 100% whereof 20% teaching & administration (LU)	95-04-01 – 02-08-31
Conference secretary (project based, LU)	95-01-01 – 96-09-14
Lecturer of Arabic (on hourly basis, LU)	94-09-01 – 94-12-31
Assistant (on hourly basis, LU)	94-02-01 – 94-12-31
Student counsellor (on hourly basis, LU)	94-02-01 – 94-12-31
Translator (project, Kristianstad County Council)	93-09-01 – 94-12-31

### **Management assignments, nominations**

Head of Department, Centre for Languages and Literature, LU	18-01-01 – onwards
Head of Section, Department board member	15-01-01 – 17-12-31
Assistant director of studies	12-07-01 – 14-12-31

### **Academic and research-policy assignments**

1. 2016 member (alternate) of the examination board, doctoral thesis defence, Andreas Hallberg, dissertation date 23 April, 2016. Lund University.
2. 2014 member of the examination board, doctoral thesis defence, Ulf Bergström, dissertation date 21 February, 2014. Uppsala University.
3. 2013/14 external expert, Ablahad Lahdo's application for the position of reader/associate professor, Uppsala University.

### **Distinctions, prizes, scholarships**

- Runner-up to the position of Professor (chair) in Semitic Languages at Uppsala University, 2016.
- Kockska priset för framstående doktorsavhandling, (The "Kockska priset" award for an outstanding PhD thesis). Vetenskaps societeten i Lund, 2002.
- Scholarship for one year of study abroad. The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation 1996/96

### **3. Account of academic qualifications**

#### **3.1 Reflections about own research**

The field of Semitic studies covers several scientific disciplines and, thereby, a scholar of the field combines specialist knowledge and depth within his own area of research with a broad general scientific competence. My main research lies within the realm of Arabic syntax, in particular dialectal syntax. Comparative Semitic studies, translation theory and didactics are my other major fields of interest. In addition to this, I have had the opportunity to work on minor research projects focusing on literature, culture and theology. My research on Arabic syntax is conducted within a general framework of functional linguistics. Due to my interest in language typology, I am keen to make my linguistic work available to a broad audience, Semitic scholars and linguists alike. I have a general competence within Semitic languages and have served as external expert on theses/applications comprising both Biblical Hebrew and Neo-Aramaic in addition to Arabic and I have worked, as project member and publication editor, in national and international research projects with a comparative Semitic approach.

##### *3.1.1 Main areas of research*

My doctoral thesis applied functional grammatical theory on a specific area of Modern Standard Arabic syntax. My interest in syntax has guided also my subsequent work within Arabic dialectology with special focus on urban Gulf Arabic dialects and on Syrian Arabic. Recently, my scope has broadened to include also North African Arabic dialects. I also cooperate with colleagues in general linguistics, Swedish and English on work within the field of second language learning.

##### Arabic dialectology

Within the framework of the project "Verbal Syntax in Gulf Arabic dialects", funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (<http://anslag.rj.se/en/fund/34032>), I conducted a fairly extensive survey of the dialects' verb system. Working with informants, I collected a sizeable database of linguistic material that was analysed in order to chart the syntax of the verb and the use of mode and aspect markers. The study led to the discovery that the Gulf Arabic *b*-prefix, previously assumed to be a future tense marker, is in fact a more general marker of the irrealis modality (Persson 2008). My study also showed that habitual actions in the past are expressed by a traditional shift of verb forms. The use of auxiliary verbs that may be observed in other dialects, such Syrian and Egyptian Arabic, has not gained a similar footing in Gulf Arabic. Asyndetic junctures of verbs, however, are relatively common and represent a likely source for the future development of auxiliary verbs and verb modifying particles. The collected database is in itself a valuable contribution to further research in this, so far, insufficiently documented dialect group. By providing an increased understanding of Gulf Arabic grammar (especially verb syntax), the project laid a foundation for future comparative research on syntax in Arabic dialects. Moreover, the results of the project further our general knowledge of processes of grammaticalization, particularly the development of markers for tense, mode and aspect. In this way the project contributed also to typological linguistic research in general.

The project "Circumstantial Qualifiers in Semitic", which was funded by the Swedish Research Council (<http://vrproj.vr.se/detail.asp?arendeid=42903>), originated in a rethinking of the concept of circumstantial qualifiers in Semitic languages within a general linguistic discourse. The project included various types of Arabic as well as Biblical Hebrew. My contribution to the project publication, Isaksson et al. 2009, consisted of an overview of the various syntactic forms in which circumstantial qualifiers appear in Gulf Arabic and the kinds of syntactic relationship that they assume

with their main clauses, as well as a survey of their semantic functions. Traditionally, the circumstantial clause in Arabic has been perceived to function, primarily, to describe a condition or activity that is simultaneous to the main clause activity or event. The project established that this is only one of several functions. For my Gulf Arabic material, I found that the relationship between the main clause and circumstantial qualifier divides into, on one hand, descriptive functions which mainly are of adverbial character such as descriptions of the time, place and manner in which the main clause activity or event takes place, and, on the other hand, logical functions where the qualification is conditional, final, interpretive, etc. Moreover, I found that the area of circumstantial clauses in my database is subject to fairly extensive grammaticalization processes. Simultaneously, they are characterized by minimal syntactic marking. As a result of both, these clauses display a considerable degree of ambiguity. In connection with the project, I have written an entry on circumstantial clauses for the Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics Online (2011).

Work on circumstantial qualifiers progressed and was widened within a subsequent project, Circumstantial Clause Combining in Semitic, in which I extended my study of clause linking expressing circumstantial qualification to comprise also Syrian Arabic (<http://vrproj.vr.se/detail.asp?arendeid=67991>). The project established that, what has been labelled gram switching, mainly a switch of verb forms, but also a switch between clauses with verbs and non-verbal clauses, is often used in Arabic and Hebrew, for example, as the sole marker of unequal syntactic relationships between clauses (hypotaxis). I was able to show that so-called circumstantial clauses in my Syrian material, rather than constituting a separate clause type or category, are part of an overall system for marking hypotaxis. Non-main clause position is marked by several markers, whereof one is verb form switch. The precise semantic value of the non-main clause, i.e. if its function corresponds to that of a relative, adverbial, final, conditional, etc. clause, is often not marked morphologically but understood from the context (Persson 2014a; 2015a). Gram switching was, furthermore, found to function also at discourse level in the surveyed data to mark certain paragraphs as backgrounded or added information that constitute a break in the main story line (Persson 2014b).

During 2014 I initiated contacts with universities in the Maghreb region. Through a personal and professional network of contacts I have started to collect a database of spoken narrative in order to investigate markers of hypotaxis in the dialects. In addition to visiting Algeria and Morocco and taking part in contact seminars between Sweden and the Maghreb countries, I established student and staff mobility programmes with two universities in Tunis (Sfax and Carthage). My goal, from a research perspective, is to create a major research project involving these dialects and also to build contacts in Egypt to include the Egyptian dialect in my further research.

Work on the Maghreb data came to a momentary halt, however, when Sweden encountered its largest wave of migration in modern times, largely consisting of migrants from the war in Syria. Seeing the need to collect and preserve knowledge for migrants, authorities, and the public, and prepare for future international mobility, I created a cross disciplinary team of researchers to work towards building a flexible digital workspace to document current experiences of flight, arrival, and integration in Sweden. Our goal is to convert collected stories of Syrian migration into durable digital research data, and to create a facility for future large migration data management, which is now lacking in Sweden.

#### Doctoral thesis – syntax and semantics in modern Arabic prose

My doctoral dissertation (Persson 2002) comprised a corpus based survey of the relationship between the semantics of main clause predicates and the choice of finite or

infinite verb forms in direct object complement clauses in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). The study was conducted within the realm of functional grammatical theory. Eight types of object complement clauses were found in the MSA data; four of these were finite, two participial and two were masdar clauses. The analysis of the data showed a connection between different clause types in MSA and specific semantic surroundings. Main clause predicates conveying manipulation, cognition or utterance were surveyed. A majority of the main clause predicates clearly belonged to one of these three semantic classes. However, the semantics of some of the main clause predicates varied according to the choice of complement clause. The method developed, and the experience in corpus linguistics gained from this work, created a firm foundation for my later research, especially my surveys of verb forms and verbal syntax, in Arabic dialectology.

### 3.1.2 Research publications (selection)

Persson, M. 2002. (Doctoral thesis). See above. Methods created for the work, and insights gained, provided tools for subsequent research in Arabic dialects.

Persson, M. 2008. The article marks my transition from literary Arabic to colloquial Arabic. The syntactic research presented also accentuates a development within the, previously, more phonetically and morphologically focused Arabic dialectology, and has inspired others (see e.g. Eades & Persson, 2013). The article modifies the former analysis of the Gulf Arabic *b*-prefix as a future tense marker. The prefix is shown to have a wider application range as a marker of the irrealis modality. This result is reached by analysis of a large corpus. Thus, the article also constitutes an argument for the need for large data bases in this type of research.

Persson, M. 2009. The project "Circumstantial Qualifiers in Semitic" broke new ground by problematizing classical descriptions of the circumstantial clause in Semitic. As for Gulf Arabic, no previous study of circumstantial qualifiers is known. Results from Gulf Arabic supported the project's hypothesis that the concept of circumstantial clause in Semitic must be redefined and broadened in light of modern linguistics. In addition to this general conclusion, the study highlights a number of problematic constructions where vague morphological marking, which is typical of these structures, creates ambiguity as to how to interpret specific clauses.

Persson, M. 2011. This encyclopaedic entry (EALLO) describes the circumstantial clause from a modern linguistic viewpoint. The term circumstantial qualifier was introduced by Badawi *et al.* (2004:156–159, 456, 579–587) to replace the traditional Arabic term *ḥāl*. Though not explicitly stated, this change of terminology hinted at the need for a broader linguistic approach to the concept of circumstantial modifiers on the levels of clauses and phrases than the one covered in the Arabic grammatical tradition. Previous research on the topic is surveyed and discussed, and the modern linguistic concept of circumstantial clause is described and exemplified.

Persson, M. 2013. The article probes existing definitions of verb serialization and represents a contribution to the debate as to whether such serialization occurs in Arabic. Likewise, the possible existence in Gulf Arabic of auxiliary verbs is explored. Furthermore, the article establishes the existence of a verb phrase variety of the parallelism which is found with nouns (lexical couplets). The article summarizes the results from the project "Verbal Syntax in Gulf Arabic dialects" which led to a revision of key elements of our previous understanding of the verb syntax of these dialects.

Eades, D. and Persson, M. 2013. This article, in its entirety a joint work, utilises two different databases: a Bedouin dialect from Šarqiyya, Oman, is compared to urban dialects in the entire Gulf region. Based mainly on their phonology and morphology, the two dialect groups have been regarded as substantially different. The article surveys a syntactic feature, viz. the tense and aspect of the active participle, and reveals that the dialect groups in this respect are significantly similar. From the perspective of personal development, this article constitutes an example of felicitous international research cooperation that stretches all the way to a joint writing process.

Persson, M. 2009. The project "Circumstantial Qualifiers in Semitic" led to the conclusion that Semitic non-main clause linking is often not marked by conjunctions. Instead, a switch between the two main forms of the verb, the prefix form and the suffix form, appear as a potential grammatical marker of hypotaxis. The hypothesis of verb form switch as a grammatical marker of non-main clause linking is here tested, with positive results, on urban Gulf Arabic. The study bears significance for Arabic and Semitic studies in that it further charts the syntax of this dialect. Furthermore, it increases our knowledge of the function of verb forms in modern Arabic which is an area that clearly needs illumination.

Persson, M. 2014a. The hypothesis of verb form switch as a marker of non-main clause linking is in this article tested on an older Syrian Arabic data base. The article marks a broadening of my competence within Arabic dialectology and mirrors, simultaneously, the theoretical development of my own research as well as that of the research group ("Circumstantial Clause Combining in Semitic."). Considering the range of Semitic languages under study, the consistency of the results is interesting from both a Semitic and a broader typological perspective.

Persson, M. 2014b. The results presented in this article show that gram switching, mainly a switch of verb forms, but also a switch between clauses with verbs and non-verbal clauses, function also at discourse level in the surveyed data to mark certain units as backgrounded or added information which constitutes a break in the main story line. On both clause level and discourse level it is a common, but not a necessary, marker. The survey of the Damascene texts from the 1950s confirms the findings in other varieties of Arabic and in Biblical Hebrew (Persson 2009, Isaksson same volume), while also pointing to differences. The Damascene data differed from Isaksson's Biblical Hebrew data in ways similar to the modern urban Gulf Arabic data. However, it also differed from the latter in the choice of other discourse markers besides gram switching.

Persson, M. 2015a. In my contribution to the project volume, (Circumstantial Clause Combining in Semitic) I demonstrate that the clauses which, traditionally, have been called circumstantial clauses, do not, in the Syrian material from the 1950s under survey, constitute a separate clause type or syntactic category. Rather, they constitute a part of an overarching system for marking hypotaxis. Non-main clauses are marked by a number of markers whereof gram switching, a switch of verb forms, but also a switch between non-verbal clauses and clauses with verbs, constitutes one. The exact semantic value of a specific clause as relative clause, circumstantial clause, conditional clause etc. is not marked morphologically but has to be inferred from the context. The results point to the need of a rather thorough re-analysis of clause structure in Arabic dialects and, in view of the project results as a whole, also in other Semitic languages.

## 3.2 List of publications

### 3.2.1 Monographs

1. Persson, Maria. 2002. *Sentential Object Complements in Modern Standard Arabic*. Studia Orientalia Lundensia. Nova Series. Vol II, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell. (doctoral thesis)

### 3.2.2 Academic articles (refereed articles marked by asterisk)

2. Persson, Maria. 2017. Review of Holes, C. "Dialect, culture, and society in Eastern Arabia. Vol. 3, Phonology, morphology, syntax, style." In *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 107, 417-420
3. Persson, Maria. 2015a. "Non-main Clause Combining in Damascene Arabic: A scale of markedness." In Isaksson, B. & Persson, M. (eds.) 2015, 55-121.
4. Persson, Maria. 2015b. Verb form switch as a marker of clausal hierarchies in urban Gulf Arabic dialects. In Edzard, L. (ed.), *Arabic and Semitic Linguistics Contextualized*, 227-259. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
5. Persson, Maria. 2014a. "Non-main clause linking and verb form switch in Syrian Arabic. Is there a circumstantial clause?" In Isaksson, B. & Persson, M. (eds.) 2014, 27-50.
6. Persson, Maria. 2014b. "Verb form switch as a marker of discourse hierarchy in Semitic: a case study on Syrian Arabic." In Davidovich, T., Lahdo, A., and Lindquist, T. (eds.) *From Tur Abdin to Hadramawt. Semitic studies*, 117-128. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
7. \*Persson, Maria. 2013. "Asyndetic clause combining in Gulf Arabic dialects. Auxiliary, adverbial and discourse functions." *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik*, 57, 5-39.
8. \*Eades, Domenyk, and Persson, Maria. 2013. "Aktionsart, word form and context: On the use of the active participle in Gulf Arabic dialects." *Journal of Semitic Studies*. LVII(2), 343-367.
9. \*Persson, Maria. 2011. "Circumstantial clause." In Edzard, L., and de Jong, R. (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics Online*, Brill Online. [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-arabic-language-andlinguistics/circumstantial-clause-EALL\\_SIM\\_000284](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-arabic-language-andlinguistics/circumstantial-clause-EALL_SIM_000284)
10. Persson, Maria. 2009. "Circumstantial qualifiers in Gulf Arabic dialects." In Isaksson, Bo (ed.); Kammensjö, Heléne and Persson Maria. 2009. *Circumstantial qualifiers in Semitic: The case of Arabic and Hebrew*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 206-289.
11. \*Persson, Maria. 2008. "The Role of the *b*-prefix in Gulf Arabic dialects as a marker of future, intent and/or irrealis", *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* vol. 8/4, 26-52.
12. \*Persson, Maria. 1999. "Semantic considerations in the syntactic structures of complement clauses in modern literary Arabic." In Suleiman, Yasir. (ed.) 1999. *Arabic Grammar and Linguistics*, London: Curzon, 182-202

### 3.2.3 Editorship

13. Isaksson, B. & Persson, M. (eds). 2014. *Strategies of Clause Linking in Semitic Languages: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Clause Linking in Semitic Languages 5-7 August 2012 in Kivik, Sweden*. AKM vol. 93. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
14. Isaksson, B. & Persson, M. (eds.). 2015 *Clause Combining in Semitic. The Circumstantial Clause and Beyond*. AKM Vol. 96. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.



### 3.3 Academic collaboration, external and internal research funding

#### 3.3.1 External research funding

1. *Verbal Syntax in Gulf Arabic Dialects*, Riksbankens jubileumsfond. Project grant comprising 1.597.610SEK. <http://anslag.rj.se/en/fund/34032> (Initiator, project leader)
2. *The Haal: Circumstantial qualifier in Semitic*, The Swedish Research Council. <http://vrproj.vr.se/detail.asp?arendeid=42903> (co-applicant, project member). 20-25% research position during 2007-2009.
3. *Circumstantial clause combining in Semitic*, The Swedish Research Council. <http://vrproj.vr.se/detail.asp?arendeid=67991> (co-applicant, project member). 20-25% research position during 2010-2012.
4. *Vega Plus*, Crafoord, ref nr 20120737. Grant comprising 135.000SEK for the purpose of field work. (Initiator, project leader).
5. *Erasmus Mundus Action 2*. One-month staff mobility awarded (Nov 2014). Host: Nizwa University, Oman.
6. *Linnaeus-Palme*. 2015. Start-up grant comprising 80.000SEK for mutual visits of staff with the purpose of establishing a student and staff mobility programme between Lund University and the University of Jendouba, Tunis. Unfortunately, the grant could not be used due to security issues (terror attacks) in the region.

#### 3.3.2 Internal research funding

##### A. Most recent funding for research work/participation in conferences:

1. From *The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology*, Lund University for 2 months research. 2017.
2. From *Fil. Dr. Uno Otterstedts fond* and *Vetenskaps societeten i Lund* for the joint conferences SCLS-2012 and NSS 2012
3. From *Stiftelsen Elisabeth Rausings minnesfond* for the AIDA conference in Qatar 2013 and a research trip to Oman
4. From *Forskarkollegiet för språkvetenskap* for the 4<sup>th</sup> international conference on Arabic Comparative Linguistics in Morocco in May 2014 and for preparations for a research project in Maghrebine Arabic.

##### B. Funding for organization of conferences:

5. From *The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology*, Lund University for organizing the Workshop on Digital infrastructure for multidisciplinary migration research. Lund, 29-30 November 2018
6. From *Stiftelsen Elisabeth Rausings minnesfond* for organizing the NSS-conference of 2014, Lund 2-5 October 2014.

#### 3.3.3 Memberships in academic societies

Board member, *Vetenskaps societeten i Lund* (as of 2016; member as of 2014).

### 3.4 Participation in national and international conferences and congresses

#### 3.4.1 Coordinating and organizing

1. 2018 Organizer. Workshop on Digital infrastructure for multidisciplinary migration research. Lund, 29-30 November 2018.
2. 2012 Coordinator and co-organizer, *International Symposium on Clause Linking in Semitic Languages*, A Marcus Wallenberg Symposium, Kivik, 5-7/8 2012 <http://conference.sol.lu.se/en/scls-2012/>
3. 1995/96 Coordinator and Conference Secretary, “The 5<sup>th</sup> Conference on Christian Arabic Studies, Lund August 1996”

#### 3.4.2 Conference papers

##### A. *International conferences*

1. “Circumstantial and general non-main clause combining in Gulf Arabic with comparison to Syrian and Maghrebi data.” *Linguistics in the Gulf*, University of Torino, 21/4 2016
2. “Non-main clause linking in (Gulf, Syrian and) Maghrebi Arabic.” *The 11th Conference of AIDA*, Bucharest, Romania, 25-28/5 2015.
3. “The role of verb form switch on clause and discourse level in Arabic dialects.” *The Fourth International Conference on Arabic Comparative Linguistics*, Kénitra, Morocco, 8-9/5 2014.
4. “Verb form switch as a general marker of hypotaxis in Arabic dialects.” *The 10th Conference of AIDA*, Doha, Qatar, 10-13/11 2013
5. “Circumstantial Clause Combining and Gram Switch in Syrian Arabic.” *International Symposium on Clause Linking in Semitic Languages*, A Marcus Wallenberg Symposium, Kivik, 5-7/8 2012.
6. “The use of verb form variation and verb form switch in Gulf Arabic dialects.” *5th International Symposium on Arabic Linguistics*, Al-Ain University, United Arab Emirates, 20-21/11, 2011
7. “Semantic and syntactic considerations in asyndetic circumstantial clause combining in Damascene Arabic.” *Workshop on Circumstantial Clause Combining in Semitic Languages*. 17-18/3 2011 Uppsala University
8. “A Comparative Study of the Active Participle in Rural and Urban Dialects of the Gulf Region” joint paper with Domyk Eades presented at the *2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference*, Dept. of English, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, 10-12/3 2010.
9. “Circumstantial Qualifiers in Gulf Arabic Dialects.” *Linguistics in the Gulf II*, Qatar University, Doha, 11-12/3 2009
10. “An interesting typological compromise. Report from a corpus based study of modal and aspectual markers in Gulf Arabic dialects.” *AIDA 8*, Essex University, Colchester 28-31/8 2008

11. "The Active Participle in Gulf Arabic" *Nordic-Arab Research Conference on Arabic Literature and Linguistics*, Alexandria, 13-15/4 2005
12. "The Dictionary of Arabic Syntax: Interpreting the Semantics of Syntactic Structures" *Colloquium on Arabic Grammar and Linguistics*, University of Edinburgh, 26-28/8 1996
- B. Swedish conferences*
13. Clause and discourse hierarchy marked by gram switching in Damascene and urban Gulf Arabic. *Nordiska semitistsymposiet*, Lund, Sweden, 2-5/10 2014.
14. Pärband av verb i syrisk arabisk dialekt: form, funktion och förutsättningar. (Chains of verbs in Syrian Arabic: form, function and footing.) *Nordiska semitistsymposiet*, Kivik, Sweden, 8-10/8 2012.
15. "Verbformsväxling som markör för satshierarkier i gulfarabisk och syrisk dialekt" (Verb form switch as a marker of clause hierarchy in Gulf Arabic and Syrian Arabic dialect). *Grammatik i Fokus*, Lund University, 9-10/2 2012.
16. "Aktionsart, ordform och kontext. Om bruket av aktiva particip i gulfarabisk dialekt." (Aktionsart, word form and context. On the use of active participles in Gulf Arabic). *Grammatik i fokus*, Lund University, 10-11/2 2011.
17. "Omvända omständighetssatser i syrisk arabisk dialekt, en stilfråga?" (Inverted circumstantial clauses in Syrian Arabic dialect – a matter of style?) *Nordiska semitistsymposiet*, Kivik, Sweden, 10-13/8 2010.
18. "Omständighetsbestämningar: Adverbiella uttryck och bakgrundsmarkörer på olika språkliga nivåer i Gulfarabiska dialekter"(Circumstantial qualifiers: Adverbial expressions and background markers at various language levels in Gulf Arabic dialects), *Grammatik i Fokus*, Lund University, 5-6/2 2009
19. "Progressiv och habituell aspekt i gulfarabiska". (Progressive and habitual aspect in Gulf Arabic). *Nordiska semitistsymposiet*, Kivik, Sweden, 13-16/8 2008.
20. "Det gulfarabiska b-prefixet – en irrealismarkör snarare än markör för futurum/intention"(The Gulf Arabic b-prefix – a marker of irrealis rather than future/intention). *Grammatik i fokus*, Lund University, 7-8/2 2008.
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23. "Modern standardarabiska - en skvader bland världsspråken"? (Modern Standard Arabic - a centaur among the world's languages?) *Nordiska semitistsymposiet*, Kivik, Sweden, 10-12/8 1999
  24. "Meningsfull syntax - om komplementsatser i modern litterär arabiska" (Meaningful syntax - on complement clauses in Modern Literary Arabic) *Grammatik i Fokus*, Lund University, 11-12/2 1999
  25. "Meningsfull syntax - om syntax och semantik i arabiska komplementsatser" (Meaningful syntax - on syntax and semantics in Arabic complement clauses) *Nordiska semitistsymposiet*, Kivik, Sweden, 6-8/8 1997
- C. *Guest lectures and seminars*
26. "تبدیل صیغه الفعل بین جمله وأخرى للإشارة إلى تراتبية الجمل المركبة" (Verb form switching as a marker of clause hierarchy in combined clauses). Nizwa University, Nizwa. 20/11 2014.
  27. "Non-main Clause Combining in Damascene Arabic: The case of the circumstantial clause." *Semitiska seminariet*, Uppsala University, 8/10 2013
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  32. The use of the Active Participle in Gulf Arabic," *Divisions of Culture and Heritage and of Language and Communication*, United Arab Emirates University, Al-Ain, 18/2 2006
  33. "الجملة العربية بين المعنى والتركيب" (The Arabic clause between meaning and structure) *Arabic department, American University of Beirut*, Beirut, 28/5 1998
  34. "الجملة المصدرية: معنى والتركيب" (The complement clause, meaning and structure) *Institut Français d'Etudes Arabes de Damas*, Damascus, 25/5 1998

35. "Semantic Influences on the Syntactic Structure of Complement Clauses in Modern Literary Arabic" *Forskarseminariet i Semitiska språk*, Lund University, 1995

### 3.5 Academic and research-policy assignments

1. 2016 member (alternate) of the examination board, doctoral thesis defence, Andreas Hallberg, dissertation date 23 April, 2016. Lund University.
2. 2014 member of the examination board, doctoral thesis defence, Ulf Bergström, dissertation date 21 February, 2014. Uppsala University.
3. 2013/14 external expert, Ablahad Lahdo's application for the position of reader/associate professor, Uppsala University.

### 3.6 Impact

#### 3.6.1 Reviews

1. Holmstedt, Robert D. 2017. Review of Isaksson & Persson (eds.) "Clause Combining in Semitic: The Circumstantial Clause and Beyond" and "Strategies of Clause Linking in Semitic Languages: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Clause Linking in Semitic Languages", in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* LXXIV n° 1-2, Jan-Apr 2017, 147-150
2. Benjamin J. Noonan. 2017. Review of Isaksson & Persson (eds). *Strategies of Clause Linking in Semitic Languages: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Clause Linking in Semitic Languages*, in *Review of Biblical Literature*, the Society of Biblical Literature.
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## 4. Teaching qualifications

### 4.1 Reflections about own teaching

I have always been comfortable in my role as a teacher. My aim is to provide the students with a safe environment and strengthen their self-confidence while also encouraging them to stretch beyond their perceived limits and excel. A rich and broad teaching experience has prepared me to handle a large variety of teaching situations and made my teaching increasingly learner-oriented.

For as long as I can remember I have enjoyed sharing my knowledge and been fascinated by man's ability to learn. I have wondered about what factors promote and what factors demote learning. Throughout my own learning experiences, I have studied my teachers' styles and didactic methods seeking inspiration and good role models. My formal training as a teacher comprises 16,5 weeks. In addition to these courses, I have continuously both taken part in, but also taught at, pedagogical seminars arranged by my employers.

I perceive my main task as a teacher to be to provide the student with optimal conditions for acquiring knowledge and skills. A keen ear for individual needs and learning styles and a positive curiosity towards the student paired with mutual respect are keys to success. Hence, my teaching is learner oriented, i.e. my focus is on the student's learning process and active acquisition of skills. Results are not measured in how much material I have covered but in how much the student has internalised and is actually able to apply. I perceive my role as more of a coach than a lecturer. Therefore, especially when teaching large groups, I allow the students to work in pairs as much as possible. That way each student gets to use the language they are learning more while I am available to individual students/groups whenever a question arises. I believe that creating situations where the students feel a need for learning, be it vocabulary items or grammatical structures, is crucial since it is always easier to learn what we feel a need to know. In this respect, too, I've found that group work increases the opportunities for simulating real life situations, and real life situations readily create a need for learning. Therefore, I often use role-play and games. My learner oriented style also means that I, instead of giving a direct answer to a question, always try to answer back with another question or an example that puts the student on the track to find the right answer. My goal is to provide the students with the tools they need to use and develop their language skills by themselves. Grappling with a question and being guided step by step to find the answer oneself - rather than receiving an immediate answer - often leads to more lasting knowledge besides creating a feeling of self-confidence and autonomy in the learning process.

Throughout the years, I have come to realize that I, as a language teacher, do not need to correct every sentence the students produce. To the contrary, too much correction may impede students' language production as the student becomes hesitant to talk when he/she concentrates too much on accuracy. It is a natural step in the learning process for a language learner to make grammatical mistakes. Structures are taught and learned in theory on a broad scale but each structure can be mastered only when the foundation has been laid by actual acquisition of other underlying structures (Pienemann, 1998). Hence, a large part of the mistakes a student makes in language production do not show lack of theoretical knowledge of the grammatical structure. The students' ability to spontaneously produce the correct structure is a matter of processability that takes much longer than the theoretical learning of principles. Secondly, it is a matter of practice. Besides consciously refraining myself from

correcting everything and encouraging the students to be confident in their language use, I also need to convince the students that they do not need my correction at every step, that their mistakes will not be cemented by not being immediately spotted and dealt with. My awareness of the processes that underlie language learning therefore inspires me to encourage the students to use the language as much as possible while reassuring them that grammatical perfection is not the primary goal at an initial stage of language learning. Rather, a correct use of grammar and well-formed sentences is, in the experience of most language learners, a by-product of maximum actual language use when paired with theoretical studies. This reassuring attitude is paired with high expectations. My teaching is intense and challenging and I am personally involved in promoting each student's progress. My aim is that the students walk out of each lesson with a sense of having worked hard and accomplished a goal. The maximum exposure to the language in speaking, writing and listening, which I believe is necessary for effective learning, requires active participation in all parts of the course: both instructor-led lessons and exercises to be completed outside of class.

## **4.2 Teaching activities and educational planning**

### *4.2.1 Experience in teaching activities*

Years of being part of ambitious and innovative teaching teams, in Sweden and abroad, has made me acquainted with various teaching methods. I have taken part in continuous teacher training and been inspired to constantly develop and try new paths in my teaching.

My teaching experience in Arabic (1994-2018) is rich and varied. I have taught full-time and intensive courses at universities and language schools as well as evening classes; both private tutorials and large classes. The levels of language learning have ranged from complete beginners to advanced classes and post-doctoral students in linguistics and Arabic studies. Hence, I have taught all levels from the alphabet to poetry analysis at advanced levels. The students' origins have varied from homogenous groups of Swedes, through second generation Arab immigrants to Sweden who know a spoken dialect but not the written idiom, to mixed classes of international students from all continents studying in an immersion programme. My total teaching experience in Arabic comprises around six thousand hours.

My formal teaching career started in the spring of 1994 when I, as a young PhD student, was asked to take over hours from one of the senior lectures in the middle of an on-going course. Student satisfaction with my teaching led the head of department to offer me to take on a full course already during the following semester. I did not hesitate. Learning and research are life essentials for me; teaching, passing on what I have learnt and discovered, is a passion.

During my PhD studies, I taught a number of courses of Arabic, both part-time evening courses and full time ordinary courses at Lund University. Upon my graduation I was immediately offered a position as senior teacher and head of the department of Modern Standard Arabic at the Gulf Arabic Programme ([www.gapschool.net](http://www.gapschool.net)), located, at the time, in the UAE. My teaching responsibilities comprised teaching adult second year language students, university students in BA and MA programmes from the USA and Denmark (universities sending whole classes for a year/semester at the language school) and tailoring private tuition for advanced learners (post-doc) and students with learning disabilities. The school, eventually, relocated to Oman. I moved with the



school and remained in this position until 2010 including a one year sabbatical spent in Sweden 2005-2006 when I taught another semester at Lund University while also initiating a research project. The position in the Gulf has immensely broadened my teaching experience. Courses at language schools are teaching intensive. The students are highly motivated to learn both in and out of class and demand of the teacher to be constantly alert and active. Classes are small and students' ethnic, cultural and educational backgrounds are greatly varied. My language school experience has, among other things, given me good training in assisting students with little experience in language studies and/or knowledge of efficient study methods. The students have come from various national backgrounds and, hence, all my teaching has been done with Arabic as the language of instruction. This together with living in the Arab world for, all in all, 10 years, ensures that I have acquired a native or native like proficiency in the language I teach.

The varied training that I received during my years abroad made me well prepared to meet the new and inspiring challenge of teaching oral and written language proficiency to a large class of beginners of Arabic at Uppsala University in the fall of 2010. Faced with a large group of students, many of whom had little or no experience in language study, some with a non-academic family background and some with a variety of Arabic as their mother tongue, I decided to work as much as possible with groups, role-play and individual tasks. The students willingly adapted to my model of teaching and often started working on their tasks even before the lesson has officially started. Some worked throughout the break too, not noticing the passing of time. In addition to writing essays and exercises as home assignments, the students were regularly requested to create their own dialogues on various themes and perform these in class. As a supplement to this, I made extensive use of the language lab where the students worked individually or in pairs/groups and where I gave individual feedback while, simultaneously monitoring the whole group at work. The group work and individual exercises were complemented by a handful of seminar sessions of a more traditional kind where the students took turns in reading a passage and, guided by questions and hints and with the help of their peers, analysed the grammar and translated the sentences. The main reason for keeping a few lessons in a traditional setting was the sense of security and the feeling of accomplishment that it gave to some students. The questions I put provided tools and worked as a guideline for self-study. Studies within the field of humanities at the university are not teaching-intensive. Most of the work has to be done by the students alone. The teacher's main role becomes to guide and assist the students in how to work with the material on their own; to provide them with efficient tools for self-study. This, alone, motivates using a variety of teaching methods, both traditional and new. Hence, as a supervisor for BA theses at Lund University, and a teacher of research methods and linguistic theories, also I work extensively with group supervision to stimulate the students to work creatively together under my guidance. In my view it is also of great advantage that the MA students I supervise are part of a larger context within the Master's Programme in Language and Linguistics where they are given opportunities to stimulating exchange with fellow students.

Consequently, in my role as a supervisor for doctoral studies, I believe that the present good relationships between sister institutions in Sweden and nearby countries are essential. Hence, I promote continued exchange, such as guest lectures and guest seminars, where doctoral students and senior researchers continuously visit each other's research seminars. This serves as a complement to Nordic symposia for Semitic studies. Especially for doctoral students, but also for senior researchers, the opportunity to present and discuss on-going work with a broader audience than the local research

group constitutes an important supplement to their departments' own research seminars.

Employers' and students' evaluations throughout the years have pointed out my enthusiasm and personal involvement in each student's progress as positive characteristics of my teaching together with my use of Arabic in the classroom. I have also been told that I speak slowly and clearly and that what I write is easy to read. These last comments have been especially encouraging since I received criticism in these areas earlier on in my teaching career and have worked consciously at improving my writing and adjusting my speed. When possible, I choose classrooms with whiteboard that, too me, are easier to work with and, for each lesson, I hand out pre-typed instructions and lesson plans.

I believe in the importance of alignment between course description, teaching and assessment (Biggs, 2007). When assigned the above-mentioned course in practical language skills (oral and written) in 2010, I decided to make maximum use of the language lab. I also, immediately, decided to use the language lab facilities for the final assessment. During the term the students did various kinds of role-plays, games and oral and written practices in real-life-like situations such as introducing themselves to a friend, giving instructions on how to get from one place to another, ordering food in a restaurant, buying a house or a flat, booking a hotel room etc. One week before the actual test I gave the students an example test, i.e. the same type of questions and the same layout as the actual tests would be. They were given three or four tasks and were asked to choose one to do orally, recording themselves in the language lab, and one to write. The exercises were varieties of the ones we had done in class during the term. Studying for the test after having seen the example test meant reinforcing the knowledge of vocabulary and phrases they had used during the term as well as practicing doing the same kinds of exercise. The task was, hence, limited, and there was an opportunity for quite strategic test preparations by practicing writing a number of dialogues and presentations beforehand. Did that mean that I gave the test away beforehand? Well, no. Not anymore than the way in which I had "given it away" during the whole term. And giving it away was the point here. The "hint" I gave them made them practice exactly what I wanted. Providing the opportunity to choose among a number of tasks for the assessment gave the students some freedom to choose a task in which they could excel and avoid failing the test because of a weakness in one specific area of vocabulary. I wanted to test the students' overall command and language ability, not one specific subject or type of dialogue. I also wanted the test to be authentic in the sense that it should involve real-life tasks. The students should be given the ability to prove that they could use the language in a real life situation (Canale, 1980). In other words, the students should be assessed for actual skills and performance of realistic tasks that they would also probably find relevant to their motives for learning the language (Wiggins, 1989). The test was not perfect. Everything has its flaws and can be improved. However, it constituted, at the time, a significant achievement in terms of a) testing what I really wanted to test (i.e. skills and not ability to cram the day before the test), b) aligning the test to my teaching and to the course description, and c) testing in a way that made the students highly motivated to practice what I really wanted them to practice. Testing for skills takes skill and practice and is an area in which I continuously strive to improve.

#### 4.2.2 *Experience in educational planning*

I have a keen interest in course and department development. My first long-term task in leadership and administration was to head the department of Modern Standard Arabic at the Gulf Arabic Programme in Oman for eight years. Upon returning to Lund I was immediately appointed assistant director of studies, then Head of Section and, in January 2018, I assume the role as Head of Department for the Centre of Languages and Literature which, with its 250 staff members and 3000 students make up approximately one half of the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology at Lund University.

I started early on in my career to work on course development and student administration. As a student, I was the president of the student council and, in that capacity, a member of the department board. I spent a couple of years in Damascus in the 90s, and in 1997/98, I organized evening courses in English through the Nazareen Church. I was responsible for the whole setup of the course, from choosing the study material to planning the course and setting up the various levels including training the teachers and teaching one of the groups. This undertaking gave me valuable experience. During my PhD years, I also worked as a student counsellor. In this role, I gained increased understanding of the students' perspective on university studies.

Being the head of a department at the Gulf Arabic Programme (2002-2010) meant both the responsibility and the privilege of designing the Modern Standard Arabic programme and taking part in hiring and training co-workers. In my role as senior teacher, I was independently responsible for planning and supervising the higher levels of Arabic. This included administering tailored courses for university students at BA and PhD level from various European countries wishing to enhance their language proficiency. One of my tasks was to set up and facilitate a one-year study programme for BA students in cooperation with the University of Southern Denmark, Odense who sent a group of students to Oman for their year of Arabic immersion studies. My responsibilities ranged from planning the course, creating the curriculum, and finding and training the teachers, to assuring that the testing procedures were done according to Danish university standards and requirements. Another major task that I undertook during my years at the Gulf Arabic Programme was to establish a system for continuous formative assessment, quizzes and chapter tests during the term paired with an organized end-of-term assessment and set conditions for moving from one course level to the next.

In my role as assistant Director of studies, it was my task to ensure that the teaching load was distributed on the teachers in ways that allow each teacher to excel in his or her teaching and that schedules were laid in ways that promote a good work situation for both students and teachers. I have been responsible for good management of finances and adhering to the allotted budget. I initiated and supervised course development and the on-going revision of course descriptions and curricula and I collected and analysed course evaluations. I was also a link between teachers and students on one hand, and between teachers and the acting head of the department on the other hand. In order to further a constructive work atmosphere for both students and staff, I initiated social events to welcome new students each fall and kick-off meetings with the staff a couple of weeks into each term. The latter were an opportunity to make sure that the term had started well, for teachers and administrators alike, to address any urgent matters, and to reinforce the team identity at the start of a new semester. These meetings were often followed by social fellowship over lunch. In addition to this, I

invited all staff to coffee together each week. This, too, was a popular event and a natural and an informal opportunity to give and receive information about what was going on in the classes and at the department as a whole.

Between 2015 and 2017, I was Head of Section for the joint section of Arabic and Middle Eastern studies (including Hebrew and Syriac), Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Yiddish, Eastern and Central European and (general) European Studies, and, as such, a member of the board of Centre for Language and Literature. The role of HoS is similar to the role of the HoD at smaller departments. The HoS is the line manager for all teaching staff within the section. Thus, I had the overall responsibility for the section's staff and budget, including responsibility for conducting staff appraisals and monitoring occupational safety and health. As a member of the department board, I took an active part in decisions concerning the whole department. In the autumn of 2017, I was appointed as Head of Department for the Centre of Languages and Literature by the Dean of the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology. The appointment was subsequent to nomination and general elections comprising all teaching and administrative staff at the department. Most important to me is the personal support of the staff members, displayed by a vote of 92% of the voting community in an unusually well attended election process.

I have worked with course and curriculum development at various stages in my career. During the academic year of 95/96, while teaching at Lund University, I used a Swedish children's book in Arabic translation as my course material. I developed grammatical comments, word-list and exercises to go with the text. In short, I transformed the children's book into a course book for teaching Arabic grammar and vocabulary. Due to its focus on practical language proficiency, my more recent teaching experience at Uppsala University inspired me to produce a rich array of teaching material of my own such as laminated pictures, memory cards, flash cards, restaurant menus, charts, maps etc. to use in role play and dialogues and I have continued to build this tool bank after moving to Lund. Immediately upon my appointment, I also started work on a remodelling of the BA program for Arabic and Middle Eastern studies. In cooperation with supervisors, teachers and examiners of the BA courses, I developed a set of documents to be handed to the students upon registering. These documents include a) a clear statement of the criteria that are applied in evaluating the BA thesis, b) a student's handbook that gives the students clear guidance through the course from choosing their research topic, though the coursework on theory and method, to the final presentation and defence of their BA thesis, c) a carefully planned schedule where the course in theory and method is aligned to the actual thesis course and where student activity is in focus: the students are expected to write as they learn. The student's handbook was positively evaluated by alumni and now constitutes a regular part of the teaching material provided to BA students of Arabic. The team of teachers, supervisors and examiners were positive to the process from the start and contributed with good ideas as well as totally revised curricula with up-to-date literature. The new course model received positive feedback in the spring of 2013 and has run with positive results for several years after. As part of this process, I also worked together with the senior lecturer in Middle Eastern studies to develop a joint course in theory and method where both teaching and group supervision were shared between the teachers. The goal was to broaden the students' perspective and to better utilize each teacher's specific skills. The cooperation also provided a valuable opportunity for me to gain insight in and benefit from my colleague's didactic experience from another discipline (history/social science). As a follow-up on this, I have initiated a process at the department with the purpose of creating joint courses in theory and method comprising BA programmes in several of languages taught at the department. The benefits of such joint courses have

been confirmed by many colleagues, as it will create larger groups of students – and make use of the combined expertise of the teachers of different languages – thus giving the students both a larger number of colleagues to work together with and more diversity in terms of possible choices of method and specialization when writing their BA theses. The next step in this process will be to do a test run with a couple of languages that already have somewhat similar scheduling and set-up for their BA courses. As part of my work to improve the learning environment at the Centre for Languages and Literature, I have also initiated a process towards procuring modern language lab facilities.

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- Wiggins, G. 1989. “Teaching to the (Authentic) Test.” *Educational Leadership* 46 (7):41-48.

### 4.3 Experience as a supervisor

I am/have been the co-supervisor of PhD students Joseph Saouk, and Emil Lundin, Uppsala University. Due to the set-up of, and my active participation at, the research seminar of Semitic languages at Lund University, I have also functioned as an informal co-supervisor to my own department’s PhD students.

In addition to this, I regularly supervise MA and BA theses and serve as the formal examiner for those of the department’s theses that are supervised by a colleague.

### 4.4 Teaching works

In addition to the curriculum development and the teaching material described above (4.2), such as the compendium for BA students (Persson 2012a), I have written two academic papers where I reflect on the process involved in thesis work and doctoral supervision:

1. Persson, Maria. 2013b. *Akademiskt skrivande*. (“Academic Writing”) Paper within the CED-course “Doctoral Supervision. Introduction”, Lund University, Autumn term 2013
2. Persson, Maria. 2012b. *Den goda processen. Rapport från ett försök att skapa uppsatskurser vars utformning bygger på vetenskaplig grund*. (“The positive Process. Report from an attempt at creating research grounded thesis courses”). Paper within the CED-course “Supervision of thesis writing”, Lund University, Autumn term 2012

3. Persson, Maria. 2012a (constantly updated) "Vägledning och riktlinjer för uppsatsarbete på kandidatkursen ARAK01, arabiska" (A comprehensive guide with advice and instructions for thesis work on the BA courses in Arabic and/or Middle Eastern Studies, compendium, 23-25 pages).

The first paper, (Persson 2012b), addresses the fact that the curriculum and structure of thesis courses often build more on tradition than on extent research on how students learn the skills needed. It also addresses issues such as course goals and evaluation. The second paper deals specifically with training doctoral students to become researchers and, particularly ways of gaining the skills needed for successful academic writing and publishing (Persson 2013b).

## 4.5 Other teaching qualifications

### 4.5.1 *Communication of research findings and third-stream activities*

I enjoy sharing my knowledge and my experience. I have often participated in the faculty's popular science seminars giving lectures on various topics related to my studies. Naturally and by demand, my lectures to a broader audience during my eight years in the Arabian Peninsula focused on the communities and cultures in which I lived. At times, however, I have also had the opportunity to talk to a general audience about the Arabic language and about my research on Gulf Arabic dialects. I have also been asked to educate teachers of Swedish as a second language in the specific challenges encountered by speakers of Arabic when learning Swedish.

Other third-stream activities include answering a multitude of question on Arabic from hospitals, schools, lawyers, journalists, etc., as well as requests for translation of minor documents to and from Arabic to individuals, associations, schools and medical facilities. I have also assisted as interpreter (Arabic/English/Swedish) in both conferences and in smaller contexts. I comply with these requests as far as time permits. I have also been increasingly involved in activities promoting international exchange of staff and students. For example, I was elected for a one-month mobility within the Erasmus Mundus Action 2, which took place during November 2014 at the University of Nizwa, Oman. On 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> October 2014, I participated in the Swedish-Maghreb Contact Seminar in Morocco and Algeria, arranged by the Swedish Council for Higher Education with the aim of promoting research cooperation and student/staff exchange between Sweden and the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia). As a result of this, one of my MA students was able to do field work in Morocco, visiting colleagues with whom I had established contact during the contact seminars. I also applied and received a Linnaeus-Palme starting grant for cooperation with the University of Jendouba in Tunisia and established research connections with colleagues at the Universities of Sfax and Chartage in Tunisia which led to successful applications for staff and student exchange programme (ICM, Erasmus+) with these two universities for the period of 2017-2019.

### 4.5.2 *Popular lectures (selection)*

1. "Språkskillnader mellan arabiska och svenska (skandinaviska)" (Linguistic differences between Arabic and Swedish (Scandinavian languages)". *Youth Leagues of the Norden Associations' organisations, Bokenäset 23/6 2018.*

2. ”Grundläggande översikt av arabiska med fokus på kontraster gentemot svenska” (Basic overview of Arabic focussing on contrasts to Swedish). *Svenska som andraspråk*, Stockholm (40min) 23-24/3, and Gothenburg (60min) 25-26/10, 2017
3. ”Omanska harem byter kön på grund av en enda man: språkliga och kulturella egenheter på arabiska halvön” (Change of sex in Omani harems due to a single man: linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the Arabian Peninsula) *SPF Elin*, Skövde, 26/3 2011
4. ”Att leva som kvinna i Oman”, (Life as a woman in Oman) *Round table*, Tidan. 4/2 2008
5. ”Att leva och arbeta på arabiska halvön” (Living and working in the Arabian Peninsula) *Allträffen*, Salemkyrkan, Moholm 30/5 2006
6. ”Vardag och liv för kvinnor i Oman” (Everyday life for women in Oman) *Vadsbo Inner Wheel*, Moholm, 8/3 2006
7. ”Yemen, Oman och Emiratén - tre länder, tre världar” (Yemen, Oman and the Emirates – three countries; three worlds) *Vadsbo Rotaryklubb*, Moholm 30/8 2004
8. ”Syrien – landet, människorna och kulturen” (Syria – the country, the people, and the culture) *Vadsbo Rotaryklubb*, Tidan 28/7 1998
9. ”Det arabiska språket – en presentation” (The Arabic language – a presentation) *Vadsbo Rotaryklubb*, Tidan 22/8 1995
10. ”Mandéerna - en minoritetsgrupp i Irak” (Mandeans – a minority group in Iraq) *Föreningen Kvarnbyskolan*, Kvarnby folkhögskola, Malmö, 21/11 1995

#### 4.5.3 Translation work (example)

”’ahlan wa-marḥaban bi-l-ummahāt wa-l-’ābā’ ila markaz ri’āyat aṭ-ṭifl” (BVC) (Vi hälsar mammor och pappor välkomna till Barnavårdcentralen (BVC)) text Birgitta Olsson, Arabic translation Maria Persson, Kristianstad Läns Landsting, 1994

## 5. Account of other qualifications

I have often been appointed a leader in formal and informal settings. After heading the department for MSA at a language school in Oman, I returned to Lund University to assume the role of Director of studies, then Head of Section and department board member at the Centre for Languages and Literature which is one of the largest departments at Lund University. In 2017 I was elected and appointed as Head of Department.

### 5.1 Activities within administration and leadership

I am task oriented and persevering with a sound ability to work independently and take initiative to new steps of development. However, I am also convinced that true growth comes from within. Therefore, I believe in working in team-based structures in which all contribute with their talents and skills in joint development projects. I am diligent and never leave a task until I am fully satisfied with the results. I expect similar commitment from my team and I want to encourage people to do their best. I am ready to deal with conflicts when they arise and to work towards constructive solutions and I am constantly working on improving my own leadership skills by taking courses as well as constantly looking for good examples of leadership to learn from. Colleagues have expressed appreciation for my commitment and enthusiasm, as well as my sense of responsibility and reliability, and expressed the confidence and security that this creates. Early on, I worked part time as a counsellor and even today students spontaneously come to talk about their studies and problems they face, expressing a sense of being seen and heard. Work satisfaction to me is to see both students and colleagues thrive and to know that I have, somehow, been a part in creating a good work climate. However, I am aware that it takes time to build good atmosphere and that change presupposes discernment and respect for all involved. My first priority in leadership and administration is, therefore, always to listen, learn and observe.

As a conference secretary for "The 5th Conference on Christian Arabic Studies" 1995/96, I became acquainted with the procedure surrounding the organizing of a major international conference. I was responsible for the entire process, from the creation of a record of possible participants and the administration of circulars and abstracts, to the booking of hotels, refreshments and leisure activities, reception of arriving guests and all types of practical issues on site during the conference. Additional staff was hired only for the practical work during the conference days. This experience was very useful when again, in 2012, I assumed the responsibility of arranging a major conference (SCLS-2012). I was responsible for registration and practical on-site arrangements but, this time a co-organizer, also co-responsible for writing circulars, making decisions on abstracts, programme, and participation. New technology had brought changes and I found myself in charge of a web-site and gaining new insights in modern ways of administering conferences.

My role as head of department at the Gulf Arabic Programme (2002-2010) has been described above. As already mentioned I had full responsibility for the planning and supervision of both the teaching in Modern Standard Arabic and the training of the teachers. My responsibilities regarding educational planning within my role as Assistant Director of Studies were also described above. In addition to administering courses, scheduling and curricula, I prepared the budget for the department and distributed the work load on the teachers. I was also responsible for preparing the



documents and other administration whenever a new position was to be announced as well as for introducing new staff at the department.

In 2012, I was assigned to write a comprehensive self-assessment for Arabic studies at Lund University in connection with the assessment of BA courses at Swedish universities carried out by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. For three years, 2015-201, I held the position of Director for the joint section of Arabic and Middle Eastern studies (including Hebrew and Syriac), Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Yiddish, Eastern and Central European and (general) European Studies, and, as such, I was a member of the board of Centre for Language and Literature.

The varied experience described above has endowed me with thorough practical training in leadership, as well as insight in the structure and management system of Swedish universities. Together with formal training in leadership, and my international experience, these are key factors that have equipped me for my present role as Head of Department. I would not understate though, the role also played by the personal experience of growing up in a family business centred on growing, selling and arranging plants and flowers. The knowledge gained from taking on responsibility, cultivating plants and interacting with customers from very early age taught me a lot about leadership; it also told me that knowledge of an individual's actual competence cannot be gained from reading a CV's listing formal training and former positions. It taught me to take the time to listen and get to know people before making a judgement on who they are. People are so much more than any document will show which is why working with people such a challenging, and such an immensely rewarding, task.