CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW LITERATURE

This chapter presents information in four major parts. The first part is an overview of concepts concerning attitudes towards foreign language learning. The second part reviews literature on Basic Education Curriculum B.E.2544, learning foreign language. The third part reviews literature on Islamic Study Curriculum B.E.2546, learning foreign language (Arabic) as well. The final part is an overview concerning Arabic language.

2.1   OVERVIEW OF ATTITUDE
2.1.1 Definition of an Attitude

There are several definitions given to "attitude" with various aspects. In general, according to Brown (1987):

> Attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in
> human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents'
> and peers' attitudes, contact with people who are "different" in any
> number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human
> experience. These attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of
> others, and of the culture in which one is living. (p.126)

In second language learning, Gardner' study (as cited in Lightbow and Spada, 1999, p. 56) mentions that positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language learning.

Rubin and Thompson (1994) have given a definition of "attitude" as an important tool that brings success or failure to learners. Students may feel interested in the culture of that language and want to learn more about it by speaking the language fluently. Also, those learners may want to have friends and prolong a good relationship and be accepted by them. These feelings are positive attitudes which can help learners continue their interest long enough to achieve their goals.

W.W. Lambert and W.E. Lambert (1973) give an interesting definition of an attitude as an organized and consisting manner of thinking, feeling and reacting to a people, a group, a social issue or more generally, to any event in the environment.

The essential components of attitudes are thoughts and beliefs, feeling or emotions and tendency to repeat.

For the definitions of attitude, it can be said that knowing the attitude of one person will give some ideas on how that person thinks, acts or has an opinion. As a teacher, being able to know students' attitudes will be very useful because we can manage our teaching to suit the students properly. However, if students' attitudes are not good, can we change them? And how?

2.1.2 Attitude Change

Triandis (1971), in 'Attitude and Attitude Change' has said that attitudes can be changed. One of them results from changes in a cognitive component such as receiving new information from other people. In addition, attitude change can occur by changing the affective component, changing the behavioral component, forcing a person to act or presenting him with a 'fait accompli', or through psychotherapy such as producing positive reinforcement, or presenting an anxiety reducing stimulus for the negative attitude.

Zimbado and Ebbesen (as cited in Green1977, pp.119-120) have summarized some of the process variables found very significant for the change process:

a) The characteristics of the source of the communication (communicator) which are comprised of credibility, expertise, and trustworthiness

b) The communication

c) The characteristics of the audience including intelligence, personality traits and motivational levels.

W.W. Lambert and W.E. Lambert (1973) believe that changing or replacing an attitude needs to be engaged with the concepts of transfer association, and need satisfaction. They claim that, for instance, through face-to-face contacts, new attitudes are more likely to be transferred.

2.1.3 The Measurement of Attitudes

In an article, 'Attitude' in Motivation in Education, Green (1977) mentions a number of systematic techniques that have been developed to infer and measure attitudes. These techniques are discussed as follows:

Thurstone scale; a measuring devices which requires the subject to select from a series of attitude statements with which he agrees. Therefore, each statement is assigned a scale value indicating the favorableness or unfavorableness towards the attitudes being investigated.

Likert scale; an attitude measuring method which is designed to rate each attitude item on a 5-point scale.

Guttman scale; a measuring scale which asks the subjects to respond to opinion statements relating to the attitude being measured. Those statements; however, are ordered according to their difficulty of acceptance.

Semantic differential sale; a method developed to measure the meaning of words and concepts which are presented by adjectives. The rating scale employed is a 7-point scale ranging from -3 through 0 to +3.

In this study, the Likert scale is employed to measure the students' attitudes towards learning English compared with Arabic. The scale is varied from strongly agree=5 to strongly disagree=1.

2.2 BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM (B.E.2544)

Before 2002, the curriculum B.E.2521 (revised B.E.2533) had been used throughout the country for more than ten years. The monitoring, assessment and research conducted by the department of Curriculum and Instruction Development have made apparent some limitations and weaknesses in the curriculum. Foreign languages learning, especially in the English language, failed to build up competence in using languages for communication and seeking knowledge from various and extensive resource centers in the information age.

The ministry of Education, by virtue of section 74 of the National Education Curriculum B.E.2542, considered appropriate to formulate Basic Education Curriculum B.E.2544. The curriculum should be based on "unity in policy and diversity in practice".

To implement principles, goals and learning standards at the educational institutions, and for those concerned in the formulation of the educational institution curricula, the Ministry of Education in B.E.2544 required that the basic education curriculum is stipulated as follows:

There shall be 4 grade levels in accordance with learners' development.

1. First level- primary education grades 1-3

2. Second level- primary education grades 4-6

3. Third level- secondary education grades 1-3

4. Fourth level- secondary education grades 4-6

The structure includes substance. The substance consists of a body of knowledge, skills or learning processes, values or virtues, morality and right behavior. This substance is assembled into 8 groups:

1. Thai language

2. Mathematics

3. Science

4. Social studies, religion and culture

5. Health and physical education

6. Art

7. Career and technology

8. Foreign languages

This is fundamental contents currently required for all learners. It can be divided into 2 groups. The first group consists of Thai language, mathematics, science, social studies, religion and culture. These subjects are taught by educational institutions to build up thinking processes, enable students to solve problems and tackle national crisis. The second group consists of health and physical education, art, career and technology, and foreign languages. These are required for forming the foundation of humanity, for creating potential in thinking and creative working.

In the foreign languages group, English is compulsory for all grade levels. Other foreign languages are selective, as appropriate.

The learning substance for each subject group is stipulated to develop quality learners in general, educational institutions can add subjects which respond to individuals' capabilities, aptitudes, interest and potential.

2.3   ISLAMIC STUDIES CURRICULUM B.E.2546

The Islamic Study Curriculum B.E.2546 was developed from three previous curriculums; Lower and Upper Islamic Study Curriculum B.E.2535, Lower and

Middle Islamic Study Curriculum B.E.2540 and Upper Islamic Study Curriculum B.E.2523. The curriculum is specific and in line with the Basic Education Curriculum B.E.2544. It can be applied in educational institutions to formal, non-formal and lifelong education systems.

To implement principles, goals and learning standards at the educational institutions, and for those concerned in the formulation of the educational institution curricula, the structure of the Islamic Study Curriculum is stipulated as follows:

There shall be 4 grade levels in accordance with learners development.

1. First level- lower Islamic Study grades 1-3 (*Ibtidaiyah*)
2. Second level- lower Islamic Study grades 4-6 (*Ibtidaiyah*)
3. Third level- middle Islamic Study grades 1-3 (*Mutawassitah*)
4. Fourth level- upper Islamic Study grades 1-3 *(Sanaweeyah)*

The structure includes substance. The substance consists of a body of knowledge, skills or learning processes, values or virtues, morality and right behavior. This substance is assembled into 3 groups:

1. Islamic Religion
2. Social Study and Morality
3. Languages

For language group, it consists of Arabic and Malay. However Arabic and Malay may be used as a medium in learning subjects in the other two groups. It is an institution's choice on the medium.

This curriculum is mostly used in Islamic Private Schools in the south and in the central part of the country. Students who enroll to study in those kinds of school are tested in the 3 group subjects to place them in a suitable level. It means that two students who are in Matthayom 1 in Basic Education Curriculum B.E.2544, may differ in level of Islamic Study Curriculum B.E.2546. One may be in middle Islamic Study grade 2 and the other may be in middle Islamic Study grade 1 or lower Islamic Study grade 1 if he or she does not have any knowledge about the content at all.

2.4   OVERVIEW OF ARABIC LANGUAGE

Arabic is a Semitic language, having a grammatical system similar to Assyrian, Aramaic, Hebrew and Ethiopian. It can be classified into Literary Arabic

and Colloquial Arabic. Literary Arabic is considered as the standard language while Colloquial Arabic refers to the many national or regional forms of dialectal Arabic. Literary Arabic or Pan Arabic is the official language of all Arab countries, which is taught in schools and used by the mass media.

Arabic is the language of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. Swan and Smith (1987) said that all Muslims of whatever nationally are to some extent familiar with Arabic, can recite extensively in it and are therefore influenced by it in their ideas of how language works (p.142). In addition, Bakalla (1984) states that Arabic or non-Arabic speakers quite often use Arabic words and expressions for Islamic prayers and greeting as well as in their worldly affairs. He also mentions that Arabic is considered as a vehicle of Islamic culture. Although the majority of the world's Muslims do not speak Arabic, learning Arabic is an essential for anyone who wants to be an Islamic religious scholar.