Western Consortium Middle East Language Pedagogy Workshop Report

Date and Venue:
The workshop took place on 1-2 April 2016 at the Marriott University Park Hotel in Tucson, Arizona.

University of Arizona Presenters:
Muhammad Al-Khudair, Arabic instructor, Middle Eastern and North African Studies (MENAS); Mohamed Ansary, Arabic instructor, MENAS; Dr. Beatrice Dupuy, Chair of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT); Karim Ibrahim, English instructor working with the Center for English as a Second Language (CESL); Charles Joukhadar, Ph.D. student, MENAS; Ahmet Okal, Turkish instructor, MENAS; Katrin Shamshiri, Visiting Scholar, MENAS; Dr. Sonia Shiri, Assistant Professor of Arabic Language, Middle East Language Programs Coordinator and Academic Director of the Arabic Flagship Program; Adnan Yilmaz, Ph.D. Candidate, SLAT.

Coordinating team from the University of Arizona:
Dr. Anne Betteridge, Director of the University of Arizona Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES); Dr. Victoria Phaneuf, Senior Program Coordinator, CMES; Kamilia Rahmouni, MENAS Ph.D. student; Dr. Sonia Shiri, Assistant Professor of MENAS, Middle East Language Program Coordinator, Director of the Arabic Flagship

Program:

Friday, April 1, 2016

6.00-6.45pm	Reception
6.45-7.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Keynote address: "Multiliteracies and World Language Education Today: Why, What, and How?" Dupuy

Saturday, April 2, 2016

8.30-10.30am	Workshop: "Using Technology for Increasing Students' Multiple Literacies and Intercultural Competence." Shiri and Ansary
10.45-11.45am	Workshop: "The Need for an Easy Approach to Authentic Material and Culture in Language Teaching." Al-Khudair
12.00-1.15pm	Lunch
1.30-2.45pm	"From the Traditional Classroom to the Virtual Classroom: Online Distance Education to Teach Turkish at the University of Arizona." Yilmaz; Okal, discussant

2.45-3.15pm	Coffee Break
3.15-5.15pm	**Panel: Technology and Multiple Literacies**
	"Integrating Mobile Phone Applications in the Teaching of Taboo Language to Second Language Learners." Shamshiri
	"Building Critical Intercultural Literacies Through Linguistic Landscapes and Film Clips." Joukhadar
	"Addressing the Issue of Arabic Diglossia through Video Games" Ibrahim
6.00pm (optional)	Departure for group dinner at Mexican restaurant

Sunday, April 3, 2016

7.30-8.30am	Buffet Breakfast
8.30-9.30am	Guided Discussion: "Best Practices in Teaching Multiple Literacies." Joukhadar
9.30-11.30am	Closing Plenary and Group Discussion: "Developing Advanced Multiple Literacies: Examples from Arabic." Shiri

Participants:

The training workshop was attended by 22 participants coming from various universities, colleges, and high schools across the US:

Arizona Western College, Central New Mexico Community College, Cholla High School, Rio Salado Community College, Seattle Central College, University of Arizona, University of California San Diego, and University of Washington.

Languages covered:

- ✓ Arabic
- ✓ Hebrew
- ✓ Persian
- ✓ Turkish

The Training-Workshop

Friday:

The workshop opened with a reception at the Marriott Hotel. Dinner provided an opportunity for participants to socialize and to get to know each other. Dr. Beatrice Dupuy gave the keynote address that got the workshop off to an excellent start by discussing "Multiliteracies and World Language Education Today". During the keynote, Dupuy considered a pedagogy of multiliteracies as a framework which can 1) provide the link between content and language; 2) serve as an organizing

principle for instructors by promoting principle-based curricular and pedagogical decision making and practices; 3) help find solutions to the pedagogical and structural problems that might face language and literature teachers. Dupuy began with a review of the literature dealing with multiliteracies, then moved on to present how this theoretical framework of multiliteracies can be put into practice in the language classroom. She concluded with an examination of the implications of adopting such a framework.

Saturday:

Saturday morning:

The second day began at 8:30 am with a workshop by Dr. Sonia Shiri and Mohamed Ansary. During their presentation, Shiri and Ansary introduced several tools and free multimedia software that can be used in language teaching. First, Ansary presented *Google Voice*, an online phone system where students can call in and leave voicemails. It allows every student to communicate with their teacher and allows the teacher to save the students' communications and give them appropriate feedback. Second, Ansary introduced *Socrative*, a teaching website, and explained how to use it. He gave examples from activities employed in previous classes, and asked the participants to log in as students and answer some questions. *Socrative* gave them immediate feedback and allowed them to visually see how they were doing compared to other participants, which increased their competiveness. The participants could retake the questions and improve their score, which created a sense of confidence and self-fulfillment. The third tool introduced was *Kahoot*, a free game-based learning platform that can be used to study vocabulary, simple questions and geography quizzes. *Kahoot* and *Socrative* can help the teacher minimize grading time and focus more on creating classroom activities and authentic materials to use in teaching. Fourth, Ansary presented *Linguafolio*, a self-assessment tool that allows students to document their progress while observing their strengths and weaknesses, and therefore help them set their own learning goals. Next, Shiri and Ansary introduced a set of tools dealing with intercultural competence such *BLCvideoclips*, *EduCanon*, and *Vimeo*. They then presented tools promoting geoliteracy, such as *Google Maps*, *Google Earth* and *Newspapermap*. The presentation concluded with a wrap-up and a Q/A session. Participants voiced concerns with feelings of intimidation that might result from using tools such *Socrative* and *Kahoot*. The presenters responded that *Socrative* has the option of hiding names and *Kahoot* has the option of using nicknames. Additionally, in *Socrative*, the motivating part is enhanced with a scaffolding part since it allows the student to do the drill several times, thus moving away from summative assessment to formative assessment.

The presentation by Muhammad Al-Khudair dealt with what he called modern hieroglyphic language. He talked about pictures, emojis, sounds, and body language and how they can be interpreted differently according to one's culture. He also addressed the importance of using videos in teaching and how they can be blended with the available technological tools in order to create a rewarding learning experience for the student. Al-Khudair also introduced a set of technological tools that can be used in the classroom such as *Quizizz* (a tool that blends *Socrative* and *Kahoot* together) and *Padlet* (a virtual bulletin board that allows students to work collaboratively on a common topic). Al-Khudair also described how to create an archive of videos that might be used in class with *YouTube* and *Dailymotion*. Al-Khudair's presentation ended with a wrap-up and was followed by lunch. During lunch, the participants socialized and engaged in active discussions about the tools introduced during the Saturday morning workshop and how to implement them in their own classrooms.

Saturday afternoon:

The Saturday afternoon session started with a presentation by Adnan Yilmaz. During his presentation, Yilmaz talked about his experience in teaching third-year Turkish fully online. Yilmaz and Okal began teaching the course using *CANVAS*, an online platform. However, it lacked the flexibility needed. With the help of the students' feedback, they switched to *D2L* and used Adobe Connect (already embedded in *D2L*). Yilmaz next presented the teaching schedule for the whole semester (In the first week, they delivered the course content and introduced the tools they were using. In the second week, they made students familiar with the program, then from the third week until the end of the semester they taught the language based on themes). Yilmaz provided some of the activities assigned for the class as examples of what is possible using these platforms. He then explained how to have conversations with students and allow students to interact with each other on *Adobe Connect*. To do this, he was joined in real-time by a number of his students who worked through an oral discussion and presentation exercise as an example. Yilmaz illustrated how *D2L* and *Adobe Connect* can be utilized in conjunction with some other online programs (e.g., *VoiceThread*, *EduCanon*, *Google Voice*, and so forth) when teaching a language.

Yilmaz's presentation ended with a discussion by Ahmet Okal, who talked about the challenges and the benefits of this teaching experience and conducted a question and answer session. Some participants voiced interest in the choice of which themes to teach and which materials to use. Yilmaz responded that they asked the students about their interests and then planned the class themes accordingly. As for which materials to use, Okal responded that they designed the class to be OPI-ua oriented. After the end of the presentation, participants had a coffee break for half an hour.
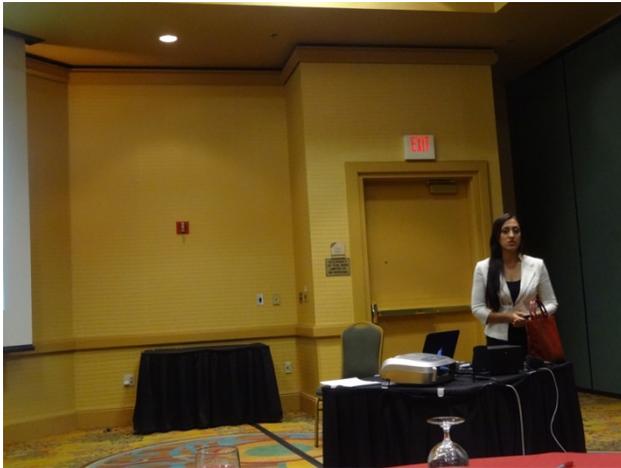
After the coffee break, Adnan Yilmaz facilitated a panel that dealt with technology and multiple literacies. The panel started with Katrin Shamshiri who talked about how to integrate mobile phone applications in the teaching of taboo language to second language learners. She argued that in order to teach taboo words, the teacher needs to create a stress free environment. The creation of such an environment, she argued, can be facilitated by the use of mobile phone apps such as *WhatsApp*, *Telegram* and *Line*. Shamshiri outlined the pros and cons of *WhatsApp* and *Telegram*, and concluded that *Telegram* is more suitable for teaching taboo words because it offers more options that allow the teacher to maintain student privacy. The participants were very engaged: many began downloading the app on their phones and requested a demo teaching session.

Shamshiri's presentation was followed by Charles Joukhadar's talk about "Building Critical Intercultural Literacies Through Linguistic Landscapes". Joukhadar discussed how publicly displayed texts, such as road signs and advertising billboards, can be used to enhance the students' intercultural competence. He illustrated how the four curricular components of the New London Group (1996), namely situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice, can be used to plan activities that integrate both language and culture. The participants were very engaged and many of them showed their willingness to incorporate linguistic landscapes in their teaching activities.

The panel ended with Karim Ibrahim's presentation on the use of games in teaching Arabic diglossia. Ibrahim began with a definition of diglossia and a categorization of the different Arabic varieties, and argued that there is so satisfactory answer on how to deal with the Arabic diglossic situation. Then, he moved to the use of video games in teaching the language. He started with a single player game, called *Ba'alty*, that simulates the process of managing small businesses. Ibrahim presented case studies of students playing the *Ba'alty* game. For example, one student used his knowledge of MSA to decode Egyptian phrases and described his learning experience as "painless learning". Following the presentations and debrief, the training-workshop was closed for the day.

Sunday:

After the breakfast buffet, Joukhadar guided the participants through an interactive discussion about the best practices in teaching multiple literacies. The session took the form of a brainstorming activity about the best teaching practices and the most efficient language teaching technological tools. The participants were divided into 3 groups and asked about their best practices. They worked collaboratively on a *Google Doc* (annexed with this report) that listed the various tools and techniques that they used in their own classrooms.

After the breakout discussion, the participants were presented with examples from Arabic on how to develop multiple literacies by Shiri. Shiri defined the term multiple literacies and introduced recent debates in the field of language teaching (emphasis on critical thinking and

preparing students to communicate in multiple cultural contexts) call for an integrative approach with multiple paths to achieve an Arabic major, call for the use of the computer not only as assisting in giving drills but also a tool for critical thinking). Shiri then introduced *Arabic Without Walls* and gave an example of content-based learning at the word level (teaching the names of Arab countries), while emphasizing the importance of clarifying cultural differences (for example, rain as a blessing in the Middle East vs rain as a nuisance in many other places). After that, she addressed multi-genre readings for advanced learners and emphasized the importance of

diversified course material in enhancing the student's ability to function in multiple contexts. For example, cartoons offer students the opportunity to research and decipher various layers of meaning related to history, politics, traditional beliefs, and other cultural factors. This activity enhances students' critical literacy. Shiri's presentation ended with an interactive discussion with the participants. Key points mentioned during the discussion were:

- ✓ The existence of a gap between textbooks and the activities and tools introduced in the workshops. One suggestion to fill in this gap was by bringing the teachers' own material and refining it to build and enhance the students' critical literacies.

- ✓ How can teachers introduce students to multiliteracies and to encourage them to be multi-modal learners? By introducing them to problems, because they will be more likely to remember the discussion and be more motivated to learn.

- ✓ Language teachers need to change the background of learning language by teaching vocabulary and grammar through problem-solving activities, working in teams, and coming up with activities that can give the student a self-fulfilling experience.

- ✓ Teachers should change the way they look at their students by taking into account that they are digital natives and they need multiple literacies.

- ✓ With the multiplicity of technological tools, teachers need to streamline their use of technology; they should not bombard the students with many tools because that might be disorienting.

- ✓ Using technology for the sake of technology can impede the learning process.

Following this interactive and engaging discussion, the training-workshop was closed at 11:30 am.

Annex

Technology Tools Collaborative Document

Name	Tool	Description	(Suggestion of) How to use
Katryn Shamshiri	*Telegram* as an application	Group chat, secret chat, channel Unlimited capacity for saving and sharing media Public and private channel Members' privacy and security	Time saving, private chat, teacher-student and student-student interaction, one way presentation in the channel
Bill Heenan	Arabic keyboard and Instant Messaging and e-mail, especially in my online classes	In my beginning classes I have students install an Arabic keyboard on computer or smartphone so they see how the letters flow and connect to each other	Having an Arabic keyboard, students can use Instant Messaging or e-mail to communicate in Arabic with each other. Reinforces Alif Baa lessons.
Susan Benson	*Linguistic Landscapes*	Aramco World articles you can subscribe to for free http://www.aramcoworld.com/en-US/Home	to start discussions of culture, colors, naming objects etc., familial relationships
Susan Benson	DLIFLC	https://gloss.dliflc.edu/	Various exercises for all skills and all levels of Arabic and other languages
Ahmad Ismail	*Arabic Without Walls*	Online resource with quizzes, drills, etc. http://arabicwithoutwalls.ucdavis.edu/aww/alifbaa_unit1/	Supplements *al-Kitaab* especially for learning the alphabet

Alyeh Mehin Jafarabadi	http://www.persianlanguageonline.com/	This website contains dialogs and short animations for Persian language	Presents useful material in three levels of beginner, elementary, and intermediate; Could be used as listening and reading material; Presents new vocabulary and follow up exercises; Presents issues in politics and culture
Alyeh Mehin Jafarabadi	*Quizlet*	Works both on phone and on computers	I use *Quizlet* to create lists of vocabulary and the app presents matching games and puzzles
Shahrzad Shams	www.Globalonenessproject.com	Weekly lesson plans	Includes movies and texts that could be turned into lessons for language classes
Khalid Ahmed	*Google pics* *YouTube* Song sites News Websites *Storify* *The Lab* *Plexer*	I use pics and songs to activate vocabulary and for teaching culture aspects. I use news websites for class and home reading, usually with discussion to follow the reading.	present pics/brain storm the content of the pics with students/students in groups discuss, use all possible vocabulary to describe the pics/include any culture aspect in their discussion/ share their product with the rest of the class. *Storify*: collecting photos from different sites and gathering them in one place

			Plexer: editing images *The Lab*: oral tests and listening comprehension activities/ students can listen at their own pace
	https://www.routledge.com/products/9781138832190		
	https://www.pearsonhighered.com/program/Paesani-Multiliteracies-Framework-for-Collegiate-Foreign-Language-Teaching-A/PGM245286.html		