

# Bridging Arabic Instruction from High School to Higher Education:

## The Role of DC- Arabic Teachers' Council (DEIA-Enhanced CoP)

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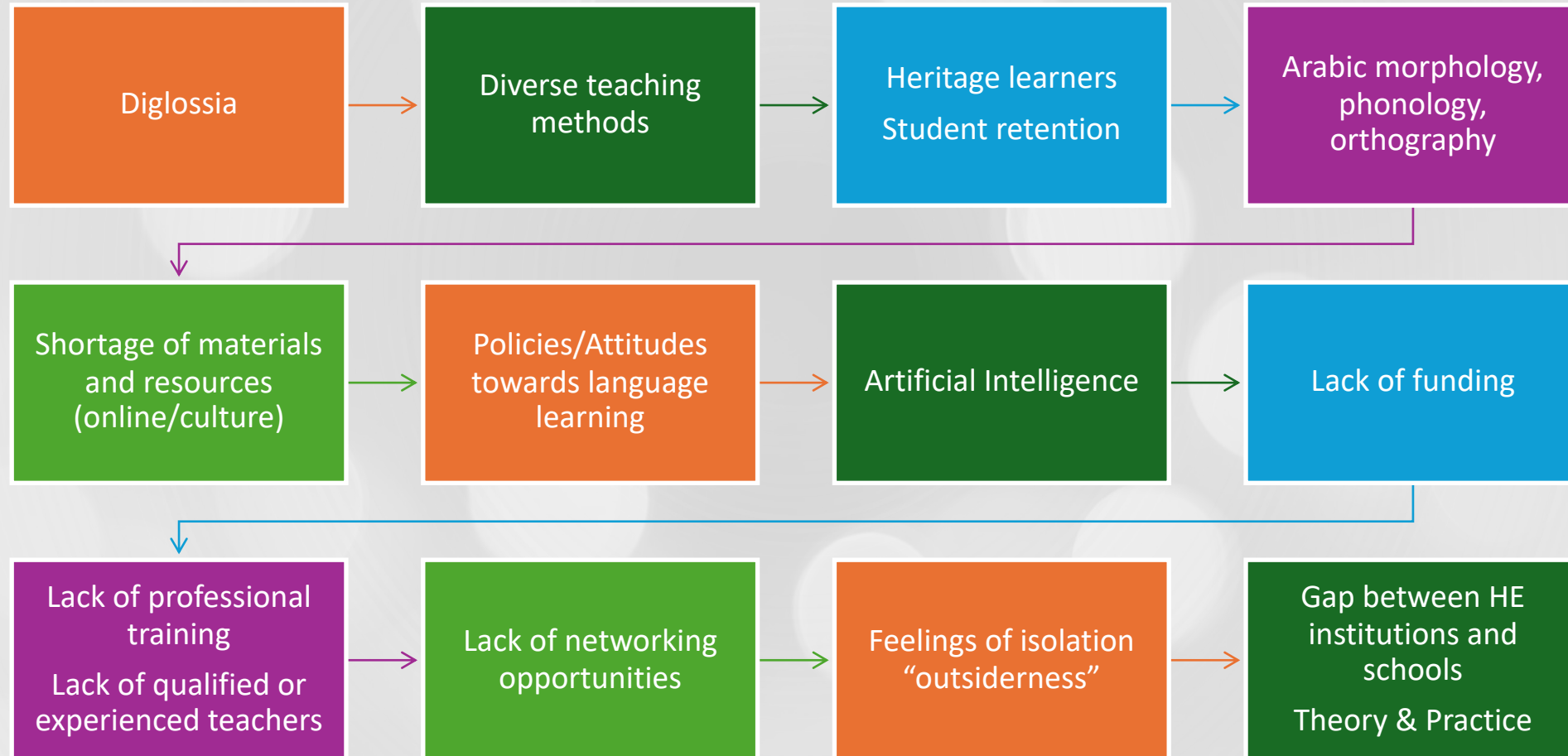


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What are the main challenges  
that you face as Arabic  
educators?

# Major challenges in TAFL



# Need for innovative solutions...

Al-Batal , 2007; Al-Batal , 2001; Albirini, A., & Chakrani, B.,2017;. Ayouby, 2001; Barbeco, 2019; Busaidi, 2015; De Felice et al., 2019; Palmer, 2007;Snowden et al., 2016; Soliman, R., & Khalil, 2022; Younes, 2014

**How did these challenges impact you and your students?**

**Need for innovative solutions to address these challenges**

# Addressing Challenges and Embracing Innovation

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Pressing need for innovative approaches to professional development



Tailored strategies to address specific challenges in TAFL



Incorporation of broader imperatives like Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)



Recognition of the evolving landscape of TAFL  
Unity/Collaboration  
**Community**

# Theoretical framework: Communities of Practice (CoP)

“Individuals united in action” (Liedka, 1999, p.5).

“A CoP (a) provides an alternative to a traditional top-down approach to innovation, (b) allows space for uncertainty and trust, (c) closes the gap between espoused theory and theory in use about special expertise, and (d) dilutes the effects of power imbalances.” (Mortier, 2018, p.1)

# Characteristics of CoP

- Shared interest, profession, or goal
- Alternative to top-down approaches
- Fostering trust
- Bridging theory and practice
- Minimizing power imbalances



# DEIA-Enhanced CoP

## Definition

Communities where participants share knowledge, best practices, and experiences focused on advancing DEIA.

Ensuring DEIA principles are central to the community's structure, goals, and activities.

## DEIA-Enhanced Arabic CoP

Establishing a supportive and inclusive space for Arabic educators.

## Goals

Addressing challenges faced by Arabic teachers.

Ensuring equitable access to resources, professional training, and networking opportunities.

→ Fostering an environment embodying DEIA principles in Arabic language education.



# DC Arabic Teachers Council (DC-ATC): Exemplary of DEIA-Enhanced CoP

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Supported by Qatar Foundation International (QFI)

Established as a collaborative group in the DMV region

DC-ATC's mission:

- “creating opportunities for teachers of Arabic at all grade levels to meet, network, share resources and ideas
- supporting schools that want to start or increase Arabic language teaching
- sponsoring community-based events that elevate the teaching of Arabic language and culture.”

# Bridge between Higher Education and Schools

“The key to advancing Arabic teaching and learning as a communal language lies in the collaboration between universities and schools.” (Soliman & Khalil, 2022, p.10)

- DC-ATC bridges higher education and schools.
- Collaboration enhances Arabic teaching and learning.
- Partnership provides research to schools and insights to universities.
- Cooperation creates clear learning pathways.
- More advanced Arabic graduates expected.
- Graduates can become proficient Arabic teachers.
- Teachers trained in progressive teaching methods.
- ➔ **Supporting the entire Arabic language ecosystem**

# Workshops Organized by DC-ATC

Date	Workshop Title	Type
18 JAN 2020	Interpersonal Communication: A Workshop for Arabic Instructors	Online
15 FEB 2020	Project-Based Learning: A Workshop for Arabic Educators	Online
2 APR 2020	Asserting Identity in Children and Youth Literature	Online
16 MAY 2020	Student-Centered Activities in the Arabic Classroom	Online
4 NOV 2020	SIMA and Using Film in the Arabic Classroom	Online
5 DEC 2020	From Morocco to Dubai: Engagement and Immersion with Virtual Reality	Online
16 JAN 2021	Social Justice and Foreign Language	Online
9 MAR 2021	Beyond the Boxes: Increasing Student Engagement in Remote Learning	Online
26 MAY 2021	MovieTalk in the Classroom	Online
27 JUL 2021	K-5 Arabic Teachers' Resource Exchange and Social Hour	Online
28 AUG 2021	'Anamel' a Collaborative Online Anthology of Arabic Modules	Online
20 SEP 2021	Arabic Teacher Workshop on Teaching Arabic Language & Culture through Food	Online
7 DEC 2021	Engaging Heritage Learners through Creative Activities in the Arabic Language Classroom	Online
19 JAN 2022	Assessing Language Learning with LinguaGrow	Online

15 FEB 2022	Project-Based Learning II	Online
19 MAR 2022	Teaching a Language in a Hybrid Format	Online
APR 2022	Useful and Practical Assessment in the Arabic Language Classroom	Online
7 JUN 2022	How to Design an Online Arabic Course	Online
23 JUN 2022	Geography in Arabic Literature: Space, Place, and Mapping	In-person
25 OCT 2022	Generating Arabic Buy-in: Getting Students and Families on Board	Online
13 DEC 2022	Universal Design: Inclusivity in the Classroom	Online
19 JAN 2023	Opportunities for Arabic Learners Beyond the Classroom	Online
23 FEB 2023	Using Ramadan in the Arabic Classroom	Hybrid
28 APR 2023	Resource Sharing for Arabic Middle & High School Teachers	Hybrid
1 MAY 2023	Resource Sharing for Primary School Arabic Teachers	Hybrid
17 MAY 2023	Using Technology to Support Arabic Literacy	Hybrid
10 JUN 2023	Poetry, Literature, and Song in the Arabic Classroom	In-person
25 OCT 2023	Exploring Food Sustainability: Building Global Citizens	Online
9 NOV 2023	Reading Current Events in the Arabic Classroom	Online
12 DEC 2023	How to Read the Room: A Storyteller's Approach to Connecting with Students	Online

# Addressing Pedagogical and Professional Challenges

Diverse topics covered in workshops.

Technology integration

Cultural competence

Assessment strategies

Diglossia

Culture and extracurricular activities

Networking

Funding opportunities through QFI

# Feedback: What did you find most effective about the event?



“I am very pleased to participate in interdisciplinary, inter-university events.”



“Very helpful ideas in the presentation. Also terrific for networking.”



“Hearing about others in the DMV area and other places passionate and working on Arabic learning”



“I like very much that since covid institutions have been inviting speakers from beyond the US. These perspectives are always interesting, as I think each geographic area sort of ossifies in its ways. Good to reach beyond ourselves.”



“the way she was able to lead a skeptical audience to a realization of the richness of art as a tool for all students, not just specialists in art”



“It was terrific. I learned a lot. Enjoyed meeting and discussing professional ideas with colleagues.”

# Limitations: What was least effective or useful about the event?



“Not enough time to try and explore the different activities and to ask about the best use of them.”



“longer workshop, or make it a few sessions, please.”



“online sharing was bad in delivering the voice.”



“Cannot think of anything in particular, would have just liked to hear more about the DC Arabic Teachers Council, who organizes it, its activities and how to get involved.”

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The food was not the best. Also water is essential, not everyone drinks soda.

# Concluding discussion

Challenges faced in TAFL

Progress and improvements

Role of DC-ATC and DEIA-Enhanced CoP

Pedagogical gaps, social dynamics, professional deficiencies

A more inclusive and interconnected Arabic language education ecosystem.

My personal experience





“Thank you for organizing this event and connecting us over our shared love of the Arabic language.”

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# لا تلمني في هواها

لا تلمني في هواها... أنا لا أهوى سواها  
لست وحدي أفنديها ... كلنا اليوم فداها  
نزلت في كل نفس ... وتمشّت في دماها  
فبها الأم تغنّت ... وبها الوالد فاها  
وبها الفن تجلى ... وبها العلم تباها  
كلما مرّ زمان ... زادها مجدا وجاها  
لغة الأجداد هذي ... رفع الله لواها  
فأعيدوا يا بنيها ... نهضة تحيي رجاها  
لم يمت شعب تفانى ... في هواها واصطفاها

الشاعر حليم بن إبراهيم جريس نمّوس (1888-1957)

# Connect with Us: Stay Engaged

- QFI
- Let's stay connected!
- Arabic-Network-NA
- Ideas for workshops/professional development
- [rahmounik@vcu.edu](mailto:rahmounik@vcu.edu)



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