

Newsletter, January 10, 2017

American Association of Teachers of Arabic



Hello from the Executive Director,

On behalf of members of the Executive Board, I would like to share with you the activities that took place in 2016.

Welcome and Greetings

First and foremost, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new members who joined AATA recently and wish AATA's members a productive and successful year 2017 in both personal and professional endeavors.

Thank You Note

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the panelists who participated in AATA's Annual Meeting Panel as well as those who participated in two of AATA's sponsored panels at the MESA, November 2016 annual meeting in, Boston, Massachusetts . It is worthy to mention that more than half of the participants gave their presentations in Arabic.

These were the panel topics:

- 1) Arabic Foreign Language Pedagogy: Current and Innovative Techniqu*
- 2) Arabic Study Abroad in Comparative Contexts: Towards an Integrated Approach.*
- 3) Variation and Change in Modern Written Arabic.*

I would also like to express my appreciation to the chairs and the discussants from each panel : Ahmed Ferhadi, Brahim Chakrani, and Zeinab Taha respectively. For those who are interested in obtaining more information about the panels and panelists, please visit this [link for archived newsletters](#).

Last but not least, I would also like to express my gratitude to outgoing President, Mohammad Alhawary, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, for his commendable service to AATA, and we are pleased to have his continued service on Board both as the Past President and Editor of Al-'Arabiyya.

AATA is delighted to announce that Ahmed Ferhadi, New York University, accepted to serve as the new President of our Association for the next two year. We look forward to his leadership and collaboration.





AATA also thanks the three outgoing members of the Executive Board. These are Steven Blackburn, Hartford Theological Seminary, Ghassan Husseinali, George Mason University, and Abderrahmane Zouhir, Wayne State University. We look forward to their continued support for AATA.

The AATA Executive Board was pleased to confer the Lifetime Achievement Award for 2016 to Mahdi Alosh, at the end of its Business Meeting. The speech recognizing his dedicated service in the teaching of Arabic was given by a former student, Allen Clark, now Associate Professor, The University of Mississippi.

To reiterate, AATA can sponsor two other panels at MESA in addition to its Annual Meeting Panel. Proposals for these AATA sponsored panels must be approved by the AATA Executive Board before they are submitted to MESA. Those of you who are interested in submitting proposals for this forthcoming MESA meeting, November 2017, please contact Ahmed Ferhadi. The deadline for submission is 15 February, 2017.

Nomination Committee

The formation of this committee was completed in November 2016. Its members, in alphabetical order, comprised Mohammad Alhawary, Gergana Atanassova, Dris Soulaïmani, and Mbarek Sryfi. The purpose of this committee is to nominate six individuals who have been AATA members for the last three consecutive years, after which three on this list will be selected by AATA's general membership to replace the outgoing three members listed above.

The Nominees

In alphabetical order, these are their names and biographies.

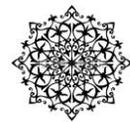
- 1. Mahmoud Amer, Ph.D** is an associate professor of Applied Linguistics at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. He has been teaching Arabic in the United States since 2002, and has most recently established a strong Arabic program, and a minor in Arabic at West Chester. Despite budget cuts and declining funding, he managed to expand the program, and hire additional faculty to teach. He earned his M.A. from the University of Toledo, and his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. His research interests include an active agenda in technology in language teaching and learning, language learning analytics, mobile applications for learning Arabic, and second language acquisition. Dr. Amer is an Adobe® Certified Expert®, a CompTIA®?? Certified Technical Trainer (CTT++), and has extensive expertise and special interest in leveraging emerging technology (mobile devices and wearables?) in language learning. Dr. Amer published peer-reviewed articles, most recently in the CALICO journal. He has also

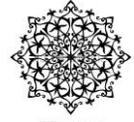




authored courseware and several award-winning programs, including a mobile app and an in-house computer program to support his students of Arabic. A proud member of AATA, Dr. Amer is committed to teaching Arabic language and culture, and insists on student participation in activities that enhance and deepen their appreciation of Arabic culture, inviting and driving students to cultural events, including a trip to attend a performance by Marcel Khalifa. If elected, he would focus on much needed outreach and collaboration between members of our profession, and on helping promote both AATA and the teaching of Arabic in K-12 settings and beyond.

2. Mahmoud Azaz, Ph.D *is an Assistant Professor of Arabic Language and Linguistics at the School of Middle Eastern and North African Studies at the University of Arizona. He holds a Ph.D. with Distinction in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT) from the University of Arizona. Also, he earned an MA in SLAT from the University of Arizona and an MA with Distinction in Applied Linguistics from Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt. Since 2013, Dr. Azaz has been a key member in the Arizona Arabic Flagship Program, where he acted as Assistant to the Flagship Program Director. Currently, he serves as Coordinator of Elementary Arabic. Before that, he taught advanced Arabic at California State University in Chico where he was a Fulbright Foreign Teaching Assistant. He also taught linguistics at Cairo University and Ain Shams University in Egypt. Dr. Azaz has published articles on Arabic second language acquisition, Arabic pedagogy, and Arabic sociolinguistics. Articles by Dr. Azaz are forthcoming in Spring 2017 in the Foreign Language Annals (Wiley-Blackwell), the International Journal of Applied Linguistics (Wiley-Blackwell, Editor ??), and Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism (John Benjamins). Other articles by Dr. Azaz came out in Al-‘Arabiyya and the Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages. Dr. Azaz has been dedicated to developing instructional materials for different levels of Arabic. For example, in 2012-2014 he served as Arabic Language Tagger at the Berkeley Language Center where he clipped and tagged Arabic movies in MSA and in colloquial Arabic (Egyptian and Levantine) for instructional purposes. In 2013, he was awarded the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award from the University of Arizona and the Top Proposal Award from the Second Language Research Forum (SLRF). He is a certified Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) tester of Arabic by ACTFL and a professional bidirectional translator (Arabic-English). His most recent book on translation into Arabic is Anthony Gorman’s *Historians, State and Politics in Twentieth Century Egypt: Contesting the Nation* (Routledge). It came out in 2015 by the National Council for Translation in Egypt. He is currently translating into Arabic Yasir Suleiman’s *The Arabic Language and National Identity*, to be published by (Georgetown University Press). Dr. Azaz received two research grants from the*

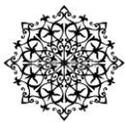


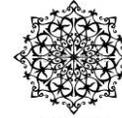
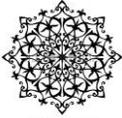


University of Arizona to examine the acquisition of Arabic sentence structure and Arabic language planning in Egypt. His underlying career goal is to contribute to maintaining Arabic data-driven research and to bridge the gap between Arabic SLA (Second Language Acquisition) theory and Arabic pedagogy.

- 3. Abdulkareem Said Ramadan, Ph.D** *is an Assistant Professor at Gettysburg College. He earned his Ph.D. in Arabic and Applied Linguistics at the University of Damascus in Syria. His dissertation dealt with the question of language proficiency among students studying Arabic as a foreign language, examining the sources and aspects of Arabic language proficiency as well as methods of measuring and improving proficiency. He also earned an M.A. in Arabic Syntax and Morphology and a B.A. in Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Damascus. Abdulkareem has taught Arabic at all levels in addition to many content courses such as: Teaching Arabic as a Second Language, Advanced Arabic Conversation and Composition, Arabic Grammar and Composition, Introduction to Arab Culture, and Arab Films. He has published research on testing language proficiency, Arabic literary criticism, language assessment, language proficiency, and language acquisition. He also published his textbook *Abjad Hawaz for Beginners* at The Arabic Language Centre, University of Damascus. Abdulkareem has been teaching at The Arabic Language School in Middlebury College, every summer since 2006. In previous years, he taught Arabic at the French Institute in Damascus and was the coordinator of the Arabic program at the Arabic Language Center at the University of Damascus, where he taught Arabic as a Second Language. Prior to joining Gettysburg College, he taught at Washington University in St. Louis and at the University of Virginia, where he coordinated the Arabic program. Abdulkareem is a member of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA), and the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL).*

- 4. Paul Roohnik, Ph.D** *(“Abu Sammy”) is a full Professor of Arabic at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA. He earned his MA in TESOL at the Columbia University Teachers’ College, and a Ph.D. in Arabic and Linguistics at Georgetown University. He teaches intermediate and advanced level courses in MSA. In the classroom, he uses only authentic materials such as editorials, analytical pieces, poems, and short stories, as well as audio clips of debates and panel discussions. He has presented and/or published 24 papers on subjects ranging from “1001 Grammar Lessons from Nizar Qabbani” to the chapter on “Arabic and Muslim Family Names” in *The Dictionary of American Family Names*, to “Generation and Systematicity in Arabic Machine*



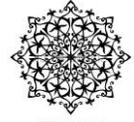


Translation: The Lexical-Functional Grammar(LFG) Experience”. He founded and moderated ITISALAT: IT IS Arabic Language And Technology -- The First Internet Forum on Arabic Computing. A long-time member of the American Translators Association, certified for Arabic, he recently translated a novel – *sayd al-batt al-barriy* – by the Iraqi author, Mahmoud Sa’eed. He has lived and worked in Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan, and visited Syria and Morocco. Abu Sammy believes Arabic instructors must determine what’s holding a student back in order to propel him/her forward. It helps when the instructor himself or herself has confronted the twists, turns, bumps, and pitfalls on the rugged road to Arabic mastery. His students typically comment that it wasn’t until they “slogged through the grammatical mud” with Abu Sammy that they finally got a handle on the mechanics of Arabic morphology and syntax.

5. **Dris Soulaymani, Ph.D** is an Assistant Professor of Arabic at New York University Abu Dhabi (NYU AD) and affiliated faculty at the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at NYU New York University, New York. He earned his M.A. in Linguistics from Wayne State University and his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from UCLA, where he was also appointed as lecturer and coordinator of the Arabic program. Dris has extensive experience in the field of Arabic language instruction, teaching Arabic at Middlebury College, Brown University, and UCLA, where he was awarded the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award. His teaching includes courses on Arabic language and culture, Arabic dialectology, Classical Arabic, and Arabic language pedagogy. In addition to Arabic teaching and testing, Dris’s research interests center on the fields of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. He focuses on the language situation in the Maghrib, including issues of language, script, and identity. He has published on language ideologies, orthographies, and language standardization in journals such as *Writing Systems Research* and *The Journal of North African Studies*. His book project, entitled “*Imagining Modern Morocco: Language, Script and Society*,” analyzes the ideological debates surrounding language interaction. Additionally, Dris has recently completed other projects, including a book chapter on the discursive strategies in Arabic L2 writing, and an article on discourse analysis of stance in Arabic storytelling. Drawing on theories of language ideologies and discourse analysis, his work emphasizes the role of language as a multimodal complex, which includes not only structure but also different semiotic fields such as talk, gesture, prosody, and other cultural resources.

6. **Katrien Vanpee, Ph.D** is Director of the Arabic Language Program at the University of Minnesota, where she teaches Arabic language and poetry. She holds a Ph.D. in Arabic from Georgetown University, where she focused on Arabic literature and linguistics, and





*M.A. degrees in Arabic & Islamic Studies from Georgetown and the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium. Prior to her position at the University of Minnesota, she taught Arabic at Georgetown University, Gettysburg College, and the Middlebury Summer Arabic School. Her research interests include program management, curriculum and materials design, teacher training, language learning strategies, test anxiety, and teaching literature in the Arabic language classroom. She has presented her work in both TAFL and Arabic literature at conferences and workshops in the United States and abroad. She edited *Laa Mafarr: Leermethode Arabisch* (Van Mol, Vanpee and Marogy, 2007), a three-volume Arabic textbook for Dutch speakers. Her current research involves differentiated instruction and reflective learning projects in the Arabic language classroom, and, in literature, the nabaī poetry competition *Shā'ir al-Milyūn*.*

Ballot Casting

Following your examination of the above biographies of the nominees, please

- 1) Vote for **ONLY THREE** members on the slate which AATA will provide you*
- 2) provide your name and e-mail address for membership authentication*
- 3) E-mail your ballot at this address **amana@stedwards.edu** no later than **January 20, 2017 at midnight**, and the names of the **three with the most votes** will be announced shortly thereafter **and they will serve on the Executive Board beginning this year.***

Important Announcements

The first is that AATA is aiming at designing a more interactive website for its homepage. with a visually aesthetic element. We are thankful to Brahim Chakrani , Michigan State University, and committee members for volunteering to undergo this transformation. We hope that it will be uploaded by April 2017.

The second is that the Translation Contest will take effect this year after a long hiatus. The announcement entailing procedures and details (eligible participants, submission date, award amount) will be circulated to the members and uploaded on AATA's homepage as soon as matters are finalized.

The third is that Professor Ernest McCarus had the largest number of students in a poster entitled "An Intellectual Genealogy of Middle Eastern Studies." Contact Charles Joukhdar cdj006@gmail.com if interested in obtaining a picture of this poster.





Assistance Needed

AATA is in dire need of the following:

- 1) ***Recruiting members*** to join AATA. We kindly recommend each one of you, a current member, to persuade a non-member in the field of teaching Arabic, Arabic Linguistics and Literature, to become one. Membership will increase AATA's budget and help it to cover its expenses in order to become more active in its services to its members. Membership dues can be sent to my address 2505 Biggs Drive, Austin, TX ,78741 or to our Business Office, Robert Ranieri, Prime Management Services,3416 Primm Ln, Birmingham, AL 35216
- 2) ***Receiving information*** from members to include in the next Newsletter. For example, AATA would welcome information on individual awards and grants, faculty and graduate students' publications, success stories related to the teaching and learning of Arabic, students' travel and study abroad experiences, views and comments on attended workshops and conferences, information on retirees and on fellow members who passed away as well as event announcements, etc.

Aman Attieh

