heritage arabic eBook

Center for Integrated Language Communities
The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Alexander Elinson, HAeB Project Coordinator,
aelinson@hunter.cuny.edu

Stephanie Love, Research Assistant,
slove@gradcenter.cuny.edu

What?

- A survey of existing classroom materials and scholarly work on Arabic heritage learners
- Development and piloting of materials in four-year and community college classrooms
- An electronic book that will be freely available on the CILC website
  - Materials will:
    - connect home and classroom language and literacy practices;
    - utilize technology and community-based resources;
    - help educators critically discuss and better valorize the unique language and literacy practices of heritage and second-generation bilingual speakers;
    - address the complex sociolinguistic situation of the Arabic-speaking world in the classroom.

Why?

- To develop pedagogical strategies and materials supporting heritage learners, who have different learning needs and motivations than L2 learners, as well as greater opportunities to use the language outside the classroom
- To address the recent incorporation of vernacular Arabic into university curriculum, which has resulted in materials that better mirror the linguistic reality of the Arab world, but often doesn't consider the needs of heritage learners
- To take advantage of current research that describes the linguistic characteristics of heritage Arabic speakers in the US, and to take its findings to critically link linguistic and sociolinguistic studies with studies of best practices in the university heritage classroom

How?

- Utilizing the pedagogical and theoretical frameworks of New Literacy Studies/ethnographic approach to literacy and Project-Based Language Learning (PBLL)
- Consultation with experts in the field, as well as with instructors of heritage Arabic at four-year and community colleges

Online Resources

- Annotated bibliography with key points for teachers and researchers interested in heritage Arabic teaching and learning

Forthcoming Resources

- Texts, videos, sample testing materials, and activities freely available to instructors

- Open access, classroom-piloted materials that work alongside popular Arabic as a foreign language textbooks (such as *Al-Kitaab Fii Ta'allum Al-Arabiyya*, *Ahlan wa-Sahlan*, and others)

- Project-based learning activities that take advantage of "digital affordances," that is, the ways that technology and social media can help to bridge the gap between classroom, community, and home language practices

- Ideas for teaching resulting from focus groups with heritage Arabic language instructors