

Zeinab A. Taha

Department of Applied Linguistics
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
American University in Cairo zeintaha@aucegypt.edu

Education

1995	Ph.D. in Arabic Linguistics, Georgetown University.
1981	M.A. in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language, American University in Cairo.
1978	BA in Political Science, American University in Cairo

Employment

2025-Present	Professor of Applied Linguistics (on phased retirement)
2024-2025	Professor and Chair of Applied Linguistics Department and Educational Studies Department
2021-2024	Professor of Linguistics and Director of MA TAFL
2019-2021	Interim Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences
2020	Professor of TAFL, Department of Applied Linguistics
2012-2019	Associate Professor of TAFL, Department of Applied Linguistics
2017-2018	Director and Academic Advisor of the TAFL Program

2013	Joined Applied Linguistics
2012	Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure
2006-2012	Assistant Professor Of TAFL
2006-2013	Director of the ALI (Arabic Language Institute) and Co-Director of CASA (Center of Arabic Studies Abroad)
2006	Appointed as Assistant Professor of Linguistics
2003-2006	CASA Executive Director
1997-1999	CASA Executive Director
1995	Summer Program Coordinator, ALI
1990-1991	Arabic Lecturer, Georgetown University
1985-1994	Summer Arabic Language Instructor, Middlebury College, Vermont
1985-1986	Arabic Language Teacher, Cairo American College (CAC)
1981-2005	Full time Arabic language Instructor, ALI
1987-1981.	Editorial Assistant and Translator, New York Times, Cairo Bureau

Publications

Authored Books

Development of Arab Linguistic Thought: From Sibawayhi to Al- Jurjani.
Al Hay'a Al Misriyya Lil Kitab. (In Arabic, Forthcoming) January 2020.

Development of Arab Grammatical Thought from the 2nd to the 4th
century of Hijra, (In Arabic) Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 2011.

Edited Books

Wahba, Kassem, Taha, Zeinab, Gioflo, Maneula Teaching and Learning
Arabic Grammar: Theory, Practice and Research, Routledge, 2022.

Revisiting Levels of Contemporary Arabic in Egypt. American University
Press, March 2020.

Wahba, Kassem M., England, Liz, Taha, Zeinab A (Eds) Handbook for
Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century. Volume II, Routledge, 2017.

Wahba, Kassem M., Taha, Zeinab A., and England, Liz (Eds.) Handbook for
Arabic Language Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century, USA:
Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers: 2006.

Book Chapters

“Metaphor in Arab Political Discourse: Arab Leaders Speeches at Trying
Times”. Handbook of Arabic Sociolinguistics. Ed. Ahmed Ech-Charfi.
Springer Handbooks in Languages and Linguistics (SHLL). Forthcoming,
2027.

“Sematic Categorization in Early Arabic Grammar: Ibn Jinni’s Khasa’is”.
Forthcoming 2027 by Brill series on Foundations of Arabic Linguistics
(FAL)

“Syntactic Variation in Modern Written Arabic”, in Handbook for Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century. Volume II. Kassem Wahba (et. al), Routledge, 2017. pp 79-89.

“Verb Classification in Arab Grammatical Tradition: From Sibawayhi to alJurjānī”, in The Foundations of Arabic Linguistics III, Versteegh, Kees (Ed.), Brill 2017. pp 229-244.

“Toward Pragmatic Competency in Arabic”. In Handbook for Arabic Language Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century, Wahba, Kassem M., Taha, Zeinab A., and England, Liz (Eds.) Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers: 2006, pp. 353-361.

“Language of the Media” (In Arabic). In Abhaath lughawiyya wa tarbawiyya, Elgibali, Alaa and Badawi, El Said (Ed.). Cairo: 2002, AUC Press, pp. 115- 124.

“Semantic Valence in Tenth-Century Arabic Grammar: The Case of ibn AsSarraj’s Usuul Fil NaHw”, in Multiple Perspectives on the Historical Dimensions of Language, Jankowsky, Kurt R. (Ed.), Munster: 1996. Nodus Publikationen, pp.281-289.

Articles in Refereed Journals

“Metaphor in Arab Political and War Discourse”. Special issue of the journal *Testo a Fronte*, By: Olschki publisher, Florence. Ed. Letizia Lombezzi. Forthcoming, December 2026.

“Cohesion in Arabic Grammar: The Concept of ‘iltibaas in Sibawayhi’s Kitab”. JALT: November 2019, Vol 17, pp. 1-14.

“Educated Spoken Arabic: How could it help in redefining ACTFL guidelines?”, Al- Arabiyya. AATA: 2008. Vol. 40-41, pp. 104-114.

"The Grammar Controversy: What to teach and Why?". In the Teaching of Arabic as a Foreign Language: Issues and Directions, ATAA: 1995, pp.175-183.

El Gibali, Alaa and Taha, Zeinab A. "Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language: Challenges of the Nineties". In the Teaching of Arabic as a Foreign Language, ATAA: 1995, pp.79 - 100.

Encyclopedia Lemmas

"*Ta'addii*", in Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics, Kees Versteegh, ed. Brill: 2009. Vol. IV, pp.410-416.

"*Ma'f'uul*", in Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics, Kees Versteegh, ed. Brill:2006. Vol. III, pp. 100-106.

Book Reviews

"Arabic in Conflict: A study in ideology, anxiety and terrorism" By Suleiman, Yasir. 2023. In Journal Of Arabic Sociolinguistics: 2024. Vol 2, pp.241-246.

"The Arabic Lexicographical Tradition" By Ramzi Baalabaki, Brill 2013. In the Journal of Arabic Language Tradition (JALT):2015. Vol 13, pp. 62-66.

Conference Proceedings

"The term *Sila* in Early Arab Grammatical Theory: The Case of ibn AsSarrag". Proceedings of the colloquium on Arabic Lexicology and Lexicography. Budapest: 1993. pp. 232-244.

Work in Progress

Coediting a special volume of the Journal of Arabic Sociolinguistics.
Theme: Analyzing Arab Political Discourse (Edinburgh University Press)
Expected to appear in 2028.

Presentations

Keynote Speeches

“Lexical and Morpho-Syntactic Variation in Modern Written Arabic”.
Conference entitled Variation in the Teaching of Arabic: Grammar and
Lexicon. University of Milan, March 2023.

“CEF in the Changing Linguistic Reality of Arabic Language Use”. Keynote
speech at Mastering Arabic Variation conference. University of Genoa,
September, 2018.

“Addressing Reality: Challenges Facing AFL Teachers”. Keynote speech at
Symposium on Arabic Language Teaching. Leeds University, March, 2017.

“The Mother Language and the Primary Language: Linguistic Reality of the
Arab Speaking Countries”. Keynote speaker address, Conference on Future
of Arabic Language. Zayed University, Dubai. March 2016.

“The Effect of Media on Spoken Arabic”. Keynote speech at the Workshop
on Media and Language. University of Utah, 2007.

Conference Presentations:

"The Use of Metaphor in Arab Political Discourse". British Association of Teachers of Arabic (BATA) 5th annual conference, University of Warwick, England, June 2025.

"التداولية: بعدا لفهم اللغة ووسيلة لتعليمها للأجانب" (Pragmatics: A Dimension in Understanding Languages and an approach to teach foreign languages". The 8th Conference on Arabic Language and Culture. Catholic University of the Sacred Heart. Milan, May 2025.

"The Power of Language: Arab Leaders' Speeches at Trying Times". British Association of Teachers of Arabic (BATA) 4th annual conference, University of Al Maktoum, Scotland, June 2024.

"Preliminary Semantic Categorization in Ibn Jinni's Khasa'is". Foundations of Arabic Linguistics (FAL V), University of Rome, November 2022.

"Pragmatics in Ibn Jinni and Al-Jurjani's treatises". AUC Conference of Arabic language and Linguistics: Heritage and Innovation. American University in Cairo, December 2019.

"Formulaic Language and Pragmatic Competence". MESA, November 2017. "The Use of Pseudo-titles in Egyptian Newspapers". Conference on Sociolinguistics Perspectives, December 2016, American University in Cairo.

"Variation in Modern Written Arabic of the Media", MESA conference, November 2016.

"Syntactic Variation in Modern Written Arabic", Symposium on Modern Written Arabic. University of Aix-en-Provence, France. June 2015.

"The Verb in Arab Grammatical Treatises: Conformity and Contradictions", Foundations of Arabic Linguistics- FAL 3, October 2014.

"The Variety we teach: A realistic or an existentialist issue?", MESA, 2013.

“Teaching Arabic on Line”, MESA 2012.

“Sibawayhi’s Terminology: more on ‘iltibaas’ ” Cambridge University- 2010.

“Why Do We Need Spoken Corpora?”, MESA, 2008.

“Educated Spoken Arabic and the ACTFL Guidelines”, MESA, 2007.

“Beyond Main Ideas: Accuracy Revisited”. MESA, 2004.

“*Ta’diyy al-fi’l fil naHw al ‘Arabi ; min Sibawayhi ilaa ibn Al- Sarraaj*” (In Arabic). The Second International Conference on Language and Linguistics, The American University in Cairo, 2002.

“Transitivity in Early Arab Grammatical Theory”. MESA, 2000.

“Cohesion in Early Arabic Grammar: the concept of “iltibaas”. The International Conference on History of Linguistics, Oxford University, 1996.

“Social Meaning and Cultural Misconceptions,” MESA, 1995.

“The Category of Adjectives in Arabic Grammar”. The First International Linguistic Conference, the American University in Cairo, 1994.

“Government and Binding in Arab Grammatical Theory”. The Second Shaban Conference, Exeter University, U.K., 1994.

“Teaching Listening and Speaking”, CASA Workshop at the American University in Cairo, 1994.

“Important Terms of Early Arabic Grammar”, Workshop, Colloquium on Arabic Lexicology, Budapest, 1993.

“The Term *Silah* in Arabic Grammar: The Case of ibn Al-Sarraaj”, Colloquium on Arabic Lexicology, Budapest, 1993. - “Semantic Valency in 10th Century Arabic Grammatical Theory”, MESA 1993.

“Parts of Speech in Arabic Grammar” International Conference of Language Sciences (ICHOLS), Washington, D.C.,1993.

“Teaching the Listening Skill in Context” Workshop in Alexandria University, Faculty of Arts, Egypt, fall 1993.

“Towards Pragmatic Competence. The CASA Experience”, MESA, 1992.

“The Grammar Controversy: What to Teach and Why?” Symposium on Arabic Teaching Middlebury College School of Arabic, 1992.

“Teaching Listening Comprehension”, MESA 1989.

Lectures

“How could Language and Culture Enhance Communication”. Lecture at Effat University, Jeddah, March 2019.

“Addressing the Reality of Arabic Levels”. George Washington University, November 2017.

“Culture, Address Forms and Language Variation”. Harvard University, November 2016.

“Allaah, Allaah, Allaah: The Role of Context in Translation”. Lecture sponsored by the Center for Translation, American University in Cairo. October, 2015.

“Challenges in Teaching Contemporary Arabic” (In Arabic). Lecture at NYU Abu Dhabi, October 2015.

“Variation in Modern Written Arabic”. Mohamed V University, Rabat, Morocco. October 2015.

Workshop Presentations

“Best Practices on Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language”, Effat University, Jeddah. March 2019.

“Training the trainers: Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language”, Workshop at Al Akhawayn University - Ifrane, Morocco. September 2015.

“Teacher training workshop for TAFL”. Alexandria University, Faculty of Arts. December 2000.

Reviewer

Journal of Arabic sociolinguistics
International Journal of Arabic Linguistics
Georgetown University Press
Cambridge University Press
Journal of Arabic language Tradition
Routledge Press
American University in Cairo Press

Teaching

I. Arabic Language For Foreigners

The Arabic Language Institute

1981-2005

A) Center for Arabic Studies Abroad (CASA): Graduate US students at the Advance and Superior levels

Reading and vocabulary Building

Writing and grammar

Egyptian Colloquial Arabic

Listening and Note Taking

Women in Egypt

Mideaval texts

B) ALI Intensive Program: Undergraduate at different levels of Language Proficiency

Modern Standard Arabic

Egyptian Spoken Arabic

Media Arabic

Georgetown University, Arabic department 1987-1988, 1990-1992

Modern Standard Arabic to both graduate and undergraduate Arabic

Majors

Middlebury College, Summer School of Arabic: 1985-1994

US Graduate and Undergraduate Students (advanced and Intermediate levels)

Modern Standard Arabic

Media Arabic

II. Language Testing

Coordinated the Arabic Language Proficiency on-line Exam
for international students at the ALI

2008-2009

III. Arabic Linguistics

MA in TAFL, Applied Linguistics (AUC)

2005-Present

Advanced Syntax

History of Arabic Linguistics

Principles of Linguistics Analysis

Sociolinguistics

Language Variation and Change
Language and Culture
Language and Communication
Seminar on Challenges Facing AFL Teachers
Selected topics in TAFL

Undergraduate Courses (AUC)

Introduction to Linguistics
Language and Society

Jagiellonian University Poland Institute of Middle and Far East

April 4-27, 2019

- Spoken and Written Arabic in Egypt and its social dissemination in Egyptian society
- Variation in Modern Written Arabic and its Sociocultural Role in Arabic Society.

IV. Curricula and Co-Curricula Preparation

American University in Cairo:

- A) Preparation of materials for Arabic courses on:** 1987-1990
- Arab Media
 - Listening Comprehension
- B) Introduction of new TAFL courses**
- Language Variation and Change (graduate level) 2010
 - Language and Communication (graduate and undergraduate) 2018

Middlebury College:

- Preparation of materials for: 1992-1994
 - Reading Comprehension
 - Listening Comprehension
 - Speaking

- Translation of children story “Giving Tree” into Arabic
(Got permission from Publisher to use the story for teaching purposes)

University of Cornell:

Preparation of Arabic Textbook and DVD

2014-2018

Student Advising

MA TAFL, American University in Cairo

1996-Present

TAFL Students’ academic advising

TAFL Thesis supervision (list attached)

Thesis committee membership

Participation in MA Comprehensive Examination

Thesis Seminar

2014, 2016-2018

(Facilitated discussion among students writing theses in biweekly meetings throughout the academic year)

External Dissertation Committee Membership

Rima Kanawati,

“اعتقادات الطالب ومواقفهم تجاه اللغة العربية في الجامعة الأميركية وفي بيروت وفي الجامعة اللبنانية”

American University of Beirut, 2022.

Giorgia Ferrari,

“Teaching and Learning Arabic Variation through Vocabulary”. University of Exeter , 2017

Pakinam Sheeha,

“Learning Arabic Phonology and Issues of TAFL”. University of Alexandria, 2016

Service

Academic/Professional Service

A) At AUC Level

Member/Chair of faculty Third year Review committee

Member/Chair of Faculty search committee

CLT Faculty Associate 2017-2018

Member of P&T committee at the School level 2005-2012, 2017, 2024

Member of faculty search committee (ARIC) 2009, 2013, 2017

HUSS representative in Admissions Committee 2003-2013

HUSS At large representative in the Senate 2001-2002

Chair of Senate Faculty Affairs Committee 2014

Trip to initiate collaboration in TAFL degrees, March 2016

University of Zayed, Dubai

Trip to initiate collaboration with Effat University in Jeddah, June 2010

Saudi Arabia

Trip to promote the Arabic language programs at AUC, October 2005

University of Du Paul, Chicago

B) At Department Level

Member of the Senate 1994-1998, 2013-2015

Member of Research and Grants Committee 2013-2018, 2022-2024

Chair, Academic Affairs Committee 2016-2018, 2022-2024

C) External P&T Cases

External reviewer for Tenure and Promotion case for:

University of Qatar 2023

The University of Sharjah 2019, 2024

Arizona University 2018

Program Review

Virginia-Yarmouk summer program, Jordan 2001, 2013
(Two reviews in which I conducted class visits, meetings with program instructors and administrators and students. Submitted a 15-page report of description and evaluation of the program.)

Zayed University curricula reviewer, Dubai 2010, 2012
(Two reviews in which I conducted a needs analysis and wrote a proposal for the establishment of a center to teach Arabic to non-native speakers, and in the second I evaluated the program and submitted a set of recommendations for material development and course offerings.)

Effat College's Arabic programs, Saudi Arabia 2009
(I met with teachers and administrators of the program and submitted a report with the needed recommendation to establish a program to teach Arabic to heritage students residing in Saudi Arabia)

Conference Organization (at AUC)

Joint AUC-Texas University on Arabic Language Teaching. 2012
Symposium on Arabic Sociolinguistics 2013
Joined AUC- Jagiellonian Polish University on Language Pedagogy 2017

AUC Centennial Conference on Arabic language and Linguistics 2019

AUC-UNESCO Conference on Empowering the Teaching of Arabic 2023

AUC Biennial International Conference on "Teaching and Learning Arabic K-16: Adjusting to New Realities" 2023

Media Appearance/Contribution:

- Al Hayat Newspaper (Abou Dhabi) October 2024
- Hiwar Al Thaqafiyya, Program Guest. Nile Culture TV. June, 2017
- 'Aalim Wafikra, Program Guest. Nile Culture TV. May, 2013

Professional Development

Academic Impressions: Inclusive Leadership: Understand Your
Intersecting Identities to Better Serve Others. January 2021

Academic Impressions: Measuring Academic Program Cost and
Demand to Improve Resource Allocation. Fall 2020

Developing Skills for Public Speaking. Customized course, Cairo
Toastmaster. Fall 2019

Participated in Blended-Learning Workshops, CLT 2019

Participated in building linguistic corpus workshop,
University of Chicago. 2008

Participated in ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview workshop, 2006

Academic Affiliations

American Association for Teachers of Arabic (AATA)

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Middle East Studies Association (MESA)

European Network of Teachers of Arabic (ENTA)

Awards

AUC Performance Merit, August 2018
Erasmus Teaching Mobility Award Spring, 2017

CASA Life-time Service Award	2013
AUC 25Years Teaching Award	2006
AUC President's Distinguished Service Award	2004