Editor-in-Chief's Introduction

I am pleased to see that the tremendous efforts made by the founding members of Arab *Journal of Applied Linguistics* have come to fruition. I am honoured and privileged to introduce this *Inaugural Issue* to all colleagues who have accepted to be on the Editorial Board of the journal, to applied linguists in the Arab world and beyond, and to all those interested in language planning, learning, and teaching. The *Arab Journal of Applied Linguistics* is all yours; it offers you open online access to its content and seeks to involve you in taking part in the global exchange and development of knowledge in your area of specialism.

Most of the contributors to this issue focused on English language teaching in different institutions and countries of the Arab world. They have shown that (i) teachers provide their students with appropriate feedback and believe in its value; (ii) teachers welcome assessment because they consider it essential for developing their teaching skills; and (iii) teachers need more in-service training, as there appears to be a mismatch between their perception of their linguistic and pedagogical capacities and their performance.

One paper raised issues related to diglossia and bilingual education. In my opinion, diglossia in the Arab world is subsiding following the rapid advances in information technology, unprecedented people mobility, and the gradual falling rate of illiteracy in the Arab world. Furthermore, local varieties, which are not impervious to one another, or to other languages, contribute to the enrichment of Modern Standard Arabic and, most importantly, benefit from it.

I hope that future contributions explore language and literacy in the Arab world and beyond through empirical studies, and less so through insider-knows-it papers. I invite researchers to study the teaching and acquisition of Modern Standard Arabic and its use at the academic level and in the job market, and to relate their findings to language policy and language planning. The contributions of information technology to the field are impressive and valuable, but they should not make us forget that the teaching and acquisition of languages are for exchanging *information* and other routine *illocutionary speech acts*, but more importantly, they are for accessing *knowledge* with the ultimate aim of contributing to it.

As Editor-in-chief of this Journal, I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues and friends: Professor Abdessatar Mahfoudhi, Editor of this Inaugural Issue and Dr Sahbi Hidri, Manager of the Journal. They have worked relentlessly over the last year or so. I would also wish to extend my thanks to all our colleagues who evaluated the typescripts submitted to the Editorial Board. They were firm, but fair.

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