

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF PERSIAN



IN THIS ISSUE

♦ Executive Board Notes ♦ Welcoming the New Executive Board (2022-2024) ♦ Job Listings 2020-2022 ♦ Member Publications ♦ 2021 AATP Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony-Dr. Mohammad Reza Ghanoonparvar. ♦ Institutional membership appreciation ♦ AATP Webinars and Roundtables at MESA: "Sharing the Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Online Teaching Experience." ♦ Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology ♦ Members can access webinars' recordings on AATP website www.aatpersian.com ♦

Dear Colleagues,

It has been an honor to serve you over the last two years as President of AATP. As we approach the end of my term, I want to thank our Executive Board and Officers for their continual support. I am proud of the Association's progress over the past two years, particularly in providing more opportunities for meaningful engagement to our members. In a world that has grown more uncertain, I am grateful for our wonderful group of educators and scholars, who continue to guide the community through a new and increasingly complex landscape.



I would like to acknowledge the valuable efforts and contributions of our Executive Secretary, Marjan Seirafi-Pour and our Treasurer, Alyeh Mehin, with whom I had the privilege of working closely. My endless gratitude to our past Presidents and executive officers for your indispensable guidance. A special thank you to Kourosh Beigpour, Graphic Designer of the University of California, Irvine, and Dr. Peyman Nojournian of the University of Southern California for designing our webinars' fliers.

Finally, thank you, our members, for your continued engagement and enthusiasm in our professional community and for your incredible support and collaboration.

Our association continues to grow in exciting, inclusive, and innovative directions, and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to play a role in that.

Best wishes to our incoming Executive Board for an exciting year ahead.

Sincerely,

Soheila Kian
AATP President (2020-2022)
University of California, Irvine

TREASURER

Now that my term as Treasurer is coming to an end, I would like to thank all of you for your support. I would like to thank our members for actively supporting the organization and making all our efforts meaningful, especially during these challenging times.

As the Covid 19 pandemic transformed the structure of so many activities, the idea of AATP lecture and webinar series was born after the motto, “Socially Together, Physically Apart”: since our members have always been “physically apart” and scattered all around the world, we adopted the pandemic potential of zoom meetings to be “socially together”. I feel lucky to have had a part in organizing our talks and panels to pursue our mission of sharing knowledge and collaboration. I feel privileged to have been part of this executive board with Dr. Soheila Kian and Ms. Marjan Seirafi-Pour. I learned a lot from both.

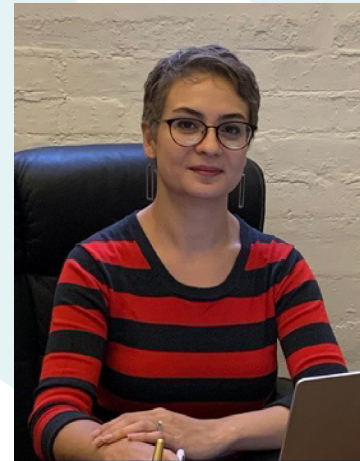
The start of our term coincided the Covid 19 Pandemic lockdown, followed by long waiting times for phone calls on banking services and challenging communications for filing taxes. I would like to thank our previous Treasurer, Dr. Michelle Quay and our executive officer Dr. Farimah Sedigh-Mostowfi and her husband Mr. Touraj Mostowfi for their support. I will be more than happy to continue the tradition and help AATP’s future treasurers to pass such hurdles more smoothly. Thank you.

Alyeh Mehin

PhD Candidate

School of Middle Eastern and North African Studies

University of Arizona



EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

As our members know, the last two years have been the most active years for AATP. When the pandemic forced all of us to stay away from our students and colleagues, the AATP webinar series brought us together and provided us the opportunity to share our challenges, struggles and solutions of online teaching. In 2020, we also took on the challenging task of updating AATP bylaws which will certainly help the organization to run smoother and provide its membership more clarity.

Serving as the Executive Secretary for AATP for the last three years has strengthened my belief that having this organization is essential for the success and advancement of teaching Persian language. I hope with the support of our members AATP can become stronger and have a wider reach. I wish the new Executive Board boundless success.

Sincerely,

Marjan Seirafi-Pour (Executive Secretary, 2019-2022)
Farzaneh Family Center for Iranian and Persian Gulf Studies
University of Oklahoma



NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS 2022

It is with great pleasure AATP Executive Board would like to welcome President-Elect Nahal Akbari, Executive Secretary-Elect Sahba Shayani, and Treasurer-Elect Narges Nematollahi.

We are confident that the contributions of the new Executive Board members will help immensely in the growth and success of our association and will fulfill AATP's mission.



Nahal Akbari, AATP President-Elect
Assistant Clinical Professor, University of Maryland



Sahba Shayani, AATP Executive Secretary-Elect
Senior Lecturer in Persian, The Oriental Institute, University of Oxford



Narges Nematollahi, AATP Treasurer-Elect
Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Assistant Professor of Persian Language, University of Arizona

MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS 2020-2022

Mirsharifi, Fatemeh. (2019). *A Comparative Study of Learners' Attitudes Toward Foreign Language Communities*. Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages, 39-1 ,26

A Comparative Study of Learners' Attitudes Toward Foreign Language Communities

Fatemeh Mirsharifi
University of California, Berkeley

Abstract

This mixed-methods study investigated the attitudes of American college learners of "strategic" less commonly taught languages, specifically Arabic and Persian as well as of local heritage languages, i.e., Scandinavian languages (Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish) toward foreign language communities, specifically native speakers. A total of 66 students (29 learners of Arabic, 16 learners of Persian, and 21 learners of Scandinavian languages) participated in the study. Results revealed that all learner groups held positive attitudes toward native speakers of their respective foreign language, although learners of Persian were comparatively less familiar with Persian native speakers and require help to generate an ideal L2 Self in terms of the target language community. Also, all learner groups tended to reproduce common discourses when they described particular qualities of the native speakers, which indicated a lack of complexity and depth in their perceptions and a need for real-life interactions with target language communities.

JNCOLCTL

VOL.26

Mirsharifi, Fatemeh. 2019. *A Comparative Study of Learners' Attitudes Toward Foreign Language Communities*. JNCOLCTL Volume 26 2019.

The Eight Books

A Complete English Translation

By
Sohrab Sepehri

Translated by
Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi and Prashant Keshavnurthy

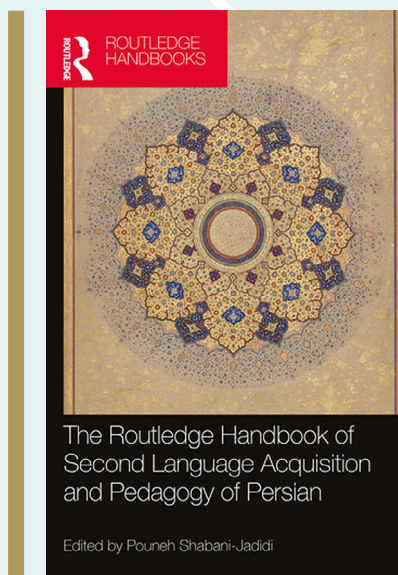
BRILL

Shabani-Jadidi, Pouneh. 2022. *The Eight Books: A Complete English Translation*. Leiden: Brill.

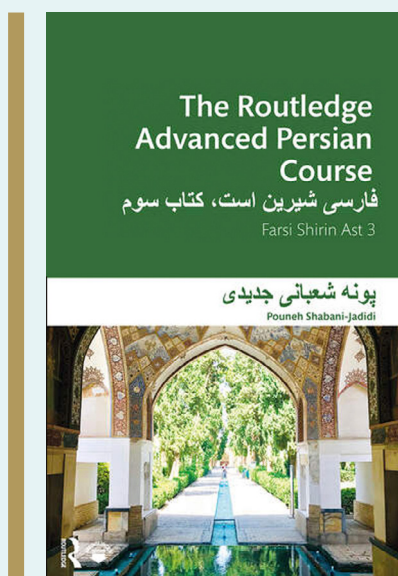
(Bilingual Persian-English translation for students of Advanced Persian)

MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS

2020-2022



Shabani-Jadidi, Pounesh. 2020. "Second Language Morphology: Case of Idiomatic Expressions," in Pounesh Shabani-Jadidi (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian*. London & New York: Routledge.



Shabani-Jadidi, Pounesh. 2020. *The Routledge Advanced Persian Course: Farsi Shirin Ast III*. London & New York: Routledge. Taylor and Francis Group.

JOB LISTINGS 2020-2022

- ♦ University of Wisconsin-Madison, APTLI Language Instructor, Summer 2020
- ♦ Arizona State University, Summer Intensive Persian, Summer 2020
- ♦ University of Maryland, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies, Fall 2020
- ♦ University of Chicago, Humanities Division, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, Fall 2020
- ♦ University of British Columbia, Department of Asian Studies, December 2021



2021 AATP LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CEREMONY WAS HELD VIRTUALLY IN HONOR OF DR. MOHAMMAD REZA GHANOONPARVAR.

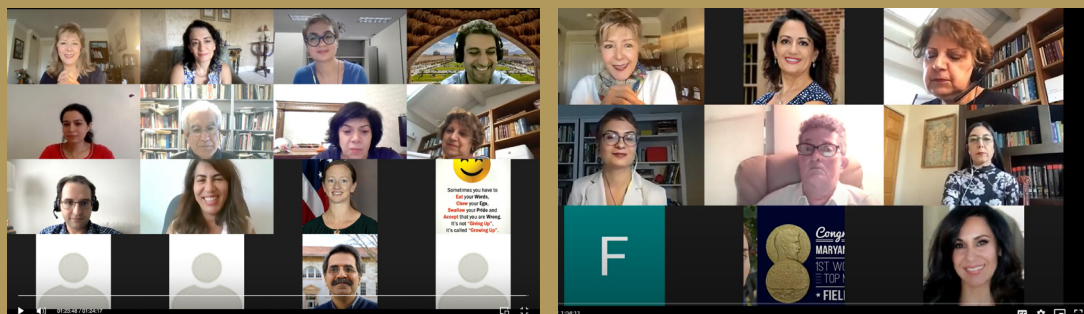
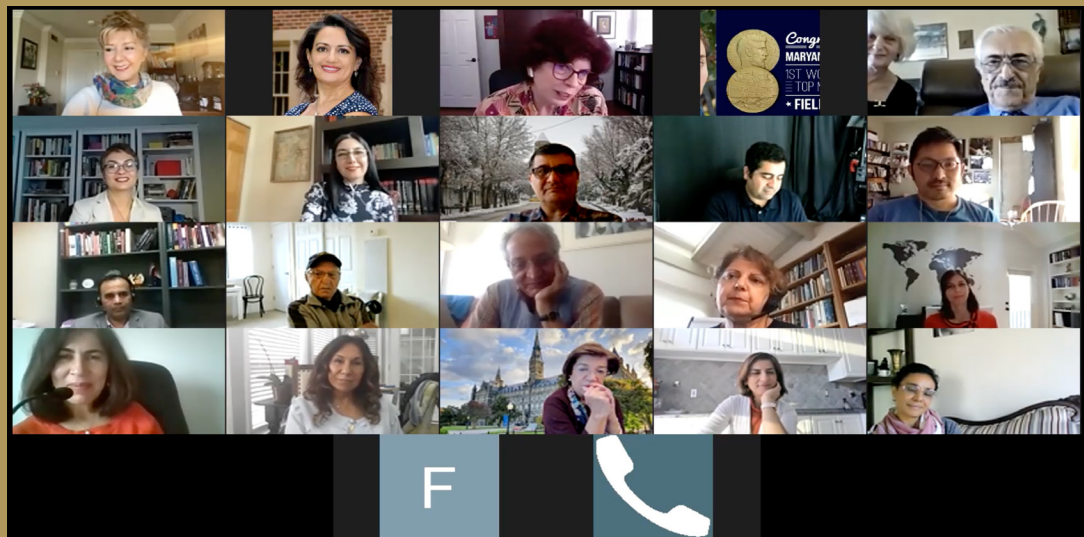
Dr. M.R. Ghanoonparvar is Professor Emeritus of Persian and Comparative Literature at The University of Texas at Austin. Professor Ghanoonparvar has also taught at the University of Isfahan, the University of Virginia, and the University of Arizona, and was a Rockefeller Fellow at the University of Michigan. He has published widely on Persian literature and culture in both English and Persian and is the author of *Prophets of Doom: Literature as a Socio-Political Phenomenon in Modern Iran* (1984), *In a Persian Mirror: Images of the West and Westerners in Iranian Fiction* (1993), *Translating the Garden* (2001), *Reading Chubak* (2005), *Persian Cuisine: Traditional, Regional and Modern Foods* (2006), *Iranian Film and Persian Fiction* (2016), *Dining at the Safavid Court* (2016), and *From Prophets of Doom to Chroniclers of Gloom* (2021). His translations include Jalal Al-e Ahmad's *By the Pen*, Sadeq Chubak's *The Patient Stone*, Simin Daneshvar's *Savushun*, Ahmad Kasravi's *On Islam and Shi'ism*, Sadeq Hedayat's *The Myth of Creation*, Nima Yushij's *The Neighbor Says: Letters of Nima Yushij and the Philosophy of Modern Persian Poetry*, Davud Ghaffarzadegan's *Fortune Told in Blood*, Mohammad Reza Bayrami's *The Tales of Sabalan and Eagles of Hill 60*, and Bahram Beyza'i's *Memoirs of the Actor in a Supporting Role*. His edited volumes include *Iranian Drama: An Anthology*, *In Transition: Essays on Culture and Identity in Middle Eastern Societies*, Gholamhoseyn Sa'edi's *Othello in Wonderland and Mirror-Polishing Storytellers*, and Moniro Ravanipour's *Satan Stones and Kanizu*. His most recent translations include Shahrokh Meskub's *In the Alley of the Friend and Leaving, Staying, Returning*, Hushang Golshiri's *Book of Jinn*, Moniro Ravanipour's *The Drowned and These Crazy Nights*, Hamid Shokat's *Flight into Darkness: A Political Biography of Shapour Bakhtiar and Caught in the Crossfire: A Political Biography of Qavamossaltaneh*, Ghazaleh Alizadeh's *The Nights of Tehran*, Ruhangiz Sharifian's *The Last Dream and Doran*, and Shahrnush Parsipur's *Blue Logos*. He was the recipient of the 2008 Lois Roth Prize for Literary Translation. His forthcoming books are *Swan Songs: On Diseases, Death and Dying in Persian Stories* and *Iranian Cities in Persian Fiction*. His forthcoming translations include Ghazaleh Alizadeh's *The House of the Edrisis and Two Views*, and Reza Julai's *Jujube Blossoms*.



INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION 2020-2022

AATP would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions and continuous support of the following institutions:

- ◆ McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies
- ◆ The Middle East Center at University of Pennsylvania
- ◆ New York University
- ◆ University of Chicago
- ◆ University of California, Irvine
- ◆ Georgetown University
- ◆ University of Maryland, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies
- ◆ University of Arizona
- ◆ University of California, Los Angeles



2020-2022 AATP WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

“Sharing the Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Online Teaching Experience.”

“Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology”

Members can access webinars' recordings on AATP website www.aatpersian.com

Inaugural Webinar by American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) www.aatpersian.com

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY OF ONLINE TEACHING

Wednesday, August 12, 2020, Zoom meeting at 10:00 am(PT), 12:00pm (CST), 1:00pm (ET)

Presenters:

Narges Nematollahi, University of Arizona
Potential disadvantages of online language classes from the perspective of students and strategies to overcome them.

Zohreh Mirsharif, Georgetown University
Canvas features on creating assignments with different forms of submission, grading, and making a variety of quizzes.

Agenda:
Welcome and opening remarks by **Sohella Kian, AATP President**
Introduction and Q & A by **Aliyeh Mehini, AATP Treasurer**
Closing remarks and upcoming webinars by **Marjan Seirafi-Pour, AATP Secretary**

RSVP by contacting us: contact@aatpersian.com | Zoom link will be provided to members who RSVP

AATP webinar: August 12th , 2020

Presenter: Narges Nematollah, University of Arizona

Topic: Potential disadvantages of online language classes from the perspective of students and strategies to overcome them.

Presenter: Zohreh Mirsharif, Georgetown University

Topic: Canvas platform: Canvas features on creating assignments with different forms of submission, grading, and making a variety of quizzes.

Second Webinar by American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) www.aatpersian.com

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY OF ONLINE TEACHING

Tuesday, September 8th, 2020, Zoom meeting at 10:00 am(PT), 12:00pm (CST), 1:00pm (ET)

Presenter:
Anousha Shahsavari, University of Texas at Austin
Obstacles of Online Instruction and Their Remedies
Examining Open Persian Resources

Agenda:
Welcome and opening remarks by **Marjan Seirafi-Pour, AATP Secretary**
Introduction and Q & A by **Sohella Kian, AATP President**
Closing remarks and upcoming webinars by **Aliyeh Mehini, AATP Treasurer**

RSVP by contacting us: contact@aatpersian.com | Zoom link will be provided to members who RSVP

In this talk, Anousha Shahsavari will discuss topics such as the effective use of breakout rooms, how to build community in an online environment, and how to conduct assessment in such dramatically different conditions. She will particularly focus on changes that can be made to assessment and feedback so that they can remain both fair to the students and an effective component of the learning process. Some of the Open Resources for Persian will also be introduced.

AATP webinar: September 8th, 2020

Presenter: Anousha Shahsavari, University of Texas at Austin

Topic: Obstacles of Online Instruction and Their Remedies: Examining Open Persian Resources.

The effective use of breakout rooms, how to build community in an online environment, and how to conduct assessment in such dramatically different conditions. She will particularly focus on changes that can be made to assessment and feedback so that they can remain both fair to the students and an effective component of the learning process. Some of the Open Resources for Persian will also be introduced.

2020-2022 AATP

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY OF ONLINE TEACHING

Sunday, November 8th, 2020, Zoom meeting
at 10:00 am(PT), 12:00pm (CST), 1:00pm (ET)

Presenter:
Stephanie Irani-Tehrani, from United States Military Academy in West Point, NY
Remote Learning
How Online Teaching Tools Can Improve Students' Speaking, Listening, and Pronunciation

Agenda:
Welcome and opening remarks by Alyeh Meyhin, AATP Treasurer
Introduction and Q & A by Marjan Seirafi-Pour, AATP Secretary
Closing remarks and upcoming webinars by Soheila Kian, AATP President

Please use this link for registration: <https://bit.ly/31Rc7pL>



Certain remote learning strategies and tools can help improve students' Persian skills, specifically in presentational speaking, listening, and pronunciation. In my presentation, I will briefly describe the current teaching environment at West Point, demonstrate a few effective tools and strategies, including Flipgrid and Lingt, and discuss why these tools may have been effective, such as nuanced audio feedback from instructors, reduced performance anxiety for students, and increased opportunities to practice presentational speaking.

AATP webinar: November 8th, 2020

Presenter: Stephanie Irani-Tehrani, United States Military Academy in West Point, NY

Topic: Remote Learning: How Online Teaching Tools Can Improve Students' Speaking, Listening, and Pronunciation

Certain remote learning strategies and tools can help improve students' Persian skills, specifically in presentational speaking, listening, and pronunciation. In my presentation, I will briefly describe the current teaching environment at West Point, demonstrate a

few effective tools and strategies, including Flipgrid and Lingt, and discuss why these tools may have been effective, such as nuanced audio feedback from instructors, reduced performance anxiety for students, and increased opportunities to practice presentational speaking.

AATP Roundtable at MESA, Virtual. Thursday, October 8th, 2020

MESA (Middle East Studies Association) <https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers>

Chair: Soheila Kian

Sharing Best Practices and Innovative Strategies to Bring a Learner-Centered Approach to Persian Language Classrooms

In this roundtable we will discuss innovative tactics that bring a learner-centered approach to the Persian language classrooms incorporating a variety of perspectives such as: 1) technology enhanced language learning, 2) enhancing communicative competence by introducing project based learning tasks to the classroom, 3) Active Learning practices, 4) exploring challenges educators face in a mixed classroom composed of "Heritage students" and "Second Language Learners" at the same time and differentiating classroom activities to serve the students' needs in that setting.

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

Not only the roundtable aims to bring together educators and share best practices and meaningful professional dialogue across levels, and settings, but also to help our classes to step away from lecture/teacher-centered classes and provide more learner-centered classes with a communicative approach.

1st Presenter: Latifeh E. Hagigi, UCLA

Topic: A Different Approach to the Usage of Role Playing for Improving Language Skills: Omid and Taraneh as two Characters in a Sequential Series of Episodes.

Role playing has always been a very effective tool in language classes for improving students' speaking skills in a target language (L2). The assignment, which can be at different levels of language acquisition, is traditionally given in the dominant language (L1, e.g. English) of the students, in a structured simple format of a given situation. The students are then asked to act out that situation, usually a very practical one, in L2 (e.g. Persian), in a scenario format, in class.

In this roundtable, I would like to present a different form of role playing, which has been very successful in my elementary and intermediate Persian language classes. These assignments are given in L2 (the Persian language) in a series of sequential stories, each with a specific scenario. The two main characters are Omid and Taraneh, who at one time became acquainted in a mutual friend's engagement party. They then keep on encountering each other in various occasions and have a conversation. These conversations, usually a page or a little more, which are rich with suitable vocabularies, idioms, slangs, proverbs, and other cultural ingredients, including a line of poetry, are given to students to read, to practice and to finally act out in class, without any notes. In order to make them ready for their final presentation, a lot of conversations in Persian about that specific scenario is done in class. They often identify with these two characters to such a degree that they dress up for the acting!

This practice has been very popular among my students as they are always very eager to know what the next episode is! Based on their feedback, my students, including those who graduated a long time ago, still fondly remember the stories of Omid and Taraneh.

2020-2022 AATP

2nd Presenter: Razi Ahmad, University of Kansas

Topic: Harnessing the power of technology in Twenty-first century-Persian Classrooms
Digital technology has immense pedagogical potential and puts in the hand of a language instructor endless possibilities to enrich student-centered language classrooms. Persian language teachers can harness the power of fascinating digital tools to engage today's generation of tech-savvy students, a generation that appreciates and prefers technology-mediated interactive learning environment over traditional instruction limited to textbook, conversation practice on given topics, audio-video recordings, etc. Indeed, modern technological innovations increasingly provide new means of effective teaching and learning. The presentation will begin with an overview of a number of available resources, facilitative of digital storytelling and augmented reality experiences, that can be effectively used as pedagogic tools in Persian language classrooms to enhance students' engagement with the lessons. After an overview of available resources, the presentation will provide a detailed discussion of a relatively new but free and interesting platform called Metaverse. It will demonstrate how Metaverse allows teachers and students to create interactive storyboard for presentational and interpretive modes of communication and engage in task-based activities for an enhanced learning experience.

3rd Presenter: Farima Sadigh-Mostowfi, Georgetown University

Topic: Teaching Cognate L3 Languages: Persian for Arabic Speakers Challenges and Triumphs

Since the establishment of the Persian Program at our university in 2006, I had noticed a persistent problem among Arabic-speaking students enrolled in the beginner's Persian course. These students with background in Arabic already had a strong understanding of written Persian script and some vocabulary, which is a major element of the beginner's class curriculum. Therefore, they were wasting a good portion of their time learning how to write with everyone else in the course. We wanted to find an alternative to meet the needs of our Arabic-speaking students while preparing them for the intermediate Persian course.

In Fall 2018, we decided to offer a 3-credit Persian for Arabic Speakers course in addition to

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

the 6-credit Persian Beginner's I course. Unlike other L3 courses, we did not combine two semesters into one, but rather covered the same material in half the number of credits by offering two semesters of Persian for Arabic Speakers courses. Students of Arabic-speaking background could now reach intermediate Persian ability faster and more efficiently, in 6 credits instead of 12. Our current requirements are that students enrolled have at least one year of Arabic language instruction. This new course has been very popular, drawing 12 new students compared to 10 students in the Beginner's I course. The curriculum of the Persian for Arabic Speakers course and the Beginner's I course is very similar overall, utilizing the same textbook. The most significant difference between the classes is that we have reduced the focus on writing in the Persian for Arabic Speakers course.

The establishment of the Persian for Arabic Speakers course at our University demonstrates a more learner-centered approach to Persian language teaching by providing an L3 course option. This course has found great success thus far and I believe that it can be successful at other universities. In sharing the challenges, successes, and future goals of this project with other educators, I hope to encourage other programs to consider this coursework, helping to meet the diverse needs of their students and increase enrollment in Persian across the board.

4th Presenter: Soheila Kian, UC Irvine

Topic: Implementing Active Learning practices into online classroom and engaging students remotely.

The new platform of online classrooms not only provides instructors with a space for innovative strategies but also creates a new set of challenges. Due to the limitations and restrictions caused by COVID19 pandemic today, more than ever, our students need motivation.

In this presentation, I would like to examine the implementation of "Active Learning" teaching strategies, which is a crucial learning tactic for students, into our online classrooms. "Active Learning" is a more productive mode of learning because students acquire and collect much more than just specific information provided by the instructor. Rather than just acquiring knowledge of a set of facts in a traditional lecture, with active learning

2020-2022 AATP

students will gain understanding of the process that lead to that acquisition — we need to design learning experiences in which students gain that understanding for themselves. Of course “telling” is an excellent method of communicating specific information, and there are plenty of occasions when our students need specific information delivered directly to them by the instructor. But the question is when to “tell,” and when not to!

Through active learning I will also explore ideas that could help develop students’ soft skills such as: effective communication skills, teamwork, dependability, adaptability, flexibility, critical thinking, problem solving. These are the skills students can take from one job to another. Online teaching/learning is a new and challenging platform for some of us but it could be a unique opportunity to invite and encourage students to practice these skills, and I look forward to hearing my colleagues’ valuable views regarding this and other concepts.

5th Presenter: Banafsheh Pourzangi, UCLA

Topic: “How ‘Dastan nevisi’ (story telling) can help students to learn Present tense and Subjunctive:

Storytelling is one of the fundamentals of the language learning process. Creating and recounting a narrative are essential factors in shaping one’s self-expression, particularly, in a foreign language. Studies have shown that language is a social act and the language learner is a social agent who actively participates in a bilingual, cultural dialogue. Storytelling is also a valid pedagogical tool in bridging cultural and social gaps, thus facilitating and enhancing language learning processes.

The success of storytelling in learning Western languages have been discussed in numerous academic studies. However, the use of storytelling pedagogies to the learners of the Persian language has not been fully understood. With the long history of oral memory and traditions, Persian is extremely suitable for applying storytelling methods and for testing their effectiveness. In spite of the existence and practice of so many exercises and role-plays to build up Persian learner students’ abilities for making sentences and conjugating the verbs, they still face difficulties in their learning process of tenses.

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

Therefore, the question is how to prepare students to use their imagination in storytelling in which they are required to use tenses in order to finish their story on their own. The idea is to let them tell a story and to add or remove some characters as follows: The story plot includes all the six elements of every complete narrative:

1. Setting
2. Characters: central characters/protagonist/antagonist
3. Plot
4. Conflict
5. Theme
6. Narrative arc

Students write one to two pages by considering the above-mentioned elements. We can introduce them to these elements by applying the differences in cultures. As the story develops, it will lead to discussions on a variety of topics."



AATP webinar: January 8th, 2021

Presenter: Peyman Nojournian, University of Southern California

Topic: Developing an LED Lightboard to Teach Persian Orthography Online

This presentation will showcase the development of an innovative technology to enhance the online teaching of Persian orthography. LED Lightboards have been used for marketing and advertisement. However, the requirement to move quickly to online platforms, due to the pandemic, motivated a new application of the technology for the teaching of foreign languages, especially for orthography. The

current form of the LED Lightboard is not well-suited to this purpose because it has not been well developed for teaching orthography. However, in this presentation you will learn tips and tricks to adjust it to your needs. This research project was made possible through a USC Dornsife award of Faculty Development Funds.

2020-2022 AATP


American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) presents
2021 Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology

Isolated Yet Belonging: Online Class Community

Opening Remarks by Soheila Khan, AATP President
Q&A by Marjan Seifati Pour, AATP Secretary
Closing remarks by Soheila Khan, AATP President

Sunday, February 28, 2021
10:00 AM (PST), 12:00 PM (CST), 1:00 PM (EST)
Register for this webinar at: <http://bit.ly/37xLppk>

At the time of COVID19 pandemic, when students stay physically isolated, building an online academic community becomes more important than ever. Studies on remote learning have mentioned the challenges faced in building and maintaining sense of community and belonging when the students are not physically present in the space of classroom. Providing content, assignments and assessments for students to work through is not enough to deliver learning experience. Rather, educators need to consider how to integrate peer interaction and instructor guidance into learning activities to reach their full learning potential. Online classrooms have the potential to be the locus of communities. The platform of online classrooms includes defined roles and practices that can be important to sense of identity for both students and teachers, that can create ties that in turn create a sense of community. Sense of community and belonging plays a crucial role in academic success in general and in language learning. Sense of belonging is correlated with motivation and continuation of learning. In this presentation, I will firstly define community and explain how an online class potentially counts as a community. Then, I will outline such elements of online class community like membership, emotional impact, shared connections and integration and fulfillment of needs. Then, I will introduce practical activities to strengthen the sense of belonging to the community of online classroom.



Alyeh Mehin
PhD Student
University of Arizona

AATP webinar: February 28th, 2021

Presenter: Alyeh Mehin, University of Arizona

Topic: Isolated Yet Belonging: Online Class Community

At the time of COVID19 pandemic, when students stay physically isolated, building an online academic community becomes more important than ever. Studies on remote learning have mentioned the challenges faced in building and maintaining sense of community and belonging when the students are not physically present in the space of classroom. Providing content, assignments and assessments for students to work through is not enough to deliver

learning experience. Rather, educators need to consider how to integrate peer interaction and instructor guidance into learning activities to reach their full learning potential. Online classrooms have the potential to be the locus of communities. The platform of online classrooms includes defined roles and practices that can be important to sense of identity for both students and teachers, that can create ties that in turn create a sense of community. Sense of community and belonging plays a crucial role in academic success in general and in language learning. Sense of belonging is correlated with motivation and continuation of learning. In this presentation, I will firstly define community and explain how an online class potentially counts as a community. Then, I will outline such elements of online class community like membership, emotional impact, shared connections and integration and fulfillment of needs. Then, I will introduce practical activities to strengthen the sense of belonging to the community of online classroom.

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) presents
2021 Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology

**Teaching Persian on Nearpod,
what is there to keep after COVID-19?**

Opening Remarks by **Sehela Khan**, AATP President
Q&A by **Allyeh Mehini**, AATP Treasurer
Closing remarks by **Marjan Seirafi-Pour**, AATP Secretary

**Sunday, July 11, 2021
12:00 PM (PST)
2:00 PM (CST), 3:00 PM (EST)**

Register for this webinar at: <http://bit.ly/3ypZv7W>

21st century students and teachers have access to all sorts of multimodal materials on the internet. Teachers can readily connect students with a community of native speakers and students can check the naturalness of the input they receive in class with the native speaker community in social media and elsewhere. It is very hard to confine students to the bounds of a textbook which is getting increasingly more expensive as well. Over the past year, thanks to the remote teaching this dependence on the open access materials has turned into an inevitable part of language instruction.

However, this new environment which provides equal, more equitable access to the sources of knowledge can easily turn into an ocean of information where students and teachers might easily get lost in. Considering the limitations of classical textbooks and the availability of open access authentic material, I believe a platform like Nearpod can strike a balance between complete lack of structure and the constraining bounds of a classical textbook. It provides an environment - what Blyth & Thoms (2021) would refer to as a "new knowledge ecology"- to develop a curriculum and deliver the lessons at the same time in a user-friendly and efficient way. In this presentation, I showcase how one can use Nearpod for teaching Persian, what its benefits and shortcomings are and how one can still use it for in-person classes.

Hessam Dehghani, Assistant Professor of Teaching Persian and Culture, University of British Columbia, Associate Researcher at Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies

CALL FOR PROPOSALS
American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP)

We cordially invite you to submit proposals for American Association of Teachers of Persian Lecture Series for the 2021-2022 academic year. We are seeking current and relevant presentations within these topic areas:

- Online Teaching Technology
- Heritage and L2 learner challenges and opportunities
- Project Based Teaching Material Development
- Adapting Authentic Materials in Teaching Persian
- Extracurricular Activities for Learners

Please send your proposals by August 25, 2021, to contact@aatpersian.org
www.aatpersian.org

AATP webinar: July 11th, 2021

Presenter: Hessam Dehghani, University of British Columbia


Topic: Teaching Persian on Nearpod: what is there to keep after Covid

21st century students and teachers have access to all sorts of multimodal materials on the internet. Teachers can readily connect students with a community of native speakers and students can check the naturalness of the input they receive in class with the native speaker community in social media and elsewhere. It is very hard to confine students to the bounds of a textbook which is getting increasingly more expensive as well. Over the past year, thanks to the remote teaching this dependence on the open access materials has turned into an inevitable part of language instruction.

However, this new environment which provides equal, more equitable access to the sources of knowledge can easily turn into an ocean of information where students and teachers might easily get lost in. Considering the limitations of classical textbooks and the availability of open access authentic material, I believe a platform like Nearpod can strike a balance between complete lack of structure and the constraining bounds of a classical textbook. It provides an environment - what Blyth & Thoms

(2021) would refer to as a «new knowledge ecology»- to develop a curriculum and deliver the lessons at the same time in a user-friendly and efficient way. In this presentation, I showcase how one can use Nearpod for teaching Persian, what its benefits and shortcomings are and how one can still use it for in-person classes.

2020-2022 AATP



American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) presents
2021 Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology

**Reconnecting with the Origin:
A Look at the Development of the Persian
Instructional Materials in Iran,
Can They Be Used in Our Classes?**

Welcome and Opening Remarks by Soheila Kian, AATP President
Q & A by Marjan Seiraf-Pour, AATP Secretary
Closing Remarks by Aliyeh Mehini, AATP Treasurer

Sunday, September 26th, 2021
10:00 AM (PT), 12:00 PM (CT), 01:00 PM (ET)
Register for this webinar at: <http://bit.ly/3ypZv7W>

In the last thirty years or so, there has been an explosion of production of Persian language instructional materials for college level, prepared by both non-native and native speakers living outside Iran. The same growth has taken place in Iran, among developers who produce materials for foreign students studying Persian at various institutions in Iran. In this presentation we will first review some of the instructional materials that have been prepared in Iran for those attending language programs in Iran. Secondly, we will focus on specific textbooks which we have been using in our classrooms and discuss their advantages and shortcomings. We believe that by studying and familiarizing ourselves with the materials developed in Iran, we might discover some elements that could be adapted for our purposes. Finally, we think a collaboration with our colleagues in Iran might prove to be fruitful for those involved in developing teaching materials both inside and outside of Iran.

Shahyar Daneshgar, Faculty
Indiana University
Topic: *Searching for Extra Suitable Instructional Materials for L2 Learners of Persian*

Narges Nematollahi, Faculty
Roehrs Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Persian and Iranian Studies, University of Arizona
Topic: *Choosing a Good Textbook for 2nd and 3rd Year Persian Classes*

Pouyan Shahidi Marnani, Ph.D. Candidate
Indiana University
Topic: *The Use of Technology in Enhancing the Instructional Materials Produced in Iran*

AATP webinar: September 26th , 2021

Presenter: Shahyar Daneshgar, Indiana University

Topic: Searching for Extra Suitable Instructional Materials for L2 Learners of Persian

Presenter: Narges Nematollahi, University of Arizona

Topic: Choosing a Good Textbook for 2nd and 3rd Year Persian Classes

Presenter: Pouyan Shahidi Marnani, Indiana University

Topic: The Use of Technology in Enhancing the Instructional Materials Produced in Iran

Reconnecting with the Origin: A Look at the Development of the Persian Instructional Materials in Iran, Can They Be Used in Our Classes?

In the last thirty years or so, there has been an explosion of production of Persian language instructional materials for college level, prepared by both non-native and native speakers living outside Iran. The same growth has taken place in Iran, among developers who produce materials for foreign students studying Persian at various institutions in Iran. In this presentation we will first review some of the instructional materials that have been prepared in Iran for those attending language programs in Iran. Secondly, we will focus on specific textbooks which we have been using in our classrooms and discuss their advantages and shortcomings. We believe that by studying and familiarizing ourselves with the materials developed in Iran, we might discover some elements that could be adapted for our purposes. Finally, we think a collaboration with our colleagues in Iran might prove to be fruitful for those involved in developing teaching materials both inside and outside of Iran.

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) presents
2021 Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology

1. Searching for Authenticity: Project Based Language Learning for Learners of Persian
2. Introducing An Online Persian Dictionary

Welcome & opening remarks by Soheila Kian, AATP President
C & A by Ayesh Mehini, AATP Treasurer
Closing remarks & upcoming events by Marjan Seifali-Pour, AATP Executive Secretary

Sunday, November 7, 2021
10:00 AM (PT), 12:00 PM (CT), 01:00 PM (ET)
Register for this webinar at: <https://bit.ly/2WXXNZTtd>

Searching for Authenticity: Project Based Language Learning for Learners of Persian
Authenticity is a hallmark of the "Gold Standard" for Project Based Language Learning (PBL). Indeed, the National Foreign Language Research Center (NFLRC) describes a high-quality language learning project as meeting the following criteria: 1) a problem or question to solve or address, 2) an "authentic, real-world purpose," 3) partners in the community, and 4) a public product and audience. In my presentation, I plan on describing PBL criteria according to the NFLRC and discussing the materials and technologies that were used, as well as the benefits, challenges, and perceived outcomes of this project compared to a more typical project that would have been carried out in previous years.

Stephanie Irani-Tehrani
United States Military Academy
Topic: Searching for Authenticity: Project Based Language Learning for Learners of Persian

Introducing An Online Persian Dictionary
In this presentation I will explore two recent resources, the Advanced Learner's Persian Dictionary by Sayed Mostafa Asai published in 2019 and an online Persian Picture Dictionary available at www.persianpicturedictionary.com. The latter provides a multimedia tool in which items on theme-based images are matched with corresponding Persian words. The theme-based images, designed to reflect some aspects of everyday life in Iran, provide cultural input to the user. As the director of the project, I will also discuss the challenges the graphic designer and I had for designing representative and informative images. I will also discuss and request for feedback on possible paths to expand the dictionary.

Narges Nemati-Lahi, Faculty
Roshan Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Persian and Iranian Studies, University of Arizona
Topic: Introducing An Online Persian Dictionary

AATP webinar: November 7th , 2021

Presenter: Stephanie Irani-Tehrani, United States Military Academy

Topic: Searching for Authenticity: Project Based Language Learning for Learners of Persian.

Authenticity is a hallmark of the "Gold Standard" for Project Based Language Learning (PBL). Indeed, the National Foreign Language Research Center describes a high-quality language-learning project as meeting the following criteria: 1) a problem or question to solve or address, 2) an "authentic, real-world purpose," 3) partners in the community, and 4) a public product and audience. The NFLRC's

website is full of information and free resources, courses, and mentoring programs for language teachers seeking to learn about PBL, get inspiration from other projects, and plan their own high-quality projects. The website also features a "Repository" of projects for learners of Spanish, French, Portuguese, Japanese, and Chinese, as well as (as of this writing) others, including one Persian project.

The authentic purpose and product that are essential to the gold-standard PBL, however, can require a lot of creativity on the part of Persian instructors and students who cannot travel to Persian-speaking countries, are not heritage speakers, and do not have many Persian speakers in their community. Thankfully, the use of remote education in the past year has expanded the concept of "community" and public audience. United States Military Academy cadets in the intermediate level in Spring 2021 were able to inch closer to an "authentic, real-world product" and overcome some of these barriers as they carried out a project aimed at providing simple information about Iran's June 2021 presidential elections for other learners of Persian and heritage speakers, in the form of websites and social media accounts.

In my presentation, I plan on describing PBL criteria according to the NFLRC, and providing an example of how my students and I sought to meet the standards through this project on the Iranian elections. I will discuss the materials and technologies that

2020-2022 AATP

were used, as well as the benefits, challenges, and perceived outcomes of this project compared to a more typical project that would have been carried out in previous years.

Presenter: Narges Nematollahi, University of Arizona

Topic: Introducing an Online Persian Pictionary

In this presentation, I will overview the existing Persian dictionaries (English-Persian, Persian-English both printed and digital ones) and argue that while they are of certain use to students of Persian, none of them fully satisfies the requirements of a learner's dictionary considering the specific features of Persian orthography and Persian grammar. I will then explore two more recent resources which are both independent of the source language; the Advanced Learner's Persian Dictionary by Mostafa Asi published in 2019 and an online Persian Picture Dictionary available at www.persianpicturedictionary.com. The latter provides a multimedia tool in which items on theme-based images are matched with corresponding Persian words. The user can see the word and listen to its pronunciation through an accompanying audio file. Furthermore, the theme-based images, designed to reflect some aspects of everyday life in Iran, provide cultural input to the user. As the director of the project, I will introduce the features of this online dictionary in detail and will discuss the challenges the graphic designer and I had for designing representative and informative images. I will also discuss and request for feedback on possible paths to expand the pictionary.

AATP Roundtable at MESA, Annual General Meeting, and Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony. Montréal, Québec, Canada. Virtual

MESA (Middle East Studies Association) <https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers>

1. AATP Roundtable at MESA, Friday December 3rd, 11:30AM (EST)
2. AATP Annual General Meeting and Award Ceremony

Saturday December 4th

2:00-3:00pm (Eastern Time) AATP Annual General Meeting

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

Saturday December 4th

3:00-4:00pm (Eastern Time) AATP Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony in honor of Dr. Mohammad Reza Ghanoonparvar

AATP Roundtable details:

Chair: Soheila Kian

The current state of students' psyche: Dealing with the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, moving toward methods of teaching that motivate students, and how to adapt stimulating content for an online platform.

This roundtable aims at discussing different challenges educators are still facing today, more than one year into the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some of the questions that will be addressed are: How can instructors select and introduce language course material (reading, vocabulary, grammar, writing) to the students in order to provide a stimulating and motivational class environment?

What sort of learning losses could we expect from the students during remote learning?

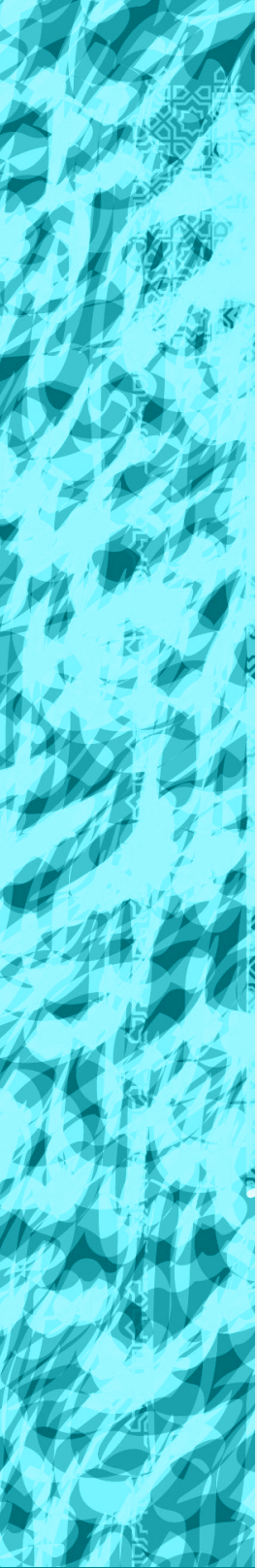
What changes in student achievement can be anticipated? Can instructors provide similar content to all students in their classrooms while teaching online, or they need to further differentiate instruction based on a broader range of needs? Can the challenging platform of online teaching/learning be a unique opportunity of gaining new efficiencies for instructors in adapting their courses for online delivery? Can teaching online be as effective as in a physical classroom?

Today, due to this crisis, many students may face great insecurities such as isolation, loss of family income, loss of family members, among other losses. Understanding these impacts and how best to support students' social, emotional as well as academic needs after the huge disruption of COVID-19 will be essential.

1st presenter: Alyeh Mehin, University of Arizona

Topic: While facing the COVID-19 pandemic most of us, instructors, faced an obligation in switching to online platforms to hold all of our classes, we have to admit that even in normal times online instruction can be an efficient way to deliver courses. Although

2020-2022 AATP



one side of online education is the challenges that we face just because online instruction is new and the switching of all in-person classes was abrupt in the academic context in Spring 2020, the other side is the open horizons that online education blueprints in front of us. Regardless of how humanity manages this pandemic, online instruction is here to stay and prevail because of the possibilities that it has to offer. However, there are skills that we have learned through years of studying and teaching in-person. Now it is time to face the challenge of online teaching. The in-person instruction brings us all in one classroom, with peers and endless possibilities to focus and involve with the materials and pair and group work techniques that physically surround us, while online teaching limits each of us to one rather small screen, usually in a room that ironically provides endless opportunities to get distracted from the instructional materials. In this context, what can we, instructors, do to minimize the risk of students feeling they may not achieve much from our online courses? How can we help students not to drop off our courses? How can we manage the lack of focus and motivation? In line with the general matters that will be discussed in this round table, I will introduce and shortly discuss the following matters, especially in the context of the pandemic: course planning and organization that can fit the platform potentials; feedback that needs to be timely and sensitive to the needs and situation of the students; access to course materials that should be easy and timely; variety of instructional methods that provide for different types of learners, instructor's enthusiasm that is contagious, much like the virus itself!; and students' autonomy that should be part of the learning outcomes of our course design.

2nd presenter: Farima Sadigh-Mostowfi, Georgetown University

Topic: Virtual learning and challenges, With the new challenges presented by virtual teaching and learning, I will present how I made adjustments for my Intensive Beginners Persian I and II (6 credits each) courses. Each class met four times a week for 75-minute sessions. First, I amended the entirety of my syllabus utilizing the online tool Canvas. I created a new syllabus in Canvas because previous requirements couldn't be replicated in a virtual environment. I found a way to incorporate cultural events and encourage participation in a virtual classroom. I adjusted my grading to reward participation and active learning. In my weekly assessments, I incorporated written and oral segments

WEBINARS AND MESA ROUNDTABLES

to discourage cheating. Secondly, I have adjusted my teaching style for the virtual environment. In a purely lecture-style, it is especially difficult to keep students engaged for the entirety of the class. I have used different tools to break up the monotony of lectures such as breakout rooms. Third, these adjustments have resulted in even more work for myself and office hours taking place at various times to accommodate different time zones. These changes have assisted with the temporary adjustments of virtual learning. Depending on how long of a reality this is, more accommodations and adjustments will need to be made.

3rd presenter: Pardis Manuchehr, University of Virginia

Topic: Learner-centered or Teacher-centered? The sudden transfer of our face-to-face classes to online learning has required major changes in language teaching methodologies. Can we hold a learner-centered methodology in our online classrooms? This presentation will examine strategies that allow the shift from a teacher-centered class focus to learner-centered ones.

4th presenter: Soheila Kian, UC, Irvine

Topic: Due to the limitations and restrictions caused by COVID19 pandemic today, more than ever, our students need motivation. One productive and engaging mode of learning for students that works well in my language classes is “the Debate” activity. The Debate serves many special functions in the classroom. It is not only an effective mode of meeting the Standards of Foreign Language Learning (5Cs-based activities) but it is also a practical way of measuring progress, identifying students’ different proficiency levels and the material they learned.

To prepare for the Debate, students need to work collaboratively to research a topic and create a list of points to argue. They also need to find evidence to develop and support each point. To deliver an organized, content-rich speech in 2 to 3 minutes, they need to be familiar with these materials. Regardless of students’ proficiency level, the experience of debating simultaneously not only shows students how much they have learned and how much there is to learn, but it also encourages them to interact with each other and

2020-2022 AATP

build up a sense of community and camaraderie. Today, in the not-quite-post-COVID era where students are still connecting virtually (in many schools) it is important for them to be able to build a comfortable and familiar space where they can belong.

AATP webinar: January 9th, 2022

Presenter: Hessam Dehghani, University of British Columbia

Topic: Authentic Input for Teaching Literacy to Persian Heritage Learners: a Critical Heritage Education Approach.

This lecture addresses the question of the characteristics of the fitting input for teaching literacy to Persian heritage students. The ACTFL's criteria for a fitting input includes *authenticity* and *comprehensibility* (Clementi, D. & Terrill, L., 2017), according to which most of the text books, teaching manuals, and hundreds of workshops offer a straightforward, one for all solution regarding content and method.

Following recent scholarship in heritage language pedagogy, I offer theoretical and practical grounds for the most appropriate content as well as the most appropriate method of delivery. That is an input which is "community-based" and "*compelling*".



American Association of Teachers of Persian presents
2022 Webinar Series on Innovative Instructional Technology

Characteristics of the Fitting Input for Teaching Literacy to Persian Heritage Students

Opening Remarks by Soheila Kian, AATP President
Q & A by Marjan Seifati-Pour, AATP Executive Secretary
Closing Remarks by Aliyah Mehdi, AATP Treasurer



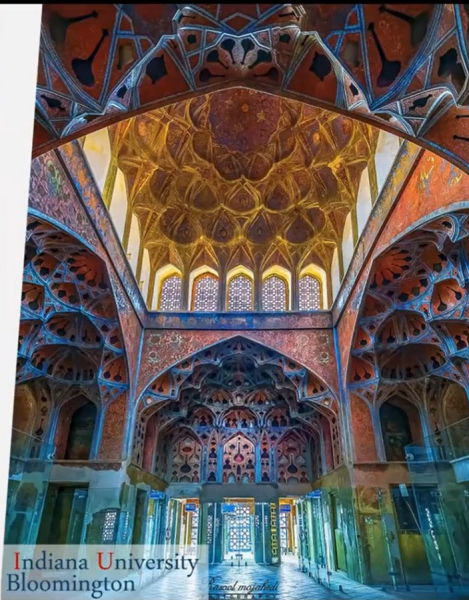
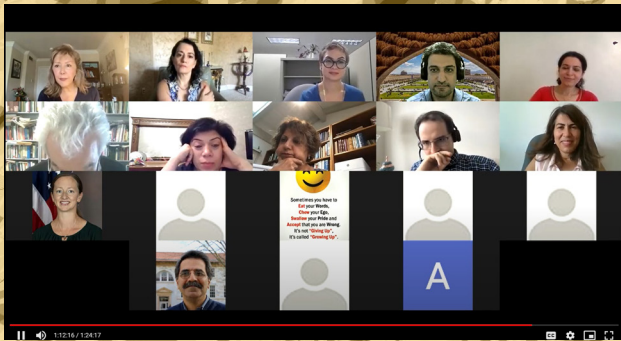
Sunday, January 9, 2022
1:00 AM (PT), 12:00 PM (CT), 1:00 PM (ET)
Register for this webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3FowXyy>

This lecture addresses the question of the characteristics of the fitting input for teaching literacy to Persian heritage students. The ACTFL's criteria for a fitting input includes *authenticity* and *comprehensibility* (Clementi, D. & Terrill, L., 2017), according to which most of the textbooks, teaching manuals, and hundreds of workshops offer a straightforward, one for all solution, regarding content and method.

Following recent scholarship in heritage language pedagogy, I offer theoretical and practical grounds for the most appropriate content as well as the most appropriate method of delivery. That is an input which is "community-based" and "*compelling*".

 Hessam Dehghani, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Teaching Persian Language and Culture
University of British Columbia, Canada

WEBINARS



Transition to online classes and recreating tasks

- Canvas, Zoom and
- Recreating Tasks:**
 - Small group interaction
 - Peer group activities
 - Cultural activities
 - Interactive and informative communication
 - Project-based activities
 - Writing tasks
 - Language practices
 - Assessment



Other PBLL-inspired projects

Remote Conversation Partner program with NaTakallam in AY 20-21

- Incorporated into curriculum by assigning interviews with CPs and sharing of findings with peers

Composing and sending letters to Afghan refugees in New Jersey

- Very inspiring project with real purpose and audience; motivation among students higher than with typical essay assignments

Capstone projects sometimes respond to "customer" requests, which increases motivation

