

# RETHINKING ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHING IN CLASSROOMS

Bridging Technology, Pedagogy and Policy

# Acknowledgments

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## About WISE

WISE is a global education platform and think-and-do tank that convenes leaders to shape the future of learning. Established in 2009 by Qatar Foundation under the leadership of its Chairperson, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. WISE drives educational innovation through policy engagement, research, leadership development, and practitioner programs. Through our year-round activities and flagship bi-annual Summit, WISE is building the future of education through strategic local, regional, and international collaborations.





# About the WISE Innovation Briefs

The WISE Innovation Briefs are a new research initiative developed by the WISE Research and Policy team to highlight urgent challenges in education and explore promising, scalable solutions.

Each brief draws on practical insights from WISE Prize finalists, WISE EdTech Accelerator alumni, and WISE's broader global network of innovators and thought leaders.

**This brief is part of a three-part series leading up to WISE 12, covering:**

- **Accelerating Foundational Literacy and Numeracy** – Innovative approaches to improving literacy and numeracy, especially for underserved learners.
- **Addressing Challenges in Artificial Intelligence** – Exploring how AI is reshaping education, with a focus on innovation, ethics, and equity.
- **Improving the Teaching of Arabic Language** – Solutions aimed at strengthening Arabic instruction through better pedagogy, curriculum, and resources.

# Rethinking Arabic Language Teaching in Classrooms

## Executive Summary

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Arabic literacy is in urgent need of reform. Across the Arab region, persistent issues of linguistic complexity, outdated curricula, inadequate teaching-learning pedagogies, gaps in teacher preparation, and social inequities hinder effective Arabic instruction. To address some of these challenges, regional innovations supported by WISE via the WISE Prize and WISE EdTech Accelerator and others are demonstrating how well-designed EdTech tools can contribute to inclusive, scalable, and culturally grounded solutions. This innovation brief spotlights leading initiatives such as Kamkalima, iqrالي.جو, and Bonocle, drawing on evidence-based practices to inform policy.

## Why Arabic Language Reform Matters Now

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Spoken by more than 467 million people, Arabic is a cornerstone of cultural identity, economic opportunity, and global communication. As the official language of more than 25 countries and the world's fifth most-spoken language, Arabic plays a vital role not only in everyday communication but also in shaping the cultural, religious, and political identity of communities across the globe.

Yet, learners in Arabic-speaking countries navigate a uniquely complex linguistic landscape—one that presents both opportunities and significant educational challenges.

A three-tiered language reality: In many parts of the Arab world, students must juggle three distinct linguistic registers:

1. Home dialect: The spoken variety used in daily life (e.g., Egyptian, Levantine, Moroccan, etc.).
2. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA): The formal version taught in schools and used in media, official documents, and public discourse.
3. Colonial or international language: Typically, French in North and West Africa, and English in the Gulf and former British territories.

This linguistic layering creates friction in the teaching and learning process. The language of instruction varies not only by country but also by subject and grade level. Some systems deliver early education in MSA, while subjects such as science and mathematics later shift to French or English. In other contexts, a colonial or foreign language is used from the outset. As a result, a student might learn to read in MSA, study chemistry in French, and solve math problems in English—all while speaking a different dialect at home. This fragmented linguistic journey can hinder comprehension, deepen learning gaps, and exacerbate educational inequality.

Foundational literacy in Arabic remains critically low. According to the World Bank, over 70% of ten-year-olds in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region cannot read and understand a simple passage in Arabic (World Bank, 2021). While Arabic remains central to cultural and national identity, English increasingly dominates professional and educational domains in many parts of the Arab world, particularly in the Gulf region. This startling level of *learning poverty* reflects long-standing challenges discussed above but also rigid pedagogies, outdated curricula, insufficient teacher training, and a lack of investment in Arabic-language instruction and content creation.

The recent rise of educational technologies, especially in low-resource and multilingual contexts, has opened new opportunities. Global research shows that EdTech interventions, when localized, equity-driven, and integrated into pedagogy can improve learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2022; Patrinos et al., 2022). In the Arab region, digital tools like Kamkalima, iqrالي.جو, and Bonocle offer promising approaches to improving Arabic literacy, particularly through gamification, adaptive learning, and accessibility features.

However, technology alone is not the solution. While EdTech has the potential to enhance literacy outcomes, it must sit within a broader strategy that celebrates Arabic as a living language tied to identity, belonging, and linguistic sovereignty. Without this cultural and political recognition, even the most innovative EdTech tools risk superficial add-ons rather than transformative learning experiences. In many contexts, Arabic is increasingly marginalized in favor of English or French in both public discourse and formal education, especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and higher education fields. This contributes to the perception that Arabic is less relevant to modernity or global participation, further alienating learners. As scholars have noted (Al-Batal, 2018; Warschauer & Elgibali, 2002), reversing this trend requires a societal shift in how Arabic is positioned and valued, not only in schools but across public life.

Arabic language reform must be holistic, going beyond EdTech to engage with questions of identity, equity, and cultural sovereignty. Reform efforts must embed Arabic within a vibrant ecosystem of museums, public spaces, media, and online platforms that support formal and informal education. Otherwise, Arabic will continue to be seen as disconnected from innovation, civic life, and global relevance.

Some countries are taking steps in this direction. In Qatar, the Qatar Foundation prioritizes Arabic language development as part of its broader strategy on cultural preservation and innovation. Initiatives like [Qatar Foundation BilAraby](#) celebrates and promotes the rich tapestry of the Arabic language and culture. It aims to amplify the voices, stories, and ideas from the Arabic-speaking world. Several museums and exhibitions in Qatar present Arabic as a primary interpretive language alongside English, signaling its centrality in educational and national narratives.

This aligns with global best practices in valuing languages, which highlight the importance of treating language not just as a subject but as part of the environment. For example, in Tunisia, researchers have advocated for equipping public spaces—like libraries, public transportation, and cultural centers—with Arabic digital signage, audio prompts, and educational materials to normalize and elevate the presence of Arabic in everyday life (Mahfoudhi et al., 2021). These initiatives contribute to what is often called a “linguistic landscape” that reinforces language learning beyond the classroom.

This brief outlines the main pedagogical, technological, and systemic challenges to Arabic instruction and highlights promising policy and innovation pathways—drawing from WISE-supported programs and beyond—to elevate Arabic literacy and inclusion across the region.

## Structural Barriers to Effective Arabic Language Learning

Despite reform momentum, systemic and structural barriers still hinder progress in K-12 classrooms. These barriers are entrenched in educational policy, pedagogy, and infrastructure, and disproportionately affect students in marginalized or under-resourced contexts. Understanding the root causes is essential to designing sustainable solutions that go beyond surface-level reforms.

The phenomenon of diglossia—the coexistence of MSA and regional dialects—creates a persistent friction between the language of formal education and students’ everyday linguistic realities (Jallad, 2020). For many children across the Arab world, MSA is first encountered upon entering school, often without prior oral exposure, which can hinder early literacy and comprehension. Arabic is further characterized by multidiglossia, with MSA occupying the formal end of the spectrum and a wide array of regional dialects used in homes and communities. As a result, students are frequently required to navigate between their home dialect, broader regional varieties heard in media, and MSA used in academic, administrative, and formal public contexts. In Algeria and Morocco, studies show that teachers often code-switch between dialect and MSA to enhance understanding—evidence of the value of flexible, context-sensitive language use in multilingual classrooms. The linguistic landscape becomes even more layered in households where both *Darija* (Moroccan Arabic) and *Tamazight* (the indigenous language of North Africa) are spoken. This interplay of languages affects access to education and students’ cultural identity. These dynamics call for inclusive language policies and pedagogical solutions—including EdTech—that recognize and incorporate the full spectrum of linguistic diversity in Arab societies.



## Curriculum Rigidity and Pedagogical Constraints

Arabic instruction in most K-12 systems remains grammar-heavy and lecture-based, with limited opportunities for inquiry-based or project-based learning (Taha-Thomure, 2019). Teachers are often bound to outdated textbooks and standardized testing systems that prioritize rote memorization over skill acquisition.

“ Let's look at curricula across the Arab world. Curricula tell us what's important and textbooks give us a tool to translate what is important into practice. One issue that we saw very common in the region is the confusion between curricula and textbooks and looking at textbooks as the curriculum. Whereas textbooks are supposed to be one of many tools available to you as a teacher to be able to achieve the objectives set forth in a curriculum.”

**Nisrine Makkouk,  
Kamkalima**

## Gaps in Teacher Preparation and Continuous Training

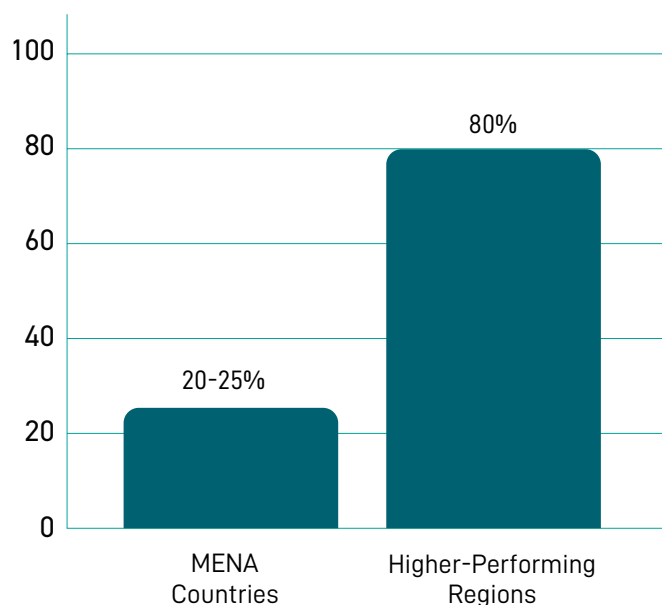
Professional development for Arabic language teachers is often insufficient, with limited access to modern instructional tools, differentiated learning strategies, or training in inclusive and digital pedagogies (Gregory et al., 2021; Nouredine, 2024).

## Lack of Parental Engagement and Early Literacy Support

In several MENA countries, only 20–25% of parents read to their children, compared to 80% in higher-performing regions (World Bank, 2021). This early literacy gap is compounded by a lack of Arabic-language resources at home and parental preference for English or French due to their perceived socioeconomic value (Gabriela et al., 2022). This lack of involvement affects children's language development by limiting their exposure to Arabic outside of formal education.

## Parental Reading Engagement: A Stark Comparison

*World Bank, 2021*



## Digital Inequity and Accessibility Barriers

Despite the promise of digital tools to democratize learning, significant equity and accessibility gaps persist in Arabic language education. A key challenge lies in the technical limitations of digital platforms in supporting Arabic script, particularly its right-to-left (RTL) orientation, complex ligatures, and diacritical marks (*harakat*), which are essential for accurate reading and pronunciation. Many platforms and learning management systems (LMS) fail to render Arabic correctly or to support interactive, vowelized texts. These capabilities are critical for early literacy development (Alharbi, 2020).

In addition, most EdTech tools that target Arabic learners are built around MSA, neglecting the rich linguistic diversity of the Arabic-speaking world, including regional dialects. This creates a disconnect for many learners, particularly younger children who are more fluent in their local dialects and may find MSA unfamiliar and difficult to engage with (Bassiouney, 2009).

Accessibility is further hampered for learners in rural or underserved communities. Limited internet connectivity, a lack of appropriate devices, and insufficient digital infrastructure block equitable access to high-quality Arabic content (UNESCO, 2022). For learners with disabilities—especially those who are blind or visually impaired—the landscape is even more constrained. Arabic braille is inconsistently supported across digital platforms, and there is a severe lack of accessible Arabic-language EdTech tools, both in terms of availability and funding for development. As Lynch et al. (2021) emphasize, inclusive EdTech in Arabic remains underdeveloped, leaving many children with disabilities behind in the digital learning revolution.

# WISE Supported Initiatives

## Innovation Spotlights: Bridging the Gap

*[Iqrati.jo](#) is an EdTech platform that connects parents with free, evidence-based resources right when they need them most. Using behavioral science strategies to help them adopt reading habits. The platform provides parents with resources they need to successfully achieve their reading goals e.g. story books, videos on effective reading and overcoming common challenges, an AI chatbot that answers parents' questions on reading with their children, and creates stories to read, in addition to activities that make reading with children a more engaging experience for both parents and children.*

Through initiatives like the [WISE Prize for Education](#) and the [WISE EdTech Accelerator](#), WISE supports a growing community of innovators who are tackling these issues head-on. The following section spotlights EdTech solutions that promote curriculum refinement, enhance parental involvement, and improve braille accessibility to advance Arabic literacy and support inclusive education.

### Engaging Parents as Partners in Arabic Learning

Arabic literacy in early childhood remains a pressing challenge across the Arab region, especially in non-formal and underserved learning environments where structured exposure to MSA is limited. Children typically begin formal education with minimal prior exposure to MSA, while their everyday language consists largely of local dialects—a phenomenon known as *multidiglossia*. This linguistic disconnect hampers children's ability to engage meaningfully with literacy instruction from the start.

WISE Prize 2025 Finalist [Iqrati.jo](#) addresses this issue by targeting Arabic language acquisition during the most formative years—from birth to age six—with a focus on empowering parents as early literacy champions. Recognizing the need for early auditory and visual exposure to MSA (Jallad, 2020), the initiative provides accessible, culturally relevant content and tools to help parents become active participants in their children's language development, even if they themselves lack formal education.

Over 50% of parents exposed to [Iqrati.jo](#)'s materials reported increased reading frequency with their children—a significant behavioral shift in households previously disengaged from Arabic literacy practices.

A key strength of [Iqrati.jo](#) is its ability to bridge the digital divide through low-tech, high-impact delivery channels. Unlike many EdTech platforms that rely heavily on stable internet connections or advanced devices, [Iqrati.jo](#) is designed to work across low-bandwidth environments, making it particularly effective in reaching rural and refugee communities. It also emphasizes offline access to Arabic reading materials, ensuring inclusivity for families without consistent connectivity or digital literacy skills.

To overcome barriers related to diglossia, [Iqrati.jo](#) uses gamification as a pedagogical strategy with content deliberately introducing children to MSA in playful, story-based formats that incorporate familiar dialectical phrases and cultural references. This gradual immersion strategy eases the transition between spoken dialects and formal Arabic, reducing cognitive overload and fostering linguistic confidence in young learners. These features are crucial for promoting literacy as a joyful, engaging experience and for countering the traditional perception of Arabic learning as rigid or overly academic.

“ We conducted a national survey to understand the home learning environment and what parents are doing. And we found that only 6% of parents reported reading to their children in the past three days. This is a very low number. ”

**Fadia Hamdi,**  
**Iqrati.jo**

What makes [Iqrati.jo](#) especially impactful is its cross-sector approach to outreach. The team has forged partnerships with multiple ministries—including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Awqaf—to embed literacy promotion into existing public services. For example, they have trained healthcare workers in public clinics, which serve over 90% of Jordan's population, to distribute books and demonstrate reading techniques during routine vaccine visits. Collaborations with mosques and community centers have also been instrumental in expanding reach while building trust within communities, including among refugee populations.

Crucially, these strategies are not one-size-fits-all. [Iqrati.jo](#) tailors its interventions based on local cultural norms and infrastructure realities, enabling its model to be scaled and adapted to diverse settings across the region. Its success in Jordan has already sparked interest from neighboring countries seeking to replicate its approach in similarly underserved contexts.



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The results speak for themselves: The Iqrali.jo program has documented a 53% increase in parental engagement among families who previously did not read to their children. This shift illustrates the power of meeting families where they are, and of designing EdTech solutions that align with real-world behaviors, constraints, and aspirations.

At its core, iqrali.jo demonstrates that advancing Arabic literacy requires more than classroom reforms—it demands holistic, culturally responsive strategies that position parents as co-educators, leverage public infrastructure, and prioritize access over sophistication. In doing so, it offers a scalable, evidence-based model for how technology can meaningfully support early language development in Arabic and beyond.

## Reaching Every Learner through Gamified and Inclusive Literacy Approaches

Literacy rates among the visually impaired remain critically low worldwide—around 10% in the United States and as little as 1% in India. These figures reflect a persistent global challenge driven by two key barriers: the severe shortage of educators trained in braille instruction and the limited availability of affordable, accessible learning tools. Existing assistive technologies often prioritize audio-based alternatives or support for advanced braille users, leaving early learners underserved—particularly in Arabic and other languages lacking localized resources.

“ The main problem is literacy among the blind community ... if I pick only two challenges, it's going to be mainly the lack of braille educators and Education for visually impaired and lack of tools. The tools available are very expensive and hard to reach. So it's basically experts who could help teach braille, and the tools required are not available. ”

**Abdelrazek Aly,  
Bonocle**

The number of children with disabilities in the Middle East is increasing. There remains a regional and global shortage of qualified medical experts to support them. With that in mind, the Saudi-based platform YNMO chose to launch an app in 2017 as a means to provide schools, learning centers and clinics with the capability to design and monitor individualized treatment plans for students with special needs. Using their combined clinical and research experience in developmental disabilities (including autism), the YNMO team created a platform that can help users design, monitor and share personalized therapeutic plans, and in turn, share these daily notes of progress with students' families so that they too can be involved in their development and learning.

By localizing accessibility features and offering culturally relevant content, YNMO demonstrates how inclusive EdTech can bridge the accessibility divide for early Arabic learners with visual impairments.

Bonocle, a WISE Prize 2025 finalist, is closing this gap through a groundbreaking approach that combines accessible hardware, inclusive design, and gamified learning. Its core innovation is a portable device featuring a single, refreshable braille cell—intended to serve as a lifelong learning companion. Paired with tailored software and playful content, Bonocle helps children develop foundational braille literacy skills through engaging, game-based experiences.

A critical stage in braille education is the development of finger sensitivity, which is often slow, repetitive, and discouraging for young learners. Bonocle's software tackles this barrier by turning practice into play—using sensory games that train touch recognition while maintaining motivation and enjoyment. These games are designed to be inclusive, enabling children to play alongside sighted peers, reinforcing a sense of social connection and fun.

Beyond pedagogical innovation, Bonocle also addresses accessibility and affordability. Unlike many braille learning tools that require multiple devices for different learning

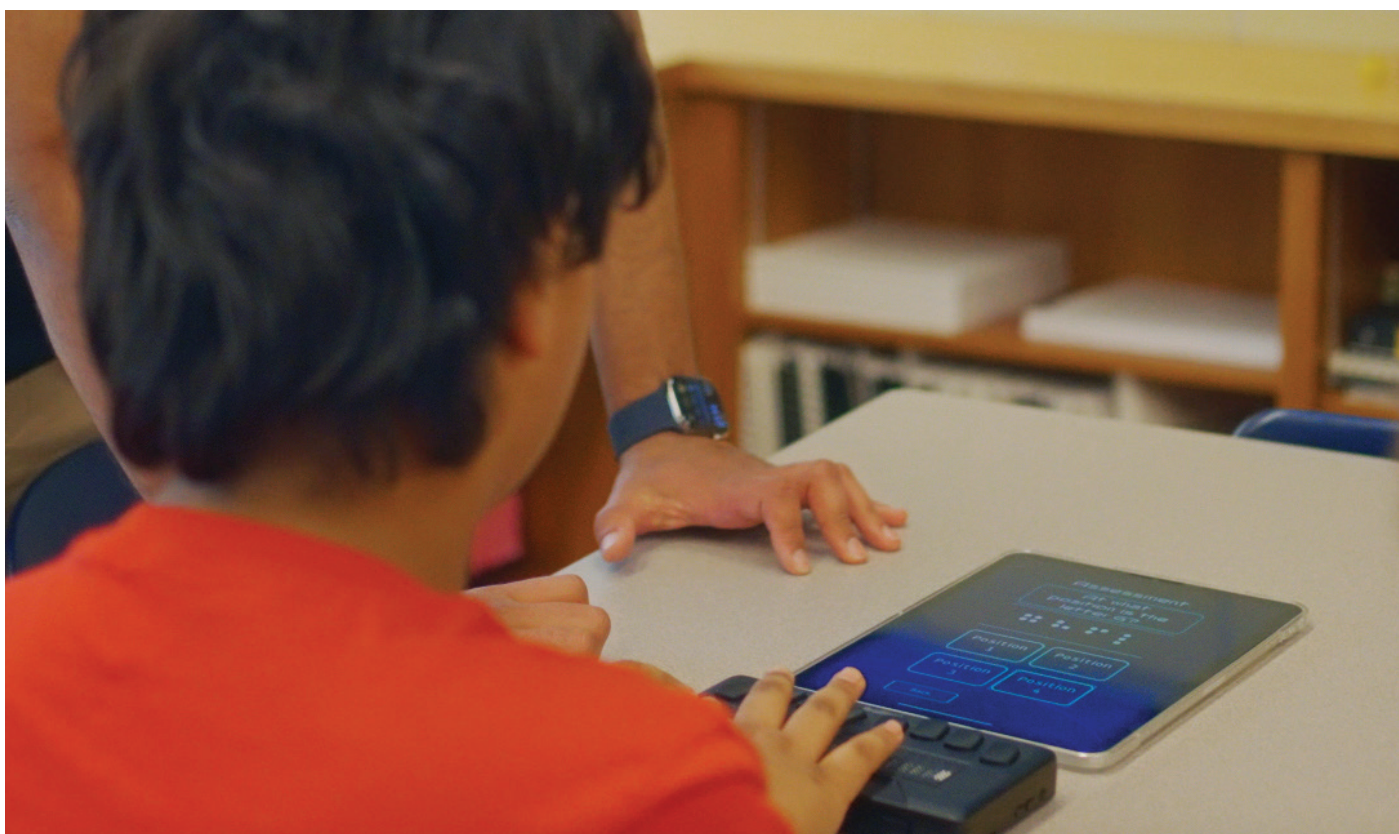
stages (e.g., alphabet, grammar, spelling), Bonocle's modular hardware and software allow users to grow without upgrading systems. The platform currently supports Arabic and English, with plans to expand into additional languages, making it adaptable across linguistic contexts.

*"We're providing games at the early stage where they just don't need to understand how brain works or the Alphabet or anything. Just games that would provide tactile representation so they can have their finger always over the dots and actually keep playing. And we provide games that they can play with their sighted friends and family and that would help them motivate and keep playing" - Abdelrazek from Bonocle*

Other efforts in the region have also made important contributions. In Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, a vision impairment instructor developed a braille tablet tailored for STEM education in Arabic and English. In Egypt, the *Momken* initiative from Egypt Scholars introduced "Braille Cells for Blinds"—a cost-effective refreshable braille display. However, Bonocle remains distinctive in offering a fully integrated solution that combines tactile technology, gamification, and early-stage literacy instruction in one device.

By blending inclusive design with scalable, engaging technology, Bonocle is redefining what early braille education can look like—especially in Arabic-speaking contexts. Its model offers valuable lessons for broader efforts in accessible education: innovation must be both human-centered and rooted in the lived realities of learners. In doing so, Bonocle helps ensure that no child is left behind in their journey to literacy.

***Bonocle:** (Inclusive Braille Learning for the Visually Impaired) Bonocle is an award-winning EdTech innovation that combines a refreshable Braille device with gamified software. Designed to teach braille from early childhood, Bonocle is addressing a critical inclusion gap, especially in Arabic-language content.*



## Revitalizing Arabic Language Instruction Through Teacher Empowerment and Digital Innovation

Arabic language instruction across the region has long faced systemic challenges: outdated curricula, rigid pedagogical approaches, and limited access to high-quality professional development. Many Arabic teachers still rely on other-language training due to a scarcity of modern Arabic-language resources. Additionally, instructional content is often criticized as overly politicized, heavily religious, or lacking in quality—factors that contribute to student disengagement and leave educators ill-equipped to deliver dynamic, learner-centered instruction.

Kamkalima, a WISE EdTech Accelerator alumnus, directly addresses these challenges through a hybrid digital platform designed to modernize Arabic teaching and learning. The platform offers curriculum-aligned content alongside intuitive, pedagogically informed tools that support educators in blending traditional instruction with contemporary digital practices.

Kamkalima's approach centers on a robust professional development model. Recognizing the urgent need for accessible, ongoing training, Kamkalima provides monthly virtual sessions on topics such as AI-powered differentiated learning. These sessions have attracted not only Arabic language teachers but also educators from other disciplines, signaling broad relevance and demand for teacher professional development. To further support

teacher autonomy and growth, Kamkalima has developed a micro-credentialing system that enables educators to build skills at their own pace while earning formal recognition. This system encourages a shift from rote-based instruction to personalized, student-responsive teaching. The platform also integrates advanced analytics that distinguish between assessment for learning—to inform instruction—and assessment of learning—to track achievement of teachers.

On the learner side, Kamkalima prioritizes engagement through gamified content, an AI-powered bot for interactive support, and formats designed to foster a relaxed, accessible learning environment. Co-founder Nisrine Makkouk emphasizes that "when students feel at ease, they are more likely to engage and thrive—an ethos reflected in the platform's student experience".

In sum, Kamkalima exemplifies how Arabic EdTech can empower teachers, invigorate student learning, and bridge the gap between outdated methods and the demands of a modern classroom. Its holistic model—blending localized content, professional development, and engaging pedagogy—is setting a new benchmark for Arabic language instruction across the region.

*[Kamkalima](#) is an Arabic educational EdTech for learning and teaching in schools. Empowering Arabic classrooms with the needed tools, resources, and support to raise a generation of students armed with 21st-century skills, and to inspire teachers to do what they do best, teach.*



# Key Insights and Policy Recommendations

## Embracing Diglossia to Strengthen Arabic Literacy

### 1. Reframe Diglossia as an Educational Asset—not a Barrier

Rather than forcing linguistic uniformity, teach students how to navigate between their home dialects and MSA.

**Policy Tip:** Embed diglossic awareness into curriculum and teacher training—just like bilingual education models elsewhere.

### 2. Start Early: Bridge the Gap Between Dialect and MSA from Day One

Early and sustained exposure to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is crucial. Evidence shows that introducing MSA through storytelling, songs, and phonics in early childhood narrows the linguistic gap with dialects and significantly improves reading readiness.

**Policy Tip:** Integrate playful MSA exposure into early learning frameworks to ease language transitions.

### 3. Promote Phonological Awareness through Dialect-MSA Transition

Effective literacy interventions are built from the familiar. Teaching phonological and morphological awareness first in colloquial Arabic—and then transitioning to MSA—has proven successful in enhancing metalinguistic skills.

**Policy Tip:** Structure early reading programs to use dialects as a springboard, not an obstacle, to mastering MSA.

### 4. Localize Global Content to Engage Learners in Arabic

Projects like Taghreedat demonstrate the power of localizing global content into Arabic. When students see high-quality, culturally resonant materials in MSA, their motivation and comprehension improve.

**Policy Tip:** Invest in local adaptation of open educational resources and global platforms to build MSA fluency.

### 5. Support the Production of Culturally Relevant Content

There is an urgent need for high-quality Arabic reading content that is free of political or religious bias. Platforms like Asafeer and Rufoof have shown how accessible, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive Arabic books can fuel a love for reading.

**Policy Tip:** Publicly fund and distribute inclusive Arabic reading materials that reflect diverse voices and contexts.

### 6. Empower Parents as Language Partners at Home

Parental involvement is a game-changer. Digital tools—like mobile apps and interactive Arabic courses—can help families actively support literacy at home. The UAE's Arabic Language Charter sets a precedent for cross-generational Arabic promotion.

**Policy Tip:** Launch national parent-engagement campaigns with incentives (e.g. free apps, learning credits, park/family space access).

## 7. Mandate Innovation: Government Policy Can Move the Needle

Top-down interventions work. Initiatives like Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK)'s early Arabic hours and Arabic Language Teaching Awards show how public policy can incentivize quality Arabic teaching and spark digital innovation.

**Policy Tip:** Create structured mandates and national contests to reward Arabic language excellence in schools and EdTech.

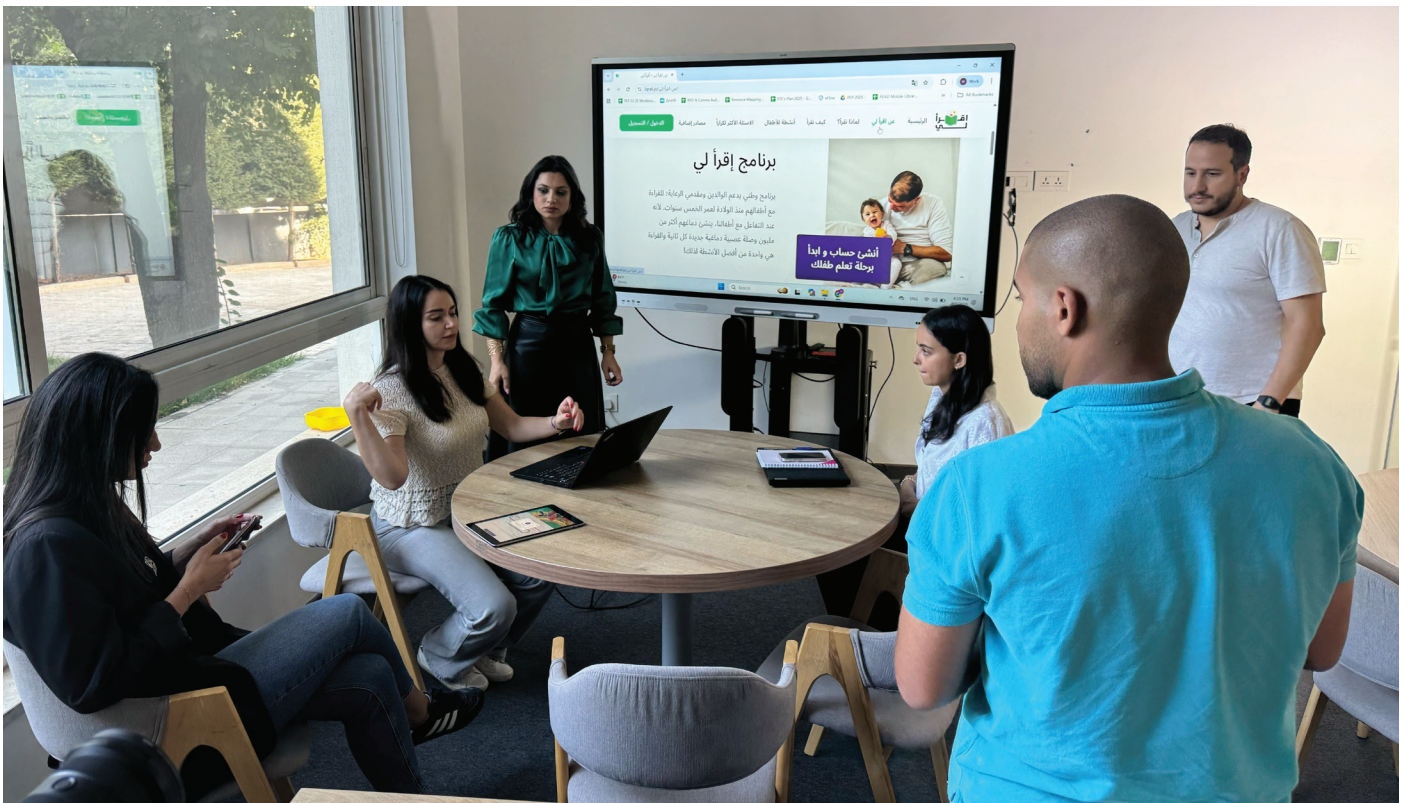
## 8. Establish National Language Commissions for Coherent Planning

Countries like Morocco offer a roadmap. Through its Language Commission established to navigate Morocco's complex multilingual landscape, this official body produced multiple policy frameworks each labeled alphabetically (Plan Alef, Ba, Ta, Tha, Jeem) to define the status and role of Arabic, Amazigh (Berber) languages, French, Spanish, and Darija (colloquial Arabic). Additionally, the government-funded Tamazight-learning app, aligned with the 2022-2026 roadmap, accelerates language adoption across education levels and illustrates how planning meets innovation.

**Policy Tip:** Set up independent national bodies to guide inclusive, multilingual language policy rooted in local realities.

“ The focus of the program as a whole is to get parents to read with their children from birth in the hopes that this enables them to learn foundation literacy skills and it bridges the gap of school readiness once they arrive at primary at grade one in public schools. ”

Fadia Hamdi,  
Iqrali.jo



# EdTech to Transform Arabic Language Learning

## 1. Modernize Curriculum through EdTech

Shift from rote grammar and memorization to digital tools that promote storytelling, educational games, and engaging learning.

**Policy Tip:** Fund EdTech platforms that embed interactive Arabic instruction into early education frameworks.

## 2. Develop Comprehensive Arabic EdTech Tools

Digital platforms should cover all four language domains—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—using voice recognition and real-time feedback.

**Policy Tip:** Set quality benchmarks for Arabic EdTech platforms to meet comprehensive language development standards.

## 3. Expand Gamified Learning Solutions

Rather than forcing linguistic uniformity, teach students how to navigate between their home dialects and MSA.

**Policy Tip:** Scale successful gamified tools across public schools and early childhood centers.

## 4. Integrate Home-Based Learning Modules

Support EdTech tools that offer family-friendly Arabic content, enabling regular practice at home.

**Policy Tip:** Promote apps with parental dashboards and bilingual story modes to engage caregivers.

## 5. Leverage Community Partnerships

Inspired by iqrali.jo in Jordan, literacy programs can be embedded into health clinics, libraries, and community centers.

**Policy Tip:** Partner with social service hubs to integrate Arabic learning kiosks and outreach programs.

## 6. Implement Ongoing EdTech Professional Development

Support EdTech tools that offer family-friendly Arabic content, enabling regular practice at home.

**Policy Tip:** Establish national training hubs or online PD modules to build Arabic teachers' digital fluency.

## 7. Introduce Incentivized Micro-Credentials

Platforms like Kamkalima offer bite-sized credentials for EdTech-driven Arabic teaching.

**Policy Tip:** Partner with EdTech providers to offer certified training pathways recognized by Ministries of Education.

## 8. Increase Public Investment in Arabic Literacy Tools

To scale innovation, governments must invest.

**Policy Tip:** Dedicate a percentage of national education technology budgets to Arabic language content creation and platform development.

# Accessibility Recommendations for Arabic EdTech

## 1. Mandate Inclusive Design Across Arabic EdTech Platforms

by requiring the integration of accessibility features such as text-to-speech, speech-to-text, closed captions, and screen-reader compatibility to support diverse learning needs. Platforms like YNMO demonstrate how localized, inclusive design can improve access for learners with disabilities.

**Policy Tip:** Enforce accessibility standards as part of EdTech procurement policies and incentivize developers to meet or exceed these benchmarks with certification or funding.

## 2. Invest in Assistive Technologies and Braille Solutions

by expanding public-private investment in specialized Arabic EdTech tools, including braille-compatible devices like Bonocle and gamified solutions for visually impaired learners.

**Policy Tip:** Create dedicated innovation grants or procurement pathways for Arabic-language assistive EdTech, especially those supporting early literacy and special education.

## 3. Align EdTech Tools with Inclusive Pedagogical Models

by ensuring that platforms are grounded in inclusive education frameworks like "Access to Learning" and "Learning to Access," and support research to evaluate their impact on students with disabilities.

**Policy Tip:** Partner with academic institutions to develop impact studies on assistive Arabic EdTech and integrate evidence-based practices into national digital education strategies.

“ Bonocle is very intuitive, and every app comes with a tutorial. And once you go through the tutorial and you understand what Bonocle is and how to operate it, you get a self-learning experience. ”

**Ramy Abdulzaher,**  
Bonocle

# Conclusion

Arabic language education stands at a critical crossroads. Despite its deep cultural and linguistic heritage, systemic challenges, from diglossia and outdated pedagogy to limited teacher training and digital inequities, these factors combined continue to impede effective learning. Yet, the rise of localized, inclusive EdTech solutions presents an opportunity to reimagine Arabic instruction in ways that are engaging, equitable, and rooted in identity.

Innovations such as Kamkalima, iqrali.jo, and Bonocle demonstrate how technology, when thoughtfully designed and culturally grounded, can complement reforms in pedagogy and policy. These models move beyond digital delivery to promote active learning, teacher empowerment, and accessibility for all learners, including those with disabilities. They highlight that the most impactful innovations are those that integrate technology with community engagement, parental participation, and teacher capacity building.

However, technology is only as effective as the ecosystem that supports it. Real transformation requires aligning EdTech innovation with national language policies, inclusive curriculum frameworks, and sustained public investment in Arabic content development.

Ultimately, rethinking Arabic language teaching is not just an educational reform; it is a cultural imperative. By bridging technology, pedagogy, and policy, the Arabic-speaking world (and its diaspora) can foster a generation of confident, literate learners who see Arabic not as a barrier to global engagement but as a bridge connecting heritage, knowledge, and innovation.

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