

Developing e-Business Capacities for Arabic Speaking Migrants to Australia

Book Chapter Proposal



for

School-University-Community Collaboration and the Immigrant Educational Experience

by

Dr Amelie Hanna , PhD

School of Education
Flinders University
Amelie.Hanna@outlook.com.au
Mob: +61 404 131312
(Corresponding Author)

Prof Lindsey Conner

School of Education
Flinders University
Lindsey.Conner@flinders.edu.au
Office: +61 08 8201 3532

February 2020

Developing e-Business Capacities for Arabic Speaking Migrants to Australia

Unemployment can be a result of external socio-economic factors, as well as individual factors, such as age, gender, marital status, and unemployment history and duration (Houssemand & Pignault, 2019) as well as computer and professional skills gaps (Castellazzi, 2016; Dengler, 2019). Some governments have created a number of programs, including unemployment prevention services, job search assistance services and re-employment services to address this (Wandner, 2018).

In Australia, the cost of unemployment benefits is causing a financial burden of \$1.3 billion/year to the Australian Government, and 17% of unemployment benefit recipients were identified as being from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (ACOSS, 2018). Among those who are unemployed in Australia, there are around 56000 unemployed Arabic-speakers. The unemployment rate (Figure 1) for this group is three times higher than the average unemployment rate in Australia (~7%).

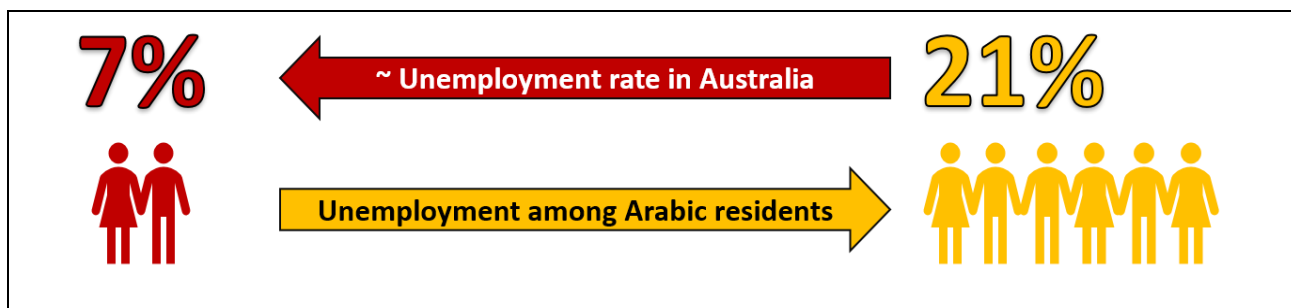


Figure 1: Unemployment rate among Arabic-speaking residents in Australia

There are a number of reasons for this extremely high unemployment rate among Arabic-speaking residents in Australia (Figure 2). These include: lack of English skills (Cranitch, 2010), lack of ICT skills, lack of professional skills including critical thinking, problem-solving, networking, decision making and team work skills (Castellazzi, 2016; Dengler, 2019) and discrimination (Booth et al., 2012).

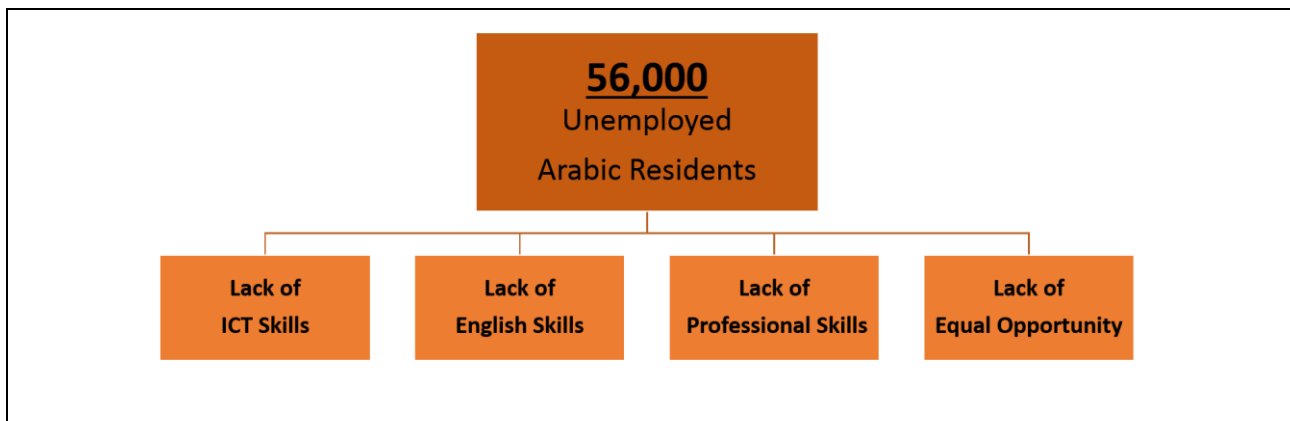


Figure 2: Reasons of unemployment among Arabic-speaking residents in Australia

Many migrants from less developed countries face challenges in the transition to work, including English language skills and the support they need for social inclusion and integration (King, 2014; Reindorf, 2015). A suggested approach is to use translanguaging to bridge this transition. Translanguaging is used to negotiate meanings through social and cognitive activities in two languages that helps to maximise understanding and supports the development of skills in the weaker language (Krompák & Meyer, 2018; Lewis et al., 2012). In a translingual approach to bilingual education, learners are able to go back and forth between two languages, so they are more likely to engage with content (Flores & Beardsmore, 2015, p. 219). In practice, teaching a subject (the ‘content’) through the medium of a language that is new, or perhaps weak, helps the learner to continue using and therefore developing their language skills (Thomas et al., 2018). A learning design, that includes translanguaging pedagogies in mother tongue instruction was argued to assist immigrant children in schools to engage in learning more effectively in host countries (Hornberger, 2017).

In this chapter, we focus on how the Australian Government and different not-for-profit and community organisations address the unemployment issue, including skills development (VET, 2020), with a special focus on migrants from Arabic Middle East countries. Currently, there is lack of design-based research that is conducted beyond formal education settings (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012) as well as a lack of knowledge in relation to how to design a program using a translingual approach (Flores & Beardsmore, 2015) for supporting immigrants to overcome unemployment. We

advocate for a need to advance community-based bi-lingual e-business training to help develop the ICT and English skills of immigrants for work readiness, and/or for assisting them in establishing e-businesses.

References

- ACOSS. (2018). *Facts of unemployment*. Australian Council of Social Service. https://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ACOSS_JA_Faces-of-Unemployment_14-September-2018_web.pdf
- Anderson, T., & Shattuck, J. (2012). Design-based research: A decade of progress in education research? *Educational Researcher*, 41(1), 16-25.
- Booth, A. L., Leigh, A., & Varganova, E. (2012). Does ethnic discrimination vary across minority groups? Evidence from a field experiment. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 74(4), 547-573.
- Castellazzi, S. (2016). *Employability and access to training: A contribution to the implementation of corporate responsibility in the labor market*. Springer.
- Cranitch, M. (2010). Developing language and literacy skills to support refugee students in the transition from primary to secondary school. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 33(3), 255-267.
- Dengler, P. (2019). *Lifelong employability thriving in an ageing society*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Flores, N., & Beardsmore, H. B. (2015). Programs and structures in bilingual and multilingual education. In W. E. Wright, S. Boun, & O. García (Eds.), *The Handbook of bilingual and multilingual education* (First Edition. ed., pp. 205-222). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hornberger, N. H. (2017). Researching the continua of biliteracy. In K. A. King, Y.-J. Lai, & S. May (Eds.), *Research methods in language and education* (3rd ed. 2017. ed., pp. 125-142). Springer International Publishing.
- Houssemand, C., & Pignault, A. (2019). Unemployment normalization in different economic contexts. In H. Adachi, K. Inagaki, T. Nakamura, & Y. Osumi (Eds.), *Technological progress, income distribution, and unemployment: Theory and empirics* (pp. 37-51). Springer.
- King, S. M. (2014). *Unfolding transitions: A collaborative investigation of the education and career pathways of African youth from refugee backgrounds in South Australia* [Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, Flinders University, School of Education].
- Krompák, E., & Meyer, S. (2018). Translanguaging and the negotiation of meaning: Multilingual signage in a Swiss linguistic landscape. In G. Mazzaferro (Ed.), *Translanguaging as everyday practice* (pp. 235-255). Springer.
- Lewis, G., Jones, B., & Baker, C. (2012). Translanguaging: origins and development from school to street and beyond. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 18(7), 641-654.
- Reindorf, A. (2015). *The Transition of Refugee Youth to Mainstream Education in Australia* [Masters by Research Thesis, Flinders University, School of Social and Policy Studies].
- Thomas, E. M., Apolloni, D., & Parry, N. M. (2018). *Bilingual teaching methods: A quick reference guide for educators*. Bangor University.
- VET. (2020). *Skills development*. Australian Government, Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business. Retrieved 5 Febuary from <https://training.gov.au/>
- Wandner, S. A. (2018). *Unemployment insurance reform: Fixing a broken system*. MI: W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.