

**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH  
AND STUDIES PROGRAM  
(84.017A)**



**Fiscal Year 2009 New Grants  
Summary and Abstracts  
Instructional Materials**

International Education Programs Service  
U.S. Department of Education  
6th Floor, 1990 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20006-8521

Application No., Applicant and Project Director	Project Title	Type	Years	Funding		
		IM/RE		FY 2009	FY 2010 (est.)	FY 2011 (est.)
P017A090297 <b>Regents of the University of Minnesota</b> CARLA 450 McNamara Center 200 Oak Street Minneapolis, MN 55455-2070 Elaine Tarone	Asian Learner Language for Teachers	IM	3	\$158,982	\$173,759	\$113,603
P017A090301 <b>Georgia Tech Research Corporation</b> School of Modern Languages 505 10th Street, N.W. Atlanta, GA 30332-0420 Stuart H. Goldberg	Advanced/Intermediate Language and Culture through Song: New Materials for Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Russian	IM	3	\$190,769	\$182,435	\$183,785
P017A090304 <b>The Colleges of the Seneca</b> Russian Studies Hobart and William Smith Colleges 330 Pulteney Street Geneva, NY 14456 David J. Galloway	To Create Web-Based Interactive Instructional Materials on Russian Verbs of Motion and Verbal Aspect which will Greatly Enhance the Teaching of Russian at the Beginning and Intermediate Levels	IM	3	\$145,867	\$173,934	\$178,693
P017A090309 <b>Amherst College</b> Academic Technology Services P.O. Box 5000 Amherst, MA 01002-5000 Jonathan Scott Payne	LangBot Project: An Intelligent Agent for Language Learning	IM	3	\$77,534	\$83,650	\$60,674
P017A090315 <b>The College of William and Mary</b> Modern Languages & Literature Grants & Research Administration P.O. Box 8795 Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795 John Eisele	Teaching Arabic Variation: Developing Language Resources for Integrating Modern Standard Arabic and Arabic Dialects	IM	3	\$203,251	\$260,725	\$264,195
P017A090323 <b>America-Mideast Educational and Training Services Inc.</b> 1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 1100 Washington, DC 20036 Jerome B. Bookin-Weiner	Multi-Media Materials for Teaching Colloquial Arabic and Culture	IM	3	\$200,000	\$188,909	\$112,426
P017A090329 <b>President and Fellows of Harvard College</b> African and African American Studies 1350 Massachusetts Avenue Office for Sponsored Programs, Holyoke 600 Cambridge, MA 02138 John M. Mugane	Enhanced Language Instruction for African Studies (ELIAS)	IM	3	\$181,356	\$197,001	\$192,052

Application No., Applicant and Project Director	Project Title	Type	Years	Funding Allocations		
		IM/RE		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
P017A090351 <b>Five Colleges, Incorporated</b> 97 Spring Street Amherst, MA 01002 Elizabeth H.D. Mazzocco	Culturetalk: Exploring Critical Languages and Cultures	IM	3	<b>\$117,303</b>	\$142,319	\$137,706
P017A090353 <b>Northern Illinois University</b> Center Southeast Asian Studies 520 College View Court DeKalb, IL 60115 James T. Collins	Multimedia Online Learner's Dictionary of Malay	IM	3	<b>\$157,372</b>	\$190,431	\$186,249
P017A090354 <b>The Regents of the University of California</b> Sponsored Projects Office 2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 313 Berkeley, CA 94704-5940 Leonardo Arriola	The Horn of Africa Online Curriculum Project	IM	3	<b>\$190,394</b>	\$169,731	\$181,743
P017A090364 <b>The Research Foundation of SUNY, University at Albany</b> 1400 Washington Avenue, MSC312 Albany, NY 12222 Peter Shea	Student to Student Chinese Language Lab	IM	3	<b>\$197,835</b>	\$199,670	\$199,835
P017A090366 <b>University of Maryland</b> Office of Research Administration and Advancement 3112 Lee Building College Park, MD 20742 Frederick Jackson	E-Learning Materials for Improving Reading Proficiency among Secondary School Students of Arabic and Chinese	IM	3	<b>\$216,246</b>	\$186,931	\$196,052
P017A090373 <b>The University of Texas at Austin</b> Office of Sponsored Projects 101 East 27th Street Suite 4.300 Austin, TX 78712 Orlando Kelm	Conversa Brasileira	IM	3	<b>\$190,011</b>	\$192,977	\$120,029
P017A090375 <b>University of Hawaii</b> Indo-Pacific Language Program 2530 Dole Street Sakamaki D-200, ORS Honolulu, HI 96822 Ulrich Kozok	Distance Education Clearing House for the Indonesian Language	IM	2	<b>\$86,408</b>	\$66,738	\$0
P017A090379 <b>Surendra Kumar Gambhir</b> 33 Brownstone Boulevard Voorhees, NJ 08043 Surendra Kumar Gambhir	Business Hindi	IM	2	<b>\$68,150</b>	\$65,530	\$0

Application No., Applicant and Project Director	Project Title	Type	Years	Funding Allocations		
		IM/RE		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
P017A090398 <b>Center for Applied Linguistics</b> 4646 40th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20016 Lynn Thompson	Web-Based Oral Proficiency Assessment Training Course for Teachers of Chinese	<b>IM</b>	2	<b>\$131,287</b>	\$140,403	\$0
P017A090399 <b>Center for Applied Linguistics</b> Language Testing Division 4646 40th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20016 Margaret E. Malone	Multimedia Rater Training Program for Modern Standard Arabic (MRTP-MSA)	<b>IM</b>	3	<b>\$149,923</b>	\$149,850	\$149,804
				<b>\$2,662,688</b>	\$2,764,993	\$2,276,846

P017A090297  
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### **Asian Learner Language - Tools for Teachers**

While more and more materials are being developed to teach important critical languages, there has been very little investment in the skills and knowledge of those who teach these critical languages. Without appropriate preparation of and support for critical languages instructors, even the most brilliant materials will be underutilized or even misused. The *Asian Learner Language - Tools for Teachers* project uses the theoretical framework of Exploratory Practice in an innovative approach to critical foreign language teacher education. Using this approach, field-tested for English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher development in Tarone & Swierzbina (2009), the proposed project will produce multimedia materials on learner language for teachers of four critical Asian languages taught in the United States: Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Persian.

Designed for use in self-study as well as in teacher development and second language acquisition courses, the *Asian Learner Language - Tools for Teachers* materials include professionally-produced and edited video clips of eight learners performing a set of speaking tasks. Accompanying transcripts and activities guide teachers through the process of identifying key elements of each learner's language, and relating those insights to their pedagogical practice. These activities are specifically designed to prepare teachers of these critical Asian languages to understand the learner language that is produced in their own classrooms, and its implications for pedagogy.

The *Asian Learner Language - Tools for Teachers* project will improve the overall quality of language instruction and learning by investing in the development of the skills of critical language teachers, helping them realign their teaching to better meet the learner language development needs of their students.

**Advanced/Intermediate Language and Culture through Song: New Materials for Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Russian**

The proposed project responds to a critical need for advanced- and advanced-intermediate level course materials in Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese and Russian that are authentic, engaging, flexible and stretch the crucial skills of listening comprehension, culture knowledge and cross-cultural reflection. The Georgia Tech School of Modern Languages (Applied Language and Intercultural Studies) proposes to develop in each of these four language areas one semester of computer-deliverable, advanced-level course materials that fully exploit the linguistic and cultural richness of song as a focal point for teaching and learning.

Songs are compact, authentic, and ripe with cultural and linguistic information. Situated in the social, cultural, economic and political discourse of their language communities, they have the potential, when embedded in a contextualizing and interdisciplinary network, to bring students rapidly and effectively into this discourse and engage them with a range and variety of cultural voices. Because of their "stickiness" or memorability, songs may potentially contribute to the learner's linguistic monitor, providing grammatical-syntactic models for language production; because of the lack of visual cues (unlike film), songs are conducive to a precision focus on discrete forms or morphology often missed in running speech because of their lack of saliency to learners. Equally important, songs, when properly scaffolded through learning tasks and placed within "webs of significance" via rich contextualizing material (paintings, historical documents, newspaper articles, poems and literature excerpts, interview or broadcast segments; etc.), become a lens to view the target culture from many angles and in many layers.

Our materials would be structured around a carefully chosen, richly annotated corpus of songs and supplied with a full pedagogical apparatus and a broad range of content in various media. They would stimulate focused linguistic development and the assimilation of deep cultural knowledge. Flexibility will be incorporated into our materials on two levels. Firstly, the computer-based delivery of a rich web of content/context surrounding the annotated main corpus of songs will allow engagement by high intermediate students, and guided exploration of cultural context on the part of more proficient readers. Secondly, the materials will be available to instructors for full-course adoption or integration into existing courses, or as self-standing modules, and our model will be readily adaptable to other languages through a downloadable template and design tools. The user interface and design tools will be created in consultation with the developers by a doctoral student in Digital Media. In general, our unique position and focus as practitioners of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies within a technological university with highly developed interdisciplinary coordination among faculty and programs situates us perfectly to pursue this project.

The course materials will undergo a many-layered process of testing, review and revision. They will be piloted at Georgia Tech and other institutions, evaluated both formatively and summatively by a general pedagogy expert and by specific language area experts. Faculty and students will give feedback in narrative, blog and questionnaire form and students will be pre- and post-tested with a battery of measures targeted to a focused set of specific skills we believe these courses will develop, including particular listening functions and an understanding of the discursive nature of cultural texts in the abstract, which we have defined in terms of seven Cs: Context, Condition, Chorus, Conflict, Connotation, Comparison, and Continuity.

The paucity of Less Commonly Taught (LCT) materials using song in other than an auxiliary function makes this project all the more crucial.

P017A090304  
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### **A Russian Verbal Laboratory for Online Learning**

Verbal aspect and verbs of motion represent the height of grammatical difficulty in learning Russian for many students. Not only are these topics difficult for native English speakers to grasp on a conceptual level, but they are also difficult to train. By virtue of design alone, no existing Web exercises are able to convey to students the actual consequences of verbal choice, a critical component to understanding and learning. Our proposed Russian Verbal Laboratory will train students via an online module which provides feedback through a graphical environment. Students will interface with the program through an avatar (a graphical extension of the user, in this case a simple stick-figure) who is subject to the directional commands of the user, and by whose actions the student can immediately see the consequences of any given verbal choice. The Russian Verbal Laboratory will provide the student with a training environment in which feedback features provide guidance, mistakes can be made without consequence, and the language can truly be explored. Graphical representation of actions using prefixed verbs of motion is instantly comprehensible, truer to authentic language use, and much less cumbersome than a textual explanation would be. Thus, there is freedom to explore without penalty and to truly think about the implications of verbal aspect in Russian. The final format of the proposal will be an application integrated into our existing Web-based *Molodets!* system (developed through a 2006-08 International Research and Studies grant). The enhanced application will remain free of charge and available to anyone with a computer and internet access; a user must simply set a username and password.

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### **LangBot Project: An Intelligent Agent for Language Learning**

Instant Messaging (IM) has become the communication tool of choice among secondary- and university-aged students, but language teachers have not yet succeeded in harnessing the capabilities of this tool to support foreign language learning. LangBot is a ground-breaking second language learning and research tool designed to collect detailed behavior-tracking and self-report data, generate user models, and track vocabulary development while serving as an "intelligent" language reference agent in a conversational "wrapper." LangBot is added to a user's "buddy list" in their IM software application just like a human "buddy". Once this is done, learners can ask LangBot for help. LangBot can also initiate interactions with individual learners by asking them questions and making suggestions. Because learners are encouraged to formulate sentence-length requests for assistance in the target language (English is also possible), LangBot not only simplifies the search for language resources, it also provides an opportunity for communicative language use. LangBot can provide: (1) translations for words, phrases or sentences; (2) examples of words or phrases used in context; (3) corrective feedback on spelling, morphological and syntactic errors in sentences produced by learners; (4) automatically generated, individualized vocabulary tests that are automatically administered and scored with the results recorded in a database; (5) automatically-scored fill-in-the-blank exercises; and (6) suggestions for readings derived from online newspapers. LangBot will be freely available via the IM software learners and teachers already have installed on their computers. It will serve as a gateway to a variety of online resources commonly used by language learners.

The project Web site will provide learners with access to their own assessment data and enable them to send reports of quiz results and estimations of their current vocabulary knowledge and development history to their teachers. An instructional guide will be prepared for teachers and available on the Web site with suggestions for how they can use LangBot to enhance their curricula.

A knowledgeable team of computational linguists, computer-assisted language learning software developers, Portuguese, Chinese, and Spanish linguists, and second language acquisition researchers will develop LangBot and all language materials. Corpora, representing contemporary language use in the three languages, will be developed as a resource for the LangBot system and made available as stand-alone resources for materials development and reference. All publications and presentation materials will be accessible on the project Web site.

P017A090315  
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### **Teaching Arabic Variation: Developing Language Resources for Integrating Modern Standard Arabic and Arabic Dialects**

This instructional materials project aims to develop, produce and widely disseminate a curriculum integrating Modern Standard Arabic and several major Arabic dialects.

At the present time there is a demonstrated need for greater numbers of individuals who are knowledgeable about and fluent in the Arabic language, as recognized by all branches of the U.S. government, as well as by large segments of the American public. An important but often overlooked aspect of gaining fluency in Arabic is the attainment of productive fluency (in speaking) in at least one of its dialects, and some passive fluency in one or more other dialects (in listening). Recently, more attention has been paid to this aspect of learning Arabic, but there has so far not been a curriculum that has addressed it in a serious manner. The curriculum and language learning resources proposed in this grant are an attempt to address the issue of teaching Arabic variation in both an integrative as well as discrete manner. The curriculum is discrete in its approach by having a primary series of three resource levels focused on Modern Standard Arabic (with 12 thematic units each), along with a parallel series of four resource modules each dealing with one of the four main dialect areas: Maghrebi, Egyptian, Levantine, and Iraqi (each based on the dialect of the capital city, the unofficial "standard dialect"). This allows a discrete focus on different varieties in order to limit linguistic dissonance on the part of the learners. The curriculum is integrative in that each level or module includes information on other varieties. For example, in the Modern Standard Arabic module each unit has as its cultural focus a different urban cultural center in the Arab world, and as part of that feature distinctive phrases in the local dialect are provided to give students their first taste of Arabic linguistic reality in all its variety. In the dialect modules information is likewise provided on important local dialects within the national spheres treated: for example, the Egyptian Arabic module would include information on distinctive features of Sa'iidi, Alexandrian, and Bedouin dialects, among others, which are an important part of the linguistic competence of native speakers of this dialect. We are asking for support for the development, testing, revision, and production of a little more than half of the project: two levels of Modern Standard Arabic, and two modules of the dialects (Moroccan and Iraqi). The project in its entirety will eventually provide materials for at least three to five years of study of Modern Standard Arabic and at least one of the Arabic dialects covered by the materials, depending on the number of class hours per week and the amount of time devoted to the study of a dialect. They will be learner centered, technology-rich, and task based, with each unit developing the four skills in a coordinated and focused manner. The materials will be pilot-tested at The College of William and Mary as well as at several institutions in the United States and abroad, and will be published in both printed form as well as in an online format.

The project is meant to address the gap between pedagogical theory and linguistic reality in Arabic L2 learning materials, as well as to provide a platform for decreasing the time needed to bring Arabic learners up to the higher levels of proficiency as measured by the Interagency Language Roundtable and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ILR/ACTFL) guidelines. It addresses Competitive Preference Priority in its focus on Arabic, both in its Modern Standard and dialectal forms.

### **Multi-Media Materials for Teaching Colloquial Arabic and Culture**

This is a proposal to create materials to: (1) enhance the teaching of three colloquial Arabic dialects – Jordanian, Kuwaiti and Moroccan – within the context of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) courses; and (2) enhance the teaching of Arab-general and culture specific proficiency within the context of both MSA courses and colloquial Arabic courses. The project will take advantage of pedagogical (conceptual) and technological developments in the field of foreign language teaching to revolutionize the approach to MSA and colloquial Arabic teaching for students at all levels. It will benefit from the longtime, on-the-ground presence in the Arab world of AMIDEAST, a U.S.-based non-profit education and training organization that sponsors study abroad programs for U.S. undergraduates in the region. The project will enable creation of text and DVD materials to supplement the principal textbook used in teaching MSA – *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al- 'Arabiyya* and creation of DVD and explanatory materials to support teaching the elements of culture proficiency focusing on Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Morocco.

The project will have two discrete but reinforcing products:

1. Text and DVD materials to supplement the existing Egyptian colloquial story line in the *At-Kitaab* series with parallel story lines in Jordanian, Kuwaiti and Moroccan colloquial; and
2. A DVD set and accompanying explanatory material in which authentic native speakers of Egyptian, Jordanian, Kuwaiti and Moroccan colloquial Arabic discuss and illustrate key components of their cultures – greetings, gestures, food and food preparation, holiday celebrations, family life, etc.

The materials will have multiple audiences:

1. Students in MSA courses in which elements of colloquial Arabic and Arab culture are infused;
2. Students in specific colloquial Arabic courses in the United States;
3. Students enrolled in MSA and colloquial Arabic courses in the country of the target dialect;
4. Students enrolled in courses on the culture of the target country; and
5. Learners pursuing self-study as a supplement to whatever materials they are using.

The DVDs will be extensively field tested by students and faculty studying and teaching MSA and colloquial Arabic in AMIDEAST Education Abroad Programs in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Morocco and in U.S. college and university MSA and colloquial Arabic courses. Project evaluation will be undertaken by the AMIDEAST Education Abroad Programs Arabic Language Advisory Board, consisting of leading practitioners in the field of Arabic language teaching in the United States.

P017A090329  
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### **Enhanced Language Instruction for African Studies (ELIAS)**

Quality language learning courseware for African languages is essential to the study of Africa. As universities seek to incorporate the African experience in their curriculums, there is a need to utilize the most efficient technologies to construct optimal online resources for housing, accessing, sharing, updating, expanding, and delivering courseware for different African languages. The Enhanced Language Instruction for African Studies (ELIAS) project at Harvard seeks to provide a robust language learning environment system that is configured to accommodate any language with considerable ease of use and maintenance. The languages that will be targeted in this project are Akan (Twi-Fante), Amharic, Igbo, Pular, Somali, Swahili, and Wolof.

Having taught 15-20 scheduled African languages courses every semester over the last six years, the African Language Program (ALP) in the Department of African and African American Studies at Harvard, we believe that we, in collaboration with other ALP programs, are uniquely qualified to produce materials of the highest quality and to share them across the globe.

Utilizing the latest technology, project ELIAS will produce beginning, intermediate, and advanced materials for the project languages including video recordings demonstrating students learning, educated native speakers coaching U.S. learners, and U.S. students demonstrating best practices in learning a foreign language. Maintaining best practices in the field of language learning and acquisition, the project will produce "how-to" electronic manuals for materials development, language-specific instruction, and African language program building.

P017A090351  
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### **CultureTalk: Exploring Critical Languages and Cultures**

Five Colleges, Incorporated requests a grant for a three-year project to create *CultureTalk: Exploring Critical Languages and Cultures*. This innovative, Web-accessible collection of 1,200-1,500 short video clips addresses the need for students of less commonly taught languages and cultures at all levels to have the opportunity to hear ordinary people talking about their lives in the languages and dialects they use every day, to read accessible transcripts in the target language and translations of those interviews and conversations in English, and also to hear citizens of the target language countries, who are fluent in English, provide cultural commentary that provides a context for the student's language learning. There is no similar resource currently in existence.

*CultureTalk: Exploring Critical Languages and Cultures* will feature video interviews with individuals who are native speakers of the languages of Nigeria (Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo), South Africa (Zulu, Xhosa), Southeast Asia (Thai, Vietnamese), the Caucasus (Armenian and Georgian), Eastern Europe (Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Polish, Romanian, Serbian, Ukrainian) and Pashto in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Persian as spoken in Iran, and Tibetan. *CultureTalk* forges the important link between linguistic and cultural proficiency that comes from an understanding of these languages but also of the value systems and cultural networks that inform these target languages.

*CultureTalk: Exploring Critical Languages and Cultures* will be a stand-alone resource for post-secondary students, the business community, the military, the government, and academia in general. This rich, innovative video resource will have free and easy access via the Web for anyone with computer access.

### **SEAsite – Multimedia Online Learner’s Dictionary of Malay**

The purpose of this project is to create and deploy a high-quality multimedia online learner’s dictionary of modern Malay. The dictionary will be available on SEAsite which is probably the most-used free resource for Southeast (SE) Asian languages and culture on the Web, and will be developed by the SEAsite project team (in operation since 1997), now joined by one of this country’s foremost authorities on the Malay language and dictionary creation, Dr. James Collins.

The Malay language, a critical Less Commonly Taught Language (LCTL), has been neglected in SE Asian studies in the United States. We argue in the proposal that this is a deficit which should be remedied, given the actual importance of the language, not only in Malaysia and Brunei, but also regionally and historically. The historical role of Malay culture and language is of central importance in any understanding of the development of world trade, the world’s modern commercial system, and the present powerful trend toward globalization. They are also important in terms of modern regional political and security issues. This dictionary will be a foundational component of an envisioned major development of SEAsite to include this crucial region and language. Support for other additional components (e.g., the historical context and language lessons) will be sought from other sources.

The dictionary itself will build on over 10 years experience in providing online dictionaries for SEAsite users. We currently host dictionaries for Thai, Tagalog, and Indonesian with Lao and Burmese currently under development. Our experience with Indonesian is particularly relevant to this project because of the similarity of the affixational morphology between the two languages. Thus, our dictionary will allow a user to enter an affixed form (such as ‘penyewa’ – one who rents) and the dictionary will find and display the entry for the root form (‘sewa’ – to rent) rather than responding with “not found”. The entry for ‘sewa’ will include not just the root and the affixed form, ‘penyewa’, but also all other common inflected forms: ‘disewa’, ‘disewakan’ ‘menyewa’, and so on. We will incorporate this technology into the Malay dictionary as well. Simple English to Malay lookup will also be supported.

In addition, this dictionary will distinguish itself in other ways. It will include, for many entries, multimedia elements (such as a picture of a real sign on a building in Malaysia “untuk di sewa” (for rent), or perhaps a dialog or video of a negotiation between a renter and a landlord). All words will have an audio component consisting of at least the word’s pronunciation and possibly extended audio segments of the word in larger contexts. In addition, this dictionary will benefit from extended input from qualified academic native speakers (including dictionary authors from Malaysia) and the expertise of Dr. Collins, a distinguished scholar of Malay linguistics and dictionary creation who will have a lead role in this project. Finally, the dictionary will be supplemented with at least two ancillary linguistic tools: a Keyword-in-Context online Concordance program and a Word Frequency program, along with usage instructions.

As part of this project, new data, both linguistic and multimedia, will be collected in Malaysia and Brunei to ensure that this dictionary will be useful to students of contemporary affairs in Malaysia and SE Asia. Some of this material will be gathered by U.S. students participating in our yearly study abroad program in Malaysia and Brunei. Some will be gleaned from current newspapers, magazines, and other print sources. This data collection will be organized and coordinated via several in-country workshops conducted during the project period.

### **The Horn of Africa Online Curriculum Project**

The Horn of Africa Online Curriculum Project, based at the Center for African Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, will be an online educational portal on the countries of the Horn of Africa developed over three years, 2009-2012. In addition to providing basic teaching materials on individual countries of the Horn – Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, it will provide curriculum addressing issues that cut across national borders, shape the dynamics of existing crises and influence the region as a whole. The material will be of interest to educators and researchers, as well as the policymaking community and the general public. The online portal would provide a university-level curriculum organized around five thematic modules: small arms, environmental pressures, local governance, conflict management, and youth. Designed according to a standardized and easy-to-use template, each module would present students with essential background information on the theme, an account of regional patterns using current data, country-specific information, contextualized case studies, interactive profiles, timelines, and maps, a guide for further advanced research using online and print materials, and related student exercises that include essay questions and quizzes. In addition, language material for introducing students to Amharic, Oromo, Somali, Swahili, and Tigrinya, and for use in language instruction courses will be integrated.

The Principal Investigator (Leonardo Arriola), Project Coordinator (Martha Saavedra), Language Materials Coordinator (Sam Mchombo), content providers and evaluators are experienced teaching scholars. African language faculty and language pedagogy professionals will assist on creating the language components. The Center will collaborate with the Berkeley Evaluation and Assessment Research (BEAR) Center at the Graduate School of Education for pre-testing and evaluation of the curriculum.

### **Student to Student Chinese Language Lab**

The *Student to Student Chinese Language Lab* (the *Lab*) is an innovative Mandarin Chinese resource for K-12 schools that offers curricular structure, dynamic multimedia content, avenues for teacher and student input, and opportunities for intercultural interaction. Significantly, it also offers the unique motivational factor of learning from one's peers who speak the target language as a first language. This *student-to-student* feature creates a powerful learning nexus that provides a personal and meaningful context critical for second language acquisition. At the same time, the *Lab* will be associated with opportunities for direct teacher-monitored student interaction. The project pioneers a new learning model that maximizes the capacity of modern communications technology to promote mutual understanding and cooperation, and can potentially be replicated at different levels and with different languages.

The *Student to Student Chinese Language Lab* will leverage the existing resources of the University at Albany's Online Teaching and Learning Initiative to develop content; engage with faculty, students, and language teachers; and inform and evaluate the overall success of the project. The University at Albany School of Education will be a partner in the proposed lab and will serve as an institutional home, providing physical space for project meetings, lab development work, teacher consultation, as well as formative and summative project evaluation. The University at Albany has already dedicated \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of space and acquisition of technology for the School of Education Technology Initiative and the *Student to Student Chinese Language Lab* will be an integral component of the larger overall initiative for research and development of twenty-first century learning environments.

The *Student to Student Chinese Language Lab* (the *Lab*) will be a free, self-contained, password-protected online resource for teachers and students of U.S. K-12 Beginner and Intermediate level Mandarin Chinese Language classes. Students, under the guidance of teachers, or independently, will use the *Lab* to learn Mandarin Chinese and learn about Chinese culture. Lab content will feature K-12 students from China speaking Mandarin Chinese and sharing information in a culturally authentic context. Each of 60 *Lab* modules will consist of: a curriculum-based vocabulary list; audio files featuring K-12 students from China pronouncing the vocabulary words and saying them in simple sentences; videos of K-12 students from China performing skits including dialogue that features the vocabulary words; artwork flashcards (digitized drawings or paintings created by students from China) that depict the module's vocabulary words/phrases and, when moused over, will reveal the respective *pinyin* and Chinese characters; photos of the participating students from China; and, in some cases, videos of students from China introducing themselves and sharing information about themselves in Mandarin Chinese, videos of students writing Chinese characters, and PowerPoint presentations made by the students featured in the module and introducing cultural information that is related to the module theme.

*Lab* modules will be organized by language level, cultural theme and grammatical element and sequenced in a progressive manner that continually builds on the learners' prior knowledge. The *Lab* will also contain related transcripts in English, *pinyin* and Chinese characters; assessment tools; and teacher guidelines.

### **E-Learning Materials for Improving Reading Proficiency among Secondary School Students of Arabic and Chinese**

The National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) at the University of Maryland proposes a project to address a burgeoning interest in teaching Chinese and Arabic in secondary schools by developing high quality e-learning materials that will help students improve their ability to read the languages.

The project builds on a multi-year, \$25 million investment in LangNet, a sophisticated e-learning system developed for the U.S. government. LangNet provides electronic practice materials that enable government workers to improve their ability to carry out their jobs by increasing their reading and/or listening proficiency.

Over the past three years, under a previous International Research and Studies (IRS) grant, the NFLC has adapted and enhanced the LangNet software to produce 110 learning modules to help secondary school students of Chinese develop and improve their reading proficiency. In this process, new features have been built into the LangNet software that is especially appropriate for beginning high school learners.

Secondary school teachers and students of Chinese across the country have warmly received the already developed Chinese materials, and there is great interest in having more of them. A more important focus of the proposed project, however, will be to leverage the knowledge and skills learned in the Chinese project to apply them to Arabic, where the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) database of language materials reports that no materials expressly designed for American high school learners of Arabic currently exist.

The project design will require the strong team of Chinese material developers at the NFLC to work side-by-side with the new team of Arabic developers for the first year, meeting frequently and learning the full capabilities of the software. In the second and third years, the Arabic developers will continue on their own, but the first year of learning from developers of materials in another Less Commonly Taught Language (LCTL) will be invaluable. It will be especially important for the two Graduate Assistants in Second Language Education.

The materials will be available at no cost on the Internet, accessible without user identification or password. In addition to secondary students, the materials will also be accessible to other interested people, including college students in lower level courses and government personnel seeking to improve their reading skills. In addition to Internet accessibility, the project will make CD-ROMs available to schools that wish them.

Project evaluation will include using questionnaires and focus groups to obtain data on teacher and student perceptions of the quality of the materials, their usefulness, and their strengths/weaknesses throughout the pre-testing and revision phases of the project. Intensive summer STARTALK programs will make classes available.

Building on LangNet, a project designed to meet the needs of government workers, and on *Read-Chinese!*, an adaptation of LangNet to high school learners, the proposed project represents a considerable cost savings. Needed hardware and software have been purchased and/or developed; an authoring tool that both facilitates and guides the work of materials developers has been developed, tested, and refined; quality criteria for materials have been developed, reviewed, and revised; support for developers that includes face-to-face training, a resource manual, and computer-based modules is now available; and production processes and management protocols that have resulted in over 5,000 hours of instructional materials delivered to specifications and on time will be used to manage production in this project.

### **Conversa Brasileira**

The University of Texas at Austin's Department of Spanish and Portuguese is proposing the full production of an online open access instructional resource centered on original conversation-style videos called *Conversa Brasileira*, which show Brazilians exchanging information, informally chatting, and interacting with friends. As one of the languages on the U.S. Department of Education's priority list of 78 Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs), high quality pedagogical materials for Brazilian Portuguese are scarce, and this is especially true for the intermediate and advanced-level learners. *Conversa Brasileira* will be unique in terms of its particular instructional approach and array of multimedia content, but even more importantly it will be available online for anyone to use, free of charge.

*Conversa Brasileira* will consist of 40 instructional videos indexed by cultural subject matter, with "pop-up" textual and audio features which will detail advanced topics in Brazilian Portuguese language instruction. It has already been prototyped with one video unit and tested with students, who have found the format to be both useful and engaging. The prototype of this project is fully functional, with one sample produced video, and available for viewing at: <http://tltc.la.utexas.edu/brazilpod/cob/>.

This primary goal is to help students better understand Portuguese by learning about the context of discussions, the type of phrases that Brazilians use, and the general ways that they communicate. The original material demonstrates how Brazilians actually talk, take turns, ask for clarifications, deal with misunderstandings, give non-verbal signals, and interact with one another. The "pop-up" buttons help students to analyze the speech samples, including special attention to the cultural as well as the linguistic aspects of speech. The general model of *Conversa Brasileira can be easily adapted and expanded for other foreign language programs and as an open access instructional resource it will be available to a world-wide audience*. Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services will provide video production with maximum quality and minimum bandwidth. The Texas Language Technology Center will provide the technical expertise needed to deliver the video on the World Wide Web via the existing interface.

**Distance Education Clearing House for Indonesian Language**

This project is part of a larger project to create a distance education clearing house for the Indonesian language. Three distance education courses for advanced Indonesian have been created under the terms of a former U.S. Department of Education grant. This project aims to add materials for intermediate Indonesian, which will be available as an online distance learning course, on interactive DVD-ROM, and as a textbook with CD. Each of the 15 course modules, covering one week of instructional time, will comprise the following:

1. An authentic text (including audio and video “texts”), and text related activities: comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar exercises in a variety of formats, e.g. multiple choice, matching, cloze quiz, cross-word, sentence jumbled, text reconstruction, etc.;
2. A text related dialogue or interview (audio and video) with accompanying exercises (transcription and word list are also provided);
3. Written homework assignments;
  - 4a. Pre- and Post-reading activities designed for online delivery;
  - 4b. Pre- and Post-reading activities designed for in-classroom use; and
  - 4c. Instructions and additional materials for the teacher (print & CD).

The proposed materials can be taught in a variety of educational settings: (1) as an online distance learning course; (2) a classroom based course with a self-study component; (3) as two separate courses, where one course is online, and the other is an adjunct classroom-based (offline) conversational course. This model has been successfully adopted at the University of Hawaii:

Thursday	Friday–Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
OFFLINE	ONLINE	OFFLINE	ONLINE
Pre-reading conversational activities	Discussion forum & feeding/listening and interactive online activities	Post-reading conversational activities	Homework submission quiz

This model has the advantage in that it enables every university in the United States to offer courses in Indonesian at very low costs.

This modular, thematic, proficiency-based unit will be available as a distance learning course and as a textbook, enabling many thousands of Americans – students, professionals, scholars, heritage learners, and others who have a proficiency level of intermediate-low or intermediate to advance their proficiency in Indonesian towards an intermediate or higher intermediate level.

The materials, facilitating lifelong language learning, will be developed using the Communicative Language Teaching Approach combining various types of learning, i.e., interactive, learner-centered, cooperative, content- and task-based learning.

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## **Business Hindi**

The proposed project is for creating a set of two textbooks for Business Hindi from intermediate to superior level. Each book will have 12 modules with four thematic units in each. The proposed textbooks will focus on three skills – speaking, listening and reading. The books will also have a full version on an accompanying CD and will also be available online for free access by all interested programs and individuals. The first book will contain theme-based modules at the intermediate to advanced level of proficiency and these units will help learners to connect with people in the business world in India in a culturally appropriate manner. These modules will also introduce them to appropriate language and relevant aspects of India's culture. The first volume will assume the knowledge of Devanagari script and sounds. The second volume will contain newspaper ads, business news, reports, editorials, and case studies. Each unit in both the volumes will contain text, glossary, grammatical notes, cultural notes, practice activities and finally a comprehensive test at the end of each module. The prologue will provide information about multilingualism in Indian society, domains of language use, and suggestions for learners and instructors on how to use the book. The books will also contain appendices for English translation of the texts in different units, a key to practice activities, and a glossary of business-related terms used in the book.

The project will be based on field data that will become the basis of the texts in all the 24 modules. The five C's of the national standards will be woven throughout the materials to integrate culture and contents in a meaningful way. The methodology will be learner-centered and performance-oriented at all stages of the work. The focus will be how to optimize the intake of learners. The modules will be based on best practices and tested guidelines in the field. The project has an elaborate plan for evaluating the proposed materials at various stages of the development. The language in the first volume will use simulated 'authentic' materials but it will not be written by language pedagogues. Two educated native speakers of Hindi will be provided the input from the field data and asked to write short conversations on the given topics. The final text will be based on these writings and the project director will be actively involved in this selection process. The second volume, however, will have fully 'authentic' texts that will be taken from various sources – newspapers, periodicals, businesses, business Web sites and business school Web sites. The methodology will be task-based and will utilize the best practices in the field.

The final product will be two state-of-the-art textbooks for Business Hindi, which will be made available both in hard copies and in the online version. The hard copy will be accompanied with a CD with full contents on it. The online version is for more visibility and easy transmittal to all programs and individuals free of cost. The CD and the online versions will have an additional feature which the book version will not have. Learners can take a short test at the end of every module and the test will be mechanically scored and stored for future reference. The learner will also be able to see his or her progress in graphic representation.

### **Web-Based Oral Proficiency Assessment Training Course for Teachers of Chinese**

The number of K-8 Chinese language programs in the United States has grown substantially in recent years. This has led to an increased demand for tools for, and professional development in, assessing progress in these languages so that instruction can more effectively address students' needs. Oral proficiency assessments are available, such as the *Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA)* and the *Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA)*. However, the cost of live workshops for teachers in use of these assessments is prohibitive for many schools and districts. In addition, there are no workshops or materials that specifically assist teachers of Chinese in the use of such assessments.

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) proposes to develop a specialized, Web-based, oral proficiency assessment training course for K-8 Chinese teachers. The final product will be an eight-week online training course (eight modules) provided on the eCollege online learning platform. The first part of the course will familiarize participants with both the *SOPA* and the *ELLOPA* and will provide a general orientation to the principles and methods of effective oral proficiency and listening comprehension assessment. The second part, will include sample *ELLOPA* and *SOPA* interviews in English and Chinese, and will provide both generic and language-specific rubrics and support materials for Chinese.

The project activities will involve four tasks: revising, piloting, and field-testing the Chinese rating rubric; developing and piloting the course; field-testing the Chinese rating rubric and course; and operationalizing the completed course on the eCollege platform. CAL project staff and field-test teachers will collaborate to ensure that the model meets high standards of professional development. In conducting the proposed effort, CAL will be able to draw upon resources and staff expertise developed in the prior experience in Web-based *SOPA* training, thus ensuring the high quality of the final online training course.

The proposed project will result in:

- Oral proficiency and listening comprehension assessment rubrics for Chinese;
- Tools for K-8 teachers of Chinese to improve their ability to assess students' oral proficiency and listening comprehension;
- Availability of *ELLOPA* and *SOPA* training to a wide range of teachers who would otherwise not have access to such training; and
- Enhancement of foreign language instruction by increasing teachers' understanding of the assessment of speaking proficiency and listening comprehension.

CAL is uniquely qualified to carry out such a project. The *ELLOPA* and *SOPA* are among the most widely used foreign language speaking and listening tests for children in the United States, and for many years, the Center for Applied Linguistics has offered live training in the use of these two assessments. To make such training more accessible and affordable, CAL has already developed a Web-based *SOPA* training course, available since 2006, that addresses teachers of English, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish. By expanding such training to teachers of Chinese for grades K-8, we will be addressing a critical and growing need in the field.

### **Multimedia Rater Training Program for Modern Standard Arabic (MRTP-MSA)**

This proposal outlines a Title VI International Research and Studies Materials Development Project to be conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in partnership with the Michigan State University, Fordson High School, Charlestown High School and the National Capital Language Resource Center. The project will enable the participating Arabic language teaching programs and ultimately secondary and postsecondary Arabic language programs throughout the country, to support student language learning more effectively by increasing testing capability and understanding of standards-based assessment.

The proposed project will yield two products:

1. A training program for rating Modern Standard Arabic language proficiency, the Multimedia Rater Training Program (MRTP-MSA). This will be an interactive CD-ROM program, supplemented by print materials, that will provide hands-on training in oral proficiency assessment based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking, and teach users to rate student oral proficiency responses to two semi-direct tests of Arabic.
2. An online tutorial for Arabic instructors and students to introduce and explain oral proficiency concepts of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking through examples of student speech.

This project will fill a major gap in the availability of assessment-related professional development opportunities for teachers of Arabic, enabling them to assess their students' oral proficiency and address their students' language learning needs more effectively. In addition, by increasing Arabic teachers' and students' awareness of the components of oral language proficiency, the proposed materials will promote more informed approaches to language learning and teaching, resulting in improved instructional techniques and classroom practices.

To develop project materials, CAL will design, draft, pilot, and revise the MRTP-MSA materials with participation and feedback from partnering instructors and students. Involvement of instructors and students will give them an investment in the products. Certified Arabic testers will be retained through ACTFL to review the materials and rate student performance on the tasks. Three Pillar Software will provide the necessary computer programming services.

Development of the MRTP-MSA will allow United States-based Arabic language programs to assess student progress more frequently and to develop a deeper understanding of standards-based assessment. These changes will have a number of significant outcomes. Increased frequency of testing will allow students and instructors to monitor progress more closely and fine-tune instruction to meet areas of need, and will emphasize the importance of speaking skills in language proficiency development. Deeper understanding of standards-based assessment will give both students and instructors a more comprehensive picture of the language acquisition process and a clearer understanding of the factors that define language proficiency and influence its development.

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