It has been a rejuvenating year and as always, it is with great pleasure that I present to you the nineteenth volume of our annual newsletter, Ulimi. I would like to express my gratitude for the support that you have shown the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) as we look to move African language pedagogy in the United States to greater heights. Thank you to all those who have helped this center realize its goals. This year’s success can be attributed to our partnerships with African language scholars throughout the United States. We are thankful for the continued support of Indiana University’s College of Arts and Sciences and School of Global and International Studies. Once again, it is my pleasure to share with you the highlights of a year’s accomplishments at the NALRC.

This newsletter serves to highlight our activities and accomplishments for the 2017-2018 academic year. NALRC continues to strive to use all resources available to bring excellence to language pedagogy in line with the goals of the World Readiness Standards. I am happy to announce that the NALRC has published many new African language brochures this year. We also have many projects currently in progress: the Yoruba Learner’s Reference Grammar, Let’s Speak Sudanese Arabic, Let’s Speak Acholi, Let’s Read Igbo, and Let’s Read Bamana. This fall, we also finalized Let’s Speak Tigrinya which will be available in due course. We would like to thank the scholars who work so hard and are crucial to publishing these textbooks. We would also like to thank our anonymous reviewers who support us in getting these materials published.

Professional development continues to be one of the major objectives of the NALRC. In 2018, the center continued to better the professional lives of African language instructors. The annual NALRC Summer Institute transformed the professional lives of the many language instructors who attended. I co-facilitated this institute with Dr. Esther Mukewa Lisanza. We also hosted a STARTALK summer workshop, which brought in educators of many different less commonly taught languages. This workshop was instructed by Drs. Es ther Mukewa Lisanza and Brenda Wawire and directed by myself. Through annual feedback, we are thankful to hear that these workshops are changing the field of language pedagogy for the better.

NALRC partnered with the African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) and the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL) to organize the 2018 NCOLCTL/ALTA Conference. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all of the NALRC staff and the National, Local and Field Advisory Boards for the work they have put in to making this center a successful one. Your continuing support is greatly appreciated and we are looking forward to working with all of you during the coming year.

Avo, Asante, E se, Jerejef, Maita, Medaasi, Nagode, Shukran, Wébale, Zikomo, Thank you.
The National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) was established in September 1999 with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to improve the accessibility of African languages in the United States by strengthening the field as a profession and by developing resources for the teaching, learning and researching of African languages. The center’s mission is to serve the entire community of African language educators and learners in the United States by sponsoring a wide range of educational and professional activities designed to improve the accessibility and quality of African language instruction in the United States. It encourages a variety of pedagogical approaches to accommodate learner diversity and advocates the integration of language and culture learning, and the acquisition of fluency in these areas. The NALRC facilitates dialogue among teachers, learners and administrators from a wide variety of cultural and institutional perspectives and promotes the profession of African language teaching.

During this year of funding, the NALRC has continued its activities and services in the following areas:
1. National African Language Program Coordination
3. Research in African Language Pedagogy
4. Professional Development for African Language Educators, Coordinators, and Directors

1. National African Language Program Coordination

I. African Language Program Inventory List
The NALRC updates the African Language Program Inventory on a regular basis so that information about programs in African languages can be available to the many universities and colleges that are planning to start African language programs. This list also helps individual language learners with interests in African languages to identify local institutions offering the language options that interest them. In order to maintain the most accurate list of African language programs in the U.S., NALRC welcomes your suggestions about program changes and new African language offerings.

II. African Language Pedagogy Evaluators’ List
The NALRC continues to compile a list of scholars who are willing to serve as consultants for new or existing African language programs. These experienced African language pedagogists support the center’s mission by evaluating existing African language programs and also helping to start new ones. These evaluators and the program developers themselves are provided with access to a book titled *African Language Program Development and Administration: A History and Guidelines for Future Programs*. This NALRC published text is a product of the life-long teaching and coordinating experience of African language pedagogist Prof. Eyamba Bokamba.

III. African Language Coordinators’ Training Programs
The NALRC trains African language coordinators through a variety of workshops. These workshops aim to improve coordinators’ effectiveness in working with a wide variety of African language instructors whose language they may not speak or understand. These workshops teach the coordinators to work with instructors better and to mentor them more successfully. Many of the coordinators have had the opportunity to attend similar workshops conducted by the NALRC at the African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) conferences.

IV. African Language Resource List
The NALRC maintains a list of African language instructors, native speakers and scholars who are interested in working as translators, interpreters and testers for government and non-government agencies. This list is updated regularly as the center receives information about new resources. These resources include former NALRC Summer Institute participants, members of ALTA and individuals who registered at various conferences at which the NALRC had booths.
V. African Language Materials and Workshop List

In order to satisfy the center’s mission to provide the entire community of African language educators with teaching resources, the NALRC assesses the need for materials across the field of African language pedagogy annually. Part of this process includes gathering information about existing materials and workshops for African language instructors. These materials range from textbooks to audio and video tapes, web-based materials and role-play cards. The catalog of existing materials and requests for new materials is critical to the material development and publication process at the NALRC.

2. African Language Material Development and Dissemination

NALRC has placed a high priority on developing and disseminating the African language materials because, in the field of African language Teaching, the need for teaching materials is great. Through the tremendous efforts of diverse scholars and African language teachers, NALRC has contributed to the development and dissemination of language teaching materials on African languages ranging from more commonly taught African languages such as Swahili to less-commonly taught African languages like Somali. Since its inception, NALRC has published 19 Let’s Speak Series textbooks, four Let’s Read Series textbooks, two Let’s Communicate Series textbook, seven Learners’ Reference Grammar textbooks, one bilingual dictionary, 28 journals, four companion audio CD-ROMs, and six language flash card multimedia CD-ROMs covering more than 15 languages in total. The NALRC has also completed 90 language brochures.

2017/2018 New Materials

African Language Brochures

- Efik
- Gogo
- Kanuri
- Khoi-Khoi
- Nyakyusa
- Suppire

Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages

- NCOLCTL Vol 22 (Fall 2017)
- NCOLCTL Vol 23 (Spring 2018)

Recently Published:
ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Yoruba

Coming Soon:
Yoruba Learners’ Reference Grammar & Let’s Speak Sudanese Arabic

Coming This Fall:
Let’s Speak Tigrinya

Other Materials in Progress

The NALRC has been working on new materials with different scholars and African language instructors. The following materials, which are in different stages of production, will soon be available:
- Yoruba Learners’ Reference Grammar
- Let’s Speak Sudanese Arabic
- Let’s Speak Acholi
- Let’s Read Igbo
- Let’s Read Bamana
2018 NALRC Summer Institute

The NALRC held its annual Summer Institute Workshop from May 14 - 25th, 2018 at the School for Global and International Studies (SGIS) at Indiana University Bloomington. An intensive two-week program for instructors in the African languages, the Summer Institute Workshop exposes the participants to new models of language teaching and, through real teaching experience, helps them enact the philosophy of communicative, standards-based, student-centered foreign-language teaching.

This year’s workshop brought in participants from five universities and one private language instruction company; together they represented Arabic, Swahili, Yoruba, and Zulu languages. The instructors were Dr. Antonia Schleicher of Indiana University, Bloomington and Dr. Esther Mukewa of Howard University.

The theme of this year’s Summer Institute Workshop was “Making Principles of Effective FL/SL Instruction Real in the Classroom.” To build on this theme, the instructors focused on five major topics:

- Backward Curriculum Design
- Proficiency-Based Approach to FL Instruction
- Standards-based Instruction
- Strategies for Providing Comprehensible Input
- Use of Target Language

In the first week, the participants were exposed to these five concepts. First, the concept of Backward Curriculum Design taught the participants that a good curriculum must be designed in a specific order that runs contrary to a common understanding. Learning objectives must be laid out first, followed by methods of evaluation for those objectives. Then, and only then, can the instructor begin to assemble a corpus of texts and materials that fits the needs laid out by the previous two items. This led into discussion of the second theme, the proficiency-based approach. The learning objectives of a language class should not be grammar-based but, rather, should be based on general, contextually-sensitive proficiency levels; so, instead of “students will know X number of words” instructors should use “students will achieve ‘novice high’ proficiency in listening and reading and ‘novice mid’ proficiency in speaking and writing”. These proficiency levels are laid out in the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (WRS), an internationally recognized set of standards that lay out in clear, concise language what a language learner will be able to do when they reach a certain level of proficiency in the language. This transitioned into the third objective, using standards-based instruction. During the second step of their backwards curriculum design when they decide how to assess their students it is these WRS descriptions of ability that instructors should look at. You will know when you students have reached a particular level of proficiency when they can do certain things, laid out in the WRS.

Woven throughout this discussion of the role played by the WRS are the final two themes: comprehensible input strategies and a maximal use of the target language. The participants were told that the target language should be used at least 90% of the time in any foreign language classroom. Many participants found this requirement daunting, but the lessons’ comprehensible input were a great help. By incorporating pictures, film, roleplay, animations, props, and culturally-authentic scenarios the participants learned that it was entirely possible to use the target language 100% of the time and still be perfectly understandable to novice learners.

When it came time for the participants to begin their own micro-teaching sessions in week two, the sheer amount of what was taught in the previous week was apparent. At first, many struggled to apply and accurately assess the core themes in their teaching sessions. But, after five days where each participants taught a new micro-session every day and had their performance assessed by their peers, the improvements were obvious in each and every one. By the end of the workshop every participant was able to use the WRS to design a curriculum, use comprehensible input to convey their intended information and skills to their ‘students’, and then accurately assess whether or not the students had grasped the concepts—all without ever using anything but the target language.

The institute concluded with an award ceremony on May 25th. Hosted by Drs. Schleicher and Mukewa, the ceremony featured a number of authentic cultural performances—including dances, songs, and poetry—from the participants. Several of the participants chose to give reflections on the experience, which can be found in the following section.
The following people received certificates at the end of the workshop:

- **Tiwa Ajeigbe**: Oodles of Fun Kids Co. - Yoruba
- **Tolulope Akinwolue**: University of Wisconsin-Madison - Swahili
- **Ajabade Matthew Ayobami**: Indiana University-Bloomington - Yoruba
- **Bonginkosi Gumbi**: University of Florida - Zulu
- **Agnes Kimokoti**: The Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, MA - Swahili
- **Felicien Masanga Maisha**: University of Florida - Swahili
- **Mwita Muniko**: University of Wisconsin-Madison - Swahili
- **Imelda Mwaluka**: Indiana University-Bloomington - Swahili
- **Oluwafunke Brinda Ogunya**: Florida State University - Yoruba

In addition, the following people received certificates for the Training of Trainers institute:

- **Iman Alramadan**: Indiana University-Bloomington - Arabic
- **Olusegun Soetan**: University of Wisconsin-Madison - Yoruba
- **Brenda Wawire**: University of Wisconsin-Madison - Swahili

**Reflections from Participants on the 2018 Summer Institute Workshop**

**Bonginkosi Gumbi**

*University of Florida*

I was told I had to give my reflections and in the back of my mind I was like, 'where do I start?' Where do I start? It's been two amazing weeks and they have been very much transformative. When I came here I was a very good performance-based instructor teaching Zulu. I was more worried about teaching people as many words as possible rather than teaching them how to use the language in an authentic way and to make them understand the language and the culture. So, I was puzzled because this has been so beautiful.

Prof. Schleicher, you are the mother of Africa. Today I was given a card to write something about you and I felt like the space was too small for me because I just wanted to write everything, because you are such an amazing woman and what you are doing is… I can't find the words. Right now, i am way better, way better; and I am sure that by the end of the summer the students I am teaching are going to be speaking like me. They will be dreaming about Zulu!

So, this workshop has been powerful for me, and transformative, and now i am going to be a better person; not in terms of teaching the language, not in terms of using the target language above 90% of the time, and not in terms of differentiating between ‘interpersonal’ and ‘interpretable’ and ‘presentational’, but in terms of being a good person! Today’s lecture on professionalism was very beautiful because, even though you have all the knowledge in the world, if you can’t behave professionally to people it is not going to work. So, i would like to thank you so very much for transforming my life and making me a better Zulu instructor.

Thank you so very much. I could say so much more. This has been beautiful, these two weeks have transformed my life in a very amazing way. I am a better person now, a better instructor, and i am going to apply every single bit of what I have learned here--from everyone! From your presentations, how you present the language, your use of cartoons! I have learned a lot, not only from the professors and the teachers, but I have learned a lot from the other participants as individuals--working with them, being with them every day for the past fourteen days.

**Tiwa Ajeigbe**

*Oodles of Fun Kids Co.*

My name is Tiwa Ajeigbe and I’m here from Houston, Texas. It’s a pleasure for me to be here and give a reflection for this NALRC Summer Institute Program for African language instructors. Unlike most of my colleagues here, I do not come from the umbrella of a traditional institute. I have an engineering background, however my journey into this language world started with my own journey to get my children to speak my language. And, given that they are American kids with African heritage, I tried to be intentional and to research other cultures, but I wasn’t as successful. I realized our culture, the Yoruba especially, didn’t transfer; many people would understand, but would not be able to speak. So I started to research other culture, why other cultures were more successful than others and it was through my research and resources that I decided to start the company Yoruba by Oodles of Fun Kids Co. So, Oodles of Fun Kids Co. existed, but then we started a company “Yoruba by Oodles of Fun”. I had taken up the task, it was just a personal task, to intentionally try to give children, my children and other children, avenues to learn to love the language—which means you will deliver the language in a form they will enjoy. So, in time interest from other parents started to pick up and we started doing weekend camps in two locations in Texas.

So, Yoruba by Oodles of Fun is out to create resources and to encourage the kids to be proud of their heritage, teach them Yoruba, then create a community for them to have fun and come together and just be themselves. However, as I continue to research and I was determined to find out more about how this could be successful, that was when I stumbled upon Professor Schleicher and her work. So, I reached out to her in faith, she didn’t know me from anywhere and I didn’t know her, and she welcomed me with open arms. Through email we corresponded--and I’m sure she was a little skeptical at first--but it turned out to be perfect timing. She invited me to attend this summer institute, telling me that this was going to be an amazing experience. Of course from my end as well, when she
I especially came into this workshop with high skepticism for the concept of using the target language 90% of the time, I didn't think that was possible. But I can stand here today and say that I can effectively teach this language using the target language 100% of the time!

Another thing that was especially unique about this program is that not only were we instructor trainees, but we were also novice language learners. I can now say that I can communicate in three languages—at the novice level—and I am now more inspired to take up learning a language and see if I can complete it. But even more valuable was how it allowed us to put ourselves in the shoes of the people we are going to be teaching, and now we can, as instructors, self reflect on what our students go through while they are learning languages; and that has made us better instructors as well, because this thing is actually not as easy as a lot of us thought it was.

So, on that note, I would first of all like to thank professor Schleicher for this opportunity she has given to me, to attend this workshop. I would like to thank you for your commitment to this field, to this cause, to the African language community. I can see your passion when you speak and in the fact that you are trying to train people that are coming behind, to pass on the baton. The principles that you are helping us to apply, which are very common sense and practical, and the fact that you are even open to new ideas, even from people that are new into this world, like me, you will still consider what we have to say. So I want to say thank you, very much, for your contribution. And, of course, I would like to say a big "thank you" to malimu Esther. I want to say thank you for setting high standards. You were there to whip us into shape! You gave us projects and assignments and made sure there was no room for slacking. And thank you for your enthusiasm and for being interested in learning new languages from us. We had very good conversations on how African languages and the community need to support each other. We are stronger together, one Africa, and appreciate that I have seen you live and work this idea.

But, anyways, I went ahead and went self-funded and this program became a leap of faith. Now, obviously and without a doubt, this has been an amazing experience. I guess my conclusion would be: not only did I make the right decision, but it was worth every penny and it was life-changing for me. We trained, obviously, and we talked about 'backwards curriculum,' roles, performance objectives, proficiency targets, making sure we are using comprehensible inputs—all those things we are dreaming about now! We talked about making sure we had a student-centered classroom, a structured lesson plan, self reflection; so many things, it was a packed workshop! Yes we got tired, but it was absolutely worth the time and the effort that we put into it. I especially cherished the practice and the peer critiques and professor critiques that we had, and how the instructors made sure that we were able to apply most of the things that we learned. I am sure that all of here ticked "I can do it with confidence" on every item in the course review sheets!

I can take the mic and tell my reflections and feedback about this fieldwork gave us our confidence, I am more confident now. Professor Schleicher did not separate us from the other fellows, with us as we were being trained to train them! I appreciate that she doesn't just care about African languages, it is making us believe in ourselves. She is a role model who inspires everybody. She was very patient with us. I want to thank her for believing in us, for making us believe in ourselves. She is a role model who inspires everybody. She doesn't just care about African languages, it is not just about her language, but it is about all less commonly taught languages. She told me "I want to support you, even after you come to this workshop I will support you. I want you to change, I want you to be a leader". Nobody else would say that.

Finally, this program for me has been invaluable. I want to thank all my classmates and the Training of Trainers fellows, you are all amazing. We have worked hard and we formed professional bonds and lifelong friendships. Thank you!

### Iman Alramadan

**Indiana University, Bloomington**

Last year I attended this workshop and I learned about a few things taught this year and I have been attending professor Schleicher's workshops at Indiana University for two years since I was hired. So, coming here to the Training of Trainers was something new for me. Standing up in front of the class on the first day was very stressful for me because I had only watched. And we had our leader sitting down there looking at us and trying to shape us and give us her support. After a few days I felt more confident. First of all I got to put myself in the shoes of my students, and I love being a student in professor Schleicher's workshops.

Being from another language, this was my first chance to learn a dialog in Zulu or Swahili, or Yoruba and this time I was able to blend myself with the African culture and I understood how important is it to explain our culture to our students! I was amazed by everything you have done here. Every word, every picture, every gesture, everything! I have learned a lot!

And I want to thank the other participants for their patience with us as we were being trained to train them! I appreciate that Professor Schleicher did not separate us from the other fellows, this fieldwork gave us our confidence, I am more confident now. I can take the mic and tell my reflections and feedback about any of the other instructor's work and I can discuss this with confidence based on proficiency, modes of communication, etc. And thank you malimu Esther for setting a high standard. I remember last year when you came in and taught us "hamjambo!" and it was amazing!

This year was another amazing experience with very, very distinguished classmates; I feel like I have known you all for a long time. And from so many different states--Texas, Kansas, Florida, Wisconsin, Massachusetts. We spent a lot of hours together; we danced, we sang, we discussed. And Professor Schleicher was very patient with us. I want to thank her for believing in us, for making us believe in ourselves. She is a role model who inspires everybody. She doesn't just care about African languages, it is not just about her language, but it is about all less commonly taught languages. She told me "I want to support you, even after you come to this workshop I will support you. I want you to change, I want you to be a leader". Nobody else would say that.

Thank you also for the support of Malimu Alwiya. You all inspire change, I want you to be a leader. Nobody else would say that.

I won't say I finished the workshop; I have just started. It is a start, the first step in a long road. I will follow both of you wherever
Brenda Wawire

University of Kansas

I am very much honored to be a participant in this workshop this year. I can say that the NALRC has done a tremendous job in shaping language teachers in the US. I first attended the NALRC workshop in 2013 with Professor Schleicher and Professor Alwiya and that was the first time my light-bulb went off. I had been teaching Swahili and English and I kept asking myself, with these American students, what’s wrong? After two semesters of instruction we are only exchanging words, nobody can form a sentence or go beyond that. But, after I came to this workshop the first time in 2013 everything changed and since then I can say I have been becoming a better, more confident language teacher. I really appreciate the instructors giving us feedback over all these years. I wanted to commend you and encourage you to keep doing what you’re doing; and I am really excited that Malimu Esther is now on board. This is the second time I have attended the workshop with her. I attended last year as a participant and I am really glad that I got to come this year as a trainer. I was discussing it with Professor Schleicher and I was worried because more was expected of me. If you are a trainer, you have to look at things from a slightly higher angle. So, I came unsure of what the challenge would be during the workshop because to be a trainer means you have to master the art and know how to do it well. That was my goal, I wanted to master the art and when I go back to my institution I want to be able to do it well. And from the discussions we’ve had, follow up after presentations, in reflection, etc., all of which were very insightful. Especially leading the reflection sessions after teaching was very good practice for me. Right now one of my main responsibilities is to learn how to build other instructors, so this was a perfect opportunity for me to come and get the skill set that I will be able to utilize once I get back to my institution. Also, the micro-teaching sessions and the workshop sessions show that you never stop being a learner; I have been learning all the time from the other presentations and gaining many skills just from watching the other participants. I really appreciated the friendly atmosphere among colleagues. Giving feedback to someone was not threatening, we had a very good community of practice among us and I really appreciate that.

Last but not least, the sessions on professionalism taught me a lot. I learned skills that will build me and enable me to be a leader in the field because my passion as an educator is to provide pedagogy in African languages. I am walking behind professor Schleicher, Malimu Esther, I am walking behind you, following in your footsteps and hopefully I will be able to contribute to the field in the future.

This is not the end of it, I know there is always room to learn more and I am looking forward to learning more from my colleagues and our very wonderful instructors. Thank you very much Malimu Esther, Professor Schleicher, Malimu Alwiya, and all my fellow participants; I really appreciate working with you and look forward to more collaborations in the future.

Ajibade Matthew Ayobami

Indiana University, Bloomington

I want to say that this two week summer institute is one of the most memorable moments of our lives as language instructors. The training did not only teach us to function effectively as African language instructors in our respective institutions but also undertake functions in strengthening the teaching of African languages in the US. We were exposed to several things, backwards curriculum design--this is the first thing mentioned here and by now, ask any of us participants and we can talk perfectly about it and we understand that and every concept of the training. It’s been wonderful. It’s been amazing. With backward curriculum design there is performance objectives and the three modes of communication, integrating language, culture and content in African language classrooms, and creating a learner-centered classroom. Every bit of this workshop from the reflections to the micro-teaching demos was worth every penny. It’s really really great.

At the start of the workshop professor Schleicher and Malimu Esther gave us some mind-blowing lectures on several aspects of language teaching. We realized that a lot of us need to make some adjustments to the way we teach our respective African languages. Though this is not the first time I have come across the topic, it is the only time I have seen instructors explain the concepts with practical details, not just theoretical--i.e., defining the concepts--, but they demonstrated with practical examples, giving us teaching demos so we could see how to go about it. As Dr. Schleicher likes to say “This is really, really great!” “This is amazing!”

It was not too challenging transferring the concepts to our lesson plans and micro-teaching sessions in the second week of the workshop, because the instructors had practically demonstrated how to apply the concepts.

I want to say special thanks to the organizer of this workshop, the NALRC Director, Prof. Schleicher, who I was privileged to work with this last year. Everyone will agree with me that the micro-teaching demos were challenging and intensive, because we would close at 4:30, 5, or even 5:30, then we would have to go back to the apartment to prepare for the following day. It is challenging, but I will say that those practical sessions played a key role in this workshop. There is a difference between understanding a concept and putting it into practice. After the first session we realized that while some of us were still struggling with different things, in the comments we thought everybody was perfect. But it goes to show that when we go back to our respective institutions we will be the best--perfect--teachers! I will say the constructive criticism at the end of each session you go. Thank you so much for your commitment to excellence, your patience, your dedication, and your happy spirit. I can teach my kids so many words in Yoruba now!
brought about a significant improvement in subsequent presentations and I have no doubt that we are all leaving as better teachers.

On behalf of all the participants I want to say that we appreciate Christina, without you we wouldn't have had this workshop, Kate, and Froozan as well; she is so good, wonderful. I also have to appreciate the African Studies program, the African Studies program coordinated by Professor Alwiya, and the IU School of Global and International Studies for this opportunity. I would also like to appreciate Dr. Esther for being a wonderful teacher. She would look at me and say "Matthew, your reflection!" I really want to appreciate Professor Schleicher, it's really been a great opportunity working with you for this one year. Though challenging, and I understand that some people might find that too challenging--sometimes we would be at the office at 11PM. Imagine a professor of her age at the office at 11pm; “How dare you leave the office”, I’d say "Good night!" One of the things I have learned is to be hard-working. It pays a lot to be dedicated. Just like Prof. Schleicher said in the morning, you might not see the reward now, it's not about the financial reward, but in the future there will be times when you will be independent and nobody will be monitoring or telling you to do this or do that and if you have not trained yourself to be a hardworking person, you will fail. That's when you will realize that there is something lacking in your life.

And really this one year has really trained me. I used to tell people "I like working," working is not my problem. But, I come here and realize that work supersedes work! But sometimes when you're working this is a motivation when you understand that she is a wonderful boss! I went to the ALTA conference and I was so surprised, Dr. Schleicher would introduce me to everyone and make sure everyone had met me-she doesn't take the glory for herself, no, she will mention what each and every one has done. Sometimes you may also notice she has been looking at you, but she looks into details of everything that you do. I can say that, Ma, I really appreciate it, I sincerely appreciate you.

I know that what I got in this one year, well, some people might not get in ten years. So thank you. I appreciate you not just for this workshop, but for being an amazing teacher, mentor, and coordinator. I'm hoping that at your retirement I will prepare my speech and all the details will be there!

I do hope this workshop will continue to contribute to the promotion of African languages in the US and beyond. From all of us: Asante, eshe, thank you!

Mwita Muniko

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Hamjambo, Bawoni, Sawubona, Salaam alaikum. First of all I really want to thank Professor Schleicher and Dr. Mukewa for organizing and leading and taking us through this workshop over the last two weeks. You are our instructors. I think that you have done a good job! You have actually moved some of us from “novice low” to “novice high” in our language teaching in a span of two weeks--some students take over four years to reach the level we have.

So, something funny, I think I have been ignoring the meaning of some phrases and words in my readings, to the extent that I did not even care to look at the meaning of the word “intensive”. This was described as an “intensive summer workshop”; but I didn't read into that. But, now, I am sure that each and every one of us know exactly what this word means. Especially when you look at Dr. Schleicher or Prof. Mukewa you know what it means because the depth to which we have explored the theories and concepts of this field in this class has been really incredible. I also need to extend my gratitude to the trainers of trainers: Dr. Brenda, Dr. Segun, and Dr. Iman. They acted as templates for our own presentations. Seeing what you were doing allowed me to draw my own lessons from you; thank you so much for bringing your expertise to us.

Fellow participants, you are such an amazing group. I have never before met a group that is as disciplined as your are, as committed, or as aiming for a common goal in the unity of purpose. It was just amazing--can we “pasha pasha” for ourselves? I have seen this unity of purpose improving throughout this session.

I am a Swahili teaching assistant from UW Madison and before coming to the US I taught Swahili language and literature at the university level in Kenya for about two years. So, when you meet my former students they will tell you that Mwita is one of the best Swahili instructors they have ever had. They are not wrong. This is not false. This is because they were native speakers. But when I came to the US I met with a different experience in the classroom; and, so, I wasn't even sure how to start teaching these students, I wasn't sure how to teach the majority to them. If you were to come to one of my classes you would realize that I am a very good grammar teacher and a very good storyteller. But, I think this workshop has exposed me to the best strategies that I need in order to address that and that kind of teaching is not going to happen anymore! Thanks to Dr. Schleicher and Dr. Mukewa, and thanks you to all the participants who have turned this into a success.

Now, in the first week of the workshop the instructors exposed us to backwards curriculum design. And I want to repeat this because it was very important to everything else. We were also exposed to standards-based instruction, the world proficiency guidelines, and performance-based objectives. That was where I really connected. Performance-based, that is what I dream about; when you want your students to dream in your languages, I dream about how to make my lessons performance based. I mean, how to base my objectives on performance. So, that is what I am taking as a carry-away for myself. It was very very important to me because it has seen me free of my previous teaching habits.

Apart from that I think our micro-teaching sessions were very helpful. We were able to learn from each and every one who presented here. I would actually sit down and look at how someone was presenting and say “Yes! I learned about teaching from all of you, everybody. From Prof. Schleicher, from Dr. Mukewa, for all of us. They actually set an example for us. They did not only teach and watch us take notes, watch us look at how
they behaved, but they also gave us an opportunity to present and be critiqued also. So, that was very good I think and I would like to commend them for that.

Now, after I have spent time here, I think this workshop would be important for every African language instructor. Very very important. And if I was in such a position I think it would a requirement for every African language instructor to go through this kind of training. Because if you are from Africa and then put into an American classroom, what are you going to do there? So, I feel that this is a place that everyone should pass before you get to class.

So, thank you so much Prof for this experience and I pray it will show up in textbooks in the future. Thank you!

2018 NCOLCTL/ALTA Annual Conference

This, as is the standing tradition, the 21st National Council on Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL) Conference and the 22nd African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) were held concurrently. The joint conference was held from April 19 - 22, 2018 at the Hyatt Regency, Dulles in Herndon, VA with an overarching theme of “LCTL Education in the US: From Pre-K to Global Professional”

Highlights of this year’s conference include four plenary sessions, a number of colloquia and presentations, the launching of a new journal, an awards ceremony, and various language-centered exhibitions.

The conference was opened with addresses from NALRC Executive Director Dr. Antonia Schleicher, NCOLCTL President Dr. Waffa Hassan, and ALTA President Dr. Leonard Muaka.

This led directly into the first Plenary Session by Maria M. Carreira. The title of this well-attended Session was Back to the Future:  Taking stock of the first 20 years of Heritage Language Education and previewing the next 20 years. Dr. Carreira looked at the institutional and pragmatic issues facing heritage language education that has led heritage languages to be taught using a second language acquisition model in most institutions over the past 20 years. She presented research and a plan of attack for changing this paradigm and improving both heritage and second language education in the future.

This led into the second plenary session which was led by Lenore Yaffee Garcia from the US Department of Education. The presentation, titled Expanding Access to the LCTLs: Products & Methods, showcased a number of readily-available resources that are available to LCTL programs and instructors. Each presenter had a change to exhibit the programs the represented before opening the floor to the attendees, who were eager to get more information.

In the fourth and final plenary session three former and current LCTL learners took the floor to share their experiences. Timothy Allen opened the session by reflecting on his journey from an LCTL student to an LCTL instructor. Matt Coss described how a lifelong interest in Chinese shaped both his personal and professional life. Wrapping up the session, Hannah Dannenfeldt related her language journey and showed how an engaged and well-prepared language teacher can be the difference between a perpetual novice and a life-long learner of a language. Each of the panelists drew lessons from their personal experiences which supported common themes of student engagement and authentic representation of the culture of the target language which resonated with the other panelists as well as the audience.

The conference also hosted 5 colloquia and 9 parallel sessions, including several language-specific sessions in Swahili, Ndebele, and Yoruba.

This year’s conference also hosted the launch party for a brand new journal. CHAUKIDU (Chama cha Ukuzaji wa Kiswahili Duniani [Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili]) officially launched their new journal in a ceremony hosted by CHAUKIDU Director Dr. Leonard Muaka, President Mahiri Mwita, and Associate Editor of the new journal Dr. Mussa Hans. Amid lunch and celebration the centerpiece of the launching was the official unveiling the first printed copies of the inaugural publication.

A number of organizations that support the NCOLCTL/ALTA conference participated in the conference and set up exhibition booths outside the lecture halls. This year’s exhibitors included: Institute of International Education’s National Security Education Program, University of Maryland Arabic and Persian Programs, Central Intelligence Agency, National Language Service Corps, Youth For Understanding USA, Avant Assessment, African Language Consultants, IU CIBER and the NALRC.

None of this would have been possible without the efforts of the staff and volunteers who worked behind the scenes to make everything run. We want to thank our staff: Matthew Ajibade, Christina Stiso, Kate Semmler, and Froozan Safi, as well as all of the volunteers who donated their time: Haidar Khezri, Indiana University; Michael Oshindoro, Fayetteville University; Mwita Jacob, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Tolulope Akinwole, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Olusegun Soetan, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Kazeem Sanuth, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Adebimpe Adegbite, Syracuse University; Olumide Ajayi, University of Georgia; Milikatu Garba, University of Council; and Robert Slater, Co-Director of the American Councils Research Center. Richard Brecht, Co-Director, American Councils Research Center chaired the session, titled Expanding Access to the LCTLs: Products & Methods, showcased a number of readily-available resources that are available to LCTL programs and instructors. Each presenter had a change to exhibit the programs the represented before opening the floor to the attendees, who were eager to get more information.

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A special word of thanks goes to the Executive Director of NCOLCTL and ALTA, Dr. Antonia Schleicher, the Outgoing President of NCOLCTL, Dr. Waffa Hassan, the Incoming President of NCOLCTL, Dr. An Chung Cheng, and the President of ALTA, Dr. Leonard Muaka. We would also like to thank the entire membership of the Boards, the Delegate Assembly member, our JNCOLCTL Editor, Dr. Danko Spika, our JALTA Editor, Dr. Jonathan Choti, as well as all of the presenters, plenary speakers, and all our the conference attendees. Our gratitude also goes out to the staff of the Hyatt Regency, Dulles for their professional service and excellent catering—Thank you!

The 2019 NCOLCTL/ALTA Conference will be held on April 26-28, 2019 in Atlanta, GA. The theme will be “Embracing Diversity and Inclusion through LCTL Education”. Submit your paper online at conference.paper.ncolctl.org and we look forward to seeing you soon!

2018 IU LCTL STARTALK Professional Development Workshop

The STARTALK Professional Development Workshop extended from July 9th - 27th, 2018. The first week of the program consisted of a non-residential distance learning session, where individual participants used the UW-Madison Language Institute and NCOLCTL Online Teaching Methods Course. The latter two weeks of the program were held at the School for Global and International Studies (SGIS) at Indiana University Bloomington, and consisted of an intensive training session for instructors of less commonly taught languages.

This workshop brought in nine participants representing four different languages - Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, and Swahili. The instructors were Dr. Antonia Schleicher of Indiana University, Bloomington; Dr. Esther Mukewa of Howard University; and Dr. Brenda Wawire of the University of Kansas.

During the first week of the residential program, the instructors introduced the participants to the critical concepts of standards based instruction, Understanding by Design, use of target language, authentic materials, performance objectives and other goals of the workshop through a combination of lectures, discussions, hands-on activities, and micro-lesson presentations to get a clear understanding of the basic concepts of teaching LCTLs as a foreign language.

The second week of the residential program gave participants a chance to apply what they learned through their own micro-teaching sessions. Each day, every participant gave a lesson in their own language to the other participants and the instructors. With every passing day it was clear that the participants were becoming more comfortable as language teachers and really applying the core concepts of the workshop to their teachings. By the end of the workshop, every participant was giving truly exceptional lessons.

The workshop concluded with an award ceremony on July 27th. Dr. Wawire served as Chair of the Ceremony, and Drs. Mukewa and Schleicher handed out certificates to each participant. The ceremony included a number of authentic cultural songs and dances from the participants. Several of the participants gave reflections on the experience, printed in the following section.

The following people received certificates at the end of the workshop:

**Maisa Ammari:** St. Mary Orthodox Church Arabic School - Arabic

**Sohair Azzam:** First Presbyterian Church, El Paso - Arabic

**Xuehong He:** Michigan State University - Chinese

**Jane Kamanga:** Sue Reynolds Elementary - Swahili

**Laxmi Khattri:** Union City Board of Education, New Jersey - Hindi

**Fatma Mohamed:** University of Miami - Arabic

**Purity Wawire:** Ohio University - Swahili

**Jingyi Zhao:** Post Oak Academy - Chinese

**Wei Zhou:** West Virginia University - Chinese

Reflections from Participants on the 2018 STARTALK Workshop

**Maisa Ammari**

*St. Mary Orthodox Church Arabic School*

I currently teach Arabic at a small Arabic institute housed at St. Mary Orthodox Church. We see our students only two hours each week and our students are heritage students. It is the parents’ desire for their children to be able to communicate in Arabic that drives our growth. I always thought that teaching Arabic would be too difficult of a task to accomplish in two hours a week with our students' low motivation and parents juggling their busy schedules. Also, our very traditional teaching style, which is done with a focus on grammar, does not do much to motivate our students. Most of the students lack intrinsic motivation needed to learn a new language. When my friend told me about the Startalk workshop for the least commonly taught languages, I wasn't sure that I'd be attending, but she spoke highly of the program. I still wasn't sure, but I applied seeking help for our program. Our first full day we met our staff: Dr. Antonia Schleicher, Dr. Esther Mukewa and Dr. Brenda Wawire. What a team! Their humbleness and professionalism was beyond excellent. It felt like we were colleagues and they were sharing their knowledge with us. They created a friendly environment that made us all so comfortable to learn and participate to our fullest potential. Dr. Schleicher’s endless knowledge made learning so quick and easy. Additionally, the behind the scene staff: Jennifer Sherwood, Jared Stemper and Christina Stiso were amazing. They constantly went above and beyond with a smile on their faces. As we started learning the Backward Learning design and the modes of communication, I thought of our small institution. I knew what I needed to do: to share what I’ve been taught with my team back at St. Mary’s. Better yet, I need to recommend/encourage them to attend the same workshop next...
year. After all, maybe we can achieve better results that will satisfy the students’ needs.

In closing, I thank StarTalk for being so generous and giving us the chance to improve our teaching skills. Also, thank you Dr. Schleicher for facilitating this program and taking the first steps in making it a very successful one. It was a truly wonderful experience and I look forward to participating in future programs.

Jane Kamanga  
Sue Reynolds Elementary

On behalf of the Swahili group, I cannot thank the director of this program Dr. Schleicher enough, who gave us such support and mentorship throughout the workshop. Dr. Lisanza and Dr. Wawire were two great instructors as well. Their focus and dedication to instructing the participants throughout the workshop session was amazing. What we learned in two weeks have impacted our methods of teaching languages and other subjects. The strategies we learned have empowered all of us in our ability to impact both other teachers in our schools and the communities that we come from. I can attest to the fact that the influence this workshop has had on us will go a long way to making us better scholars of languages. Our instructors created such a friendly environment in that we could ask questions without hesitations. This kind of atmosphere is not always something you find in all workshops.

ACTFL proficiency guidelines for the evaluation of functional language ability are an amazing tool for setting proficiency targets. The incorporation of comprehensible input strategies into our language teaching is something that will change the participants way of teaching in future. The program incorporates culture into various strategies we use for our students, and this demystified confusion students have about other cultures, their products and practices.

When I started teaching Swahili to the children of East African descent, it took time for them to grasp some basic concepts that would have been easier for them to grasp had I attended this NALRC workshop. This changes after this workshop. I am personally determined to apply the NALRC standards and I know the other participants will do it too. Our teaching of languages will not be the same again because of our exposure to the world readiness standards.

The world readiness standards we learned are applicable to learners at all levels and ages, and because of this, the participants have been equipped to go out and apply them at whatever levels they happen to be engaged in. The exposure to the backward curriculum design has helped the participants to be more student centered. I trust that after graduating from this workshop we will be more mindful of others to the extent that we can let them know what we have learned so that they can also assist their students to learn languages better.

We will be more confident teaching languages and any other subjects that can be taught using the BCD. We feel motivated to increase our usage of technology in our day to day teaching. Participants of this workshop have been given useful information about developing language learning through the three modes of communication. This is information that was privy to many of us before we attended this workshop. I cannot expand enough on how helpful we shall be as resources to our fellow colleagues after what has been imparted onto us during this program. We shall also reach out to others with the information about the STARTALK development program so that they can come and be enriched with knowledge, strategies and skills for teaching languages. We will always be grateful that we had the opportunity to participate in the STARTALK program. Thank you!

Jingyi Zhao  
Post Oak Academy

Did you want to spend more time enjoying a relaxing summer? Did you feel perplexed to know how to make progresses in the coming school year? I think I will get a “Yes” from most of you. However, we are a group of people who were seeking high-quality professional development and deliberately chose the summer program that would meet our goals. So this program must be worthy and inspiring, right? Yes, it did! We have been enlightened and savored many summer moments in the air of delight. Like other participants, I had expectations when I came here. I teach Chinese at an elementary school and am required to implement Standards-based teaching, where I teach different subjects through Chinese and create learner-centered classroom as well as use at least 90% of the target language. After one year of teaching, I still had many questions of how to reach those requirements. When I attended the NCLC and CLTA conferences, I learned a lot about the ACTFL guidelines and proficiency-based instructions. I found them helpful and instructional, but the more information I received, the more confusion I got. So I needed to know how to use those standards, guidelines and teaching practices in my classes. As a graduate student, I hoped this program could address the lingering questions of my action research on backward design.

What I have obtained from this program was beyond my expectations. We had the basic knowledge from the online courses that allowed us to go deeper during the next two weeks than we would have been able to otherwise. The instructors did not just walk us through those concepts and let it go, we were informed of the critical concepts of ACTFL guidelines, the World-readiness Standards, backward design, proficiency-based approaches, and comprehensive input and high usage of the target language, but what I liked the most was how they helped us apply those concepts. We used real lesson plans, videos, and teacher modelings to facilitate our learning while we discussed our respective ideas and questions. Something I fell in love with was when the instructors broke down each concept to make every point clear so that it could be easier for us to carry out all the steps. Every participant did four micro-teachings and we reflected right after each lesson. We used the Startalk rubric to evaluate the lessons and each day we emphasized on analyzing the application of a specific concept. The instructors gave us reasons why those concepts are significant and beneficial to both learning and teaching, then gave us opportunities to practice, so we will remember how to use them even a long time after
As a teaching assistant in Chinese, I came to the IU LCTL STARTALK at West Virginia University. With the support from our great instructors, I am ready to apply to my teaching profession. Given that we have already taken this challenge and were freely given resources and support to run this program. In addition, I would like to thank Startalk for providing financial support and resources.

What made this workshop unique was that it faithfully followed the “learning by doing” model. Every module involved plenty of discussions, and the instructors clearly demonstrated their objectives well before they expected us to perform any tasks. The teacher and peer assessments took place throughout the learning process so that I could adjust myself and make improvements along the way.

With that, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the three amazing mentors I met in this workshop: Dr. Antonia Schleicher, Dr. Esther Mukewa Lisanza, and Dr. Brenda Wawire. Thank you for creating such a conducive learning environment and being role models to me. In the future, I will work harder to become great teachers like you. I also would like to thank all the people who have contributed to this workshop and made it so memorable. I hope more people will become involved with STARTALK and share its methodology with other teachers. I believe together we can make a difference!

Wei Zhou

West Virginia University

As a teaching assistant in Chinese, I came to the IU LCTL STARTALK Professional Development Program with the hope of keeping myself informed about the latest pedagogical advancements and improving my teaching skills. What I received from this three-week workshop was beyond expectation.

Through presentations and discussion, I learned some key concepts about implementing a proficiency-based approach in teaching a language, including setting “SMART” performance objectives, making a lesson plan that targets one or multiple modes of communication by using Backward Curriculum Design, and implementing communication strategies and tools to make the target input comprehensible. I also learned how to use authentic materials in classrooms. The micro-teaching component in the last week helped me put what I had learned in the first two weeks into practice, and I taught my lessons four times and received feedback from my instructors and peers. The feedback I received was beneficial to my studies and helped me see what worked and what needed more improvement.

Learning here was a very fun experience. We are respected as educators and receive individualized guidance. Our Mwalimu listened every time we wanted to express our thoughts and helped us to address them. The instructors, teacher assistants, technology specialists and participants have helped to create an amazingly positive environment in which we care about one another. Due to this, everyone has chosen to work their hardest since this team has made us feel that they deserve our best. If any issue happened we worked through it as a whole. This is an aspect of Startalk that I will try my hardest to incorporate into my classes.

I believe in what Dr. Schleicher said that “challenge + support = success”. Given that we have already taken this challenge and were freely given support from our great instructors, I am ready to apply to my teaching in the coming school year and make my class a success!

Vote of Thanks

Laxmi Khattri

Union City Board of Education, New Jersey

First, I would like to take an opportunity to thank the School of Global and International Studies for providing all needed resources and support to run this program. In addition, I would like to thank Startalk for providing financial support and resources.

I would like to thank my fellow participants. Our roots are around this beautiful world. Here together we realized how similar we are. Together we cooked, danced, and took care of each other. We lived like a family. Thanks to Dr. Schleicher for making that happen.

We always had hot water for tea, coffee ready, and printed handouts on time. Thanks to Jennifer, Jared and Christina for always taking care of us with a smile.

We worked around the clock with Dr. Schleicher, Dr. Mukewa and Dr. Wawire. They insured that our presentations went well and we understood what we were doing. We will never forget
Dr. Schleicher explaining complex content in simple words so all of us can understand. Dr. Mukwa; your Micro lessons were very powerful. Dr. Wawire; your debriefings about our micro lessons were great. We all learned a lot from you all. Thanks for making us all better teachers. Your teaching will guide our teaching path as we have chosen to make impact on language learners.

As we are getting ready to say goodbye to each other tonight, we would like to say, shukriya, ashante, shukran, o dabu and xiexie. We are so grateful. Thank you all.

2018 NALRC Summer Institute in Pictures

Above and Below: Participants each had the opportunity to teach to the class

Above and Below: Awards Ceremony performances

Below: Participants pose with their certificates as the Summer Institute comes to an end
Group picture of participants, instructors, and staff

Dr. Brenda Wawire teaching the participants

Left and Right: Participants each got a chance to teach the class
Center: Participants play a game as part of an Arabic lesson

Dr. Schleicher gives a Yoruba micro-teaching demonstration

Participants show off their certificates at the end of the Awards Ceremony
2018 NCOLCTL/ALTA Annual Conference in Pictures
Announcements

I. Translations/Interpretations
The NALRC continues to provide quality services in the area of translation and interpretation of many African Languages as the need arises in and around the United States. The list of translators and interpreters is open to anyone who knows a less commonly taught language and wants to be an interpreter. Also, if you need translation/interpretation services, please contact us.

II. Job Opportunities Advertisements
As the NALRC website is frequently visited by students, instructors and scholars, you are encouraged to notify NALRC of any African language related job vacancy. We will advertise your job vacancy at no cost to you.

III. Upcoming Conferences - Dates & Venues
We urge our readers to mark their calendars for the following upcoming conferences in the academic year 2018-2019:

i. NCOLCTL/ALTA Annual Conference
   Date: April 26 - April 28, 2019
   Venue: TBD

ii. NALRC Summer Institute
    Date: May 13 - May 24, 2019
    Venue: Indiana University

iii. STARTALK Professional Development Program
    Date: Online Distance Learning Modules: July 9 - July 13, 2019
         Hands-On Instruction: July 16 - July 27
    Venue: Indiana University

iv. ASA Conference
    Date: November 29 - December 1, 2018
    Venue: Atlanta, GA

v. ACTFL Conference
    Date: November 16 - November 18, 2018
    Venue: New Orleans, LA

For any questions/comments, please contact:
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