NALRC “Let’s Read”
African Language Series
Let's Read Wolof

Mamaram Seck

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Antonia Folárin Schleicher, Series General Editor

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Let's Read African Language Series

The *Let's Read an African Language* series of textbooks includes intermediate level texts designed to accompany the elementary level *Let's Speak an African Language* series is the first series of communicatively oriented African language textbooks developed in the United States. The series is based on the model of *Je K’A Sọ Yoruba* (Let’s Speak Yoruba) written by Antonia Fọlárìn Schleicher in 1993. The need for the series arose to fill the gap of providing African language learners with not only up to date materials, but also materials that will prepare them to truly communicate in their respective African languages.

Both series is based on the communicative approach to language learning in the sense that learners are provided with activities that will help them to perform functions that native speakers of these languages perform in their appropriate cultural contexts. The grammars and the vocabulary in the textbooks are those that will help the learners to perform appropriate functions. The monologues and the dialogues are authentic in the sense that they present real life situations. The activities in the texts are also tailored to assist learners in acquiring the necessary skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The Let’s Read series, as an intermediate level series, addresses these content areas with greater complexity and sophistication than the elementary series – allowing students to understand, speak, read, and write the language with increased fluency and confidence.

*Nanu Jàng Wolof* is the third in this series to be modeled after *Je K’A Ka Yoruba*. If you are interested in using this model to develop materials for the language that you teach, please contact the staff of the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC). Manuscripts are subject to external review and need to follow the theoretical framework established for the series.

A series such as this depends on the vision, goodwill and labor of many. Special appreciation is extended to the National Security Education Program that provided the original grant that supported the author in developing this textbook. We are also indebted to the U.S. Department of Education’s IEGPS (International and Education and Graduate Programs Service), the NALRC staff, the three anonymous reviewers, the NALRC Advisory Board, as well as various individuals who support the efforts of the NALRC in promoting African language pedagogy nationally and internationally. Without the support, advice, and assistance of all, the Let’s Speak and Let’s Read African Language Series would not have become a reality.

Antonia Fọlárìn Schleicher Series
General Editor
Let’s Read Wolof

A Multidimensional Approach to the Teaching and Learning of Wolof

As a Foreign Language

By

Mamaram Seck

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Indiana University - Bloomington
Bloomington, Indiana
USA
DEDICATION
To my wife and children for their constant support and understanding
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INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

I. INTRODUCTION

*Nanu Jàng Wolof* is a textbook designed for intermediate-level Wolof teachers and students. In essence, it is meant to reinforce students’ basic knowledge of Wolof, taught in a communicative setting, after two semesters of language exposure. In methodology, *Nanu Jàng Wolof* focuses on communication-based and student-centered approaches. The writer of this textbook believes that students most benefit by exposure to multiple communicative tasks. Ample space and opportunity allow students to express themselves while also being creative with the language. In this vein, instructors will be facilitators of their student learning process.

As a whole, this book is comprised of dialogues and monologues, with each being followed by comprehensive questions that lead students to producing meaningful language from the material to which they were exposed. An audio accompaniment containing oral texts and dialogues goes along with the textbook, providing supplementary listening comprehension and pronunciation material for instructors and students.

**Goals of the Course**

Throughout *Nanu Jàng Wolof* there will be four types of activities: reading, writing, listening and speaking. A monologue or dialogue introduces students to the topic of each unit. These texts aim to raise important issues regarding the unit topic and enable students to produce meaningful sentences by answering questions following those texts. Communicative acts, generally speaking, allow one to function in the language in various settings. This textbook aims to enable students to be functional in Wolof in multiple settings. In other words, users of *Nanu Jàng Wolof* should be able to order a meal or purchase food, ask and answer questions pertaining to family and household, and have an exchange at the market, bus station, travel agency, and car rental place in Banjul or Dakar, the capital cities of the two countries, the Gambia and Senegal, where one finds the largest Wolof speaking communities. After they finish using *Nanu Jàng Wolof* students should be able to at least use past, present, and future tenses in meaningful activities. Since languages are also written, this textbook exposes students to situations where they are asked to write sentences, paragraphs, and comprehensive responses about each unit topic. For instance, in unit 14 students are asked to write a text about their country of citizenship, provide its location, climate and seasons, and so on. Students’ written productions vary from discrete strings of meaningful sentences to comprehensive paragraphs.
Main Features
*Nanu Jàng Wolof* exposes students to the four core elements of an effective communication-based teaching approach: listening and speaking, reading and writing. It is meant to enable students to develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing competence through exposure to meaningful activities. In the meantime it allows students to be creative with the Wolof language. A theme, carefully selected by the instructor, enables students to build their knowledge of the target culture and develop their linguistic competence, moving from acquisition to production. A picture from the target culture introduces every theme. Another authentic picture closes the unit. All activities lead to the comprehension and use of the material just learned, and, therefore, prepare students to be functional in the target language in various settings.

Organization and Content of Each Lesson
*Nanu Jàng Wolof* consists of a preliminary lesson and fourteen regular lessons. Every lesson is constructed in a way such its helps the student move from acquisition to production. The preliminary lesson consists of a review of greetings between strangers already covert at the elementary level. It is meant to remind student of extended greeting and introduces to them some expressions they may not have encountered in previous lessons. Among those expressions are: ‘*ban dëkk nga bäyyikoo*’ what do you come from?’ ‘*Jurbel nga cosaanoo itam?*’ Are you also originally from Jurbel? Every lesson ends with a reading that expands and deepens the student’s knowledge of Wolof society and culture. That reading is followed by questions.

Every lesson is organized as follows:

Objectives
They highlight the topic of the lesson, the targeted function, and the relevant grammar points.

Dialogues
They expose students to written dialogue between two native speakers, or a learner of the Wolof language and a native speaker. The dialogue is followed by comprehension activities leading to production. The dialogue is selected in a way such it exposes students to the most common expressions used in a specific context.

Monologues
They expose students to text written in the target language on the unit topic, which they read and try to understand. The monologue is followed by comprehension activities leading to production, which has always been the main goal. For instance, unit 3 covers body parts, and that topic is introduced via a monologue about external body parts and their location on the body. Later in the unit, students are given an interpersonal activity where they are instructed to ask each other questions about parts of their and their location. Other topics covered in the monologues are personal experiences, short
description of common places, and the like. Every unit also contains a monologue for reading.

**Ayca nu jàng Wolof**
As said earlier, every unit contains a reading titled *Ayca nu jàng Wolof ‘Let’ Read in Wolof*, which aims to reinforces the student’s knowledge about the culture and things related to the unit topic. That reading is followed by questions to check the comprehension and encourage student’s production.

**Tërëlinu baat yi**
Each lesson contains a grammar section that explains some important grammar rules extracted from the dialogue or monologue. Technical terms are avoided in that section mostly because the author knows that students may not be aware of that scientific terminology. Rather, the author explains the rule using common words and vernacular language. After introducing the grammar, the author instructs students to use it a simple activity.

**Cultural note**
It highlights the cultural etiquette related to the unit topic. In the meantime, it gives students tips about the country where the language, Wolof, is spoken and for their eventual interaction with native speakers living in the target culture.

**Glossary**
A short glossary always ends the unit. A final glossary compiles all vocabulary words leaned throughout the lesson and constitutes a mini dictionary for the learner.

**Recordings**
The recordings that go with *Nanu jàng Wolof* will be available in a CD format. The CD will contain all the monologues and the dialogues that appear in the book.

**II. SUGGESTIONS FOR USING NANU JÀNG WOLOF**

**Warning**
First, it is important to know that this textbook cannot substitute to the instructor’s lesson planning. Rather, it must be used a supplement to your own lesson planning. It provides you with as topic as well as useful activities for the learner. The instructor is expected to add more activities if needed and also to build on the existing materials. The objectives of each lesson can be useful to the instructor as he prepares for his lesson of the day as well as the grammar notes. More pictures can be shown to students if they can help understand the unit topic better. The activities are structured in a way such they help students build communicative competence. The reading can be used for homework as they often challenge students with new words and complex sentence structure.
Four Skills Development

*Nanu Jàng Wolof* helps the students to develop their reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. These four skills rather than being addressed separately should be interconnected in one lesson. When combined, they help students build a strong communicative competence, which is the overall goal of this textbook:

1. **Listening:** students listen to dialogues between native speakers or between learners and native speakers, and monologues, and then process meaning through communicative activities. The comprehension activities they are exposed help them get the general meaning of the dialogue or monologue by answering simple successive questions. The speaking activity from the CD also helps strengthen students’ communicative competence.

2. **Speaking:** Students produce language through repetition and creation of utterances learned from the dialogue and monologue to which they have been exposed. The communication-based tasks to which they are exposed enable them to speak correctly and appropriately about the unit topic.

3. **Reading:** The reading section of each unit is meant to help students acquire a reading competence, which is the first step towards acquiring a writing competence. In addition to helping build a strong reading competence, the texts also provide students with important cultural information.

4. **Writing:** After they read and understand the text assigned to them, students produce their own text on the same topic but related to their own experience and cultural milieu. Also, when doing speaking, students can write down their answers first before saying it aloud.

**Teaching Suggestions:**

- Warm-up your class by introducing a topic not directly related to the unit topic but from which you can bring in the unit topic. For instance a warm-up for the unit on Seasons and seasonal activities in Senegal could be a comment on the weather of the day. Then, you can ask students how many seasons they have in the United States in order to prepare them for the topic.

- Tell students the topic of the day and your objectives. Then, play the CD and/or read the monologue or dialogue twice before proceeding with comprehension questions.

- Have student practice as much as needed through various activities to prepare them to producing correct and appropriate language about the topic.
TO THE STUDENT

Welcome to Nanu Jàng Wolof, an interactive intermediate course designed for students who have completed two semesters of college level instruction or the equivalent. You will find this book very useful if you have used Nanu Jàng Wolof. This course consists of a textbook and a CD.

Many of the materials you first encountered in your first course will still be applicable at this level and should therefore be looked at as a bridge to your full understanding of the Wolof culture and language. The primary aim of Nanu Jàng Wolof is to continue the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. You will read various types of texts on a variety of topics. A number of oral and written exercises will require you to listen to and read the texts closely and intensely. Through this process you will your listening, speaking, reading, and writing competence. The readings and exercises in the textbook are supplemented by the recordings on an audio CD that further develop and refine your skills of listening, speaking, and writing.

The second aim of the textbook has been to review basic grammar commonly covered in the beginning level courses, expand and redefine the basics, and offer you additional practice in speaking and writing everyday Wolof. As you will notice, the grammar explanations are presented in an outline form and many examples are given to reinforce your understanding of how to use the form under discussion.

Nanu Jàng Wolof offers a systematic presentation of vocabulary. Some of the items you have already encountered them in your beginning course but they are presented here to make your reading a rewarding adventure into the Wolof world.

The readings and exercises require you at different points to cooperate with both your instructor and your fellow students. However, it is equally important that for a fuller understanding of the materials and improvement of your acquisition of the language, you bring in your own background and your own opinions because they are valuable ingredients in the whole process. You will also find it rewarding if you incorporate the structures introduced and the vocabulary presented in your speech and writings. The following is the summary of what you can expect in the book.

ORGANIZATION
The course consists of a preliminary lesson and fourteen regular lessons with each lesson consisting of the following elements.

Title of the lesson
It outlines the title of the unit lesson in the form of function to be acquired by the learner.
Objectives
This is a section that introduces you to the topics of the entire lesson, the function to be acquired, the grammar points to be addressed, and the cultural etiquette pertaining to the topic.

Monologues
The aim of this section is to help you increase your ability to talk and express opinions about yourself, your experiences, about other people and different events that you encounter. The topics in this section deal with day-to-day activities as told by Wolof speakers. Each monologue is then followed by exercises that test your understanding of the text and give you a chance to express your own opinion on a similar topic in the monologue.

Dialogues
The dialogues in the textbook help you to learn how conversations take place among the Wolof people right from introductions to topical issues of the day. Just like the monologues, there are exercises that follow the dialogues to enhance your understanding.

Tërëlinu baat yi
This section explains some important grammar rules extracted from the dialogue or monologue. Technical terms are avoided for the sake of clarity. Therefore, the author explains the grammar rules using common words and vernacular language. After learning the grammar rule, you are expected to complete simple exercises to show your mastery and understanding of the note.

Ayca nu jàng Wolof

Every unit contains a reading titled Ayca nu jàng Wolof ‘Let’ Read in Wolof’, which expose to a more complex than the opening monologue or dialogue. Before completing the questions following the reading, look up words in your Wolof dictionary and try to understand the sentence structure. Then, complete the comprehension questions, which follow the text flow and ends with a production question.

The CD
The CD contains all the dialogues, stories, and where applicable, poems and songs. You should make an effort to listen to the CD. Its presentation offers you the best way to learn how to pronounce the different sounds and words used and a feel of the beauty of the language both in regular speech and poetry.
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