

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



**Fiscal Year 2005 New Grants
Summary and Abstracts**

International Education Programs Service
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20006-8521

Application No., Applicant and Project Director	Project Title	Type	Years	Funding Allocations		
		IM/RE	Req.	FY 05	FY 06	FY07
P017A050003 Carnegie Mellon University Dept. of Modern Languages 160 Baker Hall Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890 G. Richard Tucker	Language, Literacy and the Early Foreign Language Learner*	RE	2	\$142,000	\$150,000	
P017A050017 University of California, Davis Consortium for Language Learning and Teaching 220 Voorhies Hall Davis, CA 95616 Robert J. Blake	Punjabi Course Materials	IM	3	\$98,000	\$98,000	\$78,000
P017A050019 University of Maryland National Foreign Language Center 3112 Lee Building College Park, MD 20742-6715 Myriam Met	Resources for Teaching Culture in Grades K-12*	IM	3	\$163,000	\$105,000	\$109,000
P017A050020 Montgomery County Public Schools 850 Hungerford Drive Rockville, MD 20850-1718 Robert E. Robison	Standards for the Less Commonly Taught Languages*	IM	3	\$148,000	\$154,000	\$154,000
P017A050022 University of Oregon 5290 University of Oregon Eugene, OR 97403-5290 Carl Falsgraf	Research Tool and Studies to Improve Language Learning*	RE	3	\$136,000	\$138,000	\$143,000
P017A050033 Center for Applied Linguistics 4646 40th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20016 Margaret Malone	Directory of Foreign Languages Test Instruments*	IM	3	\$138,000	\$135,000	\$118,000
P017A050034 University of California, Berkeley Center for African Studies 342 Stephens Hall Berkeley, CA 94720-2314 Mariane C. Ferme	Understanding Sudan*	IM	3	\$115,000	\$123,000	\$81,000
P017A050036 George Washington University Suite 601, 2121 Eye Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20006 Anna U. Chamot	Story Telling in Russian Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI)	RE	2	\$81,000	\$67,000	
P017A050040 University of Pennsylvania 3541 Walnut Street, Room P-21 Philadelphia, PA 19104-2653 Mohamed Maamouri	Teaching and Learning Linguistically Complex Languages	IM	3	\$156,000	\$156,000	\$156,000
P017A050046 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 6 Executive Plaza Yonkers, NY 10701-6801 Elvira Swinder	Assessment of Performance and Proficiency in Languages*	RE	3	\$138,000	\$138,000	\$146,000
P017A050047 University of Hawaii Second Language Studies 2530 Dole Street, Sakamaki D200 Honolulu, HI 96822-2303 John M. Norris	Evaluation Needs in College Foreign Language Programs	RE	3	\$74,000	\$95,000	\$117,000

P017A050048 United Negro College Fund 2750 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 600 Fairfax, VA 22031 Laura M. Siaya	Minority Student Participation in International Programs	RE	2	\$143,000	\$74,000	
P017A050059 Educational Broadcasting Corporation 450 West 33rd Street New York, NY 10001 Ronald D. Thorpe	Access Islam: Resources for the Global Classroom*	IM	2	\$166,000	\$8,000	
P017A050062 University of Hawaii 2530 Dole Street, Sakamaki Q-200 Honolulu, HI 96822 Ruth Elynia S. Mabanglo	Advanced Filipino Text, DVD and Web Materials	IM	3	\$89,000	\$40,000	\$43,000
P017A050069 North Carolina State University Box 8106 Raleigh, NC 27695-8106 Afroz N Taj	A Door into Urdu	IM	3	\$129,201	\$163,000	\$75,000
P017A050076 National Association for Equal Opportunity 8710 Georgia Avenue, Suite 200 Silver Spring, MD 20910 Lezli Baskerville	Common and Less Commonly Taught Languages at HCBUs	RE	2	\$145,000	\$263,000	
P017A050078 University of California, Los Angeles 10920 Wilshire Bldg., Suite 1200 Los Angeles, CA 90024-1406 Leonard Binder	Iraqi Arabic and Azerbaijani Languages	IM	2	\$154,000	\$155,000	
				\$2,215,201	\$2,062,000	\$1,220,000

**Language, Literacy and the Early Foreign Language Learner:
Foundations for Advancing Proficiency**

The proliferation of elementary school and middle school foreign language programs requires serious investigation of how children learn foreign language, develop literacy skills, progress in proficiency across the grade levels, and make the transition from elementary school skill-based programs to a content-based middle school curriculum. Little is known concerning the differential achievements of children learning cognate (Spanish) and non-cognate language (Japanese) and the unique problems for literacy that these types of languages pose. Moreover, we have no research that addresses how participation in different foreign language program models (e.g., time distribution; a curriculum based on cultural topics vs. academic subject areas; receiving instruction from one specialist, itinerant teacher vs. core language faculty members at each grade-level) affects student outcomes.

The research here proposed will examine these topics as well as how foreign language programs can address the needs of all students, including those who bring varying abilities in their first language to the classroom, and those who join a school district in the later elementary grades.

Punjabi Course Materials

The UC Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching (UCCLLT) seeks funding from the International Research and Studies Program of the U.S. Department of Education for a three-year project to develop new instructional materials and create a Web-based course in Punjabi is a neglected language critical for the United States as a language common to both India and Pakistan, and the home language of 1.5 million U.S. citizens.

This project is urgently needed, not only in the nine-campus University of California system, but in the state and community colleges of California and elsewhere throughout the United States. The UC student population of Punjabi heritage (700 on the Davis campus alone) is pressing the university to provide access to the Punjabi language; at present, only the Berkeley (UCB) and Santa Barbara (UCSB) campuses offer courses in Punjabi.

A new course in Punjabi will also serve the Department of the Army's Defense Language Institute, which has identified "an immediate need for the kind of Web-deliverable shared resource" that the UCCLLT Punjabi project proposes.

This project addresses curricular needs on two fronts: face-to-face, and at a distance. Up-to-date, coherent course materials for Punjabi are non-existent in the United States. The majority of instructors on the very few campuses that offer Punjabi make do with textbooks that are antiquated in methodology and culturally inappropriate. This project will create state-of-the-art instructional materials for a year-long course, including authentic Web-based materials, that will serve the needs of existing traditional classroom courses in Punjabi in year one, will produce a distributable DVD-ROM master class in Punjabi in year two, and will be available for distribution through the internet by the conclusion of year three.

This project will vastly improve existing instruction in Punjabi and greatly expand access to one of the least commonly taught languages of South Asia. Competency in this neglected language will enable a future generation of U.S. scholars in various disciplines (Non-Proliferation Studies, Global Studies, South Asia Area Studies, etc.) to conduct research in this region of the world that is critical to U.S. security

The LangNet Resources Database: Standards-based Resources for Teaching Culture in Grades K-12

The National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) at the University of Maryland, in collaboration with the professional associations representing teachers of Arabic, Chinese, German, Japanese, and Spanish, and with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, proposes a project that will improve and strengthen foreign language learning in the nation by addressing Goal 2 of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. Goal 2 states: “Students gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures.” The standards related to Goal 2 state that students “demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied...and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.” This project expands several previous NFLC projects that resulted in LangNet—an online searchable database of quality assured instructional materials in fourteen languages.

The proposed project will assist foreign language teachers by expanding the existing database to include resources that are useful, unbiased, accurate, and developmentally appropriate for teaching culture to students in grades K-12. It will also assist teachers and teacher educators by identifying carefully selected and quality assured resources useful for developing teacher competencies in teaching culture to their students.

The resources identified in this project will be stored in a publicly accessible online searchable database. Editorial boards appointed by partner professional language associations will work with the NFLC to identify criteria for the selection of materials (in addition to the need to be bias-free, aligned with national standards, and developmentally appropriate for the range of learners from the elementary grades through emerging, early, and late adolescence). Editorial boards will review available commercial and non-commercial resources—both print and non-print—applying identified criteria and documenting the review process. Editorial board chairs will be responsible for final approval of materials to be included in the NFLC LangNet resources database in order to assist foreign language educators, teacher educators, government agencies, and the public at large in the teaching and learning of culture.

Standards for the Less Commonly Taught Languages*

The International Research and Studies Program supports projects that produce instructional materials for teachers of modern foreign languages. Linking curriculum and instruction to national standards will improve the foreign language skills of students and reflect a state-of-the-art approach to teaching and learning the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) at advanced levels.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), the 17th largest school district in the United States, proposes to develop curriculum materials in four of the LCTLs—Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. The priorities of this initiative are to develop instructional materials for higher levels of study that contribute to advancing understanding of Middle Eastern, Central Asian, and South Asian cultures. All materials will be developed by a team of experts in both curriculum writing and foreign language instruction, aligned with national standards, and designed for use in grades 7 to 12. Teachers from across the country will pilot and help to refine the materials. By the end of the project, the finished materials (including video recorded demonstrations of teachers modeling use of the curricula) will be available to teachers nationwide.

Year one of the project will focus on revising current LCTLs curricula of Levels one through three and creating summative assessments. In Year two, the project will develop curriculum frameworks and assessment templates for Levels four, five, and Advanced Placement (AP). Year 3 will concentrate on the development of instructional guides for Levels one through five in each of the LCTLs and the completion of a demonstration video/DVD. Evaluation will be ongoing, involving project participants and recipients of the products generated. Additional oversight will be provided by focus groups, a foreign language advisory committee of notable experts in the field, and other district consumers.

Second Language Acquisition Web: Research Tools and Studies to Improve Language Learning

The Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) proposes to collect and analyze second language acquisition (SLA) data from over 10,000 second language learners and to make these data available to researchers worldwide. Through this online relational database, called SLA Web, researchers will have instant access to student responses to reading, writing, listening, and speaking items that are searchable by a variety of demographic parameters (e.g., grade level, language background, years of study). These data currently exist in CASLS archives and were collected in the course of online proficiency testing using the Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP). Partnering with the CHILDES project at Carnegie Mellon University, CASLS will perform linguistic analysis on spoken and written texts, allowing researchers to perform fine-grained analysis of learners' acquisition of Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Spanish, and Turkish. STAMP tests in Arabic, Hindi, and Persian are also planned.

In addition, CASLS and its academic partners at the University of Hawaii, Michigan State University, and the University of Minnesota will use this tool to conduct foundational studies on articulation and learner interlanguage profiles. At the end of year one of this project, CASLS will publish a major study on the proficiency levels attained by students at various levels of instruction, providing teachers and policy makers with information crucial to decisions regarding standards and course goals. In year two and year three of the project, CASLS and its academic partners will publish research on the interlanguage profiles of various demographic groups (e.g., heritage vs. monolingual learners).

Directory of Foreign Languages Test Instruments

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) currently maintains two online databases of foreign language tests: the Foreign Language Test Database and the Directory of K-12 Foreign Language Assessment Instruments and Resources. These unique databases have proved to be immensely popular over the past several years, and they clearly have provided an important service to users looking for foreign language tests. We propose to enhance their usefulness to the foreign language teaching and learning community.

The databases, as currently configured, have limitations:

- Maintaining two separate databases is inefficient, and leads users to miss information that may be use of to them.
- The databases need updating. Although the Directory of K-12 Foreign language Assessment Instruments and Resources was updated in 2003, the Foreign Language Test Database has not been updated since 1999. Therefore it's probably much of the information in the database is out of date.
- Currently, the databases do no include user comments, which would assist others in test selection.
- Neither database has been reviewed for content and format by external users, an important factor in light of the development of standards for foreign language teaching.
- There is no guidance in choosing an appropriate test. While experienced educators in language testing may not need such guidance, those who do not have experience have no guidelines by which to make their choice.

This proposal addresses these limitations by taking the following steps:

- The information in both databases will be updated including purging the databases of tests that longer exist and including new tests.
- The information from both databases will be combined in a single database to create a new, more powerful and flexible Web interface. The new databases will include a feature that allows users to comment on tests within the database, and these reviews will be moderated by CAL staff.
- The project will create a tutorial to help guide users through the test-selection process.

The result of this project will be an easily accessible database of foreign language tests for all educational levels, with online, moderated user reviews, as well as a user-friendly tutorial on how to select appropriate tests.

Understanding Sudan: Resources for Teachers and Researchers

“Understanding Sudan: Resources for Teachers and Researchers” will be a Web-based portal serving as a resource for teaching materials on Sudan created under the auspices of the Center for African Studies at the University of California at Berkeley. This portal will offer numerous features of interest to teachers and researchers, as well as the policymaking community and the general public. The highlight will be modules that teachers in high school, college and universities might integrate into their courses. The first set of modules will cover the 2004 crisis in Darfur, economic development in Southern Sudan, cultures of tolerance in central Sudan and especially in Khartoum, the human ecology of pastoralism in Kordofan and Darfur, and the political economy of oil in Sudan. The portal will also include other features, such as primary documents, video clips, photo resources, time lines, analysis, bibliographies, and opportunity for discussion. The modules, and the portal in general, will be regularly updated and expanded to reflect new scholarship and new areas of concern.

The project coordinators, module coordinators, outside experts, pre-testers and external evaluator are all experienced teaching scholars. The portal will be invaluable to teachers, from the high school to the university level. Policymakers interested in Sudan will also find the portal of considerable use.

Story-Telling in Russian Oral Proficiency Interviews

This study will seek to answer three questions: (1) At what point on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency scale does story-telling narrative become a solidified skill? (2) To what extent is story telling a variant of narration, as described in the 1999 (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines? (3) To what extent must student learners of Russian control verbal aspect to be effective storytellers? To answer these questions we will examine data from 63 oral proficiency interviews (OPIs) ranging from Intermediate Low to Superior. Thirty-eight interviews will come from a collection of existing interviews, including the database of the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR). They will be second-rated and analyzed for story telling elements. Based on these initial findings, we will conduct an additional twenty interviews in which extended stories will be elicited. The second group of interviews will be ACTFL certified. Finally, we will conduct three OPIs with native speakers to obtain a baseline for story telling. We will have these interviews second rated, but ACTFL certification will not be necessary. We will then code all the interviews for narrative elements and accuracy and completeness in the use of aspect. We hypothesize that both effective story telling and complete and accurate aspectual use arrive late at the Advanced level; perhaps even only after the Superior boundary has been crossed. If this is the case, it will be left to future research to determine whether it is possible or desirable to teach narrative skills explicitly to learners at a lower level. If, on the other hand, story telling turns out to emerge at lower levels, then investigations into classroom SLA will have additional information on which to base instructional approaches. Finally, if mastery of aspect is not an outstanding feature of story telling, then instructors who decide to teach explicit narrative devices can afford to de-emphasize verbal aspect (one of the hardest semantic or morphological features of Russian) when approaching narrative.

Teaching and Learning Aids for Linguistically Complex Languages

The Linguistic Data Consortium (LDC) proposes to develop online tools to meet the pressing needs of foreign language learning in U.S. educational institutions and particularly, to enhance the acquisition of critical and high priority less-commonly taught languages.

This proposal focuses on the elaboration of four interlinked tools, which facilitate the reading of textual materials in formal and independent reading environments. We outline a research program with the following goals: (1) to focus on Arabic as an example of a less-commonly taught language that is politically critical, structurally complex, educationally interesting and covered by available LDC resources; (2) to develop four learning tools (Dictionary Lookup Tool, Reading Facilitation Tool, Word Recognition Assessment Tool, Text Preprocessing Tool) in support of reading in linguistically difficult and morphologically complex foreign languages; (3) to interface the four tools with existing technology that selects texts suited to a learner's current level and advances the reader towards a higher learning goal; (4) to test applications of the above computer-based tools and research their usefulness in providing more effective methods for autonomous self-instruction that will enable students to achieve a high level of competency in less-commonly taught foreign languages; (5) to conduct a qualitative evaluation of the use of the above technologies and tools by student learners in academic foreign language programs and evaluate the tools' contribution to and impact on the students' autonomous learning.

Though the project will target Arabic, the tools and the development approach will be significantly useful in the development of educational resources for other languages of comparable difficulty and complexity. To the above end, the following programmatic tasks and activities will be carried out:

- The LDC will design, develop, and disseminate (a) an electronic dictionary with part-of-speech fields for each word, (b) a morphological grammar, and (c) large, educationally pertinent and culturally rich text corpora.
- The LDC will also build a graphical interface and morphological parser that will facilitate the look-up of inflectional forms and other aspects of relevant cross-linking with large corpora. Users would either be able to type in inflected words and view displays of their parsing with direct links of parsed stems to electronic lexicons or would be able to utilize the same tool in controlled (preprocessed) or uncontrolled textual analysis to facilitate reading and comprehension.
- To meet the above objectives, the LDC will marshal its significant resources in computational linguistics, database management, and sound processing as well as other facilities that it brings to the project.

ACTFL Assessment for Performance and Proficiency of Languages

The publication of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning continues the impetus towards teaching languages for real world competence. However, as is stated in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the establishment of content and performance standards will not, in and of itself, create appropriate measures for determining whether the standards are being met. Despite numerous local and state initiatives, no project exists at the national level to coordinate efforts to develop appropriate assessments for measuring the competencies described in the standards. In short, we lack a standardized, national assessment for determining if students “know how, when and why to say what to whom.”

This proposed project intends to:

- Articulate a blueprint to assess performance and proficiency in languages on a national scale across the educational spectrum K-16;
- Create a framework appropriate for a national test;
- Develop a prototype with language-specific items; and
- Disseminate information on the project in order to inform the profession and build consensus through collaboration

This will be accomplished by:

- Building upon experience and expertise of nationally respected educational and research organizations (ACTFL, AIR, CAL);
- Confronting the need for a valid, reliable, nationally normed assessment; and
- Designing a mechanism for accountability in a core curriculum area that is currently not assessed nationally.

Identifying and Responding to Evaluation Needs in College Foreign Language Programs

College foreign language (FL) programs are asked to engage in evaluation of many kinds and for many reasons, such as traditional program reviews and more recent accreditation pressures to assess student-learning outcomes. Often, however, evaluation within FL programs is perceived as an onerous bureaucratic task that is imposed from the outside. Further, distinctions between student assessment and program evaluation are poorly understood, as are the links between evaluation and the improvement of curriculum and instruction. This project is designed to help FL educators build their capacities to engage in evaluation for understanding, improving, and ensuring FL program quality across colleges in the United States.

In year 1 (needs analysis phase), the project will focus on identifying the primary uses and demands for evaluation in U.S. college FL programs and on appraising current capacities to meet such demands. In year 2 (strategies and resources development phase), the research team will develop strategies and resources, such as self-study modules, evaluation instrument templates, and workshops on evaluation procedures, which will be made available on the project web-site in conjunction with a searchable database. In year 3 (field-testing phase), the developed strategies and resources will be field-tested, evaluated, and revised, via implementation in and close collaboration with five representative foreign language program sites.

This project will raise the awareness of FL educators about the actual, concrete evaluation demands that face them; provide a basis for increasing the capacity of FL educators to engage in useful evaluation practices; and produce immediately useful strategies and resources for helping FL educators meet evaluation demands. In doing so, the project will contribute a model approach to building capacities for evaluating, improving, and ensuring the quality of FL educational programs.

Minority Student Participation in International Programs

The proposed project has four goals: (1) to provide relevant and comprehensive data about the attitudes and participation patterns of minority undergraduates with respect to international education activities and programs; (2) to identify factors that impact minority student participation; (3) to develop replicable strategies and assessment tools that institutions can use to assess and increase minority participation; and (4) to widely disseminate the results in an effort to broaden the national dialogue among Federal, state, and campus leaders on international education issues to include topics of access, diversity, and minority student interests and needs. Major project activities will include:

- A comprehensive literature review of research on minority attitudes about and participation in international education activities and programs.
- The creation of an Advisory Board that will bring together experts in the fields of international education and minority education to help guide the project and evaluate the process and results.
- A series of four undergraduate minority student focus groups to provide a qualitative perspective as well as aid in the assessment of survey questions.
- A nationally fielded web-based survey of minority undergraduates at two- and four-year HBCUs.
- Aggregated data tables developed for each participating institution as a method to provide them current and relevant data about their own students. Institutions will be able to use this data to guide them as they advance their own international education efforts.
- A final report that will provide a “resource kit” for institutions and include: (1) aggregated data tables derived from the student survey; (2) a narrative of the literature review and major findings from the focus groups and web survey; (3) the survey instrument and a detailed methodology that institutions can use to assess their students and; (4) a discussion of institutional strategies for increasing the participation of minority students in international education activities and programs.

One of the proposed project’s strength is that it builds on prior research. One United Negro College Fund Special Program (UNCFSP) project, currently underway and funded by the U.S. Department of Education, assesses the resources available and extent HBCUs have engaged in teaching foreign languages. This project also will build on and complement new data that has been collected by the University of Pittsburgh under a Title VI grant. The University of Pittsburgh project correlated institutional data with student participation in international education, specifically at four-year public institutions. Our study would take these studies a step further by (1) focusing on the student perspective, (2) examining a group of institutions that have up to now been absent in the research on international education and (3) expanding the project scope to include a broad range of international programs and activities that include study abroad, foreign language learning study and area studies.

Access Islam: Resources for the Global Classroom*

Thirteen/WNET New York, public television's flagship station, requests funding for Access Islam: Resources for the Global Classroom, a materials development and distribution initiative designed to help students learn about the world's 50+ Islamic countries through access to high quality, multi-media tools, streaming video, and downloadable lesson plans related to Islamic holidays, traditions, and culture. The initiative will reach 39,000 schools and 15 million students, with a special focus on students in grades 4-8. We are requesting \$180,000 to support the development of this resource, which can be ready for distribution as early as February 2006.

The core content of Access Islam will be built around video segments from Thirteen's award-winning program, Religion & Ethics Newsweekly, now in its eighth season covering events, controversies, people, and practices of all religions, denominations, and expressions of faith. Video segments will have associated lesson plans and other classroom materials aligned to state standards and created by Thirteen's National Teacher Training Institute, which has provided quality professional development for over 155,000 teachers nationwide since 1989. Through an agreement with Discovery Education, Thirteen will deliver Access Islam to 39,000 schools that use Discovery's Video-On-Demand service. This service, which is expected to reach even more schools in the future, gives students and teachers access to Internet-based video and associated materials, and is one of the fastest growing uses of computer/Internet technologies in schools. In order to obtain the deepest possible understanding of Access Islam's impact on student learning, Thirteen will utilize software connected to Video-On-Demand that tracks which schools use the video and materials and can be used in both quantitative and qualitative assessment. Thirteen also will host Access Islam on its own educators' Website to ensure additional penetration into schools that do not have access to Discovery's service.

Advanced Filipino Textbook with Accompanying DVD and Web-Based Interactive Multimedia Exercises

This project proposes the development of a reader/textbook of 40 readings accompanied by a DVD of 40 audio and video materials for listening comprehension and a Website featuring interactive extended reading, listening and grammar exercises for content-based teaching and learning of advanced Filipino. This project aims to fulfill the increasing demand for advanced level materials in the teaching and learning of this less commonly taught language both by a growing number of U.S. learning institutions and individual learners. The proposed instructional media will include authentic materials with fully developed lessons and interactive exercises designed for both classroom use and independent learning. The goal of the project is to include at least 80 articles/texts with accompanying lessons aimed at developing in the learners not only reading and listening comprehension skills but also appreciation and analysis of the materials' contents through a five step process. This process involves the following: (1) Pre-reading/listening activities designed to activate the readers' schema on the subject; (2) Comprehension activities that will evaluate the readers' global and specific information comprehension; (3) Appreciation/ evaluation activities that will focus on the development of cultural understanding, appreciation or analysis of specific items in the text; (4) Language activities that will include exercises in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and advanced linguistic functions; and (5) Post-reading activities that will integrate the reading and listening skills with other communication skills such as writing, and speaking. In addition to addressing the development of the learners' linguistic skills, the materials will also expand their cultural knowledge and understanding.

The materials in the textbook and DVD will be classified under the following categories: (1) myths and legends; (2) history: events and people; (3) rites and rituals; and (4) folk beliefs and practices. Texts from various genres, songs, clips from movies and TV programs, debates, interviews, speeches, panel discussions, Philippine celebrations, etc. will be included, all designed to develop linguistic skills as well as cultural understanding. The Website will feature interactive exercises related to the lessons presented in the book and the DVD. It will also function as a resource site for advanced level learners and will be set up to allow for periodic updates and revision.

Darvazah: A Door Into Urdu Web-Mounted Elementary Language Instruction

Afroz Taj, Associate Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, North Carolina State University, proposes to develop a twenty-four lesson course in first year Urdu language instruction, mounted on the Internet. Urdu, spoken by 150 million people in Pakistan, India, Kashmir, and Afghanistan, has been identified by the U.S. government as a critical language. However, currently available Urdu learning resources, electronic and otherwise, are remarkably few. Based on the templates and materials developed by Taj for the successful "A Door Into Hindi" (ADIH) project¹, the proposed "Darvazah: A Door Into Urdu" will take the next leap forward, using emerging technologies and pedagogical principles derived from the burgeoning field of computer assisted language learning (CALL) to create a fully interactive elementary Urdu course.

The course will employ the full range of multimedia capabilities of the Internet, and integrate video, audio, and animation into graded lessons that emphasize performance and proficiency in the target language. Glossaries, grammar units, cultural concepts, and other learning tools will be hyperlinked to lesson movie texts. This project will result in the equivalent of a two-semester university class in Urdu language that can serve as the basic text for formal classroom instruction, for supplemental tutorials and drills, or for self-directed learning. For the classroom environment the materials will be designed to dovetail with course delivery platforms like WebCT. The duration of the project is 30 months (2.5 years) beginning in July 2005 and ending in December 2007.

¹ "A Door Into Hindi" was developed under an IRS Grant received by the NC Center for South Asia Studies in 1999. The original Hindi grant proposal was written by Tony K. Stewart (NC State University) based on the concept developed by Afroz Taj.

A Research Project to Enhance the Internationalization of Historically and Predominately Black Colleges and Universities

The National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), will conduct a survey of HBCUs to understand their current status and capacity to provide instruction in common and less commonly taught foreign languages as well as international studies. Information will be gathered using a detailed survey instrument that is administered to presidents/chancellors, academic affairs administrators, relevant department chairpersons and appropriate faculty at HBCUs. After extensive analysis of results, NAFEO will develop specific strategies for strengthening the programs. These strategies will be communicated in a comprehensive report to HBCUs and policymakers as well as to other higher education institutions and organizations for consideration and possible replication.

It is expected that the implementation of the strategies developed will significantly contribute to the development of a corps with advanced foreign language skills and perspectives that will facilitate the country's ability to compete economically, forge strong relationships with other countries and serve in national security roles. Although interest has increased in the postsecondary study of foreign languages and areas, African Americans' participation still lags behind others, which can be attributed to access as well as recognition of their importance. Since our nation's HBCUs continue to play a significant role in educating African Americans, it is logical for these institutions to advance foreign language and international studies programs. Furthermore, they can provide meaningful insights to non-HBCUs on enhancing programs and effectively engaging African Americans.

Iraqi Arabic and Azerbaijani Tutor for Language Learning

This project aims to improve and strengthen instruction in modern Middle Eastern and Central Asian languages by developing and publishing specialized instructional materials in two vital albeit less commonly taught languages. The project will produce 16 Web- and CD-ROM-based modules that support teaching in Iraqi Arabic and Azerbaijani. The exclusive focus of the project is listening comprehension, a skill that is key to acquiring proficiency in reading, writing and speaking.

There are several commonalities among these two languages and the countries where they are spoken – oil-rich states situated in strategic regions that are experiencing turmoil. They also represent language groups (Arabic and Turkic) whose impact on the region and the entire world is immeasurable. Another commonality is the marked absence of authentic teaching materials to supplement instruction in these languages.

Authentic materials and cultural scenarios will provide the content for the Iraqi and Azeri Tutor programs, each consisting of eight elementary and intermediate modules. The materials will be drawn from a variety of sources including television, home movies and documentary footage of life in the capital cities of Baghdad and Baku. These integrated yet stand-alone modules will be anchored in the ingenious cyber architecture and Web interface that the project team developed during a pilot phase.

This project involves the collaboration of the UCLA Middle East and Europe and Eurasia National Resource Centers and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures where Iraqi and Azerbaijani are taught in Arabic and Turkic degree programs. The project is fortunate to have two leading instructors and scholars of the target languages conceptualizing and writing the modules and a seasoned team of experts and professionals at all levels of development and production. The modules will complement recently published Iraqi Arabic and Azerbaijani textbooks, thereby insuring their long-term use.

Beyond UCLA classrooms, Iraqi Tutor and Azeri Tutor will be used across the University of California system and beyond through Distance Learning. The Web-based modules are certain to be used in courses offered by the network of Middle East, Europe/Eurasia and Central Asia NRCs. As we have already ascertained, the Iraqi and Azeri Tutors will readily find application in government and commercial language training programs. The tutors will be freely accessible on the Internet to independent students everywhere.