MESSSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Jacques C du Plessis

NCOLCTL has great potential in growth as we face the digital context becoming more normal in our daily lives. These profound changes in the potential of what we can do deserves recognition in our planning – How are we planning to meet the expectations of the digital generation? Are we bold and assertive as we plan our future?

In retrospect it is valuable to see what has changed and where challenges persist since NCOLCTL was founded. As less commonly taught languages, for many of us, we still struggle to have our classes scheduled during times that are attractive to students. We struggle to retain instructors, even very talented instructors, and we are still not paid well and few are offered a permanent academic home.

The good news is that we have been blessed with leadership in NCOLCTL that has attracted attention in government. The Star Talk program has been a great blessing. Successful summer programs have ensured renewed interest in the continued commitment to teaching and scholarship of many of our languages. Great efforts are ongoing to establish standards. We value the good relationship with ACTFL to serve LCTLs. Many of our teachers have been trained to conduct oral proficiency interviews, and through the efforts of NCOLCTL and our Resource Centers, the quality of our instruction as made significant progress, and
teachers have been trained in technology.

Personally I have been impressed by, and very grateful for the sense of camaraderie we have in our midst. There is a true sense of mutual support and a collective awareness that if we support each other, we are all stronger. At the NCOLCTL conferences I cherish the values we share to form community with a spirit of inclusivity, caring, and good humor. Thank you to all of you for building faith in the bonds we have despite great cultural diversity. Demonstrations of hate and brutality in the world emphasizes the vital work we do to expand the new generation’s exposure and experience with diversity and to develop respect for things that are different. Our deeper mission is to build peace, exemplify tolerance, and expand the community commitment to deeper understanding and to overcome fear so we can be live by the values of respect and charity.

The hard economic times of most of the past decade have not been easy on foreign languages, but we have stayed focused and we are stronger. In conclusion I want to focus on two challenges we have to take up technology and K-12.

Technology: The ubiquitous nature of internet connectivity, cloud and mobile technologies are changing assumptions. An interesting example outside our field a global network of radiography centers allows hospitals anywhere to submit their digital x-rays at 3 am and to have them read immediately. We have to think beyond our university. With web conference and social media technologies we can bring universities together into one class. We are able to better connect with native speakers. It is time to consider new formats and wider borders for our classes. Open Courseware is a growing trend and it offers great promise to bridge the lack of materials for many of our languages. In this past year my live classes included students from Yale University and USAID in Afghanistan.

K-12: As the geopolitical shift happens, the focus will move more towards some of the LCTLs. We have to learn from each other to build successful programs for our languages in the K-12 space. Utah is a good example with their Chinese program in the K-12 space. It is time to challenge the Spanish, French, and German logic in the schools. With 7000 languages spoken in the world, foreign language is a really big idea with wonderful options we have to help usher into the curriculum of the future.
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S DESK

You are all welcome to the NCOLCTL 18th annual conference under the theme “Languages of America”. This year is quite special because we will be celebrating the 25th year of NCOL-CTL’s existence.

For this year’s conference and presentations, we promise to enhance the skills of all attendees as well as further the field of second language education. It is so great to see very many familiar faces. It’s great to see so many familiar faces as well as all the new ones, we’re glad to see everyone here. I hope you are all enjoying Chicago.

Last year we received participants from Last year, we saw attendees from Egypt, Greece, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Turkey, Tanzania, the U.A.E. and different states of the US. We are hoping that the number of countries represented every year grows.

I would love to start by thanking Indiana University which has been the home of NCOL-CTL, ALTA and NALRC for the past two years. I would also want to thank the NALRC staff Michael Walker, John Adeika, Joyce Nyakato and Volunteers Victor Alabi, Usman Ahmad who have participated in the details of putting this conference together. During the course of organizing the event, there have been ups and downs but the unwavering work of the above mentioned people has made it

we value the amazing input we continuously receive from all over the world. Please keeps it coming.

Several noteworthy events have occurred since last year’s conference. NCOLCTL STARTALK also held its Swahili Professional Development Program over the summer (July 9th-27th). Week one consisted of an online teacher training course – from the participant’s home base and weeks 2-3 were held at Bloomington, Indiana. Thanks go out to the master teachers Dr. Alwiya S. Omar and Dr. John Kiarie Wa Njogu who taught during the program with me. At this program, an emphasis was placed on numerous L2 acquisition theories and standards as well as what makes a successful language classroom. This year, we have applied for a grant to for the 2015 Summer STARTALK which will train language instructors from less commonly taught languages like Arabic, Dari, Hindi, Korean, Persian, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu.

Some additional events that took place last year include two trainings at Ho-Chunk Nation, one of the strongest indigenous native tribes at Black River Falls, Wisconsin. The trainings come as a deliberative effort of NCOLCTL to incorporate Native American languages into the larger association.

NCOLCTL was also represented at the ASA Conference, as well as the ACTFL Conference. I represented both NCOLCTL and ALTA at these meetings. Thanks to our secretariat staff who were there exhibiting our products and advertising the conference. We would like to thank the Qatar Foundation and ACTFL for their continued sponsorship of this conference. In addition, we would also
like to thank the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) for its continued support of NCOLCTL. We would also like to thank all our exhibitors and advertisers, without the support of all these groups and individuals, this conference would not have been possible.

Once again, the NCOLCTL conference planning committee has done what was expected of them. I’d like to extend my gratitude to each member for not only planning and coordinating but also for doing a great job in selecting this year’s presentations, editing the program and choosing this year’s Walton Award winner.

Issues such as cultural understanding in language education, the use of authentic situations in language learning, technology, social media, multi-modality in the classroom, using film to teach LCTL’s and online learning are only a few examples of what is going to be discussed at the conference this year. I hope everyone has the chance to attend a wide range of presentations. Please be sure to attend presentations offered by our organizational affiliates as they promise to be just as interesting.

The NCOLCTL board comprising: Jaques Du Plessia, Wafa Hassan, Susan Schmidt, Odeese Ghassa-Khalili, Yea-Fen Chen and Gabriel Nik. I would love to thank outgoing members of large Odeese Ghassa-Khalil and Yea-Fen Chen for their outstanding service to the board. We wish them well in their future endeavors.

Thanks also go to Dr. Alwiya Omar, Immediate Past President, for her continued involvement as well as helping in the smooth transition ushering in our new President, Dr. Jaques Du Plessis. The past and current president has proven to be a great leadership team and we look forward to continued growth under their guidance.

Last, but not least, thanks to all of you attending this year’s conference, it’s sure to be great. All of us at NCOLCTL hope that the presentations you attend and the vendors you visit will help in enhancing your professional development and furthering your goals. The NCOLCTL Secretariat is always available to help in any way possible, so please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Enjoy the conference!

INTERVIEW WITH SCOTT MCGINNIS, 2016 A. RONALD WALTON AWARD WINNER

Congratulations! I am very happy that you are receiving the Walton Award! No doubt that your amazing achievements in the world languages field and specifically the less commonly taught languages are visible to the world. I personally have had the opportunity to benefit and learn from your language initiatives.
**What are some of the highlights in your career that you personally treasure?**

I think that my work on two projects – one Chinese-specific, one pan-language – will be my most lasting (and truly most satisfying) memories.

The first is a book I co-wrote with a sadly lately-passed dear friend, Tao-chung Ted Yao, of the University of Hawai’i. Thirty years ago this March, my then-academic advisor for the doctoral program in East Asian Languages and Literatures at Ohio State, Tim Light, “set me up” with one of his former teaching assistants at the University of Arizona, Ted, to talk about an idea Ted had been working on for a book of games for learning Chinese. We spent the summer of 1986 in a long-distance collaboration – Ted was teaching classical Chinese up at the summer school at Middlebury College, and I was heading up the intensive first-year Chinese course at OSU – and via a genuinely low-tech approach (Ted snail mailing Chinese language drafts of the games from Vermont, and I composing the English equivalents on a Smith-Corona electric typewriter in our apartment in Columbus on the weekends), we produced the first draft of Let’s Play Games in Chinese – which, I discover month after month, is still being used by Chinese language teachers in all settings throughout the United States and the world. I would like to think in that somewhat small but playful way, I’m still having an impact on the Chinese language field.

The second is the now nearly-decade-old report by the ad hoc Committee on Foreign Languages commissioned by the Modern Language Association in 2004, on which I was the token member whose e-mail address did not end in .edu, but in .mil (which sometimes left me feeling like I was wearing a bull’s-eye on both my front and back sides – even among some of my fellow committee members!). Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World still, as Michael Geisler, my most frequent “tag-team” co-presenter at conferences over this past decade, will most likely agree, continues to generate more heat than light in terms of paving the way for meeting our national language proficiency and cultural competency needs. But I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn so much from the other six people on the committee with whom I worked, and hopeful that we have provided some small bit of candle-powered light.

What does it take, in your opinion, to be a successful leader in the environment of foreign language teaching and especially LCTLs?

As much as was the case when NCOLCTL was first established, the mantra of “collective solutions for common problems” applies both within each individual LCTL field, as well as among the very disparate LCTL fields. I have frequently talked about the need for articulation, both of a more vertical nature (i.e., within that theoretical “pipeline” that exists from pre-K school settings to higher educational institutions and beyond), but also of a horizontal nature. This is very much consistent with what Richard Brecht and the late Ron Walton wrote about so convincingly in the late 20th century, beginning with their seminal article in the special issue of The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social
Science, edited by the founder of the National Foreign Language Center, the late Richard Lambert. An understanding of and familiarity with the four national capacity sectors (later expanded to five by Walton in his analysis of the Chinese language field) is essential to taking a leading role in the development of any language teaching field, including LCTLs. I count myself extremely fortunate that throughout my career, including in my current additional duties as Coordinator of the Interagency Language Roundtable, I have had the opportunity and genuine pleasure of interacting with those sectors on a daily basis.

What advice would you give to the field of LCTL instruction in order to ensure the quality of language education especially in these changing times with technology?

Clearly mobile technology, in particular the iPhone, has changed everything about not just how we communicate, but how we learn, languages most definitely included. The incredible thing that I have seen in my 13 years at DLI-W is that given that we are living in a metropolitan area that requires everybody – including our students – to often spend a lot of time on public transportation, the opportunities for our students to avail themselves of hand-held devices to study for their classes are virtually endless (I do make it a point to say to our incoming students that I am NOT authorizing them to study off their phones if they have to drive a car into the District!). Equally striking is that when I first started the job in 2003, the more senior (i.e., the Army colonels and Navy captains) students fought tooth and nail to resist cutting-edge technologies – they wanted paper flash-cards, not electronic ones, and nothing more “high-tech” in audio than a CD. Now those more senior commissioned and non-commissioned officers not only embrace, but in fact demand, the highest standard of instructional (or rather, learning) technology available, in a highly portable form. And if our students are demanding it, we need to demand of ourselves to become ever-more competent and comfortable in using it.

As you look at the teaching of LCTLs in America, how do you see the future of these languages?

Again, as I responded to the question concerning leadership in the foreign language teaching field, cooperation among educational institutions and agencies invested in successful language teaching and learning models is absolutely essential. I recently conducted a site visit to three universities that are engaged in a shared distance learning initiative in well over a dozen languages, including LCTLs that might be more aptly dubbed “VNTs” – “virtually never taught” – such as Sinhala and Tibetan (both classical and modern!). Clearly only through a collaborative approach and a rationalization of resources could such LCTLs find a sufficient audience to justify offering them. Making the best use of technology and establishing mutually beneficial partnerships is, in my view, the future of LCTLs.
NEWS FROM CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, USA

2015 has witnessed another year of success and growth of the Chinese Language Teachers Association. The following are some highlights:

New Board Members
CLTA has completed another round of board member election with the highest votes compared to the last five years. Prof. Chaofeng Sun was elected as the Vice President and four others as the new board members. Next year, Prof. Helen Shen will be the president of the Association.

Journal: New Name, New Publisher, New Cover
Starting from 2016 and Volume 51, the Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers’ Association (JCLTA) will change its name to Chinese as a Second Language- Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association-USA with CSL as its abbreviation. It will be published by John Benjamins and start to be listed on CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure, a database for Academic Journals). Benjamins will also send the journal to various indexing and abstracting services such as Scopus, Thomson Reuters, ERIH, ProQuest. To be in line with JB’s style, the journal will have a new cover design, with a link to the past--the elegant bamboo graphics by the late Professor Charles Chu.

CLTA Logo
At the beginning of the year, an Ad Hoc committee was established to organize an open competition for the Association’s official logo design. With the association-wide on-line voting, the finalist was selected who skillfully incorporated into the logo the bamboo leaves motif to convey the spirit of perseverance and resilience our members admire and try to attain.

Association-Level Conferences
CLTA annual conference will be held in San Diego, November 20-24, 2015 in conjunction with ACTFL. At the conference, 3 roundtables, 3 electronic posters, 49 sessions, and 63 individual papers will be presented. CLTA-sponsored Second International Symposium on Chinese Language Teaching and Learning will be held at University of Maryland-College Park in March, 2016.

Media and Publicity Committee
Chinese Language Teachers Association, USA
NEWS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SELF-INSTRUCTIONAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS (NASILP)

The National Association of Self Instructional Language Programs (NASILP), a member of NCOLCTL, has experienced a number of changes this last year. First, NASILP’s long-standing Executive Director, Dr. Alexander Dunkel, retired after many years of selfless service to the Association’s members. Following Dr. Dunkel as Executive Director, the NASILP board appointed Dr. Koji Arizumi of the University of Alabama. Dr. Arizumi has served as the Director of the University of Alabama’s Critical Languages Program for 10 years and served on the NASILP board before his appointment as the Association’s Executive Director.

Dr. Arizumi is dedicated to increasing the use of technology to enhance the depth and breadth of language offerings to the Association’s members both in terms of tutoring an increasingly broad spectrum of less commonly taught languages, as well as in terms of extending the availability of languages offered at a few universities to other universities, colleges, and schools within the Association through the use of technology. Collaboration and partnerships among Association members will strengthen the Association as well as create a broad access to languages that has not been previously available to language learners.

The Secretariat of NASILP has remained at the University of Arizona, which has created a tutor training program open to any university tutors interested in developing its language partners. The 30-hour certificate program offered as a self-instructional set of 5 modules focuses on the basics of Second Language Acquisition, language teaching methodology, Syllabus and Lesson planning design as well as on student motivation for self-instructed learners. The program is offered through the Critical Languages Program at the University of Arizona such that NASILP member institutions receive a discounted tuition price. More information at:  http://clp.arizona.edu/tutorcertificate

Anyone interested in joining NASILP or learning more about how to create a less commonly taught languages program using the NASILP model should visit the NASILP webpage (http://www.nasilp.net/) or contact the secretariat (nasilp@u.arizona.edu).
The American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages, a founding member of NCOL-CTL, held its 30th Annual Meeting in Denver, CO, during the Affiliates Day at the Middle East Studies Association conference on November 21, 2015.

There were several new initiatives proposed and discussed, most exciting of these being the decision to hold a first ever AATT national conference in November 2016, before the ACTFL and MESA conferences in Boston, MA. The AATT Conference will focus on language, literature, and pedagogy of Turkic languages with Boston University hosting the day-long event. Also decided were several new awards: an Essay Writing contest, with the winner receiving a round trip ticket to Turkey, donated by Turkish Airlines, and a Conference Attendance Award for two members, one student, and one for a junior faculty member. These will be in addition to the other awards: AATT has been awarding since 1991 the Redhouse Award for best progress in Turkish, and since 2014, the Ayverdi Award for the best translation of an Ottoman archival/historical or literary work.

Another major decision reached at the AATT Board meeting in Denver concerns the following new AATT project. After completing the Proficiency Guidelines Update project together with ACTFL under the leadership of Roberta Micallef [BU], as AATT our new project is revising the Language Learning Framework for Turkish which was a NCOLCTL sponsored project completed in 1996. We will be considering the World Readiness Standards as presented on the ACTFL website [http://www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages]:

“The World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages create a roadmap to guide learners to develop competence to communicate effectively and interact with cultural understanding. “World-Readiness” signals that the Standards have been revised with important changes to focus on the literacy developed and the real-world applications. Learners who add another language and culture to their preparation are not only college- and career ready, but are also “world-ready”—that is, prepared to add the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to their résumés for entering postsecondary study or a career.”

This will also be the theme of next year’s roundtable at the MESA 2016 conference organized by Funda Güven [U Wisc-Madison].

AATT hosted its 11th “Graduate Student Pre-Conference,” a conference for graduate students in a range of disciplines enrolled at institutions in North America whose research involves using a Turkic language. This Pre-Conference was established to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of AATT in 2005. The Pre-Conferences have been co-sponsored by the Institute for Turkish Studies and AATT. This year, in addition to the MESA Pre-Conference, we will also offer a Graduate Student Pre-Conference in conjunction with Central Eurasian Studies Society [CESS] that will take
place in October at Princeton University. ‘Shared solutions to common problems,’ NCOLCTL’s motto, is very much on our mind as we as all the other LCTL entities are faced with diminishing or entirely disappearing funding. How to secure funding, what a ‘common’ approach to secure funding might be, would be a good joint discussion point.

As we had done periodically over the years, AATT circulated in 2015 a survey to gauge how we are doing and to find out what else we can do to serve our community better. Three key words: “Networking”, “Community” “Communication” emerged repeatedly on this survey: this will be the focus of our efforts in 2016 and beyond. Here an anonymous quote from this survey about the role of AATT which we take to heart: “Bringing teachers of Turkic together, giving us a sense of community, keeping us informed of what projects are going on across the country, what we’re all doing, what research, funding, and development opportunities are available to both faculty and students.”
The year 2016 will be a momentous one for The Modern Language Journal! Published on behalf of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations, the Journal will complete one hundred years of continuous publication, making it the profession’s oldest generalist journal devoted to language teaching and learning.

A number of celebratory events will take place throughout the year. Quite fittingly, the central activity is a centenary special issue, MLJ 100, Supplement 2016, which will appear in January 2016. Its opening contribution is a collaboratively written article by the Douglas Fir Group, a group of 15 scholars in the field who, over a period of close to two years, developed a framework for SLA research in a multilingual world. It is an expansive and thought-provoking proposal that looks at what research into language teaching and learning might look like in the 21st century. Equally challenging are the remaining 11 contributions that take a forward-looking perspective on the language education scene, from the macro-policy context, to the impact of technology, to the rethinking that is necessary to capture essential characteristics of learning goals, the learner, the classroom, teacher education, pedagogy, assessment, and research methodology for this challenging environment.

Flanking this publication are three extended colloquia at major conferences, the annual conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in San Diego, CA, November 2015, and the annual conference of the American Association for Applied Linguistics in Orlando, FL, April 2016. Other presentations in celebration of NFMLTA-MLJ centennial will take place at the 2016 annual conference of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL) in April in Atlanta, GA. Each of these events features different author teams from the special issue as presenters, thereby directly reaching out to the profession.

We would be most pleased to have you participate in the celebration, welcome you at the conference presentations, and invite you to consider how the MLJ’s beginning of its next century of publishing relates to your professional work!
The American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) held an engaging and diverse workshop during the MESA 2015 in Colorado, which brought together presenters from across the nation and provided a wonderful opportunity for colleagues to learn from each other and to share new ideas. The workshop “Multiliteracies: Language, Culture, Communication and Technology in Today’s Persian Classroom” was co-sponsored by the Middle East Center at University of Pennsylvania and Center for Middle Eastern Studies at University of Arizona. The AATP also held a Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony during the MESA 2015 where it honored Dr. Mahvash Shahegh for her many years of service to Persian language and literature and her decade-long service to the AATP as its Executive Secretary.

The AATP will hold a roundtable at the Iranian Studies Conference 2016 to be held at the University of in Vienna. The roundtable is entitled: “The Current State of Persian Instruction at Colleges and Universities” to discuss and reflect on the proliferation of lectureships and the decline in tenure-line positions in Persian and related fields. Please consider attending the roundtable and be sure to encourage colleagues in the broader field to attend as well.


The 2015 NCOLCTL Startalk program was held on July 13th through 31st. This two week program featured Less Commonly Taught Language Instructors from various institutions and organizations in the United States. During the first week of the 2015 NCOLCTL Startalk program, patrons participated in the online Teacher Training Course, which introduced them to the various theoretical concepts frequently used in the field of LCTL. This initial week of online training was a required component that introduced participants to several theories of LCTL. Afterwards, the online participants (not all of
them) travelled to Bloomington, Indiana on the 19th to commence the two week thorough onsite training. The onsite training was directed by three master instructors: Dr. Antonia Schleicher (Program Director), Dr. Jennifer Eddy (Lead Instructor), and Dr. Esther Mukewa Lisanza (Instructor). In addition, Ph.D. student and Swahili instructor Beatrice Okelo was the trainee master instructor onsite. Throughout the first week of the onsite training, Dr. Antonia Schleicher opened the program by introducing participants to Backward Curriculum Design. Moving on she introduced the principles and characteristics of Effective Language Lessons. She finally emphasized the importance of using target language, contextual teaching language lessons, as well as instructions on how to create effective lesson plans for individuals and groups. Instructors Drs. Jennifer Eddy, Esther Lisanza and Schleicher in turns performed demonstrations using varied languages, such as Spanish, Swahili and Yoruba. They place these languages in context for the participants so that they adapt these concepts to their micro teaching. Participants participated in a lot of exercises to help improve their lesson planning and teaching skills. Alongside the teaching demonstrations both Drs. Eddy and Lisanza led presentations on Backward Curriculum Design, Thematic Units of Lesson plans, development of Interpersonal, Interpretive and Presentational modes tasks and the importance of performance objective for instructors. The most part of the second week was based on micro teaching. Each participant prepared and taught a target language after which feedback was given by the program instructors and co-participants. Participants were able to receive valuable feedback from their instructors and peers. The feedback was expected to help improve participants teaching skills and future lesson plans. At the end of the program, an awards ceremony followed be a dinner was held to conclude this intensive three-week program. During the ceremony, participants and volunteer students performed songs and dance to entertain the audience. Four participants had the opportunity to share highlights of their training experiences from the 2105 NCOLCTL Startalk program, and another participant commended the student volunteers for their helpful feedback. To conclude, each participant was given a certificate of completion from the NCOLCTL.
It was awarded by D. Antonia Schleicher, Executive Director of NCOLCTL, and Director OF THE Center for Learning Excellence at Indiana University, Bloomington. In addition, the student volunteers received certificates. The evening was crowned with a dinner prepared by Samira – a Bloomington based restaurant. All the instructors invited guests, participants and staff of the secretariat shared foods and drinks representing a culture that is in common amongst occasions such as this.

The following individuals received certificates for completing the 2015 NCOLCTL.

**STARTALK PROGRAM:**

1) Ashley Bisutti - Indiana University
2) Barkha Dwivedi - Five Colleges, In.
3) Johnes Kitololo - Pomona College
4) Omayma Alkatib - Zenith Academy
5) Peter Mkumbo - Clemson University
6) Salah Farah - Defense Language
7) Yunus Ates - News Springs Schools
8) Zahrawi Samar - Sam Houston State University
9) Beatrice Okelo - Indiana University
Professor Antonia Schleicher received the 2015 ACTFL Wilga Rivers Award on September 17, 2015. This Award is in evidence of excellence in teaching, areas of Language education and selfless service to schools, communities, as well as to state, and regional, national, international and professional organizations. The criteria for winning this award shows the depth of commitment and responsibility Antonia has demonstrated to LCTLs over many years. Congratulations once again!

Find Below selected pictures from the event:

Antonia giving a short brilliant thank you speech after receiving the ACTFL WILGA RIVERS AWARD

Antonia (middle) and other Awardees

Antonia and Dick Kuettner showing the prestigious Award.

Antonia deserves this Award says Zoli and Alwiya!
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