

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Center for Open Educational Resources
and Language Learning

Newsletter



Textbooks For an Open World Fall 2011

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COERLL Newsletter

Fall 2011:

Textbooks for an Open World

This Newsletter is a biannual publication of the Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning (COERLL) at the University of Texas at Austin.

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Mission

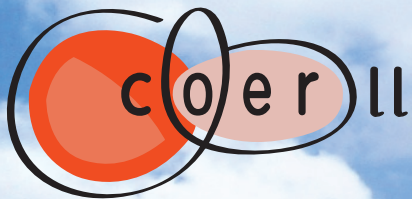
The Center for Open Educational Resources & Language Learning (COERLL) is one of 15 national foreign language resource centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education (Title VI of the 1990 Higher Education Act). COERLL's mission is to produce Open Educational Resources (OERs) for the Internet public. In addition, COERLL aims to reframe foreign language education in terms of bilingualism and/or multilingualism.

From the Director

COERLL's first year has been both productive and turbulent. Upon learning that we had won the grant to establish a national foreign language resource center, we immediately got to work. Before the end of our first year, we had launched ten ambitious faculty-led projects, hosted the 2011 SOCALLT & TexFlec conference and several workshops, and published three new open textbooks: *Yorùbá Yé Mi*, *Français interactif*, and *Deutsch im Blick*. Everything seemed to be going well when disaster struck in July: the U.S. Department of Education announced deep budget cuts that targeted programs in International Education and Foreign Language Studies. The unexpected magnitude of the cuts (50% in the case of Language Resource Centers) sent shockwaves around the country.

In a July 15, 2011 editorial published in *USA Today*, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former Senator Chuck Hagel warned that these cuts would not only threaten "the nation's diplomatic, intelligence, and national security capacities, but also our ability to maximize our competitiveness in global markets." These cuts, described as a "last-minute decision," may well have disastrous long-term consequences. At the University of Texas at Austin, it has taken decades to develop a sophisticated network of programs and centers that function on the state and national levels to improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages and cultures.

Not only is UT Austin home to COERLL, but also to three National Resource Centers (Center for European Studies, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and the South Asia Institute), two Language Flagships (Arabic, Hindu/Urdu), and a Center for International



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Business Education and Research (CIBER). This infrastructure serves U.S. students of foreign languages and cultures as well as government agencies that rely on resources we disseminate through websites, workshops, and activities.

While the recent cuts are bad news for foreign languages in general, they are particularly damaging to the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Knowledge of these languages and cultures is described as ‘critical’ for U.S. security. And yet, commercial publishing companies cannot afford to develop materials for these small markets. In fact, the need for LCTL materials was one of the main reasons given by the federal government for the establishment of the Title VI Language Resource Center program in 1990. Therefore, we are especially pleased to announce the publication of an open textbook for Yoruba, a language spoken by approximately 30 million people primarily in Nigeria. (See “More Need for Less Commonly Taught Languages” on page 8.) This new textbook illustrates what COERLL is all about—the production of high quality materials on a shoe-string budget. So, despite the recent budget cuts, we remain committed to combining Open Education with digital technologies. In fact, we believe that this combination will allow us to survive (and even thrive) during tough economic times.

For an open world,

Carl Blyth
Director of COERLL

“Today, only 5% of post-secondary students in the U.S. who are studying foreign languages are enrolled in courses on non-European languages despite the fact that 85% of the world’s population speaks those other languages.”

—Madeleine Albright and Chuck Hagel, USA Today, July 15, 2011



Dr. Carl Blyth, Director of COERLL

Scan the code to the right with a scanner (barcode reader) application to explore COERLL.



To find a scanner application, Google “QR Reader” and the model of your phone or the operating system of your computer.

OER Glossary

- **Creative Commons (CC) licenses:** Copyright-licenses offered free of charge to the public and that allow creators to communicate which rights they reserve and which rights they waive for the benefit of recipients or other creators. This flexible copyright model replaces the statement “all rights reserved” with “some rights reserved”.
- **OER:** Stands for Open Educational Resources, educational materials and resources offered freely and openly for anyone to use and under some licenses to re-mix, improve, and redistribute.
- **Open education:** A collective term that refers to forms of education in which knowledge, ideas, or important aspects of teaching methodology or infrastructure are shared freely over the Internet.
- **Open textbook:** An open-licensed textbook offered online by its author(s).
- **Open Source Software (OSS):** Computer software that, under an open source software license, permits users to study, change, and improve the software. OSS is very often developed in a public, collaborative manner and is often compared to (technically defined) user-generated content or (legally defined) open content movements.

COERLL Project News

New OERs

Spanish in Texas

Open Access Website (Spanish/Bilingualism)

The Spanish in Texas project team is developing a pedagogically useful corpus of Spanish and bilingual Spanish-English speech samples culled from interviews and conversations among speakers of diverse personal profiles and regional origins throughout Texas. The corpus will provide authentic knowledge about the diversity of Spanish and speakers of Spanish language heritage for the improvement of educational programs in Texas and beyond. The video corpus will be accompanied by instructional materials for use by students, educators, and the general public. A new interactive website allows users to become involved in the development of a ‘linguistic’ landscape of Texas Spanish speakers. It also provides valuable information about Spanish in Texas, including:

- The history and culture of Spanish-speakers in Texas
- A contemporary demographic portrait of Spanish speakers in Texas
- A glossary of Texas Spanish
- The structures of Spanish in Texas (pronunciation, word-formation, grammar, usage)
- Commentary on the linguistic landscape of Spanish in Texas
- A “get involved” feature to engage users in developing the content

OER link: <http://sites.la.utexas.edu/spanishtx>

Project Directors:

Barbara E. Bullock (Department of French and Italian)

Almeida Jacqueline Toribio (Department of Spanish and Portuguese)



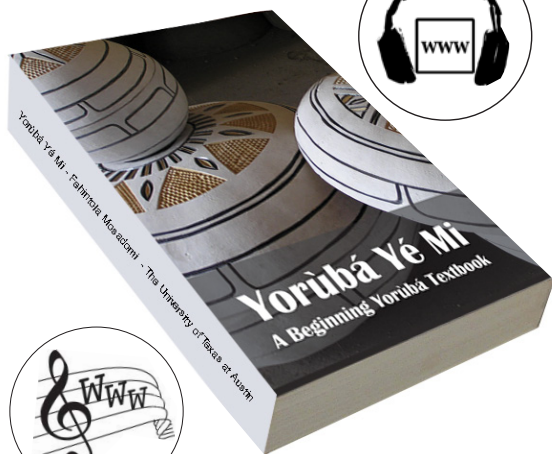
Yorùbá Yémi

Open Access Textbook (Yoruba)

This Internet-based beginning Yoruba textbook answers the call for quality, affordable language learning resources for the LCTLs. Multimedia features include monologues, dialogues, and songs recorded by native speakers, as well as an audio index of tonal pronunciations. All materials can be accessed at the website, and users have the option to print the textbook in color or black and white. For more information, see "More Need for Less Commonly Taught Languages" on page 8.

OER link: <http://coerll.utexas.edu/yemi>

Project Director: Fehintola Mosadomi
(Department of Middle Eastern Studies)



Pitch Perfect Pinyin

Open Access Website (Chinese)

Pitch Perfect Pinyin is a new website of interactive exercises designed to help beginning learners of Chinese acquire a good command of Mandarin Chinese pronunciation. The site provides clear and precise explanations of the Chinese pronunciation system in non-technical terms, as well as over 1,000 click-and-listen items to help learners become well-versed in the Mandarin sounds and tones. Learners can also find interactive exercises and 100 multiple-choice questions to test their perceptions of Chinese pronunciation.

The click-and-listen exercises give students the flexibility to focus on sounds that are more difficult to them. The interactive exercises allow students to receive immediate feedback, helping them learn pronunciation more efficiently.

The website is designed to individualize learners' acquisition processes of Mandarin pronunciation, and also free up classroom time for instructors.

OER link: <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/ppp/>

Project Director: Wen-Hua Teng
(Department of Asian Studies)

Pronunciation Tips

Initials: **d t f**

Finals: **u** **uo** **ou** **an** **ang**



COERLL Projects

LCTL Materials

- **Hindi**
Videos of Conversational Hindi
- **Arabic**
Aswaat Arabiyya: Listening Comprehension Exercises for Arabic
- **Chinese**
Multimedia Learning Materials for Mandarin Chinese
- **Yorùbá**
Yorùbá Yé Mi: A Beginning Yoruba Textbook

Language Tools

- **Textual Annotation**
eComma
- **Cultural Photo Archive**
LESCANT Photo Database
- **Multilingual Lexicon**
Multi FrameNet

Corpora

- **Spanish in Texas Corpus**
A Linguistic Map of Texas

Assessment

- **Bilingual Assessment**
An Easy-to-Use Instrument to Assess Bilingualism
- **Proficiency Training**
Spanish Proficiency Training Website and Learner Corpus

Professional Development

Workshops, Symposia, and Resources for Language Teachers

COERLL Project News

Project director feature

View a short video with interviews with COERLL's Project directors:



<http://goo.gl/nckjJ>

Upgraded OERs

Deutsch im Blick

Open Access Textbook (German)

COERLL has made an OER out of *Deutsch im Blick* (DiB), an Internet-based multimedia German textbook launched in 2008. The original resource included a 10-chapter textbook accessed online, over 300 video clips of native speakers and students, audio samples of phonetics, vocabulary, and dialogues, and much more. Updating and adding to the existing features, the new DiB website now touts:

- A Print-on-Demand option for the textbook.
- Compatibility with most smartphones (and other camera-enabled devices) to play video and audio.
- Video clips that can be shared through Facebook, Twitter, email, or your own website.
- A new web page of professional development resources on how to apply the DiB pedagogy to classrooms, including access to information on teaching methods, sample syllabi and lesson plans, and other helpful material.
- German song exercises and lyrics.
- Grammar tips with links to COERLL's German language grammar study website.

OER link: <http://coerll.utexas.edu/dib>

Project Director: Zsuzsanna Abrams



Aswaat Arabiyya

Open Access Website (Arabic)

Look for new listening exercises for multiple levels that have been added to this website that features video clips from television stations throughout the Arab world.

OER link: <http://aits.utexas.edu/aswaat>

Project Director: Mahmoud Al-Batal

(Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic Flagship Program)



LESCANT

Open Access Photo Database (Language & Culture)

In Spring, 2011, the LESCANT photo database was piloted as part of pre-departure training for study abroad programs at the University of Texas at Austin, including summer programs from the UT Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER). In May, students attending the Summer Program in Lyon, France contributed new photos to the database.

OER link: <http://aits.utexas.edu/lescant>

Project Director: Orlando Kelm (Department of Spanish and Portuguese)

Proficiency Training Website and Spanish Learner Corpus

Open Access Website (Spanish / Assessment)

The site has added 43 new video clips of heritage Spanish learners. Proficiency ratings for these and the approximately 250 existing videos on this website, designed to train Spanish instructors in assessing learners' proficiency levels, are now verified by a certified ACTFL rater. In addition, sample classroom activities are now available.

OER link: <http://laits.utexas.edu/spt>

Project Director: Dale Koike (Department of Spanish and Portuguese)

OERs in Development

COERLL is currently testing prototypes of new Open Educational Resources this fall. These projects include:

Hindi in America

Open Access Website / Video Collection (Hindi)

A video collection and online instructional materials based on unscripted interviews with Hindi-speakers.

Project Director: Rupert Snell

(Department of Asian Studies, Hindi-Urdu Flagship Program)

Bilingual Assessment

Online Assessment Tool (French, Spanish, Catalan, English)

An online assessment instrument published as a Google Docs form template and self-scoring spreadsheet, currently being piloted in Spanish, French, Catalan, and English versions.

Project Director: David Birdsong (Department of French and Italian)

Multi FrameNet

Open Access Website (Multilingual)

A corpus-based lexicon that illustrates how words are used in real-life contexts, is currently being tested in German and English with plans to apply the same model to other languages.

Project Director: Hans Boas (Department of Germanic Studies)

eComma

Open Source Web Application (Multilingual)

An open source tool for building collaborative commentaries through tagging and commenting on texts.

Project Directors:

Carl Blyth (COERLL, Department of French and Italian)

Sam Baker (Department of English)

Topics

- Hometown
- Past
- Sports
- Politics
- Other Countries
- Family
- Comparisons
- Major
- Apartment



Non-Verbal

Culture

Environment

Social Organization



Need more information about our projects?

Please contact us at info@coerll.utexas.edu

MORE NEED FOR LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

In a May 2011 press release announcing the introduction of a foreign language education act concerning primary and secondary classrooms, House Representative Rush Holt said: “Because of poor foreign language education, American companies today lose international contracts, our scientists miss important opportunities for collaboration, and clues critical to our national security go untranslated.” Senator Frank Lautenberg added: “If more Americans are fluent in languages from around the world, the United States will be better prepared to compete in a global market and protect our national security.”

If fluency in languages from around the world is the goal, not only should foreign language learning increase, but language offerings must expand. According to the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL): “Approximately ninety-one percent of Americans who study foreign languages in our schools, colleges, and universities choose French, German, Italian, or Spanish; while only nine percent choose languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Yoruba, Russian, Swahili and the other languages spoken by the overwhelming majority of people around the world.”

Contributing factors for low enrollment in less commonly taught languages include the continued federal funding cuts to foreign language programs and language resource centers whose work promotes the learning of these critical languages. This is compounded by publishers opting

not to produce comprehensive materials for languages with low exposure.

The Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning (COERLL) seeks to fill the gap left by commercial publishers. In August 2011, COERLL released *Yorùbá Yé Mi: A Beginning Textbook*. It is the newest addition to the center’s menu of Open Educational Resources (OERs) for less commonly taught languages, which includes Hindi, Arabic, and Chinese language materials. Innovations of this open textbook include:

- Easy accessibility online at <http://coerll.utexas.edu/yemi>
- Free for noncommercial public use
- Printable PDFs or Print-on-demand option for a portion of the cost of traditional textbooks
- Customizable content for the needs of individual instructors and institutions
- User-driven content that reflects feedback and contributions from actual teachers and students

On this last point, it can take years for comments and corrections from instructors and students to make it into revised editions of a traditional mass-produced textbook. Internet-based open textbooks bypass this glacial process, ensuring materials are up-to-date, relevant, and most importantly useful. Creators of OERs have found a cost-effective way to produce materials that continue to be shaped by educators and learners—those who know best what they need.

Yorùbá Yé Mi is an interactive, communicative, multi-media program intended to provide college and university instructors with flexible teaching material for the basic listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the Yoruba language. Author Dr. Fehintola Mosadomi, Department of Middle Eastern Studies at UT Austin, designed the materials to expose the Yoruba learner to this tonal language in meaningful situations, as well as to the culture of the Yoruba-speaking people of South-western Nigeria. The textbook offers:

- Yoruba monologues, dialogues, and songs
- Free PDFs for each chapter
- Free audio archive download
- Links to the textbook and CD online stores

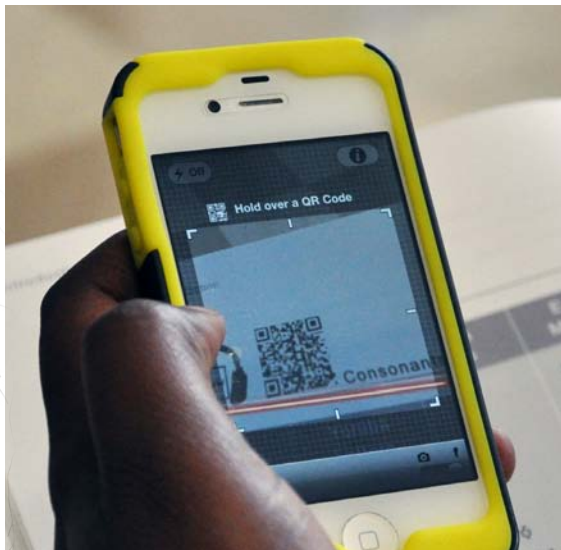
Yorùbá Yé Mi was initially sponsored by University of Texas at Austin College of Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services. COERLL adopted the project and brought it to completion through support from the U.S. Department of Education Title VI Fund for the Improvement of

Post-Secondary Education. Recently, COERLL, along with the other language resource centers, lost a devastating 50 percent of its funding for the remainder of the 2011 fiscal year as a result of the federal budget plan. (See "From the Director" on page 2.) However, the center continues to make the production of affordable OERs for the LCTLs a top priority. □

Tell us what you think about the topics presented in the COERLL newsletter. Responses will be featured in upcoming issues of the print and e-newsletters.

Why do you think the price of textbooks is so expensive? Do you think the federal government should subsidize the production of LCTL materials, given that commercial market is not profitable? Should market forces dictate educational practices?

info@coerll.utexas.edu



Visit Yorùbá Yémi:
<http://coerll.utexas.edu/yemi>



Interview with the *Yorùbá Yémi* Author

Dr. Fehintola Mosadomi

Are you surprised by the response you've been getting since the release of Yorùbá Yé Mi: A Beginning Textbook?

Oh, yes. I thought I wrote this textbook just for my students, but people are showing interest from all over the U.S. and the world. People have written to me from Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Virginia, Germany, the UK, and Nigeria.

What most excites you about this language resource?

This generation is born and raised with technology. There are not too many interactive textbooks like this one. We have embedded QR codes throughout, so you can use your smart phone to listen instantly to the dialogues, monologues, tongue twisters, and the songs. This is one of the first textbooks to use QR codes in this way. And the audio files are so clear and so distinct. I have raised my expectations of students. I tell them, "Hey, you don't have any excuse now – you can go online and hear it anytime."

Why is it important to integrate the audio component with the textbook?

Yoruba is a tonal language. Tones are just like accents. When you listen to authentic dialogue, you learn the distinctions in tones. With the audio recordings, students can listen to the sounds over and over again and practice at home.

What does your Yoruba classroom look like?

I require a great deal of group work in the classroom. It's very active. For instance, there are tongue twisters in the textbook, and students will perform them. You have to know the meaning and say it correctly and faster than anybody. They have so much fun while learning tone. For some reason, I find that when students learn for fun like this, they always get it right on the exam. Is it because of the fun, or the repetition, the peer-correction they give one another, the competition? Whatever it is translates into success.

How do the audio files of songs help students learning the language?

I use song to add more meaning if it suits the learning topic. Songs are authentic and natural and they provide another way to speak language. Songs incorporate vocabulary, grammar, spelling, repetition of structure. Songs help imprint language into the memory. Sometimes I see my students just before an exam singing a particular song as a memory aid. In that way songs are fun.

Is there cultural importance to songs?

In Nigeria, songs are used to make philosophical and political statements, to correct ill morals of society like corruption. Songwriters address the nation about money, politics, how children should behave. They ridicule through song, condemn through song. Songs are a form of dialogue amongst the people.

Does the program teach a standard Yoruba dialect?

Yes. The textbook teaches the standard Yoruba dialect used in Nigeria for official purposes, for example, in publishing, news media, and religious purposes. In Nigeria, there are about 30 million Yoruba speakers and many more around the world. There are a dozen Yoruba dialects that vary in phonology, lexicon, and grammar.

Why are Open Educational Resources important for the Yoruba language?

This is just the first step. The goal is to bring Yoruba to the level of French, German, and Spanish. We are really not that far because of programs like this that are incorporating technology to enhance learning. But of course the other programs out there are much more expensive than this one, and there are no other OERs in the Yoruba language. Open textbooks will help to promote the language and the culture.

Dr. Fehintola Mosadomi is Assistant Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies, UT Austin. She hopes to commence production on a second part to *Yorùbá Yé Mi* soon.



Countries where Yoruba is spoken



Events report

Joint 2011 Conference of SOCALLT & TexFLEC

April 15 – 16, 2011

COERLL hosted the 2011 Conference of SOCALLT, the South Central Association for Language Learning Technology, in conjunction with TexFlec, the Texas Foreign Language Education Conference.

SOCALLT 2011: Language Teaching and Learning in an Open World

SOCALLT 2011 focused on the innovations in technology-enhanced language instruction resulting from the open access provided by communications technologies, including the Web and various mobile technologies. Presentations addressed the many opportunities and challenges associated with designing and distributing instructional materials for an expanding and changing student population in a quickly evolving technological environment. Multiple perspectives were represented, including those of instructors and administrators from K-12, colleges, and universities, and encompassed current concerns as well as future trends.

SOCALLT 2011 featured presentations on the following COERLL projects:

- “An Introduction to COERLL,” Carl Blyth
- “Chinese Take-In: Interactive Listening Comprehension Exercises for Beginning Chinese Learners,” Wen-Hua Teng
- “Open Textbooks, Online Communities: Do They Work” a panel discussion of teachers using Français interactif organized by Karen Kelton
- “Spanish Proficiency Training: Learner Corpus and Exercises,” Dale Koike

For more information on conference presentations, please consult the SOCALLT website:
<http://www.socallt.org/Conferences/2011>



Summer Workshops report

French Language Workshop for K-12 Teachers

June 6 – 8, 2011

Nancy Guilloteau, French Language Program Director, introduced participants to improvements to the online French curriculum *Francais interactif* and best practices in communicative language teaching. In addition, lecturers and graduate students from the UT French Department presented classroom materials and the theory and process behind the creation of such materials. Participants worked together to create supplementary classroom activities. Participants earned 11 hours of CPE credit for this workshop co-sponsored by COERLL, the Center for European Studies, and the Department of French and Italian.

For more information please consult the Center for European Studies :

http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/european_studies/Outreach/Workshops.php

Spanish Language Workshop

August 8 – 10, 2011

The Spanish workshop, co-sponsored by COERLL and the Center for European Studies, presented an analysis and creation of materials that address grammar using an inductive approach. Additionally, participants discussed the selection and use of texts for reading and writing in the Spanish classroom. The workshop also included group analysis and creation of materials for listening comprehension and oral expression.

For more information please consult the Center for European Studies:

http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/european_studies/Outreach/Workshops.php

“”

The activities were GREAT!
Very adaptive for the high school level - loved, loved, loved it!

I will use both specific ideas as well as the concepts covered. I have already written lesson plans to include some of the activities.

Loved the practical things I can use with no or little planning, information to develop more difficult things, encouragement for the direction I'm trying to take, working together as students doing the activities, and the style of Mina Ogando Lavin.

-Comments from Spanish workshop evaluations



Summer Workshops reports

Language Learning 2.0: Emerging Technology

June 24 – 25, 2011

This summer symposium, co-sponsored by COERLL and the Texas Language Center, focused on technology use in the foreign language classroom. Presenters discussed innovative techniques for developing materials and delivering instruction for immediate use in high school and college classroom. Speakers also demonstrated ways to integrate technology into language teaching to help increase time on task for our students both in and out of class.

Language Learning 2.0 featured the following presentations:

- “Outside the Box: Rethinking Language Learning in the 21st Century,” Sue Otto, Director of the Language Media Center, The University of Iowa
- “Beyond Cool: Sustainable Technology in World Language Classrooms,” Tyler Gill, Spanish Instructor, Bowie High School, Austin Independent School District
- “Language Learning 2.0: Creating Immersive Learning Environments for 21st Century Learners,” James Chan, Director of the Center for Language Technology and Instructional Enrichment (CeLTIE) Indiana University, Bloomington
- “Fences and Fatalism: Teaching Critical Languages and Cultures in a Connected Age,” Pete Smith, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, The University of Texas at Arlington

Videos and presentation powerpoints are available at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/tlc/conferences/languagelearning2.0/home.php>



Mr. Tyler Gill, Dr. Thomas Garza, Dr. Sue Otto, and Dr. James Chan

How to Teach Intensive(ly): High Voltage Teaching in the Foreign Language Classroom

August 13, 2011

This one-day workshop, co-sponsored by COERLL and the Texas Language Center, examined how to integrate Intensive methods into existing language classes and turn intensive teaching into Intensive Courses. Presentations by University of Texas at Austin professors focused on the specific methodology, materials, and results from Intensive classes in five different languages. Presenters also offered suggestions for designing new curricula and syllabi, as well as for types of out of class assignments that can be implemented in both high school and college level courses.

Presentations by University of Texas at Austin professors included:

- "Teaching Different Learners in the Intensive Classroom," Adi Raz, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Texas Language Center and Department of Middle Eastern Studies
- "Intensive Curriculum + Intensive Methods = Intensive Results: Data from Russian," Thomas Garza, Director of the Texas Language Center and Associate Professor of Slavic and Eurasian Studies
- "Generating Classroom Power: Elements of Successful Intensive Language Teaching," Mahmoud Al-Batal, Director of the Arabic Flagship Program and Associate Professor in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies
- "*Sempre Più Avanti!* The New Curriculum of Intensive First and Second Year Italian," Antonella Olson, Distinguished Senior Lecturer in the Department of French and Italian
- "Inspiring with Effectiveness: Intermediate Learners in an Intensified Language/Cultural Curriculum," Per Urlaub, Assistant Professor in the Department of Germanic Studies

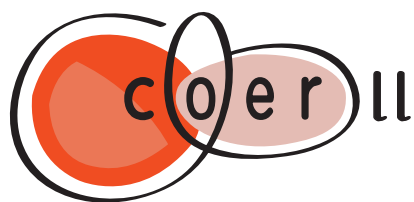
Videos and presentation powerpoints are available at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/tlc/conferences/teachintensively/home.php>



Prof. Antonella Olson, Dr. Mahmoud Al-Batal, Dr. Thomas Garza, Prof. Adi Raz, and Dr. Per Urlaub





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