Introduction to Language Learning
3-week online course for pre-field and on-field personnel

Institute for Cross-Cultural Training · Wheaton College · http://www.wheaton.edu/icct/ · icct@wheaton.edu

This three-week course is for beginning learners who need a basic grasp of their new language for daily life activities. It is ideal for those who plan to serve one to three years and those who may serve longer but do not plan for significant heart-language ministry. This includes support personnel and those who plan to work mainly in English. We suggest taking this course either before leaving home or within the first few weeks of arrival on the field.

### 2017 Course Dates

<table>
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<th>January 23 – February 10</th>
<th>June 12 - 30</th>
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<td>March 6 – 24</td>
<td>July 10 - 28</td>
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<td>April 17 - May 5</td>
<td>September 25 - October 13</td>
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<td>May 15 - June 2</td>
<td>October 30 - November 17</td>
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Groups of four or more who are learning the same language? Ask about a special section for dates that are convenient for you.

### What is the course like?

Our primary goal is to equip you to become a more efficient and effective learner of your new language regardless of the learning method — attending a language school, working with a tutor, independent learning, or a combination of approaches. The time commitment is about three to four hours per day, five days per week for three weeks. With advance notice, the course can be extended to six weeks for those with other heavy commitments. Here are some of the key topics we address:

- understanding the language learning process
- strategies for becoming a better language learner
- working one-on-one with language helpers
- making good audio recordings and using them effectively
- addressing issues such as confidence, anxiety, and motivation
- setting realistic goals and planning learning experiences
- developing listening and speaking skills, including good pronunciation
- learning grammar and vocabulary
- drawing upon multiple resources (e.g., courses, tutors, helpers, community)
- dealing with individual areas or issues that may slow down your learning

Most of the work is done online using Moodle and you also meet individually via Skype with an instructor two or three times each week. In addition, you may work for a few hours with a language helper who is either a native speaker of your target language or another language.
Cost
$500 non-credit, including all materials. Optional work with a language helper not included in course fee.

FAQs
What are the advantages of taking the ICCT online course?

- **Cost:** Our online course is considerably less expensive than some two-week on-site pre-field second language acquisition courses. We encourage you to compare our costs with those of other programs with similar goals.

- **Location:** You can take our online course without leaving home or you can take it from your overseas location. This can mean less disruption to your family routines, and it is ideal if only one spouse is taking the course.

- **Flexible study hours:** You can do most of your work at any hour of the day or night. For the individual Skype meetings, you can choose the times you would like to meet.

- **Active engagement tailored to individual needs and goals:** We recognize that each learner is different, each language is different, and each learning situation is different. So, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach to learner training, nearly all of your ICCT learning experiences are tailored to (a) who you are as a learner, (b) your target language, and/or (c) your on-field learning situation.

- **Ongoing email and Skype support:** Because we want to “be there” to continue assisting you with your language and culture learning, we encourage continued email and Skype contact after the course is over and you are engaged in the learning process.

Can you describe a typical day?

Most participants spend about three to four hours each day, Monday through Friday, on the various course assignments. This includes frequent Skype meetings with an instructor and assignments to submit each day for instructor feedback. On a typical day, you focus on three areas.

1. **Foundations.** The foundations sessions provide an overall framework for language and culture learning. They use narrated PowerPoint presentations, podcasts, short videos, and short practical readings. At the end of each session, you complete applications questions that ask you to apply insights gained to your future learning, and you receive instructor feedback on each assignment.

2. **Phonetics.** Our phonetics sessions help you develop the skills needed for learning the pronunciation of your new language. Each session has three stages: (a) a short video introduction to the lesson (8-12 minutes), which allows you to hear and produce the new
sounds, become acquainted with the new symbols, and receive advice about how to proceed with the lesson, (b) approximately one hour of phonetics drills, done individually using mp3 audio files, and (c) an individual Skype meeting with an instructor, in which your perception and production of target sounds are evaluated and personalized help is offered (usually 20-25 minutes, depending on individual needs). In addition, you focus on learning the sound system of your target language. This may include work with a native speaker and/or work with mp3 files of pronunciation learning materials.

3. **Language Learning Techniques (LLT).** Our LLT sessions introduce you to a variety of techniques and procedures that you will use in your on-field learning.

**Can I learn as much in this online course as in a face-to-face course?**

In the five years that we have offered online learner training for language learners, we have found that our online participants learn more — and usually much more — than those in our previous on-campus courses. There are several reasons for this, but the main one is that we customize nearly every session to address learner needs and goals. You might think of our approach as a lot like hiring a personal trainer instead of joining a group fitness class. While fitness classes can be very helpful, they can’t compare with the one-on-one individual attention that comes from the personal trainer who can help you set reasonable goals and then step by step guide you as you work to meet those goals.

**Will I have to work on the course every day?**

We suggest that you spend about 3 - 4 hours per day, Monday through Friday, on the course. However, we realize that there may be times when you will miss a day and will need to make up the work the following day.

**Will I need to be online the whole time I'm doing my work for this class?**

You will not need to be online for everything you do, but the exact amount of time will vary from day to day. If Internet access is a problem, please discuss this with us.

**What about groups from one organization learning the same language?**

For groups of learners of the same language we can usually set up a separate class for dates that are convenient for you.

**Where can I learn more about the course?**

We encourage you to email ICCT with additional questions (ICCT@wheaton.edu).

March 2017