
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 09 SEPTEMBER 2010

Lost In Translation

(ABC)...Brian Ross

"World News Investigates" segment on allegations that the private contractor Mission Essential Personnel is faking the competence of some translators in Afghanistan. U.S. soldiers there rely heavily on such private translators, who can earn as much as \$210,000 a year.

Virtual high school opens 'doors' to learning

The Defense Department's newest high school is devoid of walls or windows, but yet has opened its "doors" this year to students throughout the world. The DOD Education Activity's virtual high school is an accredited distance learning program for military students, whether they're geographically separated, transitioning between schools or just dealing with a scheduling conflict. "It's a wonderful opportunity to close gaps and enhance students' educational experience in a 21st century environment," said Marilee Fitzgerald, the activity's acting director. "I think it opens up possibilities for learning that we have yet to understand, yet to explore." The virtual school offers students 48 online courses in a wide range of disciplinary areas, including foreign language, math, science, social studies, language arts and physical education, as well as 15 advanced placement courses.

Language classes shift to conversation, culture

Sioux Falls public schools are tweaking their curriculum to give students a greater understanding of the world's people and help them communicate in real-life situations. In foreign language classes, the focus is turning to conversational instruction, rather than memorizing vocabulary words. Teachers also are being asked to spend more time describing the way of life in foreign countries, not only teaching the language. "A big part of the language is understanding culture," assistant superintendent Fred Aderhold said.

Kids' Study Habit Myths Debunked

As 68.5 million students start their studies this year, according to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), scientists now say that the common wisdom on information-retention may not be the most successful. **MYTH: FOCUS ON ONE SKILL:** If you are studying a foreign language, for example, you may want to study vocabulary, read and speak the language, all within one sitting. Participating in multi-modal learning (reading, speaking, listening) leaves a deeper impression of the material on the brain.

Warning over university's rethink of its modern languages provision

Professor Mary Bryden, president of the Association of University Professors and Heads of French (AUPHF), said any move to cut resources would be detrimental to employers. Professor Carol Tully teaches German at Bangor University and is an active member of the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML). She said: "In scaling down their provision in modern languages to the extent proposed, Swansea University will find itself at odds with the key message emerging from policy documents such as the Welsh Assembly Government's Making Languages Count. "Modern languages are an important and vital subject area which contribute in the regional, national and global context. Consequently, excellent provision of the kind provided by Swansea should be fostered, not reduced."

Just 1 in 10 Brits attempt foreign language whilst on holiday

A new poll by the UK's fastest growing online independent travel agent has revealed that just 11% of holidaymakers from Britain attempt to speak the foreign language when they are on holiday abroad.

Language Tables

Each semester, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures holds language tables in specific rooms in Sharples dining hall for each of the seven languages taught in our department. Students who speak a foreign language are encouraged to attend whether enrolled in a language course or not and have lunch/dinner with faculty members and other students. The language tables start the week of September 6, 2010.

PREVIOUS NEWS

Lend Me Your Ears: US Military Turns to Contractor Linguists

The US military has come to rely more and more on contractors to provide linguist services to function effectively in non-English speaking regions. The need for these services is particularly acute in the Middle East and Central Asia where US troops are actively engaged.

FAU wins \$200,000 grant to expand Asian studies, language training

Florida Atlantic University recently received an Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language grant from the U.S. Department of Education to enhance the university's Asian studies curriculum. The grant, consisting of \$200,000 over two years, will strengthen FAU's Asian studies certificate program and increase faculty in Asian studies. FAU's Asian studies program encompasses East, South and West Asia, and the Middle East.

Foreign Language Courses, Brushing Up or Immersion

These days, online programs and CDs like [Rosetta Stone](#) and [Pimsleur](#) are grabbing the interest of people attracted by their convenience and relatively low cost. But more schools are offering their own online-only language courses as part of extension programs. At the [University of California, Los Angeles](#), traditional, three-month language classes cost \$480, and online classes cost \$550. The online courses include video lectures, readings, exercises and assignments, which the instructors can correct and return to the student via e-mail. Students can practice with one another via chatrooms, and instructors and students can also talk on the phone to work on pronunciation, said Krista K. Loretto, program manager for [U.C.L.A. Extension](#).

Two Language and Culture Centers Receive \$3 Million in Federal Grants

The **Center for European Studies** (CES) and the **Texas Language Technology Center** (TLTC) at The University of Texas at Austin have been awarded federal grants totaling more than \$3 million to establish new language and culture centers that will allow them to strengthen their role as national leaders in their fields. The Center for European Studies received a more than \$1.6 million Title VI Fellowship from the U.S. Department of Education for 2010-2014 and has been designated a National Resource Center. CES works to promote studies of Europe across disciplines through courses on culture, history, economics, politics and foreign languages. Douglas Biow, CES director and professor of Italian in the Department of French and Italian, said the funding will help the center broaden its connections with schools and colleges throughout the university, as well as international academic institutions.

Spanish Language Company Launches New Online Media Room

Visual Link Languages(R), the world's number one most effective way to learn Spanish, has launched a new resource for journalists as well as government and corporate outreach departments. The Media Room is constantly updated with press releases and interesting articles about how to learn Spanish and several other languages Visual Link offers.

NUT: OECD REPORT- Education at a Glance

General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, the largest teachers union said; ""The report shows England has a relatively low proportion of time allocated to modern foreign languages compared with other OECD countries. This was reflected in this year's GCSE and A level results. I urge the Government

to come up with a coherent policy to ensure that all young people acquire at least one modern foreign language.”

Listening In Tongues

After nearly a decade of fighting in Afghanistan and [the Middle East](#), the U.S. Army still can't find enough linguists (interpreters to help troops dealing with locals and translators to handle documents and recordings). Even before September 11, 2001, the army was having problems finding enough linguists. During the 1990s, there was a big need for Albanian and Slavic language linguists to support American peacekeeping operations there. Currently, the army is spending over \$250 million a year for contract linguists. The big demand now is for those who can speak Pashto and Dari, the two major languages in Afghanistan. The [U.S. military](#) has had some success in finding American troops who speak foreign languages well enough to operate as battlefield translators. This was a major boost for intelligence gathering, since a lot of what you want to know can be found in what the locals are saying.

Arabic, Farsi Fluency Considered 'Critical' to US National Security

Summer vacation is ending and students at American schools and colleges are getting ready to head back to class. In previous years, many of them would have been taking French or Spanish as a second language. Knowledge of Arabic or Farsi is now considered "critical" to U.S. national security and more Americans are learning these languages today than ever before.

PARENTS LOOK FOR NEW WAYS TO EXPOSE CHILDREN TO LANGUAGES

Forward thinking parents are now looking for new ways to encourage their offspring to learn a second language including hiring foreign language speaking nannies, enrolling in language classes and using bilingual educational materials at home. In contrast to the recent news of a drop in the number of students taking GCSE in languages, many parents are looking for ways to encourage their children to learn a second language at an early age. It is not uncommon for a first or even a second nanny to be hired by working parents, who can speak another language. Parents ask the nanny to speak to the child in that language in the hope that it will give them a good start on the road to fluency.

'Virtual' teachers take over world language instruction in several Morris County NJ schools

After losing all three elementary school Spanish teachers due to budget cuts last spring, officials turned to "distance learning" to fulfill the world languages curriculum requirement. The Spanish DVDs did not require additional money in the 2010-11 budget. Assistant Superintendent Deborah Grefe said the DVDs were already included in the district's subscription to Discovery Education. Grefe said the 20-minute virtual lessons will be shown during social studies periods in grades K-5.

Sing and Study announced 40% Discount on its software

Sing and Study is an educational software that creates a fun and focused environment to improve listening comprehension using songs and word exercises. Sing and Study helps to learn any language using effective exercises.

Newspaper Reading for Language Students

As I have said in numerous other language learning articles, there are no tricks and no hints. The more hours you invest, the better you will get. And if your goal is to read at a native speaker level, then you need to read things a native speaker reads. If you are a 22 year-old university graduate, then you need to be reading at that level in the foreign language. And you won't get there by reading textbooks *about* the language. You will get there by reading books, articles, and textbooks *in* rather than *about* the language.

SBS plans Chinese social network

Public broadcaster SBS will launch a social networking site for Chinese speakers by the end of the year. Intended as a pilot service, the company hopes to follow with other language sites in the future as it seeks to offer a venue for more foreign language content and community information.

WordSearch Rush HD – The Hit iPhone Title Comes to iPad

The game's ease of use enables children to learn words whilst having fun, so its educational value cannot be missed. Parents and teachers have already been very positive regarding its hidden educational benefits. The range of topics covered are vast and foreign languages are also introduced in the game. These foreign language puzzles are ideal for those wanting to practice their language skills. The game is continuously updated with new wordsearches that can be downloaded from the store, so the fun of WordSearch Rush will never stop!

Creating Linguistic Boxes in Your Head

In a number of previous articles about language acquisition, I have talked about the concept of linguistic boxes, in order to learn multiple foreign languages. My idea is that, as we learn each new language, we must create a separate box for it in our brain. And if we keep these boxes distinct, we will not have interference from one language to the next.

Iraq Politicians Must Match Citizens' Courage, Form Government, Biden Says

The military also needs to be better prepared with an emphasis on training in the culture of the area and its language, Mullen said. The U.S. must work more often with partner countries, as in the coalition of more than 40 nations fighting in Afghanistan, he said.

Students Rate Quality Education, DoDEA Director Says

The activity's No. 1 priority, she said, is to help students reach their fullest potential through a focus on high student achievement and a rich and varied curriculum. Initiatives such as the virtual high school and language arts curriculum will make major inroads toward that goal, she predicted. The activity's virtual high school, new this school year, is an accredited distance-learning program for military students, whether they're geographically separated, transitioning between schools or just dealing with a scheduling conflict. The virtual school offers students 48 online courses in a wide range of disciplinary areas, including foreign language, math, science, social studies, language arts and physical education, as well as 15 advanced placement courses.