
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 6 OCTOBER 2010

Program Bolsters Department's Language Capabilities

"Language and culture are essential to the fight," she [Ms. Nancy Weaver] said during a recent interview. All servicemembers deploying to the Centcom area of operations should receive at least an introduction to language and culture in their training, she said, noting that language is key to understanding a culture. "There are clues to a culture that are hidden in the language," she explained. "That learning process is continual. It doesn't stop when you leave the classroom. You've got to interact with the local population in order to better understand what their concerns are and to get the information you need to keep your people safe." The need for language skills in a counterinsurgency fight is understood, but other military operations also require the capability, Weaver said. "After the earthquake in Haiti, we needed personnel who could speak Creole," she noted. "We were able to get many native and heritage speakers there quickly."

Eight Afghans Head To U.S. For Pilot Training

Eight young Afghan eagles from the Afghan Air Force English language immersion class will soon depart for 18 months of training in the United States. They will return as pilots when training is complete. The eight lieutenants signed their seven-year service commitments before a small gathering of family and their NATO advisors. This intimate ceremony was followed by dinner with family, friends and supporters. "You are the future of Afghanistan and what a bright future Afghanistan has," said Col. Creig Rice. First, they head to the Defense Language Institute in San Antonio, Texas, for approximately six months of training. After living in the Thunder Lab, the NATO Air Training Command-Afghanistan immersion course, and speaking English for the last five months, they are expected to take less time than their predecessors to move on to pilot training.

Rare Find: a New Language

In the foothills of the Himalayas, two field linguists have uncovered a find as rare as any endangered species—a language completely new to science. The researchers encountered it for the first time along the western ridges of Arunachal Pradesh, India's northeastern-most state, where more than 120 languages are spoken. There, isolated by craggy slopes and rushing rivers, the hunters and subsistence farmers who speak this rare tongue live in a dozen or so villages of bamboo houses built on stilts. The language—called Koro—was identified during a 2008 expedition conducted as part of National Geographic's Enduring Voices project. The researchers announced their discovery Tuesday in Washington, D.C. So many languages have vanished world-wide in recent decades that the naming of a new one commanded scientific attention. Their language is quite distinct on every level—the sound, the words, the sentence structure," said Gregory Anderson, director of the nonprofit Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages, who directs the project's research.

In Tight Races For Congressional Seats, Language Could Make A Difference

With dozens of U.S. Congressional seats at risk of changing hands in the upcoming November elections, candidates from both parties intend to coax each and every voter to head to the polls and cast a ballot in their favor. But will those potential voters actually be able to understand the candidates' positions?

According to the latest American Community Survey, approximately one in every five residents of the United States (19.7%) speaks a language other than English at home, a testament to the country's long history - and current state - of ethnic and linguistic diversity. Here is a breakdown of the percentage of individuals who speak a foreign language in their residences within each state

Parents Pick Up the Tab for Foreign Language Instruction at Elementary Schools

For many parents in the Katonah Lewisboro schools, the district-wide savings achieved from eliminating the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program from this year's school budget were negated by paying out-of-pocket fees for classes. FLES had been in place at the elementary schools for the last two years before it was nixed by the school board in order to save approximately \$250,000 per year. Now over 200 families are paying more than \$70,000 for their children to study Spanish and other languages.

Forsyth Co. language programs attracting state attention

Two first-of-the-kind in Georgia foreign language programs in Forsyth County schools are getting the attention of state education officials. The Workplace Spanish class and integrated MJROTC Russian program are seen as models for other school systems in Georgia. Each targets high-demand areas in the medical and legal professions and the military, respectively. "We are thrilled that North Forsyth is working with the community's individual needs and for the potential benefits of the student," said Jon Valentine, Program Specialist of Foreign Language and International Education for the Georgia Department of Education.

Speaking Their Language

Tom Adams wants executives and businessmen to learn a foreign language. It's a natural desire, considering that he is the CEO of Arlington, Virginia-based language education software firm **Rosetta Stone**. Adams says that America "risks falling behind in the global economy if we do not strive to be a multilingual society." He cites recent data such as the **World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report**—which shows the U.S. **losing its competitive edge** to countries like Switzerland, Sweden, and Singapore—and the May 2010 speech by **Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education**, saying that the lack of foreign language fluency "affects our ability to compete and collaborate on the world stage."

Growing Need for Court Interpreters

This weekend bilingual residents looking for something to do with their language skills can see if they have what it takes to be a court interpreter. The state court system is hosting an interpreter training session, one of several held each year. WUWM's Ann-Elise Henzl reports. If you don't speak English fluently in Wisconsin, and you're headed to court, the state is required to provide an interpreter in your native language. That goes for defendants on trial, as well as victims and witnesses to crimes.

What we must do to move education into the fast lane

A key is to build up links with industry during this year. Let's give even more students the opportunity to enter the workplace and gain some experience at the coalface. This is also a year where students have a unique opportunity to build up foreign language skills through immersion and other programmes. We could also use this year to forge links with European and Asian schools through online learning or exchange programmes.

Letters: Early intervention essential

We know early intervention is the only way to help children with speech and language needs improve their educational attainment and reach their full potential. We know communication disadvantage is repeated from one generation to the next. On average, a toddler from a family receiving benefits will hear around 600 words per hour. A child from a professional family will hear more than 2,000 words. At the age of six, there is only a gap of a few months between the reading age of a child with good oral language skills at age five and those with poor language skills. This gap will increase to five years' difference at 14.

Area and International Studies: Linguistics

In most of the world, 'you are what you speak,' because national identity is often aligned with linguistic identity. Geopolitical regions are partially defined in terms of language, and the subject matter of area and international studies is embedded in local languages. Despite the importance of linguistic expertise for understanding the peoples of a region and accessing primary material, linguistics is typically regarded as a peripheral discipline for area and international studies, relative to 'core' disciplines such as political science, history, economics, anthropology, sociology, and geography. This peripheral status results from

(largely correct) perceptions that linguistics is highly technical and impenetrable, that linguistics is theoretically fractured, and that most linguists in the US are not interested in topics relevant to area and international studies. However there is evidence of renewed linguistic interest in issues of language in the contexts of geography, politics, history, and culture, as well as a commitment to be accessible to other disciplines and language learners.

PREVIOUS NEWS

Bilateral Affairs Officer: Eyes and ears for Guard partnerships

Wayt, the adjutant general of the Ohio National Guard, is midway through a visit to the state's partners in the almost 20-year-old, 62-nation National Guard State Partnership Program: the adjoining nations of Serbia and Hungary. The two officers are bilateral affairs officers. Selected by the state and confirmed by the National Guard Bureau and the combatant command, a BAO is the liaison between a host nation and its National Guard state, first point of contact for either partner. The adjutants general need someone they can trust and rely on who understands the country team, who can be part of the embassies ... to facilitate the close working relationships between the state and the country, to plan those training events that are most worthwhile and to understand the budgetary limitations of the program," Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, said as he returned from Germany in August from meetings with U.S. Africa Command and National Guard leaders about the SPP.

Robertson Foundation for Government Pledges \$450,000 to Fund UC San Diego Graduate Students Committed to Federal Government Careers

The new Robertson Fellows Program, which begins with the current 2010-2011 academic year, is being funded by the Robertson Foundation for Government, which has pledged \$450,000 over the next four years. The program will cover expenses for outstanding students to complete their master's degrees at UC San Diego's School of International Relations and Pacific Studies. Robertson Fellows must have a proficiency in a foreign language upon graduation, and are required to work for the federal government for at least three of the first five years after graduation.

UO lands East Asian Studies 'national resource center' designation

The University of Oregon's [Center for Asian and Pacific Studies](#) (CAPS) now houses a U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) for East Asian Studies. The designation comes with a four-year, \$1.8 million grant that will allow CAPS to expand its programs and public outreach. The Center for Asian and Pacific Studies joins the UO's [Center for Advanced Second Language Studies](#) (CASLS) and its Language Resource Center as a Title VI grant recipient. Their overlapping programming promises to carry UO to a new level of training.

Disappearing Languages at Albany

The State University of New York at Albany's motto is "the world within reach." But language faculty members are questioning the university's commitment to such a vision after being told Friday that the university was ending all admissions to programs in French, Italian, Russian and classics, leaving only Spanish left in the language department once current students graduate. The theater department is also being eliminated. While the last two years have seen many language departments threatened or eliminated, faculty members at Albany said they were stunned that so many languages were being eliminated at the same time and that this was happening at a doctoral university that has prided itself on an international vision.

English becomes Europe's second language

However the report by Eurostat, the EU's statistics body found that only 12 per cent of people wanted to be French speakers, compared to 66 per cent for English and 20 per cent for German. "English is far ahead of any other as the first choice as a foreign language," the report said. "Behind English, people are choosing to learn German and Russian. Knowledge of French as a foreign language is low."

Group teaches Chinese to children from region

Every Friday evening the first floor of Reed Hall is invaded by children repeating Chinese syllables and reading aloud from texts in Chinese. The Dartmouth Chinese Teaching Society, which is run by Dartmouth student volunteers, instructs local children in Chinese language and culture each week, according to John Mei '11, the society's president.

'Law change needed to check foreign docs'

The Medical Council has asked the Government to change the law to allow it to properly check the professional competence and language skills of doctors arriving in Ireland from other EU countries. According to Council President Prof Kieran Murphy, under the 2005 EU freedom of movement legislation, the Council is currently unable to assess either the competence or language skills of EU doctors seeking registration in this country. Speaking at the launch of the Council's 2010-2013 strategy today, he said this legal loophole was a matter of "huge concern" for the Council.

National African Language Resource Center

The National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison serves African language educators and learners in the United States by sponsoring a wide range of educational and professional activities to improve the accessibility and quality of African language instruction. Its resources include textbooks and instructional technology materials, and it offers an online level-one course designed to present the fundamentals of Yoruba to two- and four-year college students. NALRC also publishes an annual newsletter and a quarterly e-newsletter.

Learn a Foreign Language Without Traveling

Verbalplanet.com announced the introduction of a new Web-based system to help in learning a foreign language. Although learning a new language is best done by immersing oneself into language, it is not always possible for everyone. To overcome this hassle, Verbalplanet introduced a new Web-based system. According to company sources, users can benefit a lot from the one-on-one online language course offered by a personal language teacher via Skype ([News - Alert](#)), the Internet telephony service.

More Women in Special Ops Forces, Gates Predicts

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday he anticipates that more women will serve in military special operations in the future. "My own bias is that we ought to spread those skills -- and language skills -- more broadly in the Army than just special operations forces," the secretary told the cadets. "The reality is, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, we have ended up using regular, conventional forces in ways that special operations forces used to do by themselves," Gates told the cadets. "A lot of regular Army infantry units are doing civil affairs, are doing development, along with fighting the fight."

Lieutenants complete inaugural language training

Twenty-five of the Air Force's newest second lieutenants recently completed the inaugural class of focused language training at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., as part of the Language Enabled Airmen Program. The Language Intensive Training Event, or LITE, was held at the Air Force Culture and Language Center over the span of four weeks and conducted by resident instructors from the Defense Language Institute. Classroom training included the strategic languages of Russian, Chinese, French, German, Modern Standard Arabic and Spanish.

Army now has Dari, will travel

Successful military deployment in a complicated place like Afghanistan requires soldiers to have all advantages they can carry. Effective weapons, communications gear, transportation and logistics support all help. But now the Army has begun sending soldiers to Afghanistan equipped with something else. It costs very little, and weighs nothing, and yet it can give soldiers an important advantage in dealing with the local population. It's [training in the Dari language and cultural customs](#). The first group of soldiers has just completed the course. We got an update on the program from Colonel Dino Pick, commandant of the Defense Language Institute's Foreign Language Center.

CULTURAL IMMERSION IN XI'AN, CHINA: Army ROTC

This past summer, I was given the opportunity to travel on a cultural immersion trip to Xi'an, China. The trip, which was 26 days long, consisted of one week in Hawaii, three days in Beijing, and the rest in Xi'an. Our mission while in China was quite simple, to volunteer our skills and services in a number of different placements, while also gaining a greater insight into the Chinese culture and traditions. Our in-country volunteer placements included teaching local kindergarteners, caring for foster babies, and even teaching Chinese college students that were interested in majoring in English. The group which I went with consisted of 21 Cadets, including myself, and two cadre, LTC Doyle, and CPT Helm. During every day of the week our group split off into our smaller sub-group and work at our specified placement for about two or three hours. I and eight other Cadets had the privilege of working at a nearby kindergarten.

Gov. Schwarzenegger vetoes bill to cut language, art requirement for high school graduates

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has vetoed legislation that would allow school districts to water down requirements for foreign language and art education in high schools. Currently, in addition to courses in English, social studies, math, science and physical education, the state requires students to take one year of either foreign language or visual/performing arts to graduate from high school. The bill would have given students the choice to take a vocational-education class instead.