
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 16 NOVEMBER 2010

Your brain on culture

When an American thinks about whether he is honest, his brain activity looks very different than when he thinks about whether another person is honest, even a close relative. That's not true for Chinese people. When a Chinese man evaluates whether he is honest, his brain activity looks almost identical to when he is thinking about whether his mother is honest. That finding — that American and Chinese brains function differently when considering traits of themselves versus traits of others (*Neuroimage*, Vol. 34, No. 3) — supports behavioral studies that have found that people from collectivist cultures, such as China, think of themselves as deeply connected to other people in their lives, while Americans adhere to a strong sense of individuality.

College Board to revive its AP test in Italian

The College Board announced on Wednesday the revival of the Advanced Placement test in Italian, setting the stage for a renaissance in the study of the language of Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci in U.S. high schools. The program will be reinstated in fall 2011; the first tests will be given in spring 2012. The [College Board](#) eliminated AP Italian in a broader purge of four poorly enrolled AP tests in 2008 and 2009, the first substantial retrenchment in AP's five decades. Tests in Italian, Latin literature, French literature and computer science AB each attracted only a few thousand students a year, compared with hundreds of thousands in such popular subjects as U.S. history and English literature.

Campuses Report Early Indication That Study Abroad is Rising

A new survey by the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Forum on Education Abroad has found that study abroad by U.S. college students was on the rise in 2009/10, after experiencing a slight downturn the previous year. After reporting decades of steady growth, reaching a high of 262,416 students studying abroad in 2007/08, IIE's *Open Doors* report showed that study abroad by U.S. students had decreased by just less than 1 percent for the 2008/09 academic year, when 260,327 students studied abroad for academic credit at their home institution.

The World Beyond Reach

Throughout my career, I have observed that the advanced study of languages is not universally valued in the American educational system. Even so, I was stunned by the announcement this fall that the State University of New York at Albany will eliminate major, minor, and graduate programs in French, Italian, Russian, and the classics (the German program was already reduced), along with theater. When financial exigencies hit, decisions to cut services and programs (and not just academic ones) must be made, but the Albany plan is astoundingly draconian: No European languages except Spanish will be taught beyond the early semesters, and 10 tenure-line faculty members will be let go.

Cuts To University's Humanities Program Draw Outcry

Public colleges and universities across the country are under the gun as state budgets face huge shortfalls. Universities are now ending low-enrollment programs and increasing class size. The State University of New York has had to cut \$640 million from its budget, and the president of its Albany campus recently announced the suspension of five humanities programs, including French, Italian, Russian, classics and theater. "None of us accepted that it was something that a university could do and still call itself a university," Wills said. "This is not a university if you only have one non-English European language program left standing."

Central students walk to raise money for Language Lab

At Central Catholic High School, students take French and Spanish classes, but the language lab is so small it makes recording and listening inefficient. On Friday, the 1,340 students and 100 faculty members will walk 2.5 miles through downtown Lawrence with the goal of raising the \$120,000 needed to build a digital language learning laboratory.

PREVIOUS NEWS

New women's affairs director sets goals for Paktika

The Paktika Provincial Reconstruction Team's female engagement team conducted their first meeting with Hala Hushawa, Paktika's new director of women's affairs, here Nov. 7. Through questions, explanations and laughter, members of the FET established a relationship with Hushawa and learned how the PRT can assist her in meeting the needs of Paktika's females.

Brig. Gen. Belinda Pinckney: Why Diversity Is Critical to Engagement

Nine years after 9/11 and nearly as many years into simultaneous wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the battlefields the United States faces today are "in our backyard," leading to significant security challenges for the country. Pinckney said there are three major issues that endanger the nation's ability to meet those challenges: shortages in language and cultural skills, poor education levels and inadequate health and healthcare, particularly mental healthcare.

Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act (H.R. 6036)

The Asia Society and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages is inviting school district superintendents to support the *Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act (H.R. 6036)*. This legislation would allow every young American student to become proficient in a second language, in addition to English, within a generation. A sample copy of a letter of support is available by clicking [here](#). In addition, a summary of H.R. 6036 is available [here](#).

Language politics and policy in the United States: implications for the immigration debate

Is there a role for language policy in immigration policy? This article examines recent attempts to legislate language in light of historical and contemporary debates about immigration and immigrant assimilation. It chronicles U.S. language politics and policy, and then appraises national language and official English bills recently introduced in Congress in view of data on language usage and preferences, suggesting ways that the current resurgence of a national debate about language could and should impact the larger debate about immigration. Abstract Is there a role for language policy in immigration policy? This article examines recent attempts to legislate language in light of historical and contemporary debates about immigration and immigrant assimilation. It chronicles U.S. language politics and policy, and then appraises national language and official English bills recently introduced in Congress in view of data on language usage and preferences, suggesting ways that the current resurgence of a national debate about language could and should impact the larger debate about immigration.

First US Sikh soldier completes training with faith intact

Thanks to his Punjabi and Hindi language skills, 26-year old Simran Preet Singh Lamba has become the first Sikh soldier in the US army in two decades to complete basic training without giving up articles of his faith. Recruited in 2009 through the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) programme for his language skills, Lamba Wednesday completed basic training keeping his turban and unshorn hair at Fort Jackson outside Columbia. "I am thrilled to serve with my fellow soldiers and serve the United States of America," said Lamba, who has become a US citizen.

World Languages Day inspires high school students to explore

When the 10th [World Languages Day](#) takes place on Wednesday, Nov. 17, the program will have brought more than 6,000 Wisconsin high school students and teachers to the UW-Madison campus. Now hosted by UW-Madison's [Language Institute](#), the program offers a full day of cultural and linguistic exploration at

the Memorial Union and Pyle Center. According to Wendy Johnson, program coordinator for the Language Institute, more than 600 students and teachers from 25 high schools will attend this year's activities. "By getting involved with cultures and languages from around the world, students experience the value and the fun of language learning and cultural growth," says Sally Magnan, director of the Language Institute, which hosts the program. "They see firsthand the great wealth in language and culture studies that UW-Madison offers — to them and to the state."

UK Government Cuts Undermining Language Education

Proposed cuts have put on hold a successful and cost-effective reciprocal scheme for the training of language teachers in England and Wales. The English Trust for European Education (ETEE), the foremost non-profit organisation for the diffusion of European multi-literacy, has written to the School Minister Nick Gibb, urging him to reconsider putting on hold the highly successful reciprocal arrangement that allows the British Council to organise a sandwich year abroad for foreign language trainee teachers in order to acquire advanced language skills

Indian language technology centre launched

Union Minister for Communications and Information Technology A. Raja on Friday launched the Indian Language Technology Proliferation and Deployment Centre (ILTP-DC) at the National e-governance Advisory Group Meeting. It will promote the use of Indian languages across multiple verticals and boost research and development in language technology by providing researchers with the tools and resources.

Coffs High builds Chinese program

COFFS Harbour High School is fast becoming a regional hub for Chinese language studies. The school community is on a high with this week's announcement of a \$20,000 federal government grant to develop its growing Chinese language program. Principal Patti Kearns said the focus on China makes sense when you consider that nation is Australia's biggest trading partner and an economic powerhouse.

Korean language program flourishes with community support

The school is building and stocking a Korean-language reading room, the latest step in growing its dual-language Korean program. "It is very important to have resources, and for the parents to be able to read to their child," said Vickie Atikian Aviles, assistant director of intercultural education for Glendale Unified. "The Korean Consulate this year has been very generous in supporting our [Foreign Language Academy of Glendale] program," said Naehi Wong, director of Keppel's Korean language program. "Three schools from our district benefited from their funds."

Obama's language skills charm Indonesians

US President Barack Obama showed off some of his Indonesian-language skills during his 19-hour visit to the country he lived in as a child, drawing laughter and cheers from the locals. Opening his speech at the University of Indonesia Wednesday, Obama said: 'Assalamualaikum. Salam sejahtera' (Peace be upon you. Happy prosperity), to applause from the academic audience. He sparked a chorus of laughter when he said: 'Pulang kampung, nih,' slang for 'I'm back in my village,' in a flawless local accent.

Language Scores Validate Afghan Air Force English Immersion Lab

The Afghan Air Force's English Immersion Lab, known as the Thunder Lab, received exciting news from Defense Language Institute in San Antonio, Texas on Nov 10. Three of the first seven lieutenants in America achieved the minimum English Comprehension Language (ECL) score to advance to USAF fixed-wing pilot training. They accomplished this in an average of 24 days. Previously, Afghan officers took an average of 405 days to reach proficiency.

Sikh soldier completes US Army training with turban on

Twenty six year old Simran Preet Singh Lamba became the first enlisted Sikh soldier in the US army in more two decades to complete basic training without shedding his turban and other articles of faith. Recruited by the Army in 2009 through the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) programme for his language skills in Punjabi and Hindi, Lamba completed basic training with his turban and unshorn hair at Fort Jackson outside Columbia and became a US citizen. "I am thrilled to serve with my fellow soldiers and serve the United States of America," Lamba said.

Jefferson's Army Of Nation Builders (New York Times)...Dominic Tierney

Today, some officers warn that an army of nation-builders would lose its edge at conventional warfare. But in keeping with the founders' belief that the soldier's role was to build, not just to destroy, we need our own multipurpose military — an Army and Marine Corps with duties that extend far beyond winning tank battles or artillery duels against enemy states, or even fighting at all. And just as in Jefferson's time, West Point in the 21st century should supply a nation-builder's education, and we should encourage its efforts to emphasize in its curriculum the study of foreign languages and cultures.

CyraCom International Awarded Multiple Million Dollar Contracts with US Military

CyraCom International, Inc., a leading provider of language services, announced the receipt of two contracts with the United States Military worth over \$2,000,000. Based on the highly successful first phase of the Translation and Interpretation Testing and Training Capabilities project, the U.S. Army Contracting Command in Seaside, California entered into two contracts with CyraCom International to continue the collaboration between CyraCom and the Defense Language Institute (DLI) on the next phase of the project. This will include introductory translation and interpretation training for military linguists in multiple critical languages followed by a "Train the Trainer" program for DLI faculty.

SAIC Expands Human Language Technology Offerings for Federal and Commercial Customers

SAIC announced today it has acquired technology, intellectual property and related assets from three firms that develop human language technologies: [AppTek Partners, LLC](#); [Applications Technology, Inc.](#); and [MediaMind, LLC](#). As part of the deal, [SAIC](#) will acquire a complete suite of products for text and speech (voice) processing, including machine translation, knowledge management and automated speech recognition tools for more than 30 languages. Federal government and commercial customers use these tools to automatically translate and transcribe large volumes of data and significantly reduce the amount of time needed to edit and finalize translated output.

Businesses seeking employees with foreign language skills

Jobseekers can improve their employment prospects by honing their foreign language skills, according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Gerwyn Davies, public policy advisor at the HR organisation, noted that languages spoken in developing countries such as Brazil, Russia, India and China are proving highly attractive to UK businesses at present.

College Board Brings Back AP Italian Language And Culture Program

The College Board [announced](#) it would reinstate its Advanced Placement (AP) Italian Language and Culture program next fall and its AP Italian exam in May 2012. According to [The Washington Post](#), College Board has continuously offered foreign language programs in Spanish, French, German, Latin, Chinese and Japanese. However, in the 2008-09 school year, the organization decided to eliminate its AP programs in Italian, Latin language, French literature and computer science because of poor enrollment and, thus, lack of funding. As [The Wall Street Journal](#) pointed out, AP Italian saw a steady increase since its first test in 2006; however, headcount was far from the College Board's target of 5,000 a year. Because of this, the organization was losing \$1.5 million a year.

Australian targets better skills with new visa criteria

All skilled migrants – applying for any skilled [visa for Australia](#) – will have to pass a new points-based test designed to target migrants more closely suited to Australia's needs. According to Australia's immigration department, the changes will "focus on better English language skills, more extensive skilled work experience, higher level qualifications obtained in Australia and overseas and different age ranges."

Japan plans US teacher training scheme

A new scheme could enable Japanese teachers to travel abroad to improve their English language skills. Prime minister Naoto Kan is set to agree a new initiative with president Barack Obama that will give teachers the opportunity to visit the US, reports the Guardian. The two governments are expected to confirm the new plans during a forthcoming visit from the president to Japan and it is likely that the scheme will cover primary, middle and secondary school teachers who have recently qualified. They could remain in the US for up to two years learning new language and teaching skills.

Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands program builds relationships

The Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands program is designed to help coalition forces build lasting relationships with locals by providing each member with the skills to communicate and understand the people they are around. The members of the program go through language and cultural training before deploying, giving them the ability to speak the language and understand the cultural differences in the region. "We train the Afghan national security forces in a variety of subjects," said Lt. Col. Marcus Williams, the director of Joint Security Academy Southwest and a member of the AF PAK Hands program.

Language shapes our attitudes

For years, psychologists have explored the surprising ways in which people's attitudes about race and gender are shaped by unconscious biases. New research suggests that the language people speak may influence what they think, too. Using positive and negative words in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic, Harvard researchers tested bilingual people's implicit preferences for people of different nationalities. What they found is that much is lost in translation: people's attitudes about a given ethnic group shift depending on what language they take the test in. Putting feelings into words, it seems, may actually influence the feelings. One possibility is that "attitudes aren't stable things we have over time," said Oludamini Ogunnaike, a graduate student at Harvard who led the work. "Attitudes are constructed on the spot in response to a given stimuli... One of the factors that goes into generating this response is language."

Even with voter approval, SQ 751 remains controversial

International students and non-English speakers soon could see a drop in bilingual services offered by Oklahoma's government following the move to make English the state's official language. "When all these services are suddenly not available, I think it will come as a bit of a shock to (non-English) speakers," said Tony Terry, director of The Language Company's Shawnee location, which offers English-as-a-second-language classes. "And abroad, people who hear about this might see Oklahoma as a backward place that is not interested in the general international community."

Confucius Institute of KU to expand teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

For the 2010-2011 school year the Confucius Institute of The University of Kansas (CIKU) will offer K-12 foreign language instruction in Chinese in 19 high school classes and 30 elementary school classes in Kansas, Missouri, and Ohio via interactive distance learning (IDL) videoconferencing. Students at remote sites will connect to CIKU instructors in Overland Park, KS, to interact and learn Chinese. Students and teachers see and hear each other to interact as if they were in the same classroom. One teacher can provide instruction to students in many different schools throughout the school day, and IDL instruction allows the local schools to schedule Chinese foreign language classes within their normal school day schedules.