
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

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Foreign Language for Foreign Policy?

Despite the chatter about globalization and multilateralism that has dominated public discourse in recent years, leaders in government and policy circles continue to live in a bubble of their own making, imagining that we can be global while refusing to learn the languages or learn about the cultures of the rest of the world. So it was surely encouraging that Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations and a fixture of the foreign policy establishment, agreed to deliver the keynote address at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention in Boston on November 19. Haass is a distinguished author, Oberlin- and Oxford-educated, and an influential voice in American debates. The good news is that in his talk, "[Language as a Gateway to Global Communities](#)," Haass expressed strong support for increased foreign language learning opportunities. He recognized the important work that language instructors undertake as well as the crucial connection between language and culture: language learning is not just technical mastery of grammar but rather, in his words, a "gateway" to a thorough understanding of other societies.

How Long Will the Dominance of English Last?

Will English remain the lingua franca forever? Unlikely. But what will be next? Nicholas Ostler explores this question in his book *The Last Lingua Franca: English Until the Return of Babel*, which Laura Marsh [reviews](#) at *The New Republic*. Ostler thinks technologies like Google Translate and Babel Fish "will revolutionize global communications, and make foreign language learning a thing of the past." They're not perfect now, but they'll improve. If so, that's great for him, points out Marsh: Ostler "is chairman of the Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Bilingual programs fill language gap in Miami schools

"The goal of the bilingual program is to prepare the students for success by helping their transition," said Mary Avalos, an assistant research professor at the University of Miami with a doctorate in curriculum and teaching in TESOL and reading. "Some keep as a goal maintaining the natural language to create a truly bilingual student, or helping to teach a second language to English speakers." Under Florida law, all schools must provide ELL programs for students who do not speak English fluently. "All Florida students that are registered will be assessed," said Rosy Ugalde, executive director of bilingual education in Miami-Dade. "If they are found to be in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) category they will be registered in that instructional model unless the parents decide otherwise." Ugalde says that almost 99 percent of parents that have their children test within the ESOL category agree to have their children enrolled in the program.

Somerset's North Elementary School to offer foreign language program on trial basis

An after-school foreign language program will be offered on a trial basis at North Elementary School at the beginning of 2011. Currently, either Portuguese or Spanish is first taught in Somerset in sixth grade. School Committee member Elizabeth White pushed for implementation of the program at a meeting last week. As principal of the Elizabeth S. Brown Elementary School in Swansea, White said she had a good experience with the program.

Microsoft Word 2010 Language Tools

These advanced language tools are extremely useful, and with them you can extend the power of Word. If you have text that you want to change to a foreign language, this can be done in three ways using the Translate tool. Choose between Translate Document, Translate Selected Text (where you must first highlight some text to be translated) and Mini Translator. The translation occurs online, and languages can be set in **Translate > Choose Translation Language**. It doesn't take long for the translation to be

returned, and this is a better option than going to the trouble of opening a browser, finding a translation service, pasting the text in and waiting for the results.

PREVIOUS NEWS

Teach Your Children...Better: Education Secretary Arne Duncan on how to fix a broken system

Education, just about everyone seems to agree, is broken in the U.S. The country has tumbled down the international rankings in several measures of educational excellence. Education Secretary Arne Duncan talked with The Wall Street Journal's Rebecca Blumenstein about what's being done to fix the system and what still needs to be done. We want to put \$1 billion behind what we're calling a well-rounded education. So yes, reading and math are fundamental; they're foundational. But we need science, we need social studies, we need foreign language, we need dance and drama and art and music and [physical education].

General: More troops need African language skills

The Pentagon needs more troops trained in the cultures and languages of Africa in order to better confront the increasing terror threat from the continent, a top general said Thursday. Army Gen. Carter Ham, who has been nominated to head U.S. Africa Command, told a Senate committee that the threat of terror from Somalia and other areas of East Africa is one of the command's greatest challenges.

Marine uses personal experiences to help Afghans

When Lucy Lopez sees Afghan children on patrols, she can't help remembering a time in her life when it seemed the poverty around her was boundless and receiving a good education was unattainable. Today, Lopez, 21, is a lance corporal and a female engagement team member for Regional Command Southwest. When patrolling through Helmand province, her main responsibilities are to assist the local women, or their children with any help they might need.

Chinese state councilor visits Russia's Chinese language school

Visiting Chinese State Councilor Liu Yandong stopped by the St. Petersburg 652 primary and middle school on Sunday, speaking highly of the school's efforts to promote Sino-Russian cultural exchange. Liu appreciated the school's achievements in Chinese language teaching, as the school has been teaching Chinese as the first foreign language for 53 years.

Newly identified brain pathways vital to understanding language

The research was presented at Neuroscience 2010, the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, held in San Diego. "The question of how the brain understands language has puzzled scientists for generations," said senior author Nina Dronkers, PhD, of the Veterans Affairs Northern California Health Care System and the University of California, Davis. "We found rich connections throughout the brain that have not traditionally been associated with language, but are now found to tie together key areas important for understanding language." "The results revealed a far more extensive network for language functions than current models would predict," Dronkers said.

Just how important are Foreign Language classes?

Lucia thoroughly believes that her ability to speak foreign languages has opened up many opportunities for her. She feels that she now has a home in many different areas of the world due to the foreign languages she can speak. When she was thirteen, she was sent to Italy to learn the culture and language of the country. Now she is fluent in five languages and one dialect (English being her most recently learned language).

Australian translation software wins award

Australia's Cybre Software recently won the Leading Innovation Award at the 6th Taipei International Invention Show and Technomart. The award was conferred by the International Intellectual Property

Network Forum and presented to Cybre's director Dr Richard Ski for his company's Cybre Reader Professional software. The browser based computer program allows translation of MS Word documents, PDF files, web pages, text and emails into a spoken voice in a range of languages.

AT&T Labs Shows Off Some of Its Speech Technology Research

"We are really on the cusp of a technology revolution in speech and language technology," said Mazin Gilbert, executive director of speech and language technology at AT&T Labs. "It's no longer about simply trying to get the words right. It's about adding intelligence to interpret what is being said and then using that to apply to other modes of communication, such as text or video."

Buenos noches

Garden City High School students are putting their foreign language skills to work helping youngsters at Douglas Elementary 3-4 campus learn Spanish. The students are working with student teacher Amanda Roman in launching the after-school Spanish Club for youngsters who studied the language before the reconfiguration of the district's elementary program. "The kids will run the program for the kids, the goal is for them to learn Spanish," said School Superintendent Michelle Cline, who greeted the close to 20 youngsters who stayed after school for the first meeting.

General Says More Troops Need African Language Skills

(Fayetteville (NC) Observer)...Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press

The Pentagon needs more troops trained in the cultures and languages of Africa in order to better confront the increasing terror threat from the continent, a top general said Thursday. Army Gen. Carter Ham, who has been nominated to head U.S. Africa Command, told a Senate committee that the threat of terror from Somalia and other areas of East Africa is one of the command's greatest challenges. And he said that while a number of special operations forces are trained in African languages and cultures, the military is not moving fast enough to provide similar training to other troops.

SAIC Makes Investment in Language Technologies

SAIC (NYSE: SAI) has purchased technology, intellectual property and related assets from AppTek Partners, LLC; Applications Technology, Inc.; and MediaMind, LLC: all firms that focus on human language technologies. According to the firm, "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."

N.J. hospitals seek to bridge language gap by training translators

Teresa Nicholas-Nicholas gave birth to her first child last Wednesday. She had all the questions of a new mother: how to breast-feed tiny Orlando Rios Jr., how to bathe him, and even when to expect his umbilical cord to fall off. But Nicholas, a 26-year-old New Brunswick woman, doesn't speak English. She said she was unnerved every time the English-speaking nurses at Saint Peter's University Hospital came and took Orlando out of her room, explaining something in words she couldn't understand. The situation improved the following day when nurses Susan D'Angelo and Yolanda Delgado visited her and told her everything she needed to know. Nicholas explained her concerns in Spanish, as Delgado stayed off to the mother's side and interpreted, and D'Angelo listened and gave answers in English, which were also interpreted.

CAL Board of Trustees Statement on the National K-12 Foreign Language Survey

In the increasingly interconnected world of the 21st century, Americans must be able to communicate effectively in English and other world languages. Yet while countries around the world are implementing language programs that position their students to become multilingual world citizens, results of a recent national report by the Center for Applied Linguistics (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2010) reveal that opportunities for U.S. students to learn a foreign language have declined.

Mandarin's Great Leap Forward: Interest soars in learning China's official language

ON A small street in Singapore's Chinatown Fu Xianling, the founder of a language-education company called New Concept Mandarin, searches for additional office space. Mr Fu wants to expand his business with the lofty ambition of competing with the industry leader, Rosetta Stone. Demand for his product has increased by 20% over the past two years. As the Chinese economy surges, so does interest in Mandarin. The Chinese government estimates some 40m people study Mandarin outside the country, up from 30m in 2005. A tight job market in the West is partly responsible. According to a survey in September by Rosetta Stone, 58% of Americans believe the lack of foreign-language skills among native workers will lead to foreigners taking high-paying jobs. "The recession has focused people on where growth is going to come from," says Tom Adams, the firm's chief executive. Among existing corporate customers logging into the company's multi-language programme, the number learning Mandarin increased by 1,800% between 2008 and 2010.

[Audit Says Police Fall Short in Providing Interpreters](#)

When Esther Jimenez called the police to her Staten Island home last year, she showed them the scratches on her arm. She told them that her husband had attacked her in front of their children. But the officers could not understand: She spoke only Spanish. They spoke English. According to [New York Police Department](#) protocol, the officers should have gotten an interpreter for her, but Ms. Jimenez said they did not. A new federal review into how police interact with the city's vast immigrant population suggests that Ms. Jimenez's experience was not unusual. The review, by the Justice Department's Office for Civil Rights, found the department often fails to ensure that New Yorkers who do not speak English have critical access to certified interpreters when seeking police assistance.

[How does foreign language fit into 'success'?](#)

When the Legislature created the "success curriculum" for the state's [Hathaway Scholarship](#) program, the foreign language requirement was met with resistance and included after [much debate](#). The current class of Hathaway scholars must complete two consecutive years of one foreign language to achieve the highest level. [The joint education committee proposed adding options](#) for students seeking a scholarship: demonstrate proficiency or take two years of either fine and performing arts or career and technical education. Lawmakers discussed but did not take action on [a bill](#) that would add arts and career courses not as an option, but as an additional requirement. The move opens a can of worms. Foreign language isn't gone from the success curriculum, but its importance has been minimized.