
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

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U.S. falls behind in foreign languages

Americans are not, in general, proficient in foreign languages. That situation, according to experts, is not good for the nation, not good for humanity, and not good for the individual monolingualist. "For the United States to get to where it needs to be will require a national commitment to strengthening America's foreign language proficiency." "Sadly, many Americans don't see the point of studying foreign languages at all, since the world seems to have learned English," Grafton said. "I wish everyone could speak, as I have, with a veteran of the Iraq war who has done house-to-house searches at night without the benefit of a competent interpreter."

Early foreign-language education could end

State-mandated early foreign-language instruction could end next year because facilitating the instruction has become a burden on school districts throughout the state. Lawmakers want to repeal a 1999 statute that requires Wyoming schools to teach foreign language in kindergarten through second grade. The Legislature's Joint Education Committee will discuss the measure when it meets on Thursday in Casper. The current law went into effect in 2002. The Wyoming Department of Education launched several pilot programs in 50 classrooms around the state to determine the most effective method of instruction. A bill to extend the program through sixth grade and provide funding failed to pass in 2004, and the effort has since fizzled.

Arabic, Korean, Chinese courses see gains at U.S. colleges

Student enrollment in Arabic, Korean and Chinese classes is showing the fastest growth among foreign language courses at U.S. colleges, even though Spanish remains the most popular by a huge margin, a new study shows. The survey of more than 2,500 colleges and universities by the Modern Language Association, or MLA, found that enrollment in Arabic surged by 46 percent between 2006 and 2009. More U.S. college students are studying Arabic than Russian, a change that officials say reflects a shift of interest from Cold War concerns to current issues involving the Middle East and terrorism.

Taking care of our words

At birth the brain can absorb all sorts of sounds. As we grow our brains become wired to certain tones and less open to new accents or languages. Children as young as 12 months can learn multiple languages. At that age they are absorbed in the same way as a native tongue. "Your ability to reproduce sounds and accents starts to decline from three years of age," notes linguist and founder of Babylangues Caroline Benoit Levy. Giving classes to toddlers and providing a foreign language nanny service, Ms Benoit Levy says that before our tenth birthday our brains have become hardwired to certain sounds, and find it hard to retain or reproduce new ones. Adults may struggle to perfect a foreign language but more frustrating still is when you start to speak your native tongue with a foreign accent. 'Foreign language syndrome' is a rare condition with currently 60 known sufferers in the world.

Study: Every foreign language has its niche

A new and definitive [survey](#) of foreign language instruction in U.S. colleges finds that every major language has found its audience, and each is showing some measure of growth, however modest. That hasn't always been so. French, German, Italian, Latin, Russian and Japanese all have had ups and downs in enrollment in past surveys by the Modern Language Association of America. But enrollments are rising in each of those languages at a fairly steady clip since at least 2000, according to the new survey, which was taken in 2009 and was last conducted in 2006.

[Study of Sign Language on the Rise in U.S. Colleges](#)

A recent article in [USA Today](#) reports that American Sign Language (ASL) is now the fourth most studied foreign language in the United States. Enrollment in college ASL classes is up 16 percent over the last three years, according to a survey by the [Modern Language Association](#). Spanish and French are in the lead, with German beating ASL by just 0.3 percent. Although some in the deaf and hard of hearing communities may take issue with the term "foreign" when referring to ASL (as the language does not come from any foreign country), it is certainly a language in its own right. ASL is not simply a translation of English into a gestural language. ASL has a specific syntax, with regional variations and slang. And, like other languages, ASL evolves with time especially to incorporate signs for new technologies.

[Technology In Schools: iPod Touch Becomes Learning Tool](#)

Not long ago, school supplies included mostly notebooks and pencils. At Owens Cross Roads Elementary, classroom materials now include the [iPod Touch](#). Check in on a weekday and you're likely to find the students in at least one classroom busily working away on the iPod Touch. Each student uses a different application to challenge their math or language skills.

[International Language Institute](#)

The spring semester of 2011 will bring about some exciting changes for Texas A&M International University's International Language Institute. Lisa Flores, visiting assistant professor will be the new director for the ILI. New opportunities will be provided to the TAMU student body, as well as members of the community who wish to broaden their language skills and knowledge of other cultures. As time has progressed, an emphasis was placed on the need for adding other language courses, such as Madrid, Japanese, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Portuguese. Flores emphasized, "The distinction that will be different now is that ILI will be under the department of Language and Literature." This will allow for language courses to be offered for both credit and noncredit purposes.

[PREVIOUS NEWS](#)

[CIA Chief Leon Panetta, Federal Officials Urge Scholars To Help Improve Foreign Language Learning in U.S.](#)

In order to make the United States more globally competitive and secure from foreign attacks, the nation must radically transform the way it teaches foreign language. That was the heart of the message that CIA Director Leon Panetta, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and other government leaders delivered Wednesday to more than 300 foreign language educators who gathered at the CIA Foreign Language Summit at the University of Maryland University College conference center.

[CIA Director Urges Stronger Focus on Foreign Languages](#)

At a national summit yesterday, Central Intelligence Agency Director Leon Panetta called for a strong national commitment to ensuring that Americans master foreign languages, saying the issue is vital to U.S. security and competitiveness. "A significant cultural change needs to occur," he said, according to a CIA [press release](#). "And that requires a transformation in attitude from everyone involved: individuals, government, schools and universities, and the private sector." U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan also spoke at the event, which was jointly hosted by the CIA and the University of Maryland's [Center for Advanced Study of Language](#). In his remarks, Duncan defended a plan to consolidate an existing federal foreign-language program into a broader, competitive fund.

[Pakistan facing language 'crisis' in schools](#)

Study of education system claims dominance of Urdu and English is a barrier to effective schooling for all but a linguistic elite and threatens to undermine social cohesion. Pakistan's commitment to using Urdu as the medium of instruction in its state schools and its ambition to widen access to English language teaching are creating barriers to effective education, limiting economic mobility and undermining social cohesion. These are the stark warnings made in a report on the current state of Pakistan's schools published last month by the [British Council](#) and debated by academics and policy makers in a series of

public meetings across the country. The report, [Teaching and learning in Pakistan: the role of language in education](#), sets out proposals that, if implemented, would seek to raise the status of the country's main regional languages, lower barriers to higher-paid government jobs and help to strengthen ties between language groups at a time when political instability is straining national unity.

District Creates AP Language Alternative: FLES Program A Success

FLES consists of a two-year introduction to a foreign language focusing on listening, speaking, reading, writing skills as well as learning the country's culture that uses that language. Giacalone, who refers to the program as "my baby," said that it provides a "seamless transition" for students to move into higher level language programs. Giacalone showed a video of elementary school students answering questions in Spanish spoken to them in Spanish by their teacher, and pictures of the classes corresponding Halloween to [Dia de los Muertos](#), a similar holiday celebrated in Mexico. Giacalone said the district's FLES program is so strong that he is helping other, local districts to model their own FLES programs.

Government Agencies: A Glimpse at Positions at the CIA and NSA

"We're always looking for engineers, computer scientists and other technically qualified applicants who can advance our vital mission of keeping America safe," CIA spokeswoman Paula Weiss said. "Anyone with a scientific or technical background who would like to apply his or her skills to our intelligence mission should check out our Web site to see the wide range of opportunities we offer. It's helpful to have an interest in world affairs, overseas experience or language skills, but it's not necessary."

Oklahoma University Launches Groundbreaking Portable Technology, First Martti Express Deployment in the US

OU Medical Center signed a contract with Language Access Network ("LAN") as its exclusive partner to provide its hospitals video language interpretation services. Addressing its growing need, OU believes integrating LAN into the language services program is critical for its Limited English Proficient and Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing patient populations. These services will be delivered via LAN'S dedicated HIPAA compliant high-speed broadband network and through its proprietary remote video interpretation equipment, the Martti™ Express. Martti (My Accessible Real Time Trusted Interpreter) offers immediate access with one button simplicity and full mobility throughout the hospital. "The Martti Express is an incredible advancement in video interpretation services," said Catherine Pierce, Associate Chief Nursing Officer. She continued, "It allows us to provide the right interpreter at the right place at the right time. It is light, compact and could not be easier to use."

How to learn a language

So you want to learn another language, but you aren't sure what method to use. We'll look at how to make a language learning notebook so that you can structure your time and attack grammar, vocabulary, and transcription. This is my simplified version of a Russian guide someone on the How to Learn Any Language forums translated into English. Even busy people can use this method. Do you have 30 minutes a day? If so, you can do this. And I guarantee everyone reading this has at least 90 minutes a day they can spare. If not, you should probably rethink your life a little bit. There are a lot of places where there is an opportunity to study we unfortunately do not take advantage of. Do you have a lunch break at work? Use some of that time. Waiting in line for 4 hours at the Department of Motor Vehicles? Use some of that time. Long bus ride? Dive into a grammar book.

Tiga Talk! Returns With More Tools For Teaching Aboriginal Languages To Kids

Tiga Talk! entertains kids while teaching both Aboriginal and English language skills during the preschool years – an integral stage in development. By watching the series, children can learn how to make language sounds more easily, and have fun doing it! The addition of an interactive website and iPhone application provide even greater learning opportunities, offering games, crafts and videos that give children and their families the chance to explore and learn together.

Women-led U.S. Teams Work With Afghan Women

Following the counterinsurgency tenet of supporting civilians, the Army and Marines have deployed women-focused teams to gain insight into Afghanistan's mostly silent female population. Female engagement teams are deployed to support battlefield operations and meet with Afghan women to gain

understanding and insight into the country's culture, Army Col. Chadwick W. Clark, director of the Counterinsurgency Training Center-Afghanistan, said during a Dec. 7 "DoDLive" bloggers roundtable. Team members are trained "to conduct female engagements in a culturally respectful manner," Clark said. They bring to the war effort comprehensive understanding of the operational environment and contribute to civil-military operations, medical visits, and educational programs, he said.

All-female U.S. Marine team in Afghanistan

Here is a selection from the photo essay by Getty Images photojournalist Paula Bronstein that Getty moved this morning. Photographed last month, the images depict the women deployed as the second Female Engagement team in Afghanistan. Getty reports that the women gain access where men cannot and train for any possible situation, including learning Afghan customs and basic Pashtun language. View the full slideshow [HERE](#).

Foreign language courses growing on campuses

A growing number of college students are studying foreign languages, a trend propelled by greater interest in Arabic, a broader palette of languages being taught and more crowded language classes at community colleges, a new study finds. The latest figures from the Modern Language Association, released Wednesday, show that enrollment in foreign language courses grew 6.6 percent between 2006 and 2009, achieving a high mark since the study began in 1960. "This is a vulnerable time for language study," said Rosemary Feal, the association's executive director and a Spanish professor at the University of Buffalo. "While interest in language study remains strong and students are increasingly interested in studying a wide range of languages, opportunities to study languages may be threatened by program cuts at many colleges and universities."

Educational exchange between China and Eastern Greene School helped by work of student interpreter

One of the busiest people around Eastern Greene schools this past week was junior exchange student Yangyang Ya, who's from Shanghai, China. Yangyang served as the interpreter for a group of 10 students and six teachers and administrators that visited her Indiana school. She smiled often and assisted in the task of bridging the language gap between the folks from her homeland and the Indiana students, teachers, and administrators. Yangyang also helped with the Greene County Daily World's interview with Bai Gang, Director of Foreign Affairs for the Anshan City Bureau of Education and Secretary General for the Anshan City Educational Association for International Exchange. Gang said, "The purpose of this trip is mainly is just to be able to partner and to maintain the friendship between the three schools." He continued, "This is the return visit from when Mr. Lewis visited six schools in Anshan in the year 2008. Another important part of this visit is the signing of the partnership agreement."