
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 20 DECEMBER 2010

Spanish classes thriving in U.S. colleges

Good news for those of us who want increasingly closer U.S. ties with Spanish-speaking countries: a new study shows that more U.S. college students are enrolling in Spanish classes than in any other foreign language. About 850,000 college students are taking Spanish, followed by 210,000 enrolled in French, 198,000 in German, 92,000 in American Sign Language, 74,000 in Japanese and 61,000 in Chinese. "Spanish continues to be the No. 1 language," MLA executive director Rosemary G. Feal said. "Almost 50 percent of all college enrollments in foreign languages are in Spanish."

Press Release: InCultureParent Magazine– for Parents Raising Little Global Citizens– Adds Two New Columns on Raising Bilingual Children

InCultureParent Magazine, for parents raising little global citizens, added two new language columns in December: Language Matters, explores language issues in bilingual and multilingual children and Ask a Linguist, is an advice column on raising bilingual children. Founder and CEO of the magazine, Stephanie Meade, explains, "Because there's no blueprint for bilingual families, much less information is available to them on how to raise bilingual children. These new columns will help support our readers on their language journey."

Top Apps for Holiday Travel: Word Lens Translates in Real-Time

You know the feeling. You're in a foreign country, but you haven't mastered the foreign language, and you just want a quick, easy way to translate signs and menus. An iPhone app released to Apple's App store Thursday now has a solution. Taking translation tools to a whole new level, [Word Lens](#) uses the iPhone's built in video camera to translate printed words in real-time. Just pull up the application and look at the words you want to translate through the iPhone. Instantaneously, the words appear on the screen in the language you understand. The application itself is free, but the in-app dictionaries cost \$4.99 each. At the moment, the app offers only Spanish to English and English to Spanish. (It's compatible with the iPhone 3Gs, the iPhone 4 and the iPod Touch with video camera.)

Can Google break the computer language barrier?

Ever since computers were a reality, the possibility of using their logistical power to break down barriers of language has been something of a holy grail in machine learning. The initial – unsuccessful – attempts were based on the principle that all languages could be distilled into two components: a lexicon of words with specific meanings, and a set of rules of grammar and syntax by which those words were linked together. The cold war prompted ambitious efforts by American intelligence agencies to understand the "code" of the Russian language on an industrial scale. It produced mostly gibberish.

Preschool Education: Talking is Teaching

Fifteen years ago, Betty Hart and Todd Risley from the University of Kansas published the definitive study about the importance of talking to children (*Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Lives of Young American Children*, Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1995). Their study demonstrated in a powerful way to the education community in America that there are enormous gaps in the amounts of talk heard by children in professional, working-class, and welfare families. Hart and Risley found that by the age of 4, "an average child in a professional family would have accumulated experience with almost 45 million words, an average child in a working-class family would have accumulated experience with 26 million words, and an average child in a welfare family would have accumulated experience with 13 million words."

[GiftedSpeech Gives Your Child the Gift of a Lifetime](#)

In today's globalized world, foreign language skills are becoming increasingly important. Children under the age of 10 have an innate ability to absorb the words, sounds and intonations of languages – an ability that diminishes with age. While there are many options available to parents who want their children to learn a new language, none offer a complete interactive teaching solution. Interactive learning, also known as eLearning, is a superior way of teaching children new languages but the options present on the market today use only traditional teaching methods and cannot offer all the benefits a web-based education tool can.

[Language Buddy™ Speech Translator for iPhone Now Supports Portuguese and Russian](#)

Sakhr Software, a global leader in advanced Arabic language and education software solutions, today announced the availability of six additional languages supported by Language Buddy™ for the iPhone. This speech-activated translator application enables live, interactive English to French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish translations that enhances language learning, cultural exchange and foreign travel assistance. Users can speak or type any English sentence and view the foreign language translation in text form. The six newly enabled languages follow the successful 2009 launch of the award-winning Arabic Language Buddy for iPhone and iPod Touch.

[PREVIOUS NEWS](#)

[English language has doubled in size in the last century](#)

Researchers at Harvard University and Google found that the language was expanding by 8,500 words a year in the new millennium and now stands at 1,022,000 words. The rate of increase over the years is shown by the fact the language has grown by more than 70 per cent since 1950, according to the study. The previous half century it only grew by a tenth. But nearly half of the new words are not included in any dictionary and are dubbed lexical "dark matter". They are either slang or invented jargon.

[Wyoming bill to eliminate foreign language mandate fails in committee](#)

A bill that would have repealed state-mandated early foreign language education failed to gain a critical committee endorsement Thursday. Since 2002, school districts have been required to teach foreign language according to state standards in kindergarten through second grade. The spirit of the bill was to introduce foreign language instruction at an early age, when research shows students acquire it best. The bill failed in a 7-7 tie vote in a meeting of the Legislature's Joint Education Committee on Thursday in Casper. All but two of the committee's House members voted in favor of the bill, which was sponsored by the committee's incoming chairman, Rep. Matt Teeters, R-Lingle.

[Some side benefits of learning both a foreign language and a foreign culture](#)

How to listen to other people's stories and perspectives; How to operate in an environment of constant uncertainty; How to communicate without a solid common language; Not to take yourself too seriously; The limits of cross-cultural "expertise"; The importance of local relationships; How to learn about culture and language; The nature and unique dangers of translation; and How to speak clearly and directly.

[School Board Focuses On World Language](#)

The focus was on the world language department at the Dec. 8th Garden City Board of Education work session as trustees and public listened to a presentation led by Peter J. Giacalone, the department's district coordinator. Giacalone expressed dismay that world language is often not considered to be a core subject, on par with math, English, social studies and science. He says oftentimes students are taking a rigorous course load of Regents-level or above classes, and the attitude exhibited toward world language is that "something has to give," and in many cases the world language is considered expendable. "That's what we're struggling with as a department, to make people realize that language is just as important as anything else," he said.

[SVOX's Text-to-Speech Technology Selected to Power Google Translate and Google Dictionary Web Services](#)

SVOX, the specialist in embedded speech solutions, has announced that Google has selected SVOX text-to-speech (TTS) technology to assist with pronunciation on its web services Google Translate and Google Dictionary. SVOX's natural sounding voices will replace Google's existing "listen aloud" service in 20 languages. With Google Translate, users will be able to enhance their language learning abilities by listening to their requested phrase pronounced in a natural and authentic sounding accent. This enables users to not only learn the correct spelling and grammar of a particular phrase in a foreign language, but can also assist with understanding and pronunciation. With Google Dictionary, users will now have the ability to see how a word should sound phonetically, as well as being able to listen to an accurate pronunciation.

Word Lens: an augmented reality language translator for iPhone

[Word Lens](#) is one of those apps that grabs your attention the first time you see it in action. Created by [Quest Visual](#), it is an iPhone-based optical character recognition (OCR) application used for language translation. In real-world usage, it will translate a foreign language sign in an instant using your camera. Word Lens uses OCR to single out the letters in an image captured by your camera. It identifies letters, builds the words and looks them up in its built-in dictionary. Once the words are identified, translation from one language to another is easy.

Hold the anglophone? Korean director warns of lingua franca's local impact

Speaking at the World Innovation Summit for Education in Doha last week, Kiyong Byun, vice-director of the Higher Education Policy Research Institute at Korea University, presented the results of an analysis of recent government policy in South Korea. The state aims to encourage students and faculty to adopt English as the academic "lingua franca". He said the findings fed into "growing concern" that courses run in English may hinder students' learning and in particular their acquisition of "subject knowledge". The government's enthusiasm for the plan, Professor Byun said, was based on a desire to develop a domestic labour market with higher levels of "internationally oriented" skills.

The Prague Post Blogs

54 percent of Czechs have no foreign language ability whatsoever, according to the results of a survey released yesterday by the Social and Economy Analyses Institute (ISEA). The same poll showed that only 27 percent of Czechs can communicate in at least one foreign language, usually English, followed by German. A negative correlation between age and language skill was found, with younger people reporting stronger abilities in foreign languages. Those with a university degree are also much more likely to speak a foreign language, with 77 percent of graduates able to speak at least one.

Representative Rush Holt: Why Foreign Language Education Matters

Even as we consider strategies to create jobs right now, it's vital that we ensure that the next generation of workers is prepared to compete in the global economy. To compete, American students must possess, but far too often lack, a knowledge of other languages and cultures. Unfortunately, the United States, as former Senator Paul Simon once said, is a "linguistically malnourished" nation. Only 44 percent of high school students are enrolled in foreign language courses, while only 31 percent of elementary schools offer foreign language instruction. As I discussed at a [summit on foreign language](#) organized by the CIA, we need to alter dramatically how our children learn languages. Already Congress has established, [by my legislation, upfront grants and loan forgiveness](#), up to \$16,000, for individuals who become foreign language teachers. Congress also must pass [my legislation](#) to establish structures for language training that starts in kindergarten and never truly stops. We also must better utilize the language talents of native speakers who have much to offer our still malnourished nation.

Culture and language center to expand production of field guides

The Air Force Language, Region and Culture Program Office will increase field guide production to provide Airmen an understanding of the cultural concepts necessary to meet mission requirements in the region to which they are deployed, officials said here Dec. 15. The framework of the field guides consists of a culture-general introduction, followed by 12 culture-specific categories meant to create awareness and understanding of different cultural domains, according to the Air Force Culture and Language Center officials. The field guides connect cross-cultural competence with the specific regional or country

information and are communicated in a style that resonates with Airmen," Mr. Finn said. "All they need is a pocket to put them in."

China welcomes India's decision to introduce Chinese as foreign language

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Thursday welcomed a decision by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) of India to introduce Chinese as a foreign language in the curriculum of schools in India from the next academic session.

Survey shows more than half of Czechs speak no foreign language

Fifty-four percent of Czechs are not capable of making themselves understood in any foreign language and 27 percent of Czechs manage one foreign language, according to a survey CVVM conducted for the Social and Economy Analyses Institute (ISEA) released Wednesday. The biggest number of people know English, followed by German. Foreign firms with offices in the Czech Republic say the knowledge of languages is of key importance in employing Czechs.

Language professor shares teaching tips in Thailand

An Indiana State professor challenged foreign language educators throughout the world to examine their teaching methods and think of ways to strengthen student learning. Lisa Calvin, associate professor of Spanish, was selected as keynote speaker at the first International Conference on the Dynamics in Second/Foreign Language Teaching in the 21st Century, which was held Nov. 25-26 at Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University in Pitsanulok, Thailand, a partnership institution with ISU.

English is increasingly the international language of business

It's the year 2012. Your employer, a major global firm, announces that within two years all meetings and written communication within the company will be based on or conducted in Mandarin, the primary language of China. Imagine our shock — our anger — our displeasure — at the need to suddenly learn an extremely difficult language, all in the name of keeping our job. Welcome to the global community in 2011! English has increasingly become the international language of business. More and more nations are demanding that their business executives become fluent in English. English learning courses are popular around the globe. While perhaps one quarter of the world's population can now converse to an extent in English, that share could rise to one-half by 2015, according to businessreviewusa.com.

2010 Sponsored Research Funding at UChicago Increases

James Nye, interim director of the South Asia Language Resource Center, Director South Asia Language and Area Center and Bibliographer Southern Asia, received \$332,000 from the Department of Education for the South Asia Language Resource Center to further South Asian language pedagogy in American universities.

A STEEP CURVE

Although it's midway through the school year, Jackson Elementary teacher Jodi Salinas has nine new students with limited English skills she must test in order to determine their language skills and to place them in the appropriate English-as-a-Second-Language program. Those nine give a hint of the high mobility rate at the west Medford school, where by the sixth grade just 15 percent of pupils will have remained since kindergarten, says Principal Tom Ettel. Oregon students, including those in Jackson County, who are learning English as another language, continue to struggle to reach the state's goal of achieving language proficiency within five years, according to a state report released Tuesday.

Minister of Education wants to improve Finns' Swedish language skills

Minister of Education [Henna Virkkunen](#) (Nat. Coalition Party) says that the level of knowledge of the Swedish language needs to be improved in Finland. She says that increasing Swedish language courses at the upper secondary school level should be considered. According to a fresh report by the Matriculation Examination Board and the Ministry of Education and Culture, Swedish is being taught less and less in Finnish-language upper secondary schools with each successive year. Now only 67 per cent of pupils at that level pick Swedish for their matriculation exams.

Can't learn a foreign language? Not true, say scientists

The brain can learn a new word in less than 15 minutes, according to scientists, whose finding will rob many of the excuse that they can't learn a foreign language. Dr Yury Shtyrov and his team made the discovery after placing electrodes on the heads of 16 healthy volunteers to monitor their brain activity. First they recorded the pulses generated when they listened to a familiar word. Then the volunteers were made to listen to a made-up word, over and over again. Initially the brain had to work hard to recognise the new word. But after 160 repetitions over 14 minutes, the new memory traces were "virtually indistinguishable" from those of the already familiar word, said Dr Shtyrov.

Squad Designated Linguist

[VIDEO] When Spc. Kevin Chalkley of the 7-10 Calvary Scout Regiment, 4th Infantry Division began learning Dari at the Defense Language Institute's Fort Carson Language Training Detachment, he never realized how much his language skills would mean to his mission of security stabilization in the remote small village of Yaka-Tut.

Female Marines in Afghanistan

YouTube video clip by First Lieutenant Quincy Washa, platoon commander for the Female Engagement Team with Regimental Combat Team 1, speaks about the challenges, triumphs, and goals for her team in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. The FET comprises female Marines from California-based units, and travels throughout the province to interact with Afghan men, women, and children. These Marines are responsible for gathering information related to security, development, and governance for their assigned area, while respecting Afghan cultural norms. The FET attaches to an infantry unit, and works as a go-between for male Marines and the local female population. Washa's team deployed in September, and is scheduled to stay through early next year.

South St. Paul considers English-Spanish immersion

School leaders in South St. Paul are in the early stages of considering a new language immersion program in which elementary students would learn both English and Spanish. Most metro-area immersion programs, in which students are taught core academic subjects in a foreign language, are one-way programs in which students learn a language other than English. South St. Paul envisions a less common model called dual language or two-way immersion, in which native speakers of English and Spanish learn each other's languages in the same classroom.

Kindergartners to get first taste of Chinese

Barrington School District 220 will begin a Mandarin Chinese immersion program for tots through teens next fall, now that the board of education has voted to accept a \$1.5 million federal matching grant for the program for five years. School board members had been mulling over whether to take on the financial and logistical obligations posed by the grant, which was awarded in the summer. They voted 6-1 to proceed at a meeting Tuesday night. The district will be on its way to becoming the only one in the state to offer Chinese immersion from kindergarten through high school, said Todd Bowen, chairman of the world language department, who secured the grant from the U.S. Department of Education.