
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 13 JANUARY 2011

Defense Language Institute to set up training unit in Europe

It is an office of one for now, but instructors and more resources will soon be on the way as the military looks to ramp up foreign language training for Europe-based troops. The Defense Language Institute has launched for the first time a Europe detachment in an effort to expand training opportunities for troops stationed across the U.S. European Command, according to the director of DLI's satellite office in Stuttgart.

Russian Bureaucrats to Learn English

The government wants at least 20 percent of federal officials to be fluent in a foreign language by 2020, and is even prepared to send them abroad to study in order to put Russia on a path toward an innovative future. The policy is outlined in a [report](#) unveiled by the Economic Development Ministry on Dec. 31 and scheduled to be submitted to the government by late February, ministry spokesman Pavel Katkov said Wednesday. The 124-page report gives little detail and does not elaborate on the cost of the project. Katkov also declined to provide details, saying his superiors planned to speak on the issue later this week. In any case, the task is monumental. While no official data on how many civil servants speak foreign languages is available, politicians and observers alike agreed that the figure is small. There were almost 880,000 federal officials as of 2009, although their ranks will be pared down by 20 percent by April 2013 under a government downsizing plan approved by President Dmitry Medvedev this month. But even the reduced figure implies that some 140,000 officials will be required to master a foreign language over the current decade.

U.S. Voters Support International Education, Poll Finds

Americans consider international education essential for today's students, and they connect foreign-language learning and study abroad with improved prospects for success in the global marketplace, according to a survey commissioned by Nafsa: Association of International Educators. Conducted on the eve of the 2010 elections, the poll of likely voters found that 75 percent of respondents agreed that "unless our colleges and universities do a better job of teaching our students about the world, our children and grandchildren will not be prepared to compete in the global economy." Nearly two-thirds said that without foreign-language skills, young people will be at a "competitive disadvantage in their careers."

The Language Flagship: Creating Global Professionals

A promotional video showcasing The Language Flagship, a national program that provides advanced language education in critical languages, to create global professionals.

Video: Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills Talks to a Female Engagement Team in Helmand Province

B-roll of Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills speaking to members of a Marine Female Engagement Team in Afghanistan, about women's role in the military, women in Afghanistan and how he views the progress in Afghanistan.

Evergreen schools to offer English-Spanish immersion program

Kindergartners in one classroom next fall will greet their new teacher with "Hola" instead of "Hello." A couple of dozen native English- and Spanish-speaking 5- and 6-year-olds will share a classroom for a new two-way immersion program at Marrion Elementary School. The dual-language program is the first of what Evergreen Public Schools' officials hope to be many immersion programs offered to students. The 28-student classroom will be half native English speakers and half native Spanish speakers. District officials are asking parents to commit to the six-year program that runs through fifth grade, said Tom Nadal, Evergreen director of elementary education. There is no tuition for the program.

The Record: Language of learning

THERE'S a lot of "no" these days, or "no more." With slashed budgets, reduced property values and anemic state aid, towns in North Jersey are cutting, stopping or deferring important local services. So it's good to hear about public libraries developing foreign language collections to meet community demand — in spite of reduced budgets. "In our community, 40 percent of the families speak another language beside English at home. We wouldn't be doing our job if we didn't provide materials for them," Paramus library Director Leonard LoPinto told The Record.

PREVIOUS NEWS

An Interview with Brig. General Tony Rock

A lot has been said and written about U.S. efforts to rebuild Iraq. That work includes rebuilding the military and personnel from Alabama are playing a key role. Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery is home to programs like the War College and the Air Force Culture and Language Center. One recent graduate is Brigadier General Tony Rock who completed culture and language training at Maxwell. He'll be on a plane Sunday (January 2, 2011) to take over as Director of the Iraqi Training and Advising Mission for the Air Force. The General discussed how he found common ground during his last trip to Iraq.

Babies' Brains Process Words in an Adult Way

Babies process words using the same brain structures as adults, and in the same amount of time, according to a study by the University of California, San Diego. They are also able to understand words as more than simple sounds and comprehend the meanings of many of the words they hear. Although lesions in two brain areas — Broca's and Wernicke's — have long been associated with loss of language skills in adults, these areas seem to have little impact on language development in early childhood. Some scientists have addressed this anomaly by theorizing that the right hemisphere and inferior frontal regions are vital for childhood language development, and that the other language areas of adulthood become dominant only when language development has matured.

Sudan needs English to build bridges between North and South

The question that Sudan has been asking itself is, when faced with massive political upheaval, poverty and a shortage of basic services, can English really make a difference? The answer, in short, is "yes". English language training is not a "quick fix" for Sudan's problems but it can encourage development, is relatively cheap and most importantly, sustainable, underpinning other capacity building projects. This is recognised at all levels of Sudanese society but is especially important in the South where the government views English as an important tool for development and future nation building. In the North, Arabic is and will remain the primary language, coexisting with English as the international language of the internet, trade and international engagement. In 2007 the government of South Sudan took English as their official language. English, however, provides a way for the North and South to communicate when Arabic is still viewed with suspicion by the South. If the country is to hold on to the fragile peace that has held for the last five years, it is supremely important that these communication channels stay open.

Focusing on Languages (Mainly Mandarin)

Before she left the building, Ms. Black, New York City schools chancellor, peppered the principal, Tanya John, with questions about college preparedness and the school's curriculum. Then, she revealed what is starting to look like an obsession. "I'm pushing for Mandarin Chinese," she said. She was laughing, but foreign-language instruction seems to be serious business for Ms. Black — and Mandarin, the new Spanish. Last month, before she traded a job running one of the world's largest magazine publishing companies for a job running the nation's largest public school system, Ms. Black was already making noise about the importance of learning Mandarin. And the noise only amplified on her first day on the job.

The Web of Babel

In late fall of 2009, Briana Leaman, a student at the University of South Carolina, uttered what is probably a rare sentence in the history of the French language: *Je vais aller à Clemson aujourd'hui avec le fanfare pour le match! Allez les Gamecocks!* In English ("I'm going to Clemson today with the band for the game! Go Gamecocks!"), the sentence is normal enough. But American college students rarely have cause to make such casual exclamations in a foreign tongue. Except, of course, if forced to do so in class or when studying abroad. That was what Lara Lomicka, a professor of French at the university, had in mind three semesters ago when she set up a hash tag on Twitter with an English class at a university outside of Paris, then required the students in her intermediate French class to post on the popular micro-blogging site at least three times a week — once in English, and twice in French. "I don't think technology will ever replace immersion, but it certainly can help to move us further in that direction without actually having to travel and be there," she says.

Literature and language scholars feel the pinch

As 8,000 literature and language professors and scholars gathered in Los Angeles for their annual convention this week, a lot of metaphors were tossed about to describe what many feel is the besieged state of their careers and classrooms during the recession. Rosemary Feal, executive director of the Modern Language Assn. of America, likened the job market for humanities faculty and students to a "low plateau" and said those in the field face crowded classrooms, program reductions and work furloughs at the nation's cash-strapped colleges and universities. The problem, she said, may be partly the result of a misconception that English and foreign language studies do not prepare students for a range of careers. "Humanities are just as practical as any other majors," Feal said, especially during hard times when people need to be nimble about switching jobs.

Closing Achievement Gap Is Education Committee Priority

Closing the achievement gap and raising overall student performance within tight budget constraints are among the top priorities the legislature's education committee set for itself Monday during its first meeting. Despite the looming \$3.5 billion budget deficit, committee co-chairman Rep. Andrew Fleischmann, D-West Hartford, said he opposes delaying the implementation of the high school reforms the legislature approved last year. The reforms, which call for schools to increase course requirements in math, science and foreign language, among other changes, would not take effect until fall 2014. But many school systems want to begin planning and training teachers and staff in preparation for the changes. Fleischmann estimates the reforms will cost the state about \$25 million.

Education issues top Wyoming legislative agendas

National debates and a heated election for state superintendent pushed education to the top of legislative agendas. Competitive federal grant programs drove major changes in other states, but Wyoming lawmakers are determined to put their own stamp on school reform. **Hathaway success curriculum, HB13:** This bill would add performing arts and career and vocational courses as an option to the foreign language requirement for the Hathaway Scholarship program.

Chinese to start in kindergarten

Kindergartners in District 54 can start learning Mandarin Chinese in the fall, giving themselves the best shot at acquiring language skills and aiding their overall development. Francis Campanelli Elementary School will offer a Chinese Immersion Program that will add a grade each year. At the end of their time in elementary school, students will be able to use English and Chinese comfortably, according to district officials.

Report criticises languages tuition

The report, Modern languages - Achievement and challenge 2007-10, released by Ofsted, recognises the significant efforts made to support languages - especially in primary schools - since the watchdog's last languages report in 2008. But it also highlights a number of weaknesses in the way secondary students are taught. The report states: "In many of the secondary schools visited, opportunities for students to listen to and communicate in the target language were often limited by many teachers' unpreparedness to

use it. "Too often, students were not taught how to respond to everyday requests and thus routine work in the target language and opportunities to use it spontaneously were too few."

Google Waves Goodbye to Language Barriers

Travelers and tourists longing to communicate better with locals may be in luck very soon. Google's prototype language translator, Conversation Mode, uses Android phones to record spoken words and then play them back in a different language. Conversation Mode combines the technology of [Google Voice](#) and [Google Translate](#) (which only works for text) to translate over fifty languages via a speech interface on a smartphone. While similar translation programs exist, most of them are text-based and those that do translate speech-to-speech only work for a limited number of languages.