
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 24 JANUARY 2011

First Lady Michelle Obama: "When You Study Abroad, You're Helping to Make America Stronger"

She focused on the importance of studying abroad in support of the President's "[100,000 Strong Initiative](#)" – a program that aims to increase the number of Americans who have the opportunity to study in China. Mrs. Obama stated, "The fact is, with every friendship you make, and every bond of trust you establish, you are shaping the image of America projected to the rest of the world. That is so important. So when you study abroad, you're actually helping to make America stronger. And these experiences also set the stage for young people all over the world to come together and work together to make our world stronger, because make no mistake about it, whether it's climate change or terrorism, economic recovery or the spread of nuclear weapons, for the U.S. and China, the defining challenges of our time are shared challenges. Neither of our countries can confront these alone. The only way forward, the only way to solve these problems, is by working together."

Sasha Obama speaking Mandarin to Chinese President

Brief video with MSNBC's Brian Williams discussing Sasha Obama's discussions in Mandarin with Chinese President Hu Jintao.

Beijing Helps US Students Learn Chinese

A visit to a Chicago high school was on the agenda as Chinese President Hu Jintao wrapped up his visit to the United States. Walter Payton College Preparatory High School is one of dozens in the U.S. that offers Chinese language and cultural instruction through a program called "Confucius Classrooms," which is partially funded by the Beijing government.

'Equip the children with language skills that will give them an edge'

In China, party hosts still have about two weeks to prepare for New Year celebrations, but students 9,000 miles across the globe in Eugene are already celebrating by singing a traditional New Year song in Mandarin. Oak Hill School in Eugene offers Mandarin immersion courses beginning in Kindergarten and ending in 8th grade. By the fifth grade, students like 10-year-old Maya Ordway can understand the building blocks of writing and speaking that will eventually allow them to become fluent.

Foreign language skills provide sharp edge in the job market

Job seekers with bilingual skills could look forward to a profusion of opportunities in the coming year, according to various reports and company hiring plans. With the globalization of businesses and populations growing increasingly cosmopolitan, the need for transactional knowledge of languages has become very important in both private and government sectors. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment of translators and interpreters in the country is expected to increase by 22 percent between 2008 and 2018. Another book on the employment scenario, *Closing America's Job Gap* (*W Business Books, January 2011*), predicts that for those completely bilingual in Spanish and English, these highly marketable language skills open doors to new careers.

PREVIOUS NEWS

U.S. DOD Language Summit to Set Future Strategy

After a five-year effort to institute processes needed to gauge service members' foreign-language skills, the U.S. Defense Department will hold a summit this month to help in forging a systematic path forward,

the director of the Defense Language Office said on Wednesday. The DOD Language and Culture Summit will occur on January 25-26. The 250 to 300 participants will include officials from DOD and other federal agencies, experts from academia, scientists, and people such as combatant commanders who have an interest in the topic.

Female Engagement Team breaks for training

Lance Cpl. Kathryn Mannion speaks to an Afghan woman while assigned to the Female Engagement team with Regimental Combat Team 7 in Marjah, Afghanistan, July 7, 2010. Mannion, originally a military policeman, volunteered to participate in the Marine Corps' newest program, designed to engage with Afghan women.

Foreign-language students at Susan Wagner HS pass on their knowledge to younger students

It's a bit like being given a lesson from your older brother or sister. That's the thought of Susan Wagner High School students involved in the Foreign Language Institute's student-teacher program, which enables about 65 dedicated foreign-language students to visit and teach language classes at a handful of Staten Island elementary schools.

TPS teams up with UT to teach students Chinese

From world leaders to 5 year olds, some bright young students are learning a new language. Kindergarten students at Old Orchard elementary school are learning Chinese. TPS has teamed up with Confucius Institute at the University of Toledo. The program sends teachers trained in teaching Chinese as a foreign language to schools. Xiaoping Tan is from China. Today, the students were learning how to count and how to say "I love you mommy" in Chinese. Ms. Tan admits Chinese is a hard language to learn, but says the children are quick learners. This is the second year for the program. All the students in the school are taught 20 minutes of Chinese once a week. The principal calls it a smart investment.

Fair gives opportunity to learn about prospective foreign-language jobs

Students at West Virginia University will have an opportunity to learn how their major's foreign language requirement could someday assist in finding a job at a foreign language career fair today. WVU's Foreign Language Department will be hosting the fair, "Putting Your Language Skills to Work," today in the Mountainlair Rhododendron Room from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Cynthia Chalupa, associate professor of German studies at WVU, said the career fair is intended to provide students with important tips on finding career opportunities in the language field.

Babylon a Leader in Fostering Foreign Language Programs

Babylon Junior Senior High School is doing exactly what a foreign language association believes every school district should be doing: expanding foreign language learning opportunities despite New York State Education officials' recent action to eliminate all middle school language exams and several Regents language exams.

Challenging the limits of learning: Human mind vs. yardstick of a machine

Although we're convinced that baby is brilliant when she mutters her first words, cognitive scientists have been conducting a decades-long debate about whether or not human beings actually "learn" language. Most theoretical linguists, including the noted researcher Noam Chomsky, argue that people have little more than a "language organ" -- an inherent capacity for language that's activated during early childhood. On the other hand, researchers like Dr. Roni Katzir of Tel Aviv University's Department of Linguistics insist that what humans can actually learn is still an open question -- and he has built a computer program to try and find an answer.

Teaching Chinese in America

More and more, Americans are learning a second language and Chinese is emerging as a language of choice. Terry McCarthy explores the latest linguistic trend.

AFOSI Airman selected Language Professional of the Year

An agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations was recently selected as the Air Force Language Professional of the Year. Special Agent Slava is being recognized by the LPOY program for

his linguist work with Department of Defense missions overseas, where he advised senior DOD officials, supported force-protection efforts and conducted liaison activities with foreign officials. He is fluent in Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian and English. Due to the nature of his work as an AFOSI agent, a pseudonym is being used for his name. SA Slava was inspired to join the Air Force by his grandfather, who was a World War II pilot. SA Slava joined in 1998 and began exploring opportunities as a linguist in 2002.

Bureaucrats Given 9 Years to Improve Foreign Language Skills

The Russian 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 according to 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 on Jan. 12.

Australian students head overseas

EXCITING adventures are in store for local students about to embark on Rotary exchange to destinations across the world. The youth exchange program allows students aged between 15 and 18 to travel to countries of their choice to promote peace and friendship, gain a broader view of the world, and develop a deeper understanding of themselves.

Learn a new Language

Those who tout the need for more foreign language education in the United States often point to its advantages for national security, or to how people who speak more than one language have advantages in the job market. These are vital reasons, but the most important reason to learn a new language is much simpler, and yet more personal and profound. It broadens horizons and deepens one's understanding of other people and cultures. Each language has its own history, connected to a unique culture and world view. Learn a language and you learn to see the world a little differently — a process that is both enriching and ennobling.

Demand for Arabic teachers spurs MSU programs

A rising demand for teachers of Arabic in the state considered the capital of Arab America has led [Michigan State University](#) to launch new undergraduate and graduate programs. About 300,000 people in southeastern Michigan trace their roots to the Arab world, and the East Lansing University said the moves will help fill a shortage of those who can teach the language.

Oakton Elementary Goes GLOBAL: Students participate in pilot program that combines regular curricula with foreign language lessons

Many of Oakton's youngest residents are going to get an extra taste of Spanish in the coming months, thanks to a pilot program coming to [Oakton Elementary School](#) next month. Called [Global Language Benefiting All Learners \(GLOBAL\)](#), the program takes a new approach to language learning that enables students to develop basic communicative skills in one of three languages (Spanish, Korean or Chinese), while reinforcing the science, math and social studies curricula they're learning during regular school hours.

GOP introduces bill to make English Minnesota's official language

Among the first bills introduced in the Minnesota House this session is one aimed at establishing English as the official language of the state. Republican Reps. Steve Drazkowski of Mazeppa, David Hancock of Bemidji, Sondra Erickson of Princeton, and Roger Crawford of Mora introduced the bill on Monday. HF 64 would make English the official language of Minnesota: "No law, ordinance, order, program, or policy of this state or any of its political subdivisions, shall require the use of any language other than English for any documents, regulations, orders, transactions, proceedings, meetings, programs, or publications, except as provided in subdivision 3."

EVSC looking to expand foreign language instruction

The Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp. took a step Tuesday toward expanding foreign language instruction to more students, including those in elementary grades. Various EVSC middle and high schools currently have instruction in Spanish, German, French, Japanese and Latin. About 3,800

students now take those courses. Under a new contract between the school district and Rosetta Stone, a company that develops language-learning software, the EVSC will offer a pilot program for about 3,000 students.

Mandarin's gain can't offset lag in language classes

Despite budget cuts to foreign language programs at many U.S. schools, the study of Mandarin has jumped by almost 200 percent in three years, according to a recent study funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Still, the study also found that just 32 percent of students in grades 6 to 12 nationwide are enrolled in a foreign language program, leaving the U.S. behind many countries. (In the European Union, for example, 94 percent of secondary level students study a language other than their native tongue.)

NECC Leads the Way in Language and Culture Awareness Training

In response to the Secretary of Defense's Language Transformation Roadmap, the U.S. Navy began incorporating language and cultural awareness into the Fleet Response Training Plan in 2006. The goal was to align language skills, region expertise and cultural awareness with operational requirements to support joint and Navy missions. Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) implemented a comprehensive training plan in January 2007, which executed the Chief of Naval Operations Language, Regional Expertise and Culture (LREC) Strategy, ensuring deployable combat forces receive regional and cultural awareness training that will enable effective interaction with native populations, local and government officials and coalition partners.

Languages Needed, but No Plans to Learn

Demand for U.S. workers who speak foreign languages—especially Spanish and Chinese—should continue to grow over the next decade, but very few workers plan to study them, according to a newly released study by the University of Phoenix Research Institute. The institute surveyed 511 workers and 419 employers last fall. Workers were asked what skills or degrees they already had or were planning to acquire; employers were asked what skills were in demand or would be in demand in 10 years. The result: 42% of employers expect business proficiency in Chinese to be in moderate or high demand in a decade; nearly 70% expect Spanish to be in demand.