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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 22 FEBRUARY 2011**

#### **Pentagon Goes for a Universal Translator. Again.**

Thus was born a scientific (and sci-fi) drive that's lasted 57 years, from *Star Trek* to [Babel Fish](#) to [Google Translate](#): instantaneous speech translation. But even though no one's mastered that yet, the Pentagon's out-there research branch is asking for even more with its Boundless Operational Language Translation, or BOLT. As outlined in Darpa's fiscal 2012 budget request. For the low, low starting cost of \$15 million, Congress can "enable communication regardless of medium (voice or text), and genre (conversation, chat, or messaging)."

#### **Female engagement teams trained to aid communication with Afghan women**

In an effort to maximize communication with the Afghan population and to honor their customs, coalition forces train female engagement teams to interface with local women. FET training teaches service members and civilians to communicate with Afghan women without offending their way of life. The five-day course consists of Pashto and Dari language training, Afghan religion training, Afghan cultural training and many other lessons to prepare the students for future engagements. The final test prior to graduation is an exercise that allows the students to utilize the skills they learned throughout the training on local Afghan women.

#### **What Malia and Sasha Obama's Parents Know About the Value of Language**

In a radio address earlier this month, President Obama focused on his desire to improve America's global competitiveness, stating, "our true measure of progress has to be... whether people in this country can still achieve the American Dream for themselves and their children." But what does language have to do with it? Quite simply, the success of the United States depends directly on its citizens' abilities to develop the skills required in today's global economy. The ability to communicate is chief among them.

#### **Being Bilingual: Beneficial Workout for the Brain**

Speaking two languages confers lifelong cognitive rewards that spread far beyond the improved ability to communicate, a series of scientific findings has shown. In the latest research, described Friday at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the onset of the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease was delayed by more than four years in elderly bilingual adults, even though they had identical brain damage compared with a group of adults in the study who spoke only one language. "It's not that being bilingual prevents Alzheimer's," said Ellen Bialystok, a professor of psychology at York University, in Toronto. "It's just that you are better able to cope."

#### **The American Translators Association Says Human Linguists Are Not in Jeopardy**

"Watson," the IBM computer that handily defeated two human trivia champions on the television game show *Jeopardy!*, has dazzled journalists and the general public with its language skills and revived the longstanding man-versus-machine debate. For the 11,000 members of the American Translators Association, however, the question of language and computers is an everyday reality—and the focus of the next issue of *The ATA Compass*, an e-newsletter for translation buyers.

#### **High school kids take Arabic**

After just four months in the first Arabic-language class offered in a Hawaii high school, the teenagers are speaking, singing and even writing the swirling script of the Arab world, learning from each mistake along the way. With news from Egypt taking center stage, the students are able to make out some Arabic words on signs appearing in television reports. "It's like an 'Aha!' moment, when you see it in the media and you can read it," said senior Chale Turner. "You're less likely to assume things and be judgmental." Added

sophomore Kayla Smallwood: "It's super-difficult in the beginning but it's like a hill. Once you get over it, you get so many rewards."

### **Bilingual students to get language help**

Gerardo Pina-Rosales, director of the New York-based North American Academy of the Spanish Language, held an all-day workshop Friday directed at helping teachers to perfect their Spanish language skills to pass their knowledge to students, The Miami Herald reported Sunday. In an age when the English language is rarely spoken properly, similar problems are being encountered among Spanish-speaking students and those who are bilingual.

### **Stonington's Chinese classes under review**

Four years ago the school system began teaching Mandarin Chinese to great fanfare. But now the Chinese program is in danger of being eliminated because of declining interest, scheduling problems and concerns over increasing foreign language requirements for graduation.

### **Bilingualism a failed and very costly experiment**

There was a small article in newspapers concerning the French fact and language in Canada -- with a very enlightening aspect. Bilingualism is a 40-year-old, failed experiment, costing us billions of dollars. The vast majority of monies in the aspect go to the promulgation of French. Both federal and provincial governments contribute to this notion. Except in Quebec, there is little use for the French language. In B.C. -- approximately 2% of British Columbians are fluent in French, with not a much greater percentage able to effectively use the language.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

### **Vienna brothers start language institute in China**

Starting a successful business is a daunting task for anyone, especially for a 22-year-old American who wants to set up shop in China. But Vienna native Robbie Fried seems to have pulled it off. With moral support and financial guidance from parents, who helped gather investors, Robbie and Bradford Fried founded the Chinese Language Institute, an educational institution that offers short- and long-term intensive Mandarin training, as well as accredited study and research seminars throughout China. The institute serves anyone who wants to learn the Chinese language and culture.

### **Foreign language assistants blow for Scottish schools**

More than half of all foreign language assistants in Scottish state schools are being axed following council budget cuts, BBC Scotland has learned. A survey of Scottish councils found at least 55 of the current 106 posts across the country are to go this year. The biggest reduction is in Glasgow, where the council is to cut all 35 of its assistants to save £300,000.

### **Chinese Lessons, Live From Beijing**

A glimpse into the high school's foreign language department proves that the only thing moving faster than technology these days is the students' uncanny ability to adapt to it. Language students there have been videoconferencing with a Chinese instructor in Beijing, and also have the option of taking Regents level courses in Spanish, French, Latin, Italian, or American Sign Language. The Chinese 360 elective, a pass-fail course taken by a small but motivated group of students, is a pilot project that has pupils and teachers raving about the benefits.

### **When in Rome, Let Your Smartphone Do the Translating**

You can use a smartphone to save a few dollars on an airline ticket, buy a [Starbucks](#) latte or gain the inside edge on draft news in fantasy sports leagues. With the Google Translate app for Android phones users speak English phrases into the phone and the app offers spoken translations. Or you can use it to save your skin in a place where no one speaks your language. It's fairly amazing stuff. Push a button, speak a query in one language and it displays a translation. Fifteen popular languages are covered by

this feature. You must speak carefully for the app to recognize your query, but if Translate misconstrues a word, you can edit the query with the phone's keypad.

### **Two WVU students among first to participate in ROTC culture and language program**

Anthony Jette volunteered at a health clinic in Peru; and James Godbout spent a few nights in the desert with the Moroccan military. Both West Virginia University juniors were among the first Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps students to participate in the Cadet Culture and Language Immersion Internship Program. The summer internship program, part of the Army ROTC's Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency Strategy, is designed to help Army ROTC students become well-rounded officers in the military. "Culture and language immersion prepares these future leaders to make better decisions, not only in the best interest of the U.S. but also of the country they are operating in. The internships help eliminate stereotypes and build mutual respect," said Major Mark Hennigan, assistant professor of Military Science.

### **Soldier bridges language gap in Thailand**

Amid the bustle of Thai and U.S. leadership speaking through interpreters, working to bridge the language gap, there is one soldier who stands out from all the rest. Born in Bangkok, Son is fluent in both Thai and English and has been assisting communication efforts between the leadership of the Thai and U.S. armies during Cobra Gold 2011. Son learned basics of the English language in a Thai grade school, but he didn't become fluent until he and his family made a permanent move to San Diego when he was 15.

### **Holloman Airman: Gateway for Iraqis to American training**

For most foreigners traveling to the United States, this is all they would need, but for Iraqis seeking a seat inside an American school house, U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Fatema Tahan from Bronx, N.Y., and an English language proficiency exam are part of their checklists. "This test is the first step in getting them there," said Tahan, 49th Maintenance Squadron unit training manager, Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. "English language testing is a critical component of the out-of-country training program for Iraq," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dawn Rodeschin, ISAM training and travel chief. "The English comprehension level exam must be administered to prospective training candidates within 105 days of their training start dates in the U.S."

### **GAO praises government for progress on human capital management**

GAO cited specific areas that pose problems for human capital management, including: A lack of staff at the [State Department](#) with foreign language skills in areas of geographic interest.

### **Does the European Union have a strategic culture?**

'Strategic culture can be defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes and norms towards the use of military force', often moulded according to historical experience (Chappell 2009, p. 419). For the European Union (EU) Cornish and Edwards see it as 'the institutional confidence and processes to manage and deploy military force as part of the accepted range of legitimate and effective policy instruments' (2001, p. 587).

However, can this be realised 'within the constraints of a liberal, democratic politics that 'speaks softly and carries a big carrot'?' (Matlary 2006, p. 106) This essay will posit that the EU does have a strategic culture, but one still in infancy, beset by weaknesses and potentially insurmountable obstacles. To demonstrate this, we shall explore key diplomatic efforts to enhance European strategic integration, responses to world events and operational deployments, how these have progressively shaped a common strategic culture, and how numerous issues undermine it.

### **U.C. Berkeley to spend \$500,000 boosting foreign language classes**

The [University of California, Berkeley](#), plans to spend \$500,000 creating more foreign language classes in the next academic year. Ultimately, this push will result in 30 new language courses at Cal. Provost George Breslauer said the school is keen to spend some of the money it's getting from fee increases "to protect and enhance the quality of undergraduate instruction."

### **At a Loss for Language**

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES will no longer offer funding to Cornell's Modern Greek program, perpetuating the current trend of downsizing small departments to meet the demands of budget cuts. This most recent decision, which follows similar moves towards Russian, Swedish and Dutch programs, raises the question — as supporters of the Greek program pointed out in their petition — is Cornell still a place where any person can pursue any study?

### **N.J. Moves to Weaken Teacher Tenure**

Teacher salaries would also be guided by evaluations instead of merely by the number of years a teacher has been employed and the type of post-graduate degrees earned. Better-rated teachers would get bigger pay raises, as would teachers in “high-need” schools or subjects in-demand, such as science and foreign language.

### **Parents Want Language Immersion in Nyack's Elementary Schools**

A group of concerned parents are calling on district officials to put language studies back in Nyack School District elementary schools. ([Liberty](#), [Upper Nyack](#) and [Valley Cottage](#)). Heather Cornell, a Valley Cottage parent, is spearheading the effort to bring a language immersion program to the schools. Language immersion teaches youngsters an unfamiliar language by carrying out classes—be they math, science or history—in a foreign language. English-speaking children would be taught primarily in Spanish, and Spanish-speaking children would be taught primarily in English.