
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 28 SEPTEMBER 2011

App helps travelers speak in foreign languages

(The Baltimore Sun)...Natasha Baker

Communicating with local people in a foreign country can pose difficulties, whether it is asking for direction or making a special request at a restaurant. But Vocre, a new iPhone app released by translation company myLanguage, aims to ease those problems by enabling users to translate their spoken voice into foreign languages. It leverages crowd-sourcing to continually improve the accuracy of its translations to allow people to express themselves in the same way as native speakers. It's like asking your friend down the street, "How would I say this in Spanish?" said Andrew Lauder, founder and CEO of myLanguage. "It might not be something that's expected by a dictionary -- but it is the right way to say it when you go to that specific part of the world. It has the colloquialisms or slang of the area."

Students are being introduced to a second language

(Fremont Tribune)...Brett Ellis

Officials with Arlington Public Schools have expanded Spanish education to all elementary students. The program began last year for students in kindergarten through second grade. This year lessons are provided for students in grades 3-6 as well. "The biggest push for this is if you think about our society and how many Spanish-speaking families we have in the United States and kind of where the world is going," elementary principal Chad Radke said.

State gets \$10.5M for English learner assessment

(The Capital Times)...Bill Novak

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has been awarded a \$10.5 million grant to develop technology-based assessments for students learning English. The four-year grant from the federal Department of Education will be used to develop an online assessment system to measure student progress in attaining the English language skills they need to be successful in school and, ultimately, post-secondary studies and work.

Ruling Affirms Right to Apply in Swedish for Academic Posts in Sweden

(New York Times)...Jonathan J. Li

Three Swedish universities, which had placed job advertisements requiring certain applications to be filed in English, are now being told to change their approach after a recent decision that gives a primary role to the national language. According to the decision, which was handed down late last month, Swedish universities cannot demand applications only in English without the possibility of applying in Swedish. "According to the Language Act, common citizens should be entitled to communicate with Swedish authorities in Swedish," she said in a telephone interview from Stockholm last week.

Chinese Taught in Icelandic Elementary Schools

(Iceland Review Online)

Last school year 23 pupils in Icelandic elementary schools studied Chinese, which has not been taught before at compulsory school level in Iceland since [Statistics Iceland](#) began collecting data on foreign language studies in 1999. English is the first foreign language taught at compulsory school level and also the most common language, followed by Danish.

Latin America lures Chinese tourists

(CNN)...Brian Byrnes

Maria Jose Martinez Waldner grew up speaking Spanish and English at her home in Buenos Aires. Several years ago she decided to learn Mandarin Chinese, a language that is rarely heard in Argentina.

In 2010, she won a scholarship and traveled to China to perfect her language skills. Now, her knowledge of both Chinese language and customs aids her considerably in her job at the Park Tower Hotel in Buenos Aires, where she welcomes Chinese tourists arriving in the Argentine capital. "They act like they never thought that someone here in the hotel could speak their language. They say to me "Oh you speak Chinese? Where did you study? Did you go to China? Would you like to go back?" So it is beautiful to receive those kinds of comments from the Chinese guests," Waldner says.

PREVIOUS NEWS

New Mandarin test for native speakers stirs up debate in China

(Xinhua)...Deng Shasha

China's new Mandarin test has raised public debate, as some experts doubt its effectiveness in enhancing native speakers' language abilities. The National Education Examinations Authority (NEEA), a body affiliated with the Ministry of Education, said in August that the Chinese Proficiency Test, which will debut after three years' preparation, is designed to promote people's interest and ability in their native language. The test evaluates listening, speaking, and reading and writing abilities at six different levels, while also providing advice to examinees on how to improve their Mandarin. The test was conceived amid the perceived withering popularity of Chinese culture and language, as more and more Chinese people have rushed to English training classes instead of perfecting their native language, because better English can mean a higher salary.

Thousands protest language law

(*The Baltic Times*)...TBT Staff

Thousands of ethnic Poles have again taken to the streets in Vilnius to protest a new language law that would force all schools in the country to teach certain classes in Lithuanian. Lithuania has a huge Polish minority and a number of schools that teach in Polish. The new law would introduce standardized testing in Lithuanian at the highest grades, as well as making Lithuanian language and history courses mandatory for younger students.

Culture hangs on language, art

(*The Durango Herald*)...Heather Scofield

"Ich nuu'apag'apü uruskwa'èi." The sentence means, "The Ute language is disappearing." Experts and tribal leaders say culture is a critical component of American Indian life, affecting tribes' interactions with government, family, the environment and their neighbors. But some say the practices and teachings of their heritage are fading within the Ute Nation's tribal membership, and it could have painful effects for both the tribes and their neighboring communities. "The language identifies who we are," said Lynda Grove D'Wolf, who teaches workshops on language and culture for Southern Ute tribal members. "If we lose the language, we lose our identity."

English easily the most popular foreign language in Bulgarian schools

(*Sofia Echo*)...Sofia Echo Staff

In Bulgaria, in 2009, 77 per cent of primary and lower secondary school pupils were studying English as their first foreign language while the second most studied language was German with 15 per cent. In Bulgarian upper secondary schools 100 per cent of pupils were studying English as their first foreign language followed by 41 per cent who were studying German. The information on language learning of school pupils was released by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. In 2009, among the European Union's 27 member states as a whole, 82 per cent of pupils at primary and lower secondary school level and 95 per cent of those in upper secondary level general programmes were studying English as a foreign language.

Airman experiences Lajes culture through LEAP

(*Af.mil*)...Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi

To increase the Air Force's bilateral relations capability, an Airman is benefiting from the cultural richness of the Azores at Lajes through the Language Enabled Airman Program. LEAP is used to develop Airmen

who already speak a foreign language, but have a desire to increase their knowledge of the language and culture, said Gilley. "It's a career-long program designed to sustain and enhance language and cross-cultural skills, with the end goal of producing a language speaker who can perform their core job duties in their respective foreign language," said Gilley, who applied for the program in September of 2010 and was selected in November.

Language, Culture, and Doctrinal Convergence of Trends in Full Spectrum Operation's

(Small Wars Journal)...Terry Tucker

The purpose of this paper is to provide research information on doctrinal convergence and divergence, and elaborate upon the role of language and culture in counterinsurgency operations. Language and culture are not mission enablers to Full Spectrum Operations (FSO); rather they are now in direct support thereof. For those in the field, this has been very clear for some time.

Commandant of the Marine Corps visits 3/6 Marines and sailors in Marjah

(dvids)...Staff Sgt. Andrew Miller

Q. What is the estimated timeframe for employment of the Female Engagement Team and if permanent would it become an MOS (Military Occupational Specialty)?

A. Gen Amos: "I can't think of a good reason why we wouldn't want to [utilize FET] while we still have Marines here. It's something that's found its place in the Marine Corps. I believe in it, sergeant major believes in it, senior leadership believes in it. It may become a permanent part of the structure, every one of you has a different MOS, we just kind of plug and play."

American students abroad pushed out of 'bubbles'

(The Associated Press)...Justin Pope

Educators are thrilled to see more American college students venturing abroad — perhaps 300,000 this year alone. Now if they can just get them to venture out of the "American bubbles" that can make the streets of study-abroad hot-spots like London, Barcelona and Florence, Italy almost feel like exclaves of Tuscaloosa or Ann Arbor. They're trying. After decades of laissez-faire and faith that just breathing the air in foreign lands broadens horizons, American colleges and international programs are pressing students harder to get out of their comfort zones. It's happening in popular destinations as well as more exotic spots in Asia and Africa, where there are fewer Americans, but language and culture barriers make them even more tempted to stick together.

Linguistically speaking – English becomes India's 'Numero-Uno' language

(The Washington Times)...Sonal Jaitly

India has a rich linguistic history with more than 22 different national languages spoken throughout the length and breadth of the country. The 1991 census recognized 1576 mother tongues and grouped them into 114 different languages. Imagine the plight of a linguist trying to study all the languages of the country. So how does English survive in this linguistic caldron? Wonder what motivates the so called ordinary people to learn English? The answer lies in the simple fact that English has become the goddess of empowerment. It contributes to the social mobility of Indians; it is a language of Science and Technology, economic progress and globalization.

Oxford Chinese program among top in nation, earns grant

(The Oakland Press)

In recognition of its potential as a model Chinese language program for the U.S., strong local leadership, demonstrated commitment to international exchange and collaboration, and global vision for the future, Oxford Community Schools has been accepted as a member of the third cohort of schools in the Asia Society Confucius Classrooms Network. This national network of 100 exemplary Chinese language programs is being developed over a three-year period. With this third cohort, the network represents almost 25,000 Chinese language learners in more than 100 schools in 27 states and the District of Columbia; public schools, independent schools, and charter schools; elementary, middle, and high schools; and urban, rural, and suburban schools.