
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 31 OCTOBER 2011

Translating a lucrative and sometimes scary proposition

(Mercury News)...Robert Jordan

The Army employs two types of linguists, those it recruits and enlists as soldiers -- primarily native Afghans in the U.S. on permanent legal status -- and private civilian contracts, said Lt. Col. Frank Demith, an assistant deputy for foreign language and culture for the Army. Despite the government's need for Dari and Pashto speakers, there are only a few dozen places around the country teaching the two most common languages of Afghanistan. The Bay Area is home to two institutions that have offered courses in Pashto and Dari.

UTSA Neurosciences Institute hosts bilingual brain research symposium

(UTSA Today)...Christi Fish

Scholars, students, Region 20 educators and members of the [Defense Language Institute](#) gathered at the UTSA Main Campus Oct. 25 for "The Bilingual Brain," a research symposium featuring some of the country's top bilingual brain scholars. The symposium was hosted by the [UTSA Neurosciences Institute](#). A panel of some of the country's leading bilingual brain researchers discussed their research and fielded questions from scholars and others.

Lawmakers eye possible foreign language requirement for scholarships

(Arkansas News)...John Lyon

Studying a foreign language helps prepare students to compete for jobs in the global marketplace, witnesses testified today before a legislative committee studying the possibility of attaching a foreign language requirement to lottery-funded college scholarships. The Higher Education Subcommittee of the House Interim Committee on Education is conducting an interim study on a proposal by Rep. Randy Stewart, D-Kirby, to create the requirement. It heard testimony Friday from several witnesses in support of the idea, including John Miller, an executive with Dassault Falcon Jet, which operates a plant in Little Rock. "It is clear that without foreign language skills our graduates are at a distinct disadvantage in today's global market."

Google Translate

(Slate)...Jeremy Kingsley

A computer that translates "natural language" is the holy grail of artificial intelligence—language being so integral to our intelligence and to our humanness that to crack it would be to achieve artificial consciousness itself. But until relatively recently, attempts at it have mostly sucked. They've tended to mix the words of one language with the grammar of the other, getting both wrong in the process. Mostly, this is the fault of literal translation—the kind of process that translates *kindergarten* as *children garden*. Newer methods—dominated by Google—turn the problem around: Using data, statistics, and brute force, they succeed in part by their refusal to "deconstruct" language and teach meaning to computers in the traditional way.

Researchers try to save language

(Edmonton Journal)...Staff

Saskatoon and Russian researchers are fighting to rescue a Saskatchewan Doukhobor language that is on the brink of extinction. Linguist Veronika Makarova had recently emigrated from Russia when she met a group of elderly Doukhobors singing and speaking an unusual form of the language. She soon realized she had come upon a unique language that emerged among the exiled religious sect after 1899 and flourished for a brief time before losing ground to the dominant English.

Online schools offer learning virtually anywhere

(South Bend Tribute)...Kim Komando

If your state doesn't yet offer public education online, K12 can connect you to private school alternatives. It's also possible to enroll kids in individual online courses for math and science help or for art and music enrichment. When summer rolls around again, you might consider keeping the kids busy with an eight-week foreign language class or a four-week class on Web or game [design](#).

PREVIOUS NEWS

Eikenberry views latest training methods at DLIFLC

(DLIFLC)...Brian Lamar

Karl Eikenberry, retired Lt. Gen. and former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, took a day to learn about advances in the realm of language learning at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Oct. 18. "You've got momentum here using great applications of technology and working well with troops in the field to get real-time feedback of how your languages programs are working," said Eikenberry, while speaking about the capabilities of the Institute.

2011 DLIFLC Hall of Fame inductees announced!

(DLIFLC)

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center is proud to announce its 2011 Hall of Fame inductees for their valuable contributions to the foreign language community and tireless efforts to improve foreign language training and the better employment of military linguists in the defense of our nation. The inductees for 2011 are: Major Jose Anzaldúa, USMC, Retired; Dr. Ray Clifford; Dr. Martha Herzog; Mr. Everette Jordan; Ms. Renee Meyer; and Mr. Robert Tharp.

Brown leads Ivies in gov't language scholarships

(The Brown Daily Herald)...Austin Cole

This past summer, Brown led the Ivy League in the number of students awarded prestigious Critical Language Scholarships, winning 11 of the 600 total awards. The scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Government, provides students with the opportunity to immerse themselves for a summer in the study of one of 13 "critical" languages, including Arabic, Chinese and Urdu.

More Languages Likely to Arrive at Cornell in 2012

(The Cornell Daily Sun)...Sarah Meyers

Beginning in fall 2012, language instruction in Modern Greek, Dutch, Romanian and Tamil will likely be available to Cornell students through video conferencing classes with other universities, according to Richard Feldman '69, director of Cornell's Language Resource Center. Cornell is preparing a memorandum of understanding with Yale and Columbia that would allow students to take instruction in foreign languages through video conferencing, Feldman said. In exchange, Cornell might offer instruction in Sinhalese, Bengali, Indonesian and Vietnamese to peer institutions, he said.

Robot dragon teaches kids language skills, battles impulse to terrorize city

(Engadget)...Brian Heater

Did you have trouble learning language skills at a young age? It's probably because you didn't have the right teacher. And by "the right teacher," we mean the right robotic dragon, naturally. This cuddly little mythical beast is the joint creation of researchers at Northeastern University, MIT and Harvard -- some of whom were behind the decidedly creepier [Nexi bot](#). It's part of a National Science Foundation-funded program to help young children learn language skills, suggesting that forming a bond with a teacher plays an important role in the educational process. The dragon will be brought to preschool classes to help test out this hypothesis. Hopefully a robotic knight will also be on-hand, just in case.

Foreign Language Budget Cuts Harm the National Interest

(Policymic)...John Deppe

I was asked to write a short piece on a foreign policy topic of my interest. As a recent Georgetown College Faculty of Language and Linguistics graduate who double majored in two modern languages, recent budget cuts wiping out the already relatively meager foreign language funding is an issue close to my heart. These cuts not only deeply sadden me, they also scare me.

Senior DOD Official Visits Indiana Training Center

(Defense.gov)...Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs

The Pentagon's top personnel official traveled here Oct. 21 to observe how Defense Department civilians are trained before they deploy to Afghanistan. "I'm here to get to understand the training better than academically," said Clifford L. Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, as he watched an exercise featuring State Department civilians being hustled into military vehicles while under enemy fire. Frank C. DiGiovanni, director of training readiness and strategy for the office of the deputy assistant secretary of defense for readiness, briefed Stanley was briefed about the training. And Julius Johnson, Afghanistan field training coordinator with the Foreign Service Institute, told Stanley about his experiences attending the second class in July 2009 and how it helped him. Claudia Munoz, a program transition specialist with the Ministry of Defense Advisors program, described the feedback she has been getting. "We are being told that the [training] vignettes are identical to what they went through once they got into country," Munoz said. "It really is very realistic and helps the trainees to hit the ground running."

Ft. Campbell language program takes top honors

(Business Clarksville)

The course is designed to increase each Soldier's listening comprehension and speaking proficiency as assessed by the *Oral Proficiency Interview*.

Air Force, International Affairs officials accepting attaché officer applications

(Af.mil)...Debbie Gildea

AFPC and the Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs are accepting applications for senior defense official/defense attaché, air attaché and assistant air attaché duty at nine locations, with selectees reporting for training between April 2012 and April 2013. Applications must be received by AFPC and SAF/IA by Dec. 15. Attaché applicants must be active duty senior captains, majors or lieutenant colonels, officials said. An operations background, foreign language skills and experience in the region are highly desired, although not mandatory. Applicants must have taken the Defense Language Aptitude Battery, and all their immediate family members must be U.S. citizens.

Portage school district awarded \$600,000 to teach Chinese language, culture

(Kalamazoo Gazette)...Julie Mack

Portage Public Schools has received a \$600,000 grant over five years to help subsidize the cost of teaching Chinese language and culture. The grant is from the Confucius Institute at Western Michigan University and will provide up to \$30,000 for two Portage elementaries and the two main high schools for each of the next five years. The grant money is to pay for teaching materials, equipment, guest demonstrations and other supplies. In addition to the yearly \$30,000, WMU will provide instructors in language and culture under the supervision of Portage teachers.

Parents Slam Remark about Art, Music, and Language Program Cuts in Schools

(Patch.com)...Paul Squire

Parent Sarah Bowe said programs like the arts, music and foreign language should be "off the table" if the board needs to make cuts. Another parent said foreign languages are essential for children to learn in today's global and multicultural market, though she recognized it would not be east for the board to make cuts.