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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 01 NOVEMBER 2011**

#### **Language and Culture Training: Opportunities Exist to Improve Visibility and Sustainment of Knowledge and Skills in Army and Marine Corps General Purpose Forces**

(GAO)

The Department of Defense (DOD) has emphasized the importance of developing language skills and knowledge of foreign cultures to meet current and future needs and is investing millions of dollars to provide language and culture predeployment training to its general purpose forces. DOD has also noted that such training should be viewed as a long-term investment and that training and personnel systems should better account for the knowledge and skills of service members acquired through training to help manage its forces. The committee report accompanying a proposed bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (H.R. 5136) directed GAO to review language and culture training for Army and Marine Corps general purpose forces. For this report, GAO evaluated the extent to which these services (1) captured information in training and personnel systems on the completion of language and culture predeployment training and proficiency gained from training and (2) developed plans to sustain language skills acquired through predeployment training. GAO analyzed service documents and interviewed cognizant officials.

#### **In a new elite Army unit, women serve alongside Special Forces, but first they must make the cut**

(Washington Post)...Kevin Maurer

What Marquez knew for certain was that she wasn't going to quit. And that refusal to give up was what the evaluators, all special operations soldiers, were looking for in the 55 selectees here at Camp Mackall, a former World War II training base near [Fort Bragg](#) tucked into the pine forests of central North Carolina. They were being considered for elite, all-female teams trained to build relationships with Afghan women. Because women and children are often held in a separate room while soldiers search the compound, these teams go into villages in Afghanistan to build rapport with women, as it is culturally inappropriate for male soldiers to talk with them. "We've been missing out on half of the population in Afghanistan because of cultural taboos," said candidate Meghan Curran, a West Point graduate and first lieutenant in the artillery.

#### **Battlefield Gadgets: Troops using more non-lethal technology**

(YNN)...Amanda Kelley

Vortex International Managing Director of Sales Clayton Millis said, "You can really speak freely off the top of your head, what you need to say for that situation. And now we're moving from free speech one way as well into two way. So you can ask that foreign speaker discrete questions and you kind of direct the dialogue. That's what we encourage them to do. They're asking questions like, 'How old are you?', 'Do you live in this village'." The SQ 410 is the first device that allows two way free speech translation, and can make all the difference. US Marine Corps Trainer Daniel Dixon said, "That helps make them understand what we want to do. So it's not putting a weapon in your face, it's getting them to understand what's going on."

#### **U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command expands soldier training system with Blackboard Learn 9.1 platform**

(Military & Aerospace)...Courtney E. Howard

Officials at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) needed a [soldier training](#) system. They found their solution at Blackboard Inc. in Washington. Army officials are adopting Blackboard Learn 9.1 as its platform to train more than 150,000 soldiers annually through its [Lifelong Learning](#) program. The [online training](#) program--offering more than 35,000 Army, Air Force, foreign language, and cultural courses in roughly 40 schools nationwide--will run on Blackboard's [learning management system](#).

### **Twitter Is Not the Enemy of the English Language**

*(The Atlantic Wire)*...Rebecca Greenfield

Contrary to all the LOLs, emoticons and hashtags happening in feeds across the Twittersphere, Twitter isn't destroying the English language, it's making it better. The medium only allows for 140 character musings, lending itself to abbreviations that don't exactly follow conventional spelling or grammar rules. Linguist Noam Chomsky finds the whole thing appalling, [calling](#) it "very shallow communication" in an interview with DC blog Brightest Young Things. "It requires a very brief, concise form of thought and so on that tends toward superficiality and draws people away from real serious communication ... It is not a medium of a serious interchange," he [told](#) Jeff Jetton. But while a few [language snobs](#) are in Chomsky's camp, the rest of the linguistic community doesn't exactly agree. Twitter is all about slang and abbreviations, but it's just not eroding the English language. In fact, University of Pennsylvania linguistics professor Mark Liberman found the exact opposite: It's making it better.

### **Korea still has long way to go to be truly multicultural society**

*(Korean Times)*...Kim Jae-won

It's hard to feel at home in a foreign country, even more so when you're trying to raise a family there. I experienced this first-hand, living in Vancouver for three years and having my first child there. Language was the most immediate barrier to overcome. Although I had been confident in my English skills, I quickly found that ordinary Canadians never speak quite as slowly as the language instructors in Seoul do and will mix their daily conversations with words that I had never heard before.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

### **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 Tribune)*...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](#).

### **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.