
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 18 NOVEMBER 2011

U.S. Military Goes Online To Rebut Extremists' Messages

(New York Times)...Tom Shanker and Eric Schmitt

The morning sun had barely cast its fresh light over Tampa Bay when Ardashir Safavi--born in Iran, a refugee to Turkey, educated in the mid-Atlantic states--was up and patrolling two dozen Persian-language Web sites, hunting militant adversaries in cyberspace. His mission was to scan news reports, blogs, social media and online essays to identify those he viewed as "containing lies, misinformation or just misperceptions" about American military operations and Pentagon policy across the Middle East. Mr. Safavi works as part of the Digital Engagement Team, established in 2008 by the military's Central Command to "counter extremist ideology, promote cultural awareness and explain U.S. interests," said Maj. David E. Nevers, the team's chief officer, who must approve all responses before they are posted on foreign-language Web sites. The team includes 20 native speakers of Arabic, Dari, Persian, Pashto, Urdu and Russian, the latter a shared language across the Muslim countries of the former Soviet states of Central Asia. Given that Central Command is responsible for military actions in an arc of instability stretching from the Indian Ocean across the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea, people here call their headquarters "Tampa-stan."

Afghanistan Pakistan Hands trains future Afghan pilots

(NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan)...Kathryn Gustafson

As an Air Force aviator, Lt. Col. Daryl Sassaman had been to Afghanistan before; however, never did he imagine he would one day be living with the Afghans, working to hone their English language capabilities, while improving his Dari proficiency. Through language and culture education and training, the APH program grooms military personnel to serve on a rotational cycle in country. As one cohort departs the region, a new group is deployed, while another receives language and culture education and training. "They come back a second time knowing how the culture works and are therefore able to continue building relationships," Sassaman said. Deterring potential problems before they arise is a key feature of the APH program, according to Barbara Barger, the Air Force's senior language authority.

SDSU to Get \$1.8 Million Grant from Defense Department to Teach Middle Eastern Languages to Marines

(San Diego 6)

San Diego State University will get a \$1.8 million grant from the Defense Department to teach Middle Eastern languages to Marines, school officials said Wednesday. About 200 Marines will be taught Arabic, Farsi and Pashto over the next year or so at SDSU's Language Acquisition Resource Center, according to the school. "In San Diego, this means providing men and women in uniform with the language skills to succeed when they are deployed, especially in Afghanistan," said Rep. Susan Davis, D-San Diego, who helped get the grant.

UGA gets federal grant to start undergrad flagship Portuguese program

(The Associated Press)

The University of Georgia plans to use a federal grant to establish the nation's first and only undergraduate flagship program in Portuguese. The school says the rapid growth of the Brazilian economy has caused a rise in demand for Portuguese speakers. The renewable grant from the National Security Education Program provides more than \$225,000 for the program's first year and is expected to contribute more than \$1 million during the first full grant cycle.

Civilian Expeditionary Workforce

(YouTube – American Forces Press Service)...Elaine Wilson

Civilian Expeditionary Workforce video that highlights the training that civilians within the program receive prior to deployment.

UNC system shifts focus to online

(Daily Tarheel)...Daniel Wiser

The UNC system's push to consolidate and streamline universities' online education programs might still be in its early stages, but administrators already have one model to follow — an emerging foreign language consortium.

Children can practise language skills through social network

(Irish Times)...Marie Boran

SECONDARY SCHOOL teacher Anne Burke has come up with a novel way to get school children practising foreign language skills outside of the classroom with Lingua Swap, a social networking site combining elements of Facebook and Chatroulette. Lingua Swap is a video chat site aimed at secondary school children looking to practise conversation skills in German, French, Spanish and English. The "swap" element involves online chat between pupils of two different languages; they spend the first 10 minutes speaking, say, Spanish, and switch to English for the next 10.

PREVIOUS NEWS

Army not using, sustaining language skills: GAO

(Army Times)...Joe Gould

The Army and Marine Corps do a poor job of tracking how much language and cultural training troops have received, leaving commanders in the dark when it comes time to assign soldiers with these skills, the Government Accountability Office has found. The two services also spend millions of dollars to train troops to speak foreign languages in predeployment training, but the Army and Marine Corps lack plans to sustain these skills and use them for ongoing operations, the congressional watchdog agency said.

Lawrence soldier earns medal

(Eagle-Tribune)...Mark E. Vogler

U.S. Army Cpl. Angel Rodriguez of Lawrence was recently awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his work with Afghan people as a member of a provincial reconstruction team in the Khost Province of Afghanistan. Rodriguez considers the most interesting aspect of his initiative is working in small, five-member groups gathering information and building rapport with the Afghan locals in small villages throughout Khost Province. He cited the language and cultural barriers as the biggest challenge. Most PRT members rely on the local and U.S. linguists or interpreters, but Rodriguez has begun learning the Afghan dialect of Pashto.

Polyglot dragon: What the PLA's language school says about China's strategic direction

(Armed Forces Journal)...Scott J. Henderson

China watchers searching for clues to Beijing's strategic direction generally look for changes in government policy, diplomatic liaisons or force realignment. Here's another useful indicator: language training. When global ambitions push a nation beyond the boundaries of its homeland and away from its native language, a state designs and invests in foreign language training. If China peers out across the operational environment and determines, for example, that Central Asia or African energy reserves are top priorities, we would expect to see resources allocated for training personnel in the applicable languages and dialects. The institute's 2011 curriculum reveals an interest in Iranian and Middle East politics amid programs of study in 26 languages.

Bringing languages to life in the classroom

(The Guardian)...John Tanner

The uptake of modern foreign languages in UK schools is continuing to decline, yet in an increasingly multicultural society and global marketplace the skills developed through language learning are more important for young people than ever. So how can language teachers get young people engaged in

languages again? One of the main barriers for pupils choosing their subject options is a question of relevance. How does learning French/German/Spanish relate to their lives and how will it benefit them as individuals? This relevance will be different for each individual and for each class but it is important that all language teachers acknowledge this barrier and that they can work within the confines of the curriculum to enhance the relevance for their class.

Students enjoy learning about language, culture by studying abroad

(North Georgia)

Five North Georgia College & State University students are enjoying their experiences studying abroad this semester as they find themselves immersed in different cultures and languages. Hundreds of North Georgia students likewise have studied abroad, helping to fulfill the university's strategic vision -- educating students for life and leadership in a global community. This week, North Georgia marks International Education Week, an annual event conceived by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education to promote a global perspective in American education and encourage institutions to emphasize the importance of international education and exchange.

Dual-language university to open its doors in Wheaton

(Maryland Community News Online) ...Aaron Kraut

Raul Medrano said there were days recently when 15 to 20 people would walk into his temporary office at the Westfield Wheaton Shopping Center and ask about the dual-language university planned for the vacant space left by Circuit City. In Wheaton, a community with a large Hispanic population, the desire for degree programs geared toward working Spanish-speaking adults was evident before the official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Ana G. Mendez University, which Medrano will oversee as campus director. Officials hope the school, one of four U.S. branches of the Puerto Rico-based university system, helps students advance their careers with bachelor's or master's degrees, while also improving their English skills.

More foreign students studying in USA

(USA Today) ...Mary Beth Marklein

International students and their dependents contributed more than \$20 billion to the U.S. economy last year as record numbers of foreigners enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities, reports to be released today show. The numbers of U.S. students earning college credit abroad also is on the rise. The number of international students at U.S. colleges and universities rose 4.7% to 723,277 during the 2010-11 academic year, says an annual report by the Institute of International Education (IIE), which has tracked data since 1949.

Air Force launches cutting-edge culture & language website

(Af.mil)

The Air Force Culture and Language Center, part of Air University's Spaatz Center here, recently launched a new public website to provide information on the Air Force's efforts to increase cross-cultural competence -- a critical warfighting skill cited by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta in an August memorandum to all Defense Department personnel. "Both military and civilian personnel should have cross-cultural training to successfully work in DOD's richly diverse organization and to better understand the global environment in which we operate," the secretary wrote. The site, www.culture.af.mil, highlights all AFCLC departments and programs, including free courses that provide Community College of the Air Force credit for Airmen and other cross-cultural competence media resources. Additional training and educational resources are offered to DOD members through the AFCLC's private site, at <https://wwwmil.maxwell.af.mil/afclc/>, which requires users to have a Common Access Card and be on a .mil or .gov server

Former World Bank chief calls for stiffer foreign language requirements in Wyoming

(Billings Gazette) ...Jeremy Pelzer

Wyoming's foreign language requirements are insufficient to prepare students for an increasingly globalized world, former World Bank president James Wolfensohn said during the Wyoming Business Alliance's annual forum Tuesday. Wolfensohn, who lives in Jackson Hole, said as China and India are becoming major economic powers, future generations need to know Mandarin and other languages to be

successful in the coming decades. China and India have each sent more than 100,000 students to the United States to learn about American culture and language, he said. But only 13,000 American students are studying in China, he said, and only 3,000 have gone to India.

Foreign languages 'essential for our children's future'

(The Financial)

As International Education Week 2011 gets underway, the British Council is highlighting the vital role of foreign languages in preparing children in the UK for life in a global society and work in a global economy. The UK's cultural relations body – which builds relationships for the UK through education, English and the arts – is underlining the important role played by languages in improving understanding of other cultures, which is essential if our children are to be able to compete in an increasingly internationalised world of work. Foreign languages also make a valuable contribution to children's intellectual development.