

# LANGUAGE & CULTURE WEEKLY

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## US MILITARY'S LANGUAGE SCHOOL DRAWS POSITIVE ATTENTION

The U.S. Defense Language Institute, or DLI, is one of the largest language schools in the world. It was established to provide linguistic and cultural instruction to the Defense Department and other Federal Agencies. Today, the Institute's Foreign Language Center [DLIFLC] has 26 Language Training Detachments, supporting different types of missions worldwide.

It is hard to believe that the young U.S. military service members at the school are speaking the most difficult language in the world - Mandarin - fluently.

They're among about 3,500 students who are learning 24 different languages at

the Defense Language Institute's Foreign Language Center - located in Monterey, California, a small city on the edge of the Pacific Ocean.

"The length of courses may range from six months for a language that is a fairly easy language for a speaker of English to learn, to 15 months for the languages like Arabic, Chinese, Korean and Japanese." said Dr. Donald Fischer.



## ARABIC LANGUAGE GRANT TO FOCUS ON ROTC ENRICHMENT

An innovative and rigorous Arabic language learning and cultural enrichment program debuts this fall to enhance the skills of future military officers at the University of Arizona.

The new UA Arabic language learning program is funded through [Project Global Offi-](#)

[cers](#), known as Project GO, a Department of Defense initiative, funded by the Defense Language and National Security Education Office, aimed at improving the language competency, re-

gional expertise and intercultural communication skills of future military officers.



**U.S. ARMY CADETS EARN FOREIGN JUMP WINGS**

Foreign jump wings are a prized possession. But when you are an Army ROTC Cadet, to wear foreign jump wings before you are even commissioned is rare.

More than 20 ROTC Cadets from colleges across the U.S. traveled to Spain in May as part of the U.S. Army ROTC's Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency program. Their mis-

sion was to teach Spanish soldiers conversational English. The additional plus for the Cadets was being able to jump with the Spanish airborne and earn their foreign jump wings.

For the Cadets, this trip was part of a historical mission because U.S Army Cadets had never been to Spain to train with the Spanish army--until now. And Cadets had

never jumped with a foreign military.

In response, Spanish soldiers jumped with the Cadets, who were accompanied by U.S. airborne instructors, and earned their U.S. jump wings.



**CUOMO SIGNS BILL RECOGNIZING STUDENT PROFICIENT IN LANGUAGES**

A new bill was signed Wednesday that will recognize New York State high school graduates who demonstrate academic excellence in proficiency of one or more languages other than English with a state seal.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the bill Wednesday that will put a state seal of biliteracy that will be attached to diplomas and transcripts of graduates who excel in listening, speaking, reading and writ-

ing in multiple languages.

“New York state should recognize the outstanding achievements of our students who have dedicated themselves to learning different languages,” said Governor Cuomo in a statement.

“Acknowledging those students who have pushed themselves to do their very best and learn another lan-

guage will provide them with an advantage when dealing with future employers and academic institutions. New York is a richly diverse state and these students are doing their part to ensure that we remain an active member of the global community. I thank Senator Robach and Assemblywoman Arroyo for their hard work on this legislation.”

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**JAPANESE UNIVERSITIES GO GLOBAL, BUT SLOWLY**

Takuya Niiyama, a sophomore at [Akita International University](#), dreams of becoming an international tourism operator promoting the northern Japanese prefecture of Akita, leveraging his hard-earned language skills and a network of international

students he befriended on campus.

Mr. Niiyama, who is from Akita, hopes that the university's mandated one-year overseas exchange program will help him achieve his goal.

“I need to acquire solid

English skills,” he said.

“And I knew that an ordinary Japanese university would not prep me for that.”

### Policy shift riles English advocates: Health insurance board switches from bilingual to 'en français' at service centre

Quebecers will face a French comprehension test before being served in English at the provincial health insurance board, which recently switched its communication policy from bilingual to "en français" at its customer service centre.

The move by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) to

revise its communications to comply with Bill 101, the province's French-first language policy, worries minority-rights advocates.

In the wake of five complaints related to RAMQ's language restrictions, a provincial English-language advocacy group says the policy will hurt patients seeking crucial health

information, for example about medical therapies, psychiatric treatments or specific drug coverage for cancer and other illnesses.

### LANGUAGE POLICY LETS PUPILS DOWN

In South Africa, children are exposed to their language of instruction far too late and for too few hours a week, which cripples their learning.

South Africa's language in education policy tries to meet two demands at once — "maintaining multilingualism and gaining access

to global markets", but children are only exposed to the language of instruction relatively late and for a few hours a week.

"In grade four, we expect our children to learn in a foreign language that

they have barely acquired and we suddenly begin to teach them maths, sciences and other subjects in English," Dampier said.



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### AFTER 53 ROUNDS, NATIONAL SPANISH SPELLING BEE ENDS IN A DRAW

After eliminating more than a dozen other competitors, two New Mexico students went round, after round, after round in a heads-up duel to win the national title in Spanish spelling before judges finally declared them co-champions.

National champions in Span-

ish spelling, you ask?

Indeed. Earlier this month, the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education and the Alliance for Multilingual Multicultural Education organized and hosted the second annual national Spanish-language spelling bee in Albuquerque, N.M. Fifth grader

Judith Villa and 8th grader Joana Fernandez, both from New Mexico, shared the title of top speller for 2012 after organizers ran out of words for them to spell, according to [NBC Latino](#).