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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

[Language, Culture, and Army Culture: Failing Transformation](#)

(Small Wars Journal)...Col Richard Outzen
COL Outzen puts forth a compelling plea for the Army to pay more attention to promoting language proficiency. The other services are similarly lacking in these fields. Although individual program managers are creating some bright spots, the truth is that poor personnel management and the burden of one-size-fits-all training preclude many servicemembers from attaining true professionalism in their fields.

[Kazakh language instructor learns new methods](#)

(DLIFLC)...Sgt. 1st Class Rebecca Doucette



In the military, one comes to expect the unexpected, and an exchange between military schools in Kazakhstan and California is no

different. Every year, a handful of language instructors from the Kazakhstan Military Institute of Foreign Language visit the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) to learn about the latest technology and methods for teaching foreign languages. The Kazakhstan Institute is Kazakhstan the equivalent to a combination of DLIFLC and the United States Military Academy. Since 2008, the partnership between DLIFLC and the Kazakhstan Institute has flourished through annual faculty visits and the enrollment of Kazakh cadets in DLI's English Language Center at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

[McClellan: In a dark conflict, area Marine shines](#)

(St. Louis Today)...Bill McClellan
Quran burnings and a massacre from our side, suicide bombings from their side, political gamesmanship from all corners. But even in the middle of a mess, some people perform admirably. Like Marine Corps Sgt. David Chambers. He's a linguist. He is trained in Pashto, which is the

language of most Afghans and, more importantly, the language of the Taliban. Chambers is a team leader and senior linguist on a Signals Support Team for the 1st Radio Battalion. Chambers was translating enemy communications when his position came under fire and he was shot in the hip. After being hit, David Chambers continued translating enemy broadcasts. David's humility wouldn't allow him to write himself up for an award he may deserve. Medals and accolades mean nothing to him.

DOMESTIC

[U.S. Education Reform and National Security](#)

(Council on Foreign Relations)...Condoleezza Rice & Joel I. Klein

"Educational failure puts the United States' future economic prosperity, global position, and physical safety at risk," warns the Task Force, chaired by Joel I. Klein, former head of New York City public schools, and Condoleezza Rice, former U.S. secretary of state. Although the United States is a nation of immigrants, roughly eight in ten Americans speak only English and a decreasing number of schools are teaching foreign languages. In international tests of literacy, math, and science, American students rank far below the world's leaders in Finland, South Korea, and Shanghai. They spend fewer years studying a more limited range of foreign languages than students in most other wealthy countries and just 1.4 percent of them study abroad, mostly in Europe.

[Irish language flows again in U.S. as heritage makes comeback](#)

(Washington Post/Seattle Times)...Daniel de Vise
Irish, or Irish Gaelic, has resurfaced as a subject of scholarship in American classrooms and social conversation groups after gradually disappearing from everyday vernacular in pubs and homes. The Hibernian tongue, once at the brink of extinction, is enjoying a modest revival. A 2009 survey by the Modern Language Association found enrollment in Irish-language classes in the United States numbered 409 students, compared with 278 in 1998, 58 in 1990 and 28 in 1980. Classes at Catholic University drew 18 students this year and 20 last year, the largest enrollments in recent memory.

[Adventures of a Teenage Polyglot](#)

(New York Times)...John Leland

SOME people pick up a little Hebrew before their bar mitzvahs, or learn Spanish from their mothers,



or can speak some Japanese from a semester abroad. Timothy Doner, 16, is not one of those people. In the fall of 2009, after studying for his bar mitzvah, he decided he wanted to learn modern Hebrew, so he continued with his tutor, engaging in long dialogues about Israeli politics. Then he felt drawn to learn Arabic. Then he dived into Russian, Italian, Persian, Swahili, Indonesian, Hindi, Ojibwe, Pashto, Turkish, Hausa, Kurdish, Yiddish, Dutch, Croatian and German, teaching himself mostly from grammar books and flash card applications on his [iPhone](#). This in addition to a more formal study of French, Latin and Mandarin at the Dalton School, where he is a sophomore.

INTERNATIONAL

[French Language teaching revolutionized in Tanzania](#)

(IppMedia.com)...Rodgers Luhwago

The government of France has taken a step further



in an effort to improve the teaching and learning of French Language in the country by introducing a new system

whereby teachers and students will now use Information Technology (IT) system and audio visual material in teaching and learning the international language. The new method of teaching and learning the language has been made possible in Tanzania schools and colleges after the French Republic through its embassy in Dar es Salaam began supplying TV sets, computers and printers to each school and college teaching French Language.

[Bridging grass roots language gap in Nigeria](#)

(Punch)...Ayodeji Alabi

Language is logically a means of social communication and interaction. Both society and

community are developed by social learning; and a nation consists of people who have learnt to communicate with each other and to understand each other well beyond the interchange of goods and services. The rationale for an official language for Nigeria has gone beyond the realm of arguments. The choice of 'English' as the nation's official language was done out of necessity. Also, with a variety of English -Pidgin English - it is easy for Nigeria to have a 'common language', which can easily help build unity amongst Nigerians at the grass roots level. Will our leaders consider 'officially adopting' this option as a means of bridging the grassroots language gap in Nigeria?

OPINION

[Why Bilinguals Are Smarter](#)

(New York Times)...Yudhijit Bhattacharjee

SPEAKING two languages rather than just one has obvious practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. But in recent years, scientists have begun to show that the advantages of bilingualism are even more fundamental than being able to converse with a wider range of people. Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age. The collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests that the bilingual experience improves the brain's so-called executive function — a command system that directs the attention processes that we use for planning, solving problems and performing various other mentally demanding tasks.