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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 1 OCTOBER 2010**

#### **'Onus is on the Administration' to Make Language Changes Work**

The Board of Education recently adopted changes to its language coursework that affects how elementary school students are instructed while trying to preserve the goal of exposing kids to foreign language at a young age—which educators say is necessary for maximum retention. "We tried to build the curriculum with a very novel approach," said Dr. Jessica Anspach, in her first year as the district's curriculum director. That approach asks classroom teachers at the elementary schools to incorporate cultural lessons within their plans to make up for the loss of dedicated, once-a-week instruction in Spanish. It's a challenge largely owed to the 2010-11 budget, which featured spending and program cuts before it was further reduced after voters rejected its tax levy at the polls.

#### **Afghan Culture Lessons Help U.S. Troops in Afghanistan**

A select number of servicemembers are learning ways to become experts in Afghan culture through the Afghan Hands Program. "We don't land in Afghanistan as experts, but the vision is that we become Afghan experts and then be[come] able to assimilate into this culture and develop relationships that just aren't possible with the short-duration deployments that we've traditionally had," Navy Capt. Russell McLachlan, the program's manager, said during a recent "DoDLive" Bloggers Roundtable. The mission of the Afghan Hands program, he said, is to build long-lasting, positive partnerships with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Afghan entities, and civilians, in order to demonstrate the long-term commitment of the International Security Assistance Force. The program, he added, is viewed as a method to build trust with the Afghan military and local populations in Afghanistan.

#### **Civil affairs Soldiers bring diverse skills to Laghman PRT**

U.S. Army Maj. Carlos Martinez of Walla Walla, Wash., the Laghman PRT operations officer and a Civil Affairs-branched Foreign Area Officer by trade, said CA is critical to keeping the PRT connected to the population. "The reason I think they're important is because civil affairs is the one entity that ties the civilian population to the commander," Martinez said. "They are our cultural experts and our liaison with the population; they facilitate the perspective we need as a reconstruction team, and that is critical to our mission."

#### **EU Languages and Language policy**

The European Commission has joined forces with Member State governments, the European Parliament, the European regions and social partners in order to: 1) Give citizens the chance of learning two languages in addition to their mother tongue from an early age; 2) Create friendlier societies, where different communities and individuals engage in dialogue with one another; and 3) Strengthen the role of languages in improving employability and competitiveness. These objectives are the backbone of 'multilingualism policy'. This section presents the activities the Commission has undertaken in these fields. To achieve its medium to long-term objectives the Commission promotes multilingualism throughout the whole range of its policies and programmes, providing an impulse for Member States, local authorities and social partners to take action at their level. In 2012 the Commission will review the progress that has been made.

#### **Learning Languages Online - Verbalplanet.com Brings Learning a Foreign Language to Life with Skype VOIP Telephony**

The Best Way to Learn a Foreign Language Is, of Course, Immersion or Living Where the Language is Spoken. For the Vast Majority of Learners That's Simply Not Possible, but Now Thanks to

Verbalplanet.com's Unique Web Based System to Learning a Language, Anyone Can Enjoy the Next Best Thing with a One to One Online Language Course with a Personal Language Teacher Via Skype, the Leading Internet Telephony Service.

### **Foreign language department teaches students about culture**

The foreign language department allows students to understand different cultures while they learn a new language. Providing students with the basic communication skills needed in French, German, Portuguese or Spanish, the department is able to assist students in ascertaining a variety of careers. The department offers majors in German, French and Spanish. "The emphasis within the major is on culture, literature, linguistics, and more preparation for professions, such as Spanish for business or Spanish for health professions," said Department Chair and Associate Professor Greta Trautmann.

### **SinoPlus bridges language gap with China**

In 2007, a Statistics Canada study found that Canadians of Chinese origin make up the largest non-European ethnic group in the country, with the majority of them arriving in Canada relatively recently. Most of them live in Ontario and British Columbia, with smaller communities in Quebec and other provinces. Tam's company works with employers who are seeking Chinese employees in Montreal to help liaise with their company operations in China. For example, some local employers in the Montreal garment industry have asked her to help find Mandarin-speaking employees to deal with pattern makers, fabric design, merchandising and clothing makers in their Chinese factories.

### **Publication of Chinese-Latvian Dictionary is first step in creation of new Confucius Institute**

The newly-published "Chinese-Latvian Dictionary", created by Peteris Pildegovics of the University of Latvia's Asian Studies Department, is the first step in the creation of a Confucius Institute in Riga, LETA was told by University of Latvia Rector Marcis Auzins. The "Chinese-Latvian Dictionary" is a great investment in both education and in the future cooperation between the two countries. There is already great interest in studying Oriental languages among students of the University of Latvia, and the new dictionary will not only be a great help to those learning Chinese, but may also further increase the interest of the general public in Chinese language and culture.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

**[HTTP://WWW.MILITARYTIMESEDGE.COM/ADVANCEMENT/CAREER-DEVELOPMENT/ED STRAT LANGUAGE 100410S/](http://www.militarytimesedge.com/advancement/career-development/ed_strat_language_100410s/)**

**OR**

**[HTTP://TINYURL.COM/2ANWP23](http://tinyurl.com/2anwp23)**

- Language skills pay now (\$300-\$1,000 per month)
- Language skills pay later (research suggests that workers who speak a second language average \$10,000 a year more in annual income)
- Language skills set you apart
- Language training is often F-R-E-E

## **BILL WOULD WATER DOWN CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

For years, business and government leaders and education planners have argued for fortifying foreign-language training in public schools, both as a tool in a global economy and as a skill in a diverse society. But a bill on Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's desk would allow districts to water down the one provision California now has regarding second-language and art education.

## [GATES OFFERS DUKE ROTC CADETS LEADERSHIP LESSONS](#)

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates returned to the lectern today, thanking about 300 ROTC Cadets at Duke University here for choosing to serve in uniform during wartime, and offering some leadership lessons to take along to the Field and Fleet. He encouraged them to consider alternative learning experiences to enhance their military education and training: going on to graduate school, becoming foreign area officers, trying a stint as a think tank Fellow, or serving in other branches of government. "All these experiences will make you a more successful military officer in the 21st century," he told the cadets.

## [FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT TEACHES STUDENTS ABOUT CULTURE](#)

Bringing the experience of learning language outside of the classroom helps students to grasp the cultural aspects of a region, according to Bailey. "Apart from the mechanical importance of struggling with the tools to express yourself in another language, I don't think that you're ever going to be able to appreciate or understand the cultural, historical or literary expressions of a place without having struggled with it somewhere else," Trautmann said.

## [LINGUIST SALARIES IN TYSONS CORNER, VA | Indeed.com](#)

Very eye (and wallet) opening figures (\$57,000-\$271,000 range).

## [LANGUAGE IDENTIFIER FREEWARE](#)

Have you ever come across documents or websites and not known what language it is written in? The Lextek Language Identifier is capable of identifying not only what language it is written in but also its character encoding and what other languages are most similar. This will alleviate your wondering of what languages you are working with or looking at. An easy to use interface gives you the ability to quickly and easily identify the language of your documents. Simply paste the text in question into the Language Identifier's text window and press the Identify Button. The language identifier will analyze the text you have provided and tell you which language matches and which other languages most closely match. Snapfiles.Com tested it with several languages and always received correct results.

## [Eurostat: Every third EU citizen says he fluently speaks foreign language](#)

All pupils in elementary schools in Spain, Italy, Luxemburg and Sweden study at least one foreign language at school, EU statistical service Eurostat announced on the occasion of the European Day of Languages, cited by **Interfax**. "About 79% of pupils in elementary schools and 83% of pupils at secondary schools in the EU had studied foreign language in 2008. Besides this 30% of adult EU citizens said they fluently speak at least one foreign language", press release of the service announced.

## [California ranks high in languages, housing costs, commutes](#)

Data released yesterday by the U.S. Census Bureau show California leading the nation in at least two areas: linguistic diversity and housing costs. The state also ranks highly in longest commute times. In California, 43.1 percent of residents age 5 and older spoke a [language other than English](#) at home in 2009 – the highest percentage of any state. Of those people, two out of three [spoke Spanish](#). Nationwide, 20 percent spoke a foreign language at home, with 12.4 percent being Spanish.

## [Replacing Teachers With Technology](#)

At Ironia Elementary School in Randolph, New Jersey Spanish class means a visit to the computer lab. Students complete their lessons individually, murmuring into microphones to work on their pronunciation. A classroom teacher is on hand to supervise and help with technical support, but the language learning comes from Rosetta Stone, an interactive computer program. Randolph is one of several districts in the state cutting elementary foreign language teachers due to budget cuts. Owen Snyder, Randolph Superintendent of Schools says that before the cut the township only had money in the budget for two foreign language teachers to work in all the elementary schools. Each class got half an hour a week of

Spanish language instruction. Now, with Rosetta Stone the students get regular lessons and the district saves nearly \$100,000.

### **[Sing-A-Lingo Supports the Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act \(H.R 6036\)](#)**

A bill, called The Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act (H.R. 6036), recently introduced into congress draws on what language experts have known for a long time: children are efficient language learners-- the earlier the better. This bill links our nation's underperforming k-12 language programs with risks to our national security and economic future. Sing-A-Lingo, whose award-winning products help children, parents and teachers bring language to young children, is proud to support this bill.

### **[Afghanistan adds female officers to swelling army](#)**

Afghanistan's army got its first female officers in decades on Thursday when 29 women graduated in a class of new recruits who hope to help take the lead role in national security from foreign forces by 2014. President Hamid Karzai, NATO and the United States have been pushing to expand and train Afghanistan's army, police and other security forces to allow them to take over during a planned drawdown of foreign troops. "I am fully committed to serving my country, the same way as my Afghan brothers currently serving in the army. That is why I decided to join," said female officer Mari Sharifi after the graduation ceremony at the Kabul Army Training Centre.

### **[Award-winning teacher shares passion for language](#)**

"My students constantly remind me of the value of language learning," Harkins said. "The ability to communicate with others is the single greatest skill which unites the human race. My students find joy in simple greetings to total strangers in another language."

### **[Kindergarten Teacher Launches Free Site to Introduce Children to Five Different Languages](#)**

A new Web site called Chillola.com is giving parents a fun, safe learning environment where their kids can explore different languages. Chillola.com employs a playful, child-oriented theme to introduce children to five languages: English, Spanish, French, German and Italian. "Chillola.com is designed to give children all over the world the opportunity to explore foreign languages, and learn about different countries, cultures and people," said Tina Jack, a California-based kindergarten teacher who owns the Web site.

### **[Military Specialists Aim to Improve Cultural Understanding](#)**

The specialists will build on their existing language skills and cultural understanding by gathering local knowledge and fostering contacts at bazaars, shuras and other places where local people gather. At full strength, the unit will have forty two members and is open to all trades in the three Services and will also support cultural training in the wider military and other government departments.

### **[Training the Troops 'Hyperrealistically'](#)**

After she retired in 2005, she and her husband, Leroy, who is also a retired Army veteran, decided to form a business that did just that — provide the most realistic cultural awareness and military training to troops being transferred to these two inhospitable parts of the world. The key element missing from the Army's training was a more realistic approach to what soldiers should expect along with a cultural awareness and rudimentary language skills that could give them an edge in their mission, she said. To accomplish that, the Latshaws enlisted native Iraqi people to play residents of an authentically simulated Iraqi village.