
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

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Being Bilingual May Boost Your Brain Power

The idea that children exposed to two languages from birth become confused or that they fall behind monolingual children is a common misconception, says Janet Werker, a psychologist at the University of British Columbia who studies language acquisition in bilingual babies. "Growing up bilingual is just as natural as growing up monolingual," said Werker, whose own research indicates babies of bilingual mothers can distinguish between languages even hours after birth.

Public schools woo foreign students to boost ranks

Northern Maine is 7,000 miles and a world away from China, but that's not stopping a school superintendent from recruiting Chinese students to attend public high school in this remote mill town. Faced with declining enrollments and shrinking revenues, public school districts from Maine to California are seeking out students from overseas, particularly China, to attend their high schools. At least two public schools in Maine have 10 tuition-paying Chinese students in classes this year, and the superintendent in Millinocket is the latest to set his sights on China. It's a growing trend: Other schools are doing the same in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Ohio, Virginia and Washington, according to a student recruitment agency in San Francisco.

Learning a language can translate into success

"Fluency in a foreign language involves a skill set that is now very important to many employers, especially those who require their employees to travel overseas," says Kathy Mahnke, director of the Center for World Languages and Cultures at the University of Denver. "Being able to communicate in a colleague's native tongue helps business negotiations, (and) social interactions with that colleague go much more smoothly than does working through a translator. There are just some cultural aspects of communication that do not translate well."

Salinas students aim to receive Seal of Bilingualism

Wynona Buco and Nayeli Bravo are in front of the classroom, trying to overcome squirms and giggles to perform a scene from "The Little Prince." "S'il vous pla't, dessine-moi un mouton," Nayeli reads from a notecard with a good French accent and a soft voice. Draw me a sheep. They are in the French class of Leslie Long, who has taught at Everett Alvarez High School since 1996. Like many of her colleagues who teach language, Long is glad to see the Salinas Unified School District has found a way to reward bilingual — in some cases, multilingual — students. A statewide program making its way into Monterey County is aiming to honor as many of the bilingual students as possible.

Multi-Language Capabilities Help Manage K-12 Demographic Shift

Unprecedented [demographic shifts](#) in the U.S. are creating a communications gap between teachers, principals, and the students and families they serve. According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), minorities will become the majority of children under 18 by 2023. All these trends will require profound changes in parent engagement and school communication.

American Sign Language as a Foreign Language

In recent years, a number of states have passed legislation recognizing American Sign Language (ASL) as a foreign language and permitting high schools and universities to accept it in fulfillment of foreign language requirements for hearing as well as deaf students. As of July 1997, 28 states had passed such legislation, and several community colleges and universities (including Brown, Georgetown, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Purdue, and the University of Washington) accept ASL as a foreign language for academic or elective credit.

PREVIOUS NEWS

Marjah district governor meets with female elected officials, Marines

The district governor of Marjah, Abdul Mutalib, met with three female members of Helmand's Provincial Council and a member of the Department of Women's Affairs, April 2, to discuss ways local government can help the women of Marjah. Razia Baluch, Malika Helmandi and Karima, all elected officials with the Provincial Council serving four-year terms, and Sharifa, an employee with the Department of Women's Affairs, flew to Marjah from Lashkar Gah alongside Marines from the Female Engagement Team 11-1, II Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group (Forward).

CIA Director Panetta Honors Excellence in Foreign Language

In a ceremony held last week at CIA Headquarters, Director Leon E. Panetta presented the Foreign Language Excellence Award to an undercover senior officer who used his near-native fluency in three languages to run operations overseas in the past year. Established in 2008, the award recognizes the exceptional use of languages by Agency officers and reflects the CIA's emphasis on increasing the foreign language skills of its workforce.

Love of languages, cultures guided new UI director

Growing up, Russell Ganim's parents spoke Spanish whenever they wanted to keep a secret from their children. That spurred Ganim to study the language, which in turn developed into a love for other languages and cultures. Ganim, 50, now speaks Spanish and French, and after spending the last 18 years as a French professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, he will become the director of the University of Iowa's newly merged Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures on July 1. He will oversee a unit that will include all 16 languages offered at UI.

CSUS reports increase in foreign language study

The Connecticut State University System says the number of students taking foreign language classes has jumped nearly 10 percent. The university system says the number of courses offered in Chinese has doubled in recent years and classes have also been added in Japanese, Arabic, Portuguese, Hebrew, and Russian.

Native American Language Fair

This morning more than 600 students showcased their Native American language skills in the largest language fair in the nation. The two day event at the Sam Noble Museum in Norman brings together as many as 25 different tribes and 23 native languages. Students compete in a variety of categories including spoken word, song, book, poster and more modern power point and film video categories. The language fair brings students from Pre-K through 12th grade and from across the state of Oklahoma and other states.

UAE Army trains its soldiers to speak Farsi

The UAE Army is training a new cadre of soldiers to speak Farsi in hopes their language program will continue the process of smoothing relations between the UAE and Iran. The desire is for the students to understand the language and culture of the biggest country in the Middle East to reduce the chance for conflict with Iran.

Urdu enters the digital age

Computer scientists at the University of Buffalo and at Janya Inc. have developed the first software system that will allow for computational processing of documents in Urdu, Pakistan's national language and one of the world's five most-spoken languages.

Language and Culture Go Together

Be patient with immigrants to the U.S. who are trying to assimilate and learn the English language and American culture. Instead of impatience we should show respect for the person's efforts to become more fluent.

1st ANGLICO Marines prepare to converse with ANA

1st ANGLICO Marines will embed into Afghan National Army units and communicate with the local population as part of their mission to coordinate naval gunfire and close-air support to coalition forces. To do this, the Marines are learning Dari as part of a six-week long pre-deployment training evolution that concludes April 14.

The BBC's Foreign Language Services have been sacrificed to budget cuts – a profound loss for Britain

On March 22nd, many of the BBC Radio Foreign Language Services were silenced as part of the British government's budget cuts. No longer will the BBC talk on the airwaves in Russian, Hindi, Mandarin, Turkish, Vietnamese, Azeri, Ukrainian, Albanian, Cuban-Spanish, Portuguese-African, Serbian, or Macedonian.

UMass Prof makes it her mission to help keep Navajo language alive

Peggy Speas a veteran linguist at the University of Massachusetts is making efforts to help preserve the Navajo language. She is a founding member of the Navajo Language Academy, which is a group that works with teachers and linguists to further language instruction in the Navajo Nation (reservation) in Arizona and New Mexico and in a variety of regional colleges.

Wisconsin National Guard members selected for all-female Special Forces team

Four Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldiers have been selected for the Female Engagement Team, an all female supporting Army Special Combat forces by interacting with local women in combat zones. "It took a lot of resilience, solid work ethic and teamwork," Elegeert said, adding that these same principles will be needed to prepare for the upcoming mission. "Gaining maximum mental awareness and physical strength is a must," she said. It was the most difficult and challenging thing I have done in my entire 25-plus years in the military," Dumke said. "I believe it was basically an abbreviated version of what the males must go through in order to be selected to enter the Special Forces." Army Sgt. Sonia Buchanan of the Wisconsin Joint Force Headquarters said there was no feedback during the assessment process until the final day.

UK Female Engagement Teams prepare for deployment to Afghanistan

Last week twenty-two female soldiers received training from the Military Stabilisation Support Group (MSSG) and the Stabilisation Unit in preparation for their deployment as part of a Female Engagement Team (FET). Five civilian experts also attended, two of whom will deploy to Helmand as Stabilisation Advisors in a couple of weeks time. FETs are made up of female soldiers and have been developed to enable the military to better engage with communities in Afghanistan.

Chinese score low in English proficiency test

Chinese have poor English skills despite their huge efforts in language training, according to a study released today. China ranks only the 29th in the English Proficiency Index, a lower range, and behind Asian rivals such as Malaysia, Japan and South Korea. Test-oriented, rote learning habits did not give Chinese students the real language skills, education experts said. The EPI report was based on a free online English test participated by 2 million adults from 44 countries and regions where English is not the native language.