

# LANGUAGE & CULTURE WEEKLY

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## Olympics perfect platform to boost language learning

(Public Service Europe)...Humair Naqvi

London 2012 brought together more than 10,000 athletes from 205 countries to compete in the world's greatest sporting event. These sportsmen and women and the nations that they represented were united by their Olympic dream, but perhaps somewhat divided by linguistic barriers. Although this was such a pivotal moment in London's history, it would appear that

British citizens were ill-prepared to fully take advantage of the opportunity to meet and make friends with the vast array of visitors from abroad.



The Olympic stadium is a melting pot of different languages, overarched by the universal language that is sport, making London 2012

the perfect springboard for international confluence. The games demonstrate that people from all over the world share common interests and dreams, rendering language disparities an artificial obstacle to meeting new people and engaging with visitors.

However, the benefits of acquiring a new language extend far beyond the Olympics; in a global working world, it is increasingly important to be fluent in a foreign language.

## AIRMAN CONTINUES FAMILY MILITARY TRADITION THROUGH LANGUAGE STUDY

(DLIFLC)...Devon Swanson

Airman 1st Class Christian Miltersen not only won a recent Chinese speech contest, sits at the top of his Chinese class at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, and holds a 4.0 GPA,

he is also fourth generation military, and second generation linguist. Christian always had an interest in language, and knows bits of French, German, and Russian, but perhaps one of his biggest language inspirations was to follow in the

footsteps of his father, Robert Miltersen, who graduated from DLIFLC's Chinese Basic Course in 1994.



**DEFENSE DEPARTMENT GRANT ADDS CHINESE INSTRUCTION AT LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOL**

(Beaufort Tribune)...Jim Foster

The Defense Language and National Security Education Office, part of the US Department of Defense, has awarded a \$256,200 grant to the Beaufort County School District to offer Mandarin Chinese instruction at Robert Smalls Middle School.

The grant will fund Project CLIMB, the Critical Language Initiative in Mandarin in Beaufort. Nearly 25 percent of the 475 students at Robert Smalls Middle come from military-connected families.

Superintendent Valerie Truesdale said the Defense Department grant was timely because Congress

recently cut its financial support for foreign language programs.

“With countries and cultures more closely connected every day, it’s vitally important for students to have access to quality foreign language programs at all stages of their educations,” Truesdale said.



**ARMY ADAPTS TO POST-AFGHANISTAN MISSION**

(Military.com)...Matthew Cox



In 2014 the plan is to have at least two regionally-

aligned BCTs, one in AF-RICOM and another added to U.S. Pacific Command.

These year-long regional assignments will give brigade level units “a lot of focus for train-

ing and leader development,” Army officials have

said.

“You are doing real-world intel, you are learning other languages, you are learning another culture,” Smith said. “So it doesn’t really matter where I send you to operate after that. At least you are not stuck on just knowing your own culture.”

Bilingual children outperform children who only speak one language in problem-solving skills and creative thinking, according to research led at the University of Strathclyde.

**BILINGUALISM ‘CAN INCREASE MENTAL AGILITY’**

(University of Strathclyde Glasgow)

Bilingual children outperform children who only speak one language in problem-solving skills and creative thinking, according to research led at the University of Strathclyde. A study of primary school pupils who spoke English or Ital-

ian- half of whom also spoke Gaelic or Sardinian- found that the bilingual children were significantly more successful in the tasks set for them. The Gaelic-speaking children were, in turn, more successful than the Sardinian speakers. The differences were linked to

the mental alertness required to switch between languages, which could develop skills useful in other types of thinking. The further advantage for Gaelic-speaking children may have been due to the formal teaching of the language.



## TEACHERS IMMERSE IN LANGUAGES

(The News Journal)...Andrew Staub

As Delaware embarks upon an ambitious plan to enroll nearly 8,000 students in language-immersion programs by 2020, the teachers tasked with guiding them in their bilingual studies started by considering a simple question.

If a Martian landed on

Earth, how would they describe a circus to him?

Part of a four-day professional institute for about a dozen visiting teachers from Spain and China, the exercise aimed to prompt a discussion of how language proficiency grows over time, said Lynn Fulton-Archer, an education specialist for the World Lan-

guage Immersion program. While some teachers could use only one word to describe a circus, others could build upon that with an adjective or a full sentence. It's illustrative of the progression state education officials would love to see from the more than 340 kindergartener who will dive into foreign languages this year.



Gov. Jack Markell speaks with Yu Meng, An Wei and Jing Jing Li, all teachers from China who will be participating in a language immersion teaching program in Delaware.

## AIRPORT STAFF LIKELY TO BRUSH UP LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR LANGUAGE SPIES

(Toronto Sun)...Jessica Murphy

Staff at eight major airports across the country will be brushing up on their language skills as the federal bilingualism watchdog prepares to take a closer look at the levels of English and French in Canada's air transport hubs. But some workers can breathe easy.

Under the Official Languages Act, many retail stores and airport bars don't have an obligation to serve their customers in both languages.

"The regulations make a distinction between essential services in the airport and less essential services," Official Languages Commissioner Graham Fraser

said.

"So you have a right to be served in the language of your choice if you are buying food because that's essential, but you do not have a right to be served alcohol in the language of your choice."

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## DLIFLC HONORS PROFESSORS IN RANK ADVANCEMENT CEREMONY

(DLIFLC)...Devon Swanson

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center promoted twenty-nine employees from associate professor to professor, at a Professor Advancement Ceremony July 19. In the academic field, the title of

professor is the highest attainable rank one can achieve while still working hands-on with students or curriculum.

Dr. Donald Fischer and Col. Danial Pick respectively, congratulated the professors and expressed their pride in sharing this momentous

occasion with them.

"This is no small task, and as task that has taken decades in some cases to achieve, but in all cases is a recognition of your professionalism, your skill, your commitment to excellence, and your dedication to this mission," said Col. Pick.

