

Welcome to the 89th BBC Active newsletter!

And welcome to all new members who joined at this year's Language Show. This is your newsletter, so all feedback and contributions are appreciated, read and replied to! Just drop me an email on: susanna.shapland@pearson.com.

With Christmas just a few short weeks away, it is time for our **Christmas hamper competition!** To win a beautiful Fortnum and Mason hamper stuffed with gorgeous Christmas goodies, you just need to email me the answer to the question below. Please note the short deadline, and good luck.

The next newsletter will most likely go out midway through December to try and catch you all before the Christmas break, but then it will be business as usual in the New Year.

Susie

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NEWS FROM BBC ACTIVE



Christmas hamper competition

It's that time of year again, and to alleviate the pain we are offering you the chance to win the beautiful Fortmason hamper. All you need to do is send your answer to the following question to me at susanna.shapland@pearson.com:

What is your favourite teaching tip to make language learning fun?

We're looking for games, activities or strategies that your students always enjoy and look forward to. Our favourite tip will win the hamper and all its bounteous contents, and the tip will be in the New Year newsletter. The best runners up

will be published along with the winning tip on our website.

In order to get it to you in time for Christmas, we need all entries in by the end of Thursday 10th December.

Talk tutors' notes

Many of you are already using the tutors' notes that accompany our *Talk* courses. You may therefore be interested to hear that we are in the process of turning all the notes into easily downloadable PDFs, and amending some of the errors that you have pointed out to us over the years. The *Talk* notes will ultimately all be available to download from our website, at: <http://www.bbcactivelanguages.com/TeachersHome.aspx> under the relevant language selected from the 'Free Resources' menu.

25% off this Christmas with BBC Active

For the month of December, there will be 25% off all orders through the BBC Active languages website. Postage is free on all standard orders anywhere in Europe, so why not treat your friends, family and students to some lovely language resources? Just add items to your basket to see their discounted price: <http://www.bbcactivelanguages.com/Christmas2009.aspx>.

NEWS FROM THE BBC

Christmas customs

From Le Père Fouettard, Father Spanker in France, to las uvas de la suerte, the lucky grapes in Spain, get into the Christmas spirit with our festive quiz and games and discover some of the quirky Christmas customs, traditions and recipes from France, Spain, Germany and Italy. Christmas customs and recipes: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/christmas/>.

Christmas crosswords

What do the French get up to during les fêtes de Noël? And why do the Spanish like to have a go at El Gordo, the Fat One? Test your knowledge with festive crosswords for intermediates. French: http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/news/crossword/flash/index_noel.shtml. Spanish: http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/news/crossword/flash/index_christmas.shtml.

Quick Fix phrases and ski vocab

Off to the Alps or set to shop 'til you drop at one of Germany's colourful Christmas markets? Download some handy holiday phrases to your mp3 player or mobile phone. Print or download now!

French ski phrases: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/quickfix/ski.shtml>.

Spanish ski phrases: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/quickfix/ski.shtml>.

Italian ski phrases: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/italian/quickfix/ski.shtml>.

German ski phrases: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/german/quickfix/ski.shtml>.

German shopping phrases: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/german/quickfix/shopping.shtml>.

Ski lingo for post-beginners:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/mafrance/html/holidays/summary.shtml>.

For download: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/mobile/>.

***New* Phrase of the Day**

¿En qué trabaja? Subscribe to the feed and receive a new word or phrase in French, Spanish, German or Italian every day!

Sign up now at: www.bbc.co.uk/languages.

Learn about RSS Feeds: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/help/3223484.stm#whatisrss>.

What's so funny about German? Your thoughts...

Vorsprung durch Slapstick! What do you think of the new, light-hearted series of videos starring stand-up comedian, Henning Wehn? Watch the videos and have your say.

What's so funny about German?: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/german/comedy/>.

8 Nov-20 Dec: French Film Festival

Au cinéma, _____ est grand et à la télé il est petit (un mot). With the 17th French Film Festival UK in full swing nationwide, try a crossword with a cinéma français theme! See: http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/news/crossword/flash/index_cinema.shtml.

Languages on TV

Languages programmes on BBC Two's Learning Zone won't return until next spring but in the meantime, keep an eye on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/> for interesting language and culture-related programmes on TV and radio.

Joyeux Noël ! : ¡Feliz Navidad! : Frohe Weihnachten! : Buon Natale!

NATIONAL NEWS

Mamma Mia - should Swedes speak English?

Iain MacInnes has been to Sweden to investigate the debate over the increasing use of English over Swedish in the country: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/8338525.stm>.

Minority languages summit

Minority languages will be the focus of a British-Irish Council (BIC) summit in Jersey: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/jersey/8350833.stm>.

Minor languages, major importance

The Independent says: Praise be for the encouragement that the EU has given these languages: <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/michael-mccarthy-minor-languages-major-importance-1817747.html>.

Latin lovers at primary level

Latin is set to make a comeback at Primary level:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/haud-mea-culpa-domina-as-they-say-in-primary-school-1817251.html>.

'Latin inspires and enthuses children': <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/dr-lorna-robinson-latin-inspires-and-enthuses-children-1817249.html>.

Leader article: <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/leading-articles/leading-article-latin-lovers-1817281.html>.

MFL NQT numbers on the decline

A dearth of trainee modern foreign language teachers is hampering a Government drive to ensure all children start learning another language from the age of seven:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/foreign-language-teaching-is-in-decline-1811719.html>.

Alien language

Professor Simon Kirby has created an alien language experiment to explore how language emerges and evolves over hundreds of years: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/8352264.stm>.

Worton Review - further news

<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6027067> and

<http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/news/news%20items/language%20graduate%20salaries.aspx>.

Primary Languages - Upskilling Specification published

A major new resource is now available to support the language competence of primary teachers - The Language Upskilling Specification. It has been designed to support the development of language upskilling courses for primary teachers and teaching assistants, enabling them to move from "beginners" to "intermediate" or even "advanced" levels. The focus now will be on providing further opportunities for Language Upskilling, building on the success of existing programmes available through Local Authorities, HEIs and the TDA. For this purpose the Specification in French, German and Spanish has been developed as a reference for providers intending to develop courses for primary teachers. It is Crown

Copyright and so freely available and downloadable. The on-line text includes a more detailed rationale and explanation as well as guidance on using the specification and an outline of the further support that will be offered.

The Specification can be accessed on the Primary Languages website at:
www.primarylanguages.org.uk/training_zone/language_upskilling.aspx.

National trends at GCSE

CILT has published the national trends in MFL GCSE exam entries on its website. The research looks at data from England, Wales and Scotland:
http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/statistics/secondary_statistics/gcse_exam_entries.aspx.

EVENTS

German Film Festival

If you hurry you will be in time to catch the end of the German Film Festival, at the Curzon Soho. This year it's running from 27th November-3rd December:
<http://www.germanfilmfestival.co.uk/>.

AULC conference

The 2010 AULC conference and AGM will be hosted by the University of Exeter, and take place 7th-8th January. See: <http://www.aulc.org/> for more details. Please do come along and say hello - I will be there on Thursday 7th!

French Film Festival

Catch the second half of the French Film Festival 2009, divided between Edinburgh, Glasgow and London, running from 8th November-20th December:
<http://www.frenchfilmfestival.org.uk/>.

Call for papers: 5th Newcastle Postgraduate Conference in Linguistics

The conference will be held on Tuesday 23rd March, 2010, in the Research Beehive at Newcastle University. In addition to student presentations, there will be guest plenary lectures from:

Professor Neil Smith of University College London and Professor Karen Corrigan of Newcastle University

We invite abstracts for poster or oral presentations from postgraduate students in any area of linguistics, theoretical or applied. The deadline for abstract submission is Sunday 3rd January, 2010.

Full details of the submission format are available on the conference website:

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/linguistics/postgrad/conference.htm>. If you have any questions, please contact: pgconfling@ncl.ac.uk.

Edexcel event for Japanese

Christopher Shone of the Japan Foundation London has drawn attention to an Edexcel training day for teachers of Japanese:

January 29th - GCSE 2009 Japanese: Successful Examinations

You can find further information about booking and payment on the Edexcel website:

<https://eiewebvip.edexcel.org.uk/TrainingBookingsPublic/>. Next to 'subject' please choose Japanese. Then select the appropriate dates and click 'search'.

ELL-LC conference - December 2009

Come and join CILT on 8th December at the ELL-LC Conference for a fantastic day full of workshops that will give you plenty to take back to the classroom. This year the conference will focus on developing effective strategies and practice in transfer and transition across Key Stages 2-3.

Key themes:

- Transfer, transition, progression! Are these the same thing? What are the differences? Where do they converge?
- Harmonizing the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 Frameworks

- Progression in language learning 7- 14
 - Recording and assessment
 - Intercultural Understanding – the role of target language
 - Practical strategies for the classroom – including teaching Year 7 classes where pupils have learnt a range of languages at Key Stage 2
 - Primary and secondary teachers working together – strategically and practically
- This national conference will include sessions from practising teachers and advisers and keynote sessions by renowned speakers on issues of current national importance in the world of language teaching. For further details and to book your place please visit CILT website: http://www.cilt.org.uk/secondary/language_colleges/lc_events.aspx.

SWON 2009

At the Open University, Milton Keynes, on Friday 11th December 2009, a conference on 'Autonomy in a Connected World' will be taking place. See: <http://learnerautonomy.org/open2009.html> for more details.

RESOURCES

Xtranormal

Xtranormal is a program which produces movies from texts. Marie-France has had a go at using it with her class for the topic 'Le week-end dernier'. Have a look at: http://mmeperkins.typepad.com/my_weblog/2009/11/le-week-end-dernier.html, and see more on Xtranormal at: <http://www.xtranormal.com/>.

Arabic Grammar

This website has been recommended to the Arabic Network as offering great support for Arabic grammar: <http://www.reefnet.gov.sy/education/kafaf/index.html>.

Robert Green's blog

Another great blog for you to explore ... recently updated with links to Téléfrançais on YouTube: <http://robertdgreen.edublogs.org/>.

Online conjugator

Graham Davies recommended this rather nifty online verb conjugator: <http://www.verbix.com/languages/>.

Bonjour, bonjour

A recommended link to a French animation and song, that comes complete with subtitles: http://www.csdraveurs.qc.ca/musique/choralies2006/karaoke/bonjour_chant.htm.

French cartoon

Dani Bourdais recommended this to the MFL Resources Forum: Thought this might be of interest to teachers of French: the making of a cartoon from the adaptation of the comic character to the finished product: <http://www.kidpaddle.com/fr/da.html>. Click on 'making-of'.

ARGuing

Prof. Thomas Connolly, Coordinator ARGuing EU project, has sent the following message about ARGuing for Multilingual Motivation in Web 2.0. ARGuing is a European Union education project:

'The project has created the first use of an Alternate Reality Game for motivating secondary school students to learn languages. The project has also learnt how an ARG can be adapted to almost any area of education.

The game that was created was called 'The Tower of Babel' and included a story designed to engage the target student group. The students had to save the planet by completing specific quests, collaboratively and internationally.

The project has been a huge success with over 400 teachers and students from 17 countries playing the game 'The Tower of Babel'. In the final pilot over 9,000 quests were answered and 800 files uploaded.

The project has created a number of resources that are available online, these include: a re-

usable game platform (on a Moodle platform) that includes multiple languages <http://ictthatworks.net:8080/moodle/> - you can view inside the platform by sending an email to me. Please place in the subject line of the email – TofB platform; a project website with additional information <http://www.arg-education.eu> . On the website are papers to download including: a methodology to make and use Alternate Reality Games in education; a set of case studies of other ARGs and serious games with empirical evidence of results; a set of use case scenarios that show examples of how ARGs could be used for other subjects or cross-subjects; an online teacher training course to enable educators to use the ARG the project produced; summaries of papers on the pedagogy, evaluation and the technology employed. Full papers are available in the conference proceedings of the 3rd European Conference on Games Based Learning <http://academic-conferences.org/ecgbl/ecgbl2009/ecgbl09-proceedings.htm>. The project team are also offering consultancy services to other educators interested in using ARGs in education. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.' His email is: Thomas@arg-education.eu, and the project website is at: <http://www.arg-education.eu/>.

Avez-vous déjà vu?

This film d'horreur de bonbons was recommended and offers some light relief; unless you are an item of confectionary, that is: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhvHhDbvCSw&feature=player_embedded.

Visual/audio Arabic resources

The following website has been recommended by a SSAT languages consultant as: 'a very useful visual/audio resource to use in the classroom called: Aswaat Arabiyya: <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/aswaat/>. Aswaat Arabiyya has audio files available for download and accompanying activities. The video files are listed according to proficiency level in Arabic, with an option to slow down the audio file.'

Don't Give Up!

Don't Give Up! Is a European Union language project that has written a book of 48 best practices for every level of language educators (schools, managers, teachers). The best practices will help improve the motivation and the results of language courses for adult learners. The project spent 2 years researching and analyzing the problems of adult learners, language educators were asked their opinions and ideas, as well. The results of the research were combined with the project team's ideas and experience. The best practices cover aspects of managing language schools and classes, enhancing lessons, engaging and motivating students and dealing with many aspects of the problems adult learners face to learn a language. This book can positively contribute to the results of your language courses. The best practices are summarised on the project website: <http://dontgiveup.eu> with some examples. The 138-page Don't Give Up! book is available through the web site in English, Czech or Spanish. If you have any questions, please contact Dasa Pelikanova: dagmar@dontgiveup.eu.

Free language games

This website has been recommended as it covers a large number of languages and is full of attractive games to help boost vocabulary: www.digitaldialects.com.

14 ideas for language learning

Linguanetter Yao Ziyuan has circulated his ideas on foreign language learning. There's an html version at: <https://sites.google.com/site/yaoziyuan/ideas>.

Listening for all

In response to a request for online listening material, the following site was recommended as being great for Spanish A-Level: <http://ssl4you.blogspot.com/>.

Le Goût - French food and drink

Another Linguanet recommendation, this time for anyone teaching French food and drink. The press section of this website has downloadable PDFs that could be used for reading/comprehension practice: http://www.legout.com/nav_flash.php?link=presse_communiques. There is also a 'Blog du

Goût'.

Asterix games

To celebrate 40 years of Asterix and his indomitable friends, why not introduce your class to the Gauls with these attractive and addictive games on the Asterix website? You can select your language on the right hand side - they are available in English, French, German, Spanish and Dutch: <http://www.asterix.com/games/online-games/>.

SURVEYS AND COMPETITIONS

Fourth Russian essay competition in the UK КОНКУРС СОЧИНЕНИЙ НА РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

A message from Andrew Jameson on the ALL Russian Essay Competition:

Following a very positive feedback from all educational sectors across the UK we are happy to announce the Russian Essay Competition 2010.

Students learning Russian at Schools, Colleges and Universities in the UK, including heritage learners and adult learners, are invited to participate in the 4th National Russian Essay Competition 2010. The competition has been organised by the Russian Committee of the Association for Language Learning (ALL), www.all-languages.org.uk; and Russian Teachers' Group UK (RTG), www.russianteachersgroupuk.org. Please visit the official RUSSIAN ESSAY COMPETITION website: www.resources4russian.co.uk/essay. It is a great opportunity for your students to be creative with the language, compete nationwide with their peers in a field-wide event and raise the profile of Russian at your institution.

This year there will be 3 people who will be directly involved in organising the competition:

Katya Solovyova (The Latymer School) info@russianessaycompetition.co.uk

Nadia Griffin (Cator Park School) entry@russianessaycompetition.co.uk

Natalia Tronenko (Russian Committee, ALL) coordinator@russianessaycompetition.co.uk

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any queries.

We would be very grateful if you could confirm your interest by 30 November 2009 to Katya Solovyova at info@russianessaycompetition.co.uk.

The Pushkin Prizes

The Pushkin Prizes offer a unique opportunity for 10 pupils from schools throughout Scotland to attend a five-day creative writing course at the Arvon Foundation Writers' Centre near Inverness. Past tutors have included professional writers Gerry Cambridge, Anna Crowe, Alan Durant, Diana Hendry and Catherine MacPhail.

Ten prizewinners will be selected by the panel of judges to attend Pushkin Prizewinners' Week in May 2010 at Moniack Mhor, the Arvon Foundation Writers Centre set in stunning Highland surroundings near Inverness. The Pushkin Prizes also funds a place for a teacher to attend the course.

To enter see: www.pushkinprizes.net. All entries must be received by 17 December 2009.

Ruta Quetzal BBVA 2010

The Ruta Quetzal competition is now open for 2010, to 16 -17 year-olds learning Spanish.

Teachers can nominate students to receive scholarships and various prizes, including participation in an expedition to Latin America. Find out more about the 2009 expedition here: www.educacion.es/exterior/usa/en/programs/quetzal/default.shtml, and how to enter the 2010 competition here: www.educacion.es/exterior/uk/es/consej/es/rutaquetzal/rutaquetzal.shtml.

QCDA report on level descriptions consultation published

The QCDA report on the public consultation on proposals for changes to national curriculum level descriptions has been published. Full information and links to downloads can be found at <http://www.qcda.gov.uk/22260.aspx>.

As a result of the consultation there will be no changes to the 2007 version of the MFL level descriptions. The letter from Andrew Hall (CEO of QCDA) to the Secretary of State proposes that QCDA should develop guidance and exemplification of teaching and pupil attainment in the key concept of Intercultural Understanding for both primary and secondary schools.

National Arabic Declamation Contest 2010

Haroon Shirwani, Head of Arabic at Eton, has sent a message to the Arabic Network inviting people to bring their students to Eton College on Sunday 7th March for 2010's National Arabic Declamation Contest. He says: 'Last time was a lovely experience, and I learnt a few lessons in terms of organising an event like this. This one is going to be a lot more structured and instructions will be provided more clearly; judges will have proper judging sheets to fill out for each competitor; all texts will be provided, including transliterations; I will make sure there are more refreshments; and certificates will be ready on the day. The buzzing atmosphere and superb performances will be the same as before, if not better.'

If you are interested in participating this academic year, please could you let him know as soon as possible. You can contact him at: haroonshirwani@HOTMAIL.COM.

Linguistics for intercultural education in language learning and teaching

There has been a call for chapters issued for this publication. Abstracts are due 1st March 2010. You can read more at: <http://users.utu.fi/freder/CFCLinguisticsinterculturaleducation.pdf>.

LinkedUp award scheme

A message from Kathy Wickstead of ALL:

A reminder that the next deadline for the LinkUp Award Scheme is 15th December 2009. Full information and an application form are available on www.linksintolanguages.ac.uk/linkedup.

The scheme will fund over 100 collaborative curriculum development projects. It runs up to March 2011, but the last date for accepting applications is 23rd April 2010. If you have an innovative idea for the curriculum that you would like to take further, please get in touch. Projects have mentor support and great opportunities to disseminate their ideas locally and nationally. Proposals can be submitted by schools (any age range), 16-19 colleges, universities, local authorities and other organisations. In most cases funding of around £3,000 is available.

We are happy to discuss ideas for projects - phone me on the number below to have a chat or email kathyw@all-languages.org.uk. For organisational/admin queries, please contact Ingrid Nyaundi on linkedup@all-languages.org.uk or phone 0116 229 7454.

If you know other bright sparks with interesting ideas for developing learning in languages, we would be really grateful if you could encourage them to consider applying too.

UK Linguistic Olympiad

The UK Linguistics Olympiad committee is currently recruiting schools to take part in the first UK Linguistics Olympiad in 2010, and to send a team to represent the UK at the International Linguistics Olympiad in Sweden. School children will compete individually and in teams to solve brain-teasers about language structure; the Olympiads don't test knowledge of either linguistics or languages. Typically, a handful of translated sentences from some unfamiliar language are presented and the challenge is to work out how to translate some other sentences and to formulate the relevant rules. Last year a pilot was very much enjoyed by pupils across a wide range of ages (years 10 to 13), and a UK team performed well at the international event. Entry is free.

Round 1, in early February, is held in schools and takes half a day; successful competitors in this round will progress to round 2, a two-day residential combination of training and selection for the team to represent the UK. Please register as soon as possible even if your interest is only provisional; the more schools are registered, the easier it will be for us to raise funding.

For more information and details about how to register, contact Dick Hudson:

dick@ling.ucl.ac.uk, or go to:

www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/ec/CLIE/UKLO/uklo.htm#registering.

China Competition for UK Schools with Students aged 5-11

The China Competition, supported by the HSBC Global Education Programme and run by the British Council, is open to UK primary schools and SEN schools with an existing partnership with a school in China. The theme of this year's competition is "Comparing Traditional Stories, Myths and Legends". The competition provides an opportunity for participating linked schools to further develop their work together by collaborating on the research and production of a performance in English by the UK school of a traditional Chinese story, myth or legend. The winning school in each of the three categories will receive £3,000 to support their school partnership with China.

Schools wishing to enter the competition must register by 8 January 2010 and the deadline

for submissions is 31 March 2010.

Interested schools should visit: www.britishcouncil.org/schoolpartnerships-china.htm.

China Activity Grants

Supported by the HSBC Global Education Programme and managed by the British Council, this opportunity is designed to help schools (primary, secondary and SEN), sixth form colleges and FE colleges across the UK to arrange events or activities that will help their students learn more about China or the Mandarin Chinese language. As part of the grant application, they must show how the students will pass on what they have learnt to other members of the community, supporting community cohesion. Schools and colleges can apply for grants of up to £750.

The deadline for applications for the first round of grants (for activity between January and March 2010) is 7th December 2009. For the second round of grants, (for activity between April and July 2010) applications can be submitted from 1st February 2010 and must be received by 1st March 2010.

Interested schools should visit: www.britishcouncil.org/schoolpartnerships-china.htm.

Franco-British Council Short Story Competition

The Franco-British Council together with *Prospect* Magazine and Eurostar have announced the third year of its short story prize. The competition aims to encourage young people to engage with French culture.

This year Bonnie Greer, recently seen battling BNP leader Nick Griffin on Question Time, is the driving force behind the competition which is open to people between the ages of 18 and 25. Bonnie, who is an enthusiastic francophile, said, 'France is a place – a country – but it is also a mythological place that can be found within the landscape of our minds and hearts. We want to read about that place in a story that tells us what France or 'Frenchness' means to you.

'The emphasis is on the imagination and we are inviting entrants to take an idea of France, an incident in a French lesson, an encounter with French food or reverence for a French sports star as the catalyst for their tale. Whether or not they have travelled to France entrants should let their imaginations take flight, using something French or some aspect of France as their inspiration.

'It is also hoped that the competition will encourage an interest in the French language.'

Entrants are invited in two categories: aged between 16 and 18 and between 19 and 25. Prizes include two return Eurostar tickets to France, £100 prize money and your story published in *Prospect* for the first prize winners in both categories. Second prizes of £75 and third prizes of £50 will be awarded in each category. The best entries will be published by the FBC in an anthology of short stories.

For full details and conditions of entry please go to:

<http://www.francobritishcouncil.org.uk/schoolprize.htm> enquiries please email adampreston@francobritishcouncil.org.uk.

What do YOU think?

We want to make this newsletter as useful as possible, so your opinions matter! What would you like to see in the newsletter? If you have any comments or feedback (good or bad!) then please let me know at susanna.shapland@pearson.com. It is your newsletter - have your say.

NB You can **subscribe** at any time - it's absolutely free! If you are reading this newsletter and are NOT yet a member of the BBC Active Language Teachers' Club, then you can contact me at susanna.shapland@pearson.com with your full name and educational institution, or sign up online at www.bbcactivelanguages.com.

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