

Languages in the News

Language and Learning

This installment of Your Voice from TVO Parents explores the effects of learning more than one language on cognitive development. Cheryl Jackson, host of the show, invites three panelists to discuss the topic, including Ellen Bialystok, Professor of Psychology at York University in Ontario, Laura-Ann Petitto, Professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto, and Peter Gazellone, Teacher and Administrator, from Ryerson Community School. At Ryerson students learn English, French and a third language of their choice: Arabic, Mandarin, Spanish, or an African Heritage Language. Bialystok studies the effect of bilingualism on children's language and cognitive development, and Petitto's research focuses on uncovering the biological mechanisms and environmental factors that determine how we acquire language and how language is organized in the brain.

The panel discusses a number of topics, including the effects of learning multiple languages at once, factors that support arguments for beginning learning a second language earlier in life rather than later, and human capacity for learning language. They raise the question: if bilingualism does not limit cognitive development, as it was believed 30 years ago, does it enhance an individual's cognitive capacities? Bialystok's research found that any kind of sustained, stimulating activity improves the development of those brain structures and mental functions known to be supported in the front part of the brain, because it develops last, is highly evolved, and is the basis for what makes human thought unique. She classifies bilingualism as an example of the kind of sustained, stimulating activity that influences cognitive benefits.

Click here to access [Language and Learning](#).

Engaging the World: U.S. Global Competence in the 21st Century

Created by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Council for International Education (CIE), this website features two videos that highlight the need for US global competence by focusing on international education K-12 through graduate school. The videos include interviews with administrators of ACE and CIE programs, as well as participants of Fulbright programs, who attest to the multiple benefits of learning a language and interacting with members of another culture.

Additional interview segments about global competence, education and international experiences are available from Title VI and Fulbright-Hays beneficiaries. Some clips include:

- Dana Banks, Foreign Service Officer, Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State
- Lynne Campbell, K-12 Foreign Language Teacher, Glastonbury School System, Glastonbury, Connecticut.
- Michael Dunne, Managing Director JD Power Associates Asia
- Michele Dunne, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Former U.S. Department of State Officer
- Elizabeth C. Economy, Director for Asia Studies, Council on Foreign Relations
- Robert Gates, United States Secretary of Defense, Former President of Texas A&M University
- Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Kelley, Chief of Defense Cooperation, U.S. Embassy, Kathmandu, Nepal

Click here to access [Engaging the World: U.S. Global Competence in the 21st Century](#).

Tips and Tools for Early Language

UCLA Language Materials Project

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's International Education and Research program, the Language Materials Project (LMP) was created in 1992. This project focuses on teaching resources for less commonly taught languages. Within the LMP website, visitors can search for resources by language, type of material, level and audience. The website also includes a bulletin board, links, information about the LMP, and a K-12 Gateway, which features lesson plans and lesson tools.

Click here to access the [UCLA Language Materials Project website](#).

The Geography Challenge

The Geography Zone geography quiz is an interactive world geography application, where kids (and adults) can check out how many countries around the globe, or in specific continental regions of the world, they can identify. In each round, a player gets 120 seconds to identify 10 randomly selected countries (you will never see the same quiz twice), and can take the quiz repeatedly. Lastly, the theme music is a hybrid of a variety of world beats and electronica.

Click here to access the [Geography Zone Geography Quiz](#).

Islamic Manuscripts from Mali

Islamic Manuscripts from Mali features 32 manuscripts from the Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library and the Library of Cheick Zayni Baye of Boujbeha, both in Timbuktu, Mali. The manuscripts presented online are displayed in their entirety.

The manuscripts are written in various styles of the Arabic script. There are special presentations of maps, photographs, and other information about the Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library. The Library of Congress will include additional manuscripts in the future as new digital images are received.

Click here to view the [Islamic Manuscripts from Mali](#).

This issue of *Newsworthy* was compiled by Tammy Dann. Send any comments, questions, or information for future issues of *Newsworthy* to Tammy Dann at tdann@nnell.org

Thank you to Kennedy Schultz, Heather Hendry, Shanon Shreffler, Andrea Suarez and Josh Hemlee for providing the links used in *Newsworthy*.

Thank you to Kennedy Schultz, Veronica Guevara, Robert Raymond and Sally Hood for their work writing summaries.