Language Programs’ Post-pandemic Future in Designing a Sustainable Life

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MLA 2021
Just in Time: Persistence of Language and Culture Studies during and beyond Pandemic
January 10, 2021
“What if the experience of knowing the future changed a person? What if it evoked a sense of urgency, a sense of obligation to act precisely as she knew she would?”

What is essential for our language programs for a sustainable future?

Colleges Lose a ‘Stunning’ 651 Foreign-Language Programs in 3 Years

By Steven Johnson  |  JANUARY 22, 2019

Resilience

Enrollment and financial crises threaten growing list of academic disciplines

Among the targets: black and women's studies, languages, philosophy and the arts

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

‘Act Now!’ Say Hello to the New Enrollment Playbook

How retail tactics are reshaping student recruitment

By Eric Hoover | FEBRUARY 11, 2020
Introspection

“Language is a virus”  
(Laurie Anderson, 1986)

- **Diversity** of faculty and students, perspectives
- **Decentering** whiteness and faithfulness to national literatures
- **Beyond monolingualism** or singular vision of department, learning as commodity or skill
- **Siloed “expertise”** --- bifurcation
- **Trans** disciplines, culture, competences in practice as well as theory

“The ways in which we teach and research shapes public perceptions of our academic subjects. Teaching languages as practical skills or tools for effective communication in order to appear more practically relevant is intellectually dishonest, because it by no means captures the complexity and the power of language use and acquisition. ... It is also pragmatically risky as it allows our colleagues in other disciplines, administrators, and policy-makers to overlook our relevance to the loftier pursuits of critical thinking and literacy necessary to foster truly globally aware citizens.”

• Jansa and Nichols (2019) "At the Crossroads: Learning to Speak the (Foreign) Language of Higher Education Leadership.”
Pandemic takeaways

• new vocabulary
• changing language
• changing our understanding and behavior

We must continue to work with existing organizations and allies
Why are we learning languages in a closed world?

BBC By Sophie Hardach January 6, 2021
Sources


