

The Foreign Language Requirement in English Doctoral Programs

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In the wonderment of this taxonomy, the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of the fable, is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking that.

—Michel Foucault

As an undergraduate majoring in English and minoring in French, I was thrilled by many dimensions of the study I undertook in courses on British, American, and French literature; critical theory and cultural studies; and world literature (in translation). Reading Sterne and Diderot, Baldwin and Sartre, Ellison and Malraux, Burroughs and Derrida, I was keen to escape the pinched mentality of an upbringing in rural Missouri, where born-again Jimmy Carter was the last Democrat anyone admitted voting for, New York City seemed as far away as Paris, and San Francisco might as well have been as far away in place and time as Sodom (folks sure wished it was). It was the bracing wonderment of new taxonomies, of thinking previously impossible *thats*. As a doctoral student in English, I was required to have what was termed reading knowledge in two foreign languages or fluency in one. The requirement struck me as a logical graduate extension of my undergraduate education, and I opted for fluency in one language, relishing the prospect of integrating careful readings of Fanon and Lacan, *dans le texte*, into my work on American, African American,

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and queer literature. It thus came as an unpleasant surprise to me that, despite the fluency option's existence, doing advanced course work in French was in practical terms difficult to manage, given the structure of the department's requirements. I found little support for foreign language study in printed departmental requirements or rationales and observed that, by and large, graduate students in my department and others typically treated the requirement as a nuisance and lost their "reading knowledge" as soon as the exam was over. I have noted in the intervening years that my decision to take the language requirement seriously is uncommon among English doctorates, though not among graduates of disciplines in which language competence is a manifest necessity—Southeast Asian anthropology, French art history, or German philosophy, for instance. Why, I wondered, do English doctoral programs¹ require something that they seem to consider a mere formality and to discourage in practice? Where did the requirement come from and what was its purpose?

BEGINNINGS

In 1892 Francis A. March recalled, nearly half a century earlier, making an

experiment of teaching English like Latin or Greek—hearing a short Grammar lesson, the rest of the hour reading Milton as if it were Homer, calling for the meaning of words, their etymology when interesting, the relations of words, parsing when it would help, the connection of clauses, the mythology, the biography and other illustrative matter.

In 1855 similar studies were begun at Lafayette College. . . . It was thought that it was the first of the kind. (xx)

March is today considered remarkable for being the first professor of English in the United States, but his piece in *PMLA* was titled "Recollections of Language Teaching," and his methods were decidedly multilingual. Though teaching English as such was a novel notion, March's multilingualism was not unusual, whereas the reverse is true today. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, when modern language and literature programs were established in the United States, there was an assumption that American men of culture would simply have to know European languages other than English (principally German and French) and that knowing another language might also be "a pretty accomplishment for young ladies and others who may possibly make little or no practical use of it" (*Babbitt* lv). German held particular status among university professors thanks to the energetic importation of German educational models (and perhaps to a fair dash of Teutonic racism).

The proceedings of the second annual convention of the MLA in 1884 record the era's sentiments about Continental languages by distinction with English:

[A] reading knowledge of French and German should form one of the requisites for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. It was strenuously urged that, as this distinction claims to represent "liberal" scholarship, it should naturally include a sufficient knowledge of these tongues to be able to become acquainted with the current lines of modern thought given in them, and without which no man of our age could esteem himself liberally educated. ("Proceedings" iii)

The "scientifically trained teachers" of these languages took as their goals "intellectual discipline . . . [,] literary culture, philological scholarship and linguistic discipline" (iv).² At the time, justifying the study of English was perceived as a trickier business than studying German and French, since a facility with English was assumed; there was therefore apparently nothing to teach and no intellectual, mental, or linguistic discipline to be gained. As J. W. Bright put it dryly at the 1884 convention, "Everybody, unfortunately, knows all about English" (xxi). The difficulty of justification was at first met by creating an arbitrary difficulty of study through minute philological comparisons with other languages ancient and modern, a technique that March pioneered. Bright considered the practice ludicrous and mocked those who sought "to counteract the fatal facility with which the student is able to read the [English] text" by making it "the occasion of a course in Anglo-Saxon equivalents, and Sanskrit 'roots'" (xxi–xxii). A colleague at the convention, J. M. Hart, was indeed moving toward a more literary, as opposed to philological, description of English study, distinguishing it from logic (which was "drifting into the domain of experimental science") and rhetoric (which had "no more to do with English literature than with Greek or German"). The "object of literary study," he declared, was "English *thought* and *feeling*," and its study would be organized by periods that he was at pains to delineate (xi–xii).

Still, Hart considered foreign language study imperative: "English authors have at all times been deeply affected by foreign thought and taste"; therefore, "the proper way to approach the subject would be to begin with Continental literature as a foundation, and trace its manifestations in English" (xii). Bright had nothing specific to say that year about the relation between the study of English and of the other modern languages, but he dramatically alerted his colleagues to the "danger of too early specialization" and to the even more threatening "evil consequences of loose and general scholarship" (xxi). Bright expressed stupefaction before most

Americans' indifference to scholarship in the modern languages and most probably considered sound knowledge of foreign languages a given among his colleagues. Today's MLA convention goers may occasionally bristle at or stare across the divide between English and the other modern languages (a divide that having separate hotels for English and the other languages sometimes carries out architecturally); this division was not true at the association's inception. In the late nineteenth century, English study was typically thought of as a thread in the weave of modern language study, not as a subject that might be pursued independent of other languages. M. D. Learned expressed the sentiments of the time before the world wars in uncompromising terms: "The study of the vernacular [English] and of foreign tongues is *one undivided* process in the evolution of national life and cannot be separated in any adequate system of national education" (xlvi). Learned's assertion looks in retrospect like a precocious call for the kinds of transnational or global study that have lately come into vogue, but the more pressing point is that transnational study is not the latest fad. It's been around in different forms since the study of the modern languages was formalized.³

The conviction that language study should be pursued by means other than philological took hold, and methods such as March's were abandoned. Hart's emphasis on thought and feeling was echoed in 1887 by Albert H. Smyth, who pleaded for the study of American literature as such. He considered a principal virtue of American literature that "it admits of a complete severance of literature from philology," which he viewed as a subordination of "thought and style" to "minute niceties of . . . language" (240). The comment reflects the role that nationalism played in consolidating departments of English: Smyth and many of his contemporaries insisted on the peculiar needs of United States education, and American literature would be a fulcrum on which to pry United States education away from German and other European models. The study of other languages remained under the new literary paradigm an assumed necessity for research, but the articulated rationale for English study in the context of the modern languages gives way to justifications for English study on nationalistic grounds. "What is American about American literature?" becomes a signal question. (This sort of reasoning would lead eventually to the argument that, for a specialist in American or English literature, there is little or no value in foreign language study.)

Teachers of English hit, too, on the idea of artistic beauty as a justification for studying English literature, and participants in the trend remained friendly to the study of other languages. The watchwords of the moment included *beauty*, *greatness*, *perfection*, *spirit*, and *soul*, and an

overriding question was, “How should we begin to develop a sense of the Beautiful?” (Baskervill and Elliott xxvi).⁴ James Russell Lowell, for his part, valued language study for relieving “moral Excommunication”; widening “the mind’s range of view, and therefore of comparison, thus strengthening the judicial faculty”; revealing “the relation of things to each other and to some general scheme rather than to ourselves”; and enlarging “aesthetic charity” (10). That such beauty was understood in relation to God was of a piece with the MLA convention’s first meeting locations: chapels at New York University and Columbia. Early, there was a sense that language study would serve different purposes depending on the student’s motive, whether scholarly or professional, and utilitarian study of language vied with its aesthetic study. Lowell recognized that “[w]hen at last a chair of French and Spanish was established here [in the United States], it was rather with an eye to commerce than to culture” (5). Robert Scholes describes this moment as literary evangelism, a period marked by the conviction that literature could “save” in some sense and in which the professor was a “priestly exegete” (*Rise* 11). It is the sort of literary faith that Settembrini had in mind in *The Magic Mountain* when he declared, “Language is civilization itself” (Mann 508). The faith was lost over the course of World Wars I and II, but latter-day exegetes would find a kind of negative theology in such language-centered currents of thought as structuralism, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and deconstruction.

SPLIT

In the decades preceding the world wars, the PhD language requirement developed a split personality in literature programs. The requirement existed in nearly all PhD programs (agricultural economics no less than English) until decades into the twentieth century,⁵ and in all programs it stemmed initially from the prevailing (and Eurocentric) assumption that men of culture spoke at least one Continental language. As science and its research model asserted themselves in United States universities, this initial reasoning blended, more or less seamlessly, into a prevailing assumption that researchers would have to know one or both of the Continental languages in which most cutting-edge work was published. But the aesthetic and cultural turn away from philology permitted a new kind of justification for the requirement in literature departments that was inoperable in departments outside the humanities but a descendant of the “man of culture” reasoning. This turn found one of its first proponents in E. H. Babbitt, who in 1892 suggested not only an aesthetic and cultural justification for foreign language study but also a political one:

The modern language teacher is just now in this country, almost above all other members of his profession, the apostle of tolerance and the foe of narrowness in all its shapes, religious, political, and social . . . a silent force opposed to sectarian intolerance, "spread-eagle" politics, and Philistinism in every form. (lix)

As W. Lee Hansen and Robert H. Graham observed in 1970, "The traditional two-language requirement, originally established for professional purposes, came to be regarded by some as culturally necessary" (159). To this day, the tension between cultural and professional rationales remains a salient feature of debates about the language requirement in English doctoral programs.

In the 1920s, O. J. Campbell could still confidently assert the rigor of the foreign language requirement in English PhD programs: "no one can pass the fairly rigorous examinations in these languages [French and German]," he noted approvingly, "without having read rather widely in their literatures" (196). By 1941, Herbert Drennon was already comfortable generalizing that "[m]astery of a language yielded in time to . . . a semblance of the traditional requirement in the form of what we are pleased to call 'a reading knowledge.'"⁶ Drennon observed that the cultural and research rationales for the requirement did not persuade graduate students in English of its value. Instead, he feared, they considered it "more of a bugaboo than . . . a boon to culture" (342, 343). Moreover, he considered it "seriously doubtful whether the perfunctory manner in which the reading knowledge of a foreign language is tested in many institutions is evidence that the student can really use the language intelligently as a tool of research" and urged that the profession demand "more strenuous evidence of mastery by the candidate who is going to make research scholarship a lifelong interest, especially if that scholarship broadens out into foreign cultures" (345, 348). Drennon's appeal was not answered by the profession at large, but it was not without sympathizers in the next decades. For instance, Lucien White underscored the requirement's cultural value in the light of Americans' isolationism (152), the MLA's Commission on Trends in Education⁷ bemoaned the global consequences of American monolingualism and the provincialism of Anglo-American literary study (Commission 22), and William R. Parker (referring to undergraduate requirements) pointed to language study's ability to teach "the limitations which the speech patterns of any single language impose upon individual thinking processes or even upon national attitudes and assumptions" (7). Such commentators were concerned to forge a meaningful link between the cultural and research rationales for the requirement.

DECLINE

Nonetheless, the requirement was in decline. After World War II, French and German no longer commanded the same prestige as the languages of science and scholarship. Moreover, the GI Bill was rapidly turning United States higher education into a mass affair, severing its intimate association with the privileged class's men of culture. Where the language requirement remained strong, it was on the basis of the requirement's research value. This strength was not in the humanities, as one might expect, but in science. Clifford Woody in 1948, Richard L. Admussen in 1967, and W. Lee Hansen and Robert H. Graham in 1970 published survey data on the language requirement in various doctoral programs, showing relatively strong support for it in the sciences, weak support in the humanities, little support in the social sciences, and nonexistent support in business and professional programs. Four factors, it appears, militated in the 1950s and 1960s against a strong foreign language requirement: the ascendancy of English as the foremost world language, the time-consuming difficulty of mastering a foreign language, increasingly narrow specialization in research, and the mass enrollment in higher education, which required greater numbers of PhDs produced more quickly.

Don Cameron Allen's *The Ph.D. in English and American Literature*, published in 1968, was the most important research in this period where the language requirement in English doctoral programs is concerned. Fear that increasing enrollments were outstripping universities' ability to produce enough new faculty members prompted the study, and Allen hoped to reduce the time candidates were spending in English doctoral programs in order to increase their number and speed their way into the classroom. His book presents a wealth of data on the requirement, most of it discouraging. French and German were almost always the required languages, but, on a brighter note, many departments were allowing other languages to qualify if candidates could justify their research usefulness. Most candidates had to achieve the required competence while graduate students, since they did not enter with adequate competence. Few doctoral students actually used the languages, a fact that Allen directly attributed to graduate faculty members' failure to require, or even encourage, their use. Allen reported near unanimity among department chairs and directors of graduate study on retaining the requirement; however, he noted that "they defend this conviction on the ground that languages are the service stripes of education and not of utility" (59). Cultural rationales followed as a secondary justification. Thus, although doctoral programs today still typically cite the requirement as a research one, the research

use of foreign languages had for the most part been abandoned in English departments by the mid-1960s.⁸

Allen observed a trend toward allowing greater competence in one language rather than reading knowledge in two, and he considered this a possible means of making the requirement meaningful again. The MLA's Advisory Committee on the PhD Study made recommendations based on Allen's research that took up this notion as well. The committee wrote:

A knowledge of one foreign language and its literature at the fourth year college level should be an alternative to the two or three language requirement.

This recommendation must be recognized as calling, in fact, for a substantial increase in view of the frequent laxity of application of the current language requirements. (Advisory Committee)

Allen's recommendations were similar but less salutary. He admitted that knowledge of another language was a sign of culture but noted that it was not a sign of professionalization, which was the purpose of a doctoral program.⁹ Considering the means of testing language competence "pure farces," Allen recommended that English departments either make the requirement rigorous or "do a little soul searching" (112, 113). Both Allen and the MLA recommendations based on his work suggested allowing languages other than French and German, but Allen limited them, offhandedly, to "the literary languages of Europe" (113).

The recommendations were quickly adopted by some programs but not always in the way hoped for by the MLA's advisory committee. In 1971, Barry A. Marks described how the English department at American University had revised the requirement in its program:

[E]very student [must] demonstrate an adequate mastery of one discipline outside of literature and . . . be able to relate the concept and methods of that discipline to the study of literature. He may elect a foreign language and literature, but he will be free to use psychology, music, theology, physics, or any other discipline he finds helpful in his work. The greatest value of foreign languages comes from the access they provide to another literature and culture, not from the access they give to scholarly work: the day when all scholarship was written in French and German has long since passed, and *we see no reason for according languages special status as a requirement*. Other intellectual disciplines are just as important in providing perspective on literature. (26; emphasis added)

Here, the language requirement no longer exists at all: the requirement is for interdisciplinarity. Marks's view that all scholarship would need to be written in French or German to justify requiring a second language

strikes me as something more significant than a straw man, for it points to an unstated and perhaps unconscious proposition: that all scholarship worthy of the name is now available either originally in English or in an adequate translation. I hope no one seriously entertains this proposition at a conscious level. More problematic still, the requirement for “adequate mastery of one discipline outside of literature” manages to include non-English literature as an option—as though it were not, in fact, literature. A laudable interest in promoting interdisciplinarity butts heads with a long-standing but ill-understood relation among national literatures and introduces an absurdity: the study of a foreign literature may serve to fulfill the requirement of adequately mastering a discipline outside of literature. This is not a coherent rationale for interdisciplinarity or the language requirement, but it is symptomatic of the language requirement’s befuddled state in English doctoral programs.

TODAY

Table 1 gives a sense of how many foreign languages English departments typically require of their doctoral students, showing that they are fairly split between requiring one or two (Steward). Although studies from the past decades have demonstrated that most English doctoral students do not achieve a level of competence sufficient for research, most departments are now flexible about the languages that are accepted, stipulating only that the director of graduate studies or the candidate’s adviser or dissertation director approve the choice’s appropriateness for the area of study. This reasoning has led, as in Marks’s article, not only to accepting a variety of less-taught languages in addition to the usual suspects (a development to be applauded) but also to accepting such “languages” as HTML or to accepting any research method not regularly taught in the normal course of English study. We have, I fear, replaced the requirement’s concern to ensure literature professors’ depth of language learning with a United States–centric apathy about language study. If *any* research tool

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES REQUIRED IN ENGLISH
DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

	NUMBER OF LANGUAGES REQUIRED			TOTAL
	NONE	ONE	TWO	
Number of programs	6	53	59	118
Percentage of total	5.1	44.9	50.0	100.0

can fulfill the language requirement, then we have lost sight of the history of the language requirement's purposes, and languages will need to be subsumed under another requirement heading such as "skills more or less useful to someone's research," which would also include training in statistics, anthropological field methodology, a musical instrument, singing, book and print design, journalism—anything, really. Against the requirement's conflation with sundry other possible disciplinary methodologies and technical skills that might come in handy for a particular student, English departments might consider the special place of the general requirement of a second language in doctoral programs that study—among other things, but perhaps still principally—language, literature, and culture.

We are helped toward this goal by the report of the MLA Task Force on the Commonly Taught Languages. "The values of foreign language study" the task force wrote, "fall into three large areas":

1. *Practical and commercial values.* These include the ability to speak with or understand a person who does not know English, either abroad or in the United States. Americans can simply do a much better job if they can understand the language of the people working around them. Furthermore, the United States has itself become a multi-language country as language groups increasingly assert their cultural identity. . . .
2. *Humanistic and cultural values.* These include not only an ability to read great works of literature, or scientific and educational articles, or foreign newspapers, or to develop awareness of a foreign culture, but also an enlarged understanding of the nature of culture, including that of English-speaking America. We quote from a statement by the Committee on Language Study in Higher Education published in the *MLA Newsletter*, February 1977: "It is one of the most profound truths about human languages that each colors the whole mode of apprehension of those who speak it. This truth cannot be grasped from within any one language, but only by the formulation of some set of ideas in two languages, so that the contrast can be experienced in that case and understood, by analogy, in other cases. The acquaintance with a second culture through its language effects a transformation of our own understanding of the content of human beliefs and practices."
3. *Linguistic and cognitive values.* These include awareness of the nature and structure of language, vocabulary building, verbal agility, a more precise understanding of the meaning of words through etymology, and an ability to acquire another new language more quickly and with greater fluency. . . . ("Report" 1)

Published in 1978, these recommendations appeared at about the same time that several commentators began to question the dilution of the language requirement that had been taking place over the past decades. I have quoted item 2 in full because it seems to me the most important

of the values for English doctoral programs and because, for those who study literature, the humanistic and cultural value of language study is a practical and cognitively useful one.

I am joined in this view by Harold H. Kolb, Jr., who cited it in 1978 as a rationale in the University of Virginia's English PhD program (581), and by Gabrielle M. Patty, who reasoned a decade later that language study would counteract English graduate students' ethnocentrism, illuminate their understanding of English-language literature's historical interactions with other languages and literatures, and enhance their research abilities. The educational values of the requirement, she wrote, "coincide with practical ones: without them, [English PhDs] will be neither genuine scholars nor competent teachers in English literature and language" (691). We need not accept the extremity of Patty's unqualified dismissal of the scholarly authenticity and pedagogical competence of the majority of the profession's members to admit the worth of her point. Still, the point might seem atavistic to some, and what matters in literary study has, assuredly, changed since the beginning of the twentieth century. Irony and difficulty, pastiche and play, race and bodies: all have variously mattered. In Vincent B. Leitch's words, we have moved "from formalism to poststructuralism to cultural studies, from high theory to posttheory to cultural critique" (vii). The monolithic notion that language is civilization itself has mutated into the dialogic and diasporic notion that language is culture itself. What has not changed in literary study is the conviction that language matters.

Literary scholars in the United States should, I think, understand that they have some things to learn from the way literature and literary study exist in other countries and more particularly from the languages in which those disciplines are structured, expressed, developed, and lived. While those in foreign language and comparative literature departments know this, I've seen little evidence that those of us in English departments do. Our linguistic and research biases in the English profession are as "US-centric" as biases usually are in the United States, and that includes a kind of obeisance to the definition of science that obtains here. Two consequences of such a deference to the scientific research model are narrow specialization (such that those in English consider literature in other languages far outside their purview) and the utilitarian devaluation of any skill, such as knowing a foreign language, that does not yield quickly tangible research benefits. These biases also include an unconscionable, if unconscious, complicity in the English language's global hegemony and in the views that language is a transparent medium of communication and that English is *the* language of the United States. These biases hold sway in United States doctoral programs, I think, whether the program's focus

is the United States or Great Britain. Commonwealth and postcolonial emphases probably foster more ecumenical attitudes.

Because foreign language competence is time-consuming and labor-intensive, most graduate students cannot achieve it solely during the graduate years. If the requirement is to have meaning for the majority of English PhDs, undergraduate English majors must be required and encouraged to devote substantial energy to the acquisition of foreign language competence. Given English departments' growing emphasis on multiculturalism and global studies, such a language requirement should fit well into major requirements and even enhance their coherence. Language competence must in turn be put to use in graduate school. Even if the student determines that a foreign language different from the one studied as an undergraduate would be more beneficial for graduate study, the labor involved in learning the next language will still have been reduced and the benefits of the first language absorbed. In many other cases, undergraduate foreign language study will transfer directly up and may also productively inform the student's graduate work, suggesting novel possibilities for research that a graduate student with a weak or nonexistent foreign language background would not see. If English PhD recipients understand the value of language competence, they will not consider the competence with which they leave graduate school the end of their language learning any more than they consider the research that they do in graduate school the final word on their research. Scholes observes plainly that "it takes a while to know enough to have anything useful to say" in the humanities ("Learning" 13), and John Guillory cites language learning as one of the losses the profession will suffer if it does not allow scholars the time they need to develop necessary but arduous knowledges (25). Learning foreign languages and their literatures and cultures is difficult and slow work, but this is not a reason to excuse PhD candidates from doing it.

There is a generally accepted sense, I will venture, that native speakers of English in the United States do not learn enough foreign languages: that too few United States English speakers are even minimally conversant in another language and that those who do know something of a second language tend only to know Spanish, French, German, or Italian.¹⁰ Culturally, English monolingualism means national isolationism and a parochial self-regard. If this is a problem in the United States English-language population at large, I can think of no good reason to condone such isolationism among the most educated Americans—those with research degrees—or among those who specialize in research on literatures written in English, which is after all a world language and as such, in the best cases, bumps elbows and noggins with all manner of other languages

and literatures and, in the worst cases, unilaterally tramples them underfoot. In terms of intellectual work, English monolingualism means ignorance of context and of one's limits. "The linguistic incapacity of American PhDs has always been a joke," writes Hazard Adams; "in the present intellectual situation it has become a scandal" (6). I am conscious not only of the controversial character of Adams's assertion but also of the great potential in insisting, along with our colleagues in foreign languages, on the more than instrumental value of language study. The decline of the language requirement will have to be reversed if those in the English profession are to treat global and ethnic studies seriously, to refuse to replicate "spread-eagle" isolationism in their work, to research and teach world literature and English-language literature's place in it responsibly, and to enrich their thinking with the extraordinary taxonomies that the other modern languages offer.

NOTES

1. I hasten to clarify that by the shorthand "English doctoral programs" I mean doctoral programs in English-language literature, critical theory, and cultural studies. This review of the foreign language requirement would no doubt look different from the perspective of composition programs' emergence as a more or less distinct area in the discipline. I will also register here my ambivalence about the term *foreign languages*. English is itself, on a historical view, a foreign language in what is now the United States, and United States literature has never been English-only (see, e.g., Shell and Sollors). It has always been absurd to refer to Native American languages as foreign, and it seems increasingly absurd to refer to Spanish as foreign. To the extent that the MLA's geographic purview includes Canada, it is also nonsensical to refer to French as a foreign language in association activities. As Peter Travis observes, British literature has also always been multilingual.

2. Well before structuralism, there appears to have been a vogue for terming literary study scientific, by which literary scholars seem to have meant the systematic pursuit of knowledge. By 1897, Calvin Thomas was concerned that the term *science* was becoming too closely associated with the research methods of disciplines such as biology, at the expense of a broader usage (systematic pursuit of truth) (299–300). He argued for a "science of literature" analogous to the German *Literaturwissenschaft*.

3. Moreover, the notion of trans- or international study of literature never disappeared. *Comparative literature* names one long-standing, broad strategy to sustain it, and *theory* names a medley (or a mishmash) of interdisciplinary methods that once promised to reveal what "literature" was transnationally and translinguistically. In 1979, J. Hillis Miller considered the comparative study of literature (even if only in translation) so pervasive in the English discipline that he declared, "No serious student of literature can fail to think of this discipline as an international enterprise" (11).

4. The question was posed in the discussion following John P. Fruit's "A Plea for the Study of Literature from the Aesthetic Standpoint." Fruit was given to rather more portentous expressions, as when he urged that the utilitarian "has in it the

greed and selfishness of the Pit, [the aesthetic] has the charity and unselfishness of the God who inhabits eternity. We are perfectly unselfish in wishing every one to enjoy the master-pieces of Art. We would call every one to see the rainbow, pillared on earth, arching the heavens" (30).

5. Claude P. Viens and Philip Wadsworth reported that, in 1957, 76% of the schools they surveyed had a uniform foreign language requirement for all doctoral programs while another 21.6% had some foreign language requirement that was departmentally determined. Only 2.4% reported that some departments did not have any foreign language requirement (24, 28). For the most part, the required languages were French and German, but Russian was a significant alternative.

6. Karl F. Otto, Jr., presents his understanding of the modest goals of reading knowledge in "Languages for Reading Knowledge: Methods and Problems."

7. The commission intended its statement "as a way in which the members of the [Modern Language] Association who teach English might participate in the [MLA's] Foreign Language Program" (Commission 24).

8. In 1972, Robert G. Wiltsey summarized cross-disciplinary survey findings that were more positive. Of the surveyed PhD recipients who had fulfilled a language requirement, 59% replied that they had used the languages in their doctoral studies, typically for dissertation research; 70% reported using the languages after completing their degree. Nonetheless, respondents' attitudes toward the requirement were not entirely positive: "36 percent felt that foreign languages were essential and 49 percent felt that they were helpful in their professional work. Thirty percent felt that foreign languages were not at all necessary in one's personal life. . . . 27 percent felt that the requirement should be eliminated." The 11,615 respondents came from eighteen fields of study. A decade later, Doris Graves reported the results of a survey, also cross-disciplinary, of graduate deans' opinions of the language requirement. Of the 227 surveyed deans, 53.6% "expressed the belief that a knowledge of foreign languages should be a requirement in all departments of graduate schools" (37); 37.7% anticipated "a further weakening or reducing of the language requirement during the next decade. . . . A suprisingly large number (25%) predict[ed] some restoration of the more rigorous traditional requirements" (38).

9. Hansen and Graham echoed this sentiment in 1970: "If the cultural justification were accepted, one would have to scrutinize the entire graduate program, for surely there are other requirements which could be considered means to the end of producing cultured men. . . . What a Ph.D. program requires of all students must be directly related to its primary aim. We base our inquiry on the premise that graduate schools consider the primary aim of their Ph.D. programs to be the production of scholars capable of research" (160).

10. This is a different issue from which languages are most spoken in the United States. These are English, Spanish, Chinese, French, German, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Italian. As Rosemary Feal remarks, "That there are so many speakers of Spanish, French, German, and Italian in homes in the United States reminds us that our focus on [teaching] these European languages corresponds to an important part of our national reality" (4). On undergraduate enrollments in language courses, see Welles; on languages spoken in the United States, see *The Modern Language Association Language Map*.

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