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[https://www.100test.com/kao\\_ti2020/164/2021\\_2022\\_GRE\\_E8\\_80\\_83\\_E8\\_AF\\_95\\_E9\\_c86\\_164551.htm](https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/164/2021_2022_GRE_E8_80_83_E8_AF_95_E9_c86_164551.htm) Why multilingualism should be a national priority By Domna C. Stanton Originally published December 28, 2005 There ' s an old joke that says: "Someone who speaks three languages is trilingual. someone who speaks two languages is bilingual. and someone who speaks one language is American." That punch line might have been funny a few years ago, but in a post-9/11 world, Americans ' lack of language skills is no laughing matter. It ' s cause for great concern. Our linguistic deficit has created an increasingly acute national security and intelligence crisis. It has affected our ability to build a public diplomacy effort that can improve our standing and relations in the world, to address burgeoning security challenges and to understand the cultural nuances that can spell the difference between life and death at Baghdad checkpoints. After 9/11, the government discovered that we did not have enough speakers of Arabic and Urdu, of Farsi and Chinese, among a host of languages. As a result, hundreds of thousands of pages that could contain crucial clues to impending attacks remain untranslated in the depths of the FBI. And the federal agencies that have the largest foreign language programs - the Army, the State Department, the Foreign Commercial Service and the FBI - are experiencing shortages up to 44 percent in translators and interpreters in such key languages as Arabic, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Persian-Farsi and Russian. To tackle this crisis, we need

more than just translators. America must have multilingual competence, not only for reasons of national security and international standing but also to ensure our economic success in the global marketplace and to engage in scientific, legal and educational work with people around the world. To do something about this, we need to gather resources, set new policy and raise public awareness. Congress has acknowledged the crisis by designating 2005 as "the Year of Foreign Language Study" and calling for the promotion and expansion of foreign language study "in elementary schools, secondary schools, institutions of higher learning, businesses and government programs." And Congress has designated 2006 as "the Year of Study Abroad," recognizing that we do not have enough graduates with foreign language skills today and that intensive study abroad can help "to share the values of the United States, to create good will for the United States around the world, to work toward a peaceful global society, and to increase international trade." But these steps are not enough. There are at least four ways to address this critical situation: Schools and universities, the best arenas for learning languages at all levels, need far greater federal support. The economic burden for Congress' initiatives to promote foreign language study should not fall primarily on educational institutions. The U.S. Education Department should make foreign language competence a new, well-funded priority from the early grades through graduate school. Our educational motto should be: "no child left monolingual." We should look to the millions who speak a second language as extraordinary resources instead of trying to strip them of

their linguistic heritage to assimilate them into American society. The language map of the Modern Language Association shows that there are more than 1 million in-home speakers of Spanish, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Tagalog and Vietnamese in the United States. These languages and the cultures embedded in them are great assets to be tapped. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)