

Esperanto founder's home city offers in-bus lessons

世界語發源都市提供公車廣告教學



The Polish home city of the 19th century founder of **Esperanto** is teaching the artificial language with panels in local buses to honor the 150th anniversary of his birth, authorities said Thursday.

Białystok council announced it was paying homage to Ludwik Zamenhof by replacing on-board advertising with teach-yourself Esperanto panels providing vocabulary and basic phrases, Poland's PAP news agency reported.

The move in the northeastern city is part of preparations for an anniversary congress of Esperanto-speakers from around the globe, due to take place from July 25 to Aug. 1.

Zamenhof, who was Jewish, was born in Białystok on Dec. 15, 1859.

At the time, the city was part of the Tsarist Russian empire, and the hub of an ethnically diverse region inhabited by speakers of Polish, Yiddish, Belarusian and Russian.

Zamenhof dreamed of a day when people would be able to communicate in a universal language free of political **connotations** and misunderstandings, fostering world peace.

In his spare time, the ophthalmologist Zamenhof devised the easy-to-learn tongue in 1887 from elements of Romance, Germanic and Slavic languages and a slice of Latin and Greek grammar.

The language's name is derived from his writer's pseudonym Esperanto, a reference to the word "hope".

Zamenhof died in 1917 and was buried in Warsaw's Jewish cemetery.

Around two million people worldwide are estimated to speak Esperanto. (AFP)

波蘭有關當局上週四表示，為了紀念十九世紀「世界語」創始人的一百五十歲冥誕，將在他家鄉的市公車上刊登該人工語言教學的廣告。

波蘭新聞社報導，比亞維斯托克市議會宣佈，為了向路德維克·柴門霍夫致敬，議會將把公車上的廣告換成世界語教學廣告，提供單字和簡單片語供民眾自學。

比亞維斯托克市（位於波蘭東北部）的這項措施，是為了全球世界語年度代表大會做準備，該大會預定七月二十五日到八月一日舉行。

猶太裔的柴門霍夫一八五九年十二月十五日出生於該市。

當時該市屬於帝俄的領土，是多種族聚居的中心，居民或說波蘭語、意第緒語、白俄羅斯語或俄語。

柴門霍夫夢想有一天人們能以不具政治意涵、不會產生誤解的共通語言溝通，進而促進世界和平。

柴門霍夫的本業是眼科醫生，他利用閒暇之餘結合羅曼語、日爾曼語和斯拉夫語的句構，以及一點拉丁文和希臘文的文法，在一八八七年發明了這種簡單易學的语言。

這種語言以他的筆名「Esperanto」命名，這個字意指「希望」。

柴門霍夫於一九一七年逝世，葬在華沙的猶太公墓。

據估計，全球約有兩百萬人會說世界語。（法新社/翻譯：袁星塵）

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. Esperanto /'espə'rænto/ n.

世界語 (shí4 jié4 yǔ3)

例: Despite not being an official language of any country, Esperanto still has up to two million speakers.

(雖然沒有任何國家以世界語為官方語言，但全球仍有高達兩百萬人會用它。)

2. connotation /,kənə'teɪʃən/ n.

隱含意義 (yín3 hén2 yì4 yì4)

例: Choose what you say carefully because many words have negative connotations.

(說話時要注意用字遣詞，因為許多字都有隱含負面意義。)

A man passes the entrance to the Belarusian radio station "Radio Racja" (Radio Truth), which broadcasts independent news to Belarus from Poland, in Białystok, eastern Poland on Dec. 20, 2006. PHOTO: REUTERS

二〇〇六年十二月二十日，一名男子經過白俄羅斯「真理廣播電台」的門口，該台位於波蘭東部的比亞維斯托克市，主要是針對白俄羅斯放送獨立新聞。照片：路透社