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"THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF THE FUTURE": DECOLONIZATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND THE AMERICAN EMBRACE OF GLOBAL ENGLISH, 1945–1965*

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The two decades following the Second World War were marked by geopolitical and pedagogical ferment, as researchers and policymakers debated the role of language teaching in a rapidly changing world. As European empires collapsed amid Cold War competition for global influence, limited colonial education systems gave way to new discourses connecting postcolonial educational expansion, international development aid, and language teaching. This article reveals increasing American interest in the connections between development and vehicular English from 1945 to 1965. Drawing on the work of anglophone reformers, American elites promoted English as a development tool, and institutionalized policies designed to spread it abroad. The rise of the idea of global English in the United States, the article shows, was rooted in an instrumental conception of language, which framed English as a politically neutral vehicle for communication, yet this discourse was contradicted by the United States' strategic ambitions.

When did Americans begin to consider English a global vehicular language? Some three decades after the linguistic turn attuned historians to the intersection of discourse and power, and despite the present-day primacy of English as a transnational lingua franca in many academic fields, historians—in particular historians of the United States—have paid surprisingly little attention to the recent history of English as a vehicular language.[1]

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[1] Liora R. Halperin usefully distinguishes between the ways discourse structures "collective attitudes" and "historical discussions about language itself," and notes that analysis of the

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This article analyzes the history of the idea of global English in the context of international language-education debates from 1945 to 1965, and its relation to American social science and US foreign policy. The United States' growing interest in the potential of English to serve as a global lingua franca after 1945 was bound up with the geopolitics of the Cold War and decolonization. Decolonization nullified the ethno-cultural hierarchies that had limited popular access to Western languages in many European colonies. Simultaneously, the imperative to maintain influence in postcolonial spaces—for the British, a postimperial point of pride; for the United States, tied to the pursuit of anticommunism—would lead Western elites to seek to link the developed and developing worlds through language. By the 1960s, a range of anglophone scholars and policymakers would contend that English could provide a neutral communicative bridge between ethnic groups and nation-states.

In part, American interest in globalizing English dovetails with the narrative of Anglo-American succession traced by scholars who link twentieth-century US power to earlier phases of British imperialism.[2] By the early nineteenth century, the English language had established a foothold outside the Atlantic world, notably in British India. Britain's linguistic footprint was also a product of its far-flung commercial presence and the establishment of white settler colonies in North America, Australasia, and Africa.[3] As British power waned and American globalism blossomed after 1945, the United States would consciously seek to build on British foundations. By the 1960s, Washington had fashioned what one US State Department official called a "formidable and workable arrangement" with Britain to "coordinate our efforts in the advancement of the use of English throughout the world."[4]

latter has, until recently, been rarer in historiography. Liora R. Halperin, *Babel in Zion: Jews, Nationalism, and Language Diversity in Palestine, 1920–1948* (New Haven, 2015), 19. Michael D. Gordin's *Scientific Babel: How Science Was Done before and after Global English* (Chicago, 2015); and David Northrup's *How English Became the Global Language* (Basingstoke, 2013), discussed below, are two recent exceptions.

2 See, for instance, Charles S. Maier, *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors* (Cambridge, MA, 2006).

3 On English in colonial India see Stephen Evans, "Macaulay's Minute Revisited: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-Century India," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 23/4 (2002), 260–81; and Modhumita Roy, "'Englishing' India: Reinstituting Class and Social Privilege," *Social Text* 39 (1994), 83–109. On English and British imperial expansion more broadly see Gary B. Magee and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850–1914* (Cambridge, 2010); and James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (Oxford, 2009).

4 Douglas Batson, memo to William Benton, 12 May 1965, William Benton Papers, Box 393, Folder 6, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

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Imperial antecedents alone, however, cannot explain Washington's interest in the use of English as a vehicular language outside US borders.[5] As early as the turn of the twentieth century, American officials had disputed European colonial policies over the question of who should learn Western languages, envisioning English as a language not just for circumscribed classes of cultural intermediaries, but for the masses. Following the Spanish–American War, the United States attempted to spread English on a mass scale in the Philippines and Puerto Rico—advertising its departure from European colonial practices in the process.[6] At this stage, however, the United States' goals remained geographically circumscribed. The rising power acted primarily out of a desire to compete with its European rivals by acquiring access to China and by asserting its hegemony in Latin America.

For the United States, the real break would come in the decades following the Second World War, when the geopolitical imperative of US foreign policy shifted from securing hemispheric hegemony to establishing global dominance

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[5] Nor can they explain the broader rise of vehicular English, which "actually postdates the high-water mark of the British Empire." Gordin, *Scientific Babel*, 295. The historiography of education in the British Empire depicts protracted British ambivalence about the place of English in colonial schooling. Thomas Macaulay's minute of 1835 famously declared the desirability of spreading English in India, while at the same time clarifying it was destined for a circumscribed "class" of indigenous interlocutors rather than the "great mass of the population." Nevertheless, the Indian case became a well-worn trope in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the British expanded their presence in Africa. Commentators repeatedly invoked the dangers of creating a faction of politicized Africans through English-language education, as had emerged in India. Evans, "Macaulay's Minute Revisited," 268–72, 276–9; Clive Whitehead, "The Medium of Instruction in British Colonial Education: A Case of Cultural Imperialism or Enlightened Paternalism?", *History of Education* 24/1 (1995), 1–15, at 2–4, 14–15; Sybille Küster, "'Book Learning' versus 'Adapted Education': The Impact of Phelps-Stokesism on Colonial Education Systems in Central Africa in the Interwar Period," *Paedagogica Historica* 43/1 (2007), 79–97.

[6] Relevant historiography includes Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 160, 165–7, 175–7; Glenn Anthony May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims, Execution, and Impact of American Colonial Policy, 1900–1913* (Westport, CT, 1980), 82–84; and José-Manuel Navarro, *Creating Tropical Yankees: Social Science Textbooks and U.S. Ideological Control in Puerto Rico, 1898–1908* (New York, 2002), 31–113. See also Ruanni Tupas and Beatriz P. Lorente, "A 'New' Politics of Language in the Philippines: Bilingual Education and the New Challenge of the Mother Tongues," in Peter Sercombe and Ruanni Tupas, eds., *Language, Education and Nation-Building: Assimilation and Shift in Southeast Asia* (Basingstoke, 2014), 165–80; Amílcar Antonio Barreto, *The Politics of Language in Puerto Rico* (Gainesville, 2001), 1–33; and Julian Go, "Chains of Empire, Projects of State: Political Education and U.S. Colonial Rule in Puerto Rico and the Philippines," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42/2 (2000), 333–62, at 333–4, 343.

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in the context of world war and then cold war.[7] At the same time, the collapse of European empires was unsettling the world language map, as languages competed for preeminence in many new states. The international development activities that matured as part of the United States' anticommunist strategy supported educational expansion in new and developing states, which raised a contentious question: if more people were going to attend school and become literate than ever before, what languages would they learn, and what languages would they learn in? Gradually, anglophone actors from Britain and the United States would recognize shared strategic interests, and would begin to promote English as a practical "language of wide communication" to spread in the developing world.

Recent scholarship in the field of US international history has shown how the United States mobilized development aid as a tactic in waging global cold war.[8]

7 On this dramatic expansion in the geography of US foreign policy see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, 2005), 23–5; and Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge, MA, 2015), 52–3. As Immerwahr indicates, it presented a social-scientific challenge, for the United States knew very little about the internal dynamics of many European colonies at the moment it ascended to superpower status.

8 Notable works focusing on modernization and development in US foreign policy include Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, 2000); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, 2003); Bradley R. Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.–Indonesian Relations, 1960–1968* (Stanford, 2008); and David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, 2010). Daniel Immerwahr has recently contested this literature's prevailing view of top-down modernization, arguing that Cold War-era models privileging industrial growth and centralized authority coexisted with a powerful countercurrent of community-oriented development thinking. This distinction, modified slightly, is also useful for distinguishing the grandiose schemes of certain mid-century policy elites from more modest language education efforts. Here I use the terms "modernization" and "modernizers" in a somewhat broader sense, chronologically and conceptually, than is typically connoted by "modernization theory," to refer to policy intellectuals who hoped to project vehicular languages onto heterogeneous populations without much concern for local wishes. In the United States and Britain, language modernizers' aims mirrored those of modernization theorists in that both looked forward to a global convergence towards western norms and practices (in this case, a convergence of language use towards some form of English). Also like the modernization theorists, language modernizers would find their preconceptions increasingly challenged by the late 1960s. Their keywords, however, did not disappear entirely. Immerwahr acknowledges that many then and since have used the terms "modernization" and "development" loosely and interchangeably (Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*, 8, 61). Melvin Fox's work on language aid at the Ford Foundation, discussed below, illustrates the intertwined nature of modernization and development in the postwar decades.

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Meanwhile, an emerging body of English-language historiography has begun to treat language as a category of historical analysis, inclusive of discourses about language, everyday linguistic practices, pedagogical techniques, and technological innovations related to language.[9] However, historiography focusing specifically on the relationship between the English language and US international history remains thin. David Northrup's *How English Became the Global Language* (2013) and Michael D. Gordin's *Scientific Babel: How Science Was Done before and after Global English* (2015) are two of the few monographs by professional historians to examine the recent history of vehicular English. Northrup's is the more straightforwardly functionalist account. Northrup cites bottom-up aspirations in places like Nigeria, where he served in the Peace Corps as an English teacher, as evidence that people have learned English not because it has been imposed upon them but "because it [has become] necessary or useful for them to do so." Gordin, focusing empirically on language use in the international scientific community, is more attuned to historical contingencies. Well into the post-1945 era, the dominance of English appeared far from secure to observers who could recall the interwar persistence of German-language chemistry or who were following the Cold War uptick in Russian-language science publications. Language use in the sciences, in other words, has at different moments been shaped by factors including nationalism and geopolitics. Yet when from this case study Gordin extrapolates conclusions about the broader rise of vehicular English, he skews toward functionalism, claiming, for instance, that the "unavoidable necessity of some vehicular or auxiliary language" fueled its rise in postcolonial contexts. In far-flung locales, Gordin and Northrup agree, the usefulness of English as a lingua franca to ordinary people drove its use much more effectively than any "top-down" designs could have.[10] This perspective contests accounts—first to emerge among anticolonial and postcolonial intellectuals, later among linguists—that have framed English as an imperial imposition upon Asia and Africa.[11]

9 See, inter alia, Gordin, *Scientific Babel*; Halperin, *Babel in Zion*; Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab* (Berkeley, 2010); Lisa Mitchell, *Language, Emotion, and Politics in South India: The Making of a Mother Tongue* (Bloomington, 2009); and Thomas S. Mullaney, "The Moveable Typewriter: How Chinese Typists Developed Predictive Text during the Height of Maoism," *Technology and Culture* 53/4 (2012), 777–814.

10 Northrup, *How English Became the Global Language*, xi–xii, 16–22; Gordin, *Scientific Babel*, 307–8. The linguist David Crystal likewise defends the functionalist view, framing the spread of English in terms of an "urgent need for a global language." Crystal, *English as a Global Language*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2003), 14.

11 Robert Phillipson's *Linguistic Imperialism* (Oxford, 1992), an influential intervention from within the field of linguistics, echoes anticolonial and postcolonial intellectuals ranging from Gandhi to the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, who announced his switch from

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What these politically and methodologically disparate accounts have in common is a lack of archival engagement with the ways in which evolving ideas about language have shaped American social science and US foreign policy since 1945.[12] Gordin's treatment of the late twentieth-century breakthrough of English is instructive: we are told that "English has come to be seen ... as a 'neutral' international mode of communication"; that English "is understood as neutral ground"; and that "English has attained its current position owing to a series of historical transformations that it also in turn shaped, exploiting a perception of neutrality that it gained through being distinctly non-neutral in either its British or American guise."[13] The reliance on the passive voice and circumlocution in these passages obscures the historicity of the idea that English is a neutral communication tool: for, as will be shown below, Cold War American development experts and Washington policymakers promoted English in precisely these terms. The linguist Robert Phillipson offers the most thorough exploration of policy discourses in his monograph *Linguistic Imperialism*, distinguishing the interwar logic behind the creation of the British Council—a means for encouraging wider appreciation of "the glories of our literature," according to the Prince of Wales—from later, more technocratic conceptions of English that denied cultural or political motives.[14] But Phillipson's work, more rooted in British than in American examples, pays less attention to American development initiatives during the 1950s and 1960s. These initiatives complicate any straightforward account of "linguistic imperialism," in that development assistance entailed cooperation with local elites.

The discourse of instrumental English, which emerged amid imperial decline and the United States' rise, was one way this development assistance was

writing in English to writing in Gĩkũyũ and Kiswahili in *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London, 1986), xiv.

12 This lacuna exists on either side of the functionalism divide. Northrup elides the Cold War development rationale behind the Peace Corps and other postwar US aid initiatives—the same forces which landed him in Nigeria to teach English—mentioning the Peace Corps exactly once, in a prefatory note. Meanwhile, Marnie Holborow, in a Marxist account of global English, associates the concept of languages of "wider communication" with 1970s scholarship in linguistics, when in fact talk of languages of "wide" and "wider communication" appeared in policy debates two decades earlier. Cf. Northrup, *How English Became the Global Language*, xi; Holborow, *The Politics of English: A Marxist View of Language* (London, 1999), 69–70.

13 Gordin, *Scientific Babel*, 295, 310, 315.

14 Quoted in Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, 138; on postwar discourses see ibid., 65–7. Although the British Council was forbidden from operating in the colonies, interwar debates over the place of English in colonial education happened likewise under the sign of culture, with advocates of English-language education arguing that it would help to solidify British values in the colonies.

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advertised to postcolonial leadership. Prior to the 1940s, imperial reformers had intermittently advocated the spread of English—but because English would help civilize backwards populations under imperial tutelage. After 1945, by contrast, anglophones began to turn away from civilizational hierarchies and attendant claims to the superiority of their language. English, in theory, was no better and no worse than other languages. Rather, its superiority rested on its practical utility as a "tool" for conveying information. What appears as a causal argument in functionalist accounts of the spread of vehicular English, then, is also a historically contingent discourse. It is at the nexus of language ideology and geopolitics that this article's investigation is situated. From the perspective of anglophone language reformers and American policy elites, decolonization presented a window of opportunity, as late colonial attempts to control education among colonial subjects gave way to the rapid expansion of schooling in postcolonial states. Only widely shared lingua francas could ensure development in these states, anglophones argued. And their lingua franca of choice was English.

Empirically, I focus on international institutions and nongovernmental organizations where connections between development and language education were debated and researched following the Second World War, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Ford Foundation. The post-1945 international arena was a contact zone of different languages, and of different ideas about the social and political role of language education, yet little to date has been written on this issue.[15] UNESCO offers a window onto how diverse actors contested the politics of language. These figures included the English scholars C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, who advocated for the worldwide adoption of a reduced-vocabulary rendering of English they called "Basic English"; Felix Walter, a cosmopolitan UNESCO official who encouraged the Western powers to rethink their stance toward language education during the period of Asian and African decolonization; and William

[15] Mary Louise Pratt has conceptualized "contact zones" as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession*, 1991, 33–40). By framing UNESCO as arena rather than actor, I depart from existing scholarship on its work in educational development, which concentrates primarily on the operational and geopolitical difficulties facing the organization's literacy activities from the 1940s through the 1960s: that is to say, the budgetary constraints, internecine rivalries, and Cold War impasses that hampered UNESCO's educational efforts. Cf. Phillip W. Jones with David Coleman, *The United Nations and Education: Multilateralism, Development and Globalisation* (London, 2005); Charles Dorn and Kristen Ghodsee, "The Cold War Politicization of Literacy: Communism, UNESCO, and the World Bank," *Diplomatic History* 36/2 (2012), 373–98; and Chloé Maurel, *Histoire de l'Unesco: Les trente premières années. 1945–1974* (Paris, 2010), esp. 76–85, 275–6.

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Benton, the longtime *Encyclopaedia Britannica* publisher, and US ambassador to UNESCO under presidents Kennedy and Johnson, who possessed an unshakeable faith in the ways American culture could promote the United States' strategic objectives abroad.[16] Meanwhile, the work of the Ford Foundation, like Benton's career, reveals the nexus of private and governmental power in twentieth-century US international history. One of the most influential American philanthropic organizations at mid-century, Ford became a major supporter of development aid and research, so much so that one foundation report called it a "private Point Four program"—albeit one with ties to the CIA and the State Department.[17] Its putative independence from Washington was an asset during the early Cold War, when domestic hardliners were attacking official US cultural diplomacy. In the 1950s, Ford operated in places like newly independent Indonesia, where it spent substantial sums on English-language education; and India, where it collaborated with the Indian government and the British Council on a program intended to improve the training of English teachers. Through the 1960s, the foundation would continue to fund initiatives dedicated to the teaching of English outside US borders.[18]

The article follows in three parts. The first part examines international language education debates between late colonial actors and language modernizers in the late 1940s and early 1950s. As decolonization accelerated in Asia and became a sure bet in Africa, abolishing colonial oversight over who had access to education in Western languages, these debates reflected growing concern among Western elites that developing-world multilingualism could undermine their international influence. The threat was no longer mass education; it was, in the words of more than one commentator, "Babel."[19] Second, I explore the linkages that British and American experts and policymakers began to forge between language education and socioeconomic development in the 1950s and early 1960s. These actors postulated that one or a few widely shared vehicular

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16 On Felix Walter see H. H. Stern, *Foreign Languages in Primary Education: The Teaching of Foreign or Second Languages to Younger Children* (London, 1967), ix; and "In Memoriam," *Linguistic Reporter* 2/6 (1960), 2, available at www.cal.org/content/download/1968/24926/file/LinguisticReporterVolume2.pdf, accessed 16 Feb. 2016.

17 Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York, 2012), 126–35.

18 Melvin J. Fox, *Language and Development: A Retrospective Survey of Ford Foundation Language Projects, 1952–1974* (New York, 1975).

19 "General Considerations of Language Problems in Fundamental Education," 19 June 1947, UNESCO/Educ./31/1947, File 375:4.A.064."47"; C. K. Ogden, "Article," 27 July 1946, File 375:4; "Meeting of Experts on Language Problems in Fundamental Education: Notes for Acting Director General's Opening Speech," 30 June 1947, File 375:4.A.064."47"; Felix Walter, "UNESCO and Language," 31 March 1952, EDIU/6/52025, File 408.3:37, Part I. All in UNESCO Archives, Paris, France.

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languages could promote both international harmony and national growth. Finally, the article discusses Washington's embrace of the idea of English as a global lingua franca in the late 1950s and the 1960s, and efforts to institutionalize this ambition in US aid policies. More so than the often disappointing results of foreign aid, the ideology of global English would be a lasting legacy of the conjuncture of decolonization and development.

confronting the "curse of babel": postwar language-education debates at unesco

The dream of conducting politics through language education was not new in 1945. Literacy and language-education projects launched by the United Nations and its agencies were part of a broader transformation—the heightening organization of education by governments and intergovernmental bodies—pursued by reformers and revolutionaries alike from the late nineteenth century onward. As a secular project, modernizing states ranging from France's Third Republic to revolutionary Mexico to the Soviet Union had aggressively promoted mass literacy and language acquisition.[20] Where states had feared to tread, religious missionaries from the United States and Europe often did tread, functioning as advance parties—witting or unwitting—for more intensive forms of imperial intervention.[21] After the First World War, language education became entwined with internationalist ideals at the League of Nations, which studied whether Esperanto or some other auxiliary language might promote peace between countries.[22]

What was new after 1945 was both the targets and the tools of international language-education reform. In the field of cultural relations, League of Nations

[20] On France, contrast Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France* (Stanford, 1976); with Jean-François Chanet, *L'école républicaine et les petites patries* (Paris, 1996). On Mexico see Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930–1940* (Tucson, 1997); and Elsie Rockwell, "Schools of the Revolution: Enacting and Contesting State Forms in Tlaxcala, 1910–1930," in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham, NC, 1994), 170–208. On the Soviet Union see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921–1934* (Cambridge, 1979); and Charles E. Clark, *Uprooting Otherness: The Literacy Campaign in NEP-Era Russia* (Cranbury, NJ, 2000).

[21] John Barker, "Where the Missionary Frontier Ran Ahead of Empire," in Norman Etherington, ed., *Missions and Empire* (Oxford, 2005), 86–106; Sarah A. Curtis, *Civilizing Habits: Women Missionaries and the Revival of French Empire* (Oxford, 2010). Cf. Northrup, *How English Became the Global Language*, 76–7.

[22] Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris, 1999), 33–4.

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efforts had been restricted as much by a focus on elite intellectual exchange as by the United States' absence. In contrast, the post-1945 international institutions, symbiotic with what Mark Mazower has called the "blisteringly fast emergence of American global power after 1945," embraced education for the masses.[23] Observers of the new United Nations and its agencies pointed up this contrast. A 1952 *New Yorker* article noted that, though "universal literacy" had been unheard of in the late 1920s, thirty years later it was "not only regarded as feasible" but had been "given priority by UNESCO."[24]

The post-1945 international institutions also benefited from a toolkit that was, in technological terms, far superior to that of their interwar predecessors. Promoting the United Nations in a 1950 letter, one seasoned American observer recalled that "when we started the League of Nations in 1920, there just wasn't any such animal as radio, film, or NGO . . . Woodrow Wilson practically killed himself taking his story personally throughout the country."[25] Advances in audiovisual aids would shape international relations almost from the moment the UN Charter was signed.[26] The technology of simultaneous translation—which entailed a customized network of microphones and headsets linking listeners to human interpreters translating in real time—was first developed for the Nuremberg trials, which began in November of 1945. Simultaneous translation was subsequently perfected at the United Nations and other international bodies.[27]

Given its expansive mandate and technological inheritance, some early insiders thought that UNESCO's ambition should be nothing less than to revolutionize the global cartography of languages. One contributor to its 1947 "Meeting of Experts on Language Problems in Fundamental Education" optimistically announced that international language-education efforts could make Europe more "European-minded," give the United States a better understanding of Russia, and provide an "indigenous and neutral 'lingua franca' for the whole [Indian] sub-continent."[28] Under its first director general, Julian Huxley (in

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23 Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (New York, 2012), 191–213, xvii; Maurel, *Histoire de l'Unesco*, 15–27; Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée*, 158–78.

24 Robert Rice, "The Thousand Silver Threads," *New Yorker*, 16 Feb. 1952, 38.

25 Arthur Sweetser, letter to William Benton, 17 Aug. 1950, Benton Papers, Box 388, Folder 2. On Sweetser see Mazower, *Governing the World*, 145, 192–3, 196, 211, 213.

26 On the intersection of mass-communications technologies and internationalism at UNESCO see Tom Allbeson, "Photographic Diplomacy in the Postwar World: UNESCO and the Conception of Photography as a Universal Language," *Modern Intellectual History* 12/2 (2015), 383–415, at 386–7.

27 David Bellos, *Is That a Fish in Your Ear? The Amazing Adventure of Translation* (London, 2012), 268–82.

28 Colonel A. Myers, "Education for International Understanding: The Part of Language-Teaching," 2 July 1947, Educ./38/1947, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives.

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office from 1946 to 1948), UNESCO launched an ambitious pilot project in Haiti's Marbial valley, intended to relieve soil erosion and rural poverty and to provide public-health and literacy assistance. In the face of the contentious politics of language in Haiti—where a small elite, literate in French, dominated political and economic life amid a largely illiterate Creole-speaking majority—Huxley, an evolutionary biologist by training and a social-engineering enthusiast by conviction, envisioned the project as a living laboratory for "teaching … an auxiliary language which would enable inter-communication of people with different languages." On the ground, a more localized approach was taken, as the project team worked to produce teaching materials in Haitian Creole—a sign of the complications to come for language modernizers. Nevertheless, Alfred Métraux, the well-known Swiss-born anthropologist heading the project, and education expert Yvonne Oddon envisioned the Creole materials as a merely temporary step toward cementing broader literacy in French—which they called a "language of civilization," in contrast to Haitian Creole.[29]

The Haiti project was intended as the flagship of UNESCO's Fundamental Education division, which targeted areas outside Europe and the United States. This geography was meant to signify linguistic as well as socioeconomic need: according to preparatory documents for the 1947 meeting, while the "curse of Babel" hung heavily over UNESCO's efforts to promote international understanding, "on the plane of Fundamental Education," the "language problem [was] an even greater barrier to international understanding." The very same "less developed areas of the world" that Fundamental Education targeted—areas where "ignorance, disease and poverty are a barrier to human progress"—were also areas where a "multiplicity of vernacular languages and dialects" tended to predominate.[30] Although Fundamental Education would be renamed and folded into UNESCO's burgeoning development work in the late 1950s, the framing of multilingualism as a policymaking challenge continued as the process of decolonization accelerated: multilingualism remained a "problem" to solve, a "barrier" to clear.[31]

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29 Julian Huxley, letter to Margaret Read, 3 April 1947, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives; Yvonne Oddon, "Recommendations for the Planning of Instructional Materials in a Fundamental Education Experiment," 30 Jan. 1949, and Alfred Métraux and Yvonne Oddon, "L'éducation de base dans la vallée de Marbial," 1 March 1949, Folder 135, Box 20, Series 100, Record Group 1.2, Projects, Rockefeller Foundation records, Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC); Joseph Watras, "UNESCO's Programme of Fundamental Education, 1946–1959," *History of Education* 39/2 (2010), 219–37, at 225–7; Julia Pohle, "Kêbé l'Inesko Fò!", *UNESCO Courier*, Sept. 2010, 41–3.

30 "Notes for Acting Director General's Opening Speech"; "General Considerations of Language Problems in Fundamental Education."

31 On the evolution of UNESCO's programs see Maurel, *Histoire de l'Unesco*, 264–5; and Watras, "UNESCO's Programme of Fundamental Education," 236–7. Felix Walter, among

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Particularly for anglophone language reformers, the so-called language barrier was to be cleared via methods and technologies advanced during the Second World War. During the war, the United States had poured money and resources into the social sciences as well as the hard sciences. Historians of propaganda and psychological warfare have traced how wartime defense spending and soldier-training experiments fertilized Cold War-era research, including the sprawling four-volume *American Soldier* study (1949–50), a landmark of postwar behaviorism, and Daniel Lerner's *Sykewar: Psychological Warfare against Nazi Germany, D-Day to V-E Day* (1949).[32] Although language-education research has not been a focus of historical scholarship, postwar reformers also drew inspiration from wartime experiments in language acquisition. In 1942, the US Army had begun to provide language training to select personnel through the Army Specialized Training Program, which used native-speaker instructors, small classes, and intensive instruction schedules. The program's results were noted after the war. When UNESCO's Walter Laves asked the 1947 meeting, "What [is] the quickest way to teach people who [speak] a number of different languages or dialects to communicate with each other?" participants did not lack for answers. One document announced that various "warborn [*sic*] experiments in rapid and effective second-language teaching" made it possible "for the first time in history" to "'mass-produce' bilinguals" through primary education.[33] This Whiggish understanding of the development of language-teaching pedagogies was somewhat misleading; decades earlier, *fin de siècle* reformers had emphasized

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others, would continue to frame developing-world multilingualism as a "barrier" and "problem" in the 1950s: see Walter, "UNESCO and Language"; [Felix Walter], "UNESCO and Language Teaching," 1955, File 408.3:37, Part II, UNESCO Archives; and Felix Walter, "UNESCO and the Teaching of Modern Languages," 19 March 1959, ED/II/3/59.029, File 408.3:37, Part II, UNESCO Archives. Walter's authorship of "UNESCO and Language Teaching" can be assumed based on its similarities to his signed 1952 and 1959 reports, including file location, writing style, and shared preoccupations with American teaching techniques and multilingualism in Asia and Africa.

32 See, for instance, Christopher Simpson, *Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare 1945–1960* (New York, 1994); Alfred W. McCoy, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York, 2006), chap. 2; and Joseph W. Ryan, *Samuel Stouffer and the GI Survey: Sociologists and Soldiers during the Second World War* (Knoxville, 2013).

33 "Meeting of Experts on Language Problems in Fundamental Education: Summary Report of the First Meeting," 17 July 1947, Educ./Com.Exp./S.R.1, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives; "Language-teaching and UNESCO," 2 June 1947, Educ./39/1947, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives. On the Army Specialized Training Program see Cheryl Brown Mitchell and Kari Ellington Vidal, "Weighing the Ways of the Flow: Twentieth Century Language Instruction," *Modern Language Journal*, 85/1 (2001), 26–38, at 29.

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oral communication in living languages over translation skills, only to encounter resistance from numerous quarters.[34] Yet the enthusiasm at UNESCO's 1947 gathering reflected the undeniable impact of wartime language work, which would help to shift language education in the United States away from reading-based methods and toward an emphasis on listening and speaking comprehension. For meeting participants, the "principles" advanced by wartime research included repetitive verbal exercises, and "all possible visual and aural aids to assist both teacher and learner": language acquisition as high-tech drill.[35]

At times, excitement about the contribution of new technologies to language acquisition outshone the military's more mundane findings. At the 1947 UNESCO meeting, I. A. Richards, then based at Harvard, vaunted his wartime collaboration with the US Naval College to teach essential English vocabulary to Chinese sailors using audiovisual tools. Animated films, he thought, "could be shown to an audience of as many as 400 learners, and this was mass education indeed." Echoing Richards, British colonel Adolph Myers, who had worked with the Indian army, advocated using filmstrips in language teaching. Optimistic about the prospects that new technologies seemed to hold for

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34 At the turn of the twentieth century, proponents of the "direct method" had encountered pushback from classicists and from scholars who did not have oral fluency in target languages—two groups which, in the case of elite British boarding schools, overlapped. The First World War presented a more political threat to the direct method, which had roots in Germany. Scarce resources could also tip the scales in favor of reading over speaking and listening skills. One influential study of language teaching in American higher education, the 1929 Coleman Report, concluded that reading proficiency should be stressed for the simple reason that it required less classroom time and could be taught more effectively by nonnative speakers. On the history of language-teaching pedagogies in Britain and the United States in the first half of the twentieth century see Susan N. Bayley, "The Direct Method and Modern Language Teaching in England 1880–1918," *History of Education* 27/1 (1998), 39–57; Mitchell and Vidal, "Twentieth Century Language Instruction," 26–30; and William Parker, *The National Interest and Foreign Languages: A Discussion Guide and Work Paper for Citizen Consultations*, rev. edn (Washington, DC, 1957; first published 1954), 51–61.

35 "Language-teaching and UNESCO." The results of the Army Specialized Training Program, informed by the behaviorism of B. F. Skinner, would coalesce after the war into the "audiolingual method" (sometimes referred to as the "oral–aural" method), which emphasized rote oral drilling as a means of enabling students to render language patterns without the need for conscious reflection. The audiolingual method was popular in the 1950s and the 1960s, before being undermined by empirical findings and by the spread of Noam Chomsky's critique of behaviorism. Mitchell and Vidal, "Twentieth Century Language Instruction," 29–30; Fox, *Language and Development*, 19; "Forty Years of Language Teaching," *Language Teacher* 40 (2006). 1–2; "From Audiolingual to Suggestopedia: the Varieties of Language Instruction," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 22 Feb. 1989, A14.

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social engineering—and overlooking the low student-to-teacher ratios of the Army Specialized Training Program—many 1940s modernizers thought that the appearance of radio and other new media heralded the possibility of spreading a genuinely global lingua franca on the cheap.[36]

The quest for magic bullets ranged into the choice of languages as well. Some modernizers advocated artificial languages such as Esperanto and reduced-vocabulary idioms such as Basic English as the best target languages in which to "'mass-produce' bilinguals." These alternatives seemed to offer a clean slate to those who, with Julian Huxley, worried that "making more people literate in more language" would likely "create further barriers to international understanding rather than promoting it." André Martinet, professor at the Sorbonne and Columbia University and member of the New York-based International Auxiliary Language Association, called for an artificial tongue to become the new worldwide auxiliary language—"a language which would serve no imperialism."[37] Similarly, British linguist C. K. Ogden rejected using one of the great powers' languages as a global lingua franca. Ogden instead proposed Basic English—an 850-word version of English which he had created during the interwar period—as a scientific means of stripping away the political and cultural baggage of preexisting languages: "The only alternative to this dilemma is a non-cultural compromise; a nucleus, simple but scientific, clear but free from literary entanglements … and above all embodying such analytic and normative principles as alone can lead us away from the traditional mystification and complacent psittacism of the ages."[38] It was Basic English that Ogden's intellectual collaborator and former Cambridge colleague I. A. Richards had taught to Chinese sailors during the Second World War, announcing to *Time* magazine in 1945 that the "spread of Basic as a globalingo could help avert war."[39]

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[36] Richards in "Meeting of Experts on Language Problems in Fundamental Education: Summary Report of the Sixth Meeting," 25 July 1947, Educ./Com.Exp./S.R.6. Myers in "Meeting of Experts on Language Problems in Fundamental Education: Report of the 3rd meeting," 18 July 1947, Educ./Com.Exp./S.R.3; "Meeting of Experts on Language Problems in Fundamental Education: Summary Report of the Fifth Meeting," 22 July 1947, Educ./Com.Exp./S.R.5; "Summary Report of the Sixth Meeting"; and Col. Myers, "Education for International Understanding: The Part of Language-Teaching," 2 July 1947, Educ./38/1947. All in File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives.

[37] Huxley, letter to Read, 3 April 1947; André Martinet, "Reflections on the Choice of a Language in Fundamental Education," 3 July 1947, Educ./41/1947, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives. Felix Walter's 1952 report "UNESCO and Language" explained that the artificial-language advocates at the 1947 meeting believed that artificial tongues were means of avoiding "linguistic imperialism."

[38] C. K. Ogden, "Article"; see also Walter, "UNESCO and Language."

[39] Richards in "Globalingo," *Time*, 31 Dec. 1945.

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These sweeping pedagogical fantasies would encounter opposition from colonial conservatives at the 1947 UNESCO meeting. The latter group wished to limit popular access to metropolitan languages, which seemed to threaten the social and political control that colonial regimes were desperate to impose in Indochina, Algeria, and elsewhere. The moment was a tense one in many colonies, coming on the heels of the 1946 general strike in Senegal, the Sétif massacre in Algeria, and a decade of social mobilization across the British Empire. And while officials on the spot were beginning to acknowledge the intractable reality of educated and urban colonial subjects, others were still clinging to interwar policies that vested authority in rural elites in an effort to contain change.[40] According to French linguist Aurélien Sauvageot, educating colonial subjects in French from an early age had been shown to be "not ideal" by the "events in Indo-China and North Africa": This policy had "formed a caste" which "mistakenly thought itself an elite" ready for self-government.[41] Late colonial antipathy to educating Africans in Western languages was underscored by another francophone at the 1947 UNESCO meeting, Jean-Jacques Deheyn, formerly an education official in the Belgian Congo. Current policy in the Belgian Congo was education in the vernacular first, then in French. Deheyn blasted opportunistic schoolmasters who, flouting this policy, offered primary schooling exclusively in French—thereby producing students who "consider themselves an elite but will never be anything more than malcontents." Citing a study of education in French colonial West Africa, Deheyn stingingly compared these francophone Africans to one of French literature's most infamous social climbers: they were "ridiculous," "odious," akin to Molière's "parody of the *bourgeois gentilhomme*." To conservative defenders of empire in France and Belgium, language education reflected a broad problem that was, as Deheyn put it, "sociological and

[40] Alice L. Conklin has shown how colonial governance in French West Africa took a conservative turn during the interwar period, in response to urban Africans' demands for a more equitable distribution of power. Shedding its earlier philosophy of assimilation, the interwar French administration embraced "associationalist" policies aimed at bolstering the authority of designated tribal elites. Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, 1997), chaps. 5, 6; see also Frederick Cooper, "Development, Modernization, and the Social Sciences in the Era of Decolonization: The Examples of British and French Africa," *Revue d'histoire des sciences humaines* 10 (2004), 9–38. On late colonial violence see Fabian Klose, "'Source of Embarrassment': Human Rights, State of Emergency, and the Wars of Decolonization," in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, ed., *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2011), 237–7.

[41] Sauvageot in "Summary Report of the Fourth Meeting," 23 July 1947, Educ./Com.Exp./S.R.4, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives.

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psychological rather than purely technical": how to manage and control colonized populations.[42]

British opinion, meanwhile, was highly fragmented. As early as 1929, MP Josiah Wedgwood had labeled English the "language of the future" before the British parliament. Wedgwood viewed teaching English in non-Western territories as a means of reforming British imperial rule. "If the native is to defend himself in this world, he must be able to speak a civilised language and to read civilised books," Wedgwood argued, adding that "English is the finest literature in the world."[43] The same wish to reform the empire held true for many who supported investing in Basic English abroad—a hope belied by Basic inventor C. K. Ogden's promise of "non-cultural compromise." During the Second World War, arch-imperialist Winston Churchill endorsed the teaching of Basic English, and the British war effort encompassed teaching Basic to unify Britain's far-flung possessions.[44]

Other anglophones, like the francophones Sauvageot and Deheyn, expressed doubts about teaching Western languages in the colonies, and pointed to anticolonial agitation in India to demonstrate its dangers. Since the interwar period, British imperial authorities had elevated local authorities and traditions in an attempt to slow the pace of social change. Lord Lugard, former governor general of Nigeria and theorist of indirect rule, warned in 1925 that Africa was traveling "along the same road" as India: "Here, too, an educated class was formed, out of touch with the people, imbued with theories of self-determination . . . and rapidly drifting toward the goal of 'Indian unrest.'" The Colonial Office's Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa (of which Lugard was a member) would recommend avoiding English entirely in elementary education in Africa and restricting its use in secondary schooling. While its recommendations

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42 Jean-Jacques Deheyn in "Summary Report of the Sixth Meeting"; and Jean-Jacques Deheyn, "Note concernant ce problème," August 1947, File 375:4, UNESCO Archives. On Deheyn see "Liste des experts," 27 June 1947, UNESCO/Educ./36/1947, File 375:4.A.064."47," UNESCO Archives.

43 Wedgwood quoted in House of Commons Debates, Hansard (hereafter H.C. Deb.), 2 June 1937, vol. 324, cols. 169–71. For Wedgwood's interwar comments on English-language education in the British Empire see also H.C. Deb., 13 July 1928, vol. 219, cols. 2671–2, 2676; H.C. Deb., 30 April 1929, vol. 227, cols. 1484–6; H.C. Deb., 26 June 1930, vol. 240, cols. 1471–3; H.C. Deb., 22 April 1932, vol. 264, cols. 1826–8; and H.C. Deb., 25 July 1935, vol. 304, cols. 2097–8. On Wedgwood see Paul Mulvey, *The Political Life of Josiah C. Wedgwood: Land, Liberty and Empire, 1872–1943* (Woodbridge, 2010), 7–12, 71–2, 117–19.

44 Rodney Koeneke, *Empires of the Mind: I. A. Richards and Basic English in China, 1929–1979* (Stanford, 2004), 186–7; Gordin, *Scientific Babel*, 297.

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were nonbinding, they had a powerful standard-setting effect in the interwar British Empire.[45]

By the late 1940s, this Lugardian approach to colonial education stood in opposition to the antiracist internationalism prevalent in many corridors of the United Nations, and the colonial powers knew it. Britain and France agreed to cooperate in order to stymie UN interference in their empires.[46] A UNESCO representative sent to observe the UN Trusteeship Council in 1951 reported British and French suspicion of UNESCO's education work: French Cameroon's representative criticized UNESCO for failing to express a "complete-enough appreciation of the efforts made by the French administration" there; while a British official admitted he was under orders to "attack UNESCO's observations a bit when dealing with education in British Togo."[47] Blaming Western-educated colonial subjects for demanding greater autonomy, many defenders of empire in Britain as well as in France in the 1940s and 1950s continued to view Western education as the cultural determinant of political instability in the colonies.

Modernizers and conservatives at the 1947 meeting did demonstrate one important commonality, however: a patronizing attitude toward non-Western languages and cultures. For late colonial conservatives, European rule was the natural and rightful outcome of cultural backwardness in the colonies. For modernizers, meanwhile, local practices appeared to be obstructing progress. C. K. Ogden, arguing that illiterates should not be educated in their mother tongues, put it bluntly: "When Henry Ford diagnosed the troubles of Europe as due to the need for 50 more dead languages, the problem seemed relatively simple."[48] If, for Ogden and other artificial-language advocates in the 1940s,

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45 F. D. Lugard, "Education in Tropical Africa," *Edinburgh Review*, July 1925, reprinted by the Colonial Office, Aug. 1930, CO 879/123/12; *The Place of the Vernacular in Native Education* (1925), African No. 1110, CO 879/121/4; Whitehead, "The Medium of Instruction in British Colonial Education," 2–4, 11; Evans, "Macaulay's Minute Revisited," 279. Lugard was also an influential figure on the League of Nations' Permanent Mandates Commission in the 1920s and early 1930s. On Lugard at the League see Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford, 2015). On analogies between education in British India and British Africa see, inter alia, Godfrey N. Brown, "British Educational Policy in West and Central Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 2/3 (1964), 365–77, at 365; and Evans, "Macaulay's Minute Revisited," 279.

46 Pedersen, *Guardians*, 396–99; Klose, "'Source of Embarrassment'," 245–6; and Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton, 2009), 150–51.

47 Marcel Destombes, "Mission à New York: Neuvième session du Conseil de Tutelle," memo to Director General, 25 Sept. 1951, XR/NSGT/Memo 177674, File 375:408.8.A.064."51," Part II, UNESCO Archives.

48 Ogden, "Article."

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the languages of the great powers were politically unacceptable to serve as global lingua francas, then the vernacular tongues of Asia and Africa were culturally unacceptable options. According to Adolph Myers, it was "too late now to rely on undeveloped native languages" to act as vehicular languages.[49] A preparatory report for UNESCO's 1947 meeting asked whether vernaculars should be "abandoned" or "modified" when "unfitted" to convey modern knowledge.[50] Another meeting document referenced "certain primitive languages [that] do not lend themselves easily to writing on account of their phonological complexity or irregularity"; these languages "cannot carry a modern (technical and scientific) educational content." Was it possible, the document chillingly asked, to establish "general principles" for the "desirability of working for a gradual elimination of smaller or more primitive languages"?[51] The clinical tone of documentation from the 1947 meeting was occasionally—but tellingly—interrupted by more openly antagonistic assumptions yoking together language and cultural development:

> It is estimated that 200 languages and dialects are spoken in French West Africa alone, while in one small area of Northern Rhodesia primers have been printed in six languages to carry vernacular education ... (I am told that one of these African languages cannot really be spoken unless the two middle teeth are prized out with a spear-head.)[52]

Such racially tinged rhetoric would soon fall by the wayside of international language-education efforts. The development paradigm that ascended as colonial regimes were waning after 1945 was many things to many people; one thing scholars have noted was its rejection of ethnic and racial hierarchies as organizing social principles.[53] In the field of language education, the rise of development signified the formal equality of all languages, Western and non-Western—their common capacity to express complex and abstract concepts, and to adapt to new conditions. It did not, however, mark a complete break with colonial practice. In parallel to mounting international antiracism, one key late colonial postulate endorsed by attendees of UNESCO's 1947 meeting would persist in subsequent work connecting language and development: the notion that social and political change in the non-Western world could and should be managed through language education.

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49 Myers in "Summary Report of the First Meeting."

50 "Fundamental Education: Common Ground for All Peoples: Chapter V: Suggested Lines of Action," 21 March 1947, UNESCO/Educ./10/1947, File 375:4, UNESCO Archives.

51 "General Considerations of Language Problems in Fundamental Education."

52 "Notes for Acting Director General's Opening Speech."

53 Cooper, "Development, Modernization, and the Social Sciences," 10, 26, 32–3.

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DECOLONIZATION AND THE INVENTION OF "LANGUAGES OF WIDE COMMUNICATION"

As the crumbling of European empires accelerated and newly independent states expanded the United Nations' membership, new actors would transform the organization's stance toward empire.[54] Politically, language education could and would no longer function as a means of separating populations from colonial overseers. In preparing for one 1951 meeting, UNESCO cast a wide net, consulting experts from the Philippines and India, among other places. On the cultural plane, decolonization secured growing recognition that non-Western languages were not hopelessly backwards but were rather dynamic potential instruments of development. Based on surveys it gathered in the early 1950s—which included frank criticism of colonial authorities for their neglectful treatment of non-Western languages—UNESCO concluded that the mere fact that some languages lacked scientific and technical vocabularies was neither proof of their inadequacy nor an insurmountable obstacle to progress. Governments in the Philippines, Indonesia, and India were working to modernize Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia, and Hindi respectively.[55]

Decolonization did not necessarily resolve the question of which languages to use in education. Many postcolonial elites had attended prestigious universities in Europe and the United States; and some even considered English "the language through which 'modernization' was attainable," according to the Ford Foundation.[56] English might even signify the shaking off of the colonial past in places like Indonesia, which pointedly declared English—not Dutch—its official "first foreign language."[57] In other cases, interest in Western auxiliaries would jostle with postcolonial efforts to legitimate indigenous cultures and languages. In 1949, the UN General Assembly resolved that member states should make vernacular languages "the languages of instruction in elementary, primary and

54 Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, chap. 4.

55 UNESCO/CL/489 (circular letter to member states, 1951), File 375:408.8, Part I, UNESCO Archives; "UNESCO Project: The Use of Indigenous Languages in Education: Progress Report: January 1951" (1951), File 375:408.8, Part I, UNESCO Archives; Abid Husain, letter and attached report to A. Barrera Vásquez, 25 April 1951, File 375:408.8.A.064."51," Part IA, UNESCO Archives; "Purpose and Scope of the Meeting," 15 Nov. 1951, UNESCO/EDCH/Meeting, Vern./8, File 375:408.8.A.064."51," Part IB, UNESCO Archives; Walter, "UNESCO and Language."

56 Fox, *Language and Development*, 33.

57 James E. Ianucci, "English Language Teacher Training Project in Indonesia: A Brief History and Evaluation 1959–67," Report 006680, Box 300, FA739C, Ford Foundation records (FF), RAC.

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secondary schools."[58] UNESCO soon followed suit, organizing a pair of meetings that yielded the 1953 monograph *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education*—a touchstone for later supporters of vernacular literacy.[59] UNESCO functionary Felix Walter would remember the United Nations' shift toward vernacular-language education in the late 1940s and early 1950s as part of the "reaction in Asia and Africa against linguistic imperialism and the old-fashioned idea that native cultures—and hence native languages—are inferior."[60]

While late colonial conservatives' efforts to preserve stable ethno-cultural hierarchies would fade from UNESCO's language-education debates, Western actors retained a keen concern to maintain their international influence. This issue would seem increasingly pressing in the late 1940s and early 1950s, as the Philippines gained independence, followed by India, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Laos. Scholars of decolonization and development have shown how, more often than not, political decolonization did not amount to a complete rupture with colonial-era discourse and practice. Relations between the industrialized powers and decolonizing territories frequently encompassed the ongoing transfer of expertise, and the persistence of economic ties.[61] These relations extended as well into the realm of language education. The end of colonial oversight of schooling would occasion growing American, British, and French interest in promoting their languages as transnational lingua francas. These would, it was argued, ease language conflict in new states and speed their integration into the international community.

Felix Walter, a leading figure in UNESCO's early language education work, was in the vanguard of this discursive shift. In Walter's eyes, the anticolonial pushback "against linguistic imperialism" presented Western language education reformers with a challenge—and an opportunity. In 1952, Walter prognosticated that the wave of nationalism that was unsettling the privileged status of European languages in Asia was likely to pass on to Africa, where it would create a "multitude of new language problems." The education specialist repeatedly

58 UN resolutions cited in UNESCO's untitled progress report of 10 July 1951, File 375:408.8, Part I, UNESCO Archives.

59 Unesco's work on vernacular literacy in the early 1950s would be credited when the issue again came to the fore in the more radicalized climate of the 1970s. See Patricia Lee Engle, "The Use of the Vernacular Languages in Education: 1973," Dec. 1973, Box 184, Report 004048, FA739B; and Melvin J. Fox, "Some Thoughts on Language as a Factor in Basic Education in Africa," 8 April 1974, Report 008184, Box 348, FA739C. Both in FF, RAC.

60 Walter, "UNESCO and the Teaching of Modern Languages."

61 Wm. Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Decolonization," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 22/3 (1994), 462–511; Cooper, "Development, Modernization, and the Social Sciences," 15–19, 24–7; and Gilbert Rist, *Le développement: Histoire d'une croyance occidentale*, rev. 4th edn (Paris, 2013), 131–97.

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advised UNESCO to prepare for this eventuality, for, as he put it, "language barriers constitute [a] chief source" of international tension.[62] In the early 1950s, anglophone researchers and policymakers would begin to promote cross-border lingua francas—particularly English—as a means of countering the upheavals they associated with postcolonial multilingualism.

A language-education meeting held by UNESCO in 1952 in Jos, Nigeria (then part of British West Africa), reflected both the international impact of anticolonial antiracism and the reconfiguration of Western strategies to maintain influence in new states. Focusing on how multilingualism affected the social and political cohesion of African territorial units, the Jos meeting would downplay the concerns of a few years earlier, when late colonial actors had worried that Western education posed a danger to colonial control and when modernizers had contended that African languages were not culturally "developed" enough for modern societies. Increasingly, discussion centered instead on this question: how could language education mollify political tensions and promote societal cohesion?

To fulfill these ambitions, Western experts would repurpose an existing idea for the postcolonial masses: the spread of a few lingua francas, or even a single lingua franca, worldwide. Integrating the concerns of two emerging fields, applied linguistics and communication, Felix Walter would argue that spreading "languages of wide communication," particularly in Asia and Africa, could promote understanding both within nation-states and internationally. Foremost among the candidates was English ("widely used at the Bandoeng [Bandung] Conference," Walter would note a few years later).[63]

The title of the Jos meeting, however convoluted, could not wholly obscure this shift: the "Meeting of Experts on the Use in Education of African Languages in Relation to English, Where English Is the Accepted Second Language." The meeting would pay as much attention to the use of English as a potential lingua franca in Africa as it did to vernacular-language education—much to the annoyance of Iraqi functionary Matta Akrawi, who countered that UNESCO's mandate from the UN General Assembly had been to study education in "indigenous languages," not in "secondary European languages." ("Another point which requires a big question mark is the limitation of the study of secondary languages in 1952 to English, while other secondary languages, say, French, Spanish, Portuguese, are also involved," Akrawi added in a memo to a British colleague.) For Akrawi, UNESCO's exploration of vernacular literacy

62 [Walter], "UNESCO and Language Teaching"; Walter, "UNESCO and the Teaching of Modern Languages"; Walter, "UNESCO and Language."

63 [Walter], "UNESCO and Language Teaching."

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had seemingly ended before it could begin.[64] Akrawi had exposed a fundamental ambiguity in the pursuit of "languages of wide communication": While ensuring vernacular literacy was not prima facie incompatible with spreading vehicular languages, in practice the two objectives amounted to a resource allocation problem as well as a political conundrum for education planners in many places. In large swaths of South and Southeast Asia and Africa, moreover, the politics of language in new states were doubly complicated by the existence of a multitude of local languages—meaning that language planning often entailed identifying a smaller number of regional vernaculars to elevate within the educational system, as well as choosing a vehicular tongue.

Akrawi's criticisms, though astute, would have little immediate impact on UNESCO's plans. The Jos meeting would recommend that African schools begin teaching spoken English early, preferably "in the first or second year of school life," and use audiovisual aids "wherever possible."[65] This emphasis on vehicular English was a sign of things to come, as the United States' restrained cultural diplomacy during the early Cold War gave way to growing American support for language initiatives during the "Development Decade" of the 1960s.

DEVELOPMENT AND THE IDEOLOGY OF INSTRUMENTAL ENGLISH IN THE UNITED STATES

Though a major locus of innovation in language-acquisition research during the Second World War, the United States appeared largely uninterested in international language-education work in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The intensive army programs that had contributed much to research in language education had been largely demobilized after the war. The first, haphazard

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64 Matta Akrawi, memo to Lionel Elvin et al., 25 Jan. 1951, File 375:408.8, Part I, UNESCO Archives. When Elvin, then director of UNESCO's Education Department, responded that this was a mere "misunderstanding" and that the conference was not, in fact, dedicated to the teaching of English, Akrawi scribbled dyspeptically, "Not quite a misunderstanding!" Lionel Elvin, memo to Matta Akrawi, 29 Jan. 1951, File 375:408.8, Part I, UNESCO Archives. Akrawi's biography presumably had sensitized him to issues that his British counterparts were inclined to overlook. During the interwar period, Akrawi had spent formative years participating in a student group noted for linking Arabic-language education to political pan-Arabism and anticolonial nationalism. Following Iraq's independence in 1932, Akrawi became a highly placed figure in the Iraqi educational system. On Akrawi see Hilary Falb Kalisman, "Bursary Scholars at the American University of Beirut: Living and Practising Arab Unity," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42/4 (2015), 599–617.

65 "Meeting of Experts on the Use in Education of African Languages in Relation to English, Where English Is the Accepted Second Language: Report Presented to the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization," 15 Dec. 1952, EJD/PZ, File 375:408.8(6)A0.64(66)"52," Part II, UNESCO Archives.

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forays of the Fulbright Program—American English-literature teachers were sent abroad to teach the English language without specialized training—testified to the nascent status of English-as-a-foreign-language pedagogies and applied linguistics in the United States in the late 1940s.[66] Meanwhile, the domestic hysteria that peaked with Joseph McCarthy's Senate investigations was hamstringing American support for UN institutions. Accusations of Soviet subversion at Paris-based UNESCO, which had surfaced as early as 1946, were followed by Congressional debate of UNESCO's "Toward World Understanding" pamphlets, an internal investigation of US participation by the US delegation to UNESCO, and an inquiry by the American Legion. By the time the Legion finally exonerated UNESCO in 1955, the veterans' organization had been disparaging American involvement there for almost a decade.[67] Little wonder that UNESCO's Education Department found itself chiding the US delegation in 1951 for its slow response to inquiries about the teaching of foreign languages for international understanding.[68]

Behind the scenes, however, liberal–internationalist elites were actively exploring links between development and language education such as those adumbrated by UNESCO's Felix Walter. I. A. Richards maintained government contacts after the war, fielding an inquiry from the State Department in 1946 about the possibilities for private language aid to Turkey and Afghanistan.[69] On a larger scale, the Ford Foundation would become a key funder of language-education initiatives from the early 1950s onward. Its nominal independence from the US government gave it operational latitude at a moment when McCarthyism was debilitating the State Department. The foundation's pronounced personnel overlaps and ideological commonalities with the Washington establishment, meanwhile, made it a de facto agent of US power. From 1951 onward, the Ford

66 W. Freeman Twaddell, "U.S. Activities of the Center for Applied Linguistics, 1959–1973," spring 1973, Report 004959, Box 220, FA739B, FF, RAC; Charles A. Ferguson, "The Role of the Center for Applied Linguistics, 1959–1967" (1967), Folder 3, Box 3, Series II, FA572, FF, RAC.

67 See Jesse MacKnight, letter to William Benton, 26 May 1950, Benton Papers, Box 388, Folder 2; William Benton, letter to Jesse MacKnight, 31 May 1950, Benton Papers, Box 388, Folder 2; *Congressional Record* proceedings, 1 April 1952, Benton Papers, Box 388, Folder 4; Delegation of the United States of America to the Second Extraordinary Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, "An Appraisal of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization," 1–4 July 1953, Benton Papers, Box 388, Folder 5; Ray Murphy, letter to Kenneth Holland, 5 Jan. 1955, Benton Papers, Box 388, Folder 5.

68 Herbert J. Abraham, memo to Charles Thomson, 21 Sept. 1951, EDIU/244.910, File 408.3:37, Part I, UNESCO Archives.

69 Francis J. Colligan, letter to I. A. Richards, 13 Sept. 1946, Folder 2795, Box 234, Series 200, RG 1.1, Projects, RF, RAC.

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Foundation supported initiatives designed to bolster English-language teaching in Indonesia; for in addition to Indonesian wishes to shake off the remnants of Dutch colonialism, the new nation-state was a flashpoint of the Asian Cold War following the Chinese Revolution of 1949 and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. The Ford Foundation dispensed nearly two million dollars on English-teaching initiatives there between 1951 and 1956.[70]

Meanwhile, anglophone experts and policy elites would continue to refine their thinking and tactics regarding the status of English in postcolonial and developing-world spaces. With the decline of territorial colonialism, Western powers could no longer dictate the language of instruction in schools and civil administrations, as the United States had once done in the Philippines. Nor could activities be conducted without buy-in from local actors, a factor largely neglected by modernizers such I. A. Richards at UNESCO's seminal 1947 meeting. In their effort to project English outside US borders, American foundations would seek to appeal to the development wishes of postcolonial elites in places like India and Tunisia, which embarked upon English-teaching projects in the 1950s in collaboration with the Ford Foundation and the British Council.[71] The genuine appeal—or threat, depending on one's perspective—of English as a communicative medium was also evident in South Africa, where the apartheid government had ordered mother-tongue primary instruction for the black population. After witnessing this system firsthand on a trip in the late 1950s, Ford's Melvin Fox lambasted South Africa as a place where language was "used to shut rather than open windows," presaging the fierce protests that would erupt in the mid-1970s when the apartheid regime attempted to mandate greater instruction in Afrikaans as opposed to English.[72]

Internationally minded Americans were optimistic that the waning of McCarthyism, and Josef Stalin's death in March of 1953, would rekindle Washington's support for cultural and educational initiatives abroad. One

70 Inderjeet Parmar has convincingly described the Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie foundations' portrayal of themselves as non-state actors as one of the characteristic "fictions" of twentieth-century American philanthropy. Ford's trustees from the early 1950s through the early 1970s included numerous individuals with ties to the National Security Council, the State Department, and the Defense Department, including Robert McNamara and McGeorge Bundy. Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*, 3–6, 53–5. On Ford in Indonesia see Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*, 124–48.

71 Melvin J. Fox, "The Work of American Foundations in English as a Second Language," June 1961, Report 002236, Box 91, FA739A, FF, RAC.

72 Melvin J. Fox, memo to John B. Howard, 23 Dec. 1959, folder labeled "Africa—Trip to Africa (Melvin J. Fox)—African Language Training Project and 'Trip to the Union of South Africa' Report—Charles Ferguson," Box 3, Series I, FA608, FF, RAC; Northrup, *How English Became the Global Language*, 99–100.

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encouraging sign was President Eisenhower's establishment of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in August of 1953.[73] The following year, a study sponsored by the US National Commission for UNESCO, *The National Interest and Foreign Languages*, expressed hope that, following the dark years of the early Cold War, Americans would begin to appreciate the importance of language education to the United States' international stature.[74] In the wake of the Soviet Union's 1957 sputnik launch, Washington would buttress domestic foreign-language training. The 1958 US National Defense Education Act channeled funding to states to augment foreign-language teaching and provided subventions for university-level language study.[75] It would also look to spread English abroad. The new USIA, along with a number of other federal agencies, would promote English-language education outside US borders. In the 1966 fiscal year, the USIA reported over 300,000 people, mostly adults, enrolled in its English-language classes in fifty-seven countries.[76]

The Ford Foundation, meanwhile, would seek to harmonize its work with evolving federal priorities by refining the intellectual and discursive connections between language education and development. In 1959, Ford, together with the Modern Language Association, established the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), the mission of which encompassed "[improving] the teaching of English around the world."[77] The Washington, DC-based center would soon issue a report that identified *Second Language Learning as a Factor in National Development in Asia, Africa, and Latin America*. The report admitted that in many places, "the immediate, urgent problem" was education in local or national languages. However, "all developing countries" shared one thing in common: "the need for increased learning of a language of wider communication (LWC) such as English or French." The concept of languages of "wide" or "wider communication"—advocated by Felix Walter at UNESCO and then by Walter's contacts at Ford and the CAL—affirmed the role of Western languages in postcolonial spaces.

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73 On the establishment of the USIA see Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, 2006), 46–75, esp. 57–8, 70–71.

74 Parker, *The National Interest and Foreign Languages*, 59–64. Parker noted that, despite the boost that the Second World War had given to language acquisition research, foreign-language enrollment in American universities had dropped every consecutive year from 1947 to 1953.

75 John L. Watzke, *Lasting Change in Foreign Language Education: A Historical Case for Change in National Policy* (Westport, CT, 2003), 45–51; Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*, 186; Fox, *Language and Development*, 36.

76 Fox, *Language and Development*, 33–5; USIA annual report numbers cited in Albert H. Marckwardt, "Teaching English as a Foreign Language" (1967), Folder 4, Box 3, Series II, FA572, FF, RAC.

77 "Our History," CAL website, at www.cal.org/who-we-are/our-history, accessed 2 Feb. 2016.

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Whereas less than fifteen years before, late colonial conservatives could portray the teaching of English and French in Africa as linguistic insubordination, the CAL's very existence was premised on cross-border communication in these languages, particularly English—"the most important of the LWC's."[78] On the cusp of the "Development Decade" announced by President Kennedy and the United Nations in 1961, then, well-connected scholars were framing the spread of English abroad as a development priority.[79]

The constellation of federal initiatives oriented toward spreading the English language outside US borders would expand in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The same year as the CAL's founding, 1959, Voice of America kicked off programming in "Special English" (like Basic English, a limited-vocabulary variety of English).[80] Language education also provided political traction for liberals in the space race. The Kennedy administration and its Congressional allies advertised satellite communications as a means of influencing nonaligned and developing nations, with the chair of the House Committee on Science and Astronautics predicting in 1961 that the "nation that controls worldwide communications and television will ultimately have that nation's language become the universal tongue."[81] (Development-communication scholar Wilbur Schramm would echo this idea a few years later at a UNESCO expert meeting on satellite communications: according to the Stanford-based Schramm, satellites would offer "precisely the incentive needed" for new Asian and African nations to adopt lingua francas like English.[82]) In 1965, four years after Kennedy established the Peace Corps, the agency enumerated that over two thousand of its volunteers were engaged in some form of English teaching. Another child of the Kennedy administration, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), would establish itself as a player in English-language education in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. USAID reported it had trained 6,202 foreign teachers of English in the 1964 fiscal year, mostly in Africa. By the same year, the US government was funding programs to teach English in seventy-plus countries

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78 CAL, *Second Language Learning as a Factor in National Development in Asia, Africa, and Latin America: Summary Statement and Recommendations of an International Meeting of Specialists Held in London, December 1960* (Washington, DC, 1961), 2. On Walter's connection to Ford and the CAL see CAL, memo to Ford Foundation, 8 Oct. 1959, and Melvin J. Fox, memo to George Gant and John Howard, 27 Jan. 1960, both in folder labeled "Africa—Trip to Africa," Box 3, Series I, FA608, FF, RAC.

79 On the Development Decade see Rist, *Le développement*, 167.

80 Alan L. Heil, *Voice of America: A History* (New York, 2003), 273–87.

81 Quoted in Hugh R. Slotten, "Satellite Communications, Globalization, and the Cold War," *Technology and Culture* 43/2 (2002), 315–50, at 336.

82 Wilbur Schramm, "Communication Satellites—Some Social Implications," 10 Sept. 1965, UNESCO/Spacecom/3, File 629.19: 621.39 MEE, UNESCO Archives.

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to the tune of nearly $15 million annually, through the Peace Corps, USAID, the USIA, the State Department, and the Defense Department. Although precise data on the Defense Department's language initiatives remained murky, one Ford representative sent to Saigon in the late 1960s reported that "English has replaced French as the language of wider communication in Vietnam," noting the "massive training program in English underway," which enrolled thousands of students per year in courses run by USAID, the USIA, and the State and Defense departments.[83]

Soon after policymakers and politicians in the United States and at the United Nations embraced socioeconomic development as a global goal, the idea of English as a development tool would receive the executive imprimatur. In 1965, the Johnson administration issued National Security Action Memorandum No. 332 (NSAM 332), which declared Washington's intention "to be of active and friendly assistance to countries that desire . . . help in the teaching and utilization of English":

> English has become one of the most important world languages. The rapidly growing interest in English cuts across political and ideological lines because of the convenience of a *lingua franca* increasingly used as a second language in important areas of the world . . . English is a key which opens doors to scientific and technical knowledge indispensable to the economic and political development of vast areas of the world. An increase in the knowledge of English can contribute directly to greater understanding among nations. It can also be the means of assuring access to a treasure house of man's knowledge about himself—about his political experiments, his philosophies, and his inner human needs.[84]

The memo's immediate goal was to consolidate language diplomacy—embraced by numerous federal agencies in the preceding decade—under the authority of the State Department. But, besides rejigging executive-branch responsibilities, it also quickly caught the attention of well-connected cultural producers. The correspondence of William Benton, simultaneously publisher of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and US ambassador to UNESCO, discloses the ambitions for vehicular English that were circulating in the American private

[83] "Report on Survey of U.S. Government English Language Programs for Fiscal Years 1964, 1965 and 1966," 20 May 1965, and "Peace Corps Volunteers Employed as English Teachers as of March 31, 1965" (1965?), Folder 13, Box 3, Series III, FA548, FF, RAC; "English Language Programs of the Agency for International Development," Department of State, Agency for International Development, Dec. 1967, at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnaad469.pdf, accessed 8 Feb. 2016; J. M. Cowan, "J. M. Cowan's Visit to Saigon, February 21–25, 1969," 1969, Report 006678, Box 300, FA739C, FF, RAC.

[84] "National Security Action Memorandum No. 332: U.S. Government Policy on English Language Teaching Abroad," 11 June 1965, Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library website, at www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/nsams/nsam332.asp, accessed 24 July 2013, emphasis in the original. The quoted text is from an unclassified portion of the memo which was intended for public consumption.

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sector in the mid-1960s. "English could and should become the universal language of the future," wrote Britannica, Inc.'s Alexis Ladas to Benton, adding that the "best and quickest way to achieve this end would be to give people the basic tools so that they can go the rest of the way by themselves." To which Benton replied confidentially: "Perhaps we can become a subcontractor on a mass scale."[85] In the wake of NSAM 332, even more cautious voices at the State Department could characterize the provision of English-language materials to audiences abroad as a basic objective of US foreign policy.[86]

Americans were not confronting a *tabula rasa*, of course. The Johnson administration was in many places building upon linguistic foundations laid by the British Empire, and was cooperating with British leadership in the process. The State Department's Douglas Batson reported to William Benton in 1965 that the United States was leaving the "formal teaching of English" to the British in ex-British colonies, preferring instead to supply books, audiovisual materials, and broadcasts.[87] The Ford Foundation's work during this period also entailed collaboration with British actors. Both sides, for instance, were committed to enhancing their stock of knowledge about global language use. In 1959, the CAL, with Ford funding, began an ambitious "World Second Language Survey" jointly with the British Council and the French government. Among themselves, anglophones frequently conflated the survey with their English-language work abroad.[88]

On the other hand, the Johnson administration's sweeping rhetoric did not necessarily translate into long-term policy commitments. Both federal and foundation funding for English teaching abroad would diminish by the 1970s, amid declining capacity to fund development aid, and declining confidence in its results. More to the point, the Ford Foundation actually built contraction into its aid model: many Ford programs aimed to implant English locally by training teacher trainers and by creating language education institutions that (in time, it was hoped) would operate largely independently of American aid. The

85 Alexis Ladas, memo to William Benton, 25 Aug. 1965; and William Benton, memo to Alexis Ladas, 20 Aug. 1965. On Ladas see William Benton, letter to Douglas Batson, 27 Aug. 1965. All in Benton Papers, Box 393, Folder 6.

86 Douglas Batson, letter to William Benton, 16 Aug. 1965, Benton Papers, Box 393, Folder 6.

87 Batson explained that this division of labor was in part an attempt to avoid provoking France over the rise of US power in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. Batson, memo to Benton, 12 May 1965, and Douglas Batson, memo to William Benton, 19 May 1965, Benton Papers, Box 393, Folder 6.

88 Fox, *Language and Development*, 36–7, 42–3, 67. On English and the World Second Language Survey see, for instance, F. F. Hill, memo to John Howard et al., 2 Dec. 1959 (headed "Copied from Handwritten Notes"), and CAL, memo to Ford Foundation re "Survey of Needs and Resources for Teaching English and Other World Languages," 8 Oct. 1959, both in folder labeled "Africa—Trip to Africa," Box 3, Series I, FA608, FF, RAC.

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foundation frequently contrasted this with the "retail" approach of the Peace Corps and other direct-service programs.[89]

What NSAM 332 did signify, independent of the approaches of various aid initiatives or the effectiveness of their policies, was the crystallization of a specific discourse about language in the United States. Suddenly—conveniently—the mother tongue of the American elite and much of the American public had become a mechanism for conveying information, a "key which opens doors," everywhere in the world.[90] USAID, citing NSAM 332, would reiterate this conception of English in a survey of its language activities in 1967:

> Social and economic development in the newly emerging nations depends upon effective and efficient use of a communication instrument equal to the job of transferring needed knowledge, skills and activities. In the absence of an international language spoken, written, and understood by all, there has always been reliance on "world languages" which serve as international media of communication. For many generations English has been one of these "world" languages; today it is the most widely used of all "world" languages.[91]

This discourse persisted in spite of fluctuating American interest in English-language-teaching aid. Even after Melvin Fox and the Ford Foundation began to expand the focus of their language work from promoting vehicular English to producing more localized studies of language use in Africa and elsewhere—part of the broader rejection of hardcore modernization theory—Fox, among others, continued to mingle the terms "modernization" and "development" in discussing the benefits of auxiliary English. As he put it in 1975, "English will continue to be a matter of interest and importance to many developing countries as a language of instruction, as a specialized school subject, and as a means for achieving access to technological material that is essential to modernization."[92]

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89 On "permanent-effect" versus "stopgap" approaches see Ianucci, "English Language Teacher Training Project in Indonesia"; "Ford Foundation Activities in Teaching English as a Second Language," Feb. 1964, Folder 2, Box 1, Series I, FA572, FF, RAC; and Harvey P. Hall, memo to J. D. Kingsley, 15 Aug. 1966, Report 009300, Box 386, FA739D, FF, RAC. On the 1970s retrenchment see Melvin Fox, memo to Francis X. Sutton, 15 Dec. 1978, Report 008175, Box 347, FA739C, FF, RAC.

90 "National Security Action Memorandum No. 332."

91 "English Language Programs of the Agency for International Development."

92 Fox, *Language and Development*, 147. On the evolution of the foundation's work see Melvin Fox, memo to F. Champion Ward, 14 Sept. 1964, Folder 12, Box 9, Series IV, FA582; [Francis X. Sutton], "A Gloss on Fox: Some Implications of the Fox Report for Foundation Activities in the Language Field and Proposals for Follow-Up," 8 Jan. 1968, Report 007118, Box 314, FA739A; Betty Pinto Skolnick, memo to Reuben Frodin, 12 Aug. 1971, Report 006260, Box 280, FA739B; Frank Cawson, "The International Activities of the Center for Applied Linguistics," 1973, Report 003315, Box 157, FA739B. All in FF, RAC.

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This instrumental understanding of language differed sharply from the thinking of interwar reformers. By the 1960s, the civilizational claims that had inspired Josiah Wedgwood and his contemporaries to advocate for the spread of English in the British Empire had fallen out of favor: "Shakespeare and Milton" were decidedly subordinate to the transfer of technical knowledge.[93] And technical knowledge, assessments by USAID and the Ford Foundation contended, existed and circulated primarily in "world languages" like English. As USAID put it, "Adequate textual and resource materials are not to be found in the local languages [of developing countries] in the fields of science, agriculture, engineering, medicine and other technical disciplines . . . Hence, mastery of a 'world' language . . . is a requirement for scientific and technical study."[94] American conceptions of the place of English in the world had diverged, too, from the arguments of 1940s modernizers like Julian Huxley, under whose leadership UNESCO had mapped contemporary languages onto an evolutionary timeline.[95] The Johnson administration and organizations like the CAL did not contest the hypothetical fitness of non-Western languages to express scientific content. Rather, it was the pace of change that rendered vehicular English useful in a world in which development seemed to march to the drumbeat of innovation. Creating educational materials in different languages required time and resources. Even commentators who rejected the excessively mechanistic approach of modernization theory could argue, seemingly pragmatically, that English simply made more scientific and technical content immediately available to a wide audience abroad.[96]

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Historians of modernization and development have commonly characterized the 1960s as a heyday of statist undertakings, a period when US liberals attempted

93 Interwar restrictions on English teaching in British Africa had prompted one Labour MP to ask, "Is this the new Imperialism, to discourage the tongue of Shakespeare and Milton?" H.C. Deb., 02 July 1928, vol. 219, cols. 952–3.

94 "English Language Programs of the Agency for International Development."

95 On Huxley's connection to eugenics and his ambiguous antiracism, see Glenda Sluga, "UNESCO and the (One) World of Julian Huxley," *Journal of World History* 23/3 (2010), 393–418; Perrin Selcer, "Beyond the Cephalic Index: Negotiating Politics to Produce UNESCO's Scientific Statements on Race," *Current Anthropology* 53/S5 (2012), S173–S184; and Michelle Brattain, "Race, Racism, and Antiracism: UNESCO and the Politics of Presenting Science to the Postwar Public," *American Historical Review* 112/5 (2007), 1386–1413.

96 "English Language Programs of the Agency for International Development," 1; Fox, *Language and Development*, 147, 150.

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to duplicate the Tennessee Valley Authority in the Mekong delta in order to check the international forces of communism.[97] The evolution of postwar language discourses examined in this article reveals another strand of this history, one that has stretched beyond the period of big-state liberalism: rising American confidence in the merits of vehicular English abroad. In 2012, Lawrence Summers, former president of Harvard University and veteran of the Clinton and Obama administrations, proclaimed in the *New York Times* that "English's emergence as the global language, along with the rapid progress in machine translation," had greatly diminished the need for anglophones to learn foreign languages. This was as true for Americans abroad as it was at home, Summers suggested: "While there is no gainsaying the insights that come from mastering a language, it will over time become less essential in doing business in Asia, treating patients in Africa or helping resolve conflicts in the Middle East."[98] By advertising English as a pragmatic tool for development and diplomacy (as well as profitmaking), Summers echoed tropes about vehicular English that first blossomed in the United States during the 1960s.

Summers's reflections, however blunt, were no outlier in contemporary American culture. Take higher education as an example. The notion that machine translation can render the world legible without the burden of language training is an illusion perpetuated by the tech industry and readily embraced by many American college students—much to the chagrin of their foreign-language instructors.[99] Somewhat more surprising is the institutional and epistemological purchase of monolingualism at the graduate level. Since the 1960s, American graduate programs in the sciences have slashed their language requirements. Meanwhile, the Modern Language Association reports a "steady decrease in the use of non-English sources in research across the humanities and social

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97 See, for instance, Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 151–207; and Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 190–225.

98 Lawrence H. Summers, "What You (Really) Need to Know," *New York Times*, 20 Jan. 2012, ED26.

99 Notes one US-based professor of German, students "frequently display an astonishing naïveté when it comes to the internet and its content; they do not question its authority or truthfulness. The speed with which an online service or web tool translates a sentence is sometimes even seen as a mark of quality: The translation must be right—even if the student does not understand it—because the computer provided the result so quickly and without hesitation." Sören Steding, "Machine Translation in the German Classroom: Detection, Reaction, Prevention," *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German* 42/2 (2009), 178–89, at 178. Although online translation tools "cultivate an image of automated, frictionless translation," this image belies the continuing imperfection of machine translation technology, and the translation industry's ongoing reliance on human labor. See Scott Kushner, "The Freelance Translation Machine: Algorithmic Culture and the Invisible Industry," *New Media & Society* 15/8 (2013), 1241–58.

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sciences."[100] Taken together, these findings reflect the imprint of mid-century language debates on contemporary American culture and society.

As in the 1960s, the implications of this instrumental understanding of language extend outside US borders. Its persistence from the Johnson administration to the present day suggests that American elites have retained at least a kernel of Development Decade *naïveté*: the idea that, despite much intervening evidence to the contrary, the world is fundamentally comprehensible through the medium of English, and will respond in positive and predictable ways to interventions conceived and executed without thick cultural and linguistic knowledge ("treating patients in Africa," "helping resolve conflicts in the Middle East"). While American ideas about global English matured in the context of Cold War development activities, neither the end of the Development Decade nor that of the Cold War would mark the limit of these still unproven assumptions.

[100] Gordin, *Scientific Babel*, 312; "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World," *Modern Language Association*, at www.mla.org/Resources/Research/Surveys-Reports-and-Other-Documents/Teaching-Enrollments-and-Programs/Foreign-Languages-and-Higher-Education-New-Structures-for-a-Changed-World, accessed 12 Feb. 2016.

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