

Language Education and Imperialism: The Case of Title VI and Arabic, 1958-1991

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Abstract

This article presents key findings from an interpretive policy analysis of the role that national security ideologies have played in the implementation of federal language education policies in the United States. To better understand this relationship, the study focuses on the case of Arabic language programs supported by Title VI between 1958 and 1991. Specifically, I argue that assessing how policy-relevant actors have enacted past language education policies explicitly linked to national security contributes to meeting three goals: adding to recent theoretical work on Marxism and language to reclaim territory otherwise ceded to postmodernism within critical applied linguistics; using such Marxist perspectives to better understand contemporary language education policies forged in the name of national security; thereby clarifying current debates about the most effective basis on which to advocate for language education, indeed for a more multilingual and just society.

All of our efforts in Iraq, military and civilian, are handicapped by Americans' lack of language and cultural understanding. Our embassy of 1,000 [in Baghdad] has 33 Arabic speakers, just six of whom are at the level of fluency. (Iraq Study Group, 2006, p. 60)

In December 2006 the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan panel convened to assess the U.S. occupation of Iraq, released its long-awaited report. Among other findings, the report documented a lack of U.S. personnel in Iraq who speak Arabic at any level of proficiency. Since the report's release, two numbers cited above, six and 33, have taken on a life of their own in deliberations over reforming foreign language education in the United States. That the federal government would be concerned, for example, with deficiencies in the language of a country it is occupying is self-evident.

In need of greater clarification, however, is how advocates for language education in the U.S. have employed these two numbers. Take for example the advertisement (see Figure 1 below) placed by the American Council on Education (ACE) in the January 8, 2007 edition of *Roll Call*, a Capitol Hill newspaper. Citing the Iraq Study Group report, the advertisement features a disproportionately large "6" at the top of the page, and explains just below the meaning of the number. The body of the advertisement reads in part, "It's hard to represent America's interests abroad when we can't speak the language." The ad goes on to name federal policies such as Title VI that promote foreign language education and advocates greater funding for them. By connecting this advocacy to the U.S. embassy in Baghdad and to the Iraq Study Group report, the generality of "America's interests abroad" becomes quite specific, namely victory in war and occupation. That an educational advocacy organization would employ such a rationale to call for greater funding of language education policies raises troublesome questions about the relationship among education, language learning, and the nation-state.



Figure 1: Advertisement from *Roll Call* advocating greater funding for language Education. (Retrieved September 4, 2007 from <http://www.languagepolicy.org/documents/RollCallAd.pdf>)

To be sure, the dearth of linguistic expertise in the U.S. embassy in Baghdad exposes a certain imperial arrogance in not bothering to learn the language(s) of the countries one invades and occupies. However, scholars and practitioners of language education need to ask ourselves: is this an effective way to frame our advocacy for language learning? What consequences, both intended and otherwise, result from linking language education to national security?

This article is but one effort to address such questions. It presents key findings from an interpretive policy analysis of the role that national security ideologies have played in the implementation of federal language education policies in the United States. To better understand the interplay between national security ideologies and language education policies, the study focuses on the case of Arabic language programs supported by Title VI between 1958-1991. In this paper I argue specifically that assessing how policy-relevant actors have enacted past language education policies explicitly linked to national security contributes to meeting three goals: adding to recent theoretical work on Marxism and language (e.g., Ives, 2004) to reclaim territory otherwise ceded to postmodernism within critical applied linguistics; using such Marxist perspectives to better understand contemporary language education policies forged in the name of national security; thereby clarifying current debates about the most effective basis on which to advocate for language education, indeed for a more multilingual and just society.

Situating the Research

Two points of background are required to illuminate the argument I forward here. The first is a general overview of Title VI policy and the programs it has funded, and what I argue to be a gap in historiography of this policy. The second reviews applied linguistic policy research on foreign language education policy and advocacy to identify a conspicuous analytical blind spot.

Overview of Title VI

It is beyond the scope of this article to present a full policy history of Title VI (see Edwards, Lenker & Kahn, 2008; Slater, 2007). However, in order to make sense of the research discussed below, a basic overview of Title VI is required. In August 1958 Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), of which Title VI was one of ten titles. President Eisenhower signed the bill into law on September 2, 1958. The NDEA and Title VI are best known in

relation to the Soviet sputniks, the first of which launched on October 4, 1957. The impact of that reaction can be seen in the opening section of the legislation:

The Congress hereby finds and declares that the security of the Nation requires the fullest development of the mental resources and technical skills of its young men and women. The present emergency demands that additional and more adequate educational opportunities be made available. (National Defense Education Act, 1958, p. 3)

Cold War logic trumped long-standing political Congressional resistance to federal influence on public education. In fact, the legislation constituted one of the first comprehensive federal interventions into public schooling in U.S. history (Clowse, 1981; Ruther, 1994; Spring, 1989).

Title VI was divided into two main parts: Part A focused on programs for higher education; Part B focused on K-12 programs. Taken together, both parts authorized four principle initiatives: 1) language and area centers at universities (now called National Resource Centers); 2) modern foreign language fellowships (now called Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships); 3) research on improving foreign language instruction and the creation of instructional materials; and 4) language institutes that delivered professional development for teachers, often held in the summer (National Defense Education Act, 1958). National Resource Centers originally were organized around distinct geopolitical regions and, then as now, act as interdisciplinary intellectual hubs on sponsoring campuses¹. One of the primary charges for area studies centers is to teach the languages spoken in the respective geopolitical region. Although the scope of Title VI programs has changed over the years, an initial primary focus was instruction in what are often referred to as *critical languages*², that is, those languages the federal government deems essential for U.S. economic and geopolitical interests (Brecht & Rivers, 2000).

The first ten years of Title VI reauthorizations and appropriations are considered the high point of the program in terms of relative funding and impact (Slater, 2007); thereafter, conflicts related to the Vietnam War and economic crises left Title VI more vulnerable (Ruther, 1994). In 1980, the NDEA was discontinued, with many of its provisions rolled into the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or the Higher Education Act, both of 1965. Congress shifted Title VI to the latter. Reauthorizations after 1980 afforded Title VI greater stability in terms of fixed

¹ Since 1980, they also include thematic centers, such as the CIBERs for international business.

² Such as Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Farsi (Persian), Hindi/Urdu, Japanese, Korean, Russian, the Turkic languages, etc.

competition cycles, even if relative funding declined. Title VI continues to this day, most recently reauthorized in 2008.

To be sure, there exists a limited historiography of Title VI and its language programs. However, that take a socio-historical or critical perspective to policy analysis (e.g. Clowse, 1981; Spring, 2006) spend little time considering such policies as language policies and the impact they had on language education. Others (e.g. Edwards et al., 2008; Gumperz, 1970; Hines, 2001; Lambert, 1984; O'Connell & Norwood, 2007; Ruther, 1994; Slater, 2007) treat initiatives such as Title VI as language policies insofar as they consider the language programs these policies supported. Yet, such studies do not critically assess the goals behind language education policies such as Title VI, or what the ideological and practical fall-out of them may be. Watzke (2003) conducts the most comprehensive history of foreign language education in the United States from a critical perspective. The 100-year-plus scope of his analysis, however, means that discussion of Title VI and related policies is by necessity limited. In short, given the simmering controversy over language education policies explicitly linked to national security (see below), there is simply not enough scholarship on what that nexus has entailed historically.

Language Education Policy and the Resource Debate

The predominant framework in the U.S. literature for understanding language education policy construes languages and their speakers as a resource, drawing on the seminal tripartite analysis of language policy orientations elaborated by Ruiz (1984). Ruiz identifies three language planning orientations (i.e., language as problem, right, and resource) that reflect underlying ideological assumptions about language and its place in society. Certainly, the resource orientation has been widely promoted as an approach to language education policy because of its social justice implications: it reframes multilingual and/or non-English proficiency as an asset to cultivate, not a deficit to redress; and it holds the potential to alleviate conflict between emergent bilinguals and English monolinguals insofar as both have valuable linguistic resources to share with the other. However, often left out of discussions of the resource orientation is the second part of Ruiz's definition, which frames language as a resource for economic advancement, military preparedness and foreign policy.

More recently, Ruiz (2010) has revisited the resource orientation in light of multiple critiques of his original thesis. Unfortunately, his remarks only confound the framework's ambiguity. For example, Ruiz is silent on how recent policy advocacy has appropriated the resource orientation

in service of national security. The sheer volume of ink spilled in applied linguistic scholarship³ since the events of September 11, 2001 examining the nexus of language education and national security renders this omission lamentable, at least. Although Ruiz (2010) explores the relationship between the rights and resource orientations to language, the balance of his comments merely acknowledge that language-as-resource will mean different things to different people. This leaves the central ambiguity inherent in the resource orientation unresolved: if language is a resource, then to what ends and in whose interests? Further, can we employ language education to meet multiple ends and serve multiple interests at once, or do some in fact predominate?

The implications of those very questions have been the subject of growing scrutiny. In exploring this debate, it is deceptively easy to frame it as two camps arguing with one another. For example, there is a segment of the language education community that has consistently advocated language education primarily to fulfill U.S. military, economic, and political needs (e.g., Brecht, 2007; Brecht & Rivers, 2000; Edwards, 2004; O'Connell & Norwood, 2007). In most cases, improved language education is subordinated to national interests that the authors assume we all share and endorse. By contrast, a second set of language education policy research interrogates the entanglement of the resource orientation with U.S. national interests. For example, Ricento (2005) questions not the orientation itself, but rather how scholars, practitioners and policy makers employ it. He challenges language education advocates to clarify "hegemonic ideologies associated with the roles of non-English languages in national life" (p. 350) in how they frame their advocacy. Petrovic (2005), extending Michael Apple's work, links his analysis of the resource metaphor to the conservative restoration of U.S. power. With respect to language education, this neo-conservative offensive centers on anti-bilingual education initiatives. Petrovic acknowledges that the resource approach aims to counter attacks on bilingual education. But because such an approach identifies with economic and political interests as elites define them, it bolsters the same ideological framework that it intends to challenge.

More often, considerations of language education policy and the resource orientation are conflicted. For example, Kramersch (2005) reviews the historical intersection between foreign language research and economic, cultural and defense interests. She scrutinizes how linguists

³ For example, the semi-annual *Perspectives* section of *The Modern Language Journal* has convened discussion on this topic in no fewer than five issues between 2003 and 2007.

have found themselves ensnared in these national interests. As her analysis turns to the post-9/11 context, however, the argument shifts. Kramersch does critique the “current appropriation of academic knowledge by state power...” (p. 557), referring to language policies tied to national security. In the same paragraph, however, she argues that, “No one would deny that it is the prerogative of a nation state to rally the expertise of its scientists for its national defense” (p. 557). These statements are contradictory: if such a right is undeniable, then on what basis do we evaluate what makes one appropriation of academic knowledge in the name of national defense reasonable and another risky?

A second example, Reagan (2002), relates more specifically to critical languages. Reagan wages a compelling argument acknowledging the profound impact that race, class, and language variation have on the language classroom. As he turns to critical languages, however, Reagan invokes “the geopolitical aspect” of language education and argues that it is in society’s interest to develop capacity “in the various national and regional languages that are used in areas of national political, economic, and strategic concern” (p. 42). Referencing September 11, Reagan continues:

Our need to understand others in the world provides another justification for studying the less commonly taught languages, since the languages themselves play an essential role in *our* ability to understand the speech communities that use them. (p. 42, researcher emphasis)

The sharpness of Reagan’s earlier discussion dulls once the conversation turns to critical languages and national security. Now, it seems there exists a set of undifferentiated interests – *our* interests – at play. Because *our* is not defined, we are left to wonder if the racial, class, and linguistic differences Reagan analyzes earlier are subordinated to dominant national identities and interests, of which he was earlier so critical.

In a direct reply to Petrovic (2005), McGroarty (2006) defends the resource orientation from a tactical perspective. She cites a standard text on general policy analysis to argue for language policy advocacy that employs a variety of rationales. Referencing the cyclical nature to policy discussions, McGroarty maintains:

A logical implication for those who consider themselves pragmatists or political realists is that advocates for positive language-in-education policies must constantly articulate the value of bilingualism, and be able to do so in varied terms that respond to a protean environment of public discussion. Scholars need to build a strong normative case for the nature and meaning of language considered as a right...at the same time, policymakers must hear from advocates who can articulate multiple rationales... (pp. 5-6)

Her argument aggravates a tension between principle and pragmatism. The very separation of normative, rights-based arguments from those aimed at policy makers implies that the former carry less weight, if any, in the policy process. This concession recalls the ambiguity in the resource orientation itself, namely can multiple definitions of it coexist, or do some outweigh others? Furthermore, this concession seems to confirm Petrovic's (2005) argument: by adapting to the constraints of fickle policy environments – instead of challenging them directly – we risk strengthening them.

I would argue that the greater share of commentary and scholarly work on language education policy and national security wades in these muddy waters. The literature reflects an unsure mix of critical arguments and those that subordinate language learning to ill-defined national interests. Moreover, the lack of historical perspective on this nexus of national security ideologies and language learning muddies the waters further still. In short, the discussion about language education policy and national security is a deeply conflicted one in need of clarification at theoretical and practical levels.

Marxism, Imperialism, and Language

My efforts to address the above questions extend Ruiz's (1984) resource orientation to language policy by specifying to what ends and in whose interest federal policies frame language as a resource. As such, this theoretical framework responds to the calls made by Ricento (2005) and Petrovic (2005) to clarify the ideological overtones of the resource metaphor itself. I argue that the classical Marxist theory of imperialism offers the most promising framework to understand the policy connections between national security ideologies and language education.

The classical Marxist tradition of theorizing imperialism turns on a central contradiction that Lenin (1986) identifies in 1913:

Developing capitalism knows two historical tendencies in the national question. The first is the awakening of national life and national movements, the struggle against all national oppression, and the creation of national states. The second is the development and growing frequency of international intercourse in every form, the breakdown of national barriers, the creation of the international unity of capital, of economic life in general, of politics, science, etc. (p. 94)

How this contradiction expresses itself varies over time and context, but it flows from capital's need for a specific material and social infrastructure, most often organized through the structure

of the nation-state.

In material terms the state initially unified domestic markets to ensure successful capitalist development at the national level. Reaching a domestic market required a certain degree of political unity that could displace feudal or absolutist state mechanisms that thwarted economic development. In social terms, one aspect of this unification included marshalling linguistic resources, specifically the invention and imposition of standardized languages. Whether or not such language invention preceded or followed consolidation of state power (see Harman, 1992; Hobsbawm, 1990), consolidation of bourgeois power in the form of the nation-state implicated a parallel consolidation of standardized national languages. The consequence: an almost universal formula that Xians speak Xish in Xland.⁴

However, mere standardization has not proven sufficient to capitalism. Rather, a monolingual regime has also emerged asserting that Xians speak *only* Xish in Xland. In most cases, full membership in Xian society is predicated, at least in part, on proficiency in Xish. As Hobsbawm (1990) noted about the French revolution, at issue is rarely whether someone is a native speaker of Xish, but rather whether that individual is willing to acquire Xish in a bid for membership in Xian society. Further, in almost every instance school is the primary institution in which monolingualism in Xish is enforced. These dynamics at once construct and reify hegemonic beliefs about monolingualism as both a natural and ideal condition, and a requisite index of national identity. Such beliefs are especially pernicious given that – after three centuries of the modern nation-state – monolingualism in practice remains the minority human experience (cf. Anderson, 2006; Fishman, 1972; Gellner, 1983; Harman, 1992; Hobsbawm, 1990; Löwy, 1975; May, 2001; Wiley, 1999).

Behind this initial marshalling of material and social resources, economic development has unfolded in ways that require as much as transfigure the nation-state. Not only does capital tend to concentrate in the hands of fewer monopolies, but also those monopolies' demands for markets and resources outgrow national borders. In the context of World War I, Lenin (1916/1963) deepens this analysis by understanding that colonization, or imperialism as he defines it, leads not only to wealthy nations exploiting poor nations in search of new markets and resources. Instead, competition over those markets and resources engenders economic,

⁴ Although these formulations are mine, I must acknowledge Fishman and his use of Xmen speaking Xish in the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for understanding language loss and revitalization.

political, social, and ultimately military conflict *among* wealthy nations as well.

These basic terms of the classical Marxist understanding of the nation-state and imperialism have been subject(ed) to endless criticism as overly reductive and fatalistic. The kernel of truth to such critique can be found in debates within the Marxist tradition against reformism and Stalinism (and its Maoist variant); those debates were largely resolved in the negative insofar as reformism (e.g., the parties of the Second International), and the former Soviet Union, its own empire, and the network of political parties it influenced, dominated left discourse for most of the 20th century. Of course, each claimed sole proprietorship over Marxist thought (for discussion of each tradition with respect to imperialism, see Harman, 1992; Löwy, 1976; Munck, 1986, especially ch. 2-5).

A competent understanding of the Marxist tradition of theorizing imperialism, however, couples the economic analysis of competition among wealthy nations over the spoils of the world with a dynamic understanding of nationalism. Such an approach begins with Marx and Engels themselves. To be sure, they never develop a complete theory of imperialism or nationalism, and in several instances⁵ they are wrong. Nevertheless, their later work does begin to sketch out a theory of national oppression, particularly its consequences within the aggressor state. For example, in his analysis of Russian oppression of Poland, Engels argues:

A people that oppresses others cannot emancipate itself. The power that leads to the oppression of others always turns back against itself in the end. As long as Russian soldiers remain in Poland, the Russian people cannot free themselves either politically or socially. (Marx & Engels, 1874/1973, p. 527, researcher translation)

Marx raises a similar argument in his analysis of English oppression of Ireland: “Ultimately, England today is seeing a repetition of what happened on a massive scale in ancient Rome. A nation that enslaves another forges its own chains” (Marx & Engels, 1870/1975, p. 417, researcher translation). According to this tentative analysis, the same power that exerts itself across national borders maintains society as it is at home.

Lenin (1914/1972, 1986) develops these initial sketches through repeated examinations of the experiences of imperialism and national oppression in cultural, religious and linguistic terms. Central to his analysis is a dynamic understanding of nationalism that distinguishes the

⁵ Particularly Engels and his reliance on Hegel’s notion of “non-historic” nations to understand national oppression. See Anderson (2009) for an exhaustive investigation of Marx and Engels’ developing analyses on nationalism.

nationalism of aggressor nations from that of oppressed nations. He insists that oppressed nations have the right to determine their own fate politically, culturally and otherwise. With respect to language and education, Lenin (1913/1977, 1986) advocates the rights of oppressed peoples consumed by empire to receive education in their home language. He does so primarily in a polemic against Austrian Marxist Otto Bauer's schemes for schools segregated by nationality in the name of cultural national autonomy. In this debate, Lenin calls for multinational and multilingual curricula within the same school as a tool for integration and overcoming national barriers. For example, in a discussion of data on the national origin of pupils in St. Petersburg, he cites as practical strategies "the hiring at state expense of special teachers of Hebrew, Jewish history and the like, of the provisions of state owned premises for lectures for Jewish, Armenian, or Romanian children, or even for the one Georgian child in one area of St. Petersburg" (Lenin, 1986, p. 110). Lenin's argument is based on the following principle:

To preach establishment of special national schools for every "national culture" is reactionary. But under real democracy it is quite possible to ensure instruction in the native language, in native history, and so forth, without splitting up the schools according to nationality. (1913/1977, p. 532)

The point is not to exalt one culture or language over another. Rather, in coupling formal legal equality among various nationalities with concrete affirmative provisions, the goal is to overcome national divisions, and the animosity they engender, so as to create conditions for cultural and linguistic integration on a free, voluntary basis. In addition to synthesizing political principle with practical strategies, Lenin's response to imperialism and the national question rejects ahistorical or essentialized notions of national culture or language. Such theoretical fluidity ensures both the principled defense of oppressed nationalities and their languages while allowing for, indeed embracing, generative integration of culture and language on a basis of equity.

More recent scholarship (e.g., Brenner, 2006; Callinicos, 2009; Harman, 2003; Harvey, 2005; Meiksins Wood, 2005; Panitch & Leys, 2004) has re-assessed classical Marxist theories of imperialism, at once rescuing that tradition from the hangover of reformism, Stalinism and Maoism, and pursuing important debates about the contours of contemporary imperialism. While most of this work hews closely to analysis of political economy, Harvey (2005), for example, examines what he calls the "inner dialectic of U.S. civil society" (p. 12). He situates the drive toward internal repression within the propensity for elites to resolve economic crisis

through external conflict. Harvey identifies at several historical moments the tendency of the U.S. state “to mobilize nationalism, jingoism, patriotism, and, above all, racism behind an imperial project” (p. 44). Understanding that each of the *-isms* on Harvey’s list has its own unique features, for ease of discussion, I will refer to them collectively as *chauvinism*.

Of course, it is far easier to marshal popular support for a specific imperial endeavor once a putative enemy has been transformed into an Other: a member of an inferior race or nationality, in need of liberation or civilization, or condemned altogether to annihilation by the aggressor nation. However, the projection of chauvinism abroad has its own consequences at home. Those consequences play out in two seemingly paradoxical ways. The first acknowledges that most of the benefits, yet virtually none of the risk, attendant to imperialism accrue to economic and political elites. While ruling elites declare war, they do not generally fight those wars themselves. And as has been documented in many analyses of neoliberal economic policy, the benefits of economic forms of imperial competition have trickled (or better: flooded) upward to ruling elites over the last 30 years in fantastically disproportionate ways. Chauvinism, inasmuch as it enforces a national identity rooted in specific ethnic or racial, linguistic, and/or religious criteria, aims to unite all members of the aggressor nation. It therefore plays a central ideological role in imperialist conflict in masking the disproportionate distribution of risk and reward to popular and elite members of the aggressor nation, respectively. The second dimension pertains to the general role that oppression plays in class society, whereby animosities engendered between working people of various ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual identities, among others, prevent the social and political unity that might in fact challenge class oppression overall. Chauvinism thus functions in two directions at once: it identifies an Other abroad, and mobilizes members of the aggressor nation across class lines in opposition to that Other; but also, it targets those individuals and groups at home who do not qualify as members of the dominant national identity. To be clear, the argument is not that imperialist conflict necessarily creates racial, ethnic, or other forms of social oppression in society; such oppression is an extant feature of modern capitalism in general. Rather, the chauvinism that accompanies imperialist conflict aggravates extant divisions among ordinary people along any number of social lines.

While Harvey’s list of *-isms* implies the linguistic consequences of chauvinism, I will be explicit: namely that a central component of U.S. imperialism is the mobilization of English monolingualism on ideological and practical terms. That is, if there exists in general an

entanglement of the nation-state with monolingual practice and beliefs, then imperialism only tightens the knot. As discussed above, the chauvinism attendant to U.S. imperialism not only enforces a specific national identity, but also requires that this identity be expressed in English. Furthermore, at moments of overt war, proficiency in English is positioned as patriotic and a sign of loyalty, while the practice of – let alone education in – “foreign” languages is deemed suspect. Consequently, and to re-iterate the central hypothesis that informs this paper: historical moments in which U.S. imperialism is ascendant hang together with restrictive language policies, whether formal or informal. The expansion of U.S. power externally constricts internal ideological and implementational space (Hornberger, 2006) for the practice of and education in minority languages. The converse also holds, namely: moments when U.S. imperialism withers hang together with the expansion of ideological and implementational space for policies that support the practice of and education in minority languages.

The Study

The theoretical position advocated above immediately confronts a challenge, however, posed by the decades-long history of U.S. language education policy explicitly linked to national security. Specifically: do such policies represent an aberration to this theoretical position? More pressing still: do they represent a pragmatic or promising way out of the cul-de-sac of the monolingual consequences of imperialism? To test this theoretical argument, I conducted an interpretive policy analysis as defined by Yanow (2000). In particular, two questions guided my analysis: 1) how have national security ideologies influenced historically the enactment of federal language education policies in the United States; and 2) what have been the implications of that influence for critical languages such as Arabic?

As stated earlier, I was most interested in understanding the relationship between national security and language learning in terms of critical languages. However, to consider all critical languages, all federal language policies, across the K-16 spectrum would have been an impossible task for one project. Therefore, I limited my investigation of this relationship specifically to Title VI Arabic language programs in higher education in an historical context.

Several considerations justified this choice. First, I intentionally excluded language programs formally tied to the military and intelligence apparatus. Every imperialist nation has such programs, and the clarity of their mission makes them uninteresting. By contrast, what is compelling about Title VI and its language education programs is that they were carried out in

civilian contexts, that is, in institutions whose stated goals are not first and foremost national defense, but rather the generation and dissemination of knowledge. Second, although the original scope of Title was across the K-16 system, since 1980 it has functioned solely as a higher education language policy. The third relates to the selection of Arabic as the critical language to explore. An extensive body of literature establishes that the experiences of Arab Americans and Muslims (and those assumed to be such) stand out as particularly contested ones, especially since World War II (cf. Allen, 2007; Findley, 1985; Hagopian, 2004; Newhall, 2006; Salaita, 2006). As Stake (1994) has argued, it is often from studies of atypical cases that we can learn the most about a particular phenomenon. Related to the question “Why Arabic?” is “Why not Spanish?” As U.S. imperialism ascended in the early 20th century, Spanish was in fact considered the critical language of its day in terms of facilitating the expansion of U.S. power across the hemisphere. Nevertheless, Spanish nowadays is not found on any government list as a critical language, perhaps an indication of the confidence U.S. imperialism holds vis-à-vis Latin America and its Latino/a population. The fourth question regarding the case was bounding it in time. I chose to end the analysis at 1991, the year in which second-generation policies (e.g., the National Security Education Program and the National Security Language Initiative) initially appeared. I chose to end the analysis at 1991, the year in which a second generation of policies (e.g., the National Security Education Program and the National Security Language Initiative) with different stated policy goals and administered by different federal agencies initially appeared.

A central task in designing an interpretive policy analysis is identifying specific interpretive communities who have a stake in the enactment of the policy being researched. For this study, I defined three: official policy actors (e.g., elected officials, representatives of federal agencies, and spokespersons for interest/lobby groups involved in the Title VI legislative process); university actors (e.g., National Resource Center directors, Arabic instructors, and former students in Arabic programs associated with Title VI Middle East centers); critical language community actors (e.g., Arab Americans both as students and professionals in Title VI Arabic programs, representatives of professional organizations for Arabic education and Middle East studies, representatives of advocacy and professional groups for Arab and Muslim Americans involved in Title VI deliberations).

Document sources comprised the greater share of data and included: 1) formal policy texts; 2) Congressional documents such as hearings reports and testimony, both oral and submitted in

writing; 3) policy briefs, newsletters, opinion pieces for the media, and internal correspondence produced by interest groups; 4) program evaluation reports; 5) surveys and questionnaires; 6) conference and meeting proceedings, especially plenary addresses to professional and scholarly organizations given by policy-relevant actors; 7) and secondary literature.

The second set of data sources comprised semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 2005) conducted with members of each interpretive community listed earlier. Because the world of language education advocacy is quite small in this country, and because the world of Arabic language education is smaller still, there were few options in terms of whom to approach for interviews. Additionally, one-third of the interview participants were Arab American.

Findings

The findings are structured around four major themes that emerged from the analysis described above. Where relevant, disconfirming evidence is presented in conjunction with the finding. I pursue the implications of that disconfirmation in the discussion section. This section begins with findings related to Title VI's impact on Arabic instruction, and then moves to the data concerning national security ideologies implicated in Title VI.

Uneven Title VI Programmatic Support for Arabic

This first section of findings draws primarily from document data in U.S. Department of Education (ED) archives, *The Linguistic Reporter* (the now-defunct newsletter of the Center for Applied Linguistics), interview and some secondary sources to demonstrate the extent of Title VI programmatic support for Arabic language programs between 1958-1991. In some cases sufficient data do not exist to draw warranted conclusions. However, based on the extant data, the most significant finding with respect to this programmatic support is its unevenness across the four program types sponsored by Title VI.

Insofar as we can connect Arabic instruction to Middle East National Resource Centers (although some African studies centers supported Arabic as well), the region was among the least funded in the first ten years of the program. A table in ED archives dated July 1968 documents funding for Title VI Middle East centers, and its relation to overall language and area center funding. The table indicates waning support for Middle East centers in the initial years of Title VI. For the period 1959-1967, Title VI allocated \$4.34 million to fund a total of 12 Middle East centers. This represented 13% of overall language and area studies center funding over the period, and placed Middle East centers the fifth-most funded out of eight funded regions.

However, from 1973 onward, the Middle East as a funded region has counted as one of only four regions to average more than 12 centers. In fact, since 1975 Title VI has funded between 11 and 17 Middle East language and area studies centers (O'Connell & Norwood, 2007).

By contrast, Arabic was not a well-supported language within the summer institute program. Title VI did augment support for the Center for Advanced Study of Arabic (CASA), an Arabic language program housed at the American University of Cairo and run by a consortium of universities. By 1967, CASA had expanded to include a full-year course of study in addition to a summer program. In fact, CASA remains one of the most successful programs for Arabic supported by Title VI (see McCarus, 1992 for a history of CASA). Beyond CASA, however, Title VI did little to support summer institutes in Arabic. Table 1 below reports the number of summer institutes that Title VI sponsored for Arabic, and which institutions hosted them. The last year reported is the summer of 1970 because the institutes were rescinded during the budget battles over Title VI that year.

Table 1

Title VI Summer Institutes for Arabic, 1961-1970

Year	Total # of institutes	# for Arabic / # of languages offered	Host institutions
1961	55	0 / 6	n/a
1963	16	2 / 28	Harvard, Utah
1964	22	3 / 33	Harvard, UCLA, Utah
1965	19	2 / 34	Harvard, Michigan
1966	24	3 / 40	Columbia, Harvard, Utah
1967	21	3 / 36	Michigan, Princeton, Utah
1968	21	2 / 44	New York Univ., UCLA
1969	21	2 / 47	UC-Berkeley, Univ. of Penna.
1970	21	3 / 45	Columbia, Indiana, Washington

Note: Data compiled from *The Linguistic Reporter*, Vols. 3-15

However, Arabic was among the best-funded languages in terms of research and project grants. Email communication with one participant, an Arabic instructor and researcher at one of the first Title VI Middle East centers, stressed the extent of this support. He wrote:

As you can see the federal language education policies have been of great value to the development of Arabic teaching materials focused on modern standard Arabic, the dialects, Arabic for specific purposes, technology-based multimedia program, and the national Arabic Proficiency Test...In brief my interpretation of the historical federal language education policies is clear: **POSITIVE ALL THE WAY.** (Participant 10, personal communication, January 17, 2008; emphasis in the original)

Most interview participants echoed the sentiment, namely that the cadre of Arabists and teaching materials that do exist in the U.S., no matter how limited, would not exist without Title VI.

In terms of research and materials projects for Arabic that Title VI supported, *The Linguistic Reporter* documented the extent of support over the years, compiled in Table 2 below. Because the 1980 reauthorization of Title VI ended this portion of the legislation, the data is only reported through 1979.

Table 2

Total Number of Title VI Research Projects per Language, 1959-1979, n ≥ 10

Language	Total number of projects
Arabic	41
Chinese	38
<i>Cantonese</i>	2
<i>Mandarin</i>	6
French	24
German	15
Hindi	17
<i>Urdu</i>	14
Japanese	22
Korean	12
Russian	22
Spanish	20
Thai	14

Note: Data compiled from supplements to *The Linguistic Reporter*, volumes 2-24.

One difficulty in comparing support for Arabic to that for other languages is that languages and language varieties are labeled with considerable inconsistency. Nevertheless, by combining all varieties of Arabic listed in *The Linguistic Reporter* supplements and comparing that to other languages, grouped similarly by related language varieties, Arabic remains second only to the Chinese language group as the target language for the greatest number of research and materials development grants awarded by Title VI. Underscoring the significance of this support is that only 10 languages/language groups received 10 or more project grants over roughly 20 years of funding.

Assessing the impact of Title VI on Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships for the period defined in this study is virtually impossible. There is little systematic data on the fellowships; in fact, inconsistent data collection would become one of the consistent complaints lodged in Congress during reauthorization hearings about Title VI. (This has changed recently

with the creation of a database tracking international education programs, including Title VI. During this study, however, data included in that database only went back to the early 2000's). In addition, ED archival records on Title VI have been thinned out with each move of the office responsible for oversight of the program. Consequently, the original data, as incomplete as they were, are even more so today.

Arabic and Intrigue

Related to the programmatic unevenness described above is a consistent interpretation of this halting support in terms of the relationship between the U.S. and the Middle East. For example, the Arabic expert at a national language research and advocacy association explained the unevenness in these terms:

Arabic has always been [*pause*] the intriguing language, I guess that's what to call it. It comes up in conversation. But it has always been this kind of language that nobody wanted to deal with...I think there is this sort of whole sense of equating it with the Muslim world and the Arab world, and so therefore having a love-hate relationship with the language... So the small group of people in the 70's...kept at it, but in a very low-key sort of way. But they've always been relegated to the back of the bus, always. I mean it's just very interesting to me that they were not [*pause*] Georgetown maybe and Michigan became fairly well known for their Arabic language programs. But they were small compared to what was happening in other languages. (Participant 2, transcript 3, lines 26-43)

This participant suggests that notions of the Arab and Muslim worlds explain the intrigue around Arabic and its second-class status in comparison to other languages targeted by Title VI.

Nikki R. Keddie, in her 1981 presidential address to the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), was more explicit in terms of locating the source of intrigue. Keddie, a specialist in Iranian and women's history who taught in conjunction with the Title VI center at the University of California, Los Angeles, stated:

Concerning the above matters, one frequently voiced complaint from my respondents was that sources of funding are rarely openly stated and explained, whether one speaks of a Near East center, a conference, or any other activity. Given the current administration's efforts to extend CIA, FBI, and other covert activities, this is a particularly serious matter, especially to those of us who remember McCarthyism and also the use of spurious foundations and the subsidization of publications by the CIA...My guess is that most people in our field, aside from those who run [Title VI Middle East] centers, have little idea where money in the field comes from. The most direct issue...is the direct and knowing use of academics by the CIA and other partly secret agencies to gather data, especially abroad. I know several academics who worked for the CIA

either full time or as informants, usually in the belief that they could influence U.S. policy. I do not know one who thinks he did influence that policy in any important way. (Keddie, 1982, p. 6-7)

Kemal H. Karpat (1985), in the same address in 1984, continued with the theme Keddie initiated three years earlier. Karpat, a Turkish historian involved with the Title VI center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said:

Another even more crucial problem is the development of confidential, contractual relationships between some Middle East scholars and various government agencies—notably intelligence...What makes it so vital that this problem be addressed is the threat the existence of such relationships poses to the viability of the entire field of Middle East studies...Fortunately, we have seen that the work produced through these hidden subsidies is often qualitatively inferior to work of the same kind produced by scholars who have chosen the subject out of sheer intellectual interest and scholarly dedication. (p. 4)

Yvonne Haddad (1991), in the same forum in 1990, quipped: “The real threat for many in the business might actually be the possibility that peace could break out,” (p. 2). In each case, participants locate the intrigue surrounding Middle East centers not just in questionable funding, but also in direct manipulation of scholarship tied to the Middle East Title VI centers by federal agencies in pursuit of U.S. interests in the Middle East. Moreover, the frequency with which MESA presidential addresses took up the issue of the subordination of Middle East studies to U.S. national interests is alone indicative of where some leading scholars in the field located the intrigue.

Disconfirming the intrigue

What complicates these interpretations of Arabic as the intriguing language is a set of data that challenge the assumption that Arabic or Title VI Middle East centers were manipulated in pursuit of U.S national interests. In fact, these data suggest that federal funding had little direct influence on the content or execution of Title VI Middle East centers or their related Arabic programs. One example comes from an interview with a participant who has played multiple roles as a Title VI policy actor over the course of her career. She reflected on her time as a student of Arabic through a Title VI center and explained:

All of the Title VI funding was for us, it was just kind of there. And we were grateful for it, but it wasn't something that impinged a lot on what we did. I don't think the awareness of government policy and the effect of government of policy on education is, well I think graduate students certainly are more aware of it now than we might have been...We were, we didn't care, it was money. It was funding. You know, you applied for everything you could get, you could think

of, dropped everything in a box and hoped for the best. (Participant 4, transcript 2, lines 121-128)

Moreover, in an interview with an Arab American director of a Middle East Title VI center, I asked him to describe how the content and scope of the courses offered through the center were determined. My question flummoxed him, as it was so obvious from his perspective that only the faculty at his institution made such decisions.

Finally, the scandal in the early 1980s surrounding the Title VI Middle East center at the University of Arizona disconfirms the Arabic-as-intriguing interpretation in complex ways. The case itself has already been documented (Findley, 1985) and involved a campaign waged between 1980-1983 by the Tucson Jewish Community Center against the Title VI center. The scandal involved two allegations: 1) that additional funding for the center from Arab-owned oil companies had an undo influence on the center's work; and 2) that its K-12 outreach course, Oriental Studies 497nx, used anti-Semitic curricular materials. To give a sense of the scandal, the main figures behind it alleged repeatedly that a faculty member in the Middle East center had been an officer in the Nazi *Wehrmacht*. This claim was disproved yet never publicly retracted. Two external panels of experts assessed the allegations and found them to be baseless. The second panel's only recommendation was for more direct faculty oversight of the Title VI center's K-12 outreach courses (Findley, 1985).

My own research in ED archives uncovered extensive documentation of this scandal. In fact, it was the single-largest collection dedicated to one topic among archived materials and comprised four 3-4-inch thick file folders labeled "UA: Time of Troubles". Allies of the community group were successful in getting their senators and representatives to write letters, archived in these folders, to ED officials requesting an inquiry. ED officials responded multiple times, both to the community group and to their representatives, that because the Title VI center in question had recently been re-approved for funding, no further action would be taken. Findley (1985) argues that the Tucson case was part of a larger campaign of civic organizations to discredit Middle East studies in general and Title VI centers specifically. However, extant ED records suggest that federal authorities took a hands-off approach. In that sense, the Tucson case challenges other interpretations that locate the source of intrigue around Arabic and Middle East centers with federal agencies, while suggesting that such intrigue may have been generated in other civic or political organizations, or simply among the broader public.

Foreign Language Education as Essential

The third major finding concerns how Title VI policy-actors positioned foreign language education as an instrumental part of realizing U.S. interests internationally. While it is hardly surprising, given the context of this study, that policy actors generally rationalized foreign language education in terms of the national interest, they did so in particularly emphatic terms. Foreign language education was not simply a resource for national security, to recall Ruiz's (1984) metaphor, but rather was an *essential* component for realizing such security. Policy actors generally made this connection in broader terms, not specifically in reference to Arabic. However, U.S. interests in the Middle East were at times invoked in order to connect foreign language education and Title VI to national security.

An early example of this connection can be found in a speech that Lawrence Derthick gave to the Modern Language Association (MLA) at its 1958 annual meeting. President Eisenhower had just signed the NDEA into law three months earlier. Derthick, then the U.S. Commissioner of Education, would be the first administrator of the NDEA. In the closing speech to the MLA convention that winter, Derthick stated:

All of us are wondering how, individually and collectively, we can do our part to implement the goal of this new Act—defense of our nation against every enemy of body, mind, or spirit that time may bring. This is a challenge to the patriotism of all of us—and especially to members of associations like yours... It was not, believe me, a rhetorical or promotional stunt, when the Congress decided to call Public Law 85-864 the National *Defense* Education Act. It was a way of saying that language teachers, among others, have an important patriotic duty to perform. (Derthick, 1959, p. 51; emphasis in original)

Certainly, that an administration official (indeed the highest-ranking person charged with implementing the NDEA) would frame the policy in such a way might be read as a simple extension of his job. What is interesting to note, however, is the extent to which this interpretation is repeated among other policy actors and across time.

For example, John S. Badeau, former director of the Title VI Middle East center at Columbia University, invokes specific U.S. interests in the Middle East in his testimony on behalf of Title VI before a House subcommittee in March 1971. As discussed earlier, by the early 1970s the economic and political costs of the Vietnam War had impacted Congressional debates about international and language education programs tied to national security (Ruther, 1994).

Defining security in defense terms had become politically less viable, leading to an emphasis on security as a function of economic competitiveness. Badeau's testimony reflects that shift:

The United States will certainly continue to be deeply involved in world affairs. However, the forms of American involvement are changing and will increasingly be in the field of cultural, economic and commercial activities and less in military, defense, and Government-sponsored technical assistance programs. It is precisely because of this that it is essential to the American world position to have a continued supply of people trained in the language, culture, and comprehension of important foreign areas and available both to Government and to private agencies...American petroleum interests in Libya are important and the fact that the oil companies have on their staff Americans trained in Middle East studies and languages now is, more than ever, an asset to them. (*Office of Education and Related Agencies*, 1971, p. 83)

The *Strength Through Wisdom* report in 1980 provides a late, and final, example from the data with respect to how foreign language education was positioned as a central component to realizing U.S. national interests. The report was the work of a commission established by President Carter in 1979. Members of the commission included Congresspeople and administration officials, leaders of education advocacy organizations, university administrators and professors, and labor union leaders. Their charge was to review all federal international and language education policies, including Title VI. The summary of the commission's report positioned language education thus:

Our vital interests are impaired by the fatuous notion that our competence in other languages is irrelevant. Indeed, it is precisely because of this nation's responsibilities and opportunities as a major power and as a symbol of ideals to which many of the world's people aspire that foreign languages, as a key to unlock the mysteries of other customs and cultures, can no longer be viewed as an educational or civic luxury. ("Strength," 1980, p. 12)

Two characteristics of this finding stand out as noteworthy. The first is the consistency with which it occurred, as much across data sources⁶ as across the time period included in this analysis. The second is the flipside of that consistency: there were virtually no instances in 33 years' worth of document data in which policy actors, Arab American or otherwise, attempted to frame foreign language education in another way. Even in the few instances in which language education, and Title VI's role in supporting such, is framed in terms of mutual understanding, the dynamics of U.S. hegemony often lie just beneath the surface. Take as one example this excerpt from an article by Kenneth Mildenerger assessing the impact of Title VI on African

⁶ Because interview participants often discussed this issue in contemporary terms, these data are not included in this discussion.

studies. Mildenberger had long been in the leadership of the Modern Language Association but had moved to the U.S. Office of Education to administer Title VI in its first years. In a section of the article entitled “Language Development and the Cold War,” Mildenberger (1960) maintained:

American responsibility is to secure continued freedom of the new African nations as they emerge onto an international scene of somber and ominous crisis. To do this, we must establish mutual respect and understanding. Fundamental to this task is the achievement of effective communication. (p. 20)

Calling for the development of effective communication skills to foster international understanding certainly implies a social justice basis for defining security. What complicates this reading, however, is that Mildenberger continued in the following paragraph to cite quantitative data describing Soviet efforts to develop capacity in multiple African languages. He compared the extent of Soviet radio broadcasts in African languages (including Arabic) to those of the U.S., primarily its Voice of America program. In both cases, he laments how far behind the United States is. In essence, a complete reading of his argument brings us right back to Cold War competition implicated in Title VI policy from its inception.

The Refrain

The fourth major finding occurred in the data with similar consistency across time and data source. Specifically, Title VI policy-actors cited an ongoing lack of linguistic capacity in languages needed for the pursuit of U.S. national interests. Of course, it is thoroughly unsurprisingly that the original rationales for Title VI centered on concerns over insufficient linguistic capacity in critical languages such as Arabic. One example is in the testimony of Kenneth Mildenberger, then still director of the MLA’s Foreign Language Program, during the first NDEA authorization hearings. In written testimony to Congress he stated:

Although it is a commonplace that the United States now occupies a position of world leadership, it is still not sufficiently recognized that in order to meet, on a basis of mutual understanding and cooperation, not only the diplomats and military men but also the common people of the other nations of the globe, the United States does not yet have nearly enough persons adequately trained in the languages. (*Scholarship and Loan Program*, 1958, p. 1824)

What is perhaps more surprising is that these concerns appeared in Title VI advocacy so consistently over time, that is, even after decades of Title VI funding. One example is from an article by William Jones in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, which was entered into the Congressional record in April 1970. The timing of the article and its inclusion in the federal

record is significant in relationship to the conflicts described earlier over Title VI funding because of the Vietnam War. In fact, President Nixon's 1970 budget cut all funding for Title VI (Ruther, 1994). Jones' article was part of written documentation used to advocate the restoration of that funding. In the article, Jones quotes a speech given in 1966 by John K. Fairbank, a Sinologist at Harvard University:

Not only have we been caught with our pants down, but with our pants off... We have this terrific fire power, and we tear things up. But we don't know what the people are saying... It's absolutely incredible to me that the American academic community has responded so slowly to such a clear need. The net result is a scandal. (*Office of Education Appropriations, FY71, 1970, p. 301*)

A similar complaint is found in a 1980 book entitled *The Tongue-Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis*, written by the late Senator Paul Simon (D-IL). The book was updated and released in a paperback edition 12 years later. In the introduction to that edition, Simon (1992) wrote, in reference to Gulf War of 1991:

During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, our military had only forty-five linguists with any knowledge at all of Iraqi dialect—and only five of them were trained in intelligence. International understanding is a fundamental component of national security. Perhaps war would not have been necessary if we had communicated more effectively with the Iraqis in the months preceding the conflict. (p. x)

Later in the first chapter, Simon revisited the complaint about insufficient linguistic capacity. He developed the argument by counter posing the amount of funding made available for weaponry versus international and language education. Simon wrote:

While it continues to be relatively easy to get appropriations for bombers and submarines and nuclear weapons, we move much less swiftly, if at all, on measures that contribute to real security—a world of adequate communications and cultural understanding, which together could eliminate, or dramatically reduce the need for those bombers and submarines and nuclear weapons. In 1977, Navy Lieutenant Howell Conway Ziegler, assigned as a U.N. military observer in the Middle East, averted a confrontation by speaking to both sides in Hebrew and Arabic. But how few we have encouraged to develop that type of knowledge. (p. 7)

Across the 33-year time period included in this analysis, then, we encounter with remarkable consistency a refrain among Title VI policy actors that the U.S. lacks essential linguistic capacity. Ironically, this refrain appeared most often in advocacy contexts such as Congressional testimony, program reviews and secondary literature. In other words, complaints about lacking proficiency were employed to defend and extend Title VI, a long-standing policy charged with producing that linguistic capacity in the first place.

Discussion

The findings discussed above identify two specific ways in which national security ideologies have influence the enactment of Title VI. On the one hand, if also less commonly, national security ideologies have formed the central basis on which policy actors explained their sense of controversy or intrigue surrounding Arabic language education in the U.S. On the other, and with remarkable consistency, policy actors in fact used national security ideologies as the core of their advocacy for formation, implementation, maintenance and expansion of the policy. As I have suggested above, it is neither surprising nor especially interesting that the formation of Title VI policy in the late 1950s implicated Cold War logic. One might adopt a political science framework and interpret the connection between national security and foreign language education as pragmatic expediency to take advantage of the political openings that one encounters in any policy process. Or one might take an historical approach and see Title VI as part of a broader project of post-WWII federal policy formation in relation to the Cold War. Both readings are accurate in their own way and drive the analysis of many histories and program evaluations of Title VI and NDEA more broadly (e.g., Clowse, 1981; Edwards, et al., 2008; Lambert, 1984; O'Connell & Norwood, 2007). However, far more confounding is that policy actors continued to use national security ideologies in their advocacy for Title VI for decades to come. In other words, linking Title VI to national security ideologies coalesced into a common sense about foreign language education policy as a resource for national interests that held across the time period included in this analysis.

While the connection between U.S. national interests and Title VI coalesced into a common sense at the ideological level, a different—indeed contradictory—common sense emerged with respect to practice. Namely, the refrain that the U.S. has lacked linguistic expertise in Arabic and other critical languages contradicts the obviousness of foreign language capacity in service of U.S. power. Exacerbating this contradiction are several data excerpts reported above that juxtapose the challenges facing language education and Title VI to the ease with which funding flows to military operations and manufacture. If the military and economic aspects of U.S. imperialism seemed to function with general success, then why did that success not apply as well to language education?

Stated another way, if language education policies such as Title VI were in fact such an obvious tool for realizing U.S. power, then one would expect to find evidence of successful capacity

development in Arabic and other critical languages. Interview participants did report such success insofar as they credited Title VI with the formation of the limited cadre of Arabists and teaching materials that exist in the U.S. But those positive assessments did not include any description of leveraging that cadre or those materials to create substantial capacity in the language. Moreover, the archival data documenting funding for Arabic and the Middle East centers that contributed to instruction of the language indicate uneven and inconsistent support for the language. Trumping both points, again, is the consistent refrain that the U.S. lacks sufficient capacity in critical languages such as Arabic. In other words, policy actors seem to have consistently concluded that Title VI has not led to the sort of linguistic capacity it was charged with creating.

To be clear, the yardstick by which I measure this conclusion is not the more general goal of societal multilingualism; to draw such a conclusion would transcend the boundaries of this case. Instead, I am drawing this conclusion by squaring the following: 1) the stated aims of the policy; 2) the common sense that emerged between 1958-1991 that Title VI and language learning more broadly were obvious, essential tools for realizing U.S. power abroad; and 3) that policy actors consistently found Title VI lacking in its ability to produce such capacity. In short, *even on its own terms* of producing greater capacity in critical languages such as Arabic, there seems to be a profound contradiction in the historical practice of the policy.

The notion introduced in the theoretical framework of imperialist power turning back on itself and constricting the ideological and implementational space for multilingual practice helps to understand this apparent contradiction. Several aspects of the social, material and political blowback of imperialism were discussed in that framework, including the fomenting of patriotism and jingoism. More immediately relevant to this case, however, is the connection between capitalist state power and monolingualism. As discussed above, the ideological and practical demand for monolingual proficiency in a standardized or national language is a unique feature of the capitalist nation-state. State efforts to project its power beyond its own narrow boundaries only aggravate the dynamic of monolingualism as an index of patriotism, loyalty, and membership in a nation. Policies that appeal to national interests, in particular to the realization of those interests abroad, exacerbate such ideological and practical dynamics of state power, whether applied at home or abroad. The data reported in this study suggest that even those policies that seek to *expand* multilingual practice are unable to overcome this dynamic. Ultimately, a policy such as Title VI that advocates expanded multilingualism—even within the

narrow confines of multilingualism in service of the state—is self-defeating insofar as it is grounded in national security ideologies and efforts to exert U.S. power abroad.

In this we see a similar dynamic as Petrovic (2005) argued with respect to bilingual education advocacy. By rationalizing bilingual education in terms of national economic resources, policy advocates bolster the same ideological framework that has engendered attacks on bilingual education in the first place. In the case of Title VI between 1958-1991, one does not see the same overt attacks on the legitimacy of Title VI or the programs it sponsors⁷ with the same consistency as Petrovic argued regarding bilingual policy. But the impact is quite similar: namely, that even on its own terms of producing linguistic capacity in service of the state, 33 years of Title VI programs to support Arabic has had a limited impact at best. This conclusion stands out even more starkly when we consider the “atypical” nature of the case at the heart of this analysis. Because Arabic is the dominant language in a geopolitical region so central to U.S. imperialism, we would expect that Title VI would have created a larger pool of Arabists, whether in the academy or in the government. Policy actor interpretations reported here indicate that this has not been the case.

What makes the inefficacy of language education policy in the name of national security even clearer is a separate historical experience that parallels the one documented here with respect to Title VI and Arabic. Namely, the Chicano civil rights movement, which emerged in the early 1960s, made two specific moves that led to the most dramatic and sustained expansion of ideological and implementational space for multilingual practice and education of the 20th century. First, Chicano/a students and their allies placed school-based struggles over bilingual and bicultural curriculum at the center of their movement. Second, the movement intersected with other popular and radical social movements of the day, particularly the anti-Vietnam War movement. The intersection of a mass struggle against racism and for specific cultural and linguistic rights intersected with the defeat of U.S. imperialism in ways that not only made multilingual practice more possible, but also that codified such practice as formal U.S. educational policy for the first time. Whatever limited developments in our knowledge of language learning, learning Arabic specifically, or Arabic pedagogical resources as provided by

⁷ This is no longer the case given the emergence of organizations such as Middle East Watch and Campus Watch that have campaigned explicitly against Title VI and its support for Middle East studies (see Newhall, 2006).

Title VI, they wither in the face of the sort of social transformation that the Chicano civil rights triggered (see Author, 2010).

And yet, the intellectual foundation – whether in the academy or in practice – for expanded language education in the United States today rests increasingly on ideologies of national security and economic competition. Even in cases, such as McGroarty (2006) discussed above, where a nod is still made to the notion of language rights for minoritized communities, those rights are ultimately checked at the door when engaging with policy makers. In fact, this subordination of rights to national security and the “national interest” is invariably positioned as the pragmatic way to approach language education advocacy. What this case study of Title VI and Arabic has clearly shown, however, is that such pragmatism is a mirage. It may lead in the short term to this or that policy initiative, but in practice and over time, the impact of bolstering national security ideologies, that is, the bolstering of U.S. imperialism, in fact constricts the ideological and implementational space for multilingual practice. It is in fact a utopian position to hope that language education in the name of imperialism might have a different outcome.

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