Language and the Continental Congress: Language Policy Issues in the Founding Documents of the United States from 1774 to 1789
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Today language policy issues are frequently framed as belonging to the contested territory of "identity politics," defined as "a wide range of political activity and theorizing founded in the shared experiences of injustice of members of certain social groups."[1] Although the phrase itself started to appear mostly from the late 1980s onwards in English and American printed sources according to the Google Books Ngram Viewer,[2] the major, federal-level US language policy initiatives have mostly been inseparable from the desire to remedy past injustices while at the same time fostering equal educational and civic opportunity since at least the late 1960s and early 1970s. Major examples include the Bilingual Education Acts (1968-2001), the *Lau v. Nichols* Supreme Court decision (1974), and the Voting Rights Amendments of 1975.

As Ronald Schmidt, Sr. argues in *Language Policy and Identity Politics in the United States*, language policy conflicts frequently represent, and also result from, a clash between two sets of public values: one that favors national unity (also known as the "assimilationist" perspective), whereas the other (the "pluralist" approach) emphasizes greater equality for minorities.[3] Consequently, while supporting developmental bilingual education models illustrates a "pluralist," "language-as-resource"-oriented attitude towards linguistic diversity according to Richard Ruiz's "orientations" framework,[4] the "language-as-problem" end of the policy spectrum includes, among others, the officialization of English and the "weak" or "subtractive" models of bilingual education. These two issues have proven to be dominant in the US context since the 1980s. Wedged between the extremes of "problem" and "resource," multilingual ballots and other measures designed to facilitate access to government services in minority languages (without fostering the intergenerational transmission of minority tongues) are generally considered to be manifestations of a "language-as-right" orientation.

Ruiz's "orientations" represent different but not mutually exclusive ideological interpretations about the "proper" role of languages in a given society or community. The term "language ideology" was probably introduced for the first time by Shirley Brice Heath in 1977 as "the self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning the roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of

that group."[5] More recently Judith T. Irvine defined language ideologies as "conceptualizations about languages, speakers, and discursive practices."[6] In the 1980s Juan Cobarrubias proposed four typical ideologies that may justify language policy-making in a particular community: linguistic assimilation, linguistic pluralism, vernacularization, and internationalism.[7]

A considerable number of language policy scholars seem to agree that US language ideologies—although they underwent serious transformations, most notably during and after World War I—have largely been dominated by a discernible "English-only" strain[8]; "linguistic nativism"[9]; or even "xenoglossophobia."[10] Similarly, Terrence G. Wiley argues that "Americanization" in the name of the "melting pot" tradition has more or less been the guiding nation-building principle since the foundation of the Republic.[11]

1. Language issues during and immediately after the American Revolution: Literature review

Language policy issues that emerged during the early years of American nation-building have received relatively little scholarly attention so far, at least as compared to the numerous analyses that focused on the language policy developments of the World War I era, and especially on the language policy battlegrounds of the post-1965 immigration reform period. Apparently, the English language was rarely seen as a symbolic and endangered component of American identity at the end of the eighteenth century—at least not to a degree that would have warranted active legislative measures to protect, promote, and enhance the societal role of the *de facto* official language. Consequently, neither the Articles of Confederation (functioning as the first constitution of the young country between 1781 and 1788), nor the Constitution of 1787 contained any references to the English language (or to any other language, for that matter).

This apparent inattention on the part of the Founders, however, cannot be attributed to the lack of contemporary ethnolinguistic diversity. Although linguistic data can merely be inferred from the racial and "national origin" questions of the first census (1790), only 49% of the total population of almost four million people claimed "English" descent. The other half consisted of 19% African; 12% Scottish and Scotch-Irish; 7% German; 3-3% Irish and Dutch, respectively; 2% French; 1-1% Spanish and Swedish, respectively; and 4% "other" Americans.[12] Nevertheless, as Heath claims, when language-related issues emerged from time to time during the early congressional debates and deliberations, these (rather sporadic) instances

mostly regarded the English language simply as a "pragmatic instrument" rather than a "national ideological symbol."[13] Consequently, no serious attempts were made either to officialize the majority language or to enhance its identity-forming capacity by legislative fiat. The apocryphal accounts of disestablishing English and installing French, German, or Latin as the *de jure* official language after the American Revolution probably belong to the realm of language policy myths.[14] Yet, despite apparently lacking hard, documentary evidence Baron appears to give some credence to alleged language reform plans that might have tried to establish Hebrew (regarded as the original, "Edenic" language) or Greek (the language of the first democracy) as the new "American" language.[15] Other language policy myths are not particularly difficult to find from this period either. Inadequate recordkeeping, ethnic nostalgia, and propagandistic interests have all contributed to the birth and spread of probably the most persistent language policy legends of all time, the so-called Muhlenberg legend, according to which German almost dislodged English from its *de facto* official status in the young United States.[16]

Overall, the majority of the Founding Fathers "probably considered language an individual matter" while expecting newcomers to assimilate as a matter of course.[17] Still, from time to time the Continental Congress tried to intervene in linguistic matters for various reasons, for example, to gain the support of non-English-speaking immigrants by translating important, official documents and to disseminate the ideas of the American Revolution in other languages—most notably in French and German.[18]

Contrary to the general *laissez faire* legislative attitude towards overt language planning, John Adams assumed a considerably more activist stance with respect to linguistic matters. Influenced by the experience that he had gained during his diplomatic missions to France and Holland, Adams sent an official letter to the Continental Congress from Amsterdam on September 5, 1780, in which he proposed the foundation of an American Language Academy. He asserted that "the form of government has an influence upon language, and language, in its turn, influences not only the form of government, but the temper, the sentiments, and manners of the people."[19] Citing French, Spanish, and Italian examples of language management (and England's failure to do the same), he argued that "[t]he honor of forming the first public institution for refining, correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English language" was reserved for Congress.[20] According to Adams, the advantages of having such an institution would have been numerous: besides the obvious strengthening of national unity by advancing a single, prestige variety, the American Language Academy could also promote (American)

English worldwide to fulfill the role of a universal language, which "English is destined to" become.[21] Despite Adams's best efforts, Congress failed to act on the proposal, probably considering it too "monarchist" and "elitist."[22]

Yet, Adams was definitely not alone with the idea of language cultivation: Noah Webster, the best known American linguist of the era was also trying to eliminate dialect differences and fight the "corruption" of the language. He argued for the adoption of "American" standards and for a linguistic "separation of the American tongue from the English," which he saw as an inevitable development.[23]

2. Aims, corpus, and method

A comprehensive overview of how, when, and in what contexts language management efforts or language-related references appeared in key legislative-oriented documents during the critical years of the founding of the United States (1774-89) will close possible gaps in scholarship and also debunk some language-related myths, especially in relation to officialization.

The corpus of the analysis was built with the help of five major documentary sources available online as part of the "American Memory Collection" of the Library of Congress, including 1) The *Journals of the First and Second Continental Congress* (from September 5 to October 26, 1774, and from May 10, 1775, to March 2, 1789, respectively); 2) The *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789* (written by delegates during their years of actual service in the First and Second Continental Congress); 3) *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*; 4) *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution* (from September 1787 to March 1789), compiled by Jonathan Elliot; and 5) *The Federalist Papers* (written between October 1787 and May 1788).[24]

The final corpus of the analysis contained all paragraphs from the five sources that included the word "language" and/or "languages," with the exception of duplicates and those instances that simply refer to a particular choice of words or language use by a person or a document (for example, "the language of the treaty").

My analysis remains at "macro," that is, the national, level and does not try to trace how policies were interpreted and appropriated in particular meso- or micro-contexts, yet attempts are made to explore the "ideological and discursive context" for the policies.[25] The first methodological problem pertains to how to gauge the scope and potential impact of language-related references that may range from informal, individual remarks to enforceable

national policies. In order to visualize a possible classification of policies, I propose to apply a language policy spectrum framework with four quadrants:

	Symbolic	*Substantive*
General		
Specific		

Table 1. Language policy spectrum framework (Source: author)

The two quadrants on the left side represent symbolic policies, defined in the public policy context by James E. Anderson as policies that "have little real material impact on people"; "they allocate no tangible advantages and disadvantages"; rather, "they appeal to people's cherished values."[26] On the other hand, substantive policies (the right quadrants) "directly allocate advantages and disadvantages, benefits and costs."[27]

The "general" vs. "specific" criteria hinge on the scope of the policy, statement, or opinion in question. National-level policies or sweeping, stereotypical statements about languages are definitely considered "general"; whereas policies affecting one single language in one particular situation (or one single individual, for example, a translator or an interpreter) are classified as "specific." Today's most controversial language policy-related laws, proposals, executive orders, and regulations (including, for instance, the provision of multilingual ballots, the federal-level officialization attempts, and Executive Order 13166, designed to improve minority access to government services) belong to the top right quadrant; therefore, they are "substantive" and "general" in nature.

In order to fine-tune the results, the language-related references in the corpus are classified on the basis of further criteria as well. First, they are grouped whether they affect the English language ("English"), foreign languages ("FL"), immigrant minority languages ("Min. L."), Native

American languages ("Nat. Am."), or classical languages ("Clas. L."), acknowledging the fact that the distinction between "foreign" and "immigrant minority" languages is extremely vague in certain cases. Next, the elements of the corpus are also examined according to language policy types, using Wiley's analytical framework, which divides the spectrum of language policies into "Promotion"-, "Expediency"-, "Tolerance"-, "Restriction"-, and "Repression"-oriented policies.[28] My analysis regards "translation" as an "Expediency"-oriented policy.)

Finally, the language-related references and policy proposals are examined according to Ruiz's tripartite "orientations," as to whether the language or languages in question are treated as a "Problem"—linked with "poverty, handicap, low educational achievement, little or no social mobility" [29]; whether they mostly appear in the "Language-as-Right" context— associated with the option of granting linguistic access to government services (in an "Expediency"-oriented way); or whether they are regarded as assets, emphasizing their national security, diplomatic, and economic value. The latter attitude is identified by Ruiz as the "Language-as-Resource" orientation[30] (and by James Crawford as the "Multiculturalist Paradigm"[31]). Although Ruiz's orientations scheme is more than three decades old now, Francis M. Hult and Nancy H. Hornberger convincingly argue for its continuing usefulness as an analytical heuristic.[32]

3. Findings and discussion

3.1 Symbolic, substantive, general, and specific policies

After removing the duplicates and the irrelevant hits from the hundreds of documents that contain the search term "language" according to the exclusion criteria identified above, altogether fifty-four hits with either symbolic or substantive language policy relevance remain in the corpus. As illustrated below, all of them were recorded between 1775 and 1788.
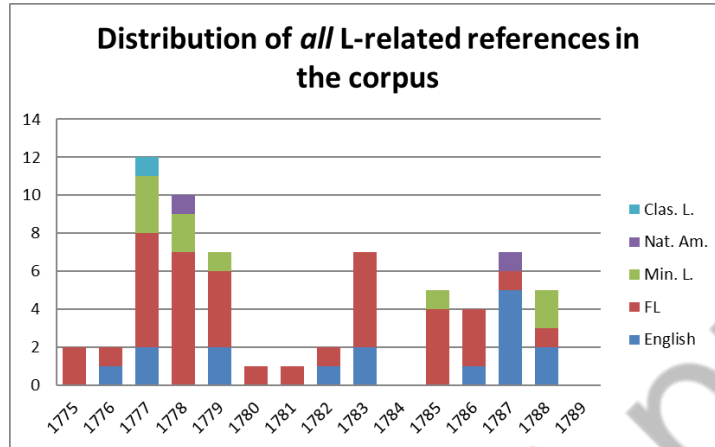
Figure 1. Chronological distribution of all relevant references in the entire corpus
(Source: author)

Even a casual glance reveals that throughout the examined period "foreign languages" (FL) dominated the relevant discourses, with the exception of the debates surrounding the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and the following fight over ratification, when the presumed role of the English language in the nation-building process attracted most attention.

Although it would be tempting to conclude somewhat hastily that from 1787 onwards the legal enshrinement and protection of the *de facto* official language must have stolen the limelight from foreign languages, a closer examination of the results shows clearly that while foreign languages almost always appeared in the "substantive" context, remarks about English remained consistently symbolic (fig. 2).
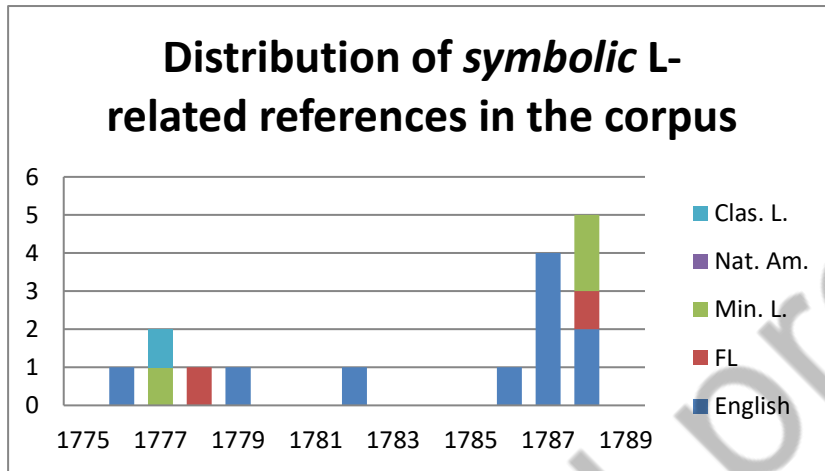
Figure 2. Chronological distribution of symbolic references in the entire corpus
(Source: author)

Substantive references (see fig. 3), however, practically disappear after 1787, which may signal the beginning of a generally *laissez faire* national-level legislative attitude toward linguistic diversity—which was to change dramatically a century later in the context of immigration restriction, the Americanization movement, and the Great War.
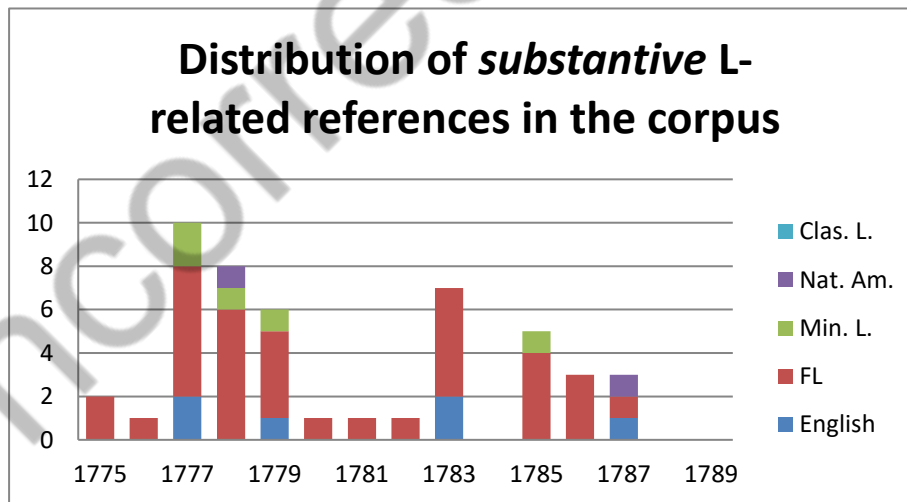

Figure 3. Chronological distribution of substantive references in the entire corpus (Source: author)

The application of the proposed language policy spectrum framework (see table 1) illustrates the numerical distribution of language-related remarks and actual policy proposals in relation to particular languages as well.

	Symbolic	**Substantive**
General	"English as a common bond" **15** **Eng. 10** **Nat. Am. 2** **Ger. 1** **Greek 1** **Fr. 1**	**0** **0**
Specific	"Fr. as an obstacle to selling P. Mazzei's book in the US" **1** **Fr. 1**	"translation and interpretation" **38** **Fr. 13** **FLs 11** **Dutch 3** **Ger. 6** **Sp. 3**

FLs=unspecified foreign languages

Table 2. Distribution of language policy references in the corpus according to the language policy spectrum framework (the numbers indicate the actual number of references) (Source: author)

3.1.1 General, substantive policies

In many respects the most important field in the framework is the empty top right quadrant. It means that—contrary to today's enacted and/or proposed policies—no general, substantive language policy initiatives were recorded in the examined documents between 1774 and 1789. Consequently, not a single enforceable official language proposal emerged, either (let alone the official adoption of other languages, such as French, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin).

3.1.2 General, symbolic references

From the general, symbolic language-related statements the majority focused on the English language, mostly describing it as a common, unifying feature of the young country, mentioning it together, among others, with the "ties of consanguinity" [33]; "a common law, common usages and manners" [34]; being "descended from the same ancestors . . . , professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in . . . manners and customs." [35] Also, the English language emerged naturally after the Revolutionary War as a straightforward bridge towards rapprochement with Great Britain. As put by Charles Pinckney in August, 1786: "Though the animosities of Great Britain are still warm, . . . when the present differences shall have terminated, it will ever be her interest to be closely connected. Our language, governments, religion and policy, point to this." [36]

Besides English, there are two references to Native American languages in the general, symbolic quadrant, and one to German, Greek, and to French, respectively. Both references to Native American languages mention a "sensible little pamphlet," Jonathan Edward's "Observations on the Language of the Muhhekaneew Indians," [37] of which two copies were sent by James Madison to George Washington and Thomas Jefferson in September 1788. Madison thought that the booklet might "aid reserches [sic] into the primitive structure of language" as well as comparative linguistic research focusing on tribal languages on other continents. [38]

The German language and its minority speakers around Yorktown, Virginia were described in less than flattering terms by John Adams in a letter to Abigail Adams in October 1777. The future president complained about the presence of German language schools and churches, as a result of which "[m]ultitudes are born, grow up and die here, without ever learning the English." [39] On the other hand, Adams urged his son, John Quincy Adams to read Thucydides in the "[o]riginal Language, which is Greek, the most perfect of all human Languages." [40]

The French language appeared in even more favorable light immediately after the signing of the French treaties in 1778: Congress assured the members of the unsuccessful British peace commission (the "Carlisle Commissioners") that "all America is intent upon learning the elegant language of our ally of France." [41]

3.1.3 Specific, symbolic references

Despite the excessive expectations concerning the skyrocketing popularity of French as a foreign language in the United States after 1778,

reality turned out to be different. Ten years later, Philip Mazzei sent to the United States 164 copies of his four-volume magnum opus titled *Recherches historiques et politiques sur les Etats-Unis* [A Political History of the American Revolution]. The book, however, did not sell, and James Madison had to acknowledge to Mazzei that "the French language is the greater obstacle."[42]

3.1.4 Specific, substantive policies

Clearly, the language-related activities of the Continental Congress were absolutely dominated by the specific, substantive references. In this quadrant, the French language and (unspecified) "foreign languages" assumed center stage, mostly in the context of translation and interpretation.

One of the first policy decisions of this type dates from May 29, 1775, when "A Letter to the Oppressed Inhabitants of Canada" (drafted by John Jay) was read, discussed, and approved by Congress.[43] The letter, of which 1,000 copies in French translation were commissioned, invited Canadians to join the War of Independence against the British. Altogether three letters were drafted, translated and sent to Quebec between 1774 and 1776, and they enjoyed very limited success.[44] In this context the French language is regarded as a "foreign" tongue, although, had the initiative succeeded, the accession of French Canada to the United States would have added a significant boost to the 2% of the French element in the population.

The French language was to be used repeatedly as a diplomatic tool throughout the American Revolution. On June 1, 1775, Congress passed a resolution in which they promised that "no expedition or incursion ought to be undertaken or made, by any colony, or body of colonists, against or into Canada."[45] The document was also translated into French. Similarly, the Articles of Confederation were also translated and distributed in Canada, accompanied by yet another invitation to accede to the United States.[46] As the ultimate success of American diplomacy, the Franco-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance (1778) were signed and "executed in French and English."[47] Later, the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the Kingdom of Prussia and the United States of America (September 10, 1785)—the first treaty signed by a European power with the US after the American Revolutionary War—was also framed "both in the American and French languages,"[48] indicating the contemporary status of French as the unchallenged language of diplomacy.

Other instances of specific, substantive policies dealt with issues of relatively lesser importance: they specified the languages to be used (and the technicalities of translation and interpretation) during the ceremonial

admission and reception of foreign diplomats. The French language (together with Spanish) also appeared three times in a very specific context: authorizing the payment of the congressional interpreter Paul Fooks's salary, which, at its highest, amounted to "2,400 dollars per annum."[49] However, Congress was soon to abolish the "office of interpreter of the French and Spanish languages": the resolution to that effect was passed on August 23, 1781.[50] According to the *Biographies of the University of Pennsylvania*, Fooks, who had been a professor of French and Spanish languages between 1776 and 1779, died approximately three months before the decision.[51]

References to unspecified "foreign languages" appeared mostly in the context of translation and interpretation. The first instance in the "specific, substantive" quadrant dealt with the creation of the position of "an interpreter and translator of languages to Congress" on June 2, 1778, to which "Mr. Paul Fooks was elected."[52] (The French and Spanish languages were not mentioned this time.) Although Fooks's position was to be terminated after his death, almost four years later, in February 1785 "the Secretary of Foreign Affairs" was "authorized to appoint an Interpreter to his Office,"[53] shortly after which Congress resolved that "all Papers written in a foreign language, which may in future be communicated to Congress, from the Office of the department of foreign affairs, shall be accompanied with a translation into English."[54]

Other decisions about foreign languages laid down the rules of linguistic protocol and etiquette concerning the admission of diplomatic representatives in Congress, specifying—among other points—that "[a]ll speeches or communications in writing may . . . be in the language of their respective countries and all replies or answers shall be in the language of the United States."[55]

In addition to French, Spanish, and other foreign languages, references to German and Dutch also appeared in the "specific, substantive" quadrant. The German language featured both as a foreign policy (propaganda) tool, and also appeared in the context of short-term, expediency-type accommodations towards the German minorities living in the United States. Congress authorized the German translation of the "late treaty between the Courts of London and Hesse, for troops to be employed in America,"[56] and actively encouraged German mercenaries in the service of Great Britain to switch sides and "[r]ise into the rank of free citizens of free states"—offering future defectors free land, oxen, and hogs as material incentives.[57] Furthermore, Congress also helped the German translation of

an appeal by the representative body of New York to the inhabitants to join the independence struggle.[58]

Heinz Kloss mentions further examples when Congress commissioned the translation of certain documents into German from as early as 1774 ("Excerpts from the Deliberations of the American Continental Congress Held in Philadelphia"), circular letters, declarations, and reports from 1775-78, including the most important publication of the period, the German edition of the Articles of Confederation.[59] From 1780 onwards, however, Congress issued no further German publications, "the reasons for which are unknown."[60] On September 13, 1779, the translation of "a circular letter from Congress to their constituents" was cancelled.[61] Following this date, no references to German translations can be found in the examined period.

References to the Dutch language appeared for the first time in February 1779, in the context of a prospective treaty of commerce with Holland. The text of the treaty secured considerable linguistic rights for merchants on both sides by authorizing them "to keep books of their accounts and affairs in any language or manner and on any paper they shall think fit.[62] Unfortunately, when the final text of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1782 was translated into English, the mistakes and errors appeared to be numerous: Congress was "exceedingly chagrined at the extreme incorrectness of the American copies of these national acts."[63] Whether this unprofessionalism was related to the fact that the translator's position was abolished in 1781 (and it was not until 1785 that the Secretary of Foreign Affairs was authorized to appoint an interpreter to his office) is not known.

3.2 Language policy types

Wiley's language policy classification framework reveals that the most consistently present policy type throughout the examined years was "Expediency," although it was not the provision of transitional bilingual education that accounted for this high proportion, rather the fact that translation (in the foreign policy context) was also classified as an "Expediency-oriented policy" (as was stated above). In addition, the Continental Congress repeatedly resorted to translation to inform (and, obviously, to convince) German speaking minorities of the aims of the Revolution—at least until 1779.
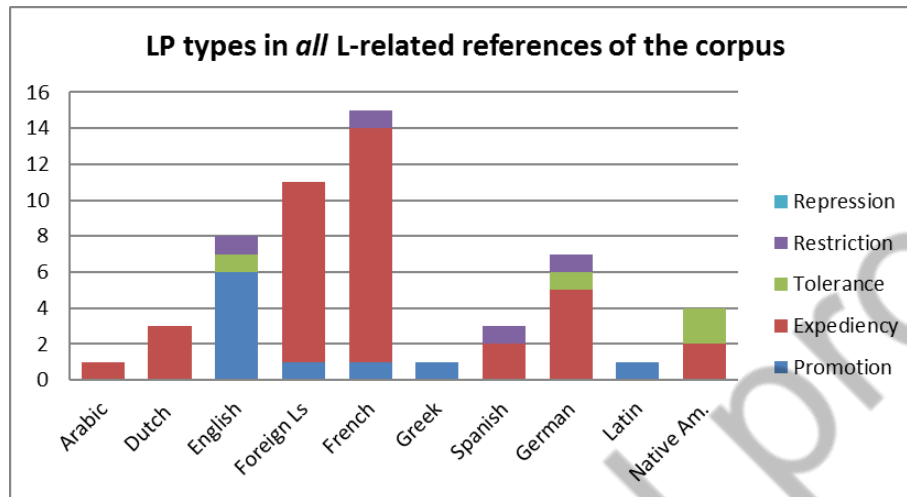
Figure 4. Language policy types in all language-related references in the corpus by languages (Source: author)

Another conspicuous feature of the diagram (fig. 4) is the fact that instances of "Repression" were not recorded at all. Although it is partly explicable by the generally tolerance-oriented environment with respect to immigrant minority languages, the lack of "Repression"-oriented references in the Congressional documents masks the presence of compulsory "ignorance laws," which had prohibited the teaching of reading and writing to Black slaves, adopted by South Carolina and Georgia decades before the American Revolution—South Carolina being the first in 1740, followed by almost every slaveholding state by the 1840s.[64]

"Restriction"-oriented policies were very few at the national level between 1774 and 1789. Ironically, however, once even the English language appeared in a (symbolic) restrictionist context: on September 14, 1782 the English language proficiency and trading skills of the fled Loyalists were used as arguments against the restitution of their rights and property for fear of creating skillful and unwanted economic competition for Americans (and their allies).[65] Otherwise, the English language enjoyed considerable support—but only at the level of symbolic statements, which did not culminate in enacted pieces of legislation (fig. 5).
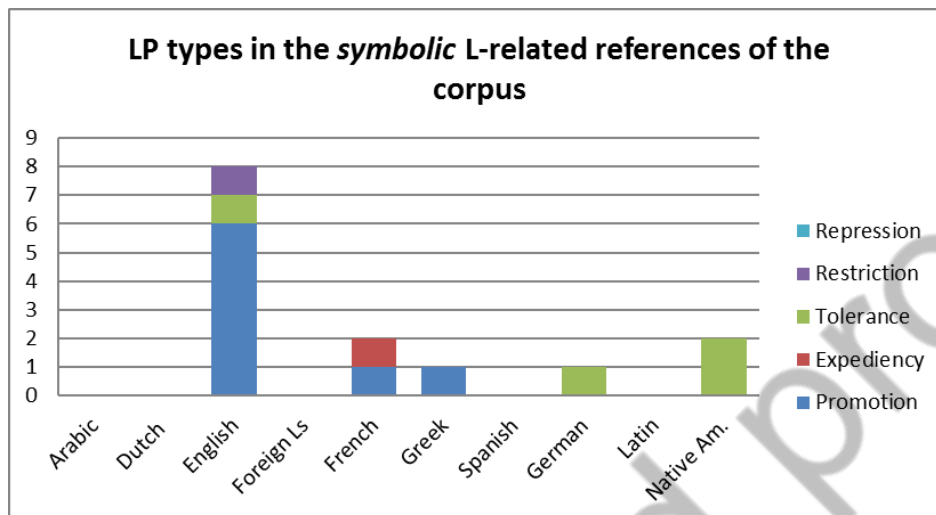
Figure 5. Language policy types in the symbolic language-related references in the corpus by languages (Source: author)
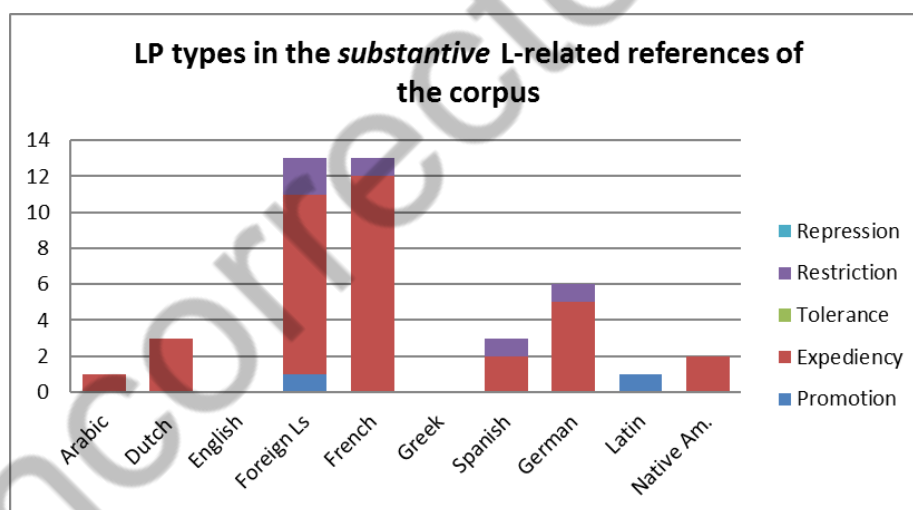

Figure 6. Language policy types in the substantive language-related references in the corpus by languages (Source: author)

The other restrictive measures (as shown in fig. 6) were substantive and affected French, Spanish (the termination of Paul Fooks's interpreter's

position), and German (the cancellation—and permanent discontinuation—of translations in 1779). Additionally, foreign languages (namely: lack of English proficiency) appeared to be serious obstacles to pursuing a military career in the Continental Army after March 1777, when Congress expressed their opinion "to discourage all gentlemen from coming to America with expectation of employment in the [military] service, unless they are masters of our language."[66]

"Expediency"-oriented measures affected Native American languages as well in certain circumstances: in March 1778 Congress authorized Colonel Nathaniel Gist (who is thought to have been the father of Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee syllabary)[67] to go "to the Indian nations, on the borders of Virginia and the Carolinas, with a view to secure them in the interest of these states" and "to engage in the service of these states, for the next campaign, any number of Indians, not exceeding two hundred."[68] For the mission, Gist was allowed to recruit as many interpreters as he judged necessary.[69] Also, Congress encouraged the Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Northern District to keep peace with the Indians and "to encourage some young white men to reside among the Indian tribes to learn their language and customs; and some young Indians . . . to learn the language and customs of the United States."[70] References to Arabic emerged in the context of signing a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the Emperor of Morocco in 1787. Besides "Expediency," Congress, to a certain degree, also promoted Latin and the modern languages by procuring "books proper for the use of Congress," including the "Best Latin Dictionary with best grammar & dictionary of each of the modem languages."[71]

3.3 Language policy orientations

The summary of all language-related references in the corpus indicates that the attitude of the Founding Fathers towards linguistic diversity was dominated by a definite "Resource"-orientation, which eclipsed both other orientations, whose manifestations were detected only in very limited contexts. Occasionally, difficulties of translation and military career prerequisites were associated with "Problem"-orientation. Language rights could only be understood in a very narrow context: foreign diplomats were definitely allowed to use their native languages in Congress (according to the codes of protocol and etiquette) but the translation of official documents into German (and French) was never elevated to the level of a *de jure* official policy—which made the discontinuation of the minority-friendly practice relatively easy in a few years' time.
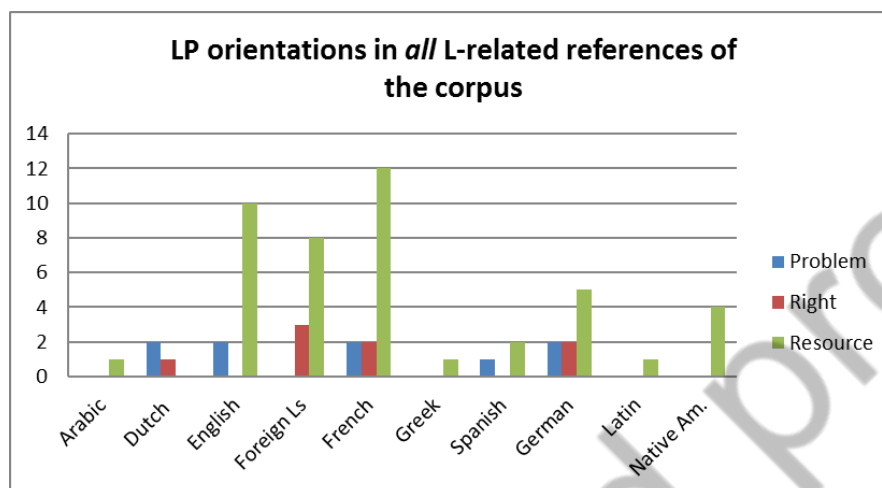
Figure 7. Language policy orientations in all language-related references in the corpus by languages (Source: author)

4. Conclusion

The analysis of language-related remarks and policy initiatives in the selected, key documents of the early nation-building period reveals that the traditionally recognized areas of language policy conflicts of the 1990s and early 2000s have very limited applicability in the context of the 1770s and 1780s. The then practically nonexistent federal-level role in education (compounded by the obviously missing psycholinguistic sophistication) explains sufficiently why bilingual education was a missing area more than two centuries ago. The unwillingness to grant the English language *de jure* official status is attributable to the legacy of British language policy (characterized by a *laissez faire*-attitude*)*, and to the "tolerance"- and (relatively short-lived) "expediency"-orientation of American language ideologies—at least towards European languages. The legally never mandated—yet often practiced—translation of declarations, statements, and legal documents into minority languages by the Continental Congress may be interpreted as a harbinger of the "access"-oriented language policies of the late twentieth century—with the caveat that minority language rights were fluid and legally not enshrined during and immediately after the American Revolution. The clash of values between "national unity" and "equality" was not yet present in the early legislative and nation-building discourse: despite the fact that, for example, the *Federalist Papers* favored national unity and the idea of a strong

central government, these principles were not translated into calls for assimilationist legislation trying to limit or eliminate multilingualism. Consequently, from the set of ideologies outlined by Cobarrubias,[72] the examined period lies probably closest to half-hearted internationalism, which also tolerated pluralism. The "English-only" strain and the surge of linguistic nativism were still beyond the language policy horizon.

In terms of policy types, contemporary language policies were mostly specific and substantive, geared towards the facilitation of international communication, negotiations, and treaty-making. Therefore, the role of the French language turned out to be dominant, which was reinforced by the American propaganda campaign towards Quebec. Foreign languages in general (and German in particular) also appeared to be crucial: the latter—somewhat similarly to French—proved to be indispensable for domestic "soft power" campaigns as well. Although the role of English as a unifying factor was acknowledged from time to time, these statements were simply nonbinding, symbolic expressions of patriotic feelings. It is also evident that on the basis of the examined legislative documents no other language threatened the dominant position of the *de facto* official language. Native American languages received sporadic attention, but when they emerged in the *Journals of Congress*, the context was never "Problem"-oriented. Overall, the Continental Congress viewed languages from a "Resource" standpoint—an attitude that was to shift noticeably towards the "Problem"-perspective a century later.

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Notes

[1] Cressida Heyes, "Identity Politics," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2016). Web. 27 Dec. 2016.

[2] *Google Books Ngram Viewer*, s.v. "identity politics." Web. 27 Dec. 2016.

[3] Ronald Schmidt, Sr., *Language Policy and Identity Politics in the United States* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2000) 37–38.

[4] Richard Ruiz, "Orientations in Language Planning," *NABE Journal* 8 (1984): 19–28. Hereafter cited as Ruiz, "Orientations."

[5] Quoted in René Galindo, "Language Wars: The Ideological Dimensions of the Debates on Bilingual Education," *Bilingual Research Journal* 21.2-3 (1997): 170.

[6] Judith T. Irvine, "Language Ideology," *Oxford Bibliographies* (Jan. 2012). Web. 27 Dec. 2016.

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