



American Public Diplomacy After World War II and the Overseas Dissemination of American English

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Abstract

The global spread of English is the result of conscious language promotion by English-speaking countries. Before World War II, the United States implemented a language policy of mandatory use of American English in the newly occupied colonies; after World War II, the United States adopted a mechanism with explicit and implicit means complementing each other to promote American language and culture overseas. Since World War II, the United States has created many public diplomatic institutions and programs aimed at strengthening the global dominance of American English and promoting its overseas dissemination and promotion. Public diplomacy activities led by government agencies have combined the promotion of American English with the dissemination of American values; private organizations have led or participated in the dissemination and promotion of American English under the guidance of the U.S. government. The division of labor between government agencies and non-governmental organizations has made the development of American public diplomacy more extensive, permeable and flexible. Examining the historical evolution of American public diplomacy and the overseas spread mechanism of American English has strong reference significance for China to develop its public diplomacy strategy and promote the overseas spread of Chinese language and culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is the lingua franca in today’s world, and its spread, circulation and numbers of speakers exceed any other language. According to the statistics of British linguist David Crystal, English is the first language in 57 countries, with a population of 450 million; 67 countries use English as the second language, with a population of about 350 million; The population that speaks English as a foreign language and reaches a certain level reaches 1.2 to 1.5 billion; more than one third of the world’s people have mastered English. (Crystal, 2001, p.57) The United States became the world’s number one power after World War II, playing a dominant role in world politics, economy, military, culture, science and technology, diplomacy and other fields. Taking this advantage, American English has become the most widely used and influential international language. American English is also an important part and implementation carrier of the “soft power” of the United States. According to statistics, among the approximately 450 million native English speakers, about 70% use American English. (Niu, 2001, p.95)

English is not only a medium for cross-cultural communication, a carrier of information circulation, but also a dissemination tool of ideology and values. The Danish linguist Robert Phillipson believes that the global spread of English is the result of conscious language promotion by English-speaking countries, which is a kind

of “linguistic imperialism”. English language imperialism establishes and maintains the dominant position of English by establishing and continuously reconstructing the structural and cultural inequality between English and other languages. Cultural and structural inequalities ensure that more material resources are continuously allocated to English rather than other languages, benefiting those who are proficient in English. (Phillipson, 2000, p.47)

At present, the academic circles have introduced more on the application of explicit means in the process of American English dissemination and promotion, and less on the analysis of its implicit dissemination mechanism. Research on the overseas dissemination mechanism of American English from the perspective of public diplomacy is still lacking. In view of this, this article will review the history of American English overseas dissemination, analyze the path that the United States used to promote American English overseas through public diplomacy after World War II, and provide a useful reference for China to spread Chinese language and culture through public diplomacy.

2. THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN ENGLISH OVERSEAS DISSEMINATION

2.1 The Overseas Dissemination of American English Before World War II

At the end of the 19th century, the United States began to expand outward and moved towards the era of imperialism. As the expansion of the western frontier of the United States came to an end, in order to satisfy Americans’ endless desire for expansion and the need to open up markets and spread Christianity, Americans began to break free from the shackles of isolationism and search for “new frontiers” overseas. Hawaii was the first attempt of American maritime hegemony; after the Spanish-American War, the Spanish colonies such as Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam fell into the hands of the United States, further consolidating the status and potential of U.S. imperialism. Although many enlightened people in the United States opposed the expansionist and imperialist behaviors of the United States, the main theme of American society at that time was expansion and hegemony, and its momentum was unstoppable. President Theodore Roosevelt divided the world into civilized countries and uncivilized countries. The English-speaking Anglo-Saxon countries were the so-called civilized countries, and the others were uncivilized countries. Civilized countries have the responsibility to supervise uncivilized countries with a big stick, not only to maintain order, but also to spread advanced values, systems, and language.

Under the guidance of this “big-stick policy”, the United States implemented a language policy of mandatory

use of American English in the newly occupied colonies. In 1906, eight years after the United States occupied Guam, English became the sole language of the Guam government. In 1922, the school banned the use of local languages, and Chamorro dictionaries were collected and burned. This “linguistic genocide” policy also spread to another colony of the United States, the Northern Mariana Islands. After World War II, these two regions achieved independent status in name, but in fact they are still satellite countries of the United States. Correspondingly, although the native language has restored its status as an official language, English is still the only way to the upper class. As Richard Day said, “As long as the Marianas remain under the control of the United States, the English language will continue to replace Chamorro until there are no native speakers left. This has been American policy and practice elsewhere, and there is no reason to believe that Guam and the North Marianas will be an exception.” (Day, 1985) At the beginning of the 20th century, the United States introduced English to the Philippines, replacing Spanish and the native language as the main language of instruction. Mastering English was regarded as a sign of good education. With the enforcement of English, this country has become more and more dependent on English, a borrowed language with American ideology and political and economic interests, and it has also become dependent on American ideas and methods that determine this language. After the Philippines gained independence in 1946, some local scholars have been committed to revitalizing the local culture, restoring the legal status of the national language, and erasing the traces of colonial rule from all aspects, including the cancellation of some college courses with mainstream western consciousness, and the use of local languages as teaching media, etc. But every step was full of resistance, and a large part of the resistance came from “nostalgic” Americans. (Li, 2006, p.217)

2.2 The Overseas Dissemination of American English After World War II

After World War II, the colonial era in which territories and benefits were obtained through military encroachment and violent plunder in the traditional sense was gone, and the Western colonial system collapsed. But in fact, since the end of World War II, a culture war without gunpowder has quietly started, and a race to reach the peak of imperial power has begun silently. As Winston Churchill said: “We must treat people with kindness, not malice. Compared with plundering land, exploiting oppression, doing so can achieve greater returns. The future empire is an empire of minds.” (Watanabe & Jin, 2013, p.164) In this context, the intellectual and strategic elites of the United States began to plan and implement strategies and tactics aimed at establishing the hegemony of the United States in global culture. Under the guidance of these strategies and tactics, after continuous adjustments and evolutions in

various historical periods, the United States has gradually completed the transfer of cultural power dominated by France and Britain worldwide.

Language has always been an effective tool for political and cultural struggles, an important means of gaining national interests, and an important part of maintaining and developing a common national culture. (Pan, 2005) The dissemination and promotion of American English has naturally become an important link in the United States planning and implementing its global cultural strategy and tactics. Different from the colonial conquest and the spread with violence before World War II, after World War II, the United States adopted a mechanism with explicit and implicit means complementing each other to promote American English and American culture overseas, and strengthen the recognition of American social systems and lifestyles by countries around the world. Relying on the strong political, economic, military, and technological strength of the United States, American English has successfully achieved “linguistic hegemony” and has become the most important tool for the export of American culture, ideology and values, and an important means for the United States to gain and maintain its cultural hegemony. As Claude Hagene mentioned, “English today has become the most important lingua franca in the history of mankind, and it has achieved the domination of space and time at the same time.” (Hagene, 2015, p.27)

2.2.1 The Explicit Dissemination Means of American English

The mass media has been employed to spread American English. The statistics demonstrate that the amount of information disseminated by media such as CBS, ABC, and Cable News Network is about 100 times that of other countries in the world; The United States controls the production of 75% of the world’s TV programs. The total production of movies accounts for only 6-7% of the world’s movie production, while the show time accounts for more than half of the world. (Wang, 1994) Language is the most important and basic carrier of information. The United States’ dominance of global information dissemination means spreading and strengthening of American English as the carrier of information dissemination, thereby helping it win its dominant position in global politics, economy, and culture, and at the same time pass American ideology and cultural values through American English has penetrated and exported to all corners of the world, and exerted subtle influence on the target of communication.

Overseas students have been enrolled to study in the United States. The United States is the world’s largest destination country for studying abroad, and its excellent educational resources continue to attract outstanding students from various countries to study in the country.

Studying in the United States has high requirements for international students’ English proficiency, and the TOEFL or GRE test scores need to meet certain standards. In addition, the goals and corresponding policies adopted by the United States for recruiting overseas students in different historical periods are not the same, but what they all have in common is that foreign students have learned American English through their educational experience in the United States while accepting American values and ideologies and when returning home, they will play a constructive role to promote the improvement of the relationship between its home country and the United States. It can be seen that the recruitment of international students can be understood as a form of American foreign policy aimed at promoting American English, exporting American culture, and serving the national development strategy.

Teaching American English abroad has been encouraged. The United States is the world’s number one publishing country and has the world’s leading publishers. It exports massive amounts of English books, periodicals, magazines, and teaching materials every year, and actively develops overseas education markets. In addition, after the 1980s, the United States began to compete with the United Kingdom in the international English education market. Through the Educational Testing Center (ETS), the world’s largest English education testing organization, it launched SAT, TOFEL, GRE, GMAT and other global English tests. While the project has brought huge profits to the United States, it has also expanded the influence of American English in the world.

2.2.2 The Implicit Dissemination Means of American English

After World War II, the dissemination and promotion of American English constituted part of the American global cultural strategy. The status of American English was maintained by dominating world organizations, commercial consumption and scientific research activities, acting as the working language of multinational corporations, and promoting church education. For example, the United States established the world political and economic order through the “Bretton Woods System”, and American English has subsequently become the dominant language of major international institutions. The United States has promulgated the “Marshall Plan” in the name of restoring and revitalizing the European economy and the “Fourth Point Plan” was formulated in the name of assisting the economy and education of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which facilitated the export of American capital and commodities and realized the widespread dissemination of American English in Europe and Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Among the many cultural strategies planned and implemented by the United States, the characteristics of public diplomacy help it to transcend some sensitive

forbidden areas in international relations, enhance the image of the United States, and improve the “mutual understanding” between the United States and other countries, which has redefined the modes of domination, conquest and subordination. The cultural penetration and ideological offensive in American public diplomacy and English language promotion activities are integrated and mutually promoted. It is a special tool for realizing American national interests. In view of this, exploring the inter-constructive relationship and operating mechanism between American public diplomacy and American English dissemination is of great benefit to a deep understanding of the exercise of American global cultural power after World War II.

3. AMERICAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PROMOTING THE DISSEMINATION OF AMERICAN ENGLISH OVERSEAS

As defined by Nicholas Cull, public diplomacy is actions taken to promote the national interests of the United States to understand, inform, engage and influence the international public. The elements of public diplomacy include listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, communication diplomacy, and international broadcasting. (Cull, 2008, p.486) Philip Coombs, the first U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for Culture and Education pointed out in 1962 that the U.S. federal government believed that the three traditional international behaviors of economy, diplomacy, and military were no longer enough, and it was necessary to add a fourth mode of behavior, namely cultural relations. (Hagene, 2015, p.29) Carrying out public diplomacy was an inevitable choice for the United States to establish and shape “cultural relations” with countries around the world. The spread of American culture would correspondingly contribute to the realization of various goals of American foreign policy.

Generally speaking, the purpose of American public diplomacy is to familiarize, understand and influence foreign public through communication, information activities, language education programs, student exchange programs, cultural programs, media research and opinion surveys, radio and television programs, and support for non-governmental organizations. (Smyth, 2001) As an important content and basic medium for the practice of public diplomacy, American English will strengthen the unequal “cultural relationship” that exists between the United States and other countries in the world, and spread the American way of life and worldview to the world, and will in turn promote the development of American public diplomacy and the realization of its goals. In the decades after World War II, many institutions and programs were introduced to strengthen the global dominance of American English and promote its overseas dissemination and promotion.

3.1 Public Diplomacy Led by Official Institutions and the Promotion of American English

Among the public diplomacy agencies in the United States after World War II, seven official departments including the State Department, Agency for International Development, U.S. Information Agency, Department of Education, Department of Defense, Peace Corps, and Department of the Interior participated in and supported American English overseas promotion activities. The common policy pursued in the public diplomacy activities led by these government agencies was to combine the promotion of American English with the dissemination of American values, work system and lifestyle, and specific language promotion activities were carried out in the form of programs.

3.1.1 The Fulbright Program

The Fulbright Program is managed by the U.S. State Department. Its purpose is to promote mutual understanding between countries through educational and cultural exchanges. At the same time, the United States hopes to spread American language and values to other countries. It is considered to be the beginning of American public diplomacy. In 1946, President Henry Truman signed the *Fulbright Act*, which was the first time the U.S. government promulgated policies related to foreign cultural relations. In 1948, the Fulbright Program was officially implemented. 35 foreign students and 1 professor came to the United States, and 65 students and scholars went abroad to study and teach. In 1961, the *Fulbright-Hays Act* was passed, and it was determined that a stable fund would be provided for Fulbright’s international exchange program in the form of congressional appropriations every year, which laid a legal and financial foundation for the future expansion and smooth implementation of the Fulbright Program. Today, 310,000 people from more than 150 countries and regions all over the world have participated in this program, and it is increasing by thousands every year. (Zhao, 2015, pp.25-26)

Of particular concern is the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA), which specifically provides opportunities for non-native English teachers to improve their teaching skills and broaden their knowledge of American culture and customs, and at the same time strengthen their foreign language practice skills in American universities. Participants in this project are not only language teachers, but also transmitters of two cultures, acting as cultural ambassadors and promoting cultural exchanges between countries.

The Fulbright Program has been implemented for more than 70 years, and its scale and impact are unmatched by any other international educational and cultural exchange program in the world. Arnold Toynbee praised the Fulbright Program as “one of the most generous and imaginative things in the world after World War II.”

President Kennedy described the Fulbright Program as “a classic example of making a sword as a plough” and the “most important” means used to improve the relationship between the United States and other countries and regions. “It is a major and constructive step on the road to peace.” (Zhao, 2015, p.27)

3.1.2 The Peace Corps

The Peace Corps was established in 1961 under the initiative of President Kennedy. It is a foreign aid agency led by the U.S. government and composed of volunteers. Although the Peace Corps calls itself a non-political organization, it receives funding from the U.S. State Department and its activities are under the direct jurisdiction of the Office of the President of the United States. Its main members are fresh graduates from the American universities and a small number of middle-aged people. They go to cities or villages in third world countries for two-year volunteer service, and directly contact the local ordinary people, engaged in education, medical care, community and agricultural guidance, etc.

Since the establishment of the Peace Corps, education has always been the largest single project of the Peace Corps. About one-third of the volunteers are sent overseas as teachers. Peace Corps volunteers as teachers only need to engage in elementary education in the recipient country, and teach English, mathematics and other courses in primary and secondary schools in some remote areas. Some volunteers have also undertaken teacher training tasks in the host country and assisted in the development of educational resources and curriculum planning. In addition, there are some volunteers engaged in preschool education, adult education and vocational education. Only a few volunteers are engaged in English teaching in universities in some large and medium-sized cities. It is worth mentioning that in some countries, Peace Corps volunteers assisted the host government in reforming the education system based on the American education system. (Liu, 2005, p.281)

The Peace Corps is a hidden force in U.S. foreign policy. Through open and apparently “altruistic” activities, it strengthens the United States’ attraction to third world countries and spreads American language, values, development models, and popular culture, which is what Joseph Nye calls “soft power” in American foreign policy. From 1961 to 2003, the Peace Corps worked in 136 countries and regions. Benjamin Gilman, chairman of the International Relations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, called the Peace Corps “the best part of our foreign aid program... as an ambassador for the United States and its values, there is no better program than the Peace Corps.” (Hirschfeld, 1999, p.565)

3.1.3 The Voice of America

International broadcasting is an important part of American public diplomacy. During the Cold War, the scale of international broadcasting in the United States

was huge, with 21 international radio stations belonging to different systems such as government, military, commerce, and religion. The most important radio station was the Voice of America, which broadcast worldwide. It broadcast more than 1,500 hours of various programs in 46 languages every week including news and current affairs, special programs, English teaching programs, American popular music, and editorials reflecting the U.S. government’s position.

The Voice of America, as an official radio station, was established in 1942 and began broadcasting to the outside world, directly under the U.S. War Information Administration. The “Smith-Monte Act” promulgated in 1948 required the United States to carry out international exchanges of news and culture in different forms, including the Voice of America, which was managed and supported by the government. After the establishment of the U.S. Information Agency in 1953, it became the responsible unit of the Voice of America, but it still accepted the policy guidance of the U.S. State Department. In 1999, the U.S. Information Agency was disbanded and the Voice of America was placed under the American Broadcasting Council, and its daily operations were supported by the International Broadcasting Bureau under the Broadcasting Council.

The core mission of VOA is to introduce the United States, specifically, to promote the history, system, culture, language, and values of the United States to countries around the world. Among them, language programs are an important broadcast content of the Voice of America, acting as a carrier for spreading American ideology. Classic language programs include “People in America”, “This is America”, “The Making of a Nation”, “American Mosaic”, “American Stories”, etc. Among them, the language program “Special English” launched in the 1950s is an English radio program specially arranged for audiences in non-English speaking countries. It is simple, fluent and standard. It provides a standard model for studying American English for audiences all over the world, and subtly exposes learners to the influence of American culture and values. In fact, the original intention of VOA to offer “Special English” is not only to facilitate the audience to learn English, but also to promote the American ideology and social system more widely. In the words of former VOA director Henry Loomis, “the ideas spread in simple sentences are still powerful.” (He, 2005)

3.1.4 Overseas Information Centers

Overseas information centers are important places established by the U.S. State Department in foreign countries to reach out to the general public and enable foreign people to understand American cultural values, including libraries, American Center, American Corner, and American House. These information centers are generally located in overseas universities, research institutes, and U.S. embassies and consulates abroad

to facilitate foreign people to enter these information centers and obtain relevant information about the United States, including American books, audiovisual materials, newspapers and magazines, etc. They use this information to understand American cultural values and understand American policies.

After World War II, with the deterioration of U.S.-Soviet relations, information media such as English books gradually became an important tool for the United States to carry out a cultural cold war against the Soviet Union, and overseas information centers such as overseas libraries expanded unprecedentedly. By 1959, the United States had successively established 158 libraries and cultural centers, 89 reading rooms in 64 countries, and 97 binational centers in 24 countries. The audience of information centers reached 28 million people. The circulation of books that year was as high as 10 million. (Hu, 2018, p.157) In 1964, the U.S. book export surpassed the U.K. for the first time, becoming the country with the most book export in the world. Among the many public diplomacy media, the role of books was unique. As Ralph Munn, the director of the Carnegie Library, said, "Any international friendship program designed and implemented by the government will arouse suspicion, no matter how noble the motivation is... the project is almost impossible to get rid of the stain of pursuing self-interest....Of all possible media, books and magazines written for domestic readers are the least suspected." (Wang, 2015, p.523) After World War II, American books gradually spread all over the world, playing the role of "cultural tentacles", transporting American language, lifestyle and way of thinking to the "new frontier" of American culture.

Overseas information centers are an important implementation method of American public diplomacy and have played an irreplaceable role. Overseas information centers have a wide variety of English books, films, and expert lectures from various industries. They also provide cultural performances, book translations, news services, English language programs and publications, as well as conferences and academic magazines. Overseas information centers interact with the local public in various forms, promote American English, and at the same time spread American values and shape the American image abroad, enabling the local public to understand and track the development of American politics, economy, and society.

3.2 Public Diplomacy Led by Private Institutions and the Promotion of American English

The leader of American public diplomacy is the government, and its goals are formulated by the government in accordance with the changes of the times under the framework of overall diplomacy. In the implementation process of public diplomacy programs, part of them are independently completed by government

departments, some are initiated by the government and implemented by private organizations, and others are funded by the government and managed by private organizations. As Professor David Lampton of Johns Hopkins University said, "If only talking about the cultural diplomacy of the U.S. government, it is of little significance to study American cultural diplomacy. The role and investment of non-governmental organizations and individuals in cultural diplomacy are unmatched by the government." (Hu, 2008, p.66) The division of labor and cooperation between official and private institutions make the development of American public diplomacy more extensive, permeable and flexible. Among them, private institutions that lead or participate in the dissemination and promotion of American English through public diplomacy activities include foundations, academic institutions, and churches.

3.2.1 Foundations

There are many foundations in the United States supporting the international promotion of American English. Among them, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the Ford Foundation are the three most influential foundations, funding the most for the development of American English.

The Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1904 and registered in New York in 1913. It is the oldest private foundation in the United States. The main areas funded by the Rockefeller Foundation include medical and health, politics and diplomacy, agriculture, literature and art, education, etc. Carrying out cultural diplomacy and promoting the dissemination of American English is one of its key concerns.

The Carnegie International Peace Foundation was established in 1910, headquartered in Washington, D.C. It is also an earlier foundation in American history. The main research and funding fields of the foundation are education, system and policy, democracy, important international affairs, etc. The Carnegie Foundation for International Peace funds academic exchange programs between the United States and other countries and groups, and supports American English teaching activities.

The Ford Foundation was established in 1936, headquartered in New York. After the 1950s, except for a few individual years, the Ford Foundation ranked first among all foundations in terms of total assets and expenditures. The Ford Foundation began to provide funding for the overseas promotion of American English in the 1950s. The foundation has provided training funds for English teachers in many overseas universities and carried out inter-school exchange programs with schools in many countries around the world. It has established the Center for Applied Linguistics, which is well-known in the world of linguistics, engaged in scientific research related to language, culture, and education, including training

language teachers, compiling related textbooks, holding academic conferences, setting test standards, collecting data, etc., and has made outstanding contributions to the international promotion of American English.

3.2.2 Academic Institutions

The U.S. government supports U.S. universities to establish transnational language and culture promotion agencies or joint schools overseas, and encourages academic organizations such as teachers' associations to conduct research and practice in English teaching. The extensive presence of American academic institutions overseas is conducive to adapting to local needs, mobilizing local resources, and carrying out the promotion of American English in a comprehensive and multidimensional manner.

TESOL International Association was established in 1966 and its headquarters is in Alexandria, Virginia. Its main tasks are to carry out research on teaching English as a foreign language, compile English textbooks, train English teachers as a foreign language, and conduct exchange meetings for teaching English as a foreign language. Among them, training English teachers as a foreign language is its main job. The work of TESOL International Association directly promoted the international promotion of American English.

World Teach was founded by Harvard University students in 1986 and is a non-profit and unofficial organization. The organization recruits volunteer teachers to go to developing countries for a year of teaching. World Teach provides more than 500 teacher volunteers to about 16 countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, Europe, Pacific Islands and other places each year. The volunteers teach a wide range of subjects, and English is the main subject taught. This organization has made important contributions to the promotion of American English worldwide.

There are many other non-governmental academic institutions in the United States specializing in the promotion of American English, such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), the Association for Bilingual Education (ABE), and the English Language School (ELS), etc. In addition, under the official permission of the U.S. government, all states, schools and other related organizations can independently carry out language teaching projects, which greatly facilitates the spread of American English.

3.2.3 Churches

American Christian churches are good at using religious activities and developing church education to spread Protestantism while spreading American English widely. The spread of the gospel of Christ and the spread of American English are two sides of the same coin, coexisting and complementing each other. From the British colonial period to the beginning of the 20th century, American missionary activities were

often combined with military and economic expansion. After World War II, in addition to continuing to spread Christianity throughout the world, the American churches focused on the development of church education and implicitly spread American political ideas, ideologies, values, and language habits through church schools.

Until now, churches are still important implementers of English education. In the United States, almost all churches provide free English courses, organize various Bible studies and other church activities; many clergy have double degrees in theology and English as a second language teaching, and have dual identities as missionaries and English teachers. In addition, American churches go deep into developing countries to spread the gospel, trying to attract more people into churches, that is, into English classes. This method is a very effective way to promote English. It is difficult to distinguish between teaching English and spreading Christianity as the purpose and the tool. (Li, 2013, p.145)

3.3 Division of Labor and Cooperation Between the U.S. Official Agencies and Private Institutions in the Promotion of American English Abroad

Although all strata of the United States are always arguing about domestic language policies, there is a high degree of consensus across the country on the issue of promoting the spread of American English through public diplomacy. After World War II, American English teaching activities abroad mainly relied on the support of private organizations represented by private foundations. In accordance with the official will of the United States, various non-governmental organizations actively carried out cultural exchanges with foreign countries, and generously donated to support foreign language teaching, as well as funding related research in specific countries and regions. In the process of the promotion of English by private organizations to other countries, the U.S. government departments only played a role of assistance. The U.S. government has been in control of the general direction of the operation of language promotion agencies, rather than directly controlling and interfering in their specific activities, so civil organizations have been relatively independent. In essence, the official language promotion activities in the United States and the language promotion activities led by non-governmental organizations represented by foundations are combined into one and complement each other. Although manifested in two different forms, they represent the same interest group.

4. CONCLUSION

As the lingua franca of today's world, English is also a dominant language in many other fields such as

international politics, economics, culture, diplomacy, and its potential impact is far-reaching. "The use of any language gives privileges to a specific type of thinking, a specific culture, and a specific way of constructing truth." (Groom & Light, 1994, p.219) Therefore, the widespread dissemination and application of English, especially American English, in different fields around the globe will inevitably lead the specific thinking models, values, ideologies and knowledge frameworks of English-speaking countries, especially those of the United States, to the dominant position in the world.

The wide spread and great influence of American English in various fields are an important manifestation of American cultural soft power and an important manifestation of American cultural imperialism. The global spread of English is the result of conscious language promotion by English-speaking countries. After World War II, American English's external dissemination mechanism became more and more perfect, and the explicit and implicit dissemination methods complemented each other and promoted each other. As an effective tool for spreading ideology and defending national interests, public diplomacy has an unquestionable role in spreading language and culture. World War I gave the initial germination of U.S. public diplomacy; World War II promoted the further improvement of the U.S. public diplomacy mechanism; the Cold War brought U.S. public diplomacy into a golden age and built a complete public diplomacy system. Since World War II, public diplomacy activities led by government agencies have combined the promotion of American English with the dissemination of American values. Specific English promotion activities have been carried out in the form of programs. By carrying out public diplomacy activities, private organizations have led or participated in the dissemination and promotion of American English under the guidance of the U.S. government. The division of labor between the U.S. government and non-governmental organizations has made the development of American public diplomacy more extensive, permeable and flexible.

At present, as a rising power, China's public diplomacy is in the ascendant. Examining the historical evolution of American public diplomacy and its specific operating mechanism will undoubtedly help develop its public diplomacy strategy, promote foreign exchanges, and promote the overseas dissemination of Chinese language and culture, so as to better defend and expand China's national interests.

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