

2001

# Language Policy in Central Asia

Baktygul M. Ismailova  
*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cie\\_capstones](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cie_capstones)

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Law Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

---

Ismailova, Baktygul M., "Language Policy in Central Asia" (2001). *Master's Capstone Projects*. 60.  
Retrieved from [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cie\\_capstones/60](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cie_capstones/60)

This Open Access Capstone is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Education at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@library.umass.edu](mailto:scholarworks@library.umass.edu).

**LANGUAGE POLICY IN CENTRAL ASIA**

**MASTER'S PROJECT**

**Completed by BAKTYGUL M. ISMAILOVA**

**MAY 2001**

**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY, RESEARCH AND  
ADMINISTRATION, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS**

## **Language Policy in Central Asia**

(Abstract)

This study addresses language policy and language planning in the five Central Asian republics, former constituents of the Soviet Union. Language issues became crucial after the breakdown of the Soviet system, which completely changed the linguistic environment in the region.

The study discusses two main issues related to the language planning in central Asia. The first section of the project describes the history of the region before 1917, when lifestyle patterns divided Central Asian residents into two groups, nomads (Kyrgyz, Kazak and Turkmen) and sedentary peoples (Tajik and Uzbek).

After a brief discussion of schooling practices in pre-Soviet Central Asia, the paper describes Soviet schooling practices and language policies after 1917. Soviet national policy included alphabetic transformations and innovations as well. The post-Soviet language policy targets the introduction and use of native languages in schools, and organizations. The policies emphasize widespread teaching in native languages and their introduction in non-native primary and secondary schools. The study also describes how changes in the linguistic environment in the region affected the schooling practices in the region. All major stages of language planning and construction in the region show that schools served as a laboratory for Soviet and post-Soviet experiments.

The second section is devoted to exploration of the role of language in maintaining ethno-social stability in Central Asia. The section discusses in-migration and out-migration issues in the history of Central Asia. The intention is to explore whether the changes in the language use patterns cause in- and out-migration from the region.

## **Introduction**

### Purpose of the study

This paper will examine language issues in the newly independent states of Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Breakup of the Soviet system brought sovereignty along with economic disintegration. Today, these independent but economically weak states are struggling to find an appropriate solution for political, economic, social, cultural and language issues of the transition period.

The paper will focus on language issues in a multicultural background, which add to current economic and financial constraints in these countries. Cultural and language issues became very crucial after the breakdown of the Soviet system, which perpetuated people's integration through Russian as a language of interethnic communication. Describing language-planning efforts, the paper will build on the history of language construction and planning in Central Asia before and during the Soviet regime. This study also focuses on the changes in language policies in education and related domains of language use. It will also highlight current dilemmas connected to language planning in the post-Soviet period.

### Background

Central Asia occupies the central part of the Eurasian landmass and extends from the Caspian Sea in the west to the border of western China in the east. It borders upon Russia in the north, and on Iran, Afghanistan, and China to the south. Central Asia consists of the republics of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Ethnically and culturally, people in Central Asia come from Turkic and

Mongol origin, although there are Tajiks who came from the Indo-European origin. By religion, the area is predominantly populated by Muslims. Below is the table that demonstrates the ethnic composition of countries in Central Asia.

**Ethnic composition of Central Asian countries (percentages)**

	Kazakhstan <sup>1</sup>		Uzbekistan <sup>1</sup>		Turkmenistan <sup>1</sup>		Kyrgyzstan <sup>1</sup>		Tajikistan <sup>2</sup>
	%		%		%		%		%
	1997	1989	1993	1989	1995	1989	1997	1989	1989
Kazakh	50.6	39.7	4.1	N/A	2.0	N/A	0.9	N/A	0.2
Uzbek	2.3	N/A	74.5	71.4	9.2	N/A	14.3	N/A	23.5
Turkmen	-		-		77.0	72.0	-		0.4
Kyrgyz	-		0.9	N/A	-		60.8	52.4	1.3
Tajik	-		4.8	N/A	-		0.8	N/A	62.3
Russian	32.2	37.8	6.9	8.3	6.7	9.5	15.3	21.5	7.6
Karakalpak	-		2.1	N/A	-		-		-
Tatar	1.8	N/A	2.6	N/A	0.8	N/A	1.2	N/A	1.4
German	1.9	5.8	0.1	N/A	-		0.4	2.4	0.6
Ukrainian	4.5	5.4	N/A	0.8		1.0	1.6	2.5	0.8
Baluchi					0.8	N/A			
Azeri					0.8	N/A			
Armenian					0.8	N/A			
Jews			0.1	N/A					
Others	6.7	N/A	6.0	N/A	1.9	N/A	4.7	N/A	N/A

This table is formed using the data from two sources. Data for Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan are relatively updated compared to data for Tajikistan (see footnote). Data for 1989 reflect the demographic situation before the official dissolution of the Soviet government. The comparison of two sets of data for titular nations and populations of Ukrainians, Germans and Russians show significant changes in the demographic situation in Central Asian countries, specifically, rise in the population of titular nationalities, and decline in the populations of the minorities

Notes and sources:

<sup>1</sup> Data for Kazakhstan (1997), Uzbekistan (1993), Turkmenistan (1995) and Kyrgyzstan (1997) are based on Smith, G. et al (1998). *Nation-building in the post-Soviet borderlands: The politics of national identities*. Cambridge: University Press; p. 153

<sup>2</sup> Data for Tajikistan is for 1989 taken from Glenn, J. (1999). *The Soviet legacy in Central Asia*. St. Martin's Press, Inc. p. 151

mentioned above. For instance, number of Kazakhs increased from 39.7 percent in 1989 to 50.6 percent in 1997. This rapid increase within eight years might be due to the out-migration of European population: Germans in 1997 made up only 1.9 percent compared to 5.8 percent in 1989. Russian population decreased from 37.8 percent in 1989 to 32.2 percent in 1997. Similar increase is encountered in the number of Kyrgyz people, who made up 60.8 percent in 1997 compared to 52.4 percent in 1989. Meanwhile, Russian population in Kyrgyzstan decreased from 21.5 percent in 1989 to 15.3 percent in 1997. Another reason of the increase may be higher birth rates among native people in the region. Central Asian Muslims tend to have larger families compared to in-migrants. Another point is that populations of Azeri, Armenians and Baluchi are shown only for Turkmenistan, and of Karakalpaks - for Uzbekistan.

### Linguistic composition

The fact that the titular nations are the majority in the region allows making a conclusion that Central Asia is linguistically homogeneous. With exception of the Tajiks, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Uzbek and Turkmen speak languages of the Turkic subfamily of Altaic languages. Tajik (Farsi) belongs to the Persian group of Indo-European languages. Kazakh is the state language of Kazakhstan and widely spoken across the country. Exception is the northern part of the country, which is dominated by speakers of Indo-European languages, including Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and German. Kyrgyz is spoken in by Kyrgyz, who live in Kyrgyzstan, Fergana part of Uzbekistan, Murgab (Pamir) region of Tajikistan, and Kyrgyz minorities in Turkey, Afghanistan and China. The Turkmens are more closely related to the Turks of Turkey than are the other major Central Asian peoples. The Karakalpaks, who form an autonomous republic within

Uzbekistan on southern shore of the Aral Sea, may be related to the Uzbeks ethnically, but linguistically they are closer to the Kazaks (Comrie, 1981).

Subsequent section of the project will describe different language situations resulted from different power regimes in the region. The sections will discuss policy of “korenizatsia” of the early Soviet government, which upgraded indigenous languages both in terms of their status and corpus. In-migration following the occupation of the Central Asian region by Tsarist, and later Soviet forces made Russian another major language in Central Asia, which later started its domination over titular languages. We also see that social and political transformations in the region in the post-Soviet era have brought about the revival of indigenous languages.

## **Literature review**

Before speaking about the languages, I would like to comment the on literature I have used to describe the linguistic environment in Central Asia. To make the discussion clearer, I would like to divide them into two groups depending on the purpose of the narrative: 1. Soviet literature; 2. Western sources. I find all these sources ideologically-bound and therefore, I would conclude that each narrative serves its own ideological goal. The intention of the Soviet literature is to underline the educational achievements of the Soviet regime in completely illiterate Central Asia. Western sources seem to be aimed at proving that Muslim Central Asia was doing quite well in terms of education before the Russian Tsarist Empire colonized it. According to western researchers, colonization did not end with the socio-political transformations of the late 1920s. I suppose that ideology is the major dimension that makes these two literature sources diverge.

The findings the research has revealed include: (a) The importance of Bourdieu's theory about language being considered as a "cultural capital". The test of the linguistic abilities of upper and working class college students showed that the students from working class families achieved results equal to those of the upper-class students. This led the researchers to conclusion that exceptional abilities and attitudes of the working class students were due to their social background, which served as a ground to move forward, to advance further. According to Bourdieu, the students were influenced by the values of the dominant society, and were driven to achieve them (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 47). Accordingly, it explains why the members of a certain society come to value cultures, languages and speakers of those languages. Language of the dominant culture is an essential factor for outsiders in the struggle for social equality, particularly for upward



mobility. This theory is best to describe the agenda hidden behind the expansion of Russian language. (b) The role of social forces that influence and motivate language change. Evidence suggests that social and political forces can sometimes easily manipulate language-planning process and use the power of language as a means of expression, communication, coordination and control (Kaplan, 1997). Most studies (Desheriev, Rogov, Mathiasson, Krag, Haarman) demonstrate that Soviet language planning was an ideologically bound, top-down process. (c) The prospects of linguistic environment in the region after the breakup of the Soviet system. In terms of prospects, it is interesting to note Koenig's extensive discussion of multiculturalism in Kyrgyzstan. Reviewing various approaches to language problem in Kyrgyzstan, Koenig suggests using a multicultural approach in the light of cultural and linguistic diversity in the country. He views multiculturalism in Switzerland and Belgium as an appropriate model for Kyrgyzstan (Koenig, 2000). However, the solution of the problem is not as easy as Koenig suggests. John Anderson's research on current ethnic environment in Kyrgyzstan discloses potential conflicts around the language issue, and states that "preservation of ethnic harmony and ethnic peace" remains a major concern for the government (Anderson, 1999, p. 42)

The way that most of the literature, specifically western sources describe the current language situation in Central Asia proves that the situation is being approached largely from a political perspective. Politicization of the issue becomes obvious from various efforts of external powers, which use language issues to shield their intentions to become an influential political power in the region. U. Ozolin's article on language issues in the post-Soviet Baltic states is titled "Between Russian and European hegemony:

Current language policy in the Baltic states” (Ozolins, 2000) I think that this title describes best the current linguistic problems that Central Asian states are experiencing today. The only difference is that Russia and Turkey represent the hegemony in the context of Central Asia. This kind of comparative research is done by Alpatov, who presents an analysis of linguistic changes in the post-Soviet countries (Alpatov, 1997) Central Asian states are too small and do not have a long history of political independence to avoid the pressure. For instance, approaching the issue from Turkey’s perspective, Tryjarski sees two major objectives in terms of languages in the region. The first intention is to introduce a modified Roman alphabet for use in all Turkic languages. The next step will be a selection or creation of a new lingua franca, which will facilitate communication among Turkic-speaking peoples. For the time being, Republican Turkish is seen as the only potential language to play the role of lingua franca (Tryjarski, 1998, p. 110). The actuality of the situation is confirmed by incredibly extensive and detailed research that Gary Fouse conducted on language issues in the former Soviet republics. One of the key issues in Fouse’s research is the conflict between Pan-Turkism and Pan-Slavism in Central Asia. Almost all findings of such researchers as Glenn, Wright, Anderson, and others indicate the pressure that Central Asian governments are experiencing today from Russia concerning the rights of Russian population residing in the region (Glenn, 1999; Wright, 2000; Anderson, 1999)

In the case of Kazakhstan, Fierman’s study demonstrates that Kazakhstan’s geopolitical and economic position in the region shapes and politicizes the language issues. Kazakhstan’s language policy is formulated to meet the interests of Kazak and Russians, because the latter comprise 48% of population, a major ethnicity in the country

(Fierman, 1997). The first language law of 1989 named Kazak as the state language and the Russian as the language of interethnic communication. After a series of protests and demonstrations of Russian people, legislative amendments of 1995 changed the status of the Russian to an official language to be used in certain sectors of economy (Glenn, 1999).

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are building monolingual societies based only on the Uzbek and Turkmen. Language reform in de-russifying Uzbekistan is being promoted through hiring and firing practices, which accentuate knowledge of the local language (Dollerup, 1998). According to Fouse, Uzbekistan is establishing close contacts with Turkey, and enjoying its assistance in the process of transition to the Turkish-style Latin alphabet (Fouse, 2000, p. 253) As the most populous nation in the region, Uzbekistan seems to draw a wide scale attention of researchers from different countries. Although some of the research has a repetitive nature, the majority of it is devoted to the examination of various aspects of political, economic and socio-cultural life in Uzbekistan. For instance, Wixman's field research on Muslim-Turkic versus Slavic-Christian relations in Uzbekistan discloses interesting aspects of these relations. It reveals social boundaries that always existed between Uzbeks and Europeans (Wixman, 1991) Another study by James Critchlow is entirely dedicated to multifaceted examination of Uzbek nation-building process starting from mid 1800s (Critchlow, 1991)

In the case of Turkmenistan, research approaches differ in the light of its socio-economic status, which separates and differentiates it from the neighbors like Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Labeling Turkmenistan as a "spoiler", Olcott states that it "has always been an anomaly in Central Asia" (Olcott, 1996, p. 147) Careful reading and

analysis of such statements as well as vocabulary choice help the reader see the ideological goal of Martha B. Olcott's research and feel her antipathy to Russia. Turkmenistan is labeled a "spoiler" for a number of "unconditional" actions, including granting Russians the right of dual citizenship. She argues that this compromise of Turkmenistan was then used by Russia "to press the other Central Asian states for similar concessions" (Olcott, 1996, p. 147) I have also found some of her findings insensitive towards the countries under her research, because they appear as a tool to express her personal concerns about the policy of Russian government in Central Asia. She often uses particular words to label the countries. For instance, Tajikistan is labeled as "territorial loser" of the region (Olcott, 1996, p. 42). I think that Olcott realizes that she is writing this book not only for western readers. Territorial issue is an acute problem between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and Tajikistan has only recently managed to restore the civil order after the civil war. I think that if accessed by Tajikistani radicals, Olcott's politically incorrect labeling will only contribute to the exacerbation of tense relationship between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

As a state language, Tajik is a major component of Tajikistan's national policy after 1989. Atkin's extensive study on Tajikistan shows that the policy in Tajikistan is largely built on the aspirations to restore the historical links to languages spoken beyond Tajikistan's borders. Considering the links between Tajik and Persian (Tehran and Kabul Persian), the policy makers support adoption of Arabic alphabet for use in writing Tajik. Tajikistan's intention is to become a monolingual society by drawing in Persian to replace Russian and Uzbek influences. Russian is deprived of all privileges, including its status of a language for interethnic communication. If Tajikistan ever adopts a bilingual

policy, then the second language will be Uzbek, which is spoken by a significant part of its population (Atkin, 1994).

## Concepts of language policy and planning

Language policy is a part of national policy of the state, which may or may not have a multiplicity of different language groups. However, this definition does not claim to be the most accurate description of the concept. Kaplan and Baldauf argue that *language planning* and *language policy* “represent two quite distinct aspects of the systemized language change process. *Language planning* is seen as an activity, which government carries out across the whole society. Kaplan and Baldauf state that *language policy* implies activities, both of symbolic and substantive nature, at a number of levels (Kaplan, 1997, p. xi). For them, *language planning* is the top-level activity followed by *language policy* mechanisms that are worked out at lower levels. This statement challenges another definition of language policy and language planning formulated by Bugarski:

The term *language policy* refers... to the policy of a society in the area of linguistic communication – that is, the set of positions, principles and decisions reflecting that community’s relationship to its verbal repertoire and communicative potential. *Language planning* is understood as a set of concrete measures taken within language policy to act on linguistic communication in a community, typically by directing the development of its languages (Schiffman, 1996, p. 3)

Bugarski’s definition is the best to reflect the language planning activities in Central Asian countries. *Language policy* in Central Asia is the responsibility of the government, whereas *language planning* is seen as an implementation process, which is modeled by the lower structural units. All five Central Asian republics declared the titular languages (Kyrgyz, Kazak, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen) official and adopted policies, which are aimed at enhancing the role of native languages and improving their use in all

spheres of state administration and at all other levels (Roy, 2000). “Titular” language is defined as “a language of an ethnos, whose name is used to identify a specific national or state system (Neroznak, 1999, p. 4). Neroznak’s definition is different from Ferguson’s “major” and “minor” languages, although they both imply one and the same phenomenon. Ferguson’s criteria for identification of major language include: (a) the language must be spoken by more than 25 percent of the population residing in the country; (b) it must serve as an official language of the nation; (c) it must be used as a medium of instruction in over 50 percent of secondary schools (Ferguson, 1971, p. 159)

Language policy is stated in constitutions, legal statutes, official statements, and other actions of governmental authorities. Implementation efforts involve all efforts including writing of grammars and dictionaries, development of academic curricula, government funding of activities that will enforce the use of the national language. Current efforts of the Central Asian states on language policy and planning differ depending on the type of governments established after the demise of the Soviet system. (Roy, 2000). They are facing the dilemmas connected with the difficulty of making a choice between multiethnic/multilingual and monoethnic/monolingual options.

### **Language situation**

There are different definitions of “language situation” given by various scholars. The definition I have chosen for the project belongs to Ferguson, who identifies “language situation” as a complete panorama of language use at a given time and place. The concept also includes such data as how many and what kinds of languages are spoken in the area, and by how many people. Consideration is given to the circumstances

of language use. The conception also covers the attitudes and beliefs about languages held by the members of the community (Ferguson, 1971, p. 61-64).

In the context of Central Asia, I think that the language situation can be described as heterogeneous and homogenous simultaneously. Considering the roots of “titular” (the ones for whom the countries are named) languages, we can say that Central Asia is predominantly homogeneous, where mutually intelligible Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkmen languages belong to Turkic subgroup of Altaic languages, and Tajik (Farsi) representing the Indo-European group (Kalzner, 1995) Titular Turkic languages are also encountered in China, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran. They are spoken by the descendants of the pre-Soviet Turkic tribes, which fled from Central Asia after 1917 revolution, civil war and forced collectivization (Ferdinand, 1994; Rossabi, 1994; Comrie, 1995)

At the same time, Central Asia’s language situation is heterogeneous due to the presence of minority languages that represent other than Turkic languages. For instance, Central Asia is a home for languages like Korean, Dungan, Russian, Ukrainian and many other minority languages.

#### Titular languages of Central Asia

Kyrgyz is the official language of Kyrgyzstan, spoken by about 2 million people. The 1989 census showed that Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan make up about 52 percent of the country's population. Kyrgyz language belongs to the northeastern branch of Turkic languages. It is used in education, mass media, cultural activities and publication. (Anderson, 1999; Kalzner, 1995; Comrie, 1981; Fouse, 2000). Besides Kyrgyz-speaking areas in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz language is also spoken by Kyrgyz people



residing in China, Afghanistan, and Turkey. (Ferdinand, 1994, p. 76; Rossabi, 1994, p.34)

Like Kyrgyz, Kazakh belongs to the northeast group of Turkic languages. The 1989 census showed that 97% of Kazakh considered Kazakh their first language. The Kazakhs comprise 46% of the country's population (Fouse, 2000, p. 271). There are also about one million Kazakh speakers in China, and around 100,000 in Mongolia. Kazakh is used for all purposes in the society (Kalzner, 1995; Comrie, 1981).

Uzbek used to be the third largest language of the USSR due to a large number of speakers: In the 1989 census, Uzbeks made up 71% of Uzbekistan's population, 98.3% of whom claimed Uzbek as their native language. Another 1.5 million speakers reside in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan. (Kalzner, 1995; Comrie, 1981). Under the Uzbekistan's Language Law, Uzbek is a state language used in government work, education, publication, and administrative documentation (Fouse, 2000, p. 253)

Turkmen is spoken by about 3 million people in Turkmenistan and by another million in Iran. Unlike Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek, Turkmen language belongs to the southeastern or Oghuz group of Turkic languages alongside Azeri, Crimean Tatar and Anatolian Turkish. As a state language, Turkmen is used in education, media, and administration (Kalzner, 1995; Fouse, 2000).

Tajik is spoken by about 3.5 million people in Tajikistan. Unlike other Central Asian languages, Tajik does not belong to Turkic languages. It represents the Iranian language group, and therefore, is included into the Indo-European family of languages. It is closely related to Farsi in Iran and Dari spoken in Northern Afghanistan. According to

the 1996 Language Law of Tajikistan, Tajik is the only state language used in government work, education, mass media and publications. (Kalzner, 1995; Fouse, 2000)

### Minority languages

Historically and currently, all five countries share the same minor ethnic groups, though they may differ in quantities. Traditionally, the region is co-inhabited by Uigurs, Kalmyks, Dungans, and Turkish people. The Jews, Tatars, Ukrainians, Germans, Chechens and some other Caucasian ethnic groups were driven to the region as a result of the World War II. Russians and Kossaks entered the region in the middle of the nineteenth century with the initial attempts of Russia to conquer the region (Khalfin, 1965)

There are two major ethnic minorities in Kyrgyzstan. In the 1989 census, Russians made up 22% followed by Uzbeks – 13%. Other groups include Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans, Uigurs, Dungans, Tajiks and Kazakhs (Anderson, 1999, p. 42; Krag, 1984; Menges, 1967). Out of 5.4 million people, Tajiks comprise 58.8% followed by 23% Uzbeks, and 11% Russians (Fouse, 2000, p. 310). Russians, Kazakhstan's major minority group, have been settled in the country for up to three centuries and dominate the northern regions of the country (Undeland, 1994, p. 31). Turkmenistan's major ethnic group is presented by Uzbeks (9%), who live predominantly in the areas bordering Uzbekistan. (Fierman, 1997, p. 2). Apart from Russians comprising 8 percent of the country's population, Uzbekistan has to deal with Tajiks, who predominantly reside in ancient cities of Samarkand and Bukhara (Undeland, 1994). Besides non-Asian minorities, Tajiks and Uzbeks, Turkmen and Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Uzbeks, Kyrgyz and Uzbeks, and Kyrgyz and Tajiks live in each other's countries as minorities.

In all five countries of Central Asia, the languages of minor ethnic groups are provided with specific rights. For instance, Dungan is a medium of instruction and taught as a subject in Dungan schools in Kyrgyzstan. Similar rights are guaranteed for Uigurs in Kyrgyzstan, Germans in Kazakhstan and Koreans in Uzbekistan. (Krag, 1984)

## **Language in education**

### Pre-Soviet Central Asia: Historical background

The present Central Asian countries were once referred to as Turkestan at the time of the Russian Imperial invasion in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The political system in the region was built on the principles of loyalty to Islam and was administered by the emirates located in Kokand, Bukhara and Khiva. There were ethnic groupings of people under the names Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik, but they did not have the political connotation that they have today. They occupied the territory of Turkestan, which did not stand for a state based on a specific ethnic or linguistic association (Roy, 2000, p. 3)

Central Asia has always been and still is viewed as one geopolitical unity, which is integrated by its geographic territory, historical background, economic relations, ethnocultural and religious commonalities. People's lifestyle divided them into two groups, nomads (Kyrgyz, Kazak and Turkmen) and sedentary (Tajik and Uzbek). Their commonalities affect people's lifestyle and values and make them racially and culturally different from other nationalities, which formed the so-called "Soviet people". Historically and currently, all five countries share the same smaller ethnic groups, though they may differ in quantities. Traditionally, the region is co-inhabited by Uigurs, Karakalpaks and other Turkic tribes. The Jews, Tatars, Ukrainians, Germans, Chechens and some other Caucasian ethnic groups were driven to the region as a result of the World War II. Russians and Kossaks entered the region in the middle of the nineteenth century with the initial attempts of Russia to conquer the region (Khalfin, 1965)

Tsarist Russia started its expansion to Central Asia in the mid-1850s. Answering the question of why Tsarist Russia moved to Central Asia, Khalfin indicates historical

reasons: Russia's defeat in the 1853-1856 Crimean War being the major one. Having lost its influence in the Balkans and Near East, Russia shifted its focus to Central Asian kingdoms, which had regular commercial ties with her (Khalfin, 1965, p.82). Russia looked down on the economically backward and politically weak Central Asia as a new market and wealth of different resources. Central Asia of the mid-1850s was an object of contest between Russian imperialism and British Empire, which was approaching the region through India. Between 1857 and 1862, forced by active military and political expansion of Britain, Russia had to accelerate its conquest of Kazakh steppes, territory under Kyrgyz, Tashkent and Samarkand kingdoms. By 1867, Russia annexed the Kazakh territory and Turkestan region as a territorial and administrative unit of Russian Federation (Khalfin, 1965).

### **Linguistic environment before 1917**

Before speaking about the languages I would like to comment on literature I used to describe the pre-Soviet linguistic environment in Central Asia. To make the discussion clearer, I would like to divide them into two groups depending on the purpose of the narrative: 1. Soviet literature; 2. Western sources. I find all these sources ideologically-bound and therefore, I would conclude that each narrative serves its own ideological goal accordingly. The intention of the Soviet literature is to underline the educational achievements of the Soviet regime in completely illiterate Central Asia. Western sources seem to be aimed at proving that Muslim Central Asia was doing quite well in terms of education before the Russian Tsarist Empire colonized it. Colonization did not end with the socio-political transformations of the late 1920s. I suppose that

ideology is likely to be the major dimension that makes these three literature sources diverge.

Pre-and post-Soviet Central Asia has two major language groups: 1. Turkic, which includes Kyrgyz, Kazak, Uzbek, Tajik and Uigur, and; 2. Iranian, which is largely represented by Tajiks and other minorities in the Pamirs of Tajikistan. Other minor languages include Korean, Chinese, Kalmyk, Kurdish and Karakalpak. Slavic languages entered the region starting from the mid-1850s, when Tsarist Russian expanded its domination to the area. Before 1917, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kazaks and Uigurs used Arabic-based alphabet, which was built on medieval dialects of Uzbek and Tajik languages and therefore was elitist, sophisticated and not widely accessible. They failed to reflect the realities of the modern indigenous languages and dialects. (Wheeler, 1962; Bacon, 1966). Also, administrators of various kingdoms in the sedentary areas used Persian. (Mathiasson, 1984) Arabic and Persian heavily influenced pre-Soviet Central Asian languages because of Islam expansion and commercial ties with Persian-speaking people.

#### Education in Central Asia before 1917

There were two types of schools in Turkestan at that time: the primary schools (*Mekteb*) and the higher schools, (*Medreseh-religious seminaries*). In Turkestan, Arabic was the primary language of instruction in the schools, although some teaching was also done in Persian, which was used by the urban intelligentsia in writing and oral communication. The condition of mektebs was unsatisfactory. They were located in the mosques, where the students were taught to read and write in Arabic and learned religious texts by rote. The number of students in the mektebs was few. In 1899, there were 4,632 mektebs with 44,773 students in Syr-Darya, Samarkand and Fergana regions.

The length of schooling was from two to five years (Pierce, 1960). Kreindler argues that the students had little understanding of what they read because, first of all, Arabic was not a native language for them and, secondly, they spent most of their time on memorizing the passages from the Koran. Only a limited number of students from rich families could continue the studies in Medresehs after finishing the course of study in the Mektebs.

Medresehs were located mostly in Bukhara, Khiva, Samarkand, and the Fergana Valley. They prepared young people, primarily men for carrying on Muslim education throughout Central Asia. Medreseh students were provided with small allowances. The curriculum in the Medresehs included mainly courses in Arabic, philosophy, theology, and the Shariat. Other academic disciplines were Persian, Turkish, logic, arithmetic, legends and fables and geography. The length of study in the Medresehs varied from student to student. Some students stayed there all their lives. After going through Medreseh, a person was considered an educated man, and was qualified to become a teacher in the Mektebs or serve in the mosques. Medreseh graduates were expected to have a good command of Turkic languages as well as Persian and Arabic literary languages. They were offered a comprehensive training in the great writings of the poets, theologians, philosophers, historians, and geographers of the Islam-dominated world. The graduates also served as secretaries to merchants, nobility, a judge or law clerk (Allworth, 1967; Pierce, 1960)

Before 1917, Kyrgyz were the most backward people. Like the Turkmen, Kyrgyz had fewer educational centers because of their dispersal and relatively small numbers (Allworth, 1967). In 1914 there were only 107 schools and one gymnasium, which were

open only for children of local officials, rich families and religious leaders. There were also some vocational schools and a high school, which did not educate any Kyrgyz between 1879 and 1914 (Isayev, 1979). This shows exploitative nature of both Tsarist Russians and local elite, which prevented cultural awareness of indigenous people through education. Thus, before 1917, Kyrgyz were mostly illiterate at a large with the exception of religious leaders. Kyrgyz people did not have a written language of their own. Legends, stories, poems and songs were orally handed down from generation to generation.

The educational system in the Kazakh steppes was different than in Turkestan or Fergana oasis. Pierce's research on the languages in pre-Soviet Central Asia shows that the Kazakh students were taught in the Tatar language by Tatar mullas (mosque leaders) in the tradition of Islam. In the 1820s, the Russian authorities started educating the Kazaks in the Russian schools. For the training of translators and interpreters needed by the administration for the courts and various offices, special Russian-Kazakh-Kirgiz schools were established. These schools taught Russian together with other local languages, the principles of Islam and the elements of arithmetic, history and geography. These schools would admit children from Russian families and better-off native families. By assisting the spread of the Russian language and culture, these schools played a progressive role in the education of indigenous people. They trained translators, administrative workers capable of leading agriculture and trade. Between 1885 and 1909, there appeared 90 such schools in Turkestan (Central Asian Review, 1956, p. 38, 242). However, because of the limited number of facilities and even fewer Kazakhs willing to overcome the cultural and linguistic barriers necessary for attendance, the education of



the indigenous people was not fully successful. Extensive research made by Pierce shows that starting from the 1850s, the intention of the Russian authorities was changed to establish schools where the Kazakh language would become the primary language of instruction. They established “aul schools” (village schools) based on the model of Russian elementary schools. These schools moved around with communities during the summer migration and stayed with them in winter camps to provide education all the year round. After finishing village schools, the students would continue the studies in the one-class volost (region) schools or the two-class “Russian-Kirgiz” schools. The students who wanted to study further went on to Russian city school or to the Orenburg Kirgiz teacher school to be eligible to teach in the village schools (Pierce, 1960)

Besides, there were also Russian elementary, middle and high schools, which were attended by the children of Russian officials, settlers and a few native children. In 1896, in the boys’ school in Tashkent, only 10 percent of 327 students were natives, and in the girls’ school 8 out of 377. There were only 65 native students among 415 students of the Tashkent teachers’ seminary, which was established in 1879 (Central Asian Review, 1956, p. 39)

According to Desheriev, in pre-Soviet Central Asia, different written languages served different social purposes and classes. Arabic served religious purposes whereas local officials working in the Tsarist Russian institutions used Russian. Elites and merchants were satisfied with Persian language, which was a useful tool in their cross-cultural trading businesses. There were a limited number of schools, where instruction was conducted in one of the local languages. There were very few literate people in major indigenous languages. Their development was hindered by the division of Turkic-

speaking people into numerous tribes and clans, which possessed their own dialects and subdialects. (Isayev, 1977, p.84-92)

As we see, because of the years of foreign domination and invasion, the peoples of Central Asia were mainly undifferentiated in terms of statehood, their own national language and scripts. This would later begin to change with the start of socio-political transformations, spread of education and modernization.

### **Soviet language policy**

#### **“Korenizatsia”<sup>3</sup> – Building on native languages**

As an important component of the Soviet government's national policy, language policy was shaped by the communist ideology, which dominated in all member republics of the system (Isayev, 1979, p. 7). Between 1921 and 1926, the so-called Turkestan was divided into five republics on the basis of ethnicity and nationality. The Soviet regime considered the “... linguistic regimentation as one of the most important instruments in the moulding of the new society” (Wheeler, 1962, p. 35).

Early language policy was built on the “Declaration of Rights of the Nations of Russia”, which was signed by Lenin in 1917 (Rogov, 1966, p.11). This Declaration announced equal rights of all nations for self-determination, and provided freedom to ethnic minorities for development. In its early period, Communist rule served to promote national identity of indigenous people in the region. Introducing the concept of “Korenizatsia”, Lenin took the view that the most effective way of spreading Communist ideas was via the conduit of the various national languages in the new empire (see

---

<sup>3</sup> “Korenizatsia” is a part of Soviet nationality policy that encouraged use of native languages. The term “korenizatsia” is derived from the Russian word “koren” - “root”, implying the process of language construction should start from the roots, indigenous languages.

footnote). Lenin stressed the necessity of language maintenance and education in mother tongue as a precondition of national liberation (Krag, 1984, p. 61). Some western researchers now interpret this process as a Soviet version of Affirmative Action (Glenn, 1999)

During the 1920s ethnic consciousness was encouraged. Rogov points to two major goals of the Soviet government in terms of language reform. The Soviets intended to replace sophisticated “non-mass” alphabets by new ones, which would be widely accessible and match modern theories of literacy. Rogov also brings in theoretical, sociological and political arguments of educating people through indigenous languages. First, mother tongue is widely accessible and understandable to all social classes. Second, Soviets intended to educate and train indigenous cadres. This view is supported by Kaiser, who also states “the major task in the early years of Soviet power was to educate the Turkic-Muslim nationalities in central Asia in an effort to create an indigenous proletarian element loyal to the socialist state” (Kaiser, 1992, p. 254). Therefore, indigenous languages were found to be the right environment for native students to study. Third, this process was conducted according to the new policy, which implied development of national cultures. Accordingly, it was assumed that indigenous languages are the best tools to reflect national identity and to transmit local cultures and values (Rogov, 1966, p. 11-12).

National policy of the early Soviet government provided indigenous cultures like Kyrgyz and Kazak with their written languages. They have developed from “mere vernaculars to standard languages” (Krag, 1984, p. 59). The new written languages were built based on the modified languages and dialects that were widely spread across the

region. For instance, Tashkent dialect of Uzbek was selected as a basis for the new written Uzbek languages out of other two major dialects in Uzbekistan: Bukhara and Samarkand dialects (Desheriev, 1968, p. 7). Similar statement is also made by Glenn, whose extended research on Soviet Central Asia demonstrated that the Soviet language policy “highlights the rather arbitrary method in choosing the basis for new literary languages; secondly, it emphasizes the role of the state in creation of the national languages of the region” (Glenn, 1999, p. 55)

Another goal was to construct alphabets for cultures, which did not have a written language at all. This demonstrates that the early Soviet language policy was implemented at both status and corpus levels. Between 1917 and 1926, Arabic alphabet was used in Central Asia despite its inability to convey some of the Turkic phonemes. Starting from 1926, Latin was introduced because it was assumed to have more potential to eliminate existing alphabetical deficits of Arabic origin. The political and ideological reason for this replacement was divergence between the large number of illiterate but potential Soviet citizens, and elitist nature of Arabic alphabet. Soviet newspapers in Arabic did not reach a wide mass of illiterate people and were being wasted on economically well off families, who were not in favor of political and social transformation in the region. Arabic and Persian loan words were removed from the indigenous vocabulary because they were associated with Islam, which did not match the Soviet policy about equal positions of all nations in the country. Latin script was used until late 1930s before it was replaced by Cyrillic alphabet (Wheeler, 1962, p. 36).

Literature review shows that there were serious political reasons as well as an economic rationale for why Latin was later replaced by Cyrillic alphabet. Here again, the

opinions and interpretations diverge because of pro and anti-Soviet ideologies. Western sources indicate that theories about the emergence of “Soviet people” and co-development of national cultures into a socialist culture served to disguise the efforts to merge national minorities into the Russian culture. The proponents of the concept supported efforts to cultivate use of the Russian language and Russian school practices among non-Russian peoples (Roy, 2000; Glenn, 1999). Soviet sources point out that the Soviet government’s intention to build a tightly integrated and centrally planned economy led to the necessity of a common language for inter-republican communication. It was the first step of official promotion of Russian, which became the language of Soviet administration in Central Asia. Political and ideological reasons included the necessity of integrated cooperation of Bolsheviks from different republics to protect the communistic ideas and counter bourgeois ideology (Isayev, 1979, p. 255).

One of the ideological reasons for the shift to Cyrillic script was the policy of Northern Russian minority schools towards Russian language. Since Latin was announced as the alphabet of global communism, non-Russian schools used Latin scripts, and were cautious not to borrow from the Russian. For them, Russian had an association with policy of russification of Tsarist Russia. National policy has provoked nationalistic movements in Ukraine against Russia and the Russian language (Isayev, 1979, p. 255). This is contradicted by Fouse, who states that in Central Asia, the change from Latin to Cyrillic was made merely because of political reasons – to distance the Soviet Muslims from the West and Turkey (the latter adopting the Latin script), and to enhance learning of Russian (Fouse, 2000; Rywkin, 1990). These alphabet changes closed doors for younger generations of Central Asians to the literature of their ancestors (Glenn, 1999;

Fouse, 2000). Bruchis' interpretation is related to the Communist Party's primary goal, which was aimed at further distancing each of the Central Asian language from its Arab-Iranian roots, and enhancing "a broad penetration into these languages of a stream of Russian words and syntactic models" (Bruchis, 1984, p. 137)

The Soviet government's early language policy contributed to a rapid rise in the level of educational attainment in Central Asia. In 1926, there were only "about 7 percent of the Central Asian men and less than one percent of women were literate compared to one-half of Russian males and one-third of Russian females" (Kaiser, 1992, p. 254). In the context of Kazakhstan, before 1917, there were 94 percent people illiterate. In 1933, there were 6,869 schools with 576,000 children (Central Asia Review, 1954, p. 84). By 1985, universal literacy rate has been achieved and over two-thirds of the population aged 10 years and older had a higher or secondary education (Kaiser, 1992).

### **The concept of "Soviet people"**

Russian language was at the core of the concept of "Soviet people" that emerged in the 1930s and redirected Lenin's national policy, leading to further arguments about necessity of introducing a common alphabet for the region. Russian became the language of the Bolsheviks and later Communists, whose policy was aimed at making it a language of interethnic communication. However, this was opposed by non-Russian people, for whom Russian was seen as a mirror image of the Tsarist policy of russification or Great Russian chauvinism. The situation was complicated by the national policy, which provoked nationalistic movements in non-Russian states. For instance, an opposition to Russia and the Russian language was observed in Ukraine (Isayev, 1979, p. 255).

To prevent the spread of anti-Russian sentiments across the country, Communist Party adopted a decree in March 1938, which stated that “establishing special national schools has caused significant losses to the principles of proper education and training of children by distancing them from Soviet life, Soviet culture and science, and preventing them from furthering their studies in higher educational institutions” (Garkavets, 1990, p. 74). This decree targeted compulsory introduction of Russian into non-Russian school curriculum. It was the first step in developing a centralized curriculum for schools in all member republics (Isayev, 1979, p. 260). This decree is also considered to be the initial stage of promoting Soviet policy of bilingualism (Smith, 1999). The 1938 decree was followed by similar resolutions made by the Communist Party leaders in Central Asia. For instance, Kazakhstan Communist Party’s 1938 decree required reorganization of all national schools. As a result, introducing Russian as a medium of instruction reorganized 59 Uzbek, 46 Uigur, 7 Tajik, 25 Tatar, 3 Azerbaijani, and many other national schools (Garkavets, 1990, p. 74). Schools in Central Asia used the curriculum, which was directly dedicated to shaping the orientation toward Soviet national culture based on Russian culture and lifestyle because the latter was assumed to reflect higher moral standards by serving as a model for others. Thus, school reforms and policies of the 1930s worked to transform indigenous Kyrgyz, Kazak, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen people into “Soviet people”. Educational and ideological policy was dedicated to integrating the largely rural, indigenous majority into supposed Soviet culture.

After the World War II, Russian language expanded its functions and domination with official backing of the Soviet government. The war between 1939 and 1945 brought a lot of voluntary and involuntary migrants to the region. Prior to German invasion in

1991, many manufacturing plants were relocated to Central Asian capital cities together with their workers. This significantly contributed to Russian's becoming a leading language. Starting from the early 1970s, bilingualism became the core of the official language policy, working to create multinational culture under the name "Soviet people". Ten years later Russian became language of administration, official documentation and instruction media in higher educational institutions of Central Asia. It became a dominant language in the capitals of all five republics, because the majority of Russians and other Slavs was concentrated in the urban areas. Traditionally agricultural, indigenous people of the region remained in the rural areas, whereas outsiders, who made use of the major part of modern achievements, intensively inhabited urban areas. As a result, native languages were left to become an instruction medium in rural schools.

#### Language in education: Russian language versus Indigenous languages

Modern type of formal schooling in the region began during the Soviet period, since the 1930s. Soviet authorities undertook wide scale measures to transmit and spread Soviet culture among Muslims. They considered education as an important agent in implementing political, economic, and social transformations (Medlin, 1971, p. 8).

Educational policy was created in and directed from Moscow, which would determine specializations to be taught either in the local languages or in Russian. The language of education in Soviet Central Asia distinctively divided schools into two groups: 1. national schools or "groups", where teaching was conducted in indigenous languages, and; 2. schools with Russian language as the medium of instruction. Schools teaching in national languages are located mostly in the rural areas, where there is high concentration of a particular nationality. As was mentioned earlier, traditional agricultural



lifestyle has always kept indigenous people of Central Asia in the rural areas. These schools had native languages as a medium of instruction and Russian as a compulsory subject (Krag, 1984, p. 71; Glenn, 1999)

The Soviet government encouraged the learning of Russian by including it as a subject in the curricula of all non-Russian schools and higher and specialized secondary educational institutions (Desheriev, 1968). While official policy in indigenous-language secondary schools aimed at bilingualism like Kyrgyz-Russian, Russian-language schools oriented only to monolingualism. Russians rarely learned the national languages of the area to which they migrated, even if it was taught at schools (Krag, 1984; Smith, 1998; Rywkin, 1990)

There were also mixed secondary schools, where children were taught in their own language, but they mix during the breaks, in interest groups and various school meetings and events. This provided an opportunity for non-Russian children to talk and master Russian. In 1962 there were about 300 mixed schools in Kyrgyzstan and 1.962 in Kazakhstan. Boarding schools also provided greater opportunities for the non-Russian children to master Russian (Garkavets, 1990). Mixed schools were the initial results of the Inter-Republican Conferences on the study of Russian in national schools that were held 1956 (Central Asian Review, 1958, p. 310). Therefore, my assumption is that the number of mixed schools had significantly increased by the 1980s.

In terms of medium of instruction, higher education was totally different from the secondary school level. Higher education represented the level, which would completely meet the requirements of the assimilation program. Students from minority language groups had to continue their studies in Russian. The minority languages were not even

offered as an optional subject. The language of instruction was mainly Russian, although there were departments where some courses were given in indigenous languages. Russian alone was used as the language of instruction in specialized institutions like Polytechnics, Architecture and Construction, Topography and Hydrometeorology. All these institutions were located in the capital cities. Russian and native languages were taught everywhere else, sometimes varying according to the nationality of the instructor (Wheeler, 1962). For instance, in Tajikistan, fields like Oriental Studies, History and Pedagogy were available in Tajik language (Fouse, 2000). There are also other languages of instruction in the region. Teacher training schools in Khodzeili (Uzbekistan) use Kara-Kalpak, Kazakh, Uzbek and Russian. The Chimbai (Kazakhstan) schools for training primary teachers use Kara-Kalpak, Kazakh, and Russian. Many institutes located in the border areas between the countries use the languages of people inhabiting those areas. This shows that smaller ethnic groups also enjoyed cultural rights, including educational and publishing facilities in their own languages in areas in which they formed substantial, compact communities (Wheeler, 1962).

Knowledge of Russian was required for entry to VUZ<sup>4</sup>. The examination for entrance to VUZ (see footnote) was conducted in writing in Russian. Many applicants from the rural national schools would fall down on the Russian language paper because of their limited knowledge of Russian. Therefore, to prevent this, many parents in cities and towns would send their children to Russian-language elementary and secondary schools, realizing the advantages of a thorough knowledge of Russian. The status of Russian was enhanced as a result of 1958-59 educational reform laws that offered parents

---

<sup>4</sup> VUZ – ('vysshee uchebnoe zavedenie) implies a higher educational institution

a choice when sending their children to schools depending on the language used as a medium of instruction (Glenn, 1999, p. 83; Wright, 2000)

Russian language was seen as an indispensable tool for further advancement, and therefore, despite good quality of education in local institutes, the prospect of receiving higher education in Central Russia and other capital cities would make students work hard to master Russian. Russian was seen as a prerequisite for social mobility. Education earned in Russian in leading cities of Russia would rate high in obtaining well-paid and prestigious positions in the society (Glenn, 1999). Therefore, indigenous cadres, particularly urban elite would compete hard to enter VUZ (see footnote) in Russia. Today's result of this competition is Karimov, the president of Uzbekistan, who had to undergo intensive language training because of lack of fluent command of Uzbek (Fouse, 2000, p. 252). Three of the five current presidents of Central Asian republics were educated in Russia. In the first years of independence, there was a need for native language tutoring for them to learn to speak publicly (Undeland, 1994, p. 8) Akaev, Kyrgyzstan's president does not seem to know that Russian and Kyrgyz belong to different language families, and each language has its own unique style, way of constructing sentences. Constructing phrases in the Russian style is now considered to be a kind of fashion among political elites. Even leaders, for whom Kyrgyz is the first language, tend to follow Akaev's style.

Imposition of Russian language as a means of upward mobility and communication between the indigenous peoples of Central Asia stratified the society into rural and urban people depending on how well people spoke Russian. Since population mixture was low and schools operated in native languages, rural level of Russian

language was low. Urban people were more inclined to use Russian in professional relations, in correspondence, in reading literature and newspapers, watching TV, etc. Urban people would ridicule rural people for speaking Russian with poor accent (Undeland, 1994, p. 8).

The situation remained unchanged until “perestroika and glasnost” came in 1985, and provoked national movements all over the country, leading eventually to the breakup of the system (Kreindler, 1989, p. 56). Kreindler’s description of the language situation in the Soviet Union on the eve of “perestroika” is true to Central Asian republics as well:

The position of national languages in the Brezhnev period was eroding as Russian expanded its role in the schools, in party and state offices, in publishing and in the economy. While the Leninist theory of language equality was never repudiated and national languages were not attacked directly, it was Russian, a major world language that was lavishly and vigorously being promoted by the state. The view that national culture and national language need not necessarily coincide, that Russian alone can fulfill most cultural needs continued to gain ground. Giving up one’s language and shifting to Russian was now deemed “progressive”, “mature”, “according to the laws of natural development” (Kreindler, 1989, p. 56)

### **Education and social mobility from ethnic perspective**

Current debates on education and social mobility from ethnic perspectives lead to conclusions, which completely ignore the past. These conclusions are often superficial and serve to support the ideology of either of the debating parties, in our case, Central Asians or the Slavs. Slavs argue that there were strong incentives for indigenous students, although Soviet authorities were said to provide equal education to Russian and Muslim children. They claim that indigenous students enjoy advantages like easier admission and more lenient grading at the universities. As an example, they indicate the 1986 survey

conducted in West Germany among Volga German emigrants from Central Asia mentioned nationality as a key factor in admissions to VUZ in the region (Rywkin, 1990, p. 104) The other party claim that these incentives were introduced later in the postwar period, when there appeared a need to train more indigenous cadres. By that time when the incentives were introduced, non-Asians came to dominate the professional environment. It was the result of the educational policy of the early Soviet government. Between 1917 and 1950, the Soviet government concentrated on overall literacy campaign in the region to generate members of the new socialist society. It was not the task to train the local people for various occupations. Therefore, before the 1950s the only non-Asian migrants benefited from specialized professional education (Medlin, 1971, p. 113)

According to Rywkin, problem of cadres was the most “fertile ground for Muslim-Russian conflicts. Previously, indigenous people always leaned toward farming leaving urban and industrial sector to be dominated by the Europeans. A contributory factor to this stratification was imposition of Russian language as a means of upward mobility and communication between the indigenous peoples of Central Asia that divided the society into rural and urban people depending on how well people spoke Russian. Ethno-demographic study conducted in Central Asia in 1979 showed that urban Uzbeks in Uzbekistan made up only 28 percent of Uzbeks living in the country. Respective figures for other major Central Asian nationalities were: 19.6 percent – Kyrgyz, 31.6 – Kazakh, 32.3 percent – Turkmen, and 29.2 – Tajik (Wixman, 1991, p. 168). Comparison drawn between this data and the more recent figures for 1989 shows increase in the

number of urbanized indigenous people: Kazakh – 57 percent, Kyrgyz – 38 percent, Uzbek – 41 percent, Turkmen – 45 percent – Tajik – 33 percent (Glenn, 1999, p. 151)

Later, by the early 1970s, increase in educational opportunities and social transformations have led indigenous people to reassess the employment possibilities in the region. They became more oriented towards urban, industrial careers (Rywkin, 1990, p. 117) Kaiser's research on social mobilization in Uzbekistan shows percentage of Uzbek students in polytechnic institutes rose from 41 percent in 1970 to 53 percent in 1979 For Kaiser, this is a proof for the fact that "young Central Asians are no longer willing to pursue traditional careers for which they have a secure niche, but rather are increasingly oriented towards high-status positions in the modernized sectors of Soviet Central Asia that have until now been dominated by Russians and other nonindigenes" (Kaiser, 1992, p. 256) Higher educational attainments and increasing fluency in Russian allowed them to compete with the Russians who stood in the way of further upward mobility. As indigenous cadres, they had more chance for employment. Accordingly, this competition for desirable and well-paid jobs and priorities given to the indigenous specialists has caused opposition, which acquired national and religious nature.

Both parties had plentiful arguments and claims related to the situation. Their assessment of the situation greatly differed because of varying perspectives. Wixman's study of the relationship between the Uzbeks and Slavs presents a detailed picture of the situation. All the arguments are of economic nature and are often related to competition for well-paid jobs and housing. The study was conducted in 1985 and therefore, language does not seem to be a tool for discrimination. It is rather ethnicity, which is often stated

by the respondents: discrimination in hiring practice based on ethnic affiliations (Wixman, 1991).

No matter what the opposing arguments were, the employment policy in Soviet Central Asia was not officially discriminatory. Although it provided an official backing for Russian language, Soviet policy of employment was based on the development of native cadres. For the Soviet Government, Russian language served as a tool for consolidating different ethnicities into “Soviet nation”

### **Challenges of post-Soviet Central Asia**

After the breakup of the Soviet system, the power in the states of Central Asia was taken over by the leaders who declared sovereignty and adopted laws about the national languages. The new states relied heavily on the aspirations and movements of people for economic independence and ethnocultural revival. To some extent, they provided the reasons why the current language situation in Central Asia is being approached largely from a political perspective. Politicization of the issue becomes obvious from various efforts of external powers, which use language issues to shield their intentions to become an influential political power in the region. The states are too small to avoid the pressure. For instance, approaching the issue from Turkey’s perspective, Tryjarski sees two major objectives in terms of languages in the region. The first intention is to introduce a modified Roman alphabet for use in all Turkic languages. The next step will be a selection or creation of a new lingua franca, which will facilitate communication among Turkic-speaking peoples. For the time being, Republican Turkish is seen as the only potential language to play the role of lingua franca (Tryjarski, 1998, p. 110).

Today, there are 25 (Isayev, 1977, p. 80) closely related languages in the region and they differ in terms of their status and functional ability. Language reform is one of the initial stages of the social, political and economic transformations in the region. The reform in the post-Soviet Central Asia is being driven by forces, which I have summarized and grouped into two sets of motivations or reasons: juridical reasons, and socio-cultural (Neroznak, 1996, p. 5).

### **Juridical motivations**

Juridical reasons for language reform are explicitly and implicitly revealed in the law on national languages and are associated with the protection of the rights of people to preserve and maintain their culture, traditions and languages (Neroznak, 1996, p. 5).

Languages in Central Asia are divided into two large groups, titular and minority.

Neroznak defines “titular language” as “a language of an ethnos, whose name is used to identify a specific national or state system (Neroznak, 1999, p. 4). Despite their multicultural and multilingual compositions, the states in Central Asia declared titular languages (Kyrgyz, Kazak, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen) official and adopted policies, which were aimed at enhancing the role of native languages and improving their use in all spheres of state administration and at all other levels. However, they differ in terms of their attitudes toward minorities (who the minorities are) and their language rights (Glenn, 1999; Fouse, 2000; Hunter, 1996).

In Kyrgyzstan, the language law of 1991 proclaimed Kyrgyz the official language of the country and caused anxiety amongst the Russians and representatives of minor ethnicities. The most controversial element of the law was Article 8, which required management and professional staff, many of whom are Slavs, to have the ability to speak



Kyrgyz to their workers and clients (Huskey, 1997). Today, despite nationalistic movements, Kyrgyzstan is more inclined to bilingualism with Russian as a second language component. This tendency is extensively described by Anderson, J., whose research for 1999 traces the process of language planning in Kyrgyzstan back to 1989. Russian is not a state language in Kyrgyzstan, but according to 1996 amendment to the Constitution, “Russian may be used as an official language in predominantly Russian-speaking areas” and “vital areas of Kyrgyzstan’s national economy” (Anderson, 1999, p. 48; Smith, 1999, p. 201).

Kazakhstan’s language policy is formulated to meet the interests of Kazak and Russians, who are a major ethnicity in the republic. The first language law of 1989 named Kazak as the state language and the Russian as the language of interethnic communication. After a series of protests and demonstrations of Russian people, legislative amendments of 1995 changed the status of the Russian to an official language to be used in certain sectors of economy (Glenn, 1999, p. 112). The new Constitution, which was ratified in 1995, acknowledged the status of Kazakh as the state language and the official status of Russian in public institutions and local governments.

Some governments are going very fast in implementing transitional reforms. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are building monolingual societies based only on Uzbek and Turkmen. The language law in Uzbekistan was passed in October 1989 and proclaimed Uzbek as the state language. Russian-speaking communities were given eight years (from 1989 to 1997) to master the Uzbek language to effectively operate in their workplaces (Fouse, 2000). A decision was also made to introduce Latin script gradually before 2005 (Smith, 1999, p. 202). At the corpus level, purification appears to be an

important part of Uzbekistan's language policy. Vocabulary of Uzbek language is re-examined to remove loan words that are believed to have been borrowed from Russian. Purification threatens such terms as "aeroport" (airport), "kvartira" (apartment), "respublika" (republic), which have become almost native in Uzbek language (Makhmudov, 1999, p. 270).

In May 1990, Turkmenistan adopted the Language Law, which ascribed Turkmen language an official status and placed it on an even level with Russian (Fouse, 2000, p. 302). According to Fierman (1997), there might be some opposition between Turkmen and Uzbek languages in terms of their use in education, mass, media and administration in Turkmenistan's areas under Uzbek people.

As a state language, Tajik is a major component of Tajikistan's national policy after 1989. The policy is largely built on the aspirations to restore the historical links to languages spoken beyond Tajikistan's borders. Considering the links between Tajik and Persian (Tehran and Kabul Persian), the policy makers support adoption of Arabic alphabet for use in writing Tajik. Tajikistan's intention is to become a monolingual society by drawing in Persian to replace Russian and Uzbek influences (Atkin, 1995, p. 131-132). Russian is deprived off all privileges, including its status of a language for interethnic communication. If Tajikistan ever adopts a bilingual policy, then the second language will be Uzbek, which is spoken by a significant part of its population (Atkin, 1995, p. 132). Atkin's research is complemented by the findings of the study that Fouse conducted on language situation in Tajikistan in 2000. According to Fouse, Tajikistan government is taking a relatively gradual approach to the language transition, postponing the alphabet shift and proclaiming Russian as the second state language (Fouse, 2000).

### **Socio-cultural factors**

Socio-cultural aspects of language planning include cultural values and imply that language is a cultural heritage of people. They are associated with people's desire to preserve and maintain their ethnic and cultural identities. In the context of Central Asia, this is an issue related to both dominant and minority languages with a particular focus, I think, on the latter. Taking this factor as a main goal, language planning may invoke such variables as language spread in terms of dominant languages and language survival for minority languages (Neroznak, 1999, p. 5).

Therefore, discussion of socio-cultural aspects of language planning in a diverse multicultural context of Central Asia will demonstrate that not all the variables of language planning are implemented as smoothly as status planning. Spread of titular languages affects minority communities and schools forcing them to adjust to new linguistic environment. Efforts are being made to help them to regain their positions in public domains at all levels. Today much emphasis is put to the development of schools with indigenous language of instruction. This is evidenced by the recent trend, which is directed toward expanding education and publishing in the national languages (Fouse, 2000).

After having been denied access to the Islamic past for so many years, the national elite and people in Central Asia are turning to their roots. The intention is to revive Islam and recapture historical and cultural traditions in order to restore lost elements of the national identity. For this reason, status planning and language spread are being accompanied by some variables of corpus planning. Kaplan defines "corpus planning" as "aspects of language planning, which are primarily linguistic and hence

internal to language” (Kaplan, 1997, p. 38). In the context of Central Asia, corpus planning implies orthographic, phonological, lexical and stylistic changes and innovations that need to be introduced to titular languages. For instance, interregional scholarly collaboration of the early 1990s was directed at purifying the languages through “dropping Russian accretions and restoring native terminology (Kreindler, 1995, p. 199). Attempts are made to renew interest in Arabic language and alphabet. For instance, Tajikistan is returning to the use of Farsi and modified Arabic script (Atkin, 1997; Fouse, 2000). I think that in terms of current linguistic situation, Kreindler’s study is heavily built on the legally documented but unimplemented aspirations of the local governments. Kreindler asserts that most nationalities in the region are returning to the use of the Latin scripts. However, this does not reflect the real situation. “Aspirations versus reality” reveals lack of material basis and practical preparedness for alphabetical transition. Fouse’s study on language issues in post-communist Central Asia was carried out in 2000. The results of the study show that, despite the aspirations and intentions, the process of alphabetic shift and full conversion to indigenous languages is stagnating because of lack of funds. At the time of independence and adoption of language laws in the early 1990s, all five countries set target dates for the transformation (mostly before 2000). Today, they have realized impossibility of fast transformation and are extending the target dates. For instance, year 1996 was a target date for Tajik becoming the only language in Tajikistan. Turkmenistan targeted year 1997 for full conversion. Both Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have extended the target date, whereas legislation in Kazakhstan eliminated such in the final version of the language law. According to the

draft, ethnic Kazakhs were supposed to learn Kazakh by 2001, while Russians were expected to master it by 2006 (Fouse, 2000, p. 239-309)

#### Language in education after independence

The aspirations of people in the post-Soviet countries to revive the national and language identities are described by Fouse (2000) as their desire to take control of their own destiny and make their own decisions in cultural and educational affairs. Current educational policy in Central Asian countries combines both language status and corpus issues in their intention to reshape the language situation in the region. The objective is to replace Russian domination by a society, which emphasizes and builds on the strengths of the indigenous languages. This is particularly true for Central Asia, where all five countries proclaimed native languages (Kyrgyz, Kazak, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen) the official languages and adopted policies, which are aimed at enhancing the role of native languages and improving their use in all spheres of state administration and at all other levels (Fouse, 2000).

In the context of education, Central Asian countries proclaimed interest in transforming the Soviet education system into a new system with more freedom and flexibility. In all five republics native language (literature and history accordingly) instruction has been increased in all secondary schools at the expense of Russian language and other politicized subjects inherited from Soviet curriculum. However, wide scale introduction of Kyrgyz as a medium of instruction revealed shortage of textbooks in Kyrgyz. Supported by foreign donors, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education organized a series of competitions for the design of textbooks in the first years of independence. The

situation has improved by the mid-1990s, when state managed to allocate funds for the publication of quality and widely accessible textbooks (Olcott, 1997, p. 141)

As for higher education institutions, the situation is slightly different. For instance, Russian still remains the dominant language of higher learning in Kyrgyzstan, although instruction in Kyrgyz is increasing gradually (Olcott, 1997, p. 141) Russian-only instruction is available for the Russian-speaking population at the Kyrgyz-Slavic university, which was initiated by the president of Kyrgyzstan.

In Kazakhstan, the language of instruction remains particularly sensitive and unresolved because of equal numbers of both Kazakhs and the Russian-speaking population. Like in Kyrgyzstan, in the early 1990s the schools in Kazakhstan operated in Russian because of shortage of textbooks in Kazakh language, and teachers of Kazakh language. In the area of higher learning, the trend is similar to the one in other Central Asian countries. “Kazakhification” of the universities grants the native students certain advantages in the selection and admission process. Nevertheless, Russian still serves as a language of instruction in most subjects at the universities (Olcott, 1997, p. 32-33)

In Turkmenistan, the Turkmen language requirement has been introduced into educational institutions at all levels. Starting from January 2000, Turkmenistan started a process of gradual switch to Latin alphabet, which represents a modified version of Turkish alphabet. (Nissman, 1997). As a result, 77 percent of comprehensive (combination of primary and secondary) schools teach in Turkmen, although there are still schools that use Russian, Kazakh, and Uzbek as a medium of instruction. Overall, Turkmenistan is experiencing the same problems that other Central Asian countries have

encountered: shortage of language teachers, lack or inadequate textbooks and instructional materials, etc (Clark et al., 1997, p. 322)

Instruction in the Uzbek language in the schools of authoritarian Uzbekistan has been increased since the adoption of the language law. The greater number of hours is devoted to the study of Uzbek in both Uzbek-language and Russian-language schools. Compared to this, number of hours devoted to Russian has decreased. Uzbek language is now introduced at the Russian-language schools at an earlier stage – during the second half of the first grade. As for higher educational institutions, more courses are being offered in Uzbek. It is also observable that more and more students are enrolled in groups with Uzbek language as a medium of instruction (Fierman, 1995). As for minority languages, Uzbek government deals with them in the same authoritarian way. Number of secondary schools in predominantly Tajik-inhabited Samarkand and Bukhara has been gradually decreasing since the late 1960s. Post-independence civil war in Tajikistan has just exacerbated this process. There was a moment, when Uzbek government closed the Samarkand University, which had a long history of teaching in Tajik. Thus, Uzbekistan is moving away from its Soviet background by removing Russian from public domains, and suppressing other minority languages. In the long run, English is seen as the language of international communication in Uzbekistan (Lubin, 1997, p. 419-421)

In Tajikistan, Tajik language is strengthening its position in public domains under the increasing influence of Persian. Having gained independence, Tajikistan increased teaching of Tajik in all secondary schools, where Russian, Uzbek and Kyrgyz served as a medium of instruction. Shahrani's as well as Muriel Atkin's research on Tajikistan clearly shows that the country intends to build a monolingual society by drawing in

Persian to replace Russian and Uzbek influences. Therefore, the purification is aimed at removing the Russian borrowings from the vocabulary. For instance, Persian “bimariston” (“hospital”) has replaced “bol’nitsa” in Russian, etc. Like in other Central Asian republics, Tajiks, particularly educated elites are advocating for the elimination of Russianized way spelling the native personal names. In short, the intention is to remove the suffix “-ov” added to the last names (Atkin, 1995, p. 131-132; Shahrani, 1994). The problem of textbook shortage in post-war Tajikistan is much more critical than in other Central Asian countries.



### **Ethno-social structure: Role of language**

This section of the project is devoted to examining the impact of language on ethnic and social phenomena like in-migration and out-migration. The nature of the study is exploratory, and therefore, the intention is not to deeply examine various reasons for diverging interethnic relations that underlie migratory processes in the region. In pre-Soviet Central Asia, language was not a cause of tensions between different ethnicities, but was a part of the settlement policy of Tsarist Russia. Language was an important tool of nation building during the soviet regime. In terms of the post-Soviet period, my intention is to explore whether the changes in the language use patterns are causing the current out-migration from the region. Despite multiplicity of reasons, out-migrants tend to consider the linguistic changes as the major cause of their decision to leave the region (Delo, 2001).

Central Asia has always been multiethnic and multicultural. It has always been and still is viewed as one geopolitical unity, which is integrated by its geographic territory, historical background, economic relations, ethnocultural and religious commonalties. These commonalties affect people's lifestyle and values and make them racially and culturally different from other nationalities, which formed the so-called "Soviet people". Ethnic and cultural diversity of Central Asia was enormously affected by different economic and political policies of Tsarist Russia and Soviet regime.

#### **In-migration**

##### First European settlements in Central Asia

Literature on interethnic relations in pre-Soviet Central Asia has no tendency to consider the language issues as the cause of tensions between different ethnicities. It will

talk about the first migrants, which were brought by the settlement policy of Tsarist Russia. Since the purpose of the study is to examine the relationships between historically Turkic nationalities and European in-migrants, the paper will not discuss frequent intertribal conflicts and raids because of territorial disagreements.

At the time of Russian expansion into Central Asia, it was a religiously consolidated region, although there were some cultural and linguistic differences. Cultural differences were due to the lifestyle, which divided them into nomads and sedentary people: Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and Turkmen were nomads while Uzbeks and Tajiks belonged to the sedentary group of people. Kazakhs of today were divided into tribes, which consisted of multiple clans. The Kyrgyz were also organized according to tribes and clans. A complex tribal structure also characterized the Uzbeks, who distinguished themselves according to clans and tribal lines. Turkmen social structure was organized by family and clan (Pierce, 1960, p. 9-12) This kind of cultural, linguistic and religious consolidation explains their strong tie to the area, reluctance to migrate and distinctiveness from Europeans.

Annexation of Turkestan by Russia resulted in economic and social changes in the region and transformed its political outlook. (Khalfin, 1965; Roy, 2000). The conquest was then followed by the settlement policy. Russian and other Slavic settlers began to enter Kazak-inhabited territories as early as the late 18th century when almost all Kazaks were still nomadic. In-migration of Slavs was encouraged through various policies, including establishment of the schooling system, where Russian language, culture and values were the focus of education (Pierce, 1960).

In the case of Kyrgyzstan, peak of the pre-Soviet migration took place by the early 1880s, when about 3.500 Russian and Ukrainian settlers started to settle in the northern territories. First settlers to the current territory under the Uzbek and Tajik were emancipated peasants from rural Russia. Majority of them was driven by the 1891 famine in Russia. By 1911, the number of rural settlers in Syr-Darya region made up 45.000 (Rywkin, 1990, p. 16)

Migration was encouraged by the land allocation policy of the Russian government, which was detrimental to local population and led to impoverishment. (Glenn, 1999, p. 5). Tension between the Russian colonizers and indigenous people was aggravated by unfair appropriation of grazing pastures and much of the arable fertile land by the migrants. Expropriation of land resulted in disastrous famines among the indigenous population between 1910 and 1913 (Rywkin, 1999, p. 16). Another factor that added to interethnic tension was the forceful measures undertaken in regard to Kyrgyz and Kazakh to make them adopt a sedentary way of life (Pierce, 1960, p. 118-120, 204-205). I do not think that Pierce's argument n colonizers and indigenous people was aggravated by unfair appropriation of grazing pastures and much of the arable fertile land by the migrants. Expropriation of land resulted in disastrous famines among the indigenous population between 1910 and 1913 (Rywkin, 1999, p. 16). Another factor that at added to interethnic tension was the forceful measures undertaken in regard to Kyrgyz and Kazakh to make them adopt a sedentary way of life (Pierce, 1960, p. 118-120, 204-205). Kyrgyz people showed their resistance through akyns (bards), who warned that any change against the existing social order was against the will of god. (1954, Central Asian Review, 1955, p.192) Indigenous anti-Russian organizations of that

time include “Young Bukharans”, “Young Turks” in Bukhara, and “Alash Orda” in the Kazakh steppe. The leaders of these organizations organized several revolts, the most prominent ones among which were the Andijan revolt of 1876, revolt of 1916, initiated by the Kyrgyz and Kazakh. Revolt of 1916 was a very important event in the Kyrgyz history. It cost 100,000 Kyrgyz lives and had serious economic consequences (Rywkin, 1990, p. 13-17)

Russian authorities attempted to reform Turkic culture. For instance, they introduced European-style education in the Kazakh steppes. There were Russian-native schools in Fergana region. These educational reforms benefited a number of influential members of the indigenous elite, who came to know and admire Russian culture. For instance, Chokan Valikhanov, a Kazakh ethnographer, who devoted much of his work to the study of Kyrgyz people and culture. However, for the majority, Russian rule and people remained alien, and even were actively resented. Similar feelings had Russians and Ukrainians, who behaved superior and showed antipathy towards non-Christians with their Asian-Muslim morals and habits. This unfriendly environment remained unchanged until 1917, when the Soviets came to impose a new Soviet culture.

#### Language as a tool of nation building during the Soviet period

For most of the Soviet period there was a remarkable degree of harmony between the different ethnicities in Central Asia. On an individual level, there were instances of discrimination and harassment, but there was no room for institutionalized racism under the Soviet system. However, social boundaries between the different groups remained (Wixman, 1991, p. 159-183) Wixman’s field research on Muslim-Turkic versus Slavic-Christian relations in Uzbekistan discloses interesting aspects of these relations. The

Uzbek showed a double attitude toward Slavs by dividing them into two groups. They behave cordially and friendly toward the Slavs, who have a long history of living in the region. They resent the more recent Slav migrants, who failed to respect local people, local language, culture, and traditions (Wixman, 1991, p. 167, 178) Therefore, before speaking about the ethnic situation in Soviet Central Asia, I would like to mention some sources of migration, i.e. to show what attracted migrants to the region.

There were a variety of reasons that brought immigrants to Central Asia during the Soviet period. Literature written during the Soviet system indicates mostly economic and political reasons, which became the source of the large Russian presence in the present total population of Central Asia. These reasons include collectivization of agriculture and industrialization in all five republics, cultivation of virgin lands in Kazakhstan, deportation of entire ethnic groups (Volga Germans, Koreans, Poles, Greeks, Crimean Tatars, Kabardins and Balkars, Chechens and Ingushs, Karachays)<sup>5</sup> to the region, evacuation of factories and plants during the World War II. The first settlers were Komsomol<sup>6</sup> members from western Ukraine, the Moldavia, and Byelorussia, from Tatar Republic. The majority of them were young, without families and were machinery drivers and agronomists, railway construction workers. According to Sheeny's statistics, at the time of virgin-land boom Kazakhstan accepted from 220,000 to 250,000 settlers annually to work in industry or on virgin lands (Sheeny, 1966, p. 321). The disastrous earthquake in 1966 in Uzbekistan had caused another influx of non-Asians, who came to the country to help with the reconstruction of Tashkent.

---

<sup>5</sup> These were "punished people", who were believed to be unreliable or accused of collaboration with the Nazi army during the World War II.

<sup>6</sup> Young Communist League

Besides political and economic motives, there were many other reasons for the immigration to the region. Most of the immigrants were attracted by the more congenial climate, better living conditions, and employment opportunities in Central Asia (Sheeny, 1966; Rywkin, 1990; Olcott, 1996) Majority of Russians in Central Asia did not come from places like Moscow or Saint Petersburg, which offer more in terms of culture and living conditions, but rather from rural areas, where situation is even worse than in Central Asia. In case of Uzbekistan, migrants comment that Uzbekistan has certain advantages in terms of climate, food, housing, and other services (Wixman, 1991, p. 180).

No matter what the reasons were, migrations processes have changed the ethnic composition of the region. The particular feature of this migration was that all incomers were Europeans, Caucasians, or non-Asians. Majority of them were Slavs. The proportion of Slavs varied from republic to republic. For instance, in Uzbekistan the Russian population made up 8.3 percent in 1994. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have always had a higher proportion of Slavs: 37.0 percent of Russians and 5.2 percent Ukrainians in Kazakhstan, and 21.5 percent Russians and 2.5 percent Ukrainians in Kyrgyzstan, dating from the pre-Soviet period. Russians in Turkmenistan comprise 9.8 percent, while in Tajikistan two-thirds of 3.5 percent (1989 prewar data<sup>7</sup>) Russian population is said to have fled during the civil war (Undeland, 1994, p. 31-93) As a result, today Kyrgyzstan has 118 nationalities, and there are 123 nationalities in Uzbekistan. (Krag, 1984, p. 64; Wright, 2000) Immigrants changed the ethnic balance in the region and spread different customs, attitudes and modes of behavior.

---

<sup>7</sup> Post-Soviet independence in Tajikistan started with civil war in 1991

Widespread introduction of Russian into Central Asian native societies heavily affected the ethnic, linguistic and settlement structure and practices. These changes are interestingly discussed by Shahrani (1994), whose position as an outsider and his comparison between Afghanistan and Sovietized Muslims in Central Asia helps to clearly see the changes occurred in the region. Shahrani's identifies two ways Soviet-Russian language policy affected the ethnic and linguistic structure. First way presents a mixture of Soviet nationality policy and concept of "Soviet people". According to the Soviet nationality policy, all nationalities enjoy equal rights for self-determination. However, to be a Soviet man native people had to learn Russian language, which was seen as the language of the Soviet proletariat. As a result, most of the urban natives, particularly elites would become fluent Russian speakers without adopting the Russian nationality. This dichotomy is often encountered in today's Central Asia, where most of the urban native professionals consider Russian as the first language, but are never accepted as Russians (Shahrani, 1994, p. 43).

Second, Russian language became common language of the Soviet states and of all the non-Russian nationalities. Russian language became a necessity to receive higher education, and to become professionally promoted in the urban areas. This policy resulted in a negative attitude toward native culture and languages among Russian-speaking natives. Shahrani asserts that this category of native people resent their native language and culture for they have an association with rural folk (Shahrani, 1994, p. 41). He also indicates that there were a great number of parents sending their children to Russian-language schools. I think that Shahrani's research fails to name some current practical reasons for Russian language dominance in the region. Russian is still a lingua franca in

Central Asia. Higher education still heavily relies on Russian and there are universities and colleges, where education is available only in Russian. Russian is essential for anyone who travels beyond the boundaries of his or her national territory in the region.

### **Out-migration**

In terms of ethnic relationship in the region, post-Soviet constitutions of the Central Asian countries guarantee equal rights before the law, in education and in employment, for all members of society. Freedom of conscience, along with other basic freedoms, is also stated in the constitutions. Full citizenship is open to permanent residents of the new states regardless of ethnic origin, religion or language. Turkmenistan has granted Russian population the right for dual citizenship (Hunter, 1996, p. 44-47; Fouse, 2000; Olcott, 1996;)

Nevertheless, current situation in the region shows that tensions do not end with the statements in the constitutions. Linguistic variations initiated by the post-Soviet Central Asian countries are causing many problems in the sphere of interethnic relations.

Starting point of the tension was the introduction and use of the native languages in schools, enterprises and organizations, widespread teaching in native languages, widespread introduction in non-native primary and secondary schools. These new initiatives affected ethnic composition of the region differently. They allowed major ethnic groups to regain self-consciousness, and made groups like Russians and other Slavs lose their dominating position in the society and find themselves a minority. Economic and financial crisis, unemployment, high inflation rates, degrading living conditions and other drastic changes in the political and social life added to tense interethnic relations and caused out-migration. However, despite multiplicity of



economic reasons, many out-migrants tend to see the language issue as a cause of conflict. For instance, language policy in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan was seen as the major motive for out-migration, which will be discussed further (Undeland, 1994) Critchlow's study of nationalism in Uzbekistan also indicates that ethnicity and language were the reasons for ethnic conflicts and misunderstandings in the country, although the examples are often related to the Soviet period (Critchlow, 1991, 144-148)

Greatest challenge is maintaining ethnic stability and harmony is presented by Russians, who make up 9, 652,701 in the region (Undeland, 1994, p. 16) Intention of titular nations to redress the previous unfair policies is viewed as discriminatory by the Slavs. They consider the priority given to the native languages is a discrimination against non-native speakers. For them, language laws of almost all five countries limit access to higher education, to civil services and high-ranking government positions. They feel insecure about the overall changing situation in the region, and therefore, they respond to these socio-economic and socio-cultural transformations in the form of emigration (Undeland, 1994; Glenn, 1999; Anderson, 1999)

However, actual studies on the issue of out-migration in Central Asia prove that language issue is not a major cause of the interethnic antagonism. For instance, Kosmarskaia's research on out-migration from Kyrgyzstan, and Yerofeyeva's study of migration from Kazakhstan broadly discuss the changes in the lives of the Russian-speaking people after the disintegration of the Soviet regime. One of the goals of the research was to find out why, when, where and how many people was leaving the newly independent Central Asian countries. Kosmarskaia's findings are based in the findings of empirical evidence that she collected during five sociological expeditions to Kyrgyzstan

between 1992 and 1998. The survey on language issues demonstrates that language policy is not a cause for out-migration. Therefore, 32.2 percent of respondents were unwilling to learn the native language, as they do not see language discrimination, and are sure that Russian language will retain its dominant position in the country. For them, major reasons for out-migration are deteriorating economic situation and instable political environment (Kosmarskaia, 1999, p. 189-195) Yerofeyeva's research was conducted in Northern Kazakhstan, which is largely populated by the Slavs. This situation in Kazakhstan is different in many ways: high concentration of Slavs in the northern region, and their close link to Russia. Language issues are often intermingled with politics. Russian speakers are more inclined to stay in the country and fight for their rights or insist on the partition of the country. The Russian minority is deeply rooted in Kazakhstan and it would be unrealistic to massively leave for Russia. For instance, 32.1 percent of Russian population in Ust-Kamenogorsk, and 27.8 percent of Russians in Petropavlovsk are firm in their decision to stay and fight for their rights. (Yerofeyeva, 1999, p. 177) Both Kosmarskaia's and Yerofeyeva's research indicate that psychological impact of suddenly becoming a minority presents another reason of out-migration.

These findings are supported by Ginzburg's research, which also shows that language alone cannot cause massive out-migration. Unlike Germany and Israel with their repatriation policy, Russia is unable to provide material and financial resources for its returnees in economically well off regions. In most cases Asian Russians may find themselves in deserted and economically poor regions far away from urbanized centers. It is not their intention to leave Central Asia just to rehabilitate or restore Russia's stagnated economy. On the other hand, Russians in Asia are now culturally different from Russians

of Russia, who treat them as refugees or competitors for scarce economic and financial resources. Therefore, many are of them are returning back (Ginzburg, 1993, p. 6; Kosmarskaia, 1999)

Similar findings were achieved in the process of studies conducted by the western researchers. Having examined the language problems in the region, Fierman notes, there is a tension across the region, but language does not seem to be primary cause of conflict. Language may become a contributory factor to conflicts that often arise from economic and political issues like division of water resources, re-demarcation of boundaries between the states, etc. (Fierman, 1997). It is also supported by Rywkin, who states “migration would not take place without a combination of economic pressures and material incentives” (Rywkin, 1990, p. 71) In the case of Tajikistan, “language policy was far from constituting the major reason of the emigration from the country. Obviously, it was the war that caused it” (OSI/Soros)<sup>8</sup> To support this statement, this study of the language situation in Tajikistan brings in actual figures on migration among Tajiks. These research findings and my own experience of a citizen of Kyrgyzstan allow me to assume that minorities in Central Asia are in a non-discriminatory position compared to those who live and work in Baltic republics, particularly in Latvia and Estonia where language has become the major instrument of dealing with the non-titular people or non-citizens (Alpatov, 1997; Ozolins, 2000). As was mentioned earlier, transitional reforms allowed minorities in the region to regain self-consciousness and raised self-awareness of their identities. It was also noted that each state in the region has its own unique approach to the solution of issues related to minority languages.

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.soros.org/fmp2/html/laws/Zakons/Tajikistan/TajEngl.html>

Minority groups have secondary schools with instruction in their native language. They enjoy good positions in terms of employment, education, housing, social protection, although there might be some deviations in some countries, which should not be generalized to the whole region. Minorities in Central Asia feel safe due to balanced policy of the republics to retain interethnic peace and harmony in the region. They are now united into the so-called People's Assemblies, which are operating now in all states of Central Asia. These unions were formed to retain and strengthen interethnic unity and understanding. Assemblies connect different ethnic groups, who hope for their needs and interests to be accounted in decision-making processes in different fields of economy. They also hope that the Assemblies will assist the governments to develop programs aimed at retaining and rehabilitating cultural values of each ethnic group (Alpatov, 1997). Therefore, minorities intended to stay are adjusting to new environment, encouraging their children to learn other languages alongside Central Asian major languages. Stable and friendly interethnic relations in Central Asia are largely due to traditional tolerance of people in the region, and a long experience of living together, sharing and respecting each other's values.

## **Conclusion**

Only 10 years has passed since the states in the region gained independence gained in 1991, and therefore, there is no way of knowing the real impact of these language policy and planning measures on the educational system and interethnic relationships in the region yet. Therefore, I think that the context described in the project is characteristic of the chaotic situations that take place during political and socio-economic transformations.

Ironically, current language policies in Central Asian countries are at the opposite end of what the language policy used to be during the Soviet era. The Soviet system was the proponent of the Russian language, whereas post-Soviet transformations emphasize the revival of indigenous languages to replace Russian. Nativization or ethnocentric nationalism is the tendency that makes them identical in their approach to the problems of linguistic and cultural revitalization. All the stages that Central Asian countries went through demonstrate that they have full potential to promote and strengthen their own languages.

Financial and organizational constraints present another factor that makes the situation identical. Very often, limitations in the ability to implement language planning in Central Asian countries are caused by lack of funds to support the language revival process. Apart from laws and verbal aspirations, very little has been done to persistently and subsequently improve standards and usage of languages. This is particularly true for Kyrgyzstan (Vechernii Bishkek, 2000) The government and relevant institutions are not making serious efforts to make the policy work. Lack of funds and lack of native-language teachers resulted in the stopping of language courses for non-native people

working in public institutions. There is also a need for technical literature to be used in the documentation in the native language.

Nevertheless, despite these similarities, each state in the region has its own unique approach to the solution of issues related to dominant and minority languages. I think that success in achieving ethnic, linguistic and cultural harmony in the country significantly depends on its economic standing and the ability of its government to prioritize the utilization of scarce resources according to the needs of the nation.

For instance, in the case of Kazakhstan, its geopolitical and economic position in the region shapes and politicizes the language issues. Kazakhstan's language policy is formulated to meet the interests of Kazak and Russians, because the latter comprise a major part of the country's population.

Despite nationalistic movements, Kyrgyzstan is more inclined to bilingualism with Russian as a second language component. Anderson, whose research of 1999 traces the process of language planning in Kyrgyzstan back to 1989, extensively describes this tendency. Russian is not a state language in Kyrgyzstan, but according to 1996 amendment to the Constitution, "Russian may be used as an official language in predominantly Russian-speaking areas" and "vital areas of Kyrgyzstan's national economy" (Anderson, 1999, p. 48)

Tajik as a state language after 1989 is a major component of Tajikistan's national policy. The policy is largely built on the aspirations to restore the historical links to languages spoken beyond Tajikistan's borders. Tajikistan's intention is to become a monolingual society by drawing in Persian to replace Russian and Uzbek influences. Russian is deprived of privileges, including its status of a language for interethnic

communication. If Tajikistan ever adopts a bilingual policy, then the second language will be Uzbek, which is spoken by a significant part of its population (Atkin, p. 132).

As was mentioned in the previous sections, some governments are going very fast in implementing transitional reforms. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are building monolingual societies based only on Uzbek and Turkmen. In Turkmenistan, the Turkmen language requirement has been introduced into educational institutions at all levels. Starting from January 2000, Turkmenistan switched to Latin alphabet, which represents a modified version of Turkish alphabet. The new alphabet is believed to have a potential to fully transfer the richness and beauty of the Turkmen language. Purification policy is aimed at cleansing the Turkmen language of borrowings and preserving the originality of the language. The Turkmen government assures that school reforms will not be used to harass minor ethnic groups on ethnic and religious grounds. An important ethnic group in Turkmenistan is presented by Uzbeks (9%), who live predominantly in the areas bordering Uzbekistan. (Fierman, 1997, p. 2)

The language law of Uzbekistan affected not only Russians, but also the urban intelligentsia, who were educated in Russian and, therefore, were more proficient in Russian than in Uzbek. Language reform in de-russifying Uzbekistan is being promoted also through hiring and firing practices, which emphasize knowledge of the local language (Dollerup, 1998, p. 144). Instruction in the Uzbek language in the schools has been increased since the adoption of the language law. The greater number of hours is devoted to the study of Uzbek in both Uzbek-language and Russian-language schools. Compared to this, number of hours devoted to Russian has decreased. Uzbek language is now introduced at the Russian-language schools at an earlier stage – during the second

half of the first grade. As for higher educational institutions, more courses are being offered in Uzbek. It is also observable that more and more students are enrolled in schools with Uzbek language as a medium of instruction (Fierman, 1995).

Overall, all major stages of language planning and construction in the region show that schools served as a laboratory for Soviet and post-Soviet experiments, although there were both gains and losses from them. Scripts were changed twice, turning people into an illiterate mass in a moment. Perpetuating the concept of “Soviet people” through Russian language, Soviet language policy contributed to the decline of the status and the role of native languages in the schools. Combined with political and socio-economic factors, post-Soviet language policy has had a series of negative consequences: lack of textbooks in native languages, lack of qualified teachers in native languages, out-migration of Russian speaking population, etc.

The current Central Asian model of policy development and implementation is largely inherited from the Soviet system, which regarded language policy as a part of the government’s political activity in the context of antagonism and the political competition between capitalism and socialism. Currently, the governments in Central Asia are confronting challenges including the role of language in regaining national identity in the republics. Although each state has already adopted language laws, public movements demonstrate that language in the region remains sensitive and unresolved.

## **Recommendations**

As we see, the policies that Central Asian countries are pursuing present three possible options: monolingualism, bilingualism, and multilingualism. The future of the language situation in Central Asia is difficult to predict because of limited period of time



(10 years only) that has passed since independence in 1991, and lack of complete information. Nevertheless, analysis of problems and difficulties encountered within this period, and findings of scholarly research in the field make it possible to make some preliminary recommendations.

The main point to be considered in decision-making is the fact that Central Asia is a home for more than 20 nationalities. Each ethnic group has its own language, its own history, customs, traditions, and lifestyle, and this needs to be taken into account in policy making on language issues. To achieve this, optimal forms and methods of integrating languages have to be determined under current multilingual conditions of the region.

It is also important that the transition process should account for traditional bilingualism in the region, which was always there before the Soviets came, and Russian-Native bilingualism, which resulted from the Soviet language policy. The majority of indigenous people in the region are bilingual – they speak their own native language and Russian or one of the other indigenous languages. Bilingualism is spread in a differentiated manner depending in the region. For instance, indigenous people in Northern Kazakhstan and Northern Kyrgyzstan and capital cities of other countries are bilingual speaking native language and Russian. People speak Kyrgyz and Uzbek in the south of Kyrgyzstan. Uzbeks and Turkmen living in the border areas between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan speak Turkmen and Uzbek accordingly.

At the same, it is important to mention possibility of multiculturalism in Central Asian republics. Matthias Koenig extensively discusses the option of multiculturalism in Kyrgyzstan's context. Multiculturalism implies ethnic equality, under which everybody is offered knowledge on history, culture, and basic information on ethnic groups, who live

together in the society and whose attention is focused on the value of cultural diversity (Koenig, 2000). In the context of Central Asian republics, I think it is important to note that multiculturalism requires a lot of monetary and non-monetary costs. Currently the local governments are hardly able to invest the promotion of titular language, never mind other minority languages. Another impediment might be aspirations of native people, who have strong hopes of their mother tongues acquiring an adequate position and status in the society. Therefore I think that multiculturalism presents an option, which needs first to be thoroughly researched and publicly discussed.

In terms of minority issues in the region, the recommendation would be to encourage them to stay, adjust to new socio-economic environment, encourage to learn other languages alongside Central Asian major languages. I believe that stable interethnic relations in Central Asia are largely due to traditional tolerance of people in the region, and a long experience of living together, sharing and respecting each other's values.

As for education, I think it is important to identify main strategic options of activity in the sector. For me, these options include multicultural education, intercultural education, bilingual education, multilingual education, education for minorities, etc. I think that multicultural education programs would give knowledge on history, culture, and basic information on ethnic groups living together in the region. Here, it is important that primary attention be focused on the value of cultural diversity. Intercultural education programs would be aimed at assisting the development of mutual understanding and respect. Minority education programs would provide knowledge of the language, culture and history for minorities' children, strengthen their self-respect and self-consciousness.

Knowing the current situation in Central Asia, I would say that feasibility and applicability of a specific option in a particular country depends on the political, ideological and economic circumstances that may predetermine the decisions in favor of a specific strategy.

Reference:

- Alworth, E. (1967). The changing intellectual and literary community. In Alworth, E. (Ed.) Central Asia: A century of Russian rule. New York and London: Columbia University Press
- Anderson, G. (1999). Kyrgyzstan: Central Asia's island of democracy? Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers
- Atkin, M. (1994). Tajiks and Persian world. In Manz, B. (Edit.) Central Asia in historical perspective. San Francisco: Westview Press
- Bacon, E.E. (1966). Central Asians under Russian rule: A study in culture change. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press
- Bourdieu, P. (1994). Academic discourse: Linguistic misunderstanding and professional power. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Clark L. et al (1997). Turkmenistan. In Curtis G. (Ed.) Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan: Country studies. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- Comrie, B. (1981). The languages of the Soviet Union. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Critchlow, J. (1991). Nationalism in Uzbekistan: A Soviet republic's road to sovereignty. San Francisco: Westview Press
- Desheriev, U. & Protchenko, I. (1968). Razvitie yazykov narodov SSSR v Sovetskuiu epokhu. Moscow: Prosveshchenie
- Dollerup, C. (1998). Language and culture in transition in Uzbekistan. In Atabaki, T. & O'Kane (Eds.) Post-Soviet Central Asia. New York.
- Ferguson, C. (1971). Language structure and language use. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press
- Fierman W. (1995). Independence and the declining priority of language law implementation in Uzbekistan. In Ro'y, Y (Ed.) Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting legacies. London: Frank Cass
- Fierman, W. (1997). Language, identity, and conflict in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus. Perspectives on Central Asia. 2(5) ([www.cpss.org/casianw](http://www.cpss.org/casianw))
- Fouse, G (2000). The language of the former Soviet republics: Their history and development. Lanham, New York, Oxford: University Press of America, Inc.
- Garkavets, A. N. (1990). Printsipy natsionalnoi politiki i iazykovogo stroitelstva. Alma-Ata: Academy of Sciences of Kazakh SSR
- Ginzburg, A. (1993). Russkiye v novom zarubezh'e: Sredniaia Aziia. Moscow: Ethnology and Anthropology Institute Press
- Glenn, J. (1999). The Soviet legacy in Central Asia. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.
- Haarman, H. (1985). The impact of group bilingualism in the Soviet Union. In Kreindler (Ed.) Sociolinguistic perspectives on Soviet national languages: their past, present and future. New York.
- Hunter, S. T. (1996). Central Asia since Independence. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers
- Huskey, E. (1997). Kyrgyzstan: The politics of demographic and economic frustration. In Bremmer, I. & Taras, R. (Eds.) New states, new politics: Building the post-Soviet nations. Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge University Press
- Isayev, M. (1979). Iazykovoe stroitelstvo v SSSR. Moskva: Nauka

- Isayev, M. (1977). National languages in the USSR: Problems and solutions. Moscow: Progress Publishers
- Kaiser, R. J. (1992). Social mobilization in Soviet Central Asia. In Lewis R. A. (Ed.) Geographic perspectives on Soviet Central Asia, London and New York: Routledge
- Kalznar, K. (1995). The languages of the world. Olndon and New York: Routledge
- Khalfin, N. (1965). Prisoedinenie Srednei Azii k Rosii. Moskva: Nauka
- Koenig, M. (2000). Social conditions for the implementation of linguistic human rights through multicultural policies: The case of the Kyrgyz Republic. In Wright, S. (Ed.) Language policy and language issues in the successor states of the former USSR. Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Kosmarskaia, N. (1999). Khotiat li Russkie v Rossiui. In Viatkin, A., Kosmarskaia, N., Panarin, S. (Eds.) V dvijanii dobrovolnom i vynujdennom: Postsovietskie migratsii v Evrazii. Moscow: Natalis Press
- Krag, H. (1984). The language situation in Central Asia – between national integrity and Soviet integration. In Chylinski, E. (Ed.) Soviet Central Asia: Continuity and change. Denmark: South Jutland University Press.
- Kreindler, I. T. (1995) Soviet Muslims: Gains and losses as a result of Soviet language planning. In Y. Ro'i (Ed.) Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies. London: Frank Cass
- Kreindler, I. T. (1989). Soviet language planning since 1953. In Kirkwood, M. (Ed.) Language planning in the Soviet Union. London: Macmillan
- Lubin, N. (1997) Uzbekistan. In Curtis G. (Ed.) Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan: Country studies. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- Makhmudov, A. (1991). Nazad k "shaitan-arbe"? In Dulichenko A. (Ed.) Etnosotsiolingvistika "perestroika" v SSSR. Munchen: Verlag Otto Sagner
- Mathiasson, K. (1984). Ethnic groups. In Chylinski, E. (Edit.) Soviet Central Asia. Soviet Central Asia: Continuity and change. Esbjerg, Denmark: South Jutland University Press
- Medlin, W. K. et al (1971). Education and development in Central Asia: A case study on social change in Uzbekistan. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Menges, K. H. (1967). People, languages, and migrations. In Alworth, E. (Ed.) Central Asia: A century of Russian rule. New York and London: Columbia University Press
- Nissman, D. (1997). Turkmenistan: Just like old times. In Bremmer, I. & Taras, R. (Eds.) New states, new politics: Building the post-Soviet nations. Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge University Press
- Ozolins, U. (2000) Between Russian and European Hegemony: Current language policy in the Baltic States. In Wright, S. (Ed.) Language policy and language issues in the successor states of the former USSR. Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Olcott, M. (1996). Central Asia's new states: Independence, foreign policy, and regional security. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press
- Olcott, M. (1997). Kyrgyzstan. In Curtis G. (Ed.) Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan: Country studies. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- Pierce, R. A. (1960) Russian Central Asia 1867-1917: A study in colonial rule. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Rogov, V. (1966). Languages and peoples of the USSR. Moscow
- Roy, O. (2000). The new Central Asia: The creation of nations. Washington Square, New York: New York University Press

- Schiffman, H. (1996). Linguistic culture and language policy. New York: Routledge
- Schveitzer, A. D. (1977) Sovremennaia sotsiolingvistika. Moscow: Nauka.
- Shahrani, N. (1994). Muslim Central Asia: Soviet development legacies and future challenges. In Mesbahi, M. (Ed.) Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union: Domestic and international dynamics. Gainesville: University Press of Florida
- Sheeny, A. (1966). Population trends in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Central Asian Review. London: Central Asian Research Center
- Smith, G. et al (1998) Nation-building in post-Soviet borderlands: The politics of national identities. Cambridge: University Press
- Rossabi, M. (1994). The legacy of the Mongols. In Manz, B. (Edit.) Central Asia in historical perspective. San Francisco: Westview Press.
- Rywkin, M. (1990). Moscow's Muslim challenge: Soviet Central Asia. New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.
- Tryjarski, E. (1998). Toward better mutual comprehension among Turkic speakers in post-Soviet Central Asia. In Atabaki, T. & O'Kane (Edit.) Post-Soviet Central Asia. New York.
- Undeland, C. & Platt, N. The Central Asian republics: Fragments of Empire, Magnets of Wealth. The Asia Society
- Wheeler, J. (1962). Racial problems in Soviet Muslim Asia. London, New York, Bombay: Oxford University Press.
- Wixman, R. (1991). Ethnic attitudes and relations in modern Uzbek cities. In Fierman, W. (Ed.) Soviet Central Asia: The failed transformation. San Francisco: Westview Press
- Yerofeeva, I. (1999). Regionalnyi aspekt slavianskoi migratsii iz Kazakhstana. In Viatkin, A., Kosmarskaia, N., Panarin, S. (Eds.) V dvizhenii dobrovolnom I vynuizdenom: Postsovietskie migratsii v Evrazii. Moscow: Natalis Press
- "Vechernii Bishkek" – a daily newspaper circulated across all regions of Kyrgyzstan. Data is extracted from the March 2000 publication by Kuzmin G.
- "Delo" – national weekly newspaper. Data is extracted from Anikeeva's article "Ukhodiat Russkie, szjimaetsia Evropa" published on April 11, 2001