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## THE FUTURE OF THE FINNO-UGRIC LANGUAGES OF RUSSIA

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

We live in a globalising world. Globalisation can be of worldwide dimensions and also of local strength. Whereas the effects of worldwide globalisation are felt where all peoples with non-Anglo-Saxon culture and language are concerned, local globalisation — over and above this — prevails in a more or less closed, originally multi-lingual and multi-cultural society mainly due to political or ideological reasons. This latter situation can be observed in case of Finno-Ugric peoples in Russia.

There are currently 6 to 7 thousand languages in the world,<sup>1</sup> and this number is decreasing by a few per cent each year. A pessimistic scenario would be that only 10 up to 20 per cent of indigenous languages will survive the next 50–100 years.<sup>2</sup>

From among Finno-Ugric peoples, Estonians, Finns, Livonians and the majority of Hungarians and Saamis can influence their future within the framework of the European Union. It is the future of Finno-Ugric languages in Russia that gives most cause for concern, which is why my paper will focus on their situation.

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<sup>1</sup> R.G. Jr. Gordon (ed.), *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, SIL International, Dallas 2005; Available in an online version at the URL: <http://ethnologue.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> M. Krauss, *The world's languages in crisis*, "Language" 1992, 68/1:4–10.; UNESCO, *Education in a multilingual world. – UNESCO Education Position Paper*, Paris 2003; UNESCO, *Language Vitality and Endangerment. UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Unit's d Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages*, Approved 31 March 2003 by the Participants of the International Expert Meeting on UNESCO Programme Safeguarding of Endangered Languages. UNESCO, Paris–Fontenoy, 10–12 March 2003.

There are a number of conditions necessary for the survival of a language. Some of these are the demographic situation, the administrative status, the political environment: whether there is a language law and if so whether it functions or not to guarantee the free choice and usage of language by minorities/ethnic minorities. Furthermore the level of development of the given language and the psychological attitude to it by its users (do they want to use their language?) and finally mixed marriages are also important factors.

#### THE DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

Between 2002 and 2010 the population of Russia decreased from 145.166.731 to 142.905.208. The process has affected the majority Russian nation as well (2002: 115.819.107 – 79,8%; 2010: 111.016.896 – 77,7%). During the past five decades both the population and the proportion of Finno-Ugrians got smaller: 1959: 2,5%, 2002: 1,9%.

It can be stated that the demographical situation is negative at all Finno-Ugric peoples. It is true that a considerable increase can be observed in case of northern peoples such as the Khantis, Mansis and Nenetses but this is nothing more than a game with statistics. The natural growth for Khantis would have been 1,2% between 1989–2002<sup>3</sup> as opposed to the 30% indicated in statistics.

As a matter of fact Nordic peoples receive substantial state aid so it is worth registering new born babies as members of some Nordic ethnicities. This is the only possible explanation of the 50% growth among the 7–8 thousand Mansis within 13 years (1989–2002) as this cannot have happened in a natural way.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand an increase in population does not imply the acceptance of the ancestors' language, the contrary trend can be traced as fewer and fewer individuals consider their ancestors' language their own mother tongue.

<sup>3</sup> Ф.Н. Рянский, В.Л. Михайловский, *Коренные народы в контексте устойчивого развития Азиатского Севера*, in: *Сохранение традиционной культуры коренных малочисленных народов Севера и проблема устойчивого развития*, Научно-исследовательский институт угроведения, Москва 2004, p. 429.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Table showing changes between the 1989 and the 2010 censuses

People	1989	2002	difference	2010 <sup>x</sup>	difference <sup>xx</sup>
Mordvins	1.073.000	843.350	-21%	744.237	-12%
Udmurts	715.000	636.906	-11%	552.299	-13%
Maris	643.000	604.298	-6%	547.605	-10%
Komis	337.000	293.406	-13%	228.235	-22%
Permian Komis	147.000	125.235	-15%	94.456	-25%
Karelians	125.000	93.344	-26%	60.815	-35%
Vepse	12.000	8.240	-33%	5.936	-28%
<b>Khant</b>	<b>22.000</b>	<b>28.678</b>	<b>+30%</b>	<b>30.943</b>	<b>+8%</b>
<b>Mansis</b>	<b>8.000</b>	<b>11.432</b>	<b>+38%</b>	<b>12.269</b>	<b>+7%</b>
<b>Kola-Lapps</b>	<b>1.800</b>	<b>1.991</b>	<b>+10%</b>		
<b>Nenetses</b>	<b>34.000</b>	<b>41.302</b>	<b>+21%</b>	<b>44.640</b>	<b>+8%</b>
<b>Sölkups</b>	<b>3.600</b>	<b>4.249</b>	<b>+16%</b>		
Nganasans	1.300	834	-35%		
<b>Enetses</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>+19%</b>		

(sources: 1989–2002: *FUSPR*,4–8<sup>5</sup> – the calculations of the author; x –google, wikipedia, provisoric data; xx – the scale of changes compared to the year 2002)

The population of Finno-Ugric nations is influenced by natural assimilation, deliberate and violent russification, the numbers of natural births and deaths and the re-settling of aboriginal population and bringing in new workers imposed by industrialization (e.g. the utilization of gas and oil fields).

According to Seppo Lallukka's warning at the World Congress of Finno-Ugric Peoples in Tallinn, 2004 Finno-Ugric peoples should be enlisted among endangered minorities.<sup>6</sup> As far as Mordvins are considered who due to massive russification have lost an large seg-

<sup>5</sup> *FUSPR* – Finno-Ugric and Samoyed Peoples of Russia, Syktyvkar 2005.

<sup>6</sup> С. Лаллукка, *Динамика изменения численности финно-угорских народов России после 1959 г.*, "Финно-угорский вестник" 2004, (35) /4:5.21, p. 20.

ment of their population,<sup>7</sup> the last speaker of Mordvin is believed to disappear in the Republic of Mordovia in 2067.<sup>8</sup>

Markov states that in 2006 the natural mortality of rural Komi population was 3,4 times higher than that of urban residents.<sup>9</sup> Similarly birth rates have been lower in the rural population than in urban environments since 1996.<sup>10</sup>

The size of the community speaking a language plays an undeniable role in the survival of the language but it is not the only decisive factor.

#### THE ADMINISTRATIVE STATUS

Currently, the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples in Russia live largely in administrative units providing some kind of autonomy: those larger in number, like the Mordvins, the Udmurts, the Maris, the Komis and the Karelians, in their republics; those smaller in number, for example the Mansis, the Khantis and the Nenetses, in autonomous districts. Other peoples at the very most may have some degree of local representation (for example, in the municipal council).

Republics and autonomous districts (created in the 1920–30's), albeit in restricted measure, provide titular peoples with the opportunity to assert their interests; for example, in relation to the usage of the mother tongue and the preservation and promotion of native culture. Nevertheless, it should be realised that all the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed titular peoples are minorities in the territories named after them, although these very territories are the ancient settlement areas of these peoples.

<sup>7</sup> М.В. Мосин, *Национальное самосознание мордовского (мокшанского и эрзянского) народа: настоящее и будущее*, in: *Национальное самосознание мордовского (мокшанского и эрзянского) народа: настоящее и будущее*, Материалы докладов съезда мордовского (мокшанского и эрзянского) народа 22–25 ноября 2004 года, Типография «Красный Октябрь», Саранск 2005, p. 20; В.В. Маресев, *Печать и книгоиздание как важные факторы формирования национального самосознания*, in: *Национальное самосознание мордовского (мокшанского и эрзянского) народа: настоящее и будущее...*, p. 47.

<sup>8</sup> Setin, *Мокшень правда*, 25. декабря 1990.

<sup>9</sup> В.П. Марков, *Возрождение в эпоху перемен*, [с.п.], Сыктывкар 2011, p. 185

<sup>10</sup> Ю.П. Шабаев, *Современный этап этнодемографического и социального развития Коми*, in: И.Л. Жеребцов, Н.Д. Конаков, Ю.П. Шабаев, В.Э. Шарпов, Е.А. Цыпанов, *Народ коми: краткие очерки этнической истории и культуры*, Collegium Fenno-Ugolicum, Сыктывкар 2008, p. 282.

However, the planned reform of the administrative framework will radically change the living conditions of the small, indigenous Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples.

The structural reform of the Russian Federation aims at an essential reduction in the number of constituting units of the federation. As we all know, the first step was to unite the Permian Komi Autonomous District with the Perm Oblast. This autonomous district was created by political will at the beginning of the 1920s, separating the Permian Komis from the linguistically and ethnically identical, and even geographically neighbouring Komis on the basis of the *divide et impera* principle. Now we will see the end of the only Finno-Ugric autonomous district with a titular people which were in majority. And through unification, this people will lose all opportunities to assert their interests, because the approximately 125 000-strong Permian Komi population will disappear in the predominantly Russian-speaking environment of Permsky Kray.

The reduction of the number of units is only one objective of the Russian Federation's territorial reform. The other, perhaps more important objective is the linguistic-ethnic homogenisation of the country, the elimination of national minorities by assimilation or, provisionally, the 'folklorisation' of national minorities. (To take the example of the Permian Komis: the incorporation of the Permian Komi Autonomous District into the Komi Republic would also have reduced the number of the units, although it would have increased the proportion of the Komi population within the Republic.)

The principles of minority policy were drafted in 2002<sup>11</sup> by the then minister for ethnic affairs (Vladimir Yu. Zorin). It shows that the state seeks to solve ethnic problems by shifting from a national-territorial structure to a cultural-educational structure, otherwise known as national-cultural autonomy. For the basis of national-cultural autonomy served the fact that almost half of the non-Russian peoples lived in their own national state formation, although more than half of the inhabitants of these republics and districts is composed of non-titular people.

It is a sign of folklorising the minority issue when, during the reconstruction of the government in spring 2004, the position of the minister without portfolio for ethnic affairs was cancelled and at the time of drafting this presentation, minority-nationality issues were

<sup>11</sup> В.Ю. Зорин, *Российская Федерация: проблемы формирования этнокультурной политики*, Русский мир, Москва 2002 (*The Russian Federation: Problems of Development of Ethno-Cultural Policy*).

being dealt with by a division of the Ministry of Culture. (Today: Ministry of Regional development).

The proposed direction meant by Zorin is:

– to dismember the administrative units and have the groups confront each other, creating minorities everywhere → no interest-assertion → Russification;

– small peoples will only be of importance from the points of view of statistical data and folklore colouring.

A common feature of all Uralic peoples is that they represent only a minority in the administrative unit which was named after them. The realization of language rights or the passing of a language law as in Karelia is therefore extremely difficult.

People <sup>1</sup>	1989	2002
	proportion (%)	proportion (%)
Karelians	10,0	9,2
Mordvins	32,5	31,9
Maris	43,3	42,9
Komis	23,3	25,2
Permian Komis	60,2	59
Udmurts	30,9	31
Khant	0,9	1,2
Mansis	0,5	0,7

A few remarks:

- the majority of Finno-Ugrians live in the countryside,
- almost 2/3rds of Mordvins live outside the borders of the Republic of Mordovia,<sup>12</sup>
- only 52% of Maris live in the Republic of Mari El,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Е.В. Пайдышев, *Законотворческая деятельность Государственного Собрания Республики Марий Эл и реализация государственной национальной политики*, in: *Языковая ситуация и языковая политика в финно-угорских республиках Волго-Камского региона / Die sprachliche Situation und Sprachpolitik in den finnisch-ugrischen Republiken der Volga-Kama-Region, (Materialien einer internationalen Konferenz, Szombathely, 27–28 May 2004), "Specimina Sibirica" 2005, no. 22, p. 144.*

– the Komi-Permian Autonomous District ceased to exist in 2005 when it was fused with County Perm (Permskaja oblastj), thus creating Perm Land (Permskij kraj) where Komi-Permians constitute about 4% of the population.<sup>14</sup>

#### THE POLITICAL ENVIROMENT

Although the Finno-Ugric republics (with the exception of Karelia) in Russia have passed their own language acts which, in principle, ensure state language rights for the language of the titular nation within the borders of the republic, the effect of these acts is rather limited. So far, no legal standards have been enacted in connection with the language acts of the various member republics (in Russia), and this promotes the continual expansion of Russian.

The status of a language is connected to the self-esteem of its speakers, which in turn depends on the domain of language usage and their substance from the language speaker's point of view (e.g. literary language, language of religious activity, lingua franca). The language and native culture of an ethnic group has no chance of survival and development unless it is equally used in mass communication, at home and at school.

When one language takes over the functions of another language in more and more areas this leads to the lexical and grammatical reduction of the displaced language, and in extreme cases may bring about its extinction. Social causes of the extinction of a language are:

- heavy cultural pressure,
- fall in prestige of the language in the eyes of its speakers,
- negative attitudes towards the language and/or its speakers,
- modernisation and in its wake the abandoning of the traditional way of life and habitat (this can be seen in the situation of the Northern peoples of the former Soviet Union and present Russia). An important sociolinguistic statement is that language usage is closely connected to territory. That is to say the language of the indigenous population will not survive without historical territory.

Let me cite some examples concerning the linguistic situation of the more numerous Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia.

– The most important issue in language development is to decide how many languages a Finno-Ugric people should have. In my opin-

<sup>14</sup> J. Puszta, *Nyelvével hal a nemzet*, Teleki Kiadó, Budapest 2006.



ion, differentiating between Zyrian Komi and Permian Komi, Meadow Mari and Mountain Mari, and Erzya-Mordvin and Moksha-Mordvin is artificial, and not even linguistically justifiable.<sup>15</sup> Although these distinctions may have a historical, ethnic and partly perhaps linguistic basis, in order to preserve the nation, the national language and national culture, and to fend off the *divide et impera* principle, efforts should aim at the creation of a ‘one nation, one language’ situation.

— The death of a language does not necessarily mean language degradation; a language may disappear with its entire grammatical and lexical structure when the speaker community adopts another language.

— In the Komi Republic<sup>16</sup>, as a consequence of the measures of the 1930s, 1950s and finally 1970s, the Komi teachers’ college trained no more teachers for national schools and even the publishing of textbooks was halted. As a result of this, Russian was the language of education in every school and Komi was only taught in national curriculum schools — as a second language. This is how a whole generation (under the age of 30, 56.9 per cent of the population) grew up, not knowing their mother tongue and with no interest in the history and culture of their people.

<sup>15</sup> Concerning Mari language: И.Г. Иванов, *Языковые проблемы марийского народа в начале третьего тысячелетия*, in: *Языковая ситуация и языковая политика в финно-угорских республиках Волго-Камского региона, Die sprachliche Situation und Sprachpolitik in den finnisch-ugrischen Republiken der Volga-Kama-Region*, (Materialien einer internationalen Konferenz, Szombathely /Ungarn/, 27–28 May 2004, “Specimina Sibirica” XXII, Department for Uralic Studies, Szombathely 2005, pp. 51–66; P. Kokla, *Über die Möglichkeit einer einheitlichen marischen Schriftsprache*, in: G. Zaicz (ed.), *Zur Frage der uralischen Schriftsprachen*. *Linguistica*, Series A, *Studia et Dissertationes* 17:71–78, MTA Nyelvtudományi Intézet, Budapest 1995; G. Bereczki, *Die aktuellen Fragen der tscheremissischen Spracherneuerung*, in: G. Zaicz (ed.), *Zur Frage...;* M. Кузнецова, *Размышления о перспективах марийского языка*, in: *Языковая ситуация...;* concerning Mordva: М.В. Мосин, *Мордовские (моксианский и эрзянский) литературные языки: состояние, проблемы и перспективы развития*, in: *Финно-угристика на пороге III тысячелетия*, Department for Uralic Studies, Saransk 2000, p. 11–19; D. Gheno, „Morwinisch” oder „Mokschanisch” und „Erzanisch”?, in: G. Zaicz (ed.), *Zur Frage...;* pp. 57–61; L. Keresztes, *On the question of the Morvinian literary language*, in: G. Zaicz (ed.), *Zur Frage...;* pp. 47–55; Г. Заиц, *Сколько языков нужно эрзе и мокше?*, in: G. Zaicz (ed.), *Zur Frage...;* pp. 41–46.

<sup>16</sup> See: E. Saveljeva, *Venäjän suomalais-ugrilaisten kansojen kielilainsäädännöstä ja kansallisista kouluista*, in: M. Lappalainen (ed.), *Sukukansapäivien satoa. Kirjoituksia ja puheenvuoroja suomalais-ugrilaisuudesta*, Castrénianumin toimitteita 57, Helsinki University, Helsinki 2002.



– The *Udmurt* language<sup>17</sup> has virtually become the vernacular and ‘Küchensprache’ of the rural population. Küchensprache is an allegedly inferior idiom referring to a variant used by less educated people and in the family sphere. In the 1960s, the shops and service units in Izhevsk all had bilingual signs, but by the end of the 1980s there was not one Udmurt sign to be seen. The use of the national language declined mainly among young people because the Udmurt language was given no place in culture. Education in the mother tongue is only present in the first years of primary school, and in the upper classes Udmurt can only be studied as a second language. Nevertheless, there are efforts to introduce Udmurt into secondary education in order to form a national elite. In higher education the language of instruction at the Udmurt and Finno-Ugric faculty is Udmurt, and at the other faculties it is Russian. Udmurt schools are to be found only in the villages; there are none at all in the towns. The good news is that in recent years Udmurt has been spreading in kindergartens, in towns too.

– In the *Mari Republic*<sup>18</sup>, the Mari language has remained the language of instruction virtually only in a few rural elementary schools. The writing and publishing of textbooks has practically come to an end. The lack of textbooks is one of the main obstacles to Mari language teaching and this provokes the most strenuous parental opposition to the language.

In towns and town-like settlements, it is the workplace, children’s Russian-language environment, mixed marriages and the nihilism of urban youth that is the reason for Russian or Russian **and** the national language being designated as the mother tongue. More than 30 per cent of Mari school children said that they speak Russian at home, and that they are not interested in Mari books.

– In the *Mordvin Republic*<sup>19</sup>, the language act was passed after encountering heavy resistance. Its terms are rather ambiguous and

<sup>17</sup> See: A. Krasilnikov, *Kansallispoliittinen tilanne Udmurtiassa 1990-luvun puolivälissä*, in: M. Lappalainen (ed.), *Sukukansapäivien satoa...*; V. Kelmakov, *Udmurttien nykytilanteesta*, in: M. Lappalainen (ed.), *Sukukansapäivien satoa...*

<sup>18</sup> Cf. P. A. Кудрявцева, В. И. Шабыков, *Республика Марий Эл: языковая ситуация и языковая политика в сфере образования. Русский язык в формировании межэтнической солидарности (Региональные аспекты языковой ситуации в России и ближнем зарубежье)*, издательство Российского университета дружбы народов, Москва 2002, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. S. Saarinen, *Sprachgesetze und Neologismen bei den wolgaischen und permischen Völkern*, in: G. Klumpp, M. Knüppel (eds.), *Die ural-altaischen Völker. Identität im Wandel zwischen Tradition und Moderne*, Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica 63, Wiesbaden 2003.

allow for plenty of loopholes. The linguistic and cultural programme following the Act deals a lot with linguistic research and much less with the propagation of Mordvin among a wider public.

Recently, however, a lot has been done to promote the Mordvin language. E.g. both big Mordvin encyclopaedias, originally published in Russian have been re-published in both Mordvin languages.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTITUDE

Language usage proportions observed during the 1989 and 2002 censuses<sup>20</sup>:

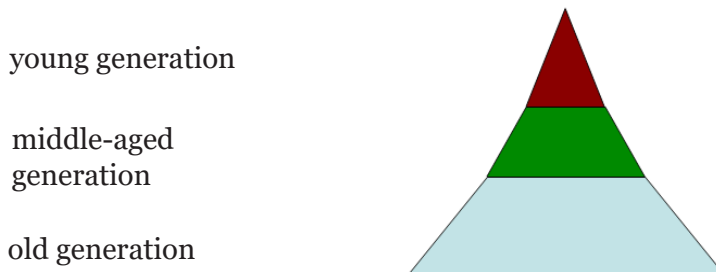
	1989	2002	difference
<b>Mordvins:</b>	<b>740 (=69%)</b>	<b>615 (=73%)</b>	<b>+4%</b>
<b>Udmurts:</b>	<b>506 (=71%)</b>	<b>464 (=73%)</b>	<b>+2%</b>
Maris:	527 (=82%)	488 (=81%)	-1%
<b>Komis:</b>	<b>239 (=71%)</b>	<b>217 (=74%)</b>	<b>+3%</b>
<b>Permian:</b>	<b>105 (=71%)</b>	<b>94 (=74%)</b>	<b>+3%</b>
<b>Karelians:</b>	<b>61 (=49%)</b>	<b>53 (=57%)</b>	<b>+8%</b>
Khants:	14 (=64%)	14 (=48%)	-16%
Mansis:	3 (=38%)	3 (=25%)	-13%
Nenetses:	27 (=79%)	32 (=78%)	-1%
<b>Selkups:</b>	<b><u>1.7 (=47%)</u></b>	<b><u>2 (=50%)</u></b>	<b><u>+3%</u></b>
<i>Total:</i>	<i>2223.7</i>	<i>1982</i>	

There are no detailed data as to the distribution of language users according to age groups. However, most of those using some Finno-Ugric language as their mother tongue presumably belong to the oldest age group, and the younger a generation is, the less it uses their Finno-Ugric mother tongue. This situation can be clearly illustrated by a pyramid.

The linguistic conditions of indigenous languages in Russia were

<sup>20</sup> There are no available data in the 2010 census concerning the use of the mother tongue.

## THE FUTURE OF THE FINNO-UGRIC LANGUAGES...



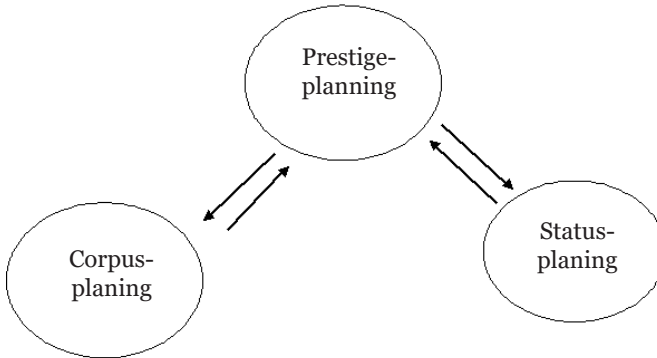
rather negatively affected by a speech of V. Putin, delivered in July 2017, stating that nobody can be forced to study a language against their will. This refers to the present situation when, at least according to laws, in ethnic republics also non-aboriginals are supposed to learn the indigenous language as a state language (in 1–2 lessons per week). Another implication of the speech is that successful education can only be guaranteed by the state if it is in Russian. In consequence public prosecutor offices have initiated inquiries in all ethnic republics to find out whether schools have terminated the compulsory education of the given indigenous language as a state language. It is to be feared that many will give up learning their minority vernacular as well. At the very moment protest is going on against this in many ethnic republics.

## THE POSSIBILITIES OF SAVING A LANGUAGE

Many have realized that the disappearance of languages is a great loss for mankind so several language-saving actions were launched. I only wish to make few comments here instead of going into details.

An important means of saving a language is development. It contains three components: status planning, creating the legal conditions for using a language, corpus planning, creating the necessary special terminology and finally prestige planning. How these are interrelated can be seen in the diagram:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> H. Haarmann, *Language planning in the light of a general theory of language: a methodological framework*, „International Journal of the Sociology of Language” 1990, 86, pp.103–126.



A lot of propaganda surrounds the experiment called *language immersion*.<sup>22</sup> The essence of the method is that children of a community with a weak language consciousness are temporarily placed with communities which still use the given language extensively. Naturally children acquire the language in a short time, return home to their native village and original environment and forget it equally fast as they can use it neither at home, nor at school or kindergarden.

Opinions differ as to the chances of preserving or revitalizing a language and the size of their communities. The distinguished Finnish scholar Juha Janhunen in one of his earlier works estimated a minimum population of 30 thousand, supposing a compact area and relative homogeneity from a dialectal viewpoint. His example were the Nenetses.<sup>23</sup>

An interesting and seemingly succesful experiment has been going on in Inari, Finland to revitalize the language of a small Sami community of a few hundred people. As far as I know the language of communication and instruction is Sami in kindergarden and at school and language courses are organized for parents of Sami descent but without sufficient knowledge. It is absolutely heartwarm-

<sup>22</sup> See e.g. J. Puszta, *In the Name of Preserving Linguistic Diversity, The Languages of Smaller Populations. Risks and Possibilities*, Hungarian Institute, Tallinn 2014, pp. 98–110.

<sup>23</sup> J. Janhunen, *Ethnic death and survival in the Soviet North*, “Journal de la Société Fenno-Ougrienne” [Helsinki] 1992, 83, pp. 111–122.

ing but the question arises whether it will be possible to teach subjects requiring strong terminology in Sami in upper classes, if there will be electrical appliances with Inari Sami applications for young people and what will happen in secondary school.

I believe that a language can be saved if it has a minimum number of 100 thousand speakers. A community of this size has enough children for whom it is possible to maintain schools, train teachers, write textbooks in their own language. A community of this size is able to produce a layer of intellectuals with teachers, journalists, poets, writers, language developers etc. This was the main reason why I decided on focusing the project „Terminologia scholaris \* Школьная терминология” of Collegium Fenno-Ugricum on five Finno-Ugric languages of Russia: Erza, Moksha, Komi, Udmurt and Mari.

When a language aspires to be used in all walks of life its standard of development is of crucial importance. Does it meet all the requirements? Terminology has to solve this problem.

In their present condition, the Uralian languages in Russia do not comply with the requirements of the state language. In the case of Uralian peoples with larger populations and at least an autonomous district, the language lends itself well to the publishing of literature, newspapers and periodicals, and to being the language (or at least subject) of instruction. However, in all fields where special vocabulary is needed (e.g. politics, administration and science), speakers automatically switch to Russian.

That is why it is essential to start or go on with the creation of special terminology and nomenclatures in order to make the language suitable for performing the desired functions in all fields of life. The restriction of language usage (e.g. only to folklore and culture) initiates in most cases irreversible, negative processes as far as the suitability of the language for technical communication is concerned.<sup>24</sup>

#### THE PROJECT TERMINOLOGIA SCHOLARIS

Summing up the aims of the project: it is to work out school terminology and therefore create the possibility of teaching in the vernacular. (Another one is to write textbooks in the mother tongue, and

<sup>24</sup> Ch. Galinski, *A proposal for UNESCO* (manuscript, 2004).

the third one is the training of teachers who can teach in their vernacular).

The results of the first phase of the project are as follows:

the creation of 10 school subject terminologies (grammar, literature, history, social studies, geography, biology, mathematics, physics, chemistry, informatics), in 5 Finno-Ugric languages (Erzya, Komi, Mari, Moksha and Udmurtian).

We were aware of the aspirations of the terminological development process in the 1920–1930s, the results of which are partly still relevant. Our experts did rely on these sources but in many cases new terms have been coined to express new things, objects and concepts, including the terminology of more recent school subjects such as information technology.<sup>25</sup>

To carry out this work one coordinator was chosen in four Finno-Ugric republics, who are teachers at the local university and their mother tongue is one of these languages. The colleagues from Syktyvkar and Saransk Universities have done their major share of work by collecting Russian language terminology from Russian course books and providing them with Russian language explanations. This material was forwarded to the four coordinators who organised the translation of both terminology and explanations into Finno-Ugric languages. The terminology vocabularies compiled this way were sent to the terminologiyi committee of the given state which evaluated them, made suggestions and then approved of them. Technical editing was followed by preparations for printing.

The structure of the dictionaries is identical in each booklet:

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. concerning Mari language: И.Г. Иванов, *История марийского литературного языка*, Марийское книжное изд-во, Jshkar-Ola 1975; И.Г. Иванов, *Словарь лингвистических терминов марийского языка – Марла йылмышанче терминологий мутер*, *Vocabularia Terminologiae* 1, Department for Uralic Studies, Szombathely 2005; Mordovian languages (Erza and Moksha): Н.С. Аляжкин, *Пути обогащения общественно-политической терминологии мордовских языков*, in: *Вопросы терминологии в финно-угорских языках Российской Федерации / Terminology issues in the Finno-Ugric languages of the Russian Federation*, *Terminologia et Corpora* II, Department for Uralic Studies, Szombathely 2003, pp. 9–13; Udmurt language: И.В. Тараканов, *Возникновение, развитие удмуртского литературного языка и пути обогащения его лексики в современную эпоху*, in: *Республиканская термино-орфографическая комиссия по удмуртскому языку*, [s.n.], Izhevsk 1998; Komi language: T. Riese, *Die syrjänische Literatursprache: Entwicklungsweg und Zukunftsperspektiven*, in: G. Zaicz (ed.), *Zur Frage...*, pp. 89–98.

in the first column the word is given in normal bold type in the given Finno-Ugric language,  
 in the second column you can find its Russian equivalent,  
 in the third column there is the annotation of the term in the Finno-Ugric language,  
 the dictionary contains a Russian–Finno-Ugric index.  
 E.g. linguistic terminology in Komi language:<sup>26</sup>

termin in Komi language	termin in Russian language	annotation in Komi language
<b>анбур</b>	алфавит	<b>сьӧрсьӧн-бӧрсьӧн тэчӧм шы- нас куд</b>

The final achievement was the publication of 5x10 terminological mini-dictionaries of 50–100 pages. All dictionaries are available in an electronic form.<sup>27</sup>

On a Hungarian initiative the EU had originally donated 2.5 million Euros to support the Finno-Ugric peoples in Russia, but due to the long bureaucratic way and costs only a part of this sum was spent on minority communities (not only Finno-Ugric).<sup>28</sup>

Having the dictionaries at hand the next step was their analysis. I have examined the terminology of school subjects language by language and published the results in 5 thick volumes<sup>29</sup>. Detailed analysis

<sup>26</sup> Г.В. Пунегова, *Словарь лингвистических терминов на коми языке для общеобразовательных школ / Шӧр велӧдчанінъяслы кыв терминъяслӧн кывкуд*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Syktyvkar–Izhevsk–Joshkar-Ola–Saransk–Badacsonytomaj 2011.

<sup>27</sup> <https://vk.com/docs-70357731>.

<sup>28</sup> Council of Europe, Совместная программа “Национальные меньшинства в России: развитие языков, культуры, средств массовой информации и гражданского общества”, Конкурс проектов. Контактные данные заявителей, отобранных для финансирования.

<sup>29</sup> Я. Пустаи, *Анализ словарей школьной терминологии мокшанского языка. Terminologia scholaris – Analysis*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Badacsonytomaj 2013, p. 517; Я. Пустаи, *Анализ словарей школьной терминологии эрзянского языка. – Analysis*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Badacsonytomaj 2015, p. 538; Я. Пустаи, *Анализ словарей школьной терминологии коми языка. Terminologia scholaris – Analysis*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Badacsonytomaj 2014, p. 441; J. Pusztay, *Schools and terminology as the means of preserving language diversity*, “Linguistica Uralica” 2014, no. 2, pp. 131–138; Я. Пустаи, *Анализ словарей школьной терминологии марийского языка. Terminologia scholaris – Analysis*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Badacsonytomaj 2015, p. 509; Я. Пустаи, *Анализ словарей школьной терминологии удмуртского языка. Terminologia scholaris...*, p. 427.



has revealed the proportion of native and foreign loan terms. Among the latter a distinction was made to separate international, Russian (e.g. Komi: кавычкаяс < Russian кавычки 'quotation marks')<sup>30</sup> and russified-international ones (e.g. Komi модальность < Russian модаль-ность < modali-ty)<sup>31</sup> etc. Terms were also analysed according to their structure. My aim when producing this detailed description was to highlight possible corrections and development that is why the analysis was written in Russian. Finally an additional German language volume was brought out summarizing the results of the project.<sup>32</sup> The project was finished with a conference at Collegium Fenno-Ugricum with the participation of the main co-ordinator, regional co-ordinators and the rectors of universities involved.

During the analysis it has turned out that the dictionaries of the two Mordvin languages, Erza and Moksha, contain far too many terms of Russian origin despite the fact that the newest Russian-Erza and Russian-Moksha dictionaries offer the vernacular equivalent of several terms (e.g. Moksha слогсь < Russian слог 'syllable'<sup>33</sup>, see in the Russian-Moksha dictionary:<sup>34</sup> валбялкс; Erza декабристэнь движения < декабристское движение 'the Dekabrist movement',<sup>35</sup> see in the Erza-Russian dictionary<sup>36</sup> сыграмо 'movement' etc.). Consequently after the completion of the project an extra meeting has been called for the linguists involved in the Mordvin programme and the main co-ordinator. I have asked them the question whether

<sup>30</sup> Г.В. Пунегова, *Словарь лингвистических терминов...*, p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>32</sup> J. Puszta, *Terminologie in finnisch-ugrischen Sprachen der Russischen Föderation. Ergebnisse des Projekts Terminologia scholaris. Terminologia scholaris...*, p. 133

<sup>33</sup> О.Е. Поляков, *Словарь лингвистических терминов на мокшанском языке для общеобразовательных школ / Мокшень кяльса общеобразовательной школатненди лингвистикань терминовь валкс*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Syktyvkar–Izhevsk–Joshkar-Ola–Saransk–Badacsonytomaj 2011, p. 25.

<sup>34</sup> *Русско-мокшанский словарь / Рузонь-мокшень валкс*, Мордовское книжное издательство, Saransk 2012. (Poljakov was a member of the editorial board of the dictionary).

<sup>35</sup> М.В. Мосин, *Словарь терминов по истории на эрзянском языке для общеобразовательных школ / Общеобразовательной школатненди туртов эрзянь кельсэ историянь терминтэнь валкс*, Collegium Fenno-Ugricum, Syktyvkar–Izhevsk–Joshkar-Ola–Saransk–Badacsonytomaj 2011, p. 19.

<sup>36</sup> *Русско-эрзянский словарь / Рузонь-эрзянь валкс*, Мордовское книжное издательство, Saransk 2012 (Mosin was member of the editorial board of the dictionary).

Mordvin languages are russified to the extent these dictionaries show and there is no will to change this situation or they are the results of a negligent attitude on behalf of the participants. If the first presupposition is true, the discussion about the beauty of the language and the importance of preserving it shall be replaced with real activity to change the situation. If it is a matter of an unscrupulous attitude they have to re-write the dictionaries. This option was accepted. However, though some years have passed since then the results of re-writing them are still to be seen.

In order to avoid turning the terminology project into a Potemkin village the completion of new, mother-tongue teaching materials had to be launched. These materials are electronic and possibly interactive. Textbooks were ordered only in those three languages, Komi, Mari and Udmurt where terminology was acceptable. In the two Mordvin languages it will only be possible if correct terminological dictionaries are produced. These teaching materials have so far been financed by Hungary, 4–4 books were completed in all the three languages with Hungarian support and two more Komi ones financed by the Центр инновационных языковых технологий Коми республиканской академии (Centre of innovative linguistic technologies of the Komi Republican Academy).

The phases of the project completed so far can be regarded professional achievements independent of politics. The extension of the project requires two further steps: teaching all subjects with the mother tongue as the language of instruction and educating and training teachers who are able to do this. These steps however need political decisions. Going by the ever increasing assimilating tendencies of the past decades a change in political attitudes is unlikely. (Only in brackets: even in Stalin's times with international concerns national schools and education in the vernacular survived.)

Nevertheless, some good news also arrived from Mari-El and the Republic of Komi where as an experiment some schools offer the option of learning some subjects in the mother tongue – to the contentment of students and teachers alike. It should be mentioned that in spite of federal laws in the Russian Federation it is possible to teach and study all subjects in the vernacular including final exams, e.g. in Bashkortostan or Tatarstan. So there would be models for Finno-Ugrians to follow.

## THE PRESTIGE PLANNING

In addition to the technical implementation of language development, the psychological status of languages should also be changed – prestige planning refers to this. Image creation is an essential element of status planning: it is this that creates a favourable background to language planning. This is especially important in the case of those languages which for some reason are not highly valued. In order to change the social acceptance of a language, its prestige has to be raised. On the basis of what has been found among various Finno-Ugric peoples we can see that a lot of hard work will need to be done to foster the love of the mother tongue and end national nihilism. Intellectuals who consciously acknowledge their mother tongue both among themselves and in public, and politicians speaking in their vernacular can do a lot to create language prestige. If the use of a language is forced out of more and more domains, it will sooner or later cease to exist. This can already be seen both among young people, scholars of humanities and politicians.

Parental attitude is a decisive factor. A negative parental attitude towards the mother tongue will deprive children of motivation and will have an adverse effect on their school achievements. In mixed marriages, a change in the attitude to language and culture is needed. Bilingual families should make every effort to see that the children learn the language of both parents. Present experience shows that only the Finno-Ugric population is bilingual, Russians are monolingual.<sup>37</sup>

Because of political and socio-cultural conditions one-sided bilingualism is the entrance hall to a new monolingualism. The process takes place as follows: Finno-Ugric monolingualism – bilingualism – a new (Russian) monolingualism. With the loss of languages identity also becomes transformed with a similar process: a Finno-Ugric identity – a double (Finno-Ugric and Russian) identity – a new (Russian) identity. Thus, such activities may bring to further unification of Russian society.

<sup>37</sup> A.A. Leontiev, *Linguistic human rights and educational policy in Russia*, in: R. Phillipson, M. Rannut, T. Skutnabb-Kangas (eds.), *Linguistic Human Rights. Overcoming Linguistic Discrimination, Contribution to the Sociology of Language* 67, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, New York 1994, pp. 63–70; P.A. Кудрявцева, В.И. Шабьков, *Республика Марий Эл: языковая ситуация и языковая политика в сфере образования...*

A PESSIMISTIC HAPPY END

While Russia accompanies other countries which have their own fellowmen outside their political borders — such as Hungary or Romania — and protests against the discriminative Ukrainian education law with good reason, it restricts the language rights of indigenous people on its own territory. Lacking a background of an independent country inhabited by their own fellowmen the representatives of Finno-Ugric nations in Russia can count on themselves or independent international organizations supporting language and cultural minorities. However, the activity of foreign institutions have to be approved by Russian authorities.

Future linguistic tendencies and the language vision of the world will be determined by globalization and the assimilating policies of multi-ethnic states. Consequently the speed of giving up the languages of small minorities, their disappearance will accelerate together with the loss of cultural values. This will bring about unpredictable consequences for mankind but this danger, unlike the one threatening biodiversity does not yet reach the treshold limen of politicians. Our task seems to be hopeless, all the same we must act in the hope of being able to slow down the unfavourable process and envision the belief who gains time, gains life.

János Pusztay

PRZYSZŁOŚĆ JĘZYKÓW UGROFIŃSKICH W ROSJI

Streszczenie

W artykule dokonano próby charakterystyki sytuacji języków ugrofińskich w Rosji w XXI w. na podstawie źródeł statystycznych, prawnych i socjolingwistycznych. Globalizacja dociera do mniej lub bardziej izolowanych, początkowo wielojęzycznych i wielokulturowych społeczności głównie za sprawą oddziaływania czynników politycznych i społeczno-kulturowych (w tym również ideologicznych). Tego typu procesy można zaobserwować w ugrofińskich wspólnotach w Rosji. Ze względów pozajęzykowych, m.in. politycznych i społeczno-ekonomicznych jednostronna dwujęzyczność (ugrofińsko-rosyjska) ewoluuje w stronę nowej jednojęzyczności (rosyjskiej).

Янос Пустай

БУДУЩЕЕ ФИННО-УГОРСКИХ ЯЗЫКОВ В РОССИИ

Резюме

Настоящая статья представляется собой попытку характеризовать ситуацию финно-угорских языков в России в XXI в. на основании статистических, правовых и социолингвистических источников. Глобализация проявляется в более или менее замкнутом, изначально многоязычном и многокультурном обществе прежде всего из-за влияния политических и социо-культурных (в том числе идеологических) факторов. Такие процессы наблюдаются в случае финно-угорских общин в России. По неязыковым, т.е. политическим и социо-экономическим причинам односторонний (финно-угорско-русский) билингвизм стал превращаться в новое одноязычие (русское).