

OFFICIAL STATUS AS A TOOL OF LANGUAGE REVIVAL? A STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE LAWS IN RUSSIA'S FINNO-UGRIC REPUBLICS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the legal and institutional position of Finno-Ugric languages according to the language laws of the national republics in post-Soviet Russia. The aim is to understand whether the republican authorities intended to use the official designation of state language as a policy device with which to ensure the revival of titular languages. The approach of the study is to test revivalist theories that establish a link between official status and language revival by comparing the number of institutionalised elements of official status in the republics. For the purpose of comparison, the study focuses on education and work environment among the domains within the public sphere of language use. The results demonstrate that the framing of official status in these sectors provided only some additional opportunities for the expansion of language use, while the extent of their institutionalisation directly correlated with the level of political representation of ethnic elites.

KEYWORDS: official language • language revival • language laws • Finno-Ugric peoples • Russia

INTRODUCTION

Change in language behaviour is an outcome of a complicated variety of sociolinguistic, political and legal processes, and the study of language policy alone cannot explain all tendencies in language practices. Yet, without doubt, the impact of state language policy is among the most important causes for change in a sociolinguistic situation, although this change will not always be one that policy-makers envisage as their goal. The most influential device of public policy is the designation of a language with an official status, which imposes compulsory use of this language on authorities and population in its interactions with authorities. This officialisation can pursue a variety of goals, and attempts at the revival of minority languages could be one of them. However, the connection between the official language and language revival is a problematic one. There is evidence from some countries that pro-active government policy enhanced language revival, while in other countries official recognition 'from above' actually discouraged grass-roots enthusiasm of activists (Sallabank 2012: 116–117). Can designation of a language with an official status serve the purpose of language revival?

This was a topical question in Russia in the 1990s and still is today. In the early 1990s domestic scholars observed the link between the ideology of language revival in

the Union and Autonomous Republics (SSRs and ASSRs) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and designation of their state languages but denied the sincerity of revivalist rhetoric of republican elites. Instead, official designation was interpreted instrumentally as an attempt by the elites to establish language preferences beneficial for them (Guboglo 1993; Aklayev 1994). Since that time more international and domestic research studies have been conducted into language legislation in Russia's republics, studies that found the importance of language laws for language maintenance (see, for example, Mikhalchenko 1994; Neroznak 2000; Galdia 2009). Notwithstanding this, there is no consensus on the nature of the link between the state languages of the republics and language revival. This link has become particularly problematic since the year 2000, when with the election of a new Russian president there was a political turn towards recentralisation of the country. As part of the new policy, self-governance of the republics was substantially constricted, any reference to 'sovereignty' was removed from their constitutions, the federal authorities started to interfere more and more with regional language policies (see Zamyatin 2012a: 40–42). In this situation, language shift and other problems of minority languages would be ignored unless ensured as the policy goal. Was language revival a concern of those who drafted the republics' language laws?

The purpose of this study is to explore the legal and institutional position of titular languages according to the language laws of the Finno-Ugric republics in order to understand the laws' impact on language revival. The first section of the article will outline the formation of the status planning as the main policy device in post-Soviet Russia and will establish the context for the comparison. In the case of minority languages, this policy approach demands extensive regulations to ensure their institutional and other support beyond a mere formal recognition of their official status, and the amount of support varied greatly in the republics. The approach of this study is to test the presupposition of the lobbyists and lawmakers that framing the official status could serve and did serve as the means of language revival. The second section will present the data of a comparative study on the language regulations in the Finno-Ugric republics and the circumstances of their adoption. The cases of the Finno-Ugric republics are interesting because they represent different configurations of official status, which allows variables in policy making to be highlighted. Among the cases studied, Karelia represents an outlier case, where the policy was pursued in a situation in which the titular language was not established as a state language and for a long time there was no language law. Finally, the third section will summarise the findings that identify ethnic elites as the driving force behind language revival and will discuss how and why different elements of official status were framed in different republics. The results allow for further theoretical elucidation of the impact of formal language status upon actual language practices, as well as the scope and limits of this impact.

LEGAL DESIGNATION AS THE WAY TO ENSURE LANGUAGE
REVIVAL BY MEANS OF COMPULSORY USE

The Functions of Official Status in the Case of Minority Languages

Political thinkers argue in justification of an official language that citizens need to have shared values and a common language for society and the state to function properly. In the tradition of liberal thought the argument is that all members of society knowing a common language is a prerequisite for on-going political debate, in which shared values are born (Patten, Kymlicka 2003: 37–40). This implies the necessity for every citizen, including minority members, to know the official language, which is, therefore, the source for requirement that knowledge of the official language is a precondition for citizenship. When the dominant majority language is simultaneously an official language, serious measures are needed for the maintenance of minority languages. One way is also to grant official status to minority languages, which, however, raises the problem of the re-conceptualisation of officiality for the purpose of minority languages and further justification. What does it substantially mean for a language to function as an official language and what areas should be covered for a minority language?

First of all, official use should not interfere with the freedom to choose the language used in private affairs. Regarding the public sphere, different classification of these areas could be suggested. According to a functional classification, the official language operates as 1) the working language of state authorities and organisations, 2) the language of communication of authorities with citizens and other public communications, 3) state institutions provide public services in the official language (see Zamyatin 2013c: 124–125). These functions can be performed both in the majority and minority language, or in either of the two. If there is more than one official language, an obvious reason for the (co-)official status of languages is the obligation of the state to provide public services to those minority members who do not speak the majority language, or speak it badly. Another justification of (co-)official status is the need for the symbolic political recognition of a group not just as an ethnic or/and linguistic minority, but as a national community.

The latter line of argument fits the case of Russia's republics, which historically were established as the exercise of the right to national self-determination of their 'titular peoples' (for a discussion on the ethnic nature of Russian federalism, see Bowring 2000: 216–219). This right can be exercised internally in the form of autonomy for a province or other historical territorial unit within a larger state. Being in the minority within a larger society, ethnic groups or 'titular peoples' are constituted in the political space as collective entities with their 'own' territories, that is, titled after them. A territorial unit marks, then, a community with the need of a common language or languages in order to function. All in all, not the personality principle but the territorial principle of accommodating languages in society became the policy cornerstone in Russia. The symbolic role of common languages for communities is used as an argument by authorities to introduce compulsory study of official languages of this territory by all its inhabitants irrespective of mother tongue and ethnic affiliation and for the knowledge of these languages by civil servants. On top of this argument, yet another justification for (co-)official status might be given, which is the endeavour to ensure protection of a *de facto*

minority language in a wider society. Establishing the official norms with this and that obligation for official language use in the public sphere then becomes particularly important for raising prestige of a *de facto* minority language, that is, for reinforcement of (ethno-)national identity.

Language Policy versus Language Rights: A Historical Outline of Status Planning in Russia

The Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) was proclaimed on a day (12 June 1990) that is celebrated, somewhat infamously in recent years, as Russia's independence day. While the Declaration recognised the freedom to use one's native language, it has not designated state language(s) nor has it otherwise touched upon language issues. The foundations of Russia's language policy were laid somewhat later, in the early 1990s, and included, *inter alia*, the freedom to choose one's languages of communication and education, the principles of equality of languages and prohibition of discrimination on the basis of language, enshrined first in Russia's language law (Law of the RSFSR... 25 October 1991) and then in the Constitution of the Russian Federation (12 December 1993). Most significantly, these documents established Russian as the state language of the country and recognised the right to its national republics to establish their own state languages.

Since the Soviet period Russian was the *de facto* official language not only of the central authorities but also of regional authorities. Non-Russian languages functioned as the working languages of the ASSR authorities only in some USSR Communist Party (CPSU) local committees and local administrations, while Russian was the dominant language throughout the State apparatus (see Iskhakova 2002: 9–10). During *perestroika* popular movements arose out of dissatisfaction with the state-of-play in inter-ethnic relations. The late Soviet nationalities policy was virtually directed at the Russification of non-Russians in the RSFSR. The leadership of national movements in Russia's ASSRs expressed their concerns with the linguistic situation of low-prestige non-Russian languages and the continuing language shift towards Russian. In the view of this leadership (referred to hereafter as ethnic elites), first *de facto*, and since 1991 *de jure*, official status of Russian as the sole state language of the country gave it a more favourable position and, thus, contradicted the formally proclaimed equality of languages, leading to their actual sociolinguistic and political inequality.

In the condition of the transition period, territorial language rights, minority language rights or some other right model could become a mechanism to manage diversity and to solve the problem of inequality of languages in Russia. However, for a number of reasons, including Soviet legacies and a failure of democratisation, not the rights-based approach but the policy-based approach has become the mechanism for management of language issues (Zamyatin 2013c: 143; these approaches resonate with the culture-protective and legal models of linguistic mobilisation suggested by Viktor Birin et al. 2005: 10–12). Those few rights that were recognised in legislation, foremost in the education law (Law of the Russian Federation... 10 July 1992), are formulated only as declarative and not self-executing rights. For example, not only federal law but also every regional language law contains a clause on the right to receive education in one's mother tongue. In practice, its implementation depends on the language plan-

ning activities of the republics, which might create the possibilities and might not. If an individual would go to court with the case for his or her right, non-execution will be excused by cost argumentation and numerous other 'objective' obstacles. Within the rights-based approach, used in some other countries, individuals have rights that they can employ in court even against the state, if the latter infringes the rights. The Soviet-style language laws are not directly enforceable but need administrative regulations for their implementation.

Moreover, a lack of language rights is not compensated by international treaties, because among the main European conventions in the field Russia is a party only to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities with its minimal level of protection, but not to the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which themselves, however, do not contain rights but state obligations (see Zamyatin 2013c: 107).

Language Revival: From Formal to Legal Designation of Languages

In the conditions of the policy-based approach, ethnic elites came up with the idea of 'language revival' as an alternative solution to linguistic problems. This idea found its shape in the policy goal of expansion of the use of non-Russian languages in the public sphere and raising their prestige through officialisation of the titular languages. Since the Soviet period, the titular languages were not used or were only symbolically used in the public sphere. So, official designation was identified by ethnic elites as the primary revival mechanism because it was a legal regime that could imply the compulsory use of titular languages in the public sphere, which could, *inter alia*, serve as an instrument of preferential treatment of titular groups and their elites.

Pyotr Voronetskiy (2009) argued from a normative perspective that the designation of the state languages of the republics cannot be motivated only by efforts for the preservation and support of the language as a cultural value, because this task has to be solved by other mechanisms. However, in the light of the virtual absence of the other, that is, right mechanisms, the elites had only a short menu of options. In fact, as non-intervention by the state into the private affairs of citizens included the freedom of language choice and became an element associated with democratisation, the policy could not directly address the problem of broken intergenerational language transmission in the family, which would be a straightforward approach to the language shift. At the same time, because the principle of ethnic federalism established a link between territories, ethnicity and language, the ethnic elites viewed as justified preferential treatment for the autochthonous groups in their titular republics and looked forward to a policy of state support for their languages as an appropriate way to achieve equality of languages.

Simultaneously, both titular ethnic elites and Russian regional elites saw their joint interest in designation of the state languages of republics by the declarations of state sovereignty of 1990 as one more attribute of national statehood to ensure more self-governance vis-à-vis the federal centre (Zamyatin 2013a: 155–157). In this light, the Russian regional elites even agreed as a concession to include in the elite pact the state languages as ethnic institutions established according to the constitutions of the republics (Zamyatin 2013b: 341–343). Yet, in all ASSRs, in practice Russian was designated as another state language at the republic level, which implanted the problem for imple-

mentation; this prevented in many instances compulsory use of titular languages and accompanying language preferences (see Zamyatin 2013c: 116–118).

The sovereignty declarations and the constitutions of Russia's republics, where official designation of their state languages was first made, contained only symbolic and formal designation, which was sufficient for the Russian regional elites. However, language revival as the expansion of language use made sense only beyond formal recognition as an increase in the number of functions performed by the titular language. That is why ethnic elites envisaged the official status of the titular languages to include their actual functioning in the capacity of state languages. The latter implied the legal designation in language legislation and, first of all, the adoption of a language law that would list the domains and sectors of compulsory use of titular state languages. While such legal designation was achieved relatively quickly in some republics, in others, notably those whose titular group was in the minority, it became problematic for the ethnic elites to advocate not only the expansion of official functions but also the inclusion of language revival as a policy goal in the first place.

A study of the laws would shed light on the policy goals behind these documents and the level of institutionalisation of titular languages. There were some comparative legal studies on the languages laws, for example, in the republics and other regions of Siberia (Katunin 2009; 2010) that, however, were focused neither on elucidation of the policy goals nor on the functions. Language legal regulations are usually classified according to the domains of public life: education, courts, administration, mass media, cultural and economic life and others (see Iskhakova 2002: 9–11). In the next section, the study proceeds with a comparison of the legal regulations in the Finno-Ugric republics on: 1) the compulsory study of titular state languages by all students or compulsory study of native language and its functioning as the language of instruction, and 2) language preferences for some professions. This study undertakes comparison only in the sectors of education and the work environment because the way language functions in these two sectors implies their compulsory use. As a result, language revival here needed significant resources for its implementation and was, thus, the most debated. Apart from this, the compulsory use in these sectors is not directly connected with instrumental use and preferential treatment because it does not have behind it the issue of status and access to resources, as in the case of language requirements for top officials (which represents the first function described above and is studied separately in Zamyatin 2013b). In these sectors, accordingly, the third and the second function of the official language are exercised. In addition, these sectors are the most illustrative of language promotion. However, a restriction of this study is that it does not evaluate the actual implementation of the legal provisions, which is accomplished for the sphere of education (Zamyatin 2012c).

LEGAL DESIGNATION OF STATE LANGUAGES IN THE FINNO-UGRIC REPUBLICS: THE RESULTS OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Komi

Among the Finno-Ugric Republics, the Republic of Komi is the one that regulated the language issues quite early by establishing the legal and institutional basis for its state

languages. In Komi already after the elections in March 1990, the Supreme Council created its Commission on Culture, Nationalities Policy Affairs, Development of National and Internationality Traditions, Protection of Historical Heritage, which started activities on language law from the very beginning of its work (Popov, Nesterova 2000: 46).

The Commission ordered the Institute of Language, Literature and History to prepare a draft language law. The Komi national organisations criticised the first draft law for its weakness in the area of language revival and, in particular, for the originally planned long-term implementation period that had to last up to ten years. In their view, the Komi language was developed and standardised enough to function in the public sphere, although there were some discussions regarding the question of whether there should only be one written form (see Tsypanov 2009: 210–213). Yet, the problem with passing the bill was that by *perestroika*, ethnic Komis composed only about a quarter of the total population. In 1985, 37 per cent of the deputies were ethnic Komi in the Supreme Council, the Soviet-style regional legislature, and 31.6 per cent were elected in 1990 (Popov, Nesterova 2000: 148, Table 8).

Even if these figures were higher than the population share, ethnic representation was still insufficient to pass a language law in the wording envisaged by leaders of the national movement. Yet, it proved to be possible for ethnic elites to reach an agreement with majority elites quite early, in 1992, due to the strategy of cooperation with republican authorities, chosen by leaders of the national movement, such as Valeriy Markov and Nadezhda Bobrova, and their lobbying of the draft among the Russian-speaking deputies of the Supreme Council. This became possible partly due the position of Yuriy Spiridonov, the Head of the Republic of Komi (Tsypanov 2001a: 123; 2001b: 185–186). The support on the part of Spiridonov was compatible with the need of the regional political elites to ensure their position versus the central authorities. This cooperation and participation of ethnic elites in elaboration of the laws on language (Law of the Republic of Komi... 28 December 1993) and culture (Law of the Republic of Komi... 22 December 1994) also enhanced their early adoption (Popov, Nesterova 2000: 37–39).

The final text of the language law (Law of the Republic of Komi... 28 May 1992) had quite strong provisions. There were language requirements for some professions to know both state languages (articles 7, 13, 18). The list of such professions demanding knowledge of both state languages and other languages in the state authorities had to be defined. Legal acts had to be translated into the state languages (article 7). According to the law, “Komi and Russian state languages are studied in all schools” (article 19), which meant that in theory it became compulsory for all students of the Republic to study Komi as another state language, but in practice twenty years later only about one third of students do (see Zamyatin 2012c: 88). Komi has not been used as the language of instruction since the 1970s and its expansion in this direction was not included, although it was planned for the future. So, the right to choose the language of upbringing and instruction, even if in the law, was not enforceable in Komi. The law included the right to choose Komi or Russian in order to enter high professional institutions, higher education institutions and to accomplish research, which also remained on paper. According to a study titled “Public Opinion of the Population of the Republic of Komi on the Issues of Statehood and Sovereignty” conducted soon after adoption of the law, 37 per cent of ethnic Komis and 24 per cent of the total population were in favour of compulsory Komi for all students. In 2004 the numbers in favour were 35.8

per cent of Komis and 13.3 per cent of Russians or 26.6 per cent of the total population (Shabayev et al. 2009).

After the campaign to “[bring] regional legislations into concordance with the federal legislation” was initiated by the federal centre, amendments were made to the Komi language law in the direction of its deterioration, although somewhat later than in the other republics (Law of the Republic of Komi... 16 July 2002). As elsewhere, many legal provisions were weakened in such a way that now actions had to be performed “according to the federal legislation” (see Tsypanov 2003; 2005). The demand for official and public servants to know the state languages was substituted with the demand to know just one of the state languages, which in practice meant, of course, Russian. The list with language requirements was not mentioned. However, an obligation was imposed on heads of authorities and municipalities to create conditions for acquiring the minimum language knowledge needed for work by all public servants. The latter was removed in the next wave of amendments (Law of the Republic of Komi... 6 July 2009). The amendments also ensured that the languages of upbringing and instruction are defined by the founder of the education institution. Yet, compulsory study of the state languages and language requirements are still in the language law. Similarly, the amended education law has not excluded compulsory study of languages (Law of the Republic of Komi... 15 November 2006).

Mari El

In the Republic of Mari El the Supreme Council created its Commission on Internationality Affairs in 1990. The first draft of the language law was prepared by a working group of the Supreme Council and published for discussion in three languages (Russian, and the two main varieties of Mari: Hill Mari and Meadow Mari) in 1992 (Kondrashkina 2000: 160). Hot debates arose around the proposed compulsory study of the state languages for all students (later article 11) and the language requirements that officials had to have some knowledge of the state languages (later article 14) (Sharov 1994: 78; 2001b; Anduganov 2000; Belokurova, Denisova 2003: 50). The third Congress of the Mari People suggested that these provisions would be voted on openly in the Supreme Council (Resolution On Language... 31 October 1992). However, at that time deputies of Mari ethnic origin represented only approximately one third in parliament and the draft language law was not even discussed in session. Through the absence of a language law, the laws on education (Law of the Republic of Mari El... 4 November 1992) and on culture (Law of the Republic of Mari El... 31 May 1994) partially fulfilled similar functions in their respective spheres. In 1994–1995, when the republican constitutions were adopted, the national movements throughout the whole country entered a period of decline, signified by a decline in the general ability of national movements to use language and other ethnicity-related phenomena as channels for political mobilisation (Gorenburg 2003: 75, also Zamyatin 2013b). Nevertheless, the inertia of the sovereignisation processes, which started in the circumstances described, made possible the adoption of language laws, as happened in Mari El.

According to official data, the share of ethnic Mari in the Mari ASSR Supreme Council of 1985 was 42 per cent, in 1990 it was 30 per cent (Sharov 2001a: 96). In the State

Assembly of the Republic of Mari El elected in December 1993 the share of Mari was 46.2 per cent. 13 out of 30 deputies in the Republican Parliament were of Mari ethnic origin, 14 were Russians, 2 Tatars and one Ukrainian. This composition reflected the ethnic structure of the population (Belokurova, Denisova 2003: 57). In other words, in 1995 the titular elite was represented powerfully enough in political establishment to pass the language law. The dispute inside the titular elite about whether the Hill Mari language also had to be granted the status of yet another state language of the Republic was unsettled (Kuznetsova 2008). The internal clash somewhat postponed the adoption of the Language Law. Despite the relatively small size of the group, the Hill Mari elite was predominant in power at that time and the President was of Hill Mari origin (Kasimov 1992). A compromise was achieved through an agreement that the application of the Mari state language had to be performed according to the areas of residence of the Hill and Meadow Mari.

The debate resulted in the language law of 1995 a few months after the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Mari El (24 June 1995), in which three languages were recognised as the republic's state languages. Certain categories of officials and public servants now had to have a command of Russian and also of one of the state languages, that is, Meadow Mari or Hill Mari, to the extent needed to carry out their professional duties (article 14). Moreover, "heads and employees of education institutions are chosen taking into account their knowledge of the languages of institution" (Law of the Republic of Mari El... 26 October 1995; Decree of the State Assembly of the Republic of Mari El... 26 October 1995). However, despite some practice, these provisions were never implemented in principle. In the sphere of education, the law included the right to choose freely the language of upbringing and instruction as well as the equal right to receive education in one's chosen native language. In addition to free choice of education institution, the law included the demand that Mari and Russian as the state languages are studied in all republican education institutions. However, the law settled on a transition period of five years for the switch to the teaching of the state languages in all education institutions (article 11, 62). Finally, the right to "pass exams in one of the state languages" was mentioned, although never actually enforced.

In the 1996 election to the State Assembly 50 deputies had to be elected personally and 17 deputies represented the administrative units of the Republic out of the total number of 67 deputies. This meant that 28 deputies had to be elected from urban areas and 39 from rural areas, which should have ensured higher ethnic political representation. However, in practice only 17 elected deputies were of ethnic Mari origin, including one representing the national organisation Mari Ushem (Mari Union). Thus, the share of ethnic Mari deputies was only 25.4 per cent (Belokurova, Denisova 2003: 64).

In June 2000 the fifth Congress of the Mari People was held, addressing the problem of the low ethnic political representation. The congress expressed its support for ethnic Mari candidates in the State Assembly election campaign of 2000. However, the amendments to the Mari Constitution and to the election law abolished the previously formed territorial and administrative-territorial electoral districts and formed only territorial districts. This way ethnic representation was reduced because of the lost extra seats from rural administrative-territorial districts. These amendments were a part of the campaign of bringing the republic's legislation into concordance with federal legislation (ibid.: 75–77).

As a further step in this direction, the Office of the Republican Public Prosecutor found the Mari language law and education law to be in conflict with federal legislation and protested against these pieces of legislation to the President and head of parliament of the Republic in August and September 2000. In January 2001 the Public Prosecutor proposed his own amendments, in which there was a requirement to change 24 of 65 provisions of the current language law. Even if the proposed amendments were mainly of decorative character and did not directly touch the provisions on the status of the Mari language, they attempted to change the balance, giving a clear priority to the Russian language. Leaders of the Mari national movement and some deputies of ethnic Mari origin strongly opposed this proposal. A conciliatory commission was formed to discuss disagreements (*Reshenie* 2001; Shkalina 2001: 12).

In the State Assembly of the Republic of Mari El elected in 2000 only 37.3 per cent of all deputies were of ethnic Mari origin, and they were unable to create an obstacle for the adoption of the amendments (Sharov 2001a; 2001c). The language law was amended in the direction of its significant deterioration (Laws of the Republic of Mari El... 19 September 2001, 2 December 2008, 16 March 2009, 12 March 2011). The compulsory study of the Mari language for all students was not excluded as the norm from the language law, but the education law was abrogated as contradicting federal legislation. The new law on regulation of relations in the sphere of education excluded compulsory study of Mari as the state language by all students (Laws of the Republic of Mari El... 29 March 2001; Sharov 2002). Sociological research studies of 1994 and 2001 have shown an increase among ethnic Maris in support for the compulsory teaching of the state languages to all from 59.2 per cent to 61.2 per cent and a decrease in support among Russians from 21.8 per cent to 19.4 per cent (Kudryavtseva, Shabykov 2002: 28, Shabykov 2006).

Mordovia

In Mordovia the first draft language law was prepared in 1991, but public support for it was very low (Maresyev 1996). After the first Congress of the Mordvin (Mokshan and Erzyan) People in 1992 a draft language law was discussed and rejected by the Supreme Soviet Council because the deputies opposed the demand for compulsory study of the titular languages in all schools and the demand of language preferences for some administrative professions (Kargin 1995: 51; Maresyev 1995: 178; Iurchenkov 2001: 88, 90). Unlike the other republics, political representation in the republic's parliament remained relatively stable and reflected the share of the titular population in the whole population of the republic. Bearing in mind that the share of Erzya and Moksha was 32.5 per cent of the population of the republic, in the Supreme Council of 1990 their share was 34.9 per cent, in the State Council of 1995 it was 33 per cent (43.5 per cent according to Polutin 2000) and in 2000 in the State Council it was 38.6% (Dolgayeva 2001). However, even the deputies of titular origin were reluctant to openly support the draft law (Mosin 2001).

Only the second Congress in March 1995 demanded, along with the designation of the Mordvin languages as the state languages, the adoption of a law on state languages (Resolution... 24 March 1995). Some actions were arranged to speed up the process of the adoption of the language law. For example, the political developments in Mordovia

were compared with equivalent developments in Komi and the other republics in the public appeal made by the representatives of intellectuals and social movements to the republican authorities (Appeal 1997). It was stated that Mordovia lagged far behind in finding a solution to ethnic problems and concrete steps were proposed and requested, including the adoption of the language law. At the same time, leadership of the national movement was now ready for a compromise. It withdrew some demands, including language requirements for top officials (Iurchenkov 2001: 90).

The attitude of the state authorities also changed. When Nikolai Merkuskin was appointed Head of the Republic in 1998, he expressed his willingness to address national issues (Latypov 1995). The language law in Mordovia was adopted in 1998 (Law of the Republic of Mordovia... 24 April 1998). As in the constitution, the law designated Russian and Mordvin (Erzyan and Mokshan) as the state languages. This was the compromise text, which sanctioned the use of the titular language in many domains of the public sphere only by necessity (Mosin 2001). Optional study of the state languages was introduced (article 10). Parents now had the right to choose the language of instruction according to federal legislation, which in practice meant that students continued to study in native languages in rural schools. In addition, the right for those who received education in native language to enter exams of high professional and higher education institutions in Mordvin (Moksha or Erzya) was mentioned. In the same year the education law was adopted (Law of the Republic of Mordovia... 30 November 1998). Unlike all other Finno-Ugric republics, Erzya and Moksha are still used as the languages of instruction in rural schools. There was an attempt to introduce their compulsory teaching to all students in 2004 but it largely failed because support for such measures is very low both among the majority and minority populations, although typically for Mordovia no data are available. Due to the late adoption of the laws, as in the case with the Constitution, there was no need for major amendments either in 2000–2001 or in the late 2010s (Law of the Republic of Mordovia... 12 March 2010).

Udmurtia

In comparison to other republics, the national movement in Udmurtia has had little success in creating a legal framework for language revival at the legislative level. The first draft law on the state languages, elaborated by the Society of Udmurt Culture, was presented in 1991 (Draft Language Law... 1991). Its successor, the national organisation Udmurt Kenesh (the Udmurt Council) appealed to the Supreme Council to adopt the new version of the draft language law (Decision... 11 November 1992; Draft Language Law... 1992). However, the Supreme Council rejected the draft. The drafts of 1991 and 1992 contained among other provisions clauses on native language of instruction, on compulsory study of the state languages by all students, and on bonuses for officials for languages knowledge.

Even if in the Soviet period the Soviets were only decorative bodies, the endeavour to ensure a balance between industrial workers and peasants sometimes led to over-representation of minorities. For example, in Udmurtia, while the ethnic Udmurts counted only for about one third of the ASSR population, they were in the majority in rural areas. Consequently, in the Supreme Council of 1986 they constituted 42 per

cent of the deputies. However, when the Soviet system was abolished, the minority political representation in parliament proved to be an insurmountable obstacle, which largely defined the fate of a language law in the case of Udmurtia. The ethnic elite was relatively well ethnically mobilised and had a sizeable representation. For example, all 52 ethnic Udmurts out of 200 deputies of the Supreme Council in 1991 composed a deputy group backing ethnicity and language demands. However, in Udmurtia there was never a moment when ethnic representation would reach half, as required for the adoption of laws in the legislative procedure, as it was the case in Mari El at one point.

As in other republics, ethnic representation decreased rapidly with the abolition of Soviet practices of ethnicity preferences and quotas. In some years political representation was low and did not even reflect the actual proportion of Udmurtia's minority population. In elections to the State Council in 1995 Udmurt Kenesh did not win a single set. Only 16 of 100 deputies of the State Council 1995–2000 were ethnic Udmurts and they did not create a separate faction (Yegorov, Matsuzato 2000: 318). The adoption of a language law was hardly possible at all after 1995 and the period of decline of national movement activism in the conditions of majority rule.

Moreover, even in 1990, when the majority was not strongly against the adoption of a language law, it proved impossible to draft a law for a rather technical reason: there was no authoritative centre that could produce a draft language law. Only in 1996 was a draft law on state languages prepared in the Parliamentary Standing Committee of the State Council on Science, Public Education, Culture and Nationalities Affairs. Among the elements of compulsory language use, only the clause on compulsory study of state languages by all students was left (Draft Language Law... 1996). However, this draft did not pass. The absence of a language law delayed and complicated the start of the language revival project. This was partly compensated by the adoption of the laws on education (Law of the Udmurt Republic... 31 January 1996) and on culture (Law of the Udmurt Republic... 18 December 1996). The education law was particularly important for the initiation of language reform because it guaranteed the right to learn the native language and obliged the republican authorities to create facilities for the study of the state languages for those citizens who wish to do so. In practice, Udmurt was taught as a subject only, in the main, for ethnic Udmurt children. Russian remained the language of instruction in all schools.

The case of Udmurtia demonstrated the importance of institutional support for linguistic demands in the executive branch of power. Unlike in Komi, in Udmurtia the Udmurt Congress had no right of legal initiative and could not present its demands directly to parliament. As the legislature remained inactive, the executive authority had to produce the law. Again, unlike in Komi, the relevant authority, titled the Committee for Nationalities Affairs of the Republic's Government (since 1999 the Ministry of Nationalities Policy), was nominally created only in 1994. The author of this article worked as a lawyer in this Committee and prepared one of the drafts of the language law, being a graduate student at the law faculty. Because of the failure of the previous drafts, the procedure was chosen to receive approval at the government level and to present the draft law as a government initiative. The process of elaboration of the new draft was more sophisticated than with previous drafts. Several existing language laws of other republics, notably Komi, Mari El, but also Tatarstan, were taken as the pattern. In order to be presented to parliament in the name of the government, the draft had to be supported by other ministries and

government agencies of the Republic. Many executive authorities were against the draft, which was not needed in their opinion, or were reluctant to support it. The procedure also included an expertise by the specialised federal authorities of both legislative and executive branches and consultations with national organisations of all ethnic groups – ‘the peoples of Udmurtia’. While the Russian Ministry of Nationalities Affairs and the Committee of Nationalities Affairs of the State Duma were supportive, among other organisations the republican Society of Russian Culture was against many of the draft provisions that favoured the Udmurt language.

Only 11 of 100 deputies of the State Council of 2000–2005 and 17 deputies of the State Council of 2005–2010 were ethnic Udmurts. After a decade that included eleven considerations at the level of commission of the Supreme Council and later State Council, the language law in Udmurtia was passed only in 2001 and unsurprisingly was quite weak. The law recognised the right of citizens to choose freely the language of upbringing and instruction, which, however, remained on paper. This right and the right to receive pre-school, primary and secondary school education in one’s native language are restricted to the potentialities provided by the education system. These rights had to be ensured by creation and support of “national schools, classes and groups”. The law proclaimed that Russian and Udmurt as the state languages are studied as subjects “according to the legislation”. In effect, there was neither compulsory study of Udmurt nor language preferences for public servants (Law of the Udmurt Republic... 27 November 2001; Bannikova 2002: 22–24). Timing is one of the reasons for the weakness of the provisions of the language law in Udmurtia, even in comparison to Mordovia, because by the year 2000 an overall shift in the policy had already started.

Nevertheless, the law had its impact. Right after its adoption the support for compulsory study of Udmurt in all schools among ethnic Udmurts was 31 per cent and ethnic Russians 3.4 per cent (Smirnova 2002: 505). Notwithstanding this, the sociological research titled National Relations in Udmurtia ordered by the Ministry of Nationalities Policy in 2003 has shown that only one quarter of respondents of both majority and minority background was in favour of such measures. An amendment to the language law added the clause that the Republic creates conditions for citizens to learn the state languages and other languages of the population in the areas of compact residence within potentialities provided by the education system (amendment to the Law of the Udmurt Republic... 21 June 2010). A new education law did not contain the obligation to facilitate the study of the state languages by those citizens who wish to do so (Law of the Udmurt Republic... 15 December 2009).

Karelia

An anomaly of language policy in Karelia is that it has not designated the titular language as its state language. Among the reasons for this should be listed the use of Finnish as the *de facto* second official language in the Soviet period, the absence of a written form of Karelian until 1989, prohibition by the amendment to Russia’s language law (Law of the RSFSR... 25 October 1991 amended by the Federal Law... 11 December 2002) of the state language of a republic to be based on the Latin script as well as a low share of the titular group and low political representation, etc. (see Zamyatin 2013a:

139–141). Among the republics of Russia, Karelia is the republic with the lowest share of the titular group. Whereas up to 1985 the share of ethnic Karelians in the Supreme Council was 30–40 per cent, in 1990 it was 13 per cent; in the Legislative Assembly in 1994 it was 13 per cent and in 1998 it was 6 per cent (Hämäläinen, Kozhanov 1992; Strogalschikova 2000: 165).

Karelia is one of two republics (the second is Dagestan) where a language law was not adopted in the form that it was in other republics. Despite the numerous draft language laws and motions to pass language legislation, in Karelia for a long time language issues remained unregulated. As a result, the creation of a legislative framework for language revival in Karelia was significantly postponed. A lack of language law was somewhat compensated for by the adoption of laws on education (Law of the Republic of Karelia... 18 January 1994) and on culture (Law of the Republic of Karelia... 24 January 1995). Karelia's education law contained similar language provisions to the education laws of the other republics and stated that the republic creates the conditions for Karelians, Veps and other nationalities to ensure their right to receive general education in the native languages and to choose the language of education within the potentialities provided by the education system (article 6).

The first two draft laws were elaborated in 1994 by the Republican Ministry of Justice and proposed Russian as the sole state language (Draft Language Law I and II... 23 March 1994). There was no intention among the drafters to give the Karelian language the possibility to have any elements of official status and to be officially used in the territories where concentrations of Karelians live. One of the drafts proposed the use of Russian and Finnish by publication of laws, and in the texts of forms, seals, stamps and signboards. Another draft law would establish the possibility to use Finnish along with Russian, but not Karelian, in the territories of historical settlement of the indigenous populations in management of public affairs.

The national organisation *Karjalan Rahvahan Liitto* (The Union of the Karelian People) advocated the officialisation of Karelian. With the participation of the Union, the State Committee on Nationalities Affairs drafted a law that, for the first time, proposed the establishment of two varieties of Karelian (Olonets Karelian and Karelian Proper) on a par with Russian as the state languages (Klementyev, Kozhanov 2012: 178). After further elaboration and exclusion of the distinction of varieties, the draft law was published in the mass media for public discussion (Draft Language Law III and IV... 20 March 1996, 3 September 1996). The need for the status of state language for Karelian was justified by the facts that Karelians are the titular nationality of the republic, it is their native language and that Karelians themselves demanded this at the first Congress of the Representatives of Karelians. As a justification for arguments against the designation of Finnish as a state language the data of the sociological research was given, specifically that only 2 per cent of Karelians spoke Finnish and wanted it as the state language (Birin et al. 2005: 112–114).

There were many publications speaking against the draft, including the multiple opinions of ethnic Russians against the official status of Karelian. One of the most important among their arguments was the issue of cost. Moreover, counter-activities were arranged: the republican department of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, known for its use of Russian nationalist rhetoric, even initiated the collection of signatures against the official status of Karelian because it has no unified written form, and

against Finnish because it is a foreign language. The Russian nationalist organisation *Russkoye soglasiye* (Russian Consent) expressed the idea to designate only Russian as the state language of the Republic. An alternative draft law, which proposed Russian as the sole state language, was supported by the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, the Union of Communists of Karelia, *Russkoye soglasiye* and other Russian nationalist organisations. An idea was expressed regarding the procedural issue that state languages could be designated only by referendum (Birin et al. 2005: 147, 154–156, 158–159, 165, 171–172, 182–183, 192–194). Several more drafts were elaborated in 1997–1998 (Draft Language Law V–VIII). In 1998, a draft law was presented to the parliament but did not pass (Öispuu 2000; Khairov 2002). The proponents of the draft law hoped that after the 1998 election the new parliament would pass the law. Yet, the new Constitution of the Republic of Karelia (21 February 2001) designated only Russian as the state language of the republic.

Attempts to designate Karelian as the state language were continued, but without any success. One interesting novelty was the idea to designate Karelian as a regional language in the context of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, just signed by Russia in 2001 but as yet not ratified (Kleyerova 2001). Between 2001 and 2004 the draft laws *On the Languages in the Republic of Karelia*, *On the Languages of the Peoples of the Republic of Karelia*, *On the State Guarantees for the Preservation, Learning and Development of the Karelian, Veps and Finnish Languages in the Republic of Karelia*, *On the Regional Languages in the Republic of Karelia*, *On the State Support of the Karelian, Veps and Finnish languages in the Republic of Karelia* were discussed (Kleyerova 2000). Only the law *On the State Support of the Karelian, Veps and Finnish Languages in the Republic of Karelia* was passed by the Legislative Assembly, on 19 March 2004.

This 2004 law has a narrower scope of application than the language laws of the other republics, and cannot be called a language law in the proper sense. Nevertheless, the law created possibilities for the use of Karelian in different domains of the public sphere, including education (article 5). According to the law, the Karelian, Veps and Finnish languages can be studied as subjects in education institutions in line with federal and republican legislation. Citizens have the right to choose freely the language of education and upbringing, to learn the Karelian, Veps and Finnish languages and to receive general education in these languages. The Republic ensures these rights by creation of the required number of classes or groups. However, there are no language preferences and no compulsory study of Karelian for all students in the Republic. Yet, in the early 1990s there was a practice of adding a bonus to wages for knowledge of the titular language. Karelian is compulsory for study by all students in the areas of dense titular population. The new law on education (*Law of the Republic of Karelia... 29 April 2005*) has not changed the settings of language teaching.

This inability to introduce official status reflects, for example, the language attitudes of the population (see Klementyev et al. 2012). In the research among the non-Karelian population arranged in 2003–2004 the popular preferences of the possible state languages were listed as follows: 1) only Russian; 2) Russian and Finnish; 3) Finnish, Russian and Karelian; 4) Russian and Karelian. According to the research data, about one third of respondents believed that if Karelian becomes a state language, it would be desirable for those without knowledge of the language to learn it (Kovalyova 2006: 12–13).

THE STATUS OF STATE LANGUAGES AS A TOOL OF LANGUAGE
REVIVAL: DISCUSSION

Popular Mobilisation, Political Representation and the Threshold for National Demands

The regional language legislations are often not transparent on the goal(s) of language policies. Unlike some other contexts in different countries, protection of minority languages was not the main official justification for the official status of the languages. Nevertheless, the analysis of the processes around the adoption of the language laws in Finno-Ugric republics showed that at least there language revival was the first among the main reasons for status planning. It has to be specified here that neither most of the documents of national organisations nor the laws contain the term 'language revival', probably because it was associated with the situation of languages on the verge of extinction. The formula used instead in the republics' laws is borrowed from Russia's law and reads as "maintenance and development of languages". While expressing concerns about the language shift, ethnic elites did not dare to make stronger statements and relate the titular languages to the group of endangered languages because they were part of a political culture in which it was usual to hypocritically present things as being better than they actually were. Status planning was there to ensure state support for the titular languages. Yet, the policy of state support was challenged and balanced, on the one hand, by the argument about the equality of languages and non-discrimination, employed by the majority elites and supported by the population, and, on the other hand, by the privileged position of Russian as the state language of the whole country. In these circumstances, the level of institutionalisation of the elements of an official language in education and the work environment depended on a number of variables. First of all, what were the driving forces towards the language revival?

As the languages laws not only prescribe compulsory language use by authorities and their officials, but also influenced language use in communication with citizens and public services, the language attitudes of the population would have been a more important variable in the case of framing the policy by language law than in the case of symbolic and formal recognition by declaration or constitution. Public debate in the mass media was also important to reveal public opinion. Sociological research studies were arranged from time to time in the republics, however, mostly *after* the adoption of the language laws. The studies explored popular opinion on the linguistic issues in the public sphere. For example, Dmitry Gorenburg (2003: 235–240) measured support for cultural nationalism among the titular peoples by examining their language attitudes. Out of all Russia's republics such support appeared to be the lowest among the titular groups of the Finno-Ugric republics. According to his data, support for the single titular state language counted from 13 per cent among Karelians, up to 18 per cent among Udmurts, 23 per cent among Mari, and 26 per cent among both Komi and Mordvins. Gorenburg interprets these results as unwillingness to treat non-titular groups as "second-class citizens" (ibid.: 160, 237). According to his data, obligatory knowledge of the titular languages by all inhabitants was supported by 31 per cent of Mari and Mordvins, 34 per cent of Komi and Karelians, and 36 per cent of Udmurts; support for compulsory study of the titular languages in all schools was expressed by 36 per cent of Udmurts, 37 per cent of Mordvins, 42 per cent of Mari, 43 per cent of Komi and 52 per cent of

Karelians. Somewhat different data was presented by Russian researchers for the first half of 2000: 62.1 per cent of Mari, 31 per cent of Udmurts and 35.8 per cent of Komi are for compulsory teaching of their titular languages to all students, while among local Russians the figures are 19.4 per cent in Mari El, 3.4 per cent in Udmurtia and 13.3 per cent in Komi (Shabayev et al. 2009: 94). The results of such surveys on popular opinion were used both by authorities and interest groups to justify their positions. Nevertheless, even by the conditions of low popular support in Komi, Mari El and Mordovia, compulsory teaching of titular languages was included in the laws.

This is witness to the fact that rather than language attitudes and interests of the public, the elite settlement was reflected in the language laws. Except in the first relatively democratic elections in spring 1990, the popular influence on elites through elections was ever decreasing over the following years. Even in the early 1990s, not so much popular mobilisation but the activities of the elites and their consolidation mattered (Zamyatin 2013b: 363–365). Yet, the ethnic composition of the population was an important variable that influenced the makeup of parliaments. Even if ethnic mobilisation in the Finno-Ugric republics has never reached the stage of mass movement and the electorate never voted exclusively along ethnic lines, some correlation can be found between the ethnicity of elected candidates and the ethnic composition of the population, especially in the early 1990s. In no case is there a universal link between a deputy's ethnicity and his stance on ethnic or linguistic matters (Zamyatin 2013a: 148–151).

Nevertheless, the access of ethnic elites to power and their participation in the political process depended on the share of the titular group in the total population of a republic, which in its turn influenced the level of its representation in a respective legislative body and the ethnicity of top officials. As a part of the solution of nationalities issues the Soviet authorities were careful to reflect the ethnic composition of the republican populations in the Supreme Council, which was often even higher than the share of titular groups in the total population. However, the Supreme Councils were only quasi-representative bodies, while the real power was in the hands of the CPSU. As the data demonstrate, when, with the dissolution of the USSR, the system of national representation was abolished and titular groups began to be underrepresented in parliaments (with some exceptions, as in Mordovia) (see Table 1).

This trend shows that, with the decline of ethnic mobilisation, the populace voted less and less on the principle of ethnicity for the candidate of 'their nationality'. Further, at the beginning of the *perestroika* epoch the first secretaries of the CPSU regional committees at least in some ASSRs were of titular nationality. In the early 1990s the power shifted first to chairmen of the Supreme Councils and then to presidents or heads of the republics. Typically, these were the same people who had simply changed chairs, many of them CPSU functionaries in the past (for the data see Zamyatin 2013a: 141–142; 2013b). All in all, rather than the language attitudes of the population it was the aspirations of the ethnic elites that were behind the demands for state languages. Popular ethnic mobilisation had significance for the strength of the ethnic elites expressed at the level of their political representation. Those ethnic elites that were better represented could insist on the inclusion of stronger national demands.

Table 1. Ethnic representation in parliaments and among top officials.

Year of election...	Share of deputies of titular nationality in the parliament of the Republic (per cent) / Top official of titular nationality (CPSU secretary, Supreme Council Chairman or President) (Yes or No)				
... or census	Share of the titular group in the total population of the republic (per cent)				
Republic	Komi	Mari El	Mordovia	Udmurtia	Karelia
1985 elected and appointed	37 per cent Yes	42 per cent Yes	>30 per cent No	42 per cent No	>30 per cent Yes
Population census 1989	23.3 per cent	43.3 per cent	32.5 per cent	30.9 per cent	10 per cent
1990 elections	31.6 per cent (1990)	30 per cent (1990)	34.9 per cent (1990)	26 per cent (1991)	13 per cent (1990)
	No (1989/90)	Yes (1991)	No (1991)	Yes (1990)	Yes (1989/90)
1993 elections	– –	46.2% (1993) –	– Yes (1993)	– –	– –
	n/a	25.4 per cent (1996)	33 per cent (1995)	16 per cent (1995)	13 per cent (1994)
1995 elections	No (1994)	Yes (1996)	Yes (1995)	No (1995)	Yes (1994)
	n/a	37.3 per cent (2000)	38.6 per cent (2000)	11 per cent (2000)	6 per cent (1998)
2000 elections	Yes (2000)	No (2000)	Yes (1998)	No (2000)	No (1998/02)
	Population census 2002	25.2 per cent	42.9 per cent	31.9 per cent	29.3 per cent

The Timing and the Balance between Language Revival and Other Policy Goals

Ethnic elites had to advocate the adoption of language laws and negotiate with majority political elites. Language revival of titular languages could not be the sole or even the main issue of such negotiations because it was not in the interest of majority elites. So, the ethnic elites were forced to be flexible in advancing some demands and refusing others. As a result, language laws did not concentrate exclusively on language revival as their main goal and contained only some elements that enhanced revival, including language preferences and compulsory use, while other elements of official status, notably the parallel status of Russian, were built in to pursue other and often opposite goals. Many obstacles to the revival of titular languages emerged at the level of implementation. The configuration of the elements is unique for every republic and depends on the time at which the law was adopted. As both popular mobilisation and political representation were rapidly decreasing, the elites' ability to balance their demands with the time of adoption became the most important variable for the ensuring the legislative and institutional basis for state languages.

The language laws adopted on the rise of national movements in the period after the adoption of the USSR language law (Law of the USSR... 24 April 1990) and before Russia's language law (Law of the RSFSR... 25 October 1991) in the ASSRs with titular groups in the majority as are Chuvashia (Law of the Chuvash ASSR... 27 October 1990), Tyva (Law of the Tuvan ASSR... 14 December 1990), Kalmykia (Law of the Kalmyk ASSR... 30 January 1991) and Tatarstan (Law of the Republic of Tatarstan... 8 July 1992, adopted after Russia's language law) have quite strong norms. These laws typically include, among others, provisions on compulsory study of the titular languages by all

students in the republic, the functioning of the titular languages as the means of instruction, language preferences for some professions, and more. The later the language law was adopted, the more difficult it became for ethnic elites to bargain for stronger language demands, because the short period when Russian and ethnic elites had mutual interest to act jointly in the face of central authorities was over (see Zamyatin 2013a: 151–153; 2013b).

The language laws in the republics adopted after 1991 follow the pattern of Russia's language law in that they contain many declaratory statements but few prescriptive norms. In effect, they are reminiscent more of policy documents than legal acts. The language laws usually formulate the principles of language use of both state languages and other languages of the peoples of the republics but do not provide a list of domains for compulsory language use, in the same vague manner of Russia's language law. The wide scope of application is partly the reason why the structure of the laws only vaguely reflects the domains of languages use. The structure typically consists of chapters on general provisions, citizens' rights for language use, language use by authorities, language use by public and other institutions, languages of geographical objects, languages in international contacts, and responsibility for breaches of the language legislation. The scope of application of the laws of Komi and Mordovia are restricted only to the official status and official use of the state languages, but this does not make them more operational. Karelia is an interesting case where despite the efforts of quite mobilised national movement the titular language was not designated as a state language and adoption of the language law took a long time.

The regional political landscapes of the late Soviet period largely pre-determined the status of languages in the post-Soviet period. One of the arguments of the ethnic elites for official status for languages and the need of regulation was that there should be a language law, for example in Karelia, because there are language laws in other republics. At the same time, while the autonomous districts could not designate their state languages, some of them had language laws, albeit their languages could have only some official functions (see, for example, Charter of the Komi-Permiak Autonomous District, 19 December 1994; Zamyatin 2013a: 132–133). Among those regions titled after the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples, language laws were adopted in the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District (Law of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District... 4 December 2001) and in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District (Law of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District... 5 April 2010). In the Nenets Autonomous District, the equivalent draft was presented to a session of the District Administration only in August 2012 (Draft Law of the Nenets Autonomous District... August 2012). Both in Karelia and autonomous districts the lack of status of a state language did not prevent the adoption of a language law and implementation of language revival. In these regions lawmakers could not boost the revival of titular languages through the mechanisms that imposed compulsory use of the state languages. Yet, Karelia's law contains some elements of official status and the compulsory teaching of Karelian was introduced at the municipal level. The absence of state language status was an obstacle but did not exclude language revival in this Republic.

Despite the difference in the status of titular languages between the republics and autonomous districts, as was pointed out above, a common Soviet inheritance was that the policy-based approach, and not the rights-based approach, was chosen by lawmak-

ers as a strategy to address language issues. Within the policy-based approach certain measures were planned in law as future activities. The analysis demonstrated that, formulating norms, lawmakers used the language of the third person plural, or the passive tense: something “is being done”, which should mean an obligatory rule. However, the implementer interpreted this in a different manner. This ambiguity gives rise to problems in enforcement and implementation. In fact, those implementing the law take these not as obligations, but almost as recommendations. In addition to which there are many norms with references redirecting the reader to legislation that does not exist.

The Raise and Demise of Language Revival: the Corridor of Opportunities in Establishing Institutions

In a situation in which delivery of revival projects and their necessary support depended on government officials, an important variable became the (in)ability of the leadership of national movements to cooperate with republican authorities. In Komi and Mari El, as in some other republics, national movements became strong enough, quickly enough, to lobby for the support of the regional governments for state languages, that is, foremost, for the titular languages. Despite the low proportion of ethnic Komi in the population, the strategy of the national movement’s leadership was directed at cooperation with the regional authorities and resulted in the early adoption of a quite strong language law. In Mari El a comparable share of ethnic Maris and Russians and, consequently, adequate proportional political representation enabled the leadership of the national movement to lobby for the adoption of a language law (Law of the Republic of Mari El... 26 October 1995; revised 19 September 2001), although adoption was slowed down due to disagreement about whether one or two Mari languages should be the state languages. The difference between the strategies of cooperation and confrontation in the long run was that in Komi many language provisions are still in force while in Mari El they have been to a great extent abolished. Nevertheless, in Komi and Mari El, as in Tatarstan and Chuvashia, the legislative basis for the functioning of the state languages was mainly created, whereas in Udmurtia, Mordovia and Karelia these processes were protracted.

In Mordovia and Udmurtia ethnic elites appeared to be relatively weak, which led to the late adoption of language laws (Law of the Republic of Mordovia... 24 April 1998; Law of the Udmurt Republic... 27 November 2001). The cases of Mordovia and Udmurtia show that in the republics where existing ethnic elites hoped for Soviet national quota systems, national movements largely failed during the period of rapid social transformation. In both republics the authorities managed to co-optate the collaborationist leaders and to mobilise them against the more radical segments of the movements. In Mordovia there was an early split in the leadership of the national movement. Yet, the regime consolidation from the mid-1990s was marked by the change in republican leadership in 1998 and included a language law in the elite pact. In Udmurtia regime consolidation took place in the conditions of the overall shift in Russia’s political regime in 2000–2001. The language law was adjusted to a changed political situation and did not prioritise support for the Udmurt language. As a consequence of the late adoption, the doctrine of the language laws in Udmurtia and Mordovia is a mixture of language

revivalist, and symbolist, ideas with prevalence of the latter. In order to reach a compromise, the ethnic elites were forced to refuse many initial demands, such as language preferences and compulsory language teaching. The study of draft laws in Udmurtia is a shining example of how the provisions became softer and softer in the later drafts, and later in time, and how the final texts of language laws contained more qualifications such as “if possible” or “if necessary”.

On the whole, the data reinforce the argument about the central role of ethnic elites as the driving force of status planning and establishes a direct link between ethnic representativeness and the adoption of language laws. Moreover, the data on ethnic representation (Table 1) correlate with the data on the establishment of institutions across the republics (see Table 2).

Table 2. Language requirements and language teaching according to language laws.

	Komi	Mari El	Mordovia	Udmurtia	Karelia
Language law I	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004
Language preferences	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Language law II amended	2002, 2009	2001, 2008–2011	2010	2010	–
Language preferences	No	No	No	No	No
Language law I	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004
Native language instruction	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Compulsory state language	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Entering exams	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Language law II amended	2002, 2009	2001, 2008–2011	2010	2010	–
Native language instruction	No	No	Yes	No	No
Compulsory state language	Yes/No	No	Yes/No	No	No
Entering exams	No	No	No	No	No

Being in the minority, the ethnic elites had to involve other, both sociolinguistic and instrumental, ideas to support their claims. One complication that caused delays in advancing the legislative basis was the existence of more than one form of titular language, as in Mordovia, Mari El and Karelia. Otherwise, extra-linguistic variables played the central role in language planning. At the time of the adoption of the constitutions the matter of cost was not on the agenda because constitutional language provisions did not imply direct expenditures. At the time of adoption of language laws the issue

of costs came to the forefront. Michael Kirkwood (1989: 1) distinguishes between sociolinguistic and instrumental types of language planning, in which for the first diversity maintenance is important, while the second asks about price. The present analysis demonstrates that around the year 2000 language planning in the republics moved from a sociolinguistic to an instrumental model. In the 1990s regional authorities brought forward economic difficulties as an excuse for non-implementation of language provisions. Since the year 2000, the language revival itself has been questioned from the position of language rationalisation. This became possible because the representation of the ethnic elites among the regional ruling elites decreased dramatically even in those where they used to be in power (Mari El, Komi; see Zamyatin 2013b: 363–365). What makes the principal difference between the 1990s and the 2000s is the overall turn in Russia's nationalities policy and language policy. As a result, even previously strong provisions were removed and the language revival curtailed by amendments to the law in Mari El in 2001 and in Komi in 2002. Those few demands that still retained obligatoriness, such as compulsory teaching of titular state languages to all students, were actually aimed not so much at the expansion of language use but rather at raising language prestige and reinforcing identity. However, whether such measures can unequivocally raise prestige is problematic, especially in view of the given language attitudes of the majority population. The further problem is that prestige planning was not identified as a separate direction of language planning.

The next wave of amendments to the Finno-Ugric republics' education laws took place between 2004 and 2006, and the next wave of amendments to the language laws between 2008 and 2010. The latter amendments were caused by Russia's education reform that enforced the demand of the languages of upbringing and instruction to be defined by founder of the educational institution and not by regional education agencies (Zamyatin 2012b). In Komi the amendment to the language law was adopted in 2009, in Mari El in 2008, 2009 and 2011, and in Udmurtia and Mordovia in 2010. Apart from accommodating reform at the regional level, these were mainly minor changes. There are still no laws in the republics that list the domains of compulsory language use of the state languages in the manner of the Federal Law On the State Language of the Russian Federation (1 June 2005), which prescribes concrete domains for the compulsory functioning of Russian as the state language. Moreover, although the compulsory teaching of the republics' state languages has not been formally removed from the reformed legislation, this teaching is being *de facto* removed with gradual enforcement of new united federal state education standards. Another tendency is that teaching of state languages is a poor substitute for better-quality teaching of native languages (see Zamyatin 2012c: 95–97). The situation has improved in one respect: the new Federal Law On Education in the Russian Federation (29 December 2012) included the practice that those students who learned their native language and literature in school, can also take final exams in these subjects.

CONCLUSION

In the early 1990s the titular national organisations in Russia's republics demanded the institutionalisation of official status for titular languages in language laws and declared

that this action should have language revival as its main goal. These were ethnic elites who saw status planning as the way both to ensure their own interest in the instrumental use of languages and also to promote the titular languages among the population through their expansion in the public sphere. The regional authorities of Finno-Ugric republics have taken this demand into account in drafting language laws and identified language revival as one of the goals of their language policies. In the conditions of the virtual non-functionality of the mechanism for the protection of individual language rights, official status was probably central to what could have been done for the promotion of the *de facto* minority language in the long term, if it was possible to do anything at all in the minority situation.

While during the 1990s there was relative success in the gradual formation of the conditions in which the titular languages could function in the public sphere in the Finno-Ugric republics, from 2000 their expansion started to face obstacles, and soon most of the elements of compulsory use were removed. Today the dynamics in contemporary Russia's politics is defined by Russian national mobilisation. The *de jure* and *de facto* dominant position of Russian and the policy of its promotion presents a challenge to the state languages of the republics. In this context, language revival rhetoric is still used as a substitute for national rhetoric, although in practice the revival is largely curtailed. Nevertheless, the previous efforts to forward the demands in the area of language policy had already been embodied in the form of legally binding documents. Laws are still being implemented and the status of the state languages itself works as a social institution and a composition of rules to form a social reality, and the situation is unlikely to change in the near future.

The current analysis demonstrated that the authorities have spent some efforts in order to employ the mechanism of compulsory use for the expansion of titular languages. However, only a certain configuration of official status makes this mechanism effective and, perhaps, the most effective it could be when the *de facto* minority language is used as the sole official language. Yet, the co-official titular and Russian languages were established in all republics as a compromise among the regional elites. Official bilingualism has become an obstacle for the expansion of titular languages, because in practice it annulled the obligation to the use of titular languages alongside Russian. Language revival, and change in language practices in general, are not a matter of reaching a threshold with a critical mass of actions but are rather an extended process with its own direction and speed. The comparative study of the adoption of the language laws in the Finno-Ugric republics revealed that different configurations of the official status of the titular languages were achieved even among the same category of the republics' state languages due to a varying level of political representation of ethnic elites and their ability to bargain for better conditions in the elite pact. These configurations had evidently diverging impact on language practices. Making a catalogue of the various domains and institutions of official status according to the republics' language laws remains the subject of a separate study, one that would show the differences in the institutionalisation of the republics' titular languages. The language laws should be assessed closely to ascertain how they are actually being implemented against their own objectives and, further, implemented against measures prescribed through the targeted programs. Such a survey would provide further data on what impact the designation of official status has on minority language practices.

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