LANGUAGE POLICIES, ATTITUDES, AND BELIEFS IN KYRGYZSTAN

Thesis Booklet

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Introduction

Language policy (LP) has been viewed as an instrument of nation-building (Fishman, 1968). It also can function as a tool for liberation or oppression, inclusion, or exclusion (Tollefson, 1991). Language authorities can adopt various LP models, including the attempt "to kill a language; letting a language die; unsupported coexistence; partial support of specific language functions; adoption as an official language" (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1992, p. 153). An increased interest in issues such as language endangerment and language ecology led to new directions, highlighting the role of LP in identity construction, language maintenance, and revitalization (e.g., DeLorme, 1999; Hornberger, 2015). This millennium began with the notion that LP is not only macro-level (top-down, government) decrees but can also involve micro-level decisions, including family, school, and religion. The latest studies have established that LP is grounded in language management (LM), attitudes, and beliefs (Schiffman, 2002). It is "not only the policies adopted at the national level but also how people react to them" (Polese, 2011, p. 40).

Describing policy (what people should do) and practice (what people commonly do), Spolsky & Shohamy (1999, p. 39) warned that "if policymakers ignore the existing general language practices, their policies may have no effect." According to Johnson (2013), language beliefs, practices, and management are often correlated. However, a similar relationship between language beliefs and management could not exist (Hollebeke et al., 2022). A mismatch between official policy and actual practice may serve as an underlying ideology constructed in the interest of a specific group (Kroskrity, 2010). The lack of correlation between citizens' language beliefs and governmental language management might show the existence of a gap between top-down and bottom-up policies (Mambetaliev, 2019). When LP is not in tune with the values of linguistic culture (Schiffman, 2002), it can face severe trouble leading to social tensions (Chen, 1999). It is crucially dangerous for politically unstable countries with ideologically inconsistent policies because the sociopsychological components of LP can condition the outcome of language policies (Baker, 1992).

Assets that can maintain a successful LP should include healthy language attitudes, tolerable beliefs, and acceptable behaviors (Spolsky, 1998). The common belief that some languages cannot fulfill a broad spectrum of functions is unhealthy and stereotypical (Garrett, 2010, p. 10). Therefore, LP should address not only overt policy (e.g., explicit mentioning of language rights of any or all linguistic groups) but also covert policies, for instance, "no mention of any language in any legal document" (Schiffman, 1996). It is crucial to understand how

individuals and communities are coerced into language issues and power relationships in policy-making processes (Tollefson, 2015) because LP processes are negotiable, in which finding a 'common language' that satisfies all parties is essential in community development (Wright, 1996).

The topic is still searching for a well-approved theoretical base (Civico, 2021). A recently announced book by Gazolla et al. (Accepted/In press) promises "to create an accessible and inter-disciplinary overview of LPP as a coherent discipline." Meanwhile, researchers are still using different definitions for various components of LP.

In the methodological part, the rise of critical research viewpoints by the 1980s questioned the traditional approaches, finding them theoretically and methodologically adrift (Tollefson, 1991). It has already moved from large-scale censuses to other methods since some studies warned of the risk of relying merely on statistics in some contexts (Landau & Keller-Heinkelle, 2012) partly because of the gap between de jure and de facto policies (Mambetaliev, 2019). In addition, in some cultures, written policies may have less authority than oral traditions (Schiffman, 1996). In such situations, the influence of official LP on language practices is not guaranteed because their language authorities consider that a country can be built on unifying myths, such as common origin, citizenship, values, and history (Johnson, 2013). When this is the case, "the nature of their language policy must be derived from a study of their language practice or beliefs" (Spolsky, 2005b, p. 2153). In some contexts, a better understanding of language issues in a community requires the study of personal histories and cultural practices (Young, 2017). Some aspects of LP, such as language revitalization policy, imply that the results of LP can be observed only after a considerable period, often in the coming generations (Nahir, 1998).

As LP is probing various methodologies (Civico, 2021), it does not insist on one approach or another, allowing new methods and procedures to be used and introduced (Ricento, 2000a). Publications in the last decade included studies using various methods of a sociological and textual nature (Hult & Johnson, 2015). They explored the top-down components by analyzing legal texts and interviews with experts to describe various types of LP, including covert and overt (Schiffman, 1996).

Research Gap and Rationale

A decade ago, Johnson (2013) called attention to the role of LP in nation-building in developing and newly emerging countries. Stavans & Jessner-Schmid (2022, p. 9) once again reminded the scholarly community that, despite the growing number of language issues in Asia, Africa, and South America, "the center of gravity of research remains geographically

constrained to North America and Europe." In addition, Ehlert (2008, p. 3) warned that the field needs knowledge from local researchers, as many publications by outsider authors have a superficial understanding of the details of language issues and often "present misleading information by missing out some important facts, such as socio-historical and sociocultural aspects." Indeed, LP has become one of the most controversial in recent years throughout post-Soviet space. LP is a cause or pretext of conflicts or military operations in many countries.

Language activists in Kyrgyzstan often lament that the LP is not based on quality research but is monopolized by the government (Bekmurzaev, 2020, p. 28). Meanwhile, a poorly studied (and consequently planned) LP is stuck in problems of a socio-psychological nature. Few have approached individuals to learn from first-hand sources about their complaints, perceptions of their transforming identities, language attitudes, and beliefs. Investigations of the sociopsychological aspects in a particular community, say a region, a town, a neighborhood in a city, a school, a university, or an organization, can enhance understanding of the problem.

Artoni & Longo (2021, p. 197) are precise when they write that one of the most important concerns of many authors is focusing on cities and the exclusion of rural areas. The regional factor often serves political purposes and becomes the subject of bargaining in inter- and intra-national political games. Kyrgyz experts confirm this problem when they point to the lack of studies exploring differences in language issues between center and periphery, urban and rural populations (Bekmurzaev, 2020).

Research Aims and Questions

This thesis aimed to draw attention to the importance of LP for various stakeholders through scientific coverage of the problem. The purpose of this study was to identify and describe (1) LP models and methods enacted in Kyrgyzstan; (2) the effect of the LP on current undergraduate students in Kyrgyzstan's prominent public universities; (3) the association of demographic characteristics of students with their language attitudes and beliefs.

This study's central thesis was that there has always been a difference between the declared and actual language policies implemented in Kyrgyzstan. It also hypothesized that the policies have significantly affected post-Soviet undergraduate students' linguistic perceptions, values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

The answers to the following questions assessed the acceptability of this thesis and hypothesis: 1. What LP has been implemented in Kyrgyzstan? 2. How has the LP affected the target group? 3. What language attitudes and beliefs currently prevail in the target group?

The Context

The issues of LP in this study have been examined by Landry & Bourhis (1997), Huskey (1995), Korth (2005), Landau & Kellner-Heinkele (2001), Munday (2009), and Mambetaliev (2019). A summary of their findings suggests that the LP in the target community of this research has not been isolated from the ideologies that have occurred in larger contexts since the last century. The ideology of "one nation, one language," which dominated Europe until the late second half of the previous century, has not been found alien to many participants in this study about their perceptions of identity construction and nation-building. In contrast, Lenin's declared ideology of international socialism claimed multilingualism (Lenin, 1917), which also found many followers among the participants. An examination of previous literature shows that Lenin's ideology was an effective tactic to keep non-Russian ethnic groups in the realm of the USSR (Grenoble, 2003). Later, Soviet imperialism, which took over in the 1950s, implied the complete fusion of national languages with the Russian language (Schiffman, 2002). It resulted in the extinction of several minority languages and eventually ended the idea of building the Soviet identity (Marshall, 1992).

The idea of language revitalization in the late Soviet period caused a nationalistic euphory among the speakers of the Kyrgyz language but massive protests among ethnic Russians in Kyrgyzstan. The literature also informs that while the post-Soviet nation-building period in Kyrgyzstan has been characterized by ideas that fluctuate between different LP models, the national languages of most neighboring ex-Soviet countries have emerged as dominant languages.

Finally, the country's location on the ancient Silk Road, which served as a business, cultural, and linguistic exchange between East and West before the Arabic, the Turkomongolian, and the Russian intervention into Central Asia, appears to be again becoming an important factor influencing the linguistic ecology of the region. Ongoing discussions suggest that attempts to add English to the national curriculum in current constitutions and increasing contact with the English-speaking world may replace the traditional language equilibrium with balanced multilingualism.

Conceptual Framework

An LP can be compared to an iceberg in which the written policy represents only the visible part, while the unwritten part that controls the language policy is invisible. A model with prevailing visible parts is an overt LP. The larger the invisible part, the more this model is

inclined to be a covert LP. The study's conceptual framework (Fig. 1) shows overt and covert, top-down and bottom-up aspects or components of LP. It also includes demographic factors that might affect bottom-up aspects. According to this concept, determining the language policy models implemented in Kyrgyzstan (RQ1) is the first task. The second task is to establish how the LP affected the participants (RQ2). The third task is learning the language attitudes and beliefs of the participants. The second and third tasks also consider the effect of demographic factors on the participants.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
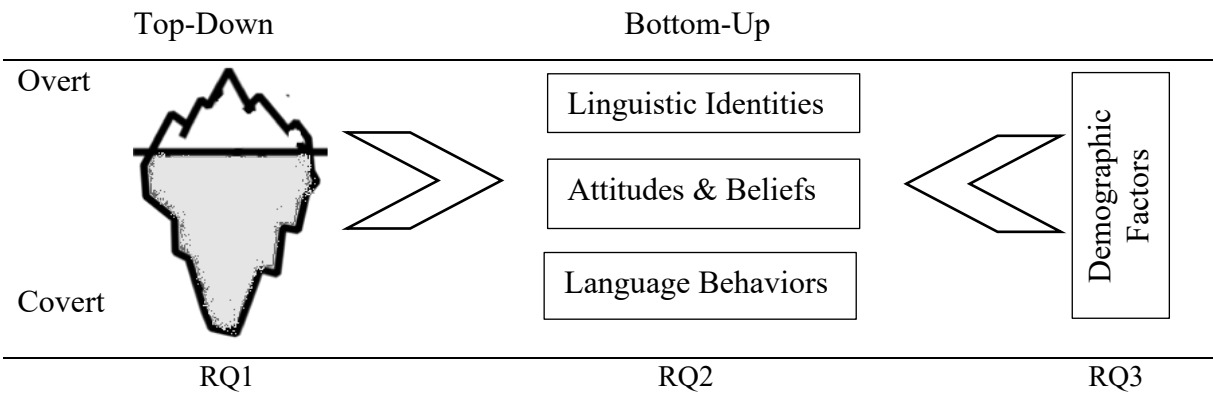
Research Design

The research design of the study comprised a pilot phase (including the evaluation and tool-checking procedures), data collection, data cleaning, and data analysis (Table 1).

The method included a pilot study that aimed to explore the issues of the topic and probe data collection and processing tools. The pilot's first phase involved several interviews. An unstructured interview helped record fundamental opinions about the LP. The survey with the shortlisted questions was conducted online among random participants. The main part of the study was an extended version of the pilot study that employed contact and non-contact methods for data collection. It used textual analysis of legislative documents and historical materials, content analysis of university websites and dissertation catalogs, transcription analysis of expert interviews, and statistical functions to analyze data from survey questionnaires. The results of the pilot study were also used when evaluating the instrument's reliability.

Analyzing the top-down and bottom-up aspects of LP required qualitative and quantitative methods. The top-down components of LP, which imply historical and structural factors (Tollefson, 2015), required the use of interviews and textual analysis, while the bottom-

up components (i.e., socio-psychological aspects) necessitated questionnaires (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970) which are essential in language planning processes (Trinick et al., 2020).

The bottom-up aspects cannot be analyzed without a rigorous study of top-down aspects. Therefore, exploring the LP of post-Soviet societies from its different sides, from top-down and bottom-up perspectives, can explain language problems more reliably than approaching the problem from only one side because it has already become known that the problems of LP are not only related to government decisions and written pieces of information but also to unwritten aspects of culture such as customs and traditional values that have been instilled for centuries and passed from generation to generation. The analysis of these aspects required the use of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The top-down components of LP, which imply historical and structural factors, required the use of interviews and textual analysis, while the bottom-up components (i.e., socio-psychological aspects) caused questionnaires which are essential in language planning processes (Trinick et al., 2020).

Table 1. Research Design

	Pilot Phase Products	Data Collection Products	Data Cleaning	Data Analysis Products	
Qualitative	Ideas, opinions.	Recorded interviews. Collection of relevant texts and artifacts.	Updated Data	Coded transcript, themes.	Discussion, conclusion, suggestions
Quantitative	Results of online survey.	A dataset of cross-sectional offline survey.		Results of statistical analyses.	

The data to answer the first question were collected online, in libraries, and through in-depth interviews. With the help of librarians, all available scientific works, archival documents, and laws stored in the specialized departments of the National Library and the National Academy of Sciences were studied. The author also visited libraries in Hungary, Austria, the United States, and Greece to review the literature and search for alternative data. In parallel, visits were paid to educational and government institutions for interviews. The interview

process was facilitated by the researcher's long list of contacts accumulated during his extensive career experience in the education system.

The data to answer the second and third questions were collected using a survey questionnaire. A total of 770 respondents comprised participants (excluding pilot study participants). The target group for this study was undergraduate students in Bishkek. The study also relied on deep face-to-face recorded interviews with experts and former colleagues with whom the author had stronger emotional ties and more extended contact. It attempted to draw attention to the unmentioned covert language policies and the sociopsychological traces of century-old language management in Kyrgyzstan.

The questionnaire determined the demographic background of the participants and the characteristics related to language. It included closed and open questions since it is impossible to obtain all answers using only a closed questionnaire (Spolsky, personal communication, October 12, 2019). Some questions were determined using the adjusted Q-sorting method. In this method, the questions are composed of famous statements. Other questions were inferred from suggestions by foundational authors. The questions also used the experience of previous studies in neighboring countries. Spolsky's (2004) and Schiffman's (1996) classification of LP models were adopted for operationalizing ideas proposed by the participants of this study. It was also applied to assign definitions to the LP models found in Kyrgyzstan's laws.

Data Analysis

The text analysis method was used to study LP in laws and constitutions. An analysis of the texts of constitutions determined that language-related themes occupy a small part of both the Soviet and post-Soviet constitutions. Therefore, word clouds or plotting the entire document might not highlight language issues. However, copying only relevant articles, paragraphs, or sentences into a separate document to analyze the LP was a reasonable procedure to highlight language issues. To do this, (1) a new document was created, (2) the word "language" was typed into the search field, and (3) all sentences or articles containing the word "language" were copied into a separate document. As a result, a separate document contained ideas related only to language and LP. The document's content can be analyzed using different methods. For this study, a table was compiled showing the statuses, rights, and functions of languages in various periods when the documents were valid (Table 5,6,7, and Appendix K).

In addition to legal documents, several other materials were considered, including banknotes, newspapers, websites, and dissertation catalogs. First, all banknotes circulated in Kyrgyzstan in the early twentieth century were analyzed. The banknotes emphasized the status

of languages with different locations, fonts, and mentions. Then all the newspapers available in the national library archives were analyzed. The first Kyrgyz newspaper, continuously printed since 1924, was the most informative. The transition from Arabic to Latin, then to Cyrillic, and changing its name following the ideological context most accurately reflected the entire history of Kyrgyzstan's LP. The analysis of websites of universities and PhD dissertations defended in Kyrgyzstan provided the overall language use in the higher education domain.

The interview analysis was performed using a table with two columns. The interview transcription was placed in the left column, and the codes of different ideas were placed in the right column (Appendix I). Such a system made it possible to find ideas relevant to the corresponding section in transcription using standard MS Office functions. Note that pseudonyms replaced the real names.

Data processing was carried out using the R software, which helped to determine the location and dispersion of the data, and calculate frequencies, means, standard deviations, p-values, regressions, associations, and correlations. The software can perform cross-tabulations, including frequencies, percentages, chi-square, correlations, p-values, ANOVA, MANOVA (and their alternatives for nonparametric data), and logistic regressions.

The analysis of the quantitative data included the following moments. Each record in the data set was randomly and independently sampled from the population. The sample size for most categories in this study was larger than 30, meaning that the sample distribution approaches the standard normal distribution (Rice, 1995).

The pilot study used MySQLi and R programs to process and analyze the data. The result was presented at the Washington University (USA) conference and published by the Central Eurasian Studies Society. Subsequently, the main study also used these systems for data analysis. The analysis used statistical functions to calculate summary statistics, proportions, differences, correlations, regressions, and p-values. Pearson's χ^2 and correlation tests were used to find associations between variables. When the DVs were multivariate and normally distributed within each group of IVs, the groups contained the same homogeneity of variances, and there were no extreme multivariate outliers, MANOVA was used. When the assumptions were not met, a semiparametric PERMANOVA was used to assess the effect of IVs on combined DVs. When the result of a MANOVA test found a significant difference, a post hoc test was also performed. A multinomial logistic regression (MLR) model was used when a DV was affected by several variables. The model fit was assessed using McFadden's coefficient, which is quite strict and requires the model to yield a result within the 0.2-0.4 limit to be reliable

(McFadden, 1979, p. 306). The results of the MLR test were interpreted based on multinomial logit coefficients or relative risk ratios (RRR).

Thus, this study answered the research questions using qualitative and quantitative data. In doing so, the study drew on ideas from previous publications that explored issues and perspectives of nation-building, language beliefs, language revival, intergenerational transmission, interethnic language, and attitudes toward dominant / minority languages. The author hopes the dissertation will shed some light on vaguely emerging issues in the study of LP and contribute to discussions among academic circles and decision-makers.

Reliability and Validity

This study used triangulation of results, including data from legislative documents, historical materials, representation of languages on websites and dissertation catalogs, and survey questionnaires. It is "a worthwhile procedure to enhance the internal validity in qualitative studies" (Meijer et al., 2002). While doing so, it used textual, discourse-analytical, and statistical methods to produce descriptive and reflexive knowledge (Lin, 2015).

The logic proposed by Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) was used to decide whether the data sets were reliable. The method uses probability theory ($p(a) = p(X \cap Y)$ or $p(b) = p(X \cup Y)$, where $p(a)$ is the result when both X and Y are true, and $p(b)$ is the result when either X or Y is true. In case of contradictions, the reasons were explained in the Discussion Chapter.

It should be noted that, despite the best intentions for objectivity and validity, the nature of the topic has always been interpretative (Ricento, 2015; Hornberger, 2015), and this study is an interpretation based on the estimates of commonly accepted qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2002).

Quantitative data collection procedures were standardized, contact with participants was kept to a minimum, and the same research instrument was used across groups. Before the surveys, the researcher organized a conference at one of the state universities on the topic "Language Policy and Planning," which was attended by language activists, international PhD students, and faculty members from different institutions. At the conference, an agreement was reached with representatives of universities to survey their students.

At the beginning of each survey session, participants were warned of complete anonymity and data protection. Furthermore, only volunteers could participate in the survey (see a translation of the consent agreement in Appendix Q). Some administrators attached assistants who helped to collect the data.

Before using the research tool, it was sent to the supervisor, discussed face-to-face, reviewed, and revised. The final version of the questionnaire went through proofreading procedures. After creating the database, basic exploratory factor analysis was performed to eliminate unreliable variables using built-in software functions. The outliers were then regrouped, and the values of some variables were coded and verified for reliability. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was checked using Cronbach's Alpha. Each variable that reduced the Alpha from the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7 was removed from further analysis. At the end of these procedures, the responses of random participants in the pilot and main studies to identical questions in the survey questionnaires were closely related, confirming the instrument's reliability.

Finally, the researcher was awarded a medal for contributing to the LP study in Kyrgyzstan by the State Agency under the country's President for organizing the conferences and surveys. The author believes that the award is a shared responsibility for the validity and ethics of the study among his former colleagues.

Summary of Findings and Results

The main thesis of this study was that there has always been a difference between the declared and actual language policies implemented in Kyrgyzstan. It also hypothesized that the policies have significantly affected post-Soviet undergraduate students' linguistic perceptions, values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The answers to the following questions assessed the acceptability of this thesis and hypothesis: 1. What LP has been implemented in Kyrgyzstan? 2. How has the LP affected the target group? 3. What language attitudes and beliefs currently prevail in the target group?

The results suggest that the approaches of Kyrgyzstan and the Kremlin to LP differed on several key issues. The first constitution of the Kyrgyz ASSR in 1929 contained explicit and overt language planning by assigning the status of the state language to the Kyrgyz and Russian languages. However, the Kremlin did not approve. After seven years, when the article containing explicit statuses of languages was removed from the constitution, the Kremlin approved it, showing that the Kremlin did not prefer overt de jure LP, confirming Schiffman's (1996) definition of the covert LP. From then on, the Kyrgyz ASSR became the Kyrgyz SSR in 1936, and the LP followed the all-Union model of covert LP, removing any mentions of language planning. It led the Kyrgyz language into unequal competition with the imperial language, resulting in asymmetric bilingualism and diglossia (Huskey, 1995). Closer to the

collapse of the USSR, the Supreme Council of the Kyrgyz SSR attempted to apply a language revitalization policy by issuing a new language law in 1989.

However, a few years later, after independence, some Soviet-educated leaders who were in the government of post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan brought back the Soviet model of bilingual LP by introducing semantically confusing terminologies which contained vague statements about the statuses and functions of the Kyrgyz and Russian languages. Therefore, this study gives an operational definition of the vague LP to post-Soviet constitutions.

The survey data show that the LP of the past contributed to the identity crisis among post-Soviet students characterized by vague perceptions of their national, ethnic, and linguistic identities. Approximately every third of the students (ethnically Kyrgyz) marked themselves as Russkoiazychnyi (Russian speakers). This phenomenon, called Russification, has been more robust among ethnic minorities. Furthermore, the covert LP of the Soviet Union and the vague LP of post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan reinforced language-based discrimination and contradictions between regions and ethnicities. Finally, past LP has divided students, regardless of their gender identities, into Kyrgyz and Russian speakers with mutually exclusive linguistic identities, values, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs.

These results were obtained using the following data, methods, and procedures. The top-down LP was first analyzed using legislative documents, historical materials, and interview transcripts. Legislative documents included constitutions and laws that were enacted in Kyrgyzstan. Historical materials included banknotes circulated in Kyrgyzstan and newspapers published since 1924 (when the first newspaper in the Kyrgyz language was printed). Interviews were conducted with former government members who chaired LP boards and professors who directed linguistics departments, mentored research projects and authored relevant publications. Unstructured conversations were also extended to members of admission committees, business owners, and representatives of minorities. Legislative documents were studied using text analysis after selecting all articles related to the language in a separate word document. The banknotes were analyzed by counting the languages and considering the size and arrangement of the words in the currencies. The interview transcripts were analyzed by creating a table with two columns where the interview texts and codes were placed. The bottom-up LP, which presents the survey questionnaire results among undergraduate students, was analyzed using statistical methods, which estimated the effect of gender identity, regional identity, religious identity, and ethnic identity on language attitudes, beliefs, and sociolinguistic values.

The previous literature has not yet discussed why ethnic minorities in Kyrgyzstan (and in other national republics) switched to the Russian language by completely ignoring the

language of the titular nationality. It also has not come across what ideas were behind the vague declarations of language rights without mentioning concrete languages and their statuses in the USSR constitution. This study argues that the impediment to overt language planning has led to the fact that the dominant language has de facto displaced the Kyrgyz language from the capital to the periphery and contributed to the Russification of ethnic minorities, preventing their integration with the titular nationality.

The previous literature also did not mention the consequences of Soviet practices, such as the segregation of students in Kyrgyzstan. However, due to this practice, two groups of citizens have grown up alienated from each other in language and culture. The construction of isolated linguistic identities has become the basis for the emergence of various types of discrimination.

This study believes that the effects mentioned above of LP were due to national and Kremlin leaders, as other studies confirm (e.g., Huskey, 1996). According to McDermott (2017), many ethnic Kyrgyz have also contributed to unequal competition between the Kyrgyz and Russian languages, bringing the Kyrgyz language to an inferior position compared to the Russian language in Kyrgyzstan.

The findings confirm a difference between the declared and actual LP of the USSR implemented in Kyrgyzstan. They also reveal that post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan has been using vague terminology for the functions of the Kyrgyz and Russian languages. The results of the survey questionnaire accepted the hypothesis that the soviet and post-Soviet LP significantly affected the undergraduates' linguistic perceptions, values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

Findings and results suggest that preserving a minority language is possible only when the government and majority population are committed to the values of a pluralistic society since the minority has little chance of preserving linguistic diversity because of demographic and economic factors unless it has a powerful kin-state.

Conclusion

This study focused on LP, language attitudes, and beliefs in Kyrgyzstan. It covered periods when Kyrgyzstan's LP was led by the notions of international socialism, soviet nationalism, late soviet language revitalization, and (pre-) independent identity construction. Additionally, the study critically analyzed how authorities promoted covert and overt policies which shaped language identities, attitudes, beliefs, and practices.

Based on a wide range of previous studies in different languages and large-scale data, the findings and results of this thesis can be a source of information for language planning

processes. The results show that encouraging students to use Kyrgyz on campus, admitting more students from peripheral regions (especially from the South) rather than from Bishkek, and improving LP in some universities would help the government increase the number of Kyrgyz speakers among students. A focus on language behavior on campus would help reduce language discrimination. The programs should also raise awareness of the role of languages in constructing identities for independent Kyrgyzstan.

The author is convinced that Kyrgyzstan should consider the experience of the USSR, which showed that preserving the diversity of languages is a duty of the majority group because it is unlikely that it depends on minorities. He also believes that supporting minority languages can improve the trust of minorities in the government and the titular nationality. Unilaterally imposing the state language on citizens can cause an adverse reaction. Identifying a specific problem in the concrete local community and creating targeted programs are necessary.

It would be helpful to develop programs that raise awareness among students in the Kyrgyz language of the usefulness and need for positive attitudes toward minority languages. The author rejects the opinion that "the death of a minority language might be a good thing, as it contributes to social stability and ethnic equality" (Tsung, 2014, p. 49).

Language planners should pay attention to the motivation problems of students whose primary language is Russian, as their belief in the Kyrgyz language is significantly weak compared to students whose primary language is Kyrgyz. Particular attention should be paid to urban students. It is also essential to further investigate the weak interest of students in some universities. It is necessary to improve the educational base for teaching the state language since the poor outcomes of the education system are, as Businessman V noted, "textbooks of the Kyrgyz language are dull and uninteresting" (personal conversation, January 2020).

Further language planning should consider the different levels of interest in the state language among minorities. Kyrgyz authorities must develop separate programs for Russian-speaking Kyrgyz and ethnic minorities. Primary efforts to revitalize the state language should be directed at ethnic Kyrgyz. Other minorities should have broad rights to preserve and develop their native languages while not restricting their access to learning the state language.

More research is needed to determine why Russian-speaking Kyrgyz, Russians, and some representatives of minorities do not see the need to learn the state language and why some participants think it is not essential for their children. Other reasons might include: 1) poor campus-level LP; 2) students in some departments may consider the state language optional; 3) the lack of qualified teachers; 4) along with the language, culture, or religion being imposed.

This thesis could not find and use a wide range of views on LP promoted by local authors due to the small number of publications on their part. A search in the National Library's primary dissertation catalog showed that no doctoral dissertation on the bottom-up aspects of LP in Kyrgyzstan had been defended in any language by the time of data collection for this study. A Google search with the words "language policy in the Kyrgyz language" (without quotation marks) also did not find a link to a thesis or a book. The seminal research by Korth (2005) remains a single book that explored this dimension of language problems based on her observations and interviews with 30 participants. Other notable publications are brief reports, including articles by Huskey (1995), Munday (2009), and Landau & Keller-Heinkele, 2012).

More interviews would compensate for the lack of critical evaluation of the previous LP by Kyrgyz-speaking authors since current publications are limited by descriptive narratives which are not supported by examples of other countries and previous theories. A longitudinal quantitative study of campuses, including the Soviet period and the early independence years, would help better describe the dynamics of the development of linguistic identities, attitudes, and beliefs than a cross-sectional study alone.

As a direction for the future, it is proposed to study the linguistic landscape of universities, which can provide additional data on the language policy of universities. Furthermore, a comparative study of public and private universities and universities in the regions remains a research gap. It would also be interesting to investigate how the experience of studying or internships in developed countries can affect linguistic attitudes and beliefs.

Another helpful information among students would be how they view minorities in the country. Besides Russian soft power policies, it would be an asset to investigate any evidence of similar Anglo-American, Arab, and Chinese efforts to influence language-related attitudes in Kyrgyzstan.

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