

PhD Dissertation Booklet



**THE MAINTENANCE OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN THE POST-SOVIET
STATES: THE ACTIVITIES OF RUSSIA**

Written by
Mariia Popova

Supervised by
Prof. Dr. István Csernicsekó
Prof. Dr. Kees de Bot

Faculty of Modern Philology and Social Sciences
Multilingualism Doctoral School
University of Pannonia
Veszprém, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	3
2.1. Historical background	3
2.2. Theoretical framework	5
2.2. Legal framework	9
2.6. Data collection	11
2.7. Research design.....	12
CHAPTER 2. THE POSITION OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN THE POST-SOVIET STATES	13
2.1. Eastern Europe: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova	13
2.2 The Baltic states: Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia.....	14
2.3. Central Asian states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan ..	15
2.4. Caucasus states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia	15
CHAPTER 3. ACTIVITIES OF RUSSIA AIMED AT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN THE POST-SOVIET STATES	18
3. 1. The activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and its subordinate structures	18
3.2. The activities of Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo).....	18
3.3. The activities of the Russkij Mir Foundation	19
3.4. The activities of the Russian Orthodox Church	19
CHAPTER 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	20
4.1. Discussion	20
4.2. Conclusion.....	21
4.3. Scientific or scholarly significance	22
REFERENCES	23

ABSTRACT

The study of language policy is one of the most dynamic fields of linguistics. As a political, social, and economical instrument, language policy is exposed to many external and internal factors that may influence the state's linguistic legislation speedily and change it dramatically in a short time. If such linguistic modifications may occur within one country so rapidly, what might be the scale of changes when 15 multinational Soviet states with the common political system and one dominant language in a short period of time became independent and re-established the language legislation?

The first part of the study investigates the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union on the position of the Russian language and the Russian-speaking population living in the post-Soviet states. Following a historical-structural approach to Critical Language Policy studies (Tollefson, 2006), it aims at the up-to-date description and comparison of the language policy of the post-Soviet countries, non-recognized and partly recognized states established on their territories. The language management model of Spolsky (2009) was used as an instrument to determine the position of the Russian language in the studied region according to its domains.

The second part of the study investigates implementing the Russian foreign policy designed to maintain the Russian language in the post-Soviet states. The study focuses on the activity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its subordinate organizations: the Russkij Mir Foundation, Rossotrudnichestvo, and the semi-governmental organization of the Russian Orthodox Church. The theoretical framework of the study is based on the Constructivist approach to international relations.

As studies of language integration into the political sphere require a multidisciplinary approach, the thesis combines political and linguistic theoretical frameworks to shed light on the complexity of language policy and investigate it more comprehensively.

The study uses language legislation documents (laws on languages, constitutions, documents determining the foreign policy course of Russia, acts, charters of international and regional organizations, bilateral agreements), the news sources related to the language policy of the post-Soviet states, expert reports on the present linguistic situation, and population census results and estimates.

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Historical background

Russia's language policy toward ethnic groups dates back to the era of the Russian Empire (1721-1917). Initially, it varied by region. In the 1720s, Tsar Peter the Great granted linguistic autonomy to areas like the Baltic provinces and Poland, introducing German, Swedish, and Polish into administration and education. More developed regions retained linguistic rights, while less developed areas like left-bank Ukraine faced Russification. However, the Romanticism influenced the state policy, promoting language unity to consolidate society but also sparking ethnic unrest. Under Nicholas I and Alexander II, Russification intensified, limiting the use of non-Russian languages. However, resistance to Russification was notable in higher education, particularly in the Baltic provinces and Western Poland, where the Russian language was imposed following the 1863-1864 Polish Uprising. Despite a more lenient policy after the 1905 revolution, the focus on promoting Russian at the expense of other languages contributed to national movements, ultimately leading to the 1917-1918 revolution and the collapse of the Empire and the following foundation of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union, established in 1922, was a socialist federation of multiethnic states, initially including the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republics, with other regions joining later. The Bolsheviks, who came to power in 1917, adopted policies favoring ethnic minorities, promoting equality and self-determination, in contrast to the Imperial approach. Their goal was to foster a supra-national communist identity, downplaying national consciousness. However, by creating a federation with inconsistent territorial boundaries and statuses, they inadvertently set the stage for the USSR's collapse in the 1990s and local conflicts.

The Soviet administrative structure included Union Republics, Autonomous Republics, and Autonomous Oblasts, with varying degrees of autonomy. Despite promoting Russian as the language of social mobility, the USSR was defined as a multiethnic state. However, inconsistencies in assigning territorial statuses were evident. For instance, Estonia, with a population of one million, was granted Union Republic status, while eight million Tatars only received autonomy. The Adjarian Autonomous Republic differed from Georgia mainly in religion, and Nagorno-Karabakh, an Armenian-majority region, was placed within Azerbaijan for ideological reasons. Economic and political considerations also influenced territorial decisions. For example, Donbas and other regions were added to Ukraine in 1919 to bolster its

industrial base, aligning with Marxist-Leninist principles. Crimea was transferred from the RSFSR to Ukraine in 1954 due to economic and territorial ties.

After the Russian Revolution, the Soviet government adopted a policy of *Korenizatsiya* ("nativization") that aimed to replace Russian with local languages and encourage ethnic groups' participation in regional governance. This policy, intended to foster loyalty and a common Soviet identity, contrasted sharply with the Russification of Tsarist Russia. The Soviet Union embraced linguistic pluralism, avoiding the designation of any official language, with Russian legally on par with other languages (Arutunova, 2012).

From 1918 to 1938, Soviet policymakers focused on codifying and standardizing local languages. New alphabets were created for 46 previously unwritten languages, while Turkic languages based on Arabic scripts were Latinized. The government also launched a massive literacy campaign, *Likbez* (Eradication of illiteracy), offering compulsory education in both Russian and local languages. By 1938, primary education was available in seventy languages, contributing to a significant rise in literacy rates—from 21% in 1897 to 81% in 1939, though progress varied across regions.

The *Korenizatsiya* policy extended beyond education, bringing titular languages into administration, judiciary, industry, and mass media. World and Russian classical literature were also translated into these languages, and literature in non-Russian languages was promoted, especially in ethnic regions.

However, by the 1930s, the Soviet government shifted its linguistic approach due to financial constraints and the need for centralized control. A new phase of Russification emerged, with Russian promoted as the language of industry, politics, and economics. This shift coincided with the suppression and forced assimilation of non-Russian ethnic groups.

Initially, Soviet leaders saw the Latin alphabet as a symbol of internationalism and the Cyrillic alphabet as a remnant of Tsarist oppression. However, the use of Latin-script languages, which could have up to 129 characters, hindered the learning of Russian. Consequently, between 1939 and 1940, previously Latinized languages like Turkic (Azeri, Uzbek, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Tatar), Mongolian (Kalmyk, Buryat), Finno-Ugric (Karelian, Komi), and Caucasus (Abkhaz, Chechen, Ingush) languages were converted to the Cyrillic alphabet (Ataov, 1992).

Soviet linguistic reforms also affected educational policies. In 1938, Russian became a compulsory subject in non-Russian schools, while titular languages were removed from mandatory curricula in 1959 (Pavlenko, 2008a). By 1961, Russian was designated as the

language of international communication (Pavlenko, 2013). These changes increased the prestige of Russian, leading many ethnic groups to choose Russian-medium schools.

Mass migration, driven by industrialization and urbanization, also contributed to the spread of Russian as a lingua franca. By 1989, a much higher percentage of non-Russian ethnic groups spoke Russian than the reverse, particularly in Central Asia, where less than 5% of Russians spoke titular languages, compared to 64% of Kazakhs, 37% of Kyrgyz, and 30% of Tajiks who were fluent in Russian (Pavlenko, 2008a).

However, the collapse of the Soviet Union marked a turning point, with newly independent states pursuing de-Sovietization and de-Russification. The newly independent states prioritized their titular languages in public domains such as administration, education, and media, reducing the use of Russian. The former Soviet Republics rejected Russian as an official language, despite large Russian-speaking populations. As a result, 25.3 million Russians, or 18.5% of the USSR's population in 1989, became ethnic and linguistic minorities in the post-Soviet states. In Kazakhstan, for example, Russians made up 37.8% of the population, nearly equal to the titular Kazakhs at 39.7% (Popova & de Bot, 2020). Despite their numbers, Russian speakers were often viewed as remnants of Soviet occupation, and language policies in these states took a form of "linguistic deterrence" against Russians (Popova & de Bot, 2017). This included restricting civil and political rights, limiting the use of Russian, and excluding non-titulars from high-ranking positions.

1.2. Theoretical framework

Given the complexity of minority issues and the interdisciplinary nature of language policy studies, no single theory comprehensively addresses all aspects of this field. Various approaches are utilized depending on the specific focus of the research.

The study adopts Spolsky's Language Management Model (2009), which distinguishes three interrelated components: actual language practices, language beliefs (ideologies) within a community, and language management efforts, which include attempts to modify practices and beliefs. This model encompasses various domains of language policy, such as public space, schools, media, workplaces, and government.

The dissertation also employs a historical-structural approach within the framework of Critical Language Policy studies (Tollefson, 2006). This perspective views linguistic legislation as a complex outcome of social, historical, ideological, political, and economic factors. These factors include demographic changes, the nature of intergovernmental relations, the conditions under which states are formed, and a state's involvement in local or global conflicts. Critical

theory examines language policy as an ideologically driven system of inequality and exploitation (Ruiz, 1984; Tollefson, 1991, 2006). This approach is used to analyze the status of the Russian language in post-Soviet states, focusing on power dynamics, institutional support, and processes that create and maintain systems of inequality. Critical studies emphasize the imbalance of power, with a focus on how minority groups are subordinated and the efforts of these groups to protect their interests.

Language policy, as a multidisciplinary field, must explain the need to preserve the mother tongues of ethnic minorities while recognizing the political dimensions of language. It must also consider internal and external factors that shape political decision-making. Since the second part of this study examines Russia's foreign policy aimed at maintaining the Russian language in the studied regions, the research incorporates political theory. Thus, the study enriches Tollefson's model (2006) with the Constructivist paradigm of Wendt (1992) widely used in political science.

Founded and developed by scholars such as Wendt (1992, 1994, 1995) and Hopf (1998, 2000), constructivism offers an alternative to the realist paradigm in international relations. Unlike realism, which focuses on military and economic power, constructivism emphasizes discursive power (e.g., knowledge, culture, language) and its role in shaping the identity and behavior of states. In political science, the inclusion of non-state actors, such as de facto states, international organizations, and diasporas, is crucial. Constructivism expands the analysis beyond state-centric paradigms, offering a more comprehensive view of linguistic issues at both domestic and international levels. By considering these new actors and instruments, this study aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the sensitivity of linguistic matters in the post-Soviet context.

The theoretical novelty of this research lies in combining political and linguistic approaches in language policy studies. By integrating methods from different disciplines, this approach provides a deeper understanding of the research subject and helps avoid potential bias.

De Facto States

While sovereign states continue to hold significant influence in international relations, their primacy is increasingly challenged by the emergence of political entities that claim legal independence—de facto states (Florea, 2014; Lakhany, 2006; Stengel & Baumann, 2017). These entities exist in a "grey zone" of international law, as the norms surrounding state recognition are not codified and there are no universal criteria for statehood. De facto states

arise in the context of the tension between the right of nations to self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity and inviolability of existing borders (Silaeva, 2011).

De facto states often possess their own political symbols, such as anthems, flags, and currencies. However, their unrecognized status severely limits their ability to engage in international relations, and their passports are rarely accepted abroad (de Waal, 2018).

The constructivist approach suggests that dialogue with de facto states is essential for achieving greater predictability in international relations and reducing uncertainty (Hopf, 1998).

De facto states often emerge from unresolved regional conflicts. This study examines several breakaway territories that emerged in the post-Soviet space, including Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan), Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Georgia), Transnistria (Moldova), and the Donetsk People's Republic, Luhansk People's Republic, and the Crimean Peninsula (Ukraine). By including these de facto states in the analysis, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of language policies in the region and to compare the status of the Russian language in these entities with that in the states from which they separated. Including de facto states in the analysis also opens up new avenues for research in political, ethnic, and conflict studies.

Soft power

Constructivism, as a theoretical perspective in international relations, emphasizes the significance of ideas, norms, and identities in shaping global interactions. It considers elements like religion, culture, education, and language as vital tools of policy, which are integral to the concept of "soft power." This paradigm suggests that shared values and cultural exchanges can build relationships, influence international perceptions, and enhance a state's global influence and attractiveness.

Soft power, a relatively new but widely adopted concept, was first defined by Joseph Nye (1990, 2004). He described three forms of political influence: threat, coercion, and inducement or attraction, with the latter being termed "soft power." Unlike hard power, which relies on military and economic might, soft power is the ability to influence others through attraction and persuasion. This involves leveraging a nation's culture, values, lifestyle, religion, and media to create a positive image abroad, foster international cooperation, and shape the preferences of others, all without the use of force or coercion. Soft power is closely linked to public and cultural diplomacy. While traditional diplomacy targets foreign governments, cultural diplomacy aims at the citizens of other nations. It promotes mutual understanding through the exchange of ideas, information, and culture, utilizing tools such as music, art, literature,

scientific exchanges, and educational programs. The goal is to create a favorable environment for achieving political and economic objectives, thereby strengthening a state's influence in international relations. In Russia, soft power was officially recognized as a foreign policy tool in the 2013 Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation. This document defined soft power as a comprehensive toolkit for solving foreign policy problems through civil society, information, communication, and other non-traditional diplomatic methods.

Church

Religion is another domain of policy of not the least importance and sensitivity. Its role in politics still requires deeper investigation. Shah claims that “religion has become one of the most influential factors in world affairs in the last generation but remains one of the least examined factors in the professional study and the practice of the world” (2012: 3).

Religion is included in the soft power concept of Nye (1990) and reflected in the language policy analysis of Spolsky (2004, 2009). Despite the former barely focusing on the religious component, it does not deny it as an additional tool of influence without using hard power alongside culture, education, and language.

The notion of religious soft power in achieving foreign policy goals was enriched by Haynes (2008) and Mandaville (2018), who study how religious actors affect the course of foreign policy and how state and non-state actors in foreign policy use religion for geopolitical purposes. Modongal (2023: 6) assumes the following functions of religion in a political context: building national identity, ability to influence political processes and shape public opinion, and “legitimizing an action that has been done for some other purpose”.

Regardless of the secularization of the political domain at the end of the twentieth century, the re-emerged concept of religious soft power underlined that the role of the church in policy had never diminished (Ozturk, 2023).

Education

Education is another crucial domain within the framework of language policy and soft power. It is integral to various models of language vitality, such as the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Model (Giles & Johnson, 1977), the Graded Inter-Generational Disruption Scale (GIDS) by Fishman (1991).

At the same time, education is a field of cultural diplomacy. Aimed at creating a positive image abroad, states establish educational centers and cooperate with local universities, museums, and libraries. The mission of such organizations correlates with the foreign policy objectives of the country they represent.

The strategy to support education in Russian abroad is spelled out in the Concept "Russian School Abroad" of November 4, 2015. The document considers the Russian-speaking diaspora of 17 million people living in the CIS countries as one of the program's target audiences, which faces the problem of obtaining education in Russian.

The Concept sets tasks aimed at supporting Russian education for compatriots and solving foreign policy interests, such as forming a positive attitude towards modern Russia and increasing interest in Russian education (Article 6, 8).

To support Russian schools abroad, Russia provides informational, methodological, and material assistance and organizes vocational and advanced training opportunities for employees of Russian schools abroad.

Language

Language is crucial for self-expression, identity, and communication. However, it is also a tool of political influence. Governments shape language policy through education, media, and social interactions, influencing national identity and cohesion (Popova & de Bot, 2017). Jarve (2003) links language policy to political developments and elite ambitions, establishing new hierarchies among languages and speakers, while Shohamy (2004) views language policy as a tool for advancing political and social ideologies. Spolsky (2004, 2012, 2023) describes language management as involving both government action and the influence of various stakeholders.

Russia's "Concept of State Support and Promotion of the Russian Language Abroad" (2015) highlights the Russian language as a tool of soft power and cultural promotion. In October 2023, the International Organization for the Russian Language was established within the CIS, aiming to promote Russian globally, enhance education, and foster cooperation among CIS states. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rossotrudnichestvo, and the Russkij Mir Foundation oversee these efforts.

1.3. Legal framework

The concept of a kin-state refers to a country that has ethnic, cultural, linguistic, or historical ties with a group of people residing outside its borders and engages in measures to support and protect this diaspora. This concept spans various academic disciplines, including migration studies, international relations, and ethnic politics, and involves complex interactions between states and their diasporas.

Waterbury (2020:1) defines a kin-state as "a state that represents the majority nation of a transborder ethnic group whose members reside in neighboring territories." The kin-state phenomenon is multifaceted, involving international, regional, and domestic levels. Despite significant academic interest, Waterbury emphasizes the need for further investigation into how kin-state policies are perceived from the perspective of the home state. Such policies may be seen as challenges to state security, risks of irredentism, or forms of external intervention.

The activities of kin-states raise legal dilemmas under international law. The UN Charter emphasizes state sovereignty, prohibiting intervention in domestic affairs (Art. 2.7). However, kin-state activities often involve interactions with the domestic affairs of host states, creating a need for clear legal regulation. The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, 1975) and the Venice Commission Report on the Preferential Treatment of National Minorities by Their Kin-State (2001) address the rights of kin-states to support their diasporas in cultural and educational fields while emphasizing respect for host states' sovereignty.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) (1995) and other documents support kin-states' actions abroad while respecting the sovereignty of host states. However, the extent of acceptable transborder activity remains a legal grey area.

Russia has engaged in kin-state activities following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which left 25 million Russians as minorities in newly formed states. Russia's kin-state policy began with the Decree of August 11, 1994, focusing on protecting compatriots in the CIS and Baltic states. This policy has evolved to include legislative measures, bilateral treaties, and the consolidation of efforts under the Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo). The migration of Russians to Russia from former Soviet states also shaped this policy (Shapovalova, 2011).

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) Doctrine

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine, established at the 2005 UN summit, addresses the international community's duty to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. Kin-states may have a direct interest in supporting their minorities in such situations, but their actions can be perceived as interference or destabilization by host states. R2P places primary responsibility for protecting populations on the host state, including preventing discrimination and ensuring minority rights. External support, including

intervention, is considered only if the host state is unable or unwilling to act. The involvement of kin-states in such interventions is subject to approval by the UN Security Council (Popovski & Turner, 2013).

However, R2P lacks codified norms and clear guidelines for proving a host state's inability to protect its minorities or determining appropriate actions for kin-states if the Security Council fails to authorize intervention. The principle's application remains contentious, with "grey zones" of international law complicating assessments of actions like Russia's interventions in Georgia (2008), Ukraine (2014, 2022), and the Crimea referendum. In these cases, Russia has justified its actions by referencing the principle of self-determination, as well as the need to protect its compatriots.

2. Data collection

The study integrates various sources to analyze language policy changes. Key sources include

- 1) Legal documents that reflect the language policy of the post-Soviet states: the Constitutions, Laws on Languages, Acts, Regulation of language use.
- 2) Bilateral treaties and agreements between the Russian Federation and the post-Soviet states stipulate the mutual legal protection of national minorities and the languages they speak, creating conditions for studying and maintaining minority languages.
- 3) Charters and Treaties of the regional and international organizations established in the Post-Soviet space.
- 4) Legal Acts determining the foreign policy course of the Russian Federation.
- 5) Documents reflecting the objectives of the organizations aimed at the Russian language maintenance.
- 6) Statistical data presented by the latest population census results and estimates of the Russian Empire (1897), the Soviet Union (1989), and independent post-Soviet states.
- 7) Information provided by the internet news sources Lenta, BBC, Sputnik, Ria, Tass, and Delfi covering the state of the Russian language, changes in the language policy of the studied region.

2.1. Research design

Based on the previous studies and the sources described above, the present paper aims to reveal in which public domains of Spolsky's Language Management Model (2009) the Russian foreign policy toward the post-Soviet states contributes to the maintenance of the Russian language and protection of the rights of the Russian speakers.

The purpose of the study addresses the following objectives:

1) to provide an analysis of the position of Russian in all the former Soviet countries and the de facto states located in their territories

2) to analyze the activity of Russia in maintaining the Russian language and protecting the linguistic rights of compatriots living in the post-Soviet states.

The countries are divided into a few regions: the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Eastern European states (Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova), Transcaucasus states (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan), Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). The division into regions was used in the articles of Pavlenko (2008a, 2008b, 2013) to reveal common characteristics of language policy of the states of each subgroup and peculiarities of the individual states.

CHAPTER 2. FINDINGS: THE POSITION OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN THE POST-SOVIET STATES

2.1. Eastern Europe: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova

The Russian language in Belarus has a unique status, being one of the two state languages alongside Belarusian. This status was established in a 1995 referendum. Despite ethnic Russians being only 13% of the population (1989), Russian was the mother tongue of a third of the population and spoken fluently by 80% of Belarusians as a second language. Consequently, 83.3% supported its official status in the referendum. Today, Russian remains predominant: while most Belarusians identify as Belarusian and claim Belarusian as their mother tongue, 70% use Russian at home. Belarusian is more symbolic, appearing in official documents and public signs, but Russian is the primary language in public institutions and media. In education, Russian predominates, with 88% of students in Russian schools and 59.8% of university instruction in Russian.

Post-Soviet Ukraine adopted a policy of de-Russification, declaring Ukrainian the sole state language in 1996. Although Russian was the mother tongue for 33.2% of the population (1989), it was considered a minority language and used in regions with large Russian-speaking populations. The 2014 revolution intensified this policy, making Ukrainian mandatory for officials and removing Russian's regional status. Despite Russian being spoken by 17% of the population, it became a foreign language.

The right to speak the native language became one of the official reasons for mass riots in the separatist regions with significant proportions of Russian speakers (the Donetsk region: 38%; the Luhansk region: 39%; the Autonomous Republic of Crimea: 58). Crimea's 2014 referendum resulted in it joining Russia, though this is not internationally recognized. Donetsk and Luhansk later declared independence and were incorporated into Russia. These regions initially officialized both Russian and Ukrainian but later removed Ukrainian's official status in response to Ukraine's de-Russification.

In education, 92% of students are taught in Ukrainian, and the number of Russian schools dropped from 4,500 in 1989 to 55 in 2021. The 2017 Law on Education mandated that minority language schools switch to Ukrainian for most subjects, with only some exceptions for indigenous peoples. Russian is excluded from higher education, which uses Ukrainian, EU languages, and English.

Moldova's language policy, oriented towards de-Russification, established Romanian as the sole state language in 1990, despite a significant Russian-speaking population. Regions with large Russian and Ukrainian communities, Gagauzia and Transnistria, declared autonomy and recognized Russian and Ukrainian as official languages alongside Moldovan in Cyrillic script.

Following Transnistria's separation, the percentage of Russians in Moldova dropped from 13% in 1989 to 4.1% in 2014. An attempt to re-officialize Russian in 2020 was quickly overturned due to opposition and legal issues.

In education, Moldovan is the primary language, with Russian becoming an optional foreign language in secondary schools as of 2014. Russian remains compulsory in schools in Gagauzia and Transnistria but is fading from higher education, where instruction is mainly in Romanian or Moldovan. Russian media is restricted, with a 15% cap on non-titular language content, although some Russian-language media persists.

2.2. The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

After the proclamation of independence, Estonia and Latvia granted citizenship only to those who had lived there before World War II, leaving Soviet-era migrants stateless. Stateless residents received special passports but faced limitations and were not recognized as full citizens. Efforts to obtain citizenship required passing language and cultural tests, contributing to a significant stateless population. Recent reforms in Estonia (2015) and Latvia (2020) granted citizenship automatically to children born in these countries, yet a portion of the population remains stateless. Russian speakers face restrictions in employment, political participation, and access to education in the Baltic states.

Russian does not have official status and is defined as a foreign language (Law on Language of Estonia of 1995, chapter 1, art. 2; Law on State Language of Latvia of 1999, section 5). In Lithuania, which was exposed to immigration to a lesser extent, Russians make up 5% (2021) of the population and constitute the second minority group after Poles (Kuczynska-Zonik, 2017). The status of the Russian language is not defined. Only the titular languages are state languages of the states.

Estonia and Latvia have eliminated Russian from schools, aiming for full instruction in state languages. Lithuania allows education in minority languages but has seen a decline in Russian schools. Media in the Baltic states is predominantly in state languages, with restrictions on Russian content, which is often seen as a tool for propaganda (Popova & de Bot, 2017).

2.3. The Central Asian States: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

In 1989–1990, all five of the independent states raised the status of the titular languages, defined them as the sole state languages, and aimed their language policy at expanding the sphere of titular language usage to all public domains. In 2010, Kyrgyzstan became the only state in the region to grant official status to the Russian language: Russian is used in the governmental, judicial, legal systems, and the public sphere alongside the other state language – Kyrgyz (Constitution of 2010, art. 10). In Kazakhstan, Russian is an officially used language along with Kazakh in ‘state organizations and local governments’ (Popova & de Bot, 2020). Language policies in these countries require proficiency in the state languages for high-ranking positions, leading to the replacement of Russians with titular groups. In education, Turkmenistan has largely eliminated Russian-language instruction, while Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan maintain Russian-medium schools and higher education programs. However, discrimination and policies favoring titular languages impact Russian speakers’ access to education. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan continue to offer Russian-medium education at various levels. Media in Central Asia also reflects these policies. Kyrgyzstan has the most robust Russian media presence, while Kazakhstan is reducing Russian content. Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have severely limited Russian media, with Uzbekistan easing restrictions since 2016.

2.3. Transcaucasus Region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia

Post-Soviet states Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia have focused on promoting their titular languages, reducing the role of Russian. Their constitutions declare the titular languages as the sole state languages, though Russian remains a lingua franca in certain contexts (Soltanova 2023). In the self-proclaimed states of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russian is officially recognized as a state language or is widely used (Constitution of the Republic of Abkhazia; Constitution of the Republic of South Ossetia).

In education of the three Caucasus states, the titular languages are dominant. Azerbaijan maintains a significant Russian-medium educational sector, with 16 Russian schools and 340 Russian classes. Russian is also taught in many Azerbaijani schools and at a Moscow State University branch in Baku (Zinnurov, 2022). In Georgia, Russian is taught in 11 schools and 59 classes and remains one of the languages of instruction in Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Akhmeteli, 2017).

Higher education in the Transcaucasus also reflects the state policy. In the media, Armenia and Georgia have restricted Russian broadcasts and films and reduced Russian media presence. In contrast, Azerbaijan's media environment remains more open to Russian content, with numerous Russian-language journals and films, and even Russian-named streets and villages (Zinnurov, 2022).

The collapse of the Soviet Union and following policy of derussification, the ethnic composition of the post-Soviet states was also affected. As the present study focuses on the Russian speaking population, the table below provides a comparison of the share of Russians in the Soviet Republics and post-Soviet states.

Region/Country	Population census 1989	Latest population census
Eastern European region		
Belarus	13%	7.5% (2019)
Ukraine	22%	17% (2001)
Luhansk People’s Republic	N/A	38% (2019)
Donetsk People’s Republic	N/A	38% (2019)
Crimea	67.3%	58% (2014)
Moldova	13%	4.1% (2014)
Transnistria	13%	29% (2015)
Baltic states		
Estonia	30.3%	23.7% (2022)
Latvia	34%	24.5% (2021)
Lithuania	9.4%	5% (2021)
Central Asian States		
Kazakhstan	37.4%	15.5% (2021)
Kyrgyzstan	21.5%	4.97% (2022)
Uzbekistan	8.3%	2.6% (2013)
Tajikistan	7.6%	0.3% (2020)
Turkmenistan	9.5%	2% (2001)
Caucasus region		
Armenia	1.6%	0.47% (2022)

Azerbaijan	5.6%	0.7% (2019)
Nagorno-Karabakh Republic	1.02%	0.16% (2015)
Georgia	6.3%	0.7% (2014)
Abkhazia	14.3%	9.1% (2020)
South Ossetia	2.16%	1.1% (2015)

CHAPTER 3 ACTIVITIES OF RUSSIA AIMED AT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN THE POST-SOVIET STATES

The activity of Russia intended to maintain the Russian language in the post-Soviet states and support the compatriots is conducted through soft power. The main actors in foreign policy implementing cultural diplomacy are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, its subordinate structure "the Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo)," the Russkij Mir Foundation, as well as the semi-governmental organization – the Russian Orthodox Church.

3. 1. The activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

One of the main fields of cooperation between Russia and the CIS states is protecting the compatriots. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia signed bilateral treaties with each CIS state to protect the linguistic rights of the Russian compatriots who became a national minority in newly established states. The treaties which Russia signed with the post-Soviet states postulate that the parties protect ethnic minorities' rights to preserve and develop their linguistic, cultural, and religious identity and receive education and information in the languages of their communities. The states shall also encourage opening cultural and scientific centers, and create conditions for learning the Russian language, literature, art, and culture.

In the field of protection of compatriots' rights, Russia evaluates actions of the states related to minority rights, writes reports, and attracts public attention of the European Union, the United Nations, and OSCE to the problems of the compatriots such as non-citizenship, unequal chances for job possibilities and education in the Baltic States.

3.2. . The activities of Rossotrudnichestvo

Rossotrudnichestvo, the Russian Federal Agency for CIS Affairs, operates offices in 81 countries based on intergovernmental agreements and diplomatic relations.

Its activities include educational, cultural, scientific, and legal fields. It promotes Russian education, supports cultural and educational centers, strengthens the Russian language's position in the CIS, and aids Russian expatriates. The agency provides educational resources, such as Russian language courses and textbooks as well as scholarships for studying at the universities in Russia. In Uzbekistan, Rossotrudnichestvo implements the fundamental project

"Class!" ("Zur!") that focuses on improving Russian language education. It includes updating textbooks, enhancing teaching methods, and training teachers. The project involves developing new educational materials with modern technology and interactive features, such as QR codes linking to audio recordings. It also provides on-site training for teachers from both Russia and Uzbekistan.

3. 3. The activities of the Russkij Mir Foundation

The Russkij Mir Foundation, founded in 2007, is dedicated to promoting the Russian language and supporting its study internationally. The Foundation's activities span educational, cultural, and communicative domains. It organizes a significant number of events annually, including cultural celebrations and educational workshops for Russian language teachers. The Foundation also supports the creation of educational materials, such as textbooks and online platforms for learning Russian, and provides resources to schools, including in de facto states like Transnistria and South Ossetia. Additionally, the Foundation runs the "Russkij Mir" portal, which offers news, educational content, and cultural programming, and publishes a monthly magazine. This broad array of initiatives underscores the Foundation's commitment to advancing the Russian language and culture globally.

3. 4. The activities of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)

The ROC is a semi-governmental institution, influential both within Russia and in the post-Soviet space. It serves not only as a spiritual anchor for the Russian diaspora but also as a means of asserting Russian cultural and national influence abroad. The ROC engages in educational and cultural diplomacy. It has partnerships with institutions like MGIMO University to offer theological education programs for international students, focusing on Church diplomacy and foreign policy. Additionally, the ROC collaborates with the Russkij Mir Foundation and Rossotrudnichestvo to distribute Orthodox literature and organize religious events abroad. Its Orthodox TV channel, available through satellite and the internet, further extends its reach by broadcasting services and news related to the ROC's activities.

CHAPTER 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

4.1. Discussion

Language is not only a tool of communication. It is a crucial part of identity. Forceful assimilation, discrimination, and manipulation of language can result in what the rules try to avoid the most – riots, armed conflicts, tensions, or attempts (successful or not) to proclaim independence from the mother state. At the same time, it is also hard to say that de jure equalizing the status of all languages spoken within the state can automatically establish multilingualism de facto. It requires a more nuanced approach and expertise in different domains. Furthermore, language policy studies are not purely linguistic or political subject of investigation. It is also not just a sum of these fields. Apart from being a complex interplay of linguistic and political studies, it is also a subject of conflict studies, ethnic and cultural policies, linguistic landscape, sociology, history, international law, kin-state studies, human rights, international relations, and so on.

Underlying the importance of multidisciplinary studies, the present dissertation combines theoretical frameworks of Constructivism with Spolsky's Language Management Model (LMM) to provide a more nuanced analysis. Constructivism generates an understanding of how ethnicity, religion, race, and language determine politics and analyzes the Russian language as a national-building instrument. This perspective emphasizes that language is deeply interconnected with broader socio-political domain. At the same time, Spolsky's LMM complements the study offering a structured framework to analyze the language policy and the position of Russian in different domains of society including but not limited to education, information, services, and governance. This model facilitates a detailed examination of measures taken by the Russian government and post-Soviet Republics throughout the studied period.

Constructivism discusses a language and its speakers as tools of cultural diplomacy. The framework of the soft power concept used in the research depicts how the language is used as a foreign policy tool. It sheds light on how Russia influences its position in the international arena using the language in the informational, educational, cultural, and religious spheres.

However, it is of extreme importance to underline that, despite the politicized nature of the Russian language, it remains the communication tool and a marker of identity. The research offers to distinguish between the active and passive roles of the language and diaspora in international relations, characterizing the position of the Russian-speaking diaspora and the language as passive, therefore, it underlines the importance of linguistic rights.

The study discusses how military conflicts having linguistic reasons as an official background, become subjects of discussion at the international level regarding the effectiveness of international law, its duality, and grey zones. However, the dissertation is not aimed at a legal assessment of the activity of the Russian Federation in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014, 2022). Rather, it reveals how the attitude toward the Russian language and Russian policy at its maintenance is changed under the circumstances of military conflicts.

4. 2. Conclusion

The present paper is an up-to-date descriptive language policy study: the newest data available were used: it is based on the official data (population census, estimates), language legislation acts and documents, reports, and the latest media texts related to language policy of the studied countries.

The research investigates, on the one hand, the consequences of the Soviet Union's collapse on the position of the Russian language and the Russian-speaking population living there, and on the other hand, studies the implementation of Russian foreign policy designed to maintain the Russian language in the post-Soviet states.

The time frame of the research covers the Tsarist epoch, the Soviet period, and the post-Soviet era.

Geographically, the study encompasses the states situated on the territory of the former Soviet Union. At the same time, as this study of language policy aims to describe the situation comprehensively, it underlines the importance of considering all political units regardless of their international legal status (recognized, non-recognized, partly recognized states, debatable territories, autonomies within the states). The given approach sheds light on how the status of the Russian language and its use in de facto states and disputed regions (LPR, DPR, Crimea, Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic) differs from the language laws enacted by the states from which they have de facto broken away.

The study focuses on the activity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its subordinate organizations: the Russkij Mir Foundation, Rossotrudnichestvo, and the Russian Orthodox Church.

In the educational domain, the activities of the Russkij Mir Foundation and Rossotrudnichestvo include providing grants and scholarships for studying at Russian universities. These activities are essential in the states where secondary and higher education in Russian has been eliminated (Latvia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine) or limited by local legislation (Estonia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Caucasus, and Central Asian states).

Providing modern textbooks, holding seminars, and conducting advanced studies for Russian language teachers is essential for Central Asia, where the low quality of methodological materials, insufficient level of Russian teachers training, and a shortage of teachers are additional challenges to the Russian language in education.

The Russkij Mir Foundation is active in the informational sphere. Since the usage of non-titular languages in mass media is restricted by the law of the post-Soviet states (except for Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, and Belarus), the Russkij Mir Foundation provides information in the Russian language via the same-named online platform, Radio, TV channels, and journals.

In the religious sphere, the activity of the Russian Orthodox Church plays an important role in forming and maintaining the national identity via the awareness of affiliation with the Russian nation.

The activity of Russia aimed at maintaining the Russian language in the post-Soviet states corresponds to the objectives of its foreign policy, which in turn, follow the soft power concept.

Overall, the study describes the unique situation where for one century the language shift occurred twice: when Russian became the dominant language of the Soviet Union and displaced titular languages from most public domains, and after the dissolution of the USSR, when it became a minority language in the independent states despite the considerable number of its speakers.

4.3. Scientific or scholarly significance

The study incorporates political and linguistic frameworks into the studies. It underlines the importance of a multidisciplinary approach and can act as a recommendation for further studies investigating language policy and linguistic minority rights as a complex phenomenon.

An even more complete picture of language power can probably be gleaned through the lens of other disciplines. However, the study highlights that it is insufficient to study only one dimension of language; it is essential to incorporate it into other fields and build dialogues between disciplines. Sharing perspectives can lead to a broader view of each discipline, which, in turn, can have practical outcomes such as including linguistic rights in fundamental documents like the Human Rights Declaration, or on the level of society, to establish broader inclusiveness of minorities into political and public life.

As previous studies have shown, there are blurred boundaries between de facto and de jure states. The present study discusses de facto states as a separate actor in international relations and underlines the importance of building a dialogue with such political entities, regardless of their international recognition.

REFERENCES

- Address by President of the Russian Federation. (2022, February 21). Retrieved from <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67828>
- Address by the President of the Russian Federation. Vladimir Putin addressed State Duma deputies, Federation Council members, heads of Russian regions and civil society representatives in the Kremlin. (2014, March 18). *Kremlin*. Retrieved from <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603>
- Akhmeteli, N. (2017, August 19). Грузинские школы в Южной Осетии переходят на русский [Georgian schools in South Ossetia are switching to Russian]. *BBC news*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-40987171>
- Atanga, M. L. (2020). Language Ideologies and the Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon. *Journal of*
- Beglaryan A. (n/d). В Нагорном Карабахе «Русью пахнет» [In Nagorno-Karabakh, it feels like in Russia]. *Nashasreda*. Retrieved from <https://nashasreda.ru/v-nagornom-karabaxe-rusyu-paxnet/>
- Bengard, A. (2018, February 27). Только 216 школ в Кыргызстане с русским языком обучения [Only 216 schools in Kyrgyzstan with Russian as the language of instruction.]. *24.kg*. Retrieved from <https://24.kg/obschestvo/77108/>
- Brubaker, R. (2011). Nationalizing states revisited: projects and processes of nationalization in post-Soviet states. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34(11), 1785–1814.
- Csernicskó, I, Beregszászi, A. (2019) Different states, same practices: visual construction of language policy on banknotes in the territory of present-day Transcarpathia. *Lang Policy* 18, 269–293. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-018-9485-3>
- Csernicskó, I., & Kontra, M. (2022). The Linguistic Human Rights Plight of Hungarians in Ukraine. In: Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Phillipson, R. (Eds.) *The Handbook of Linguistic Human Rights*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 373-382. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119753926.ch26>
- De Waal, T. (2018). Uncertain territory. *New Eastern Europe*, 7-14.
- Demina, T. (2022). В Кремле подписали договоры о вхождении в состав России ДНР, ЛНР,
- Fishman, J. (1977). Language and Ethnicity. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, Ethnicity and Intergroup Relations* (pp. 16-26). London; New York: Academic Press.
- Gallarotti, G. M. (2020). How to measure Soft Power in International Relations. *Polis. Политические исследования*, (1), 89-103. <https://doi.org/10.17976/jpps/2020.01.07>
- Giles, H., Johnson, P. (1987). Ethnolinguistic identity theory: A social psychological approach to language maintenance. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 69–99.
- Gomelauri, A. S. (2020). Methods For Measuring" Soft Power": Comparative Analysis of Ratings. *Современная наука и инновации*, (4), 154-161.
- Grenoble, L. A. (2003). An overview of Soviet language policy. *Language Policy in the Soviet Union*, Vol. 3, Springer, Dordrecht. 35-63. https://doi.org/10.1007/0-306-48083-2_2

- Hogan-Brun, G., & Melnyk, S. (2012). Language policy management in the former Soviet sphere. *The Cambridge handbook of language policy*, 593-604.
- Hopf, T. (1998). *The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory*. *International Security*, 23(1), 171–200. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.23.1.171>
- Hopf, T. (2000). Constructivism all the way down. *International Politics*, 37, 369-378.
- Hudson, V. (2019). The Georgian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate: Tools of Russian Soft Power?. *Europe in the Caucasus, Caucasus in Europe*, 175-203.
- Huntington, S. P., & Jervis, R. (1997). The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order. *Finance and Development-English Edition*, 34(2), 51-51.
- Kireenko, A. (2020) Лингвистическое строительство в СССР или как бесписьменные народы получали первые алфавиты [Linguistic building in the USSR or how unwritten languages got first alphabets]. *Мир месен*. Retrieved from <https://sovsojuz.mirtesen.ru/blog/43335471457/Lingvisticheskoe-stroitelstvo-v-SSSR-ili-Kak-bespismennyye-narod>
- Kleczkowska, A. (2019). Explaining the Meaning of ‘Grey Zones’ in Public International Law Based on the Example of the Conflict in Ukraine. *Contemporary Central and East European Law*, 2019 CCEEL 1(133), 75-93. <https://doi.org/10.37232/cceel.2019.07>
- Mariano, R., & Vårheim, A. (2021). Libraries, museums and cultural centers in foreign policy and cultural diplomacy: a scoping review. *Journal of Documentation*, 78(3), 651-672.
- May, S. (2006). Language policy and minority rights. In T. Ricento (Ed.), *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method*. (255-272). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Melikyan, A., Veliev, J., Sartania, K., Abdullazade, S. (2018). The Rise of New Nationalism in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in the Late 1980s and Early 1990s. *Caucasus Edition*. Retrieved from <https://caucasusedition.net/the-rise-of-new-nationalism-in-armenia-azerbaijan-and-georgia-in-the-late-1980s-and-early-1990s/>
- National statistic office of Georgia (2016). General Population Census. Retrieved from http://census.ge/files/results/Census_release_ENG.pdf
- National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (2019). Population census results of Belarus, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.belstat.gov.by/informatsiya-dlya-respondenta/perepis-naseleniya/perepis-naseleniya-raunda-2020-goda/>
- Nye, J. S. (1990). Soft Power. *Foreign Policy*, (80), 153-171. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1148580>
- Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
- O'shea, P. (2012). *Playing the sovereignty game: understanding Japan's territorial disputes* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sheffield).
- Pavlenko, A. (2006). Russian as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 26, 78-99.
- Pavlenko, A. (2008a). Multilingualism in post-Soviet countries: Language revival, language removal, and sociolinguistic theory. *International journal of bilingual education and bilingualism* 11(3-4), 275-314.
- Pavlenko, A. (2008b). Russian in post-Soviet countries. *Russian linguistics* 32(1), 59-80.

- Pavlenko, A. (2013). Language management in the Russian empire, Soviet Union, and post-Soviet countries. In R. Bayley, R. Cameron & C. Lucas (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of sociolinguistics*, 652-679. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199744084.013.0032>
- Persson, G. (2014) Russian Influence and Soft Power in the Baltic States: the View from Moscow. In: Winnerstig M. (ed), *Tools of Stabilization. Russian Soft Power and non-military influence in the Baltic States* (17-29). Stockholm. FOI-R--3990--SE.
- Popova, M., de Bot, K. (2017). Maintenance of the Russian language in the Baltic States. *The Hungarian Journal of Applied Linguistics* XVII 2017/2, 1-14.
- Popova, M., de Bot, K. (2020). Maintenance of the Russian language in Kazakhstan. *The Hungarian Journal of Applied Linguistics* XX 2020/2, 1-16.
- Popovski, V., & Turner, N. (2011). Blood across borders: The role of the kin-state in minority protection.
- Shah, T. S., Stepan, A. C., & Toft, M. D. (2012). *Rethinking religion and world affairs*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. & Phillipson, R. (1994). Linguistic human rights, past and present. In T. Skutnabb-Kangas & R. Phillipson (eds.). *Linguistic Human Rights. Overcoming Linguistic Discrimination* (71-110). Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language policy*. Cambridge University Press <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511615245>
- Spolsky, B. (2009). *Language management*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511626470>
- Spolsky, B. (2012). *The Cambridge Handbook of Language Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511979026>
- Spolsky, B. (2023). *Rethinking Language Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781474485487>
- State Statistics Committee of Ukraine (2001). *About number and composition population of Ukraine by data All-Ukrainian population census' 2001 data*. Retrieved from <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/>
- The Main Results of RA Census (2022). *Armstat*. Retrieved from <https://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=82&id=2623>
- The Soft Power 30. A Global Ranking of Soft Power 2019 (2019). *Portland*. Retrieved from <https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2019-1.pdf>
- Tollefson, J. W. (1991). *Planning language, planning inequality*. New York: Longman.
- Tollefson, J. W. (2006). Critical theory in language policy. In T. Ricento (Ed.). *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method*, 42-59. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Waltz, K. (1979). *Theory of International Politics*. New York: McGraw Hill Publishing Company.
- Waterbury, M. A. (2009). From irredentism to diaspora politics: States and transborder ethnic groups in Eastern Europe. *Global Migration and Transnational Politics*, 1-10.
- Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics. *International organization*, 46(2), 391-425.

Wendt, A. (1994). Collective identity formation and the international state. *American political science review*, 88(2), 384-396.

Official sources

Constitution of Abkhazia of April 30, 1994

Constitution of Georgia of August 24, 1995

Constitution of Azerbaijan of November 12, 1995

Constitution of Tajikistan of September 26, 1999

Constitution of South Ossetia of April 8, 2001

Constitution of Kyrgyzstan of June 27, 2010

Constitution of the Crimea Republic of April 11, 2014

Constitution of the Donetsk People Republic of May 14, 2014

Constitution of the Luhansk People Republic of May 18, 2014

Constitution of the Republic of Armenia of July 5, 1995

Law on State Civil and Municipal Service of Kyrgyzstan of May 30, 2016

Law of the Republic of Armenia on Television and Radio Broadcasting of October 9, 2000

Law on Language of Estonia of April 1, 1995

Law on State Language of Latvia of December 9, 1999.

Mass Media of Azerbaijan of December 7, 1999

Model Law of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS Member States "On Languages" of December 4, 2004

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (1975). *Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church of 2000. Retrieved from <http://mospat.ru>

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of February 1, 1995.

The Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation of February 18, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/6D84DDEDEDBF7DA644257B160051BF7F

The Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation of May 31, 2023. Retrieved from https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/fundamental_documents/1860586/

Georgia on cooperation in the field of culture, science and education of March 3, 1999.

Treaty of friendship, good-neighborliness and cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus of February 21, 1995. <https://soyuz.by/dogovor-o-druzhbe-dobrososedstve-i-sotrudnichestve-mezhdu-rossiyskoy-federaciyey-i-respublikoy-belarus>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 10, 1948.