PRESERVATION OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY: RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE

Moscow
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Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO
Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program
Interregional Library Cooperation Centre

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Compilers: Evgeny Kuzmin and Ekaterina Plys

English text edited by Andrei Svechnikov and Maria Sergeeva

The book Preservation of Linguistic Diversity: Russian Experience was prepared for the international conference Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace (Yakutsk, Russian Federation, July 2-4, 2008). It cites practical examples to present the picture of diversified multi-level activities to preserve and develop multilingualism in the Russian cyberspace.

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From the Compilers

This book continues a series of publications by the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Programme (Russian IFAP Committee) and the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre (ILCC) as a part of their partnership to develop multilingualism on the Internet.

We have previously published:

Linguistic Diversity in Cyberspace: Russian and Foreign Experience – a collection of analytical materials, translation into Russian of two UNESCO books – *How to Guarantee the Presence of Language in Cyberspace?* and *Measuring Linguistic Diversity on the Internet*, translation into Russian of the European Commission book *Human Language Technologies for Europe*, a collection of communications made at the seminar Representation of the Languages of Russia and Other CIS Countries in the Russian Segment of the Internet, organized by the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Programme and the ILCC during the international conference EVA 2007 Moscow.

We are finishing preparation of the collection *Multilingualism in Russia: Regional Aspects*.

The book *Preservation of Linguistic Diversity: Russian Experience* has been prepared for the international conference Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace (Yakutsk, Russian Federation, July 2-4, 2008).

The Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC took up the problems of multilingualism rather recently, after they prepared, at the borderline of the years 2006-07, the national report of the Russian Federation *On Measures Taken to Implement the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace* under the instruction of the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO.

The Recommendation[*] was adopted by the 32nd session of the UNESCO General Conference in October 2003. The basic international document for the development of linguistic diversity on the Internet, it

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[*]The English-language version of the Recommendation can be downloaded from the UNESCO website: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php URL_ID=13475&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, and the Russian-language one from the Russian IFAP Committee website http://www.ifapcom.ru/ru/387/425/

analyzes four interconnected aspects: development of multilingual content and systems; facilitating access to networks and services; development of public domain content; reaffirming the equitable balance between the interests of rights-holders and the public interest.

The Recommendation is well known in Russia. The Russian IFAP Committee published its Russian-language version twice in a total 3,000 copies to dispatch them to all major Russian public and research libraries. It was repeatedly discussed at representative conferences on information society development and placed on the Russian Committee website http://www.ifapcom.ru.

The impact of the pivotal ideas of the Recommendation on the views and activities of Russian cultural activists, researchers and educationists is evident.

Opening the present collection, the national report of the Russian Federation *On Measures Taken to Implement the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace* is arranged in conformity with the guidelines which UNESCO forwarded to all its member countries on the necessity to offer detailed information about the activities to implement **all** provisions of the Recommendation. This is why the report analyzes not only the support and development of multilingualism in Russia but also the guarantee and improvement of access to socially important information, Internet networks and services, the development of open-source software, public information literacy and a just balance of interests of right-holders and the public interest.

Part One of this book also contains official materials prepared specially for it and reflecting the Russian federal- and regional-level policy for the preservation and development of multilingualism on the example of several constituent entities of the Russian Federation: the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Buryat Republic, the Republic of Dagestan, the Republic of Karelia, the Republic of Tatarstan and the Chuvash Republic. All these are multiethnic regions with areas densely populated by particular ethnic entities. The development of multilingualism in cyberspace and elsewhere is extremely topical there, related problems similar and largely typical of all constituent republics of the Russian Federation, and regional policy interesting, indicative and instructive.

Part Two offers examples of the activities of government cultural and educational institutions, nongovernment organizations and the private sector connected in some way or other with the problems of preserving and developing linguistic and cultural diversity in cyberspace. In particular, the book tells about a new field of joint activities of the Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC to promote multilingualism on the Internet. The material by the head of Department of Communications and Information Technology of the National Library of the Republic of Karelia can help give an idea of the contribution of major Russian libraries to the support of languages in cyberspace. A staff researcher of the Lomonosov Moscow State University tells about the practice and problems of documenting minor languages. The CEO of Russia's leading type designer company tells the story of elaborating types for ethnic languages of Russia that have recently acquired a written form.

As you can see, we aimed to cite practical examples in this book to present the picture of diversified multi-level activities to preserve and develop multilingualism in the Russian cyberspace, and acquaint the reader with rather a large circle of people involved in those activities.

We express heartfelt gratitude to all our authors, translators Tatyana Butkova, Erik Azgaldov and Elena Malyavskaya, designer Igor Goryunov, ILCC Executive Manager Sergei Bakeykin, editors of the English text Andrei Svechnikov and Maria Sergeeva for inestimable help in the preparation of this book.

We hope that this book will be no mere source of information about the work underway in Russia to preserve and support the linguistic heritage of the peoples of our country. We hope it will also promote experience exchanges and bridge building between all stakeholders at the international level.

Evgeny Kuzmin and Ekaterina Plys

Part I. Language Policy in the Russian Federation

Report
**by the Russian Federation to the UNESCO General
Conference on Measures Taken to Implement
The Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of
Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace**

Support and Development of Multilingualism in Russia

Encouragement of multilingualism is important for contemporary Russia not only with a view to preserving and developing languages as the foundation of the cultural heritage of the different nations inhabiting Russia; it has been and remains important also in terms of addressing political, economic, social and other cultural problems, primarily those of interethnic communication in polyethnic environments.

The population of Russia according to the 2002 census is 142.4 million people. In addition to the Russians (79.8 %) there are more than 180 other nations, which speak more than 100 languages and dialects belonging to the Indo-European, Altaic, and Ural language families, the Caucasian and Paleo-Siberian language groups.

The official language of Russia is Russian, which is almost universally used as a language of interethnic communication, too. Arguably, almost all the adult population of Russia is fluent in Russian. More than 127 million people (of whom 120 million are Russians) consider the Russian language their mother-tongue; for over 16 million people it is their second language.

Therefore, unlike many countries with polyethnic populations Russia knows little or no language barriers.

Preservation and development of the languages of the peoples of Russia, and the development of writing in the languages of many small indigenous peoples was an important goal and task of the Russian state throughout the last century, particularly in the Soviet period. It can certainly be considered an achievement of Russia.

Despite the fact that the USSR was separated from the West by an 'Iron Curtain', cultural exchange inside the USSR (and inside Russia as part of the USSR) was quite intensive. It was greatly encouraged and supported by the state, being a national policy priority. Cultural diversity was supported and advocated.

The change in the political and economic life of Russian society and the development of the democratic bases of Russian statehood made for the growing role of national and cultural factors, among which language is one of the chief attributes of ethnic identity and fosters the consolidation of ethnic communities in a polyethnic environment. As they significantly influenced the growth of national consciousness, these developments gave point to the question of the preservation and development of the national (native) languages of non-Russian peoples and the expansion of their scope of application.

The 1990s saw intense efforts, at the federal level and in Russian Federation republics, towards creating and developing language legislation, designed to regulate the functioning of official and native languages, and the development of ethnic education and culture.

Article 68 of the Russian Federation Constitution says that:

1. The Russian language shall be the state language of the Russian Federation across its territory.

2. The republics that form part of the Russian Federation have a right to establish their own state languages. They shall be used alongside the state language of the Russian Federation by their public authorities, local governments, and public offices.

3. The Russian Federation shall guarantee to all its peoples the right to maintain their native language and conditions for its study and development.

The constitutional provision establishing the status of Russian as the official language inside the Russian Federation is elaborated on in Federal Law On the State Language of the Russian Federation of 1 June 2005. This is typical of multinational states such as Canada, Switzerland, or India.

In a multinational state the question of the official language is very important, indeed. Such a state requires unity and consistency in communication and a universally recognised means of intercourse between people in society, in public authorities, local governments, etc.

In Russia, this means is, naturally, Russian, the language of the most numerous ethnic group, the Russians, which makes up over 80% of the total population. Most members of the other nations are equally (and often more) proficient in Russian as in their ethnic languages. For example, such people make up 71.8% of the Bashkirs, 70.8% of the Tatars, 72.1% of the Buryats, 85.3% of the Kalmyks, etc.

The status of Russian as an official language means its compulsory use and application by all the public authorities and local governments inside the country, during referendums and elections, in the official publication of laws and other statutory acts, in judicial procedure, record keeping, etc. This fact imposes upon the state, primarily public educational institutions, certain obligations with respect to the learning, development and dissemination of the Russian language.

The Law On the Languages of RSFSR Peoples constates that the Russian language shall be learned without fail in general educational institutions and vocational training institutions, and that in those which are accredited institutions, the learning of Russian as the state language shall be subject to state educational standards (Pt 2, Art. 10).

The Law states in addition that:
- the languages of the Russian Federation peoples are the Russian state's national patrimony;
- the languages of the Russian Federation peoples shall be under the shelter of the state;
- the state shall promote the development of national languages, bilingualism, and multilingualism inside the Russian Federation territory.

The republics (constituent entities of the Russian Federation) have a right to establish their own state languages, as recorded in their constitutions. .

According to the Law On the Languages of Russian Federation Peoples (Pt 2, Art. 3) the highest agencies of the state in the Russian Federation must encourage the development of the languages of the republics that are part of the Russian Federation (Art. 6); they can be employed in the work of the public authorities of republics and local governments alongside the Russian language (Pt 1, Art. 11); it can be used in the publication of federal and republic-wide legal acts inside the republics (Arts. 12, 13); it can be used alongside the state language of Russia in prepar-

ing and holding elections and referendums (Art. 14), in the running of enterprises, organisations, and institutions (Art. 15), in judicial procedure (Art. 18), and so on.

Russian citizens who do not know Russian have a right to speak at meetings, conferences, or assemblies in government institution, organisations, enterprises or institutions in the language they know; if necessary proper interpretation is provided (Pts 2 and 3, Art. 15 of the Law On the Languages of the Russian Federation Peoples).

As a general rule, the official languages of a republic will be Russian and the language of the title nation that has lent the name to the republic, even though the title nation, which lent the name to the republic, may represent an ethnic majority in it. In several republics, two or more languages in use inside the republic are recognised as state languages.

For example, in Kabardino-Balkaria, two more languages in addition to Russian have the status of official — Kabardian and Balkar; in Dagestan, all the languages of its constituent nations. However, lack of knowledge of a state language in the constituent republics of the Russian Federation must not be a discriminatory measure in exercising the rights and freedoms or man and citizen.

The introduction of their own official languages lays upon the respective republics an obligation to provide conditions for their learning to anyone who wishes so that lack of knowledge of a language would not play a discriminatory role in employment, education, use of benefits of culture, etc. The Republic of Buryatia Law On the Languages of the Peoples of the Republic of Buryatia No. 221-XII, of 10 June 1992, contains a provision under which anyone wishing to learn the Buryat language is guaranteed the teaching of the language to the level consistent with the job content. This law uses a differentiated approach to the use and application of the two state languages, Russian and Buryat. For instance, the law says that the texts of republic-wide laws shall be published in Buryat and Russian and shall have equal legal force; the two languages, Buryat and Russian, are used to print voting papers, in judicial procedure; documents (resolutions) are passed by local authorities in either Russian or Buryat depending on the composition of the population; record keeping in institutions and public organisation is done in the Russian language, the official language of the Russian Federation.

The public language policy in the Russian Federation aims at guaranteeing to all its nations the right to maintain their native languages and creating conditions for their study and development, which is fully consistent with commonly recognised international standards.

The right of every nation irrespective of size to maintain, study, use, and develop its vernacular is defined and guaranteed not only in the Law On the Languages of the Russian Federation Peoples, but also in a number of other federal laws pertaining to education, culture, national and cultural autonomy, and so on. Language equality and means of protection of languages feature prominently in constitutions (statutes), specialised laws and other regulatory acts of constituent members of the Russian Federation.

Thus, the provisions of Pt 3 of Article 68 of the Russian Constitution clearly show that the establishment of state languages does not mean neglect of the languages of the other nations populating Russia. All of them are guaranteed the right to preserve their native language and conditions for its learning and development.

In line with international legal standards the Law On the Languages of the Russian Federation Peoples guarantees their equal rights and means of protection (social, economic, and legal); provides for the funding of respective government programmes, opportunities to create a writing culture in native languages, to conduct investigations of all languages of Russian peoples, to organise education and teaching in a native language irrespective of the size of the ethnic community and according to its needs; in communities compactly populated by ethnic groups speaking a foreign language, legitimates the use in official communication (record keeping at public authorities and local governments, at enterprises, institutions, and place names) of the language of that population group.

Federal Law On Education of 13 January 1996 determines that the language(s) in which the education and upbringing in general educational institutions are conducted shall be determined by the founder(s) and/or statute of the institution; the state shall assist in the training of specialists required for educational services to be conducted in Russian peoples lacking their own statehood (Pts 3 and 7, Art. 6).

Fundamentals of Russian Federation Cultural Legislation of 9 October 1992 allocate to national cultural centres, national associations and communities the right to organise libraries, circles, and studios for the learning of their native languages (Art. 21). Government protection measures for national (native) languages – which are rather similar to those specified in the above-mentioned federal laws – are also quoted in Federal Law On National and Cultural Autonomy of 17 June 1996.

Therefore, if implemented, the provisions of Pt 3 of Article 68 of the Russian Federation Constitution furnishes the necessary framework for the individual's language sovereignty irrespective of their origin, social and property status, race and nationality, gender, education, religious affiliation, and place of residence; real exercise by every citizen of the Russian Federation of their right to use their native language, to choose their language of communication, education, teaching, and creativity; and the counteraction of the advocacy of language superiority.

Statutory and other regulatory acts addressing linguistic issues have been passed by many constituent members of the Russian Federation.

As our case studies we consider the situation in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Republic of Buryatia.

Language Policy in the Republic of Yakutia

In terms of territory, 3,103,200 square kilometres, it is the largest member of the Russian Federation and the largest political unit in the world. Yakutia stretches across three time zones. Its population is 950,000 (2005). Population density, 0.3 per. per sq. km, is the lowest in the Russian Federation.

According to the Russian census of 2002 Yakutia is populated by members of 127 nationalities. The principal ethnic communities are Yakuts, 433,000 (45.6%) and Russians (41.1%). Small northern ethnic groups total about 33,000, among them 18,232 Evenki, 11,657 Evens, 1,097 Yukagirs, 1,272 Dolgans, and 602 Chukchis. Their compact locations are 69 population centres, mainly in the Far North. In addition, there are 238 registered nomadic tribal communities, which include 74 deer farming ones.

Pursuing an ethnocultural policy in such a multiethnic republic demands special care and attention not only on the part of the state but from civil society institutions as well. In this respect a great contribution is being made by ethnic cultural centres, diasporas, and communities. At present, there are about 50 ethnic communities and associations. The republic has maintained stable interethnic peace and harmony, for which due credit must be given to the Assembly of the Peoples of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Department for Yakutia's Peoples and Federal Relations. Revival of national languages, culture, customs and traditions is the main thrust of the efforts of national and cultural associations, which are busy communicating, sharing their experience and expertise.

UNESCO has been instrumental in influencing the activities of the Assembly of the Peoples of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and other institutions.

It is an ethnographic feature of Yakutia that the nation that lent its name to the republic was an ethnic minority in terms of size and share before 2000, but presently it ranks first in the national composition of the population. The growth of the Yakut population is 12.1% from the 1989 census, which is due not only to the intensification of migratory processes but also a relatively high natural increase of the Yakut population.

On 27 September 1990, the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the republic was passed, which promulgated the state status of the Yakut and Russian languages on a parity basis and the official status of Northern peoples. On 16 October 1992, the Law on the Languages in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was passed, which brought to the fore the need for a new language policy.

Russian is spoken by 93.3% of the population in the republic. Their national language is considered to be their mother-tongue by 87.4% of Yakuts, 37.7% of Chukchis, 20.7% of Evens, 19.5% of Yukagirs, and 6.5% of Evenkis. Recent studies suggest that the number of people in Yakutia speaking their native language is declining. A contributing factor is the rising status of Russian as a language of interethnic communication, a carrier of international information, and a language of learning at higher levels of education. Yakuts who considered their ethnic lan-

guage to be their native one made up 96.3% of the population in 1970, 95.3% by the 1979 census, 94.8% by the 1989 census, and 94.2% by the 2002 census. According to the last census, the number of Evenkis who consider their national language native decreased by 8.6%, and the number of Evens, by 27%.

Many researchers point to insufficient communication motivation for language learning. Urbanisation makes for increased reluctance to learn and speak one's own language and clture. This is characteristic of almost all the industrial *uluses* but particularly of the capital city, Yakutsk, where every fourth non-Russian child is not learning in his/her native language. A language excluded from school curriculum is inevitably endangered. As evidenced by research and practice, language teaching techniques need to be upgraded, too.

It follows that promulgating a language the state or official one does not in itself take care of its development. If the Law On the Languages of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is to be implemented in practice, efficient steps must be taken to provide required financial support.

A resolution of the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of 4 March 2005 approved a State Target Language Development Programme of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) for 2005−2007. Other programmes were developed as well, which reflected problems in the functioning of state and official languages. Steps are being taken in support of intercultural dialogue and creation of a favourable language situation.

Language-wise, television broadcasting in the republic is 62% Russian, 38% Yakut, and 1% languages of small indigenous ethnic groups. Publication of Yakut books is growing annually. An embryo of bilingualism has appeared in forms of worship, the Bible has been translated into Yakut, which is beginning to be used in public worship. At the same time, Russian-language programmes about the culture and history of the peoples of Yakutia are on the increase.

In the system of institutions ensuring the preservation and development of national languages, a leading position is held by the National Library of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the largest collection of books in the languages of indigenous peoples (http://nlib.sakha.ru).

Its book holdings are about 2 million items, of which 48,000 books in Yakut and 1,688 books in the languages of Northern peoples; the collection tends to grow thanks to more active acquisition efforts. In 1990-1994, the growth of the Yakut book collection was 16.1% and the book collection in the languages of Northern peoples grew by 32.4%; in 1995-1999, the figures were 9.3% and 9.5%; and in 2000 − 2004, 14.8% and 14.4% respectively.

Good progress is being made by the republic target programme Yakutia's Memory, which was approved by Decree No 116 of the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of 2 March 2001. The programme aims to preserve and popularise the documentary heritage of the peoples of Yakutia, to make it more democratically accessible through the Internet, and to create a State Register of Unique and Valuable Documents and a joint web-site, "Yakutia's Memory".

The programme is a joint effort between the National Library, the National Archive of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Yakut State Museum of History and Culture of Northern Peoples, and the State National Repository of Cinedocuments of the Republic of Sakha.

The programme envisions selecting particularly valuable documents highlighting important aspects of the history and culture of Yakutia, digitising them and putting them on the Web. Work is in progress to digitise rare Yakut books and local history books, archival documents, rare gramophone recordings of Yakut performers, which are of cultural and historical value. With Soros Foundation support a Web-museum was created called "Yakutia's Book Monuments 1812-1916".

The Yakutia's Memory programme (2002-2006) made possible several expeditions to locate and acquire rare books, photographs, and motion pictures important for area studies for major film repositories, libraries, and archives in Russia, and contacts with owners of private collections. The State National Repository of Cinedocuments on the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) established contacts with Harvard University, Museum of Modern Art of the Cinema Department (New York), Georgetown University, and the state archives of Kazakhstan and Kirghizia. As a result, films relating to the history and culture of Yakutia were found and included in institutional holdings. Under the Voices of the Age project, an expedition went to Verkhnevilyuisk and Nyurbinsk

uluses with the purpose of study and collection of records. The voices of folk singers in Verkhnevilyuisk *ulus* were recorded and some folk songs in Vilyuisk *uluses* were recorded anew. Expeditions also travelled to the cities of Chita and Irkutsk with the purpose of locating rare pre-revolutionary photographs related to Yakutia's history.

The programme resulted in a Web information portal, Yakutia's Memory, which provides access to the unique documentary heritage of the nations of Yakutia. The portal is structured as follows:

1. Book monuments of Yakutia. This section presents book monuments that are part of Yakutia's heritage as well as part of the culture of the global community: early books in Yakut (1812-1858), books published by the Yakutsk Oblast Printing House (1861-1917).

2. National Bibliography. This section takes care of the problem of access to bibliographic information relating to books that appeared in the indigenous languages of the Republic since early publications.

3. Unique and Particularly Valuable Archival Documents of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). This section deals with the preservation, and access to, the unique archival documents of the Yakut Voyvodship Office (1701-1823), Yakutsk Provincial Office (1778-1892), Yakutsk Governor (1862-1919), as well as documentary monuments of socio-political thought of Yakutia in the 18th to early 20th centuries.

4. Film Chronicle of Yakuria envisions the updating, preservation, and access to film documents about Yakutia that are of great historical, cultural, scientific, and educational value. The State National Repository of Cinedocuments about the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) holds more than 2500 motion pictures, fragments, and plots describing different periods in the history and culture of Yakutia.

5. Photo Chronicle of Yakutia is geared to preserving, and providing access to, photo documents reflecting the most significant events and facts in the socio-political life of the Yakut region, the cultural life of Yakutia, etc. The most interesting photographs are those showing the traditional beliefs of the indigenous peoples of Yakutia, the spread of Orthodoxy, and Yakut studies.

6. Voice of the Age: Musical and Sound Heritage of the Peoples of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) provides for protection against deterioration

and oblivion of valuable and rare sound recordings and free access to them. The project includes the digitisation of folklore performed by folk artists and singers (olonkhosuts, toiuksuts, khomusists, reciters), voices of authors, and culture and art workers representing Yakutia's peoples.

Future development of Yakutia's Memory portal will involve the widening of its coverage. Other sections may be established at subsequent stages, such as Prominent Individuals in the History and Culture of Yakutia, etc.

In the purposeful government policy in the sphere of national relations in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), a place of importance belong to questions of national and cultural revival of small indigenous peoples of the North. The indigenous peoples of Yakutia living in the inhospitable climate of the North created their unique mode of life and have an interesting and instructive history, traditions, and original culture. Globalisation and the pressure of mass culture endanger not only their languages but all their traditional culture.

The main source for the implementation of the government policy with respect to small indigenous nations of the North is still the Grant for National and Cultural Revival of Small and Endangered Ethnic Communities in Places of their Compact Habitation. Among other programmes there are Children of the Arctic and Revival of the Languages of Small Indigenous Peoples of the North.

With a view to preserving the original languages of small indigenous peoples of the North in the framework of the Northern Peoples' Memory programme, the National Library of Yakutia is collecting Talking Book audio cassettes with recorded voices of Evenki and Even authors, folklore scholars, scientists, Even scholars, etc. It has prepared and produced disks on Evenika, Yukagirica, Evenkica and Dolganica, which include not only bibliographies of the literatures of indigenous nations of the North but also full-text databases of originals. It also maintains thematic databases of authors and researchers who represent Northern peoples, and donated collections of well-known Northern scholars.

At present, the National Library jointly with Arctic State Institute of Culture and Art has developed a programme, "Development of the Arctic-Info-Centre Information Portal", which envisions the development of a common information space of Artic territories of the Repub-

lic and the Russian Federation. Jointly with colleagues in the Far Eastern Region and the city of Fairbanks, Alaska, Yakut specialists took part in the international program "Polarpak" aimed at creating database on northern territories of the Russian Federation.

With support from the Moscow UNESCO office, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture and Spiritual Development of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) has developed a multilingual portal, www.kuyaar.ru, in the Yakut, Russia, English, and Even languages.

Language Policy in the Republic of Buryatia

The resident population of the Republic of Buryatia, according to the 2002 census, is 981 238 people. The Republic of Buryatia is populated by members of more than 100 nationalities. Russians make up 67.82%, Buryats 27.81%, Ukrainians 0.98%, and other nationalities, 3.39% of the total.

Russian and Buryat are state languages in the Republic of Buryatia. Their state status is defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Buryatia and the Republic of Buryatia Law On the Languages of the Peoples of the Republic of Buryatia. The laws promulgate the equality of the languages and the language rights of citizens unless otherwise provided by federal law. On the other hand, there are still no clearly defined enforcement mechanisms for these guarantees both in respect of the Buryat language and the languages of ethnic minorities and, occasionally, in respect of the Russian language.

The body responsible for current questions directly or indirectly affecting interethnic relations is Committee for Interethnic Relations, Relations with Public, Religious Associations, and Information attached to the Presidential Executive Office and the Government of the Republic of Buryatia. Besides, a number of advisory bodies have been set up at the Government of the Republic of Buryatia: the Council of Nationalities attached to the President of the Republic of Buryatia and the Council for Communication with Religious Associations attached to the President of the Republic of Buryatia.

The government of the Republic approved the Concept of State Nationalities Policy in 1997. At present, the Republic Targeted Programme to implement this Concept for 2006-2007 is in progress.

Buryatia has the Law On the Languages of the Peoples of the Republic of Buryatia, according to which Buryat and Russian are the state languages of the Republic of Buryatia.

With a view to preserving and developing the Buryat language the republic is implementing several projects. In 2006, the *Electronic Manual of the Buryat Language* was published, the result of three-years work of a large group of authors. The Manual is not just the biggest to date collection of dictations, exercises, and texts. It includes 14 electronic dictionaries. Other sections of the manual provide a wealth of materials on Buryat history, art, geography, customs, and religious beliefs, a total of 500 articles and more than 1000 photographs. The manual is addressed not only to students at national schools but also to adults speaking their native language.

The manual was produced by a creative team at the Informatisation Centre, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Buryatia, which included philologists and journalists, religious scholars and businessmen, photographers, designers, and programmers.

The summer of 2006 saw the presentation of a new website of Buryat literature, www.nomoihan.org. The electronic collection of texts has several parts: Earl Literature, Medieval Literature, Modern Literature, and Contemporary Literature.

The projects were implemented with financial backing of Presidential administration, the Government of the Republic of Buryatia, and the East Siberia Metals company. The manual was recommended for use at schools in the republic by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Buryatia.

The website www.buryadxelen.org in Buryat and Russia is devoted to the Buryat language. It is designed in support of the Electronic Manual of the Buryat Language. The designers intend, some time in the future, to create a portal based on this website addressed to all those who take an interest in the Buryat language. The National Library of the Republic of Buryatia is creating integrated bibliographic and full-text databases and electronic collections on objects of cultural and natural heritage of the republic's peoples. It uses both the techniques of digitisation and Web searches to locate necessary documents.

The principal information resources is the library's electronic catalogue, one part of which, EK "Area Study", comprises more than 5000 records, of which about 700 are in Buryat. To collect and classify information pertaining to Lake Baikal and the Baikal Natural Area a web portal was created, called Baikal-Lake (http://www.baikal-center.ru). The portal is bilingual, in Russian and English, and it has a system of links to regional, Russian, and foreign resources (more than 120 links).

To assist in more effective study and use of the cultural heritage of the peoples of the Republic of Buryatia, the National Library is implementing an integrated project, "Buryatia: A Territory of Culture", which seeks to produce a series of reference-bibliographic CDs and DVDs. The project was prepared and implemented in the framework of the Presidential Programme "Preservation and Development of the Culture and Art of the Republic of Buryatia (2004-2007)". In building electronic collections for the "Buryatia: A Territory of Culture" series, use was made of documents from the collections of libraries, museums, archives, and ethnic cultural centres of Buryatia.

For three years now, the National Library of the Republic of Buryatia has been working on an electronic collection dealing with the establishment and development of Buddhism in Buryatia. A DVD-ROM named "Datsans: Past and Present" is the first electronic reference-bibliographic publication to present in a multimedia format information about the appearance and development of Buddhism in Buryatia, the life and work of Pandito Hambo-Lamas, and 14 datsans in Russian, English, and German.

The DVD-ROM comprises a bibliography on the history of datsans (about 200 names), an electronic library (82 texts), rare photographs, drawings, video materials, and music. In the Appendix, some of the materials are presented in Buryat.

With financial support of the Russian Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography, a DVD called *Geser: A Buryat Heroic Epic* was produced — a unique electronic reference-bibliographic publication, which provides information about principal oral versions of Geseriada, ekhirit-bulagat and ungin, main narrators, collectors, and researchers.

The DVD-ROM contains a bibliography of the Buryat Geseriada (more than 500 titles), an electronic library (152 texts, six elec-

tronic books of the best-known editions of the Buryat version of *Geser* in the Russian and Buryat languages, rare photographs, audio and video materials, a video recording of A. Andreev's opera *Geser* in the Buryat language.

The DVD-ROM *Buryatia's Evenki* presents in a multimedia format information about the ethnography and material and spiritual culture of the Evenki, a bibliography (more than 800 titles), an electronic library (170 articles in Russian and Evenki, four electronic books in Evenki, and a video lesson, "Baunt's History").

Work is in progress on electronic full-text databases: *Buryatia's Writers* (more than 200 personalia, information in Russian and Buryat), *Genghiz Khan: Man of Millennium* (information in Russian, Buryat, Mongolian), and on large Buryat clans, Khori-Buryats and Khongodors.

All information about the electronic resources can be found at the National Library web-site (http://www.nbrb.ru).

Multilingualism in the Cyberspace

The development and utilisation of multilingualism in the Russian cyberspace is by no means targeted at the lowering of language barriers because, as already mentioned, they are almost nonexistent. At any rate, they do not pose a socially significant problems for the majority of the native Russian population. The development of local digital content and content in the languages of peoples of Russia pursues two key goals: to broaden access to information and knowledge, and the preservation, study, and popularisation of the cultural legacy and languages of peoples of Russia.

An analysis of current Russian legislation shows that these aspects are directly touched on by Federal Law On Information, Information Technologies, and Information Protection of 27 July 2006. Article 3 of this law includes, among the principles underlying the legal regulation of relations arising in the information sphere, the principles of equality of the languages of peoples of the Russian Federation when developing and operating information systems.

Article 8 "Right of Access to Information" says that government agencies and local authorities shall undertake to provide access to infor-

mation about their activities in the Russian language and the state language of the respective republic within the Russian Federation in accordance with federal laws, laws of Russian Federation members, and regulatory legal acts of local authorities. A person wishing to access this information is not required to justify the need to obtain it.

However, current law-enforcement practice still faces problems in equal and broad access to information networks (including the Internet) and information, promoting the development, preservation, and dissemination of information in all languages using all alphabets.

Nevertheless, the number of websites in the languages of peoples of Russia, created by public and private entities with support of federal and regional authorities, foundations and corporations, as well as by individual fans, is steady growing. On the Russian Web, one can find even catalogues of resources presented in cyberspace in these languages. The speed with which these resources grow and new ones appear depends on the speed at which the Internet is reaching out to remote regions and the pace at which the liberally educated intelligentsia is acquiring computer literacy.

Web pages devoted to scholarly study of individual languages are growing, websites in these languages have appeared as well as first national founts for the Internet. For example, the site http://peoples.org.ru/font.html offers set of 25 national character sets for the Windows platform. Fonts can be freely disseminated and modified. Many university departments, faculties, and institutes engage in the teaching and study of languages of Russian Federation peoples maintain their own Web pages.

As the Internet community in Russia is growing, the number, quality, and importance of websites in all the languages of Russia's peoples, including small ones, is steadily growing, too, and this trend will certainly hold out. Yet, there is still no unambiguous answer to the question, whether the development of the Internet and information resources in the languages of small nations of Russia contributes to the preservation of these languages or leads to continuing curtailment of their functions.

Access to Socially Significant Information: Current State, Legal Support, Challenges

The Constitution of the Russian Federation proclaims freedom of information collection, storage and dissemination, and prohibits censorship. Its acting law On the Mass Media was adopted more than 15 years ago. Russian regions—constituent entities of the Federation—have their bylaws On the Access to Information or On Information Right.

The Federal Law On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection, adopted on July 27, 2006, specifies everything that concerns information-related rights and duties of all legal persons in the Russian Federation, and regulates relations arising in:

- exercise of the right of information search, reception, passing, creation and dissemination;
- implementing information technologies;
- protecting information.

The law contains a special clause, The Right of Access to Information.

The law settles a number of major information-related problems. One of them concerns the correlation of information access to which is applied for or provided, with the person having whatever rights to such information. Particular information can be regarded as public domain, other qualifies as state secret, yet another commercial, or pertains to private life. Different patterns of access are naturally applied to each.

On January 18, 2007, the Government of the Russian Federation submitted to parliament a draft federal bill On the Provision of Access to Information Concerning the Activities of Government and Local Self-Government Bodies.

The bill determines the procedure and general terms of public and corporate access to information about the activities of government and local self-government bodies, and aims to guarantee the openness of such information and easy access to it.

According to it, the duties of ruling bodies include guaranteeing access to information about the activities of government and local self-government bodies by all available means, including placing such information on the Internet.

The bill largely resembles related acting laws of North American and European countries.

Prior to its passing, the Russian Federation recurred to a temporary measure—Government Resolution No. 98, of February 12, 2003, which stipulates a list of information the federal executive bodies must make accessible to citizens and organizations, mainly through placing such information on the Internet.

It must be taken into consideration, however, that information access is out of the question without a proper infrastructure. As we regard matters related to broad access to information in general and the Internet, in particular, we must consider the following: Russia presently has 45,000 remote settlements, which are not on the telephone and so are hard put implementing their information rights.

That is why Russia is drafting legislative acts and elaborating legal mechanisms to encourage telephone operators as they provide telecommunications for such remote settlements thus to provide information access. The Federal Law On Communications, of July 7, 2003, demands public Internet facilities for every settlement whose population exceeds 500, with access provided on tariffs regulated by the state to make them affordable—with the minimum possible charges.

The implementation of the right of access to socially important electronic information must also be regarded in close connection with general issues of using information technologies in the everyday routine of government bodies and other social institutions as content makers, and of legal and private persons as its consumers.

The Government of the Russian Federation adopted, on September 27, 2004, a concept of using information technologies in federal ruling bodies' work up to 2010, which promotes such activities.

The concept envisages implementing projects for automated information systems in electronic document circulation, and to mutually integrate government information resources as electronic administrative regulations for government services are introduced.

Databases are formed on federal government bodies' basic activities and placed on special websites for interactive information services to the public and organizations.

The development of public access to IT services is regarded as a future-oriented field. Related efforts include the establishment and development of public services in educational institutions, libraries and post offices, and through wider use of home computers.

The federal target program Electronic Russia: 2002-2010 is the basic mechanism of implementing unified and coordinated state policies in information technology use for federal government activities.

The program includes measures to develop and streamline the legislative and methodological bases of information technology use for federal government activities; of forming a unified infrastructure for information technologies provision to federal government bodies; the creation of national information resources and interdepartmental automated government information systems; and training government officers to use information technologies.

Practically every federal ruling and government body, many regional administrations, and certain local self-government bodies, especially in the larger cities, have their own websites for today.

Russian federal government bodies share a portal, http://www.gov.ru, which provides access to other ruling offices' websites.

Apart from that portal, government bodies unrelated to it have their own websites.

Administrative bodies provide free access to websites on particular matters of major interest.

Thus, bylaws of many levels determine the use of available official sites for information on order placement in the Russian Federation.

Federal Government Resolution No. 229-r, of February 20, 2006, appoints the address of the official Russian Federation website, which carries information about contract placement for commodity supplies, works and services for federal needs, http://www.zakupki.gov.ru.

Certain government offices supply and update such information in a sufficient amount and more or less regularly, while others have formal attitudes to that duty, and fail to provide the required amount of information and duly update it, with insufficient communication servicing.

Coming as an inspiring regional-level instance is the official portal of the Smolensk regional ruling bodies, http://admin.smolensk.ru.

The regional administrative staff regularly monitors the website content of all its executive bodies. Proceeding from such monitoring, executive bodies whose site content does not meet the requirements of regional administration resolution No. 284, of November 5, 2003, On Providing Access to Information about the Activities of the Smolensk Regional Administration and Other Executive Bodies of the Smolensk Region, receive written messages demanding necessary improvements.

Such monitoring and control makes all Smolensk regional administrative departments responsible for their websites, which carry all necessary information and legal acts regulating activities. Such sites also provide application forms for organizations and private persons. There is an Internet reception room, etc.

The region arranged a Best Website contest for regional executive and municipal self-government bodies to further promote their information offers. All regional executive bodies and 23 municipal applied to compete. The contest was summed up on October 27, 2006.

The official regional administration server carries a portal on Smolensk regional government purchases, http://gz.smolensk.ru/index.html, and a database of legal acts, Smolensk Regional Legislation, http://law.admin.smolensk.ru/bpa/.

It is no exaggeration to say that Russian legal information spectacularly improved within the several preceding years. On the one hand, cardinal economic and political changes aroused an acute mass need for legal information, which concerns experts and the public-at-large alike. On the other hand, users are offered sufficiently extensive legal information databases, complete with efficient search means.

The Russian practice gave rise to a very interesting system of circulating legal information. Apart from, government bodies, private companies engaged in that sphere, such as Garant, Kodeks and KonsultantPlus, are prominent in that system.

Many government bodies regularly place legal acts they issue and/or publish on their official websites for free access without databases.

In compliance with Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 1013, of August 7, 2004, and in accordance with government policies of implementing legal information technologies, the Federal

Guard Service organizes the creation, urgent servicing and support of an integrated full-text electronic database of legal information, and provides access to it for federal government bodies, ruling bodies of constituent entities, local self-government bodies, organizations and private persons.

Legal acts of the federal, regional and municipal levels are presently collected, processed and circulated on a centralized pattern by electronic means within the federal legal act circulation network.

In compliance with the acting legislation, the Federal Guard Service, through its subordinate company, the Sistema Technical Research Center, comes as the only federally authorized structure circulating the official texts of federal laws, and legal acts of the President and Government of the Russian Federation in electronic form.

The state also circulates the Electronic Official Legal Information Publications and Periodicals. Apart from collections of bylaws, the publication carries the Bulletin of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, and the Transactions of the Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation.

The private company KonsultantPlus publishes court verdicts in electronic form. Company systems comprise approximately 400,000 legal acts concerning arbitration practice, and the number increases by an annual average exceeding 50,000 verdicts. It is, for today, one of Russia's largest and most comprehensive legal reference resources on arbitration practice. The publication of general jurisdiction court decisions is also improving, though not so spectacularly as with arbitration.

The other commercial companies, Garant and Kodeks, are also successful in that field.

Apart from that, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation also offer information on their own websites. The Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation soon intends to fully digitalize its decisions and provide access to them through the Internet.

Internet dissemination in Russia and optimistic forecasts of its progress pose ever new questions on the goals and the means to attain them in the legal information field, including private online access to such information.

Russia started establishing centers and points of public access to legal information in 1998. They mainly base on public libraries and educational establishments to provide quality information search and servicing. More than 2,000 such centers are active for today. Close on 2.5 million clients received answers there within a few years. Center databases are replenished and updated through a government system for legal act circulation, through the Internet, and through commercial carriers.

The program for such centers was launched more than eight years ago, and their number is steadily growing. There is a great public demand for their services, and local self-government is taking an ever greater interest in them. Thus, close on 70% of centers established in 2006 base on municipal libraries, including rural.

Legal students, practicing lawyers, private entrepreneurs and pensioners are the most active users.

Apart from government bodies, private legal information companies are currently part and parcel of efforts to establish the center network, keep it going, and developing it. Also very active are the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program, and the Nonprofit Partnership of Russian Public Legal Information Centers.

Improvement of Access to Networks and Services

Russian telecommunications are developing apace, and much more rapidly than the Russian economy as a whole.

The federal law On Communications, which entered into force on January 1, 2004, bases on all Russian citizens' equal access to communication services. It either removed or, at least, spectacularly reduced obstacles in the telecommunication market, and established transparent rules, similar for all. It is now simple and easy to obtain a communication service license.

The amendments to the fiscal legislation, which entered into force on January 1, 2007, offer beneficial terms for information technological activities.

Efforts are made to bring Russian bylaws into conformity with the international law. Russia has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on protecting private persons in automated personal data procession, and passed a federal law, On Personal Information.

State regulation means to guarantee and promote fair competition in the telecommunication service market to improve such services and reduce current tariffs. Making the most rapid progress are such market segments as have no state tariff regulation, e.g., mobile telephony—unlike stationary, in which it still exists. Its number of users increases much slower. The interurban and transnational telephone market is further demonopolizing.

Blueprints are made for radio frequency conversion before 2012.

Amendments to the federal law On Communications, passed on March 3, 2006, abolished mobile incoming call payments to make mobile telephony more accessible to persons who cannot afford paying large bills. At present, roughly 60% of Russians are using mobile telephones, approximately 40% have PCs at home, and close on 20% are on the Internet.

Market interests are shifting to digital technologies and communication net convergence.

Communication operators are developing and modernizing local telephone networks, implementing leading-edge technologies, and extending the range of their services.

More than 10,000 post offices in every part of Russia had established public Internet access by the start of 2007.

55,000 schools will join the Internet on wideband channels, at minimum 128 Kb/hr, before the end of 2007 as priority national project Education is implemented. The program promises significant improvement of the country's computer literacy.

Many parts of Russia—in its North, Siberia and Far East—are sparsely populated to make their communication infrastructural progress economically inexpedient. As the result, close on 45,000 small remote settlements are not on the telephone—but Russia plans to cure the matter by the end of 2008.

Open-code Software Development

Russia has ever more enthusiasts of freely circulated open-code software circulation. Generally accessible software has support from the IBM and other Microsoft competitors, and gains ever more users in ad-

ministrative bodies, universities and among programmers to offer Russia an essential alternative in the development of vocational training and the entire IT sector. Many university and interuniversity net administrators choose Linux open programs—a pragmatic choice based on their reliability, adaptability and reasonable prices. Open commercial programs are more welcome than closed in specialist training up to world standards, in student practice, independent programming, and commercial services.

Free software used for government needs dramatically cuts software legalization expenses, promotes Russian software manufacture, and so reduces Russia's technological dependence. Open software is used, for instance, in standardizing document circulation on federal program Electronic Russia.

At least 70% of Russian national Internet domain resources use the Linux, which accounts for roughly 15% of the open-code server software market, say open-code enthusiasts' statistics.

1C products are widely used in Russia, which means that more than half of accounting will shift to open software within several years.

In December 2006, the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications determined to establish an ad hoc team that will blueprint guidelines for free software circulation in Russia.

Trailblazing work has been made to offer prerequisites for such development. Thus, a national Linux verification center has established on the basis of the Systems Programming Institute under the Russian Academy of Sciences. The center was the fullest and the most systematic in verifying the **LSB Core 3.1**. That and other center endeavors received wide acclaim in the international open-code programming community.

Russia has stored ample experience of open-code programming courses. Project www.intuit.ru has been underway for several years. It is popularly known as Online Information Technologies University. Its website offers approximately 30 curricula, each for about six months. The extramural university has 55,000 students, with free tuition.

Open software will survive and make progress as long as alternative mentality stays welcome and universities employ enthusiastic and disinterested programmers. Web development steadily increases their number as they keep on improving generally accessible programs.

Information Literacy Progress as Means to Popularize It and Win Public Confidence in ICT

Information literacy is a way to popularize ICT in Russia, and win public confidence in its implementation and use. A wide range of efforts to promote such literacy involves legislative and executive bodies, educational establishments, libraries, research institutions, and civil society.

Russia implemented government programs for education development in 2001-05, and unified education information environment development in 2001-05. Program Electronic Russia: 2002-2010 is being implemented. All those programs aim to promote the ICT normative and legal basis; information and telecommunication infrastructural development; access to open information systems through the Internet and otherwise; elaboration of the methods of ICT introduction in education, and blueprinting new educational standards and curricula. All those efforts aim to implement Russians' right of free online access to public and government acts/information.

Information literacy efforts by Russian educational establishments concern students at all levels of lifelong learning. The National Education Doctrine of the Russian Federation determines such activities. Among pivotal goals of Russian education, it highlights training well-educated persons and high-class specialists capable of professional progress and career mobility as information technologies penetrate the community and high technologies develop apace.

The Modernization Concept of Russian Education for the Period Up to 2010 and the Modernization Concept of Russian Higher Education for the Period Up to 2010—both elaborated by the Ministry of Education, pay close attention to training people for life in information society, and to substantiating the role of ICT as tool of improving education quality and access.

Information technologies have become a study discipline at every level of education from primary school to postgraduate and doctorate, including postgraduate personnel training in all institutions, whether specializing in sciences or humanities. That is one of the basic ways to promote information literacy in the Russian lifelong learning system. Such studies aim not only at acquiring computer know-how and training the

use of latter-day information systems but also at developing scientific world-views and perceptions, which are necessary for personal fulfillment in information society. Apart from well-established instrumental and technological aspects of information science, its philosophical bases and general scientific methods (such as information approach, information modeling and prognostication) are introduced in education alongside the socio-economic and general civilization aspects of information society development.

Russia has implemented an initiative of its Ministry of Education to get village schools on the Internet. Internet training centers are active in libraries and higher education.

The federal portal www.edu.ru offers information about implementing ICT and improving students' information literacy in Russian education.

Libraries are also prominent in the information literacy drive. They train their users, whether researchers, production personnel, cultural activists, students or others, in the ABC of information search and collection on paper and electronic carriers, making abstracts, arranging personal files, and content and structural analysis of documents on problems under study or elaboration. Ever more attention is paid to training work with information on latter-day carriers.

Research institutions (higher educational establishments, departmental research institutes, and research branches of large libraries) are also working to promote public information education. They elaborate the theoretical and methodological fundamentals of preparing the community to live in information society, and information education methods and techniques. They develop experimental efforts to implement the methods and technologies of improving information literacy of the various population groups. They arrange and host research and practical conferences and seminars, and prepare publications. Siberia, for one, possesses a Research Institute of Information Technologies in the Social Sphere. Established under the Kemerovo State University of Culture and the Arts in 2001, the institute is regional UNESCO IFAP implementation center, which specializes in the problems of personal information literacy and culture. The institute elaborated and tested a concept and

technology of personal information culture formation, which educational establishments and libraries are implementing in many parts of Russia. It formed a package of curricula and teaching aids to guarantee fruitful personal information culture formation in general and vocational schools, colleges, universities, and libraries. Summing up all those many-year studies is a fundamental monograph by N.I. Gendina, N.I. Kolkova, G.A. Starodubova and Y.V. Ulenko, published in 2006: *The Formation of Personal Information Culture: Theoretical Substantiation and Modeling of Study Discipline Content*.

Research achievements in elaborating the theoretical and methodological bases of personal information culture formation and improving public information literacy find reflection in academic theses and numerous related publications. Thus, a bibliographic index on personal information culture, made by the Kemerovo State University of Culture and the Arts research library, comprises 823 works published in 1973−2006.

The Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program, which enjoys government support, is carrying on fruitful work to promote pubic information literacy and culture in Russia. The Committee organized many events in all parts of Russia for that goal. Several pivotal events deserve special mention:

- The international conference, UNESCO Information for All Program: the Development of National and International Information Policies (Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, 2003);
- The international conference, UNESCO Information for All Program: General Access to Information (St. Petersburg, 2004);
- The international conference, UNESCO between the Two Phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (St. Petersburg, 2005);
- The international conference, Personal Information Culture: Information Society Challenges (Moscow, 2006);
- UNESCO IFAP Days in Kuzbas (2003, 2005 and 2006).

Russian researchers were active in an IFLA international project probing public information literacy.

Reaffirming the Equitable Balance Between the Interests of Rights-Holders and the Public Interest

Recently, the Russian copyright and allied rights law has suffered dramatic changes. A goal of the Russian legislative bodies was to bring the national copyright laws into compliance with the international laws, inclusive of those Russia is planning to join in future, and to ensure their harmonization and concordance with the laws of the European Union.

To-date, the relations in this field are governed by the Russian Federation Law "On Copyright and Allied Rights" of July 9, 1993 (with the subsequently approved additions and amendments). The latest updates were introduced by the Federal Law of July 20, 2004. They succeeded a lot in improving the governance of the relations in creating and using the results of the creative activity in the cyberspace.

To enhance the protection, the latest version of the above Law treats as violation of the copyright and allied rights the bypass of technical means and removal or amendment of the copyright-holder information.

Additionally, on April 8, 2003, the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation was amended to harden the responsibility for violating the copyright and allied rights to the extent of imprisonment up to the 5 years term.

The latest version of the Copyright and Allied Rights Law includes the provision which is new for the Russian law and proclaims the authority of the copyright and allied rights holders to impart the result of their creative activity to the public. By doing this, the Russian law has brought its provisions in this field in compliance with the standards of the 1996 WIPO Copyright Treaty and WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty.

Even the original text of this Law ensured protection of the results of creative activity available in the digital form.

In compliance with the international treaties signed by the Russian Federation, the legislation contains several exceptions and limitations of the rights of the copyright and allied rights holders so as to enforce the constitutional rights of people to the access to cultural values, information, freedom of occupation, education, and participation in the cultural life. At that, no exceptions should cause unlawful damage to the

standard use of the objects of the copyright and allied rights or incur conditions for violation of the interests of legal right-holders.

From January 1, 2008, the Copyright and Allied Rights Law and the Law of the Russian Federation "On the Legal Protection of Computer Programs and Databases" was abrogated, and the relations in connection with the creation and use of the results of creative activity are governed by the provisions of Part IV of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation signed by the President of the Russian Federation on December 18, 2006. The provisions of this Part IV repeat to a great extent those of the previously effective legislation.

Thus, computer programs are treated as copyright objects and, with respect to protection, are set equal to literary compositions; subject to protection are compositions in the digital form irrespective of their original or subsequent presentation.

Copyright is created irrespective of the formalities, though, with respect to computer programs and databases, this right may be subject to registration at the right-holder's will.

Among the novels of the Civil Code one should mention a new allied rights subject—the database producer, though its rights are limited to 15 years.

In general, the level of the Russian copyright and allied rights law sufficiently complies with its international counterparts, though its practice still poses a problem, because the required traditions have not been formed since the drastic revision of the doctrine in the beginning of the 1990s.

Language Policy in Certain Constituent Entities of the Russian Federation

Elmir Yakubov

Republic of Dagestan

The all-Russia population census of 2002 recorded 122 ethnic entities in Dagestan.

The republic has no titular nationality. Possessing relevant political attributes are 14 ethnic entities, whose languages belong to three families:

- the Nakho-Dagestani subgroup of the Ibero-Caucasian language family: ***Avar*** (with 13 entities whose independent languages are related to it—Andi, Akhvakh, Archi, Bagulal, Bezhtin, Chamalal, Ginukh, Godoberi, Gunib, Didoi, Karati, Khvarshi and Tindal), ***Agul, Dargin*** (including Kaitag and Kubachi), ***Lak***, ***Lezgian***, ***Rutul***, ***Tabasaran***, ***Tsakhur*** and ***Chechen*** (Akka Chechen included);
- the Turkic group of the Altai language family: ***Kumyk***, ***Azerbaijani*** and ***Nogai***;
- the Indo-European language family: ***Russian*** and ***Tat***.

Though the Constitution of the Republic of Dagestan qualifies Russian and the languages of Dagestani peoples as its official languages (Clause 11), it does not contain a list of Dagestani peoples and languages—not because it shrugs the matter off. On the contrary, it attaches them tremendous importance. Whatever attempt to put a limited list of peoples and languages on a legislative footing would raise a tsunami of mutually clashing public protests and arguments defying settlement.

The linguistic situation is all the more complicated as the precise number of present-day Dagestani languages is unknown. There are rough references to 60 independent verbal languages.

The great specificity of many Dagestani dialects hampers the development of standard written languages of the peoples speaking them. Thus, Avar (in the narrow sense of this ethnicon, which leaves out 13 or even more

languages) has another seven clearly pronounced dialects—the Khunzakh, Antsukh, Andalal, Karakh, Salatav, Gid and Batlukh. The Khunzakh has been used for more than 300 years as warriors' koine (*bolmats*, lit. "soldier language") of the entire Inner Dagestan (so-called Avaristan). That is why not only the Avar proper but all Avar, including speakers of the 13 said dialects, are rather fluent in Khunzakh. *Bolmats* is to this day a strong influence on the ethnic self-identification of the entire population of Avaristan. The contemporary written Avar took shape on the basis of *bolmats*.

The Dargin ethnicity brings together three mutually independent though closely related languages—Dargin, Kaitag and Kubachi. Dargin subdivides in dialects, the most pronounced of which are Akusha, Urakhi and Tsudakhar. These differences reflect the versatility of Jamaats, political alliances, of the traditional Darginia. Experts say that differences between the dialects are great enough to rule out mutual understanding in oral communication. The Dargin have no koine (contact language) because they did not need any. The Avar *bolmats* brought together Jamaats speaking different dialects and mutually independent languages. The sporadic Dargin alliances, on the contrary, had no need for unity. Written Dargin emerged in Soviet years, and based on the Akusha dialect of the center of the Akusha-Dargo, the most influential of alliances. Monitoring and opinion polls show that the Dargin are reluctant to study their own written language and talk between themselves in their native dialects, preferring Russian when they meet Dargins from other Jamaats.

The Lezgin better understand each other's dialects, with differences pronounced not so well. Written Lezgin, however, bases on the Kyuri dialect and has small attraction, let say, to people of the highly influential Jamaat of Akhty, or Akhty-para, who speak their own Lezgic dialect, the Akhty.

The people of Dagestan make it a point to know Russian, which spectacularly enhances their social mobility and career. Russian in Dagestan is no mere interethnic contact language but a national language, the basis of community life, politics, academic studies and a greater part of culture.

Thus, the progress of Dagestani written languages is impaired, on the one hand, by independent Jamaat languages and dialects and, on the other hand, by Russian, which has assumed the functions of koine for speakers of the many local dialects. That is why the Dagestani—the Avar

being the only exception—little care about their own written languages, preferring their community tongue plus Russian.

Dagestani intellectuals are alarmed, and say that an all-round crisis is raging in their multi-ethnic republic. This crisis affects population reproduction and ethnic culture, spreading to the public mind and everyday routine. The Dagestani are steadily losing their ethnic identity. They no longer care about it, and pay far greater attention to other ethnic values.

The young generation is losing interest in the native language and culture. According to the population census of 2002, the number of speakers of every Dagestani language closely coincides with that of its hereditary speakers. Things are just the contrary in reality due to urbanization, interethnic marriages, labor migration, ethnic nihilism and other factors of contemporary life.

Aware of the necessity to preserve ethnic languages as the basis of ethnic cultural communities with information increasingly unified, Dagestani authorities pay great attention to the promotion of multilingualism in every sphere of public life.

Annual presidential messages to the community promise further state support of ethnic cultures, languages, press and book publishing. Recently adopted republican laws and comprehensive programs envisage streamlining the regional language policy.

The republican Popular Assembly passed, on February 27, 2008, a bill on the adoption of a program for the development of interethnic relations in Dagestan for 2008-2010. The implementation of this government program will help to harmonize interethnic relations, and cancel or at least reduce problems in that field.

The program limits language policy to three goals—the establishment of a permanent government commission for orthography and terms; the establishment of republican school contests of the knowledge of Dagestani ethnic languages, customs and traditions; and drafting a republican program of ethnic language preservation and development. The program also envisages allocations to ethnic language teaching aid publication.

The comprehensive program should be regarded as additional measures to what ministries, other central offices and municipalities are already doing.

The Gamzat Tsadasa Institute of Language, Literature and Art established, in 2005, an academic council on Dagestani languages and their functioning. Led by Gaji Gamzatov, Full Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and brother of classic Avar poet Rasul Gamzatov, the council aims to study conditions necessary for the survival of the endangered languages of Dagestani ethnic minorities, considering the difference of their social status and that of the larger entities, and the provisos of coexistence of smaller and bigger languages.

The Dagestani Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences is working at spelling, explanatory and bilingual dictionaries. This is an essential work as recorded vocabularies reduce the danger of language extinction. In certain instances, a dictionary is the only chance to preserve a language. Comprehensive academic Russian-Dagestani dictionaries of the basic written languages, put out in 2003-2008, were a landmark. Each of those dictionaries contains 30-40 thousand entries. Dagestani-Russian dictionaries are being prepared for print. Dagestani researchers have published ten dictionaries of non-literate languages with support from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (Germany) and the Leiden University (the Netherlands).

The Dagestani State University hosted the international research conference "Languages of the World and the Problem of Tolerance in Linguo-cultural Interaction in the Multiethnic Space" in 2007. It discussed problems related to the Dagestani language policy, interlingual contacts, bilingualism and multilingualism, and the functioning of Russian as a tool of interethnic contacts in Dagestan.

The fundamental program of the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences "Adaptation of Peoples and Cultures to Changes of the Natural Environment and Social and Industrial Transformations" includes a section on "Cultural and Language Dynamism in the Historical Retrospective". The latter is implementing the project "The Russian Language and Dagestani Languages: Functioning in a Multiethnic Milieu" under the leadership of prominent philologist Professor Boris Atayev. In 2006-2007, the think-tank studied the reasons for current extinguishing of non-literate languages, and analyzed the ways to stop the process and conditions under which languages would survive. The team also elaborated the methods of protecting ethnic minority rights. Con-

cerning the bill On the Languages of the Peoples of Dagestan, the team advises to fix the de facto status of Russian as Dagestan's only official languages, while the ethnic languages should be qualified as "national languages of Dagestan with relevant competences".

Great hopes for improving the complicated language situation in Dagestan are pinned on the Interregional Center for the Languages and Cultures of South Russian Peoples, recently established by the Russian Academy of Sciences. The center will help to pool efforts of a wide range of humanitarian experts—philologists, culturologists, ethnologists and political scientists—in drafting a science-based federal and regional language policy. The center is planning fundamental and applied research, and personnel training on macroregional languages and cultures.

Among research priorities of the center is to determine conditions for the preservation of unique Dagestani multilingualism as a cultural factor of national integration. Influential experts deem it necessary to pass the comprehensive regional law On Languages of the Peoples of Dagestan, which has been drafted for ten years now, and launch a related government program for the preservation and development of those languages. The program should envisage profound studies of the language situation in the republic, support of ethnic languages and the greatest possible promotion of multilingualism, which fully complies with the spirit of the Federal Law On the Languages of Peoples of the Russian Federation.

Not merely cultures of different types but also different models of cultural conduct exist side-by-side in Dagestan—hence the unique function of its general education. The ethnic school faces an unprecedented psychological and pedagogical duty—to promote mutual understanding, shared opinions and teamwork in an area where cultural and philosophical diversity is an established norm.

In compliance with the Dagestani republican law On Education, Russian and native languages shall be tuition languages in the republic (Clause 5, Para 1), while educational institutions with tuition in Russian shall make native languages a compulsory discipline (Clause 5, Para 5). The law limits the right of basic education in the native language and of choosing the tuition language with opportunities offered by the educational system of the republic (Clause 5, Para 2).

The native language is among basic disciplines in general education school of all types. Schools with mono-ethnic pupils have the native language for tuition in the first four grades later to shift to Russian. Native language studies have 5 academic hours a week in the 1st grade, later to shrink to an hour in the 11th, final. Pupils of such schools are fluent in their native language, reveal its profound knowledge, and engage in research and creative writing in it.

Schools with multi-ethnic pupils, mainly urban, have an hour or two a week for the native language. Mono-ethnic study groups of the same age are formed for one language class a week, mostly outside compulsory curricula. Such studies after classes are to small effect.

To enhance students' interest in their native languages, Dagestan arranges annual contests, whose winners can enter the Dagestani Philology Department of the Dagestani State University without entrance examinations.

Tuition and teaching methods steadily improve. 300 study books in 13 languages, with a total 1,926,380 copies, have been published since 2000, and another 65 books are being prepared for print. Related republican allocations made 25 million rubles within the preceding three years. Regrettably, Dagestan is still short of study books in ethnic languages despite all that, and another 48 million rubles or more is necessary.

Up to 250 ethnic language teachers graduate from the Dagestani State University, the Dagestani State Pedagogical University and four teacher-training colleges every year. More than 950 teachers a year undergo postgraduate studies on varying curricula of the Dagestani Postgraduate Teacher-Training Institute. Still, schools remain undermanned, though to a tolerable extent. Government personnel review boards point out inadequate school and inspection monitoring of native language tuition.

A majority of pre-school institutions are in multi-ethnic towns. Many kindergartens have native language classes on methods elaborated by the Alibek Taho-Godi Dagestani Pedagogical Research Institute.

Research and method-setting agencies of the Dagestani Education and Science Ministry offer assistance to ethnic Dagestanis in Georgia, Azerbaijan, the Stavropol Territory, Chechnya, North Ossetia and

Kalmykia with studies of ethnic- and region-related disciplines, provide them with study books and teaching aids, and train teachers.

The extended-attendance board session of the Education and Science Ministry of April 26, 2007, held a discussion on measures to promote ethnic- and region-related studies in Dagestan. Its decisions envisage a set of measures to improve school tuition of native languages.

Dagestan has a sufficiently ramified information structure and fairly beneficial conditions to implement the constitutional right of information—in particular, in ethnic languages.

More than 400 printed and electronic media outlets have been registered in the republic. There are approximately 200 newspapers and magazines, with varying periodicity. More than 90 of them, with a 7 million total circulation for 2007, were established by government and municipal bodies.

The republican parliament and government are founders of the magazine *Dagestani Woman*, published in seven languages. The Dagestani Writers' Union puts out literary magazines—*Friendship* (in Avar), *Rainbow* (Dargin), *Morning Star* (Kumyk), *New Moon* (Lak), *Samur* (Lezgian) and the *Falcon Fledgling* children's magazine in Avar, Dargin, Kumyk, Lak, Lezgian, Nogai and Tabasaran.

Dagestani socio-political newspapers come out in 14 languages, and are unique for versatility.

There is an alarming trend, however. Dagestani-language press circulations are shrinking as growing printing and sale expenses steadily reduce subscription. The pres personnel is also partly to blame with slow updating the activity to preserve and promote ethnic languages, insufficient attention to public demands, and laxity with profit enhancing, so that the press depends to this day on republican allocations.

The electronic media are developing apace. The Dagestan republican state broadcasting corporation was established in 2004, and works side-by-side with the state radio and television company of the same name, which is a branch of the All-Russia State Radio and Television Company, or VGTRK.

The latter offers radio broadcasts in 14 languages—Avar, Dargin, Kumyk, Lak and Lezgian 50 minutes a day; and 20-30 minutes a day in Agul, Azerbaijani, Nogai, Rutul, Tabasaran, Tat, Tsakhur and Chechen.

Television broadcasts are in 12 languages, while the state corporation has its television casts in seven. Regrettably, the running time of radio broadcasting in ethnic languages is shrinking, while ethnic-language television casts are inferior to Russian-language ones.

Dagestani multilingualism is reflected in cyberspace. Research and educational institutions engaged in Dagestani linguistic problems have their Internet pages, which offer research materials on particular languages. There are websites in Avar, Kumyk, Lak, Lezgian, Tabasaran and Tat. Ethnic types are being elaborated for Dagestani languages.

The amount of Internet materials in those languages is scanty yet—for a number of reasons. The Internet slowly advances to outlying parts of Dagestan, there are problems with ethnic types, and public computer competence is still inadequate. The number of users is increasing, however, and ethnic websites will surely grow in number and acquire greater influence, what with the importance of the Internet as a remedy against geographic dispersion of ethnic minorities.

Republic of Karelia

The Republic of Karelia is a multi-ethnic area, with a population of 690,600. More than 150 ethnic entities are represented here, according to the all-Russia population census of 2002. The greatest share belongs to the Russian (76.6 %), Karelian (9.2 %), Belarusian (5.3 %), Ukrainian (2.7%), Finnish (2.05%) and Vepsian (0.7 %).

The republic presently has 40 ethnic public organizations, including ethnic cultural autonomies, which come as a major stabilizing factor of Karelian community and political life.

The recent history of the revival and development of ethnic languages and cultures in Karelia started 20 years ago, when the ethnic language policy was launched in the republic. It began with a public discussion by the academic community of Karelian and Vepsian language revival problems. Karelian and Vepsian appeared at that time in the curricula of certain general educational establishments, the Karelian and Vepsian alphabets were approved and the development of writing started, the first study books, primers and newspapers in these languages came out, and ethnic language university chairs appeared. That was the time of the first television broadcasts and fiction in ethnic languages, and initial dynamic activities of public cultural organizations of the Karelian, Vepsian and Ingrian (or Ingermanland) Finns.

Karelia has passed since then about 30 regulatory acts (laws, government decrees, programs, concepts, etc.) to promote Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish cultural and linguistic interests with an emphasis on the educational, cultural and creative aspects of language development, and on the restoration of the multi-functionality of the Karelian and Vepsian languages. Deserving special mention were the republican government decrees "On the Republican Programs for the Finno-Ugrian School in the Republic of Karelia for 2000-2002", "Ethnic Cultural Education in the Republic of Karelia for 2003-2005", and "On Measures for the Development and Interethnic Cooperation of Peoples Inhabiting the Republic of Karelia for 2002-2005", to mention but three.

Guidelines of implementing the state policy of ethnic development, interethnic relations and cooperation with religious organizations in the Republic of Karelia up to 2020 were adopted in 2007.

The republican Prime Minister decreed, in 1998, the establishment of the Republican Commission on Terms and Orthography under the republican President. Preservation, development and long-term promotion of Karelian and Vepsian as native languages of indigenous ethnic entities are its basic goals.

The presidential Council of Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish Representatives was set up on a public initiative in 2001. Its meetings analyze the implementation of constitutional rights, the state of ethnic languages and cultures, and social problems of the Baltic-Finnish ethnic entities in the places they traditionally inhabit.

The determination of language-related political priorities, the choice of language and writing, and its social and political functions is among crucial matters accompanying ethnic processes. This has been so, and stays so to this day. Karelia is, to all appearances, the only constitutional entity of the Russian Federation, and the only entity in the Finno-Ugrian community of Russia, which possesses three Baltic-Finnish languages—Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish, though those ethnic entities put together make a mere 10% of the republic's population.

The ethno-linguistic policy perpetrated in Karelia stipulates equal opportunities for the development and functioning of all these three mutually independent languages, and regards linguistic diversity as one of the most valuable parts of the European cultural heritage. This point is fixed in the republican Law on the State Support of the Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish Languages, passed in 2004. The preamble says, in particular, that "the Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish languages belong to the national endowment of the Republic of Karelia and, alongside other ethnic languages of the Republic of Karelia, shall be under its protection." Karelian and Vepsian are languages of the indigenous population of the republic, while Finnish is the language of a historically formed sub-ethnic entity, which is closely related to Karelian and Vepsian and has played an inestimable role at the stage of their written development and the emergence of higher education in those languages. We recognize and value its contribution.

The present day demands full-fledged paternalistic policies toward Karelian and Vepsian, with government agencies and the public proportionately sharing responsibilities for the fate of those languages. This point is reflected in the regional target program On State Support of the Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish languages in the Republic of Karelia for 2006-2010, which was adopted within the limits of the relevant law and envisages collegial discussion of practical measures. This program is a tool of implementing the state nationalities policy in the sphere of preserving and developing ethnic languages. It envisages improvement of language tuition in the educational institutions of the republic, enlargement of the network of educational institutions of various types with an ethnic cultural component of the academic content, quantitative and qualitative improvement of services in ethnic cultural education and traditional culture, the preservation and progress of presently available media outlets in the Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish languages, the training and retraining of relevant specialists, and monitoring of language research, study and use.

To guarantee ethnic political and social stability in the Republic of Karelia, promote tolerant views and conduct, and prevent extremist moods and interethnic and interreligious conflicts, the regional target program Harmonization of Interethnic and Interdenominational Relations, and Promotion of Civil Accord in the Republic of Karelia for 2007-2011, under the motto "Karelia: The Territory of Accord", was elaborated. The republican government approved it with decree No. 22r-II of January 25, 2007. The program facilitated targeted support of public organizations in implementing socially important initiatives to promote the cultural dialogue and civil accord. A notable program achievement was made in 2007 with the establishment of the information portal The Ethnic World of Karelia www.etnomir.onego.ru, which carries information about ethnic public organizations of Karelia, and the languages, cultures and traditions of peoples inhabiting it.

The current language policy has launched unprecedented cultural-historical and political processes that determine the basis of national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the republic. The community has realized the necessity of paying ethnic languages the attention they deserve, and come to an accord on it.

Ethnic writers, musicians, actors and artists are more active than ever before. Their work finds appreciation in the republic and far outside it. We cannot but mention the efforts of the State National Theatre of

the Republic of Karelia to promote the Finnish and Karelian languages and traditional Karelian culture. The youth is much more interested than before in developing the Karelian and Vepsian languages and culture.

The 9th international congress of Finno-Ugrian writers, Writer—Literature—Reader (Petrozavodsk, September 2006) highlighted the profundity and stability of ethnic literary development in Karelia. The number of writers admitted to professional unions is skyrocketing, Karelian-language authors making a majority. The government company Periodika Publishers is carrying on the traditions of publishing the latest literary works in Baltic-Finnish languages.

Karelian researchers are active in archeology, linguistics, ethnology, folklore studies, history and toponymy of Karelia. Signs bearing the names of settlements in ethnic languages have been manufactured and placed in Baltic-Finnish-populated localities since 2006 on the republican target program State Support of the Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish Languages in the Republic of Karelia for 2006-2010.

The republican government pays major attention to the preservation of a network of educational establishments with ethnic cultural curricula, improvement of their material and technical basis, and training qualified professors.

In 2005-2006, the republican Education Ministry drew and approved basic republican curricula for general educational establishments and establishments with an ethnic cultural component of tuition. A stride forward was made with the adoption of the regional (ethnic regional) component of the state general educational standard of the Republic of Karelia. New-generation teaching aids on ethnic languages are being drafted.

Urban and rural settlements densely populated by the Karelian and Vepsian actively revive folk festivals.

Specialists on the Karelian and Vepsian languages and culture are trained with prospects of employment in education, cultural and research institutions, and the mass media.

The elaboration of a standard Karelian language is one of the most important goals and labor-consuming tasks—a lengthy, multi-stage process. It is essential for Karelian language researchers to bring their opinions to an accord and spotlight sophisticated linguistic phenomena, in particular, grammar, that demand reduction to a standard. Parallel to

this work, it is necessary to explain it to Karelian language teachers and promote the idea of the unified language through the media. The presidential commission for terms and spelling is active in the work at unified written Karelian and further efforts to bring its vocabulary into order. The comprehensive program Development of the Karelian Language in Karelia in 2008-2020 was drawn during work on that task.

The State National Library of the Republic of Karelia is one of the leading institutions working to preserve and develop the Karelian and Vepsian languages. Its collection comprises more than a million books in many languages, more than 500,000 copies of periodicals, sheet music, audio-visual and electronic editions, maps and microfilms, including more than 40,000 documents on Karelian history, culture, science, economy and community life in Russian, Karelian, Vepsian, Finnish and other languages. The library offers extensive bibliographic and reference services with traditional and electronic catalogues and files, and a reference literature collection. The entire library collection is reflected in basic users' alphabetical and thematic catalogues, and a general alphabetical catalogue for the personnel. The work at the electronic catalogue started in 1993. At present, it comprises more than 700,000 documents. The library has central catalogues in Karelian (Karelica) and Vepsian (Vepsica). The Karelica includes editions in Karelian or containing Karelian-language texts from many libraries of Karelia and the Russian National Library (pre-revolutionary Karelian-language editions). It includes editions on linguistics, literary history, religion, natural sciences, geography, biology, art, history, law, pedagogic, mathematics, physics, economics, agriculture and ethnology, as well as folklore and fiction. The Vepsica includes editions on linguistics, literary history, religion, natural sciences, geography and mathematics, as well as folklore and fiction. The catalogues are alphabetically arranged and supplemented with a subject index. Every description is concisely annotated in Russian. The Karelian Ministry for Nationalities Policy and Contacts with Religious Organizations and the National Library of the Republic of Karelia launched their joint project Electronic Library in 2006 for libraries in the areas traditionally populated by the Karelian and Vepsian. Three disks with electronic versions of books came out in 2006-2007.

154 titles in Karelian, Vepsian, Finnish and Russian were put out in 1992-2007—translations and research literature on the Baltic-Finnish (Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish) languages and culture—in a total 187,400 copies.

They include electronic editions—in particular, a Dictionary of the Karelian Language (Karelian-Russian and Russian-Karelian, http://webslovar.ru). Petrozavodsk State University professors have prepared off-campus Karelian and Finnish language curricula (http://webct.ru).

The annual republican contest Book of the Year was established in 2000, with a statute approved by a republican presidential decree. All books published in Karelia within the calendar year are welcome to compete. The library exhibits the previous year's books in March and April for the jury to make its choice in the categories Best Printing, Best Design, Best Children's Book, and Best Book in Karelian, Vepsian or Finnish. Three money prizes and several honor certificates are awarded in each category. The book that wins the greatest number of awards receives the title of Book of the Year. The decoration ceremony is on April 23, World Book and Copyright Day.

Periodika Publishers specializes in ethnic-language books and periodicals—six newspapers, among them *Oma mua*, in the Livvik dialect, and *Vienan Karjala*, in Karelian proper, and two literary and art magazines that regularly carry contributions in Karelian—*Carelia* and children's *Kipin* . They are circulated in Karelia, the Russian Federation and Finland. The circulation of every issue is permanent—from 500 copies for *Vienan Karjala* to 860 for *Carelia*.

The Karelian Ministry for Nationalities Policy and Contacts with Religious Organizations joined hands with local self-government bodies of the Olonets and Kalevala ethnic municipal districts and the Pryazhino and Louhi municipal districts in 2004 to publish Karelian-language pages in printed periodicals.

The State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company Karelia has ethnic-language programs. Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish have an equal presence in electronic media outlets. All government television and radio companies in the All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (VGTRK) switched to a unified grid on August 11, 2003, throughout the Russian Federation, after which the Karelia slightly extended the total length of ethnic-language programs to 50 minutes a week.

Language development is one of the most socially important aspects of life in Karelia, and to arrange it the best possible way is one of the crucial goals as thriving ethnic languages promote civil accord and consolidate the community through guarantees of full satisfaction of ethnic linguistic and cultural demands. This is why language development needs state regulation.

Zilya Valeeva

Republic of Tatarstan

The all-Russia population census of 2002 specifies the population of Tatarstan as 3.8 million (a 3.4% increase—by 137,500—since the 1987 census). Of these, Tatars account for 52.9% and Russians 39.5%. Tatar and Russian are official languages. The share of Tatars has grown by 4.4% since 1989 due to immigration and higher birth rates, while that of Russians has shrunken to 3.8%.

Tatarstan adopted a number of republican laws on ethnic cultural development in the 1990s and the present decade—On Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan, of July 8, 1992, and its amended and supplemented version On the Official Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan, of July 28, 2004; On the Protection and Use of Historical Cultural Values, of October 2, 1996; On Culture, of July 3, 1998; On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Communities, of July 14, 1999; On the reinstitution of the Roman-based Tatar Alphabet, of September 15, 1999; On Ethnic Cultural Autonomies in the Republic of Tatarstan, of April 11, 2003; On the Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Tatarstan, of April 2005, and others. Each of these laws stresses the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural arrangement of the republic, and many religions coexisting there. However, certain instruments of the 1990s emphasized, to an extent, the support of the titular nation's language and culture in the transition period.

The regional language policy found reflection in the developmental programs and concepts of education, languages and culture adopted in the 1990s-2000s. In particular, the State Program of the Republic of Tatarstan for the Preservation, Study and Development of the Languages of Tatarstan was adopted in 1994, and a draft concept of the republican language policy elaborated in 1999. These documents determined the goals and implementation mechanisms of the republican language policy, whose essence lay in the acquisition of the official status by the Tatar language to get it on a par with Russian, and providing practical conditions to extend the field of its social functioning.

The second ten-year State Program of the Republic of Tatarstan for the Preservation, Study and Development of the Official Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan entered into force in 2004. The implementation of the latest information technologies in humanities and formation of databases on the Tatar language and culture is one of the program targets. Apart from the development of the Tatar and Russian languages, the program envisages promoting the preservation and development of the languages of other ethnic entities populating Tatarstan, and the improvement of general speech culture and interlinguistic tolerance.

Tatarstan has formed an integrated system of satisfying the cultural and educational demands of its ethnic groups. Out of a total 2,261 comprehensive schools, 1,147 have tuition in Tatar—of these 92 grammar schools, lyceums and schools with extended curricula of certain disciplines. 380 schools have classes with bilingual—Tatar and Russian tuition. The republic has 119 Chuvash, 44 Udmurt, 20 Mari, 4 Mordovian schools and 1 Bashkir. There is a school with Jewish ethnic cultural curricula, where modern Hebrew and Jewish history, culture and traditions are taught, and a kindergarten where modern Hebrew is spoken.

The study of Tatar and Russian is compulsory in all general educational institutions in compliance with Clause 9 of the Law On the Official Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan. At present, all schoolchildren are studying Russian, and 99.8% Tatar. 53% of Tatar Children study in their native language.

52 weekend schools teach languages of 27 nationalities (Ukrainian, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Polish, German, Yiddish, Georgian, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Bashkir, Lezgin, Assyrian, several languages of the Volga country, Arabic, French, English, Italian, Hindi, Pashtu and others).

Tatar is spoken in 67% of kindergartens. Their number has grown from 692 in 1988 to 876 in 2008. Another 532 kindergartens have Russian- and Tatar-speaking groups. 69% of Tatar children are brought up in their native tongue. There are also 51 Chuvash, 14 Udmurt and 10 Mari kindergartens.

15% wage rises come as an incentive for bilingual, Tatar-Russian employees. The annual contest Teacher of the Year has categories Best Tatar-Language Teacher Year and Best Russian-Language Teacher.

The population approves the official status of two languages. 88% of Tatar parents and 44% Russian approve the tuition of Tatar in Russian-language schools. 82% of respondents acknowledge the necessity of a working command of Russian and Tatar for government functionaries, and 79% for consumer services.

The number of Russians knowing the Tatar language grew from 1.1% in 1989 to 4.3% in 2002. 43% of Russians understood spoken Tatar, to varying extents, and 16% spoke it in 2002. 76% of Tatar respondents were fluent in their native language, and another 16% spoke it fairly well.

However, a considerable part of Tatars seldom use the language outside home.

Secondary vocational training and higher education also extend tuition in Tatar, though not so dynamically as secondary education. 10 vocational schools have tuition in Tatar, as compared to 7 in 1989. Each college or university applicant can choose Tatar or Russian for entrance examinations. 12 higher educational establishments had established classes with tuition in Tatar by 2002. The Tatarstani State Humanitarian Pedagogical University, established in 2005, widely uses Tatar in tuition.

The total collection of Tatarstani libraries exceeds 24.8 million copes, more than 4.7 million of these in other languages used in the Russian Federation than Russian. The collection of literature of the Volga country peoples comprises 153,700 documents. There are 10.9 books per capita for ethnic Russians, 2.2 for Tatars, 0.9 Chuvash, 0.42 Mari, 0.77 Udmurt, 0.06 Mordovian, and 0.03 Bashkir. The Culture Ministry of Tatarstan makes regular allocations for the purchase of literature of the Volga country peoples.

The National Library, the largest in the republic, has more than 3 million copies, 96,000 of these in Tatar. Work to establish the Tatar-language National Electronic Library started in 2007 to include 100 Tatar classics. It is on the website of the National Library of the Republic of Tatarstan (http://www.kitaphane.ru/links/index.shtml). Close on a thousand virtual calls are registered every day, coming from the whole world— in particular, from the United States, Australia, Japan and Iraq.

Places densely populated by ethnic Diasporas have 220 libraries (147 Chuvash, 32 Udmurt, 24 Mari, 14 Mordovian and 3 Bashkir). 20 centralized library systems have libraries or desks for Diasporas, and 14 libraries are zonal cultural method-setting centers for ethnic Diasporas.

Tatarstan has an Association of Ethnic Cultural Societies, which unites 33 such societies, and a House of Friendship.

35.3% of all Tatars in the Russian Federation and 31.2% of the entire Tatar people live in Tatarstan. The republic satisfies cultural and linguistic demands of Tatars outside it in compliance with Russia's state policy of support for compatriots living abroad, and with Clause 14 of the Constitution of Tatarstan and Clause 2.4 of the Treaty on the Delineation of Competences between State Ruling Bodies of the Russian Federation and of the Republic of Tatarstan.

Tatarstan offers regional ethnic Tatar societies research method setting and other assistance mainly through agreements treaties on interregional cooperation, which envisage promotion of cultural development. The republic has for today concluded such agreements with 68 Russian regions, a majority of CIS countries and some other post-Soviet countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova).

The Executive Committee of the World Tatar Congress coordinates activities of ethnic cultural organizations and Tatar communities in Russia and other countries within and outside the former Soviet area. The Congress presently unites 358 Tatar ethnic cultural organizations—68 outside the former Soviet Union, 81 in other former Soviet republics, 164 in the Russian Federation and 46 in Tatarstan.

The problems of preservation of the Tatar language and ethnic cultural development are especially acute in other parts of the Russian Federation and abroad, whether in or outside the former Soviet Union. Tatarstan made agreements with other Russian regions on which interregional Tatar language and literature contests were established in 1992. They gather more than 60 school pupils from 16-20 Russian regions every year. The Duslyk summer camp, based on the Zarechye camp in Kazan and established in 1997, provides Tatar language practice. It accommodated 190 schoolchildren from 23 Russian regions in 2007. A similar camp, the Mizgel, appeared in Naberezhnye Chelny in 2002.

The republican Education and Science Ministry holds Tatar Public Education Days in Russian regions. It has organized 24 such events since 2002 with delegations of Tatar educationists visiting previously appointed areas for methodological assistance and educational opinion exchanges. 30 such visits took place in 2005-2007.

Tatarstan launched a project, supported by the federal ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education and Science and federally funded, in 2004 to enroll ethnic Tatars from other CIS countries and post-Soviet Baltic countries in Tatarstani higher educational institutions. Leading institutions have prepared entrance tests in 10 disciplines for examinations held in other CIS countries. School curricula in those countries occasionally do not coincide with those accepted in the Russian Federation, so the Kazan State University is organizing online courses for tentative ethnic Tatar applicants. The Federal Education Agency of the Education and Science Ministry of the Russian Federation earmarked 70 appointments in 2007, 165 applicants competing.

The republican Institute of the Development of Education established postgraduate courses for Tatar language teachers in 2005. They enroll professors teaching their disciplines in Tatar from other CIS countries and post-Soviet Baltic countries. The 4th Tatar language teachers' congress, held in Kazan on March 28-30, 2006, gathered 25 Tatar weekend school teachers from Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan. More than 100 teachers from other Russian regions undergo postgraduate training in Tatarstan every year. There are permanent courses visiting other parts of Russia. They were held in seven parts of the country (the Kurgan, Sverdlovsk, Orenburg, Tyumen, Perm and Kirov regions and the Republic of Bashkortostan) in 2005-2007.

Problems that still persist demand solution at the state level or by particular educational institutions. Many Tatar schools retain their ethnic identity only thanks to language classes, while Tatar schools in many parts of Russia are switching en masse to Russian as tuition language. Thus, according to the Education Ministry of the Republic of Bashkortostan, it had 397 schools teaching in Tatar in 2006, compared to 604 in 2000, and 207 schools with Tatar language classes in 2006, as against 553 in 2000. A majority of the 30 Tatar schools in the Nizhny Novgorod Region have switched to tuition in Russian at the basic and middle levels. The introduction of Unified State Examinations and specialist and pre-specialist schools is also to blame for the decreasing number of Tatar schools and cutting Tatar language and literature curricula.

There are problems in supplies of Tatar-language study books, fiction and teaching aids. Teachers from many parts of Russia shower

Tatarstan with requests for free literature supplies as a majority of Russian regions cannot afford Tatar-language school books. 91,000 copies of study books and teaching aids to 2.5 million rubles were purchased in Tatarstan on regional budget allocations in 2005 and 66,000 copies to 2.8 million rubles the next year, while in 2007, only the republics of Bashkortostan and Chuvasia, and the Perm Region bought such literature. That is why Tatarstan has to supply Tatar language and literature study books to educational establishments with the Tatar ethnic cultural component on the curricula in other parts of Russia and CIS countries through its own Education and Science Ministry. 17,000 copies of school books to more than 650,000 rubles were passed to 22 Russian regions and to other CIS countries within the first half-year 2007, compared to 10,000 copies to 236,000 rubles in 2005, and 6,500 copies to 244,000 rubles in 2006.

Tatarstan possesses 825 printed media outlets, including 110 Tatar-language newspapers (52 of them government) and 28 magazines (11 government). There are five Chuvash-language newspapers (a republican and 4 district) and one Udmurt-language district newspaper. There are also bilingual—Russian and Tatar—periodicals.

Tatarstan has 50 television companies, 30 of them (25 of these government companies) broadcasting in Russian and Tatar. 58 out of a total 86 radio companies broadcast in Russian, 22 in Russian and Tatar, and 6 in Tatar. The satellite television and radio company Tatarstan—New Age broadcasts in Russian and Tatar, and is available in many parts of Russia and in other countries. Bashkir and Udmurt television is transmitted to Tatarstan.

Two of the 10 news agencies of Tatarstan are republican. Tatar-Inform news agency (http://www.tatar-inform.ru/) works in Russian, Tatar (Cyrillic and Roman writing) and English. Tatar-language information is provided by the official server of the Republic of Tatarstan http://www.tatar.ru, the republican government portal http://prav.tatar.ru/, and the Internet portal of all Tatarstani media outlets www.tatmedia.com.

22 constituent entities of the Russian Federation presently possess 67 Tatar-language media outlets, including 39 newspapers and supplements to local editions. Other countries, within and outside the CIS, have 12 such outlets. The Tatar-language information field is steadily shrinking. Tatar-language broadcasts finished in the Omsk, Chelyabinsk,

Tyumen, Orenburg and Ulyanovsk television and radio companies in 2006 alone. The ethnic press encounters bad problems—difficulties with press circulation in areas densely populated by Tatars; the necessity for a federal Tatar-language newspaper and television channel; the necessity to support Tatar-language editions in and outside Russia; and circulations of the Tatar-language press lagging far behind public demands in areas densely populated by Tatars.

Tatarstan bases the development of multilingualism in cyberspace on its comprehensive program for developing information technologies for 2005-2010, also known as Electronic Tatarstan. Among other goals, the program envisages parity development of information resources in the official languages of Tatarstan. It stipulates the establishment of a system of backbones and resource centers for information, research and methodological support of education in Russian and Tatar; the elaboration of Tatar-language computer standards, drivers, types, and model; the establishment of Tatar-language information resources in the Internet, and of a system of machine translation from and into Tatar, etc. The program acknowledges that Tatarstan is lagging behind, to an extent, with ethnic information and cultural development of information technologies. There are a negligible number of Tatar-language information resources in the library network, and information technologies are introduced too slowly in museums, art galleries, theatres and other cultural establishments.

Microsoft introduced the operating system Microsoft Windows XP with a Tatar-language interface in 2006, and Tatar-language Microsoft Windows Vista and Microsoft Office 2007 appeared the next year—which means that Tatar has joined the number of leading languages in the global information space.

Ethnic Tatars are dispersed all over the world. This is why the rapid development of the Tatar Internet, popularly known as Tatnet, is ever more important.

Information about Tatar history, culture, art and traditions can be found in the websites of the institutes of the Tatar Encyclopedia (http://www.ite.antat.ru/), history (http://www.hist.antat.ru/), language, literature and art (http://www.antat.ru/ijli/) of the Academy of Sciences and the National Museum of the Republic of Tatarstan

(http://tatar.museum.ru/), and project Turkic-Tatar World (http://www.tataroved.ru/). Information about Tatars' life in Tatarstan and the whole world is provided by the website of the World Tatar Congress Executive Committee (http://tatar-kongress.org/) and the world Tatar server (http://www.tatarlar.ru/). The Tatar-language Wikipedia in Roman writing is on the website http://tt.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%A4wge Bit.

Project Virtuan Tatar School (http://tatar.org.ru) provides free access to online studies of the Tatar language, literature, history and other disciplines, with 23 electronic study books. The website http://tatar.com.ru/ offers extensive facilities for Tatar language studies. A Tatar-Russian online dictionary is on the website http://www.suzlek.ru/. There are other dictionaries, as well: Tatar-Turkish (http://www.kcn.ru/tat_tat/tat_tur/index.htm) and English-Tatar (http://agidel.virtualave.net/frame.html). The information and reference portal Tatartele treats the problems of Tatar shifting to the Roman alphabet (http://tatartele.ru/).

Several newspapers have Tatar-language websites: the *Vatanym Tatarstan* (http://www.vatantat.ru/), *Tatarstan yashlere* (http://tatyash.ru/), *Tatarskaya Gazeta* (http://tatar.yuldash.com/), *Magrifat* (http://www.magrifat.ru/), and *Shakhri Kazan* (http://shahrkazan.narod.ru/). The Internet offers Tatar-language broadcasts of Radio Liberty (http://www.azatliq.org/), Radio Kuray (http://www.kuray.ru/), Tatar Radiosi (http://www.tatarradio.ru/), and Radio Tatarica (http://tatarica.com/radio/). Lyrics of Tatar folk songs are available on the website http://www.leadsinger.ru/genres/jyrlar.htm, while the website http://akidil.net/tatar/tatarsongs.htm offers the sound version of such songs. Tatar literature is available on the websites of the Tatar Electronic Library (http://kitap.net.ru/) and Shigriyat.ru (http://shigriyat.ru/).

The Stars of Tatnet contest of Internet projects, established in 2004 (http://tatnet.tatar.info/), gives many Tatar Internet projects a good start.

Natalia Volodina

Chuvash Republic

Chuvashia is in the Volga-Vyatka region, the heart of European Russia, and is at the crossing of economic and research links. It is one of the most dynamic parts of Russia in terms of interethnic and interregional contacts.

It is rather densely populated—74.3 per sq km. The republic is Russia's fourth for the population, with 1.3 million in a comparatively small area of 18,300 sq km. The rural population accounts for 40% of the total. The Chuvash are a fairly large ethnic entity.

The republic works consistently in every sphere of life and constantly raises living standards, with an all-round approach to problems. All this brings fruit—Chuvashia is making rapid progress, and is good home not only to the native population but to all. 97 ethnic entities are represented in its friendly community. The Chuvash make 67.7%, Russians 26.5%, Tatars 2.8%, Mordovians 1.2%, and the other nationalities 1.8%. This ethnic diversity is an inestimable strategic resource of mutual enrichment and social, economic and cultural progress. Naturally, the republican government pays great attention to nationalities and language policies.

President Vladimir Putin highly assessed our efforts when he visited Chuvashia in 2004. In particular, he appreciated our fully depoliticized the ethnic issue. As the President approvingly remarked, the republic channels its entire energy into mutual assistance so as to rule out conflicts. This is of tremendous importance today, when the whole world tends to reduce nationalities policy to interethnic conflict settlement.

We adopted the law On Languages in the Chuvash Republic in 1993, and were among the first in Russia with it. This law is a reliable basis for the preservation and study of the ethnic language and the development of ethnic general education. Despite its multi-ethnicity, Chuvashia is mono-national, as the Chuvash make close on 70% of its population. That is why the republican Constitution grants the official status to two languages—Russian and Chuvash.

Chuvash is an ancient and unique language. Vast efforts are made to preserve and develop it. The Chuvash based their writing on Ugrian

runes and the Arabic alphabet in the times of the Volga Bulgarian kingdom. The vocabulary is dominated by Chuvash and general Turkic. There are borrowings from many Turkic languages, Arabic, Persian, Mongolian, Georgian, Armenian, Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian and Finno-Ugrian languages. The work to preserve and develop the Chuvash language was started by Ivan Yakovlev, outstanding educator of the Chuvash and other Volga and Ural peoples. His 160th birth anniversary is celebrated in 2008. This brilliant humanist trailblazer of public education often stressed in talks with his pupils that the mother tongue was the most precious of national spiritual treasures. "Schooling that limits the use of native languages is alien and hostile to the people," he said.

We follow Yakovlev's behests today. The school certainly plays a crucial part in the development of ethnic languages and culture. All educational establishments throughout the republic have Chuvash on their curricula as an official language, so bilingualism thrives. Chuvash culture, creative writing, the arts and the press make rapid progress. Colleges and universities are mushrooming. The number of people with higher education per thousand population has increased by 63% since 1989, compared to the average Russian 39%.

The republic has 1,040 Chuvash language teachers. 98% of them have university degrees, and more than 80% are certified. Specialist schools are especially relevant today as they bring up free and competitive intellectuals. Gifted children who want to take up Chuvash philology, culture or history are welcome to specialist language and literature classes. Chuvashia has 22 higher educational institutions, and the number of students per 10,000 population was 563 in 2007, as against the national average 514 in 2006.

Chuvash book publishing is skyrocketing. 60 titles of study books for Chuvash- and Russian-language tuition schools came out within the three last years. Book series are published on the President's initiative. The series Chuvash Presidential Library and Great Men of Chuvashia enjoy tremendous popularity. Memory series publication finished last year. The multi-volume Chuvash Encyclopedia, whose second volume will soon come out of print, will satisfy public interest in our republic.

Schools have free supply of Chuvash-language study books and teaching aids, many of them concerning Chuvashia. 97.3% of demands

have been satisfied for today on republican target programs. Libraries systematically receive Chuvash-language children's fiction books. 10,768 copies were purchased for school libraries in 2006 and 21,742 the next year.

The Chuvash Republic is the spiritual center of the Chuvash people, scattered all over Russia. Support of the Chuvash Diaspora is among top priorities of the republican nationalities policy. More than 20 Chuvash ethnic cultural associations have appeared outside the republic within the three last years. All told, there are 76 such associations in 29 Russian regions and six other countries—Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Chuvashia helps its Diaspora to preserve the native language and culture. 52 agreements have been made with areas densely populated by the Chuvash, and 13 with foreign countries. The Diaspora gets assistance with cultural and literary festivals, personnel training and library replenishment. 77,000 copies of books on social themes, put out by Chuvash Publishers, were sent within the three preceding years to Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, the Samara, Penza, Ulyanovsk and Rostov regions, and elsewhere—to more than 4.2 million rubles.

The start of the year 2008 saw a landmark event—the finish of the complete translation of the Bible into Chuvash, an endeavor started by Ivan Yakovlev in the 19th century, immediately after a Cyrillic-based Chuvash alphabet was elaborated. It will come out of print in 2009 to make the Chuvash a second people in Russia after Russians, who can read the whole of the Scripture in their native tongue.

An electronic bridge connects all the Chuvash wherever they live. New information technologies powerfully support the work to promote the Chuvash language. Chuvashia is among Russian leader regions for IT introduction. Several ambitious programs have been implemented within the federal target program Electronic Russia. The official portal www.cap.ru, based on a new Intranet system, is one of the first comprehensive projects. It offers free and equal access to all power branches at every level, and has one of the greatest numbers of users among authorities' websites. Its users vary from schoolchildren and village library frequenters to businessmen and officials in and far outside Russia. The portal matters much to the Chuvash Diaspora as a source of the latest news about the republic. It is the heart of virtual life of Chuvashia and the entire Chuvash people.

Ethnic language teaching got a powerful impetus with IT. Electronic study books have come out. Teachers of Chuvash language, literature and culture gathered for their first online conference in 2007. It is a permanent arrangement now, with the website pedkanash.chuvash.org.

There are regular interregional contests on Chuvash language and literature. An annual all-Russia Chuvash language contest, under the motto "The Chuvash Swallow: Linguistics for All", was started in 2003. It gathers schoolchildren from Chuvashia, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and the Ulyanovsk Region. There were 20,000 contestants in 2008, four times more than in 2004.

There is a network of 500 model libraries, portals and websites of cultural institutions, archives and media outlets—another mighty impetus to the development and promotion of the Chuvash language.

The portals Chuvash Mass Media (www.smi21.ru) and Internet Broadcasting of the Chuvash Republic (www.chuvashia-tv.ru) opened in 2006 on the initiative and with support of Nikolai Fedorov, the President of the Chuvash Republic. These image and political and social information resources have a large impact on the Russian public opinion of Chuvashia, and an influence on the development of the republic.

Close on 80% of newspapers published in the republic come out in Chuvash, and all are present in a special media resource. The portal Chuvash Mass Media carries Chuvash- and Russian-language publications, with the participation of more than 40 printed periodicals and news agencies. It carried more than 23,000 contributions by state newspapers in 2007 alone, with 10,000 users a month. The portal intends to represent all Diaspora newspapers in the future.

Project Internet Broadcasting of the Chuvash Republic makes republican television and radio broadcasts available online in any part of the world for the first-ever time. There is free access not only to the latest news but also unique sound and video archives of the Chuvashia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, many of them in Chuvash.

The republic's archives started electronic editions and virtual exhibitions in 2002. These exhibitions are devoted to celebrities, the ethnic diversity of Chuvashia, landmarks of history and outstanding current events. Many materials appear in Russian and Chuvash. The portal Archives of Chuvashia (www.archives21.ru), one of the most prominent Russian archive websites, accumulates archive information resources.

The National Library of the Chuvash Republic (www.lib.cap.ru) is among the principal information centers of the entire Chuvash people. Its two million books include the world's largest Chuvash-language collection on the Chuvash, with roughly 40,000 copies. Users have an access to literature in 50 languages spoken all over the world. Its electronic resources—a library, a catalogue, the Chuvashica database and other multimedia editions made by the National Library—have materials in Russian and Chuvash.

Work is underway to establish the information portal Memory of Chuvashia to provide access to the unique documentary heritage of the peoples of Chuvashia. The Chuvash State Art Museum collection has been digitized. The electronic Compendium of Book Monuments of the Chuvash Republic is already available. The full-text National Electronic Library is in the making alongside union catalogues of Chuvash books. Local historical catalogues are being retro-converted in Russian and Chuvash. Legal information library centers and archives of the republic are working at a consolidated full-text database of official local self-government documents of the Chuvash Republic since 1924, to comprise more than 12,000 documents. An electronic compendium of the Chuvash language is also in the making.

Also worth mentioning are Chuvash-language "popular" websites, which acquaint users with ethnic literature, history, culture, traditions and customs.

The Chuvash share many good features with other peoples—such as industry, morals, and friendliness to people of other nationalities. Proving all this by deed are vast efforts of the republican government to create conditions for every ethnic entity in the republic to develop its culture and preserve its language and traditions. There are presently 22 ethnic cultural associations of 12 nationalities, compared to seven in 1994. There are 344 schools with Chuvash as tuition language, 177 Russian, 17 Tatar and 4 Mordovian. Tuition is in ethnic languages in the 1st to the 5th grades of Chuvash and Tatar ethnic schools. The Armenian, Jewish, German and Tatar weekend schools teach ethnic languages, culture and traditions. All preschool institutions (146 Chuvash, 5 Tatar, 2 Mordovian and 277 Russian) have every condition for upbringing and education in native languages.

Libraries offer differentiated services with an account for cultural, linguistic and other ethnic specificities. Ethnic cultural centers are affiliated to libraries. The Tatar, Mordovian and Russian centers are very ac-

tive. There are 11 libraries in areas densely populated by Mordovians, and 20 in Tatar-populated localities. All have been replenished on republican allocations for several years now. The library community notices public interest in Tatar literature growing with every passing year.

The Council on Nationalities Affairs was established in 2007 under the Ministry of Culture, Nationalities Affairs, Information Policy and the Archives of the Chuvash Republic. The council aims to enhance the effectiveness and creativity of work in the field of inter-ethnic relations, bring it into system, and improve its quality. Great hopes are pinned on the implementation of an agreement on information partnership in culture and interethnic relations, which the Chuvash Ministry of Culture, the Journalists' Union and the Council on Nationalities Affairs signed in January 2008.

The republic has formed a harmonious pattern of contacts between government agencies and ethnic cultural associations. The ministry helps them with money and offers research and method-setting assistance for events of public purport. The ministry supported 26 projects last year—in particular, the K m l Sas all-Chuvash song festival and contest; a national Russian folk festival under the motto "Make yourselves heard, Russian provinces!"; the Urmai Mony international regional Tatar song festival; two interregional festivals—Mordovian Arta and Mari Peledysh; the 2nd Chuvash Piki republican contest; the Prince Burtas Land festival, and others. The Friendship Garland festival of ethnic cultural associations of the Chuvash Republic is widely acclaimed. Days of the Chuvash Language and Slav Writing and Culture are celebrated everywhere, just as the Akatui and Sabantui folk festivals.

Every language is unique. It is the basis not of culture alone but of thinking, communication and development. Precious traditions, customs and knowledge pass from generation to generation through language. One language dies in the world every two weeks. This dire fact clearly proves that protection of the ethnic cultural heritage is among top state priorities. At the same time, we must take into consideration that there is no way to force one into speaking his native tongue, reading in it, and admiring it. This is why it is so important to take in the beauty and the spirit of the native tongue with mother's milk. It is parents' sacred duty to be mature and wise as statesmen at home. Otherwise, they cannot help their children to realize that the command of several languages opens to them the treasury of opportunities for better life.

Part II. Some Aspects of Development of Multilingualism in Cyberspace in Russia

Evgeny Kuzmin and Ekaterina Plys

Development of Multilingualism in the Internet as a New Field of Activity of the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program and the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre

The Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program (Russian IFAP Committee) and the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre (ILCC) established a new field of activity in 2007. That was the development of multilingualism in the Internet.

Why Is It So Important to Preserve Multilingualism?

Every language is a unique treasure store of information about the ethnic entity speaking it, the culture of that entity, its own evolution and about man as a biological species [5].

Languages came and went throughout human history—but languages have never been dying out so rapidly as now. A mere 10% of presently extant languages are likely to survive to the end of the 21st century, pessimists warn. Urgent action is necessary to preserve linguistic and cultural diversity in Russia and the entire world.

Languages face many threats: natural calamities killing off nations; inefficient education, which does not provide school tuition in pupils' native tongues; absence of writing in certain languages, and others. Another factor appeared several decades ago—the rapid progress of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the Internet.

Multilingualism in Russia

At present, there are more than 180 ethnic entities in Russia. They speak more than a hundred languages belonging to different fami-

lies: Indo-European, Altai, Ural, Yukagir-Chuvan, Kartvelian, Abkhaz-Adyg, Nakh-Daghestani, Sino-Tibetan, Semitic, Eskimo-Aleutian, Chukchi-Kamchatka, Yenisei, Austro-Asian, and others. The Nivkh and Itelmen are isolated languages. A tremendous immigrant inflow from other CIS countries accounts for an ever greater dissemination of their languages in Russia within recent years.

Only eight languages are spoken by more than a million people in Russia, according to Wikipedia:

- Russian (overwhelming majority of the population),
- English (6 955 315),
- Tatar (5 347 706),
- German (2 895 147),
- Ukrainian (1 815 210),
- Bashkir (1 379 727),
- Chechen (1 331 844),
- Chuvash (1 325 382).

Peculiarly, three of the languages most widespread in Russia—English, German and Ukrainian—do not belong to indigenous languages.

Many problems are faced in the post-Soviet area by the languages of ethnic minorities, of less than 50,000. Approximately a third of languages used in the former Soviet Union belong to minority languages. All of them are under the threat of extinction, to varying degrees [5].

The acting Russian legislation guarantees every ethnic entity the right of preserving its native tongue and conditions for its study and development. Relevant clauses are found in the laws "On the Languages of Ethnic Entities of the Russian Federation", "On Education" and other federal legal acts concerning culture, ethnic cultural autonomy, etc., and in constitutions (statutes), special bylaws and other enactments of constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

Every ethnic entity in Russia is guaranteed equal rights and social, economic and legal means of protecting languages. Funding relevant government programs, the opportunity of creating the written form of ethnic languages, research on all languages in Russia, and tuition in the native language are envisaged for all ethnic entities irrespective of their numerical strength and in conformity with their demands. The use of local languages on a par with national languages is admissible in the official sphere (record management in government and local self-govern-

ment bodies, in companies, offices and place names) in areas densely inhabited by small ethnic communities.

However, tuition in higher education is in Russian, with token exceptions. The Russian language is also dominant in record management. Television and radio broadcasts in ethnic minority languages often have limited schedules—several hours a week. Books in ethnic languages are published in comparatively small numbers of copies. The situation makes many non-Russians regard their native language as non-prestigious, so they are reluctant to study it. Students pay much greater attention to Russian or English—languages that provide a greater part of information they need for education and future career.

All that makes the number of ethnic language speakers shrink, and those languages are endangered.

The preservation of linguistic diversity is necessary. The extinction of any language is an irreparable loss because:

- languages reflect historical experience;
- languages are instruments of socialization and the expression and transfer of social and cultural traditions;
- languages promote the accumulation of knowledge;
- languages are intellectual products of amazing richness and versatility;
- languages are tools of self-identification, which promote it and so are treasures for their users [12].

Why Is It Essential to Develop Multilingualism in the Internet?

The Internet offers its users fabulous opportunities of free expression of their opinions, of education and access to information. There is a bad problem here, however: Internet information and services are usually available only in the dominant languages.

No doubt, language shall not impede users' access to knowledge. Otherwise, the development of ICT and the Internet will make even greater the digital divide between those who can receive information and those who cannot.

Viktor Montvilov, one of the initiators and authors of the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace, notes that today "we can only

regret that languages are all too often used as a tool of domination or division between peoples. Their future often depends on their ability to resist the onslaught of the more aggressive languages or languages used by economically dominating countries. One of the essential tasks for today is to prevent, with the help of the latest technologies, the use of languages for an ever greater marginalization of a vast part of humanity, which is in adverse conditions. Thus, people who do not speak languages used in the Internet (which uses a mere 400 out of the 6,700 languages presently existent in the world) cannot take an adequate part in information exchange, and have to live as if in the shadow of 'dominating' nations, which impose their language on them and so also impose their world-views and customs." [3]

We must also stress that the development of multilingualism in the Internet has not only a cultural but also a political purport. The circulation of multilingual information about different peoples' history, languages and cultures promotes tolerance and understanding, and so is among the essential factors of peaceful sustainable development of modern civilization.

International Efforts to Preserve Multilingualism

Various aspects of preserving multilingualism are widely discussed at the global, regional and national levels.

Active in this field are UNESCO, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Internet Governance Forum, established within the framework of implementing The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) decisions.

Major foundations have been established—in particular, the Volkswagen Foundation, the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project—and others. The study and survival of minority languages, and funding relevant projects are their principal goals.

UNESCO Recommendation

The UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace, which the 32nd session of the UNESCO General Conference adopted in October

2003, is an international document of the greatest importance for the development of linguistic diversity in the Internet.

The Recommendation regards four aspects whose consideration is necessary for the greatest possible number of people to use the ICT potential:

- promotion of the multilingual content development;
- extension of access to Internet resources and services;
- elaboration of the content of information of the public domain;
- promotion of a fair balance of rightholder and community interests [8].

The Internet offers vast information unattainable to one who has no command of the language in which it is presented. That makes it so important to provide access to educational, cultural and scientific information in the digital format, so as to ensure that all cultures can express themselves and have access to cyberspace in all languages, including indigenous ones (Recommendation, Para 1).

The governments of all countries should realize the essential importance of developing multilingualism in the Internet. They should elaborate national policies for language survival in cyberspace, and promote the creation and circulation of the local content in the Internet (Recommendation, Para 3).

For users' access to information in many languages, it is necessary to make joint R&D for operating systems, search engines and browsers of a major multilingual potential, online dictionaries and terminological references. International cooperation is no less necessary for universally accessible free or low-tariff services in automated translation and R&D for linguistic-cognitive systems of multilingual information browsing, abstracting and ASR with full account for translation copyright (Recommendation, Para 4).

It is also suggested to create a joint online instrument of observation of current policies, rules, technical recommendations and advanced experience in multilingualism, multilingual resources and related applied research (Recommendation, Para 5).

There is another major problem beside the development of multilingual content. That is the access to networks and services, i.e. technologies, telecommunication nets and the Internet proper. "Such an

access remains limited to many countries, regions and population strata due to the absence of economic opportunities of access to the infrastructure and the acquisition of equipment, addresses and domain names. Such factors as insufficient access to basic services, such as electricity or telephony, also occasionally come into the foreground."[3]

Part 3 of the Recommendation concerns the circulation in the Internet of content of the public domain. This is a huge amount of information stocked by governments, public offices and international organizations, which exists in every country and in different languages. The availability of such information will bring closer the essential goal—extending the universal access to information.

Part 4 of the Recommendation concerns copyright. Balance between compliance with them and access to information is among the principle objectives of the information society. It demands both national and international regulation. Such balance would be promoted if certain provisions were added to the copyright legislation and its application limited [8].

The System of National Reports

The 33rd session of the UNESCO General Conference in 2005 determined to introduce a system of regular reports about implementing the Recommendation. In 2006, the UNESCO Secretariat circulated messages among all member countries with the request to submit such reports before January 31, 2007, and later report once every four years, starting with that day. Instructions circulated with the letters called member countries to inform the UNESCO General Secretariat about all measures taken to implement the Recommendation.

The Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO ordered the Russian IFAP Committee to draft the national report.

Taking part in its drafting were Vyacheslav Yudin, deputy head of the Special communications board of the Federal Guard Service; Natalya Gendina, Director of the Research Institute of Information Technologies in the Social Sphere under the Kemerovo State University of Culture and Arts; Ekaterina Chukovskaya, former Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation; Sergei Ivanov, deputy director of the Department of Information Society Formative Strategies of the Ministry

for Information Technologies and Communications of the Russian Federation; Irina Balkhayeva, director of the National Library of Buryatia; Galina Leveryeva, deputy director of the National Library of Yakutia; Marat Guriev, IBM government program director for Russia and president of the Union of Internet Operators; and Evgeny Kuzmin, Chair of the Russian IFAP Committee (compiler and executive editor).

The report concerns the following:

- promotion and development of multilingualism in Russia;
- multilingualism in cyberspace;
- access to information of the public domain: present state, legal groundwork and problems;
- improvement of access to networks and services;
- development of open source software;
- development of information literacy as a means of popularizing the implementation and use of ICT and promotion of Russian public confidence in it;
- confirmation of a fair balance between public interests and rightholders.

The Russian IFAP Committee site www.ifapcom.ru carries the report in unabridged Russian- and English-language versions.

Though the Russian legislation was thoroughly analyzed from the point of the preservation, promotion and development of multilingualism, no references to the necessity of promoting linguistic diversity in the Internet were found, which shows that, regrettably, the problem is not yet fully evaluated at the state level in Russia as yet.

Consolidated UNESCO Report

Proceeding from national reports, UNESCO made a consolidated world report about member countries' efforts to implement the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace. The Russian IFAP Committee site www.ifapcom.ru also carries this report.

As the report says, the problem of multilingualism has not been fixed in the strategic action plans of the various government offices, and certain member countries view it as the main obstacle to the develop-

ment of multilingualism in the Internet. Other countries, including Russia, consolidate their efforts to promote multilingualism. With this end in view, they are elaborating relevant policies and strategies to promote linguistic and cultural identity.

To preserve multilingualism and provide universal access to cyberspace, UNESCO member countries are taking a variety of measures. They step up personnel training in the information field, conduct scientific research, draw annual action plans to promote public use of the Internet, spread telecommunication networks to remote and rural areas, improve network services and security, promote public literacy, and do much else beside.

The system of reports introduced by UNESCO will help its member countries to assess the impact of their obligations in implementing the Recommendation and, when necessary, re-orient their programs, strategies and nationalities policy. UNESCO, in its turn, will get an opportunity to use the received information for effective assistance to its member countries in drawing reliable programs promoting multilingualism and universal access to cyberspace [11].

The concluding part points out certain progress made by member countries in realizing the importance of the Recommendation. It will take much more efforts, however, to achieve still greater participation of many agencies at the national level in promoting its implementation [11].

The UNESCO Recommendation and the World Summit on the Information Society

The elaboration of the Recommendation came as substantial UNESCO contribution to preparing the World Summit on the Information Society, or WSIS (Geneva, 2003; Tunis, 2005). The final documents of the first WSIS phase bring out cultural diversity and identity, language diversity and local content as a separate field.

The Declaration of Principles, adopted during the first phase of the Summit, notes the importance of preserving cultural and language diversity. In particular, it says that "the Information Society should be founded on and stimulate respect for cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and foster dialogue among cultures and civiliza-

tions. The promotion, affirmation and preservation of diverse cultural identities and languages ... will further enrich the information society."

The Declaration also says that "the creation, dissemination and preservation of content in diverse languages and formats must be accorded high priority in building an inclusive Information Society... It is essential to promote the production of and accessibility to all content — educational, scientific, cultural or recreational... The development of local content suited to domestic or regional needs will encourage social and economic development and will stimulate participation of all stakeholders, including people living in rural, remote and marginal areas." [6].

The section of the Plan of Action on "Cultural Diversity and Identity, linguistic Diversity and Local Content" describes a set of measures necessary to preserve cultural and linguistic diversity—in particular, the formulation of relevant national policies, support of libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions, promotion of the elaboration, translation and adaptation of local content, establishment of digital archives and guarantees of the diversity of forms of the digital and traditional mass media, and creation and distribution of software in local languages [9].

The second Summit also stressed the importance of developing multilingualism in the Internet. It stressed the necessity of creating multilingual domain names, e-mail addresses and keyword search; of implementing programs that envisage multilingual domain names and content in the Internet, and the use of various software models to cover the linguistic digital gap; and closer cooperation of relevant agencies for further elaboration of technical standards and promotion of their implementation everywhere [13].

After the WSIS

UNESCO retains attention to the development of multilingualism in cyberspace and carries on active related efforts after the Summit.

On May 9-11, 2006, Geneva hosted the first Global Symposium on Promoting the Multilingual Internet, jointly organized by UNESCO and the ITU. It analyzed the existing standards and technical solutions. The participants exchanged practical experience, determined the range of problems yet to settle, and drew a plan of further teamwork.

As the symposium was summarized, the participants said that large-scale research had been made by that time on technical matters, such as the introduction of multilingual domain names and e-mail addresses, keyword search, elaboration of methodological standards, the opportunities of semantic interaction, etc., while the development of multilingual content, support of ethnic language fonts, and documentation were yet underfunded and so insufficient. Balanced coordination of the available knowledge and resources would promote further progress in both fields, the symposium chairman remarked.

UNESCO is also active in publishing and research. Noteworthy among its publications are the brochures *Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Information Society*, *How to Guarantee the Presence of Languages in Cyberspace?* and *Measuring Linguistic Diversity on the Internet*; as well as *Language in the Internet*, a thematic publication of the international journal on multicultural societies. Detailed information about projects, guidelines and research can be found on the UNESCO site: www.unesco.org/webworld/multilingualism [8]. Translations of certain UNESCO publications on the theme into Russian can be found on the Russian IFAP Committee site www.ifapcom.ru.

Development of Multilingualism in the Internet in Russia

Principal state efforts to preserve languages in Russia are made at the level of constituent entities. Regional programs are launched to preserve the cultural and linguistic heritage and diversity; websites are started in the languages of peoples inhabiting Russia on their culture and history; electronic study books and dictionaries are made, and communication forums opened. The Internet provides mass media resources and radio broadcasts in the languages of many Russian ethnic entities. Higher educational and research institutions based in Moscow and many other cities are documenting minor languages.

Despite all that, languages of the Russian peoples are sparsely represented in the Internet mainly due to insufficient attention to this field and its consequent underfunding. This, in its turn, leads to insufficient attention to personnel training for the creation of Internet information resources, standardized types for ethnic languages, dictionaries, browsers, etc.

Study conducted by the Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC in 2007

Aware of the importance of developing multilingualism in the Internet, the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program and the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre carried out joint research in 2007 with the following basic aims in view:

- demonstration in the greatest possible detail of measures taken in Russia to promote multilingualism in the Internet;
- definition of the extent to which languages of the peoples of Russia are represented in the Russian segment of the Internet;
- determining the range of agencies, organizations and experts who can have a bearing on the development of multilingualism in the Internet, and establishment of practical contacts with them.

We made two questionnaires for the study:

- "Measures Taken in Russia to Promote Multilingualism in the Internet"; and
- "Measures Taken by Higher Educational and Research Institutions in Russia to Promote Multilingualism in the Internet".

The questionnaires were drafted on the basis of related literature, Internet resource monitoring and communication with linguistic researchers, and programmers and designers of types, electronic dictionaries, browsers and websites in ethnic languages of Russia.

The questionnaire "Measures Taken in Russia to Promote Multilingualism in the Internet" was mailed to regional governors of the Russian Federation and brought information about:

- who launches and makes electronic information resources (IR) in ethnic languages of Russia,
- from what sources IR creation and maintenance are funded,
- what part municipal and regional authorities play in IR creation and maintenance,
- IR purposes, basic content and designers' principal problems,
- which languages are used in IR creation and to what an extent IR information is translated into other languages,
- the quality of ethnic language types used in IR,
- the availability of electronic translators and dictionaries to translate from and into ethnic languages of Russia,
- the availability of browsers adapted for search in ethnic languages of Russia.

The questionnaire "Measures Taken by Higher Educational and Research Institutions in Russia to Promote Multilingualism in the Internet" was mailed to research institutes that had a bearing on the problem under study and to principal Russian higher educational establishments. The answers produced an idea of work underway in Russia for electronic linguistic documenting of minor languages:

- what languages are documented in a particular educational/research institution,
- who launches and creates electronic information resources (IR) on language documentation,
- from what sources related projects are funded,
- which research results are available in electronic form and/or the Internet,
- what part municipal and regional authorities play in IR creation and maintenance,
- IR purposes, basic content and designers' principal problems,
- the quality of ethnic language types used in IR,
- whether there are plans to create electronic translators and dictionaries within documentation projects,
- which languages are used in IR creation and to what an extent IR information is translated into other languages.

The answers also revealed the opinions of government officers in constituent entities of the Russian Federation, and of the research and education personnel about the topicality of developing multilingualism in cyberspace in Russia. They also provided a comprehensive picture of the representation of ethnic languages of Russia in the Internet.

Involved in the study were administrations of 46 constituent entities of the Russian Federation: Adygea, Buryatia, Chechnya, Chuvashia, Dagestan, Kabarda-Balkaria, Khakassia, Komi, Mordovia, North Ossetia, Tatarstan, Udmurtia and Yakutia; the Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk and Littoral territories; the Khanty-Mansi, Nenets and Yamal-Nenets autonomous areas; the Jewish Autonomous Region; the Astrakhan, Bryansk, Chita, Ivanovo, Kaluga, Kirov, Magadan, Murmansk, Nizhny Novgorod, Omsk, Orel, Orenburg, Penza, Rostov, Ryazan, Saratov, Smolensk, Tambov, Tomsk, Tver, Vladimir, Volgograd, Vologda and Voronezh regions; and the Moscow and St. Petersburg municipal administrations.

Also taking part in the study were the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, the Yaroslavl State University, the Kalmyk State University, the Bashkir State University, the Chuvash State University, the Astrakhan State University, and the Tomsk State University.

Available or forming electronic information resources in languages of the peoples of Russia and other CIS countries were reported from Buryatia, Mordovia, Tatarstan, Komi, Chuvashia, Adygea, Udmurtia, Khakassia, Dagestan, Yakutia, the Murmansk, Orenburg and Rostov regions, and the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area.

The following establishments are documenting languages of the peoples of Russia and other CIS countries: the Tomsk State University (Siberian peoples' languages), the Kalmyk State University (Kalmyk), the Bashkir State University (Bashkir), the Chuvash State University (Chuvash), and the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Ukrainian and Belarusian). The Bashkir and Tomsk state universities have placed the results of their research in the Internet.

The Internet provides most diverse resources in languages of the peoples of Russia: media outlet portals, websites of higher educational establishments and national libraries, and electronic libraries and databases containing information about the languages and culture of peoples inhabiting Russia. Certain college and university sites have electronic dictionaries, and offer Internet television and radio broadcasts. There are also CDs with information about the history and culture of peoples inhabiting Russia, language study materials, and documentaries and cartoons in ethnic languages.

Thus, the newspapers *Adyge Mak'* (the Republic of Adygea), *Khanty*, *Mansi*, *Khanty Yasang* and certain others (the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area) have Internet versions in ethnic languages, and there is the Chuvash Mass Media portal. Of major interest is the project Internet Broadcasting of the Chuvash Republic, established on the initiative of, and with support from republican President Nikolai Fedorov. It offers republican radio and television broadcasts online.

The educational information portal of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area for indigenous ethnic minorities of the North possesses Khanty and Mansi electronic dictionaries.

An electronic study book of the Buryat language has been made in Buryatia. Apart from study materials and teaching aids, it possesses 15 dictionaries and about 500 entries on the history, culture, customs and traditions of the Buryat peoples.

Many constituent entities of the Russian Federation release CDs acquainting users with regional red-letter days and historic landmarks, biographies of outstanding people, the music of local peoples and texts in ethnic languages.

A cartoon in Khanty, subtitled in Russian, was made in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area, and a children's computer game using the Komi and Russian languages in the Komi Republic. A Tatar- and Bashkir-language CD database is being made in the Orenburg Region on the basis of the Orenburg State University interuniversity library, and there are plans for an electronic library in many languages of the world.

Windows XP, Windows Vista and Linux, and such programs as MS Office 2000, Mozilla Firefox and Mozilla Thunderbird have been localized in the Tatar language in Tatarstan. Microsoft has established a code page with support of Tatar symbols in Windows 2000.

Several administrations report prospects for electronic resources in ethnic languages. Thus, the formation of full-text resources—some of them in the languages of Yamal ethnic entities—is planned in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area on the basis of its National Electronic Library. Implementation of the regional development program for 2007-2011 in the Republic of Kabarda-Balkaria envisages the creation of electronic dictionaries, websites and online tutorials in the Kabarda and Balkar languages. The Trans-Baikal Armenian Union of the Chita Region intends to start its Armenian-language website in 2008.

Regional executive agencies, ethnic cultural societies, higher educational institutions, libraries, research institutes and private persons come most frequently as initiators of electronic information resources in Russia's ethnic languages.

Creation of such resources involves programmers, designers, philologists, library, archive and university personnel, translators, journalists, historians, other researchers, government officers, poets, prose writers and musicians. Students are also attracted to the work.

Assistance in the creation and development of information resources comes the most often from government agencies, and Russian and foreign foundations and programs aiming to promote and finance language study and preservation projects – the Russian Foundation for Fundamental Research, the Russian Humanitarian Foundation, the Endangered Languages Documentation Program, the School of Oriental and African Studies, the Soros Foundation; national libraries, public organizations, the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia; and, last but not least, from media outlets, archives, broadcasting companies, publishers and private persons.

Projects are usually funded from the budgets of constituent entities—mostly republics—or organizations on whose initiative information resources are created. Foundation grants and donations from private persons and public organizations are also rather frequent. Federal, municipal and federal target program allocations are much rarer.

Respondents varied in their assessment of the contribution of regional and municipal authorities to the creation of information resources in ethnic languages. Administration officers of constituent entities highlighted an outstanding part played by regional authorities and said that they were the initiators of websites in such languages. In Tatarstan, for one, regional and municipal authorities implement state policies in information resources, coordinate the formation of such resources in the official languages of the republic, provide public and corporate access to information about the activities of government agencies, guarantee information security of the republican and municipal information systems, etc. A majority were extremely skeptical about the role of municipal authorities.

Colleges and universities pointed out insufficient interest of regional and municipal authorities alike, and said it was among the worst problems in the development of electronic information resources in ethnic languages of Russia.

Websites and CDs are intended for public access to information, educational, cultural and scientific resources in ethnic languages, and to preserve and develop those languages, and protect and promote the cultural heritage. Representatives of the Republic of Khakassia also said that its information resources aimed mainly to instill in young people reverential interest in history, traditions and cultures of peoples living in the republic and in the entire Russian Federation.

Information resources in ethnic languages of Russia contain, for the most part, regional and local news, information about the history, culture and the arts of the titular and other peoples, study and other books, articles, dictionaries and other materials for language study, bibliographic databases, and information about colleges and universities.

These information resources mostly orient on the public-at-large. The following user categories were specified: school and university students; people taking an interest in the languages and cultures of the peoples of Russia; linguistic researchers and language teachers; language speakers, and representatives of state ruling bodies, the mass media and public organizations.

As bilingual and multilingual information resources are created, 10-40% of materials available in Russian are translated—more is unaffordable due to underfunding.

Information in Russian is in the greatest demand on bilingual websites. When English-language versions are available, the Russian language is used the most extensively in Russia and English in other countries.

Among the most topical problems, our respondents mentioned underfunding and the shortage of automated work areas, insufficient expert remuneration, inadequate administrative and information support of projects, the lack of quality types and special software to place information in the Internet, scarcity of ethnic communities interested in developing their native language through ICT, and the embryonic state of tuition in ethnic languages.

The shortage of qualified personnel was often mentioned. Top-notch programmers and specialists in other fields with a working command of two or three languages (Russian, native and English) are necessary to create and maintain resources in ethnic languages. Colleges and universities also highlighted the scarcity of specialists sufficiently well-versed in linguistics and computer technologies.

In many instances respondents mentioned the shrinkage of the number of ethnic language speakers and limited access to the Internet of users with a fluent command of those languages. Thus, many young people (that is, the basic Internet users) do not know their native tongue and prefer to study Russian and English, and communicate in them in the Internet,

while older people fluent in their ethnic language most often live in remote settlements and do not know how to use computers and the Internet.

Our colleagues from Tatarstan complained of the absence of unified federal policy in introducing information technologies among minor ethnic communities, and pointed out the lack of coordination in relevant R&D, and the normative legal basis only emerging. To solve the problems, they deem it necessary to establish an integrated multilingual network of republican information resources, which should envisage a unified system of government territorial cadastres, registers, primary databases and databases of composite analytical information for state ruling bodies and local self-government, as well as providing access to these information resources. The absence of a united computerized regional center for quality information products is also regarded among the essential problems of the Komi Republic.

As representatives of Mordovia see it, users have an insufficient demand for information resources in ethnic languages. They think that the state ought to support such resources in certain instances and thus preserve and promote traditional ethnic cultures.

Yakut respondents see the numerical paucity of indigenous peoples in Russia as the most formidable problem. It leads to information resources in ethnic languages being necessary only in places densely populated by indigenous entities. This is why IR designers and owners focus attention on the local information field and ignore themes of a federal scope. Hence, such resources stay unnoticed in the Russian segment of the Internet.

The absence of standardized types for ethnic languages of Russia was emphasized in a majority of responses. These types were mostly assessed as satisfactory, and only rather rarely as good. The administration of Tatarstan said that Tatar-language types were excellent and steadily improved. Udmurtia has entirely standardized its types within republic and placed them on the website of its republican Ministry of Nationalities Policy (http://www.minnac.ru/).

Many administrations and universities said they were interested in making electronic dictionaries and interpreters for ethnic languages of Russia. The gubernatorial administration of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area/Yugra informed us that the Ob-Yugra Institute of Applied Research and Development was working at electronic translators,

and a concise dictionary of Khanty and Mansi had been placed on the educational portal of the indigenous Yugra peoples. An advance copy of W. Steinitz's Khanty language dictionary has come out on a CD.

Work at electronic dictionaries is only at its inception in Chuvashia.

Certain respondents said no work at electronic dictionaries was on because there were no standardized ethnic language types.

The Bashkir State University has placed on its website M.V. Zeinullin's explanatory Russian-Bashkir dictionary of linguistic terms. The Tomsk State Pedagogical University is making electronic dictionaries on a database project for Siberian peoples' languages and cultures.

The joint research laboratory of the problems of artificial intellect affiliate to the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan and the Kazan State University cooperates with the Moscow-based Media Lingua Co. They have together made Russian-Tatar electronic dictionaries — user's dictionary and a dictionary of political vocabulary, as well as the WordCorr morphological checker of Tatar-language texts for MS Word.

Respondents mostly said no to the question about the availability of retrieval systems adapted to ethnic languages of Russia. The Chuvash republican administration alone said that the portal SMI Chuvhashii (Chuvash Mass Media) provided search in the Chuvash language, and assessed the browser as satisfactory.

An overwhelming majority of respondents find the development of multilingualism in cyberspace necessary as they do not think Russian ethnic languages are sufficiently presented in the Internet for now, though creation of Internet resources in ethnic languages can help languages and cultures not merely to survive but dynamically develop. As Tatarstani spokesmen said, an ethnic entity and its language have no chance to make any progress in the information society unless they have virtual writing.

Other Activities of the Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC to Develop Multilingualism in the Internet

Within this new field of activity developing multilingualism in the Internet, the Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC made reports to major Russian and international conferences for library experts in 2007:

the 14th international conference Crimea 2007 (Sudak, June 9−17), the 7th international conference "The Libraries − Bridge to the Future" (Anapa, September 9−15), and the international conference "The Digital Age of Culture 2007" (Sochi, October 1−5).

The books *How to Guarantee the Presence of Language in Cyberspace?* and *Measuring Linguistic Diversity on the Internet* have been translated into Russian, and appeared in print and on the Russian Committee website, www.ifapcom.ru/ru/365.

A roundtable on multilingualism in the Internet was held during the International Conference EVA 2007 Moscow in December 2007 to discuss the following essential questions:

- creation of websites containing IR in the ethnic languages of Russia;
- electronic language documentation;
- development of electronic dictionaries of the ethnic languages of Russia;
- creation of standardized types for the ethnic languages of Russia.

The United Nations proclaimed 2008 International Year of Languages. The Russian IFAP Committee is planning for this year the international conference Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace. It is organized and hosted by Russia, with leading Russian and foreign specialists invited to take part. Such initiatives as that are essential to preserve and develop the multiethnic cultural heritage of the Russian Federation, and contribute to international cooperation in this field.

Another major international conference is gathering in Barcelona in October 2008 − "Languages and Dialogue of Cultures in the Globalizing World". The Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC intend to be active there and to present the results of the preceding regional conference in Russia.

The Necessity to Extend Cooperation

The number of websites in ethnic languages of Russia is steadily increasing, and their quality improving. However, theirs is still a small share of information in the Russian segment of the Internet, as compared to the amount of information in Russian and English.

It takes active teamwork of government, public and private agencies to make the Internet serve the noble goals of preserving, developing and popularizing languages. To get this work going, we must at least provide the conditions for taking stock of current problems and exchanging experience.

The Russian IFAP Committee and the ILCC intend to give all interested organizations this opportunity through:

- a series of conferences, seminars and roundtables;
- publication of relevant material collections;
- promoting the most important initiatives at the political and administrative level;
- a permanent forum on the Russian Committee website www.ifapcom.ru.

The Russian IFAP Committee and the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre call on everyone for teamwork.

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Galina Galanicheva

Activities of the National Library of the Republic of Karelia to Promote Regional Languages in Cyberspace

The development of the world is in its infinite variety, and it will perish with attempts to level this variety. We take this point for granted. Brilliant minds of yesterday and today convincingly prove the interrelation and interdependence of things big and small in this world of reality.

The virtual world is rapidly developing side by side with the real world, and its impact on the human mind is ever greater. Information and communication technologies (ICT) invade every sphere of life, be it science, production, culture, services, entertainment and everyday routine, to change our mode of life beyond recognition. To what an extent does the virtual world reflect the infinite variety of the real world? Does it help to preserve this variety? Any retrieval system will tell you that the Internet uses a mere 10% of languages presently existing in the world.

What can a library as social institution do to fill inspiring UNESCO documents on cultural and linguistic diversity with practical content, without which they will be sheer declarations? Let us see it on the example of the Republic of Karelia (RK) and its National Library (NL).

Demographic Processes in Karelia

Karelia is populated since times immemorial by the Russian, Finnish, Karelian and Vepsian. According to the first all-Russia population census of 1897, Russians, Karels and Vepsians made 99% of its permanent population (Fig. 1).
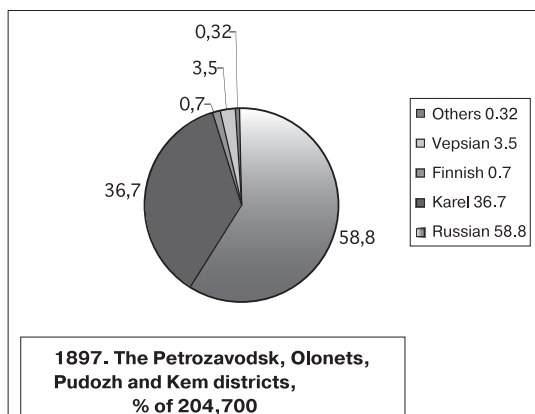
The population of Karelia grew fourfold in the 20th century and made its ethnic composition much more motley.

Karelia met the 21st century with an alarming trend—its population is dwindling, which is especially hard on Baltic-Ugrians—Finns, Karels and Vepsians. The reason is not only in natural loss, migration and the mixing of ethnic groups. Influencing the number of Vepsians[1] was the disintegration of their traditional territory through its repeated incorporation in different administrative territorial entities. When outlying villages, which were officially considered declining, were liquidated in Soviet years, they were the first whose population was coercively resettled. Many instances of officials' refusal to record Vepsian ethnicity were known during the population censuses of 1970 and 1979. The public naturally regarded Vepsian ethnic identity as humiliating.

The population census of 2002 specifies the population of Karelia as 716,300 (0.5% of the entire population of the Russian Federation), the urban population accounting for 75% of this, and rural 25%.

More than 90 ethnic entities are represented in the republic, of these 76.6% of Russians, 9.2% Karels, 2% Finns, and 0.7% Vepsians (Fig. 2).

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[1]They lived in the southeast of the area between the three largest Northwest Russian lakes—Onega, Ladoga and Bely, and are settled presently on the southwest shore of Lake Onega, in Sheltozero, Shoksha and Ryboretskoye of the Prionezgsky municipal district, in adjacent districts of the Leningrad Region—Podporozhye, Lodeinoye Pole, Tikhvin and Boksitogorsk, and in the northwest of the Vologda Region—Babayevo and Vytegra.
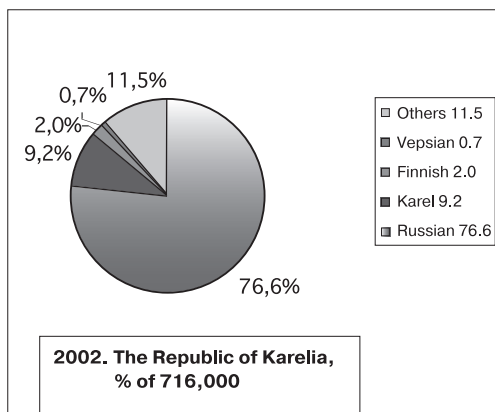
Fig. 2. The ethnic composition of Karelian population at the beginning of the 21st century

Russian is the official language of the RK, though Finnish, Karelian and Vepsian are also spoken. Rather closely interrelated, they belong to the Baltic-Finnish group of Finno-Ugrian languages of the Ural language family.

Multilingualism in the Internet: Review of Karelian Websites

Multilingual website versions are one of the ways to promote multilingualism in global nets. The broader the public on which the site is oriented the more valuable this site is. Language barriers badly hamper access. Naturally, website developers aim at attracting the greatest possible number of users outside a particular language and nationality. A good site demands at least minimum services for users apart from native speakers of the language the site is made on—that is, access in several languages, even if it is very narrow, and maintenance of the non-verbal language: symbols, pictograms, emoticons ("smiley"), etc.

The Karelian segment of the Russian Internet comprises more than 1,500 websites, some of them bilingual and even trilingual. English and Finnish are extensively used in multilingual sites. English was chosen for an evident reason—it dominates the electronic world and is popular in the real world. This is why it attracts new users.
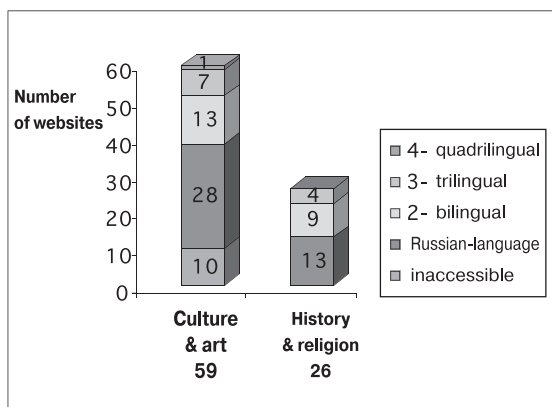
Fig.3. Review of websites on the theme of Karelia

Finnish is the widest-used of Baltic-Finnish languages. Its speakers live in many European countries, the United States, Canada and Australia. It is the official language of Finland. It was used as standard language in Karelia in Soviet years. Karelia is an area of active border cooperation, and has extremely promising contacts with Finland, which pays back with reciprocal interest.

A cursory look at the catalogue of websites pertaining to Karelia, which has a list of classification headings (project karelia.info is a review of 999 websites) shows the following (Fig. 3). Out of 59 Russian-language websites in the Culture & Art rubric, 10 are inaccessible or inactive, 13 are bilingual (12 with an English version and 1 with Finnish), 7 trilingual (6 with English and Finnish versions and 1 with English and French), and 1 quadrilingual. All 26 sites in the History & Religion rubric are active. 9 are bilingual (English version) and 4 trilingual (English and Finnish versions).

The National Library of the Republic of Karelia presently maintains four websites[2], one of which (the NL RK website proper) has Russian-, English- and Finnish-language versions. The two latter appeared after the Russian. The website Finno-Ugrian Libraries in Russia is bilingual, and its Russian- and Finnish-language versions

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[2] They have been brought to one entry point, http://library.karelia.ru/, and work is underway to transform them into a united portal with a common retrieval system and partly united resources.

were planned from the start. This website was established on the initiative and with support of the Institute of Russia and Eastern Europe, based in Helsinki, Finland[3].

It is hard to maintain a multilingual site. We have elaborated system management, appointed library employees with a working command of English and Finnish to be responsible for management of particular versions and trained them to use system management maintenance.

However impressive the list of websites pertaining to Karelia might be, you will not find a single Karelian-language, let alone Vepsian, among them for a number of objective and subjective reasons.

Karelian and Vepsian Writing and Literature

The Karelian language falls in three major dialects: Karelian proper (spoken in the north and center of Karelia), Livvik (east coast of Lake Ladoga) and Ludik (west coast of Lake Ladoga). Ancient Karels are mentioned in Russian chronicles (the first reference dates to 1143), Scandinavian sagas, certain Western chronicles and papal bullae.

Karelia has a rich oral poetic heritage. Pride of place in it belongs to epic songs, based on which is the world-famous Finnish-Karelian epic *The Kalevala*, with its 22,795 verses.

Karelian writing was only embryonic from the 13th-14th centuries into the 1990s. Influences on its development were multidirectional, some made by the Russian Orthodox Church, and the other by Russian and Finnish linguistic researchers. Publications included edifying books, dictionaries, study books, folklore collections, translations from Russians and original Karelian works. The 1920s and 30s saw attempts to elaborate a unified standard language. They failed because of great differences between dialects. The small number of books published at that time were printed wither in Cyrillic or Roman letters[4]. Thematically and stylistically motley, these efforts only hampered the development of one, profoundly original literature.

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[3] The work to modernize and update the website Finno-Ugrian Libraries in Russia has reached its peak.

[4] Unified Karelian writing, elaborated in 1937 on the basis of the Cyrillic alphabet, was abolished as soon as 1940. The revival of Karelian writing, now on the basis of the Roman alphabet, started toward the end of the 1980s.

Vepsians, one of the indigenous ethnic minorities of the Russian North-West, belong to peoples whose writing appeared rather recently. There were 25,600 Vepsians, according to the first all-Russia population census of 1897. Now, there are less than 9,000. Vepsians have a negligible number of written monuments. The first attempts to elaborate Vepsian writing date to the 1930s. It was a short-lived writing—too short to start steady literary development.

As research shows, less than a half of Karelians and close on a half of Vepsians resident in Karelia know their native language.

A 1989 resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Karelian Autonomous Republic approved Karelian and Vepsian alphabets and orthography. That was a time of active revival of ethnic identity. Study books and ethnic newspapers and television casts were in Livvik and Karelian proper. Various versions of Karelian were taught in higher educational institutions of Petrozavodsk and in Karelian schools. Vepsian also developed along different lines as two variants of its alphabet—Roman and Cyrillic—were approved.

Karelian President Sergei Katanandov signed a government decree to establish Karelian and Vepsian alphabets as late as March 2007. To facilitate native language study in secondary and higher school, Katanandov called to elaborate a unified alphabet for either language. Scholars, teachers and writers using the ethnic tongue coped with the task. Minor amendments allowed arrive at a unified Karelian alphabet, while Roman letters alone stayed for the Vepsian. School and university essays can now be typed on a standard computer as word processors have all necessary symbols, while certain symbols could previously be made only by hand or needed special machines. The unified Karelian alphabet is an initial step to standard written language. A commission for terms and spelling intends to unify the vocabulary, too. This will be hard to do with a shortage of technical specialists.

Libraries now have received a new field of activity with the Karelian and Vepsian languages. We were not indifferent observers of the growing-pains of those languages.

Activities of the National Library of the Republic of Karelia to Promote Regional Languages in Cyberspace

What have we done to support ethnic languages in the region? According to Professor Peter Domokoc of the Etves University in Budapest, comprehensive bibliography of written sources should be an initial step necessary to revive and develop an ethnic culture. The master catalogues Vepsica and Karelica, made by experts of the NL RK, are on its website and regularly updated these ten years. Legal persons possessing relevant materials include Karelian libraries and the Russian National Library.

The National Library of the Republic of Karelia preserves the ethnic cultural heritage. This is why to preserve our collection. Of no smaller importance is to guarantee access to information resources. This is why the NL RK, together with the Petrozavodsk State University, takes part in the project Electronic Library of the Republic of Karelia. We are implementing the technology of digitizing printed matter within the project, and spreading it to publications in ethnic languages. The Electronic Library possesses electronic copies of 12 issues of the magazine *Karelia* for 1939—the only Karelian-language literary and art periodical of that time. It also has an electronic copy of the first, 1835 Helsinki edition of *The Kalevala* in Finnish. The Electronic Library is popular in the whole world. 73 books out of the NL RK collection of rare editions on local history available in the Electronic Library were read 18,218 times in 2006.

Our website Finno-Ugrian Libraries in Russia offers a small electronic collection of Karelian- and Vepsian-language editions. We chose for it editions of the 1930s and 40s not to trespass the lay on copyright and related rights. This collection might be only of historical interest, considering what was said above on the history of Karelian and Vepsian writing. It would be good to extend its limits to make it deserve its name of Electronic Collection in Finno-Ugrian Languages. Possibly, similar efforts are made in Komi, Mordovia, Udmurtia and Mari El—but we have been unable to this day to establish contacts with the national libraries of those republics. I can only guess why. Document digitizing is a hard and expensive job that does not bring libraries any tangible benefits, so they are not willing to give other websites access to their own cherished resources made with such difficulty—and never mind that the site was made as a general point of access to resources of Finno-Ugrian libraries, a kind of visiting card they all share,

which introduces users of related languages. Possibly, the NL RK is to blame, too—we might be not active enough in cooperation with colleagues. I hope we shall correct all our errors as the site is re-arranged.

Our attempt to place on our website references to Karelian-language electronic editions, for instance, generally accessible ones in the electronic library of the Russian National Library, was no great success. We could place only a reference to the search page of that electronic library, and search can be made only in Russian. The reference is pointless in the Finnish version of our website. Different developers use different software, and occasionally deliberately close out the opportunity of references to a particular resource to protect it from copying.

The idea of pooling in the electronic resources of libraries and research and educational institutions is easily understandable and extremely topical and attractive with the necessity of a unified interface, a reliable way of addressing, and guaranteed long-term storage of electronic editions. All these problems are posed in many uniting projects, which we know only in theory. God knows why, nothing is known as yet about practical results to benefit all.

An electronic copy is a sum total of graphic files, so we had no problems of selecting types and keyboard layout, which arise in typing a text on a PC. After the new alphabets were introduced, it is no problem typing a Karelian- or Vepsian-language text by combining Estonian and Czech symbols on the keyboard. This is rather an awkward job, however, and can cool a user's desire to produce, let say, a Vepsian-language text, as cyberspace users want everything to be simple and easy. But it is hard to make any improvements. One cannot make operating system developers extend their systems to types for languages that are comparatively rare on the global scale.

I would also like to mention another kind of electronic resources our library is developing—three CDs with electronic copies of editions in ethnic languages, and of rare editions on local history from our collection. It was done on an order from the Karelian Ministry for Nationalities Policy and Contacts with religious Organizations. We are making a fourth CD now. Experts of the library work IT department are responsible for digitizing, layout, design and circulation of the CDs. Such publishing activities are outside library duties and competences, so this is a labor of

love. The CDs are intended for the republic's libraries, and come out in a small number of copies. However, I think this is a necessary job. We gave computer and communications technologies, purchased on republican budget allocations, to central library systems of all Karelia's municipal districts on the subprogram IT Introduction to Libraries of the RK, which was completed in 2006. However, for a number of reasons, even not all central municipal libraries can work in the Internet even today. The Kalevala ethnic area has technical problems as a monopolist provider can offer only dial access in the Kalevala township. The Olonets ethnic area has had no municipal allocations for more than a year to pay for connection and information transmission on data channels. The Suoyarvi municipal district has extremely unreliable communications.

I could go on with the list of problems ad infinitum. Meanwhile, the localities I mentioned have been populated by Karelians since very long ago, and a CD collection will be extremely popular there.

Prospects and Problems

We intend to establish a section on ethnic languages accessible from whatever website on our portal. Pages on the ethnic language of Karelia will tell how their writing developed. We shall introduce their alphabets and tell how to relocate PCs for typing in Vepsian and Karelian.

We also intend to establish a Karelian-language forum for language users to communicate with each other. There will be problems with it, I am sure—and not only technical. It is easy to make a communication tool but much harder to maintain a content interesting enough to language users to prompt them to spontaneous opinion exchanges. A forum is doomed when left drifting and when there are no interesting people on it. Say, now, have you seen a sight more depressing than an abandoned website or page?

The United Nations has proclaimed 2008 the Year of Languages. By way of preparation, we determined to place initial Karelian language classes in the section. We hope they will be interactive and, possibly, in the sound form. We have already obtained relevant experts' consent to cooperate, so we hope to make 2008 a fruitful year.

We faced certain problems in working at CDs. A majority of printed editions in Vepsian and Karelian have been put out starting with the 1980s. We cannot replicate them with the law on copyright and related rights even though this is a nonprofit project with libraries getting the disks free. We feel lucky when we obtain authors' and publishers' consent—but sometimes, we come across an interesting edition that came out in a small number of copies, reprints are not envisaged, and the publishing house has been liquidated. On such instances, we have to track down its legal successor to authorize digitization. It will be very convenient to have dependable consultants for such instances.

It takes money to establish and develop ethnic-language resources preserving a unique cultural, historical and ethnological heritage.

We occasionally need professional assistance to place information on a website or record it on a disk. Author and expert services must be remunerated. To be sure, we have a way to earn the sums we need—for instance, win a grant or get on a regional program. But we cannot be sure that the allocations will suffice and we shall meet the timetable. Our department of ethnic and local historical literature is collecting unique material for a CD on Vepsians—their history, rites, customs, recorded folklore and present-day life.

The authors are our users and friends of the library. It is hard nowadays, however, to rely on disinterested work. Alas, we cannot afford to pay these enthusiasts. We have collected verbal contributions, video and sound recordings, maps and photographs. We need quality design and layout—but real professionals will charge more than all grants accessible to us can give, considering the costs of digitizing widely diversified materials. Professionals demand remuneration proceeding from tentative sale profits—but we librarians cannot sell resources we make. There must be a way to cope with the problem, but we don't know it. The Russian IFAP Committee ought to establish a help desk similar to the Virtual Reference, a service used by many libraries. It would be of help with advice or addresses for assistance.

Conclusion

The Republic of Karelia is doing much for its more than 90 ethnic entities, including Kalerians, Vepsians and Finns. Ethnic languages are taught in primary school, colleges and universities. There is an idea of start-

ing tuition in kindergartens. Study materials, fiction and the press are published in those languages, and there are radio and television broadcasts in them. The Institute of Language, Literature and History of the Karelian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Baltic-Finnish Philology and Culture Department of the Petrozavodsk University are centers of linguistic research. The cultural institution personnel are entitled to wage rises for knowledge and use of Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish.

Two regional target programs have been launched—Harmonization of Interethnic and Interdenominational Relations, and Promotion of Civil Accord in the Republic of Karelia for 2007-2010, under the motto "Karelia: The Territory of Accord, and State Support of the Karelian, Vepsian and Finnish Languages in the Republic of Karelia for 2006-2010". A public council monitors their implementation.

The republic has 34 ethnic public organizations—unions, congresses, public movements, autonomies, friendship and cultural societies, etc. They often hold meetings and celebrations in the National Library of the Republic of Karelia. It is active in such events, as many other Karelian libraries are.

Libraries can honorably contribute to the development of information resources in many languages. But they cannot do anything single-handed. They need interested partners from among other libraries, educational and cultural institutions, executive bodies and public organizations.

If you think our efforts to promote ethnic languages in cyberspace are not worthwhile, considering the relatively small number of Karelians and Vepsians, let us turn to the opinion of Joe O'Donnell, professor of information technologies of the Sabhal Mor Ostaig College on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. He thinks that the Internet and accompanying globalization will bring the death of languages closer unless people take care to preserve them, and so make the Internet an inestimable tool of language survival.

Alexander Arkhipov

Documentation of Minor Languages: Research and Technical Aspects[1]

Language documentation[2] is a comparatively young branch of linguistics. It is connected the closest with *field linguistics*, i.e., the study of languages in their natural habitat. Collection and storage of primary information about little-studied languages is the principal task of documentation. It is especially topical nowadays with linguistic diversity shrinking at an unprecedented pace. 50-90% of world languages will perish before the end of the 21st century, UNESCO and other experts forecast. Naturally, minor languages (with less than 50,000 speakers) are in the greatest danger. Such languages are used by relatively small communities. They have no official status and seldom enjoy social prestige. This is why researchers must preserve the greatest possible amount of linguistic data for the generations to come and for minor language speakers. Many foundations and academic organizations are concertedly working to preserve the endangered linguistic and cultural heritage.

1. The Objectives of Language Documentation

By language documentation, we understand lasting multi-purpose fixation of linguistic data [1].

The field linguist usually aims at *language description*, immediate study of linguistic phenomena during which he can solve a wide range of practical research problems. Thus, experts on phonetics can study regularities of a particular language connected with the stress, while grammarians study the rules of arranging and using verbal forms, semanticists the system of color designation, etc. Language description rests on abstract categories and rules, and results from linguistic analysis, observation, generalization and insights. All this makes it rather subjective. We

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[2] We use the term "language documenting", or "linguistic documenting" for the long practical process, while "language documentation", or "linguistic documentation" stands for resultant materials.

can hardly find two linguistic researchers who would make similar descriptions of one and the same set of linguistic phenomena.

Unlike language description, documenting aims to collect a considerable amount of *basic data* (raw material of a kind), which will later allow to study the language (that is, cope with practical research tasks) even if there is no chance to collect new data. Texts of diverse genres—stories, tales, legends, accounts of real events, everyday dialogues, songs, etc.—are the basic documented kinds of speech activity recorded in documenting. Recordings of spontaneous speech are also of great value. Isolated phrases, words and verbal grammar forms, such as samples of conjugation and declination, are also frequently recorded.

These two activities are interconnected as, in tackling whatever research problem, linguists store a certain—occasionally considerable—amount of basic data, which, however, are most often inaccessible to other scholars. They lie idle in private notebooks or cassettes while only analytical results are published. Documentation, on the contrary, aims not only to collect material but to make it universally accessible in a handy electronic form. It makes every researcher's work much more effective and helps to avoid repetition of the same work by several researchers. It is also necessary to guarantee reliable lasting preservation of collected information and regularly transfer it to new carriers and formats.

Last but not least comes another essential goal, which can also be attained irrespective of the above-said. That is the use of the obtained material not only for linguistic research but also for language teaching, promotion and even revival. Close communication with language speakers and their active involvement in the work is especially productive in these instances.

2. Linguistic Documentation: Who Does It, How and What For?

Ideal documentation aims at a sum total of raw data entirely sufficient for the coming generations of users, whatever linguistic aspect they choose to study (every practical project certainly has its limits). This means that all language varieties—local dialects, social idiom, genre speech, etc. must be taken into account.

Language documentation is intended for the most extensive range of users. Recorded texts are of interest to local people as they concern

their everyday routine and acquaintances. Merely to know that scholars take an interest in their language and the recordings will be available worldwide means to revive young people's interest in their native tongue with its rising prestige. It helps to preserve the cultural heritage for generations to come. Collected and processed data are of tremendous value to students of the language in its many aspects, be it researchers of a particular language family, typologists, who study general linguistic regularities by comparing mutually distant languages, which are totally unlike each other, sociolinguists, ethnographers or folklore students. Next come educationists, and people engaged in language support and planning. There are also potential users we do not know presently, and there are goals never posed at the time of documenting. At the same time, the project needs explicitly posed goals—or documentation will degenerate into the storage of a bulk of irrelevant information.

Documentation rests on sound recordings—raw data easy to collect, process and reproduce with general access to recorders and sound processing software. Video recordings contain more information as they facilitate orientation in the communicative situation and, on the whole, tell much more about the culture of the language community under study and so promote an emotional response of that community. A good video recording, however, is labor-consuming and demands special training. More than that, it is hard to store and process videos, and special temporal markups are necessary to locate and reproduce a particular fragment. Other materials can also be used for documenting—photographs and sketches of household utensils, environmental landmarks, maps, family trees, livestock brands, folklore personages, etc. This is where the border between linguistics and cultural studies is obliterated, and we pass without knowing it to collecting ethnographic data.

Though we focus on raw data in documenting, it is hardly possible to limit one's efforts to data collection. Grammar descriptions and text analyses, as well as dictionaries, are part and parcel of linguistic documentation. Notably, even a text published in written form is not a raw material as any transcription of oral speech is fruit of linguistic analysis. The transcriber has to make a tremendous number of decisions, often unspecified, concerning the way of transcribing particular sounds, intonations, slips of the tongue and other properties of oral speech.

3. Language Documentation and Information Technologies

Technological standards of the end product of documenting—the corpus of collected and annotated materials—follow from the above. The optimum corpus of linguistic documentation must have a large volume and be further extensible, and contain both textual and multimedia data. High quality of primary recordings is essential, for instance, to allow spectrum analysis of speech sounds, or articulation analysis based on video recordings.

3.1. Data Storage

Storage of large texts is no problem, while sound recordings and especially video files demand considerable free disk space. With present-day quality standards, we need approximately 600 Mb for an hour of stereo recording and 300 Mb for an hour of mono recording [2]. Videos demand much greater volumes. A ten-minute film recorded by a MiniDV digital camera takes approximately 2.2 Gbytes on the hard disk. A disk no smaller than 400 Gbytes is necessary to store a 30 hour recording in this format, by an order of magnitude greater than an average office computer can offer. Lack of space is an even greater problem for large archives. Most often, they (e.g., the DoBeS archive) store compressed format MPEG-2 or MPEG-4 files. Even such volumes are hard to bring to the user through the Internet. Video copies of varying quality for storage and demonstration are one of the ways to cope with the problem.

The document corpus must envisage long-term storage, which demands, first, regularly making reserve copies; second, maintenance of necessary equipment (sound recorders, cameras, disk drives, computers, etc.) and carriers (cassettes, disks and paper archives); and third, data translation from obsolete carriers to newer ones, for instance, from tape and paper cards to computer files, from pre-Unicode types to Unicode, etc.

3.2. Access to Data

Materials must be accessible to the widest possible range of users. At present, this point primarily relies to access in the electronic form through the Internet. On the other hand, users differ, and different groups need different forms of access—simpler to handle and understand for the public at large and language speakers, and the more detailed and sophis-

ticated for linguistic researchers and other experts. Varying access privileges may be granted to certain users.

Importantly, the entire system must be as independent as possible of a particular information milieu (equipment, software, types, etc.). In whatever part of the world he might be, the user must see the same thing on the monitor irrespective of his computer make, operating system and other technicalities. Promising in this respect is the use of free open-code software (e.g., OpenOffice.org or the Mozilla Firefox browser), or XML and other open file formats. The use of Unicode types is a must.

3.3. Metadata

Metadata are auxiliary "data about data", which facilitate storage and search. However important it may be, this category is extremely seldom used in Russia to this day. There are several kinds of metadata, including classificatory (text name, interlocutors, author, date and place of recording, name or code of language); descriptive (concerning the content of recording); structural (describing the inner document structure, e.g., a bilingual dictionary); technical (file format and size, symbol coding, etc.); and administrative (date of the latest change, copyright information, access and circulation limiting, etc.).

There are two international standards for linguistic metadata: OLAC (Open Language Archives Community) and IMDI (ISLE Meta-Data Initiative).

4. Moscow University Experience in Minor Language Documentation

The OTIPL, Theoretical and Applied Linguistics Department under the Department of Philology of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, celebrated its 45th anniversary two years ago.[3]

The OTIPL was, in its time, the cradle of Moscow linguistic expeditions. Alexander Kibrik, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and head of the Chair of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, took up the study of minor Russian/Soviet languages in 1967. He has led since then more than 40 linguistic expeditions to Dagestan,

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[3] http://www.philol.msu.ru/~otipl/new/main/index.php

Azerbaijan, Georgia, Abkhazia, Tuva, Kamchatka, the Pamir and the Volga country. Many of his pupils now arrange their own expeditions in the OTIPL and other research centers. Kibrik also heads the recently established Department of Linguo-Cultural Ecology of the Institute of World Culture (IMK) under the Lomonosov Moscow State University[4], which studies minor languages and preserves their heritage.

4.1. Elaboration of Text Representation Standards

An OTIPL-IMK team started using long experience of linguistic field work for new documentation projects in 2005[5]. The Russian Foundation for Basic Research is working on a three-year project, "Minor Languages and Peoples: Existence on the Brink", led by Vyacheslav Vs. Ivanov, Full Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and IMK director. Soon to finish, the project elaborates standards for recording and comprehensive representation of texts in non-literate languages.

A text in a little-studied language is a complicated linguistic object. Many components/layers of information can be used for its adequate representation, including several transcriptions (more or less detailed), several versions of translation (literal, idiomatic and literary), commentaries of various kinds (linguistic, situational and encyclopedic), and various aspects of grammar analysis (morphological and syntactic). The visual anthropological aspect of performance is also relevant in many instances, especially for traditional folklore and ritual texts. Students of different languages, who represent different schools, practice different methods of recording and use varying technical means. All this must be brought to one standard for exchanges between experts on different languages and easier browsing in a large amount of texts. The biggest goal of the project is a comprehensive unified corpus of texts in minor languages of the Russian Federation, accessible to students of many cultures and languages.

The IMK Department of Linguo-Cultural Ecology also publishes Russian-language collections *Minor Languages and Peoples: Existence on the Brink*. The first issue [2] came out in 2005, and a second is ready for print. The edition concerns the problems of minor language documentation and includes dictionaries and texts in languages of many families.

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[4] http://www.imk.msu.ru/Structure/Linguistics/linguistics.html
[5] http://www.philol.msu.ru/~languedoc/

4.2. The Five Languages of Eurasia

The four-year NSF project "Five Languages of Eurasia" was launched in May 2006. Led by Professor Alexander Nakhimovsky of Colgate University, NY, U.S.A., it brings together Moscow and St. Petersburg linguists. The American party funds field studies and provides technical support to elaborate special software. The project initially envisaged documenting four languages of Russia and one of Azerbaijan. An additional NSF grant of 2007 helped to extend it to another language.

Expeditions have been made for today to document two languages of the North Caucasian family, each spoken only in one village, from which it borrows its name—the Archi of Dagestan and the Khinalug of Azerbaijan, and the Nganasan language of the Ural family, Samodic group, spoken in the village of Ust-Avam on the Taimyr Peninsula. The Archi and the Khinalug are non-literate languages, each spoken by approximately 1,200. They are relatively safe now as the village population is not shrinking, and children speak them from birth. However, the fate of these languages arouses apprehensions with the decline of rural traditions. The Nganasan language is in a far worse situation as only people past 50 from among ethnic Nganasans are fluent in their native tongue.

Several kinds of resources are made on the project: electronic text corpuses, phonetic databases and dictionaries. All resources have an electronic format and will appear in the Internet. The texts—stories and legends recounted by native speakers, everyday dialogues, etc.—are recorded by quality sound and video recorders. Next comes the difficult job of translating and multi-level phonetic and grammar analyses. At long last, when the text is ready, the use can simultaneously hear the sound, see the speaker on the monitor and read not only his words but also comprehensive linguistic commentaries. Linguists can also search for particular words, morphemes and grammar constructions in the entire text collection. Phonetic databases are necessary for detailed phonetic studies. They contain usage instances of all sounds of the language in different pronunciation variants, recorded from several speakers.

Writing has been elaborated for Archi and Khinalug, based on the Avar Cyrillic writing for the former, and Azeri Roman writing for the latter. Our British colleagues, Marina Chumakina, an OTIPL graduate, among them, snatched at the new alphabet for their trilingual Archi-English-Russian dictionary.

Many stories of gripping interest are connected with the Archi language. Minor language studies are usually made on the academic initiative—local people and authorities very seldom launch such studies though local educational and research centers and local administrations usually welcome and help linguistic expeditions. When an expedition arrives, it attracts an enthusiast or two from among the local people. They are willing to work with the linguists round the clock to preserve their native language and culture. Here, Dame Fortune had a pleasant surprise for us. Maksud Sadikov of Archi came to the Moscow University one fine day and asked us to invent an Archi alphabet—which we did. Sadikov presently heads the Institute of Theology and Religious Studies in Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan.

4.3. Problems

We are undermanned, underfunded and pressed for time. These are our worst problems. There are many endangered languages in need of research, while the number of qualified experts willing to spend the lion's share of their time in this hard work is scanty. We need expensive gadgetry, programmers, sound and video engineers, and archivists—all workaholics. It is necessary to train experienced and beginner linguists in the ABC of latter-day information technology, and so make them self-reliant, at least to an extent.

5. Foundations Financing Minor Language Documentation

Linguistic expeditions and documentation projects in Russia are funded by two government foundations—the Russian Humanitarian Foundation (www.rfh.ru) and the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (www.rfbr.ru).

There are several major language documentation projects abroad. They usually funs research worldwide, and accept applications from researchers in any country for projects based in whatever part of the world.

The German-Dutch program DOBES (Dokumentation Bedrohter Sprachen)[6] was established in 2000, and is financed by the Volkswa-

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[6] http://www.mpi.nl/DOBES/dobesprogramme/

gen Foundation[7]. The Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, in Nijmegen, Netherlands, is its research and technical base[8].

Great Britain's ELDP (Endangered Languages Documentation Programme) is part of the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project[9]. Supervised by an international committee, it is implemented by the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London[10]. The program envisages research grants to a total 15 million pounds within ten years[11].

The DEL program of the United States (Documenting Endangered Languages)[12] is many years' endeavor of the National Science Foundation[13] and the National Endowment for the Humanities[14]. It recently received a permanent status. The Five Languages of Eurasia project (see above) is within this program. Research is led by the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) of the Smithsonian Institution[15].

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[7] http://www.volkswagenstiftung.de/index.php?id=3&L=1

[8] http://www.mpi.nl/

[9] HRELP (Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project) http://www.hrelp.org/

[10] SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), http://www.soas.ac.uk/

[11] http://www.hrelp.org/grants/apply/information/russian/index.html

[12] http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12816

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[14] http://www.neh.gov/

[15] http://www.mnh.si.edu/

Emil Yakupov

Fonts for Languages Spoken in Russia, Which Have Recently Acquired a Written Form

This article offers you an analysis of the present state of types for minority languages used in Russia. It starts with a glimpse of history of writing in Russia and finishes with forecasts and wishes for the future. It also cites certain statistics obtained by the latest population census concerning the ethnic and linguistic composition of the Russian population, which are necessary for a comprehensive treatment of the theme.

Ethnic Communities and Languages

Russia has been a multiethnic country since long ago, and so has stored a vast experience of friendly coexistence. Though its titular nation makes approximately 80% of the population, a majority of the smaller ethnic communities retain their identity and avoid assimilation. The enfeeblement of federal authority toward the end of the 20th century prompted ethnic pride, which went through an extremist stage in the 1990s and is now moderate enough for constructive settlement of the essential problems of safeguarding and developing ethnic cultures, and of interethnic communication.

2002 all-Russia population census
Population, exceeding 145 mln
Titular nation, 80%
Number of ethnic entities exceeding 1 mln, 7:
- Russian 115.9 mln
- Tatar 5.6 mln
- Ukrainian 2.9 mln
- Bashkir 1.7 mln
- Chuvash 1,6 mln
- Chechen 1.4 mln
- Armenian 1.1 mln

Number of (plausible) variants of answer to the question on ethnic identity, c. 800

Number of nationalities, c. 150

Number of languages, exceeding 200 (of these, c. 20, dead)

Number of Cyrillic-based written languages, c. 90

At present, there are more than 70 languages in Russia with a number of speakers exceeding 10,000, while the entire number, nonliterate languages included, exceeds 200. 90 languages use, or formerly used, Cyrillic writing. Apart from it, those languages use Roman, Armenian, Georgian, Greek, Arabic and Hebrew letters, and hieroglyphics.

Recently Acquired Writing

The history of the inception and development of Russian ethnic minorities' writing is mostly stormy and confused. Several languages acquired written form as early as the 19th century thanks to Orthodox missionary toil. The basic developments, however, came in the 1930s with activities of the All-Union Central Committee for the New Alphabet, or VCKNA, and the Institute of Languages and Writing of the Peoples of the USSR. With support from Culture Minister Anatoly Lunacharsky, the VCKNA insisted on Russian and the other languages spoken in the USSR shifting to Roman letters. The so-called New Alphabet that was fruit of its work based on Roman lettering. Allround efforts were made proceeding from it to elaborate writing for many languages. 68 ethnic entities, with the total number approaching 25 million, had shifted to it by 1936.

This was soon declared a bad blunder, the New Alphabet abolished, the committee disbanded, and a shift to the Cyrillic alphabet rapidly made under the leadership of the Institute of Languages and Writing of the Peoples of the USSR, which was entrusted with the scientific and method-setting part of the job. Regional Communist Party committees appointed task forces to elaborate and introduce the new Cyrillic alphabet. Their representatives regularly visited Moscow for all-round instructions and teaching aids.

The reform was seldom discussed—criticism of decisions from the center was out of the question in 1938. Inserted below is a striking example: excerpts from a resolution of the regional Communist Party committee board of Dagestan, which the newspaper *Dagestanskaya Pravda* carried on February 4, 1938.

"The Board of the regional Communist Party committee of Dagestan stresses the tremendous political and cultural importance of the Dagestani peoples shifting to the new alphabet. This is yet another victory of the Leninist and Stalinist nationalities policy and cooperation of the peoples of our Fatherland <...> Rabid enemies of our socialist country—bourgeois nationalists and banditry led by Trotsky, Zinovyev, Bukharin and Rykov—spread their sabotage to the sphere of writing and language <...> Their evil practice, spearheaded against the working people of Dagestan, expressed their vicious hatred of our socialist country and their perfidious desire to drive in a wedge between the working people of the Dagestani Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the great socialist Fatherland, rob them of the fruit of socialist victories and cast them back into the abyss of feudal serfdom and oppression, lawlessness and poverty <...> The introduction of the new alphabet, based on the Russian, will be of inestimable help to the working people of the Dagestani Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in the rapid eradication of all the dire fruit of perfidious sabotage by fascist bourgeois nationalist bandits in the field of language and writing, and will bring the people ever closer to the great culture of all the peoples of the USSR."

The tortuous road travelled by the new ethnic writing in Russia found striking reflection in the lives of people involved in it. The fate of Nikolai Yakovlev was highly symbolic. Theoretician of alphabet elaboration on the basis of phonemes, he actively improved and introduced Romanized alphabets at the start of his career. Head of the VCKNA technographic commission, he was the principal ideologist of Romanization. He was stigmatized in 1936, shortly before the VCKNA was disbanded. Yakovlev joined the staff of the Institute of Languages and Writing of the Peoples of the USSR, where he supervised the shift from Roman to Cyrillic writing. In certain respects, he adopted the theory of Nicholas Marr, which dominated Soviet linguistic research at that time. Joseph Stalin fulminated against that theory

in his work *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*, published in 1950. Yakovlev was promptly dismissed as an "unrepentant Marrist". Hunted down, the scholar went mad with the shock and could no longer go on with his research.

The New Alphabet

The New Alphabet was conceived as an extended Roman alphabet to be adopted by all languages spoken in the Soviet Union. The basic phonemes were each to have a symbol of its own, with the same symbols for similar phonemes in different languages. Digraphs were avoided whenever possible, as well as diacritical signs written separately from letters (to be replaced by conjoint diacritics, such as cedillas and crossings). Whenever necessary, symbols were borrowed from other alphabets unless they were blatantly out of the style of the Roman alphabet. Overturned letters were occasionally used.

The resultant alphabet possessed a basic set of 33 letters occurring in an overwhelming majority of new alphabets plus additional letters in certain alphabets. The composite alphabet had 105 symbols by 1936, and active work was on to reduce the number by simplifying particular alphabets and through eliminating symbols doubling each other as they stood for similar or mutually resembling phonemes of different languages. The VCKNA intended to reduce the composite alphabet to 83 symbols.

Those principles and recommendations could not be followed on certain instances. Though a majority of linguistic researchers highly assess the scientific achievements of the VCKNA, the implementation of its systems approach made resultant alphabets ineffective with many redundant elements, and necessary exceptions from the rules muddled the overall picture.

The New Cyrillic

The new pan-Cyrillic alphabet was elaborated by the same team and based on the same principles as the new Roman—it proceeded from the Russian alphabet with several dozens of derived symbols for the basic phonemes of minority languages.

It took more than ten years to elaborate and introduce the new Roman alphabet. The Cyrillic was adopted much quicker with ample practical experience stored, and lesser stringency of the principles on which derived symbols were made. The entire shift took slightly less than five years, and all the 68 Roman alphabets had been replaced by Cyrillic by 1941.

The Cyrillic Types

Roman symbols took shape throughout centuries in a spontaneous evolution that found practical expression in the labor of professional carvers, engravers, scribes and calligraphers—that is, type designers of many eras. Unlike it, the Cyrillic alphabet had a much shorter and less spontaneous history. The initial writing of the time of Sts Cyril and Methodius (9th century) was made for ecclesiastical purposes by compiling and modifying available alphabets. This writing had slowly progressed up to the start of the 18th century. Its four basic forms were available at that time—the uncial, the semi-uncial, the ligatured script and the cursive. With his reform of writing in 1708, Peter the Great decreed the introduction of the so-called "secular type", designed proceeding from the contemporaneous Dutch antique. Many symbols radically changed shape, and the alphabet itself was thoroughly modified.

The present-day Cyrillic writing is thus a mere 300 years old. At its inception, its design left ample room for progress as, to all appearances, Peter designed it single-handed. Though a jack-of-all-trades, the Emperor was by no means a top-notch type designer. The 18th and 19th centuries saw effective development of the type. Russia possessed several hundred types and several tens of letter foundries at the beginning of the 20th century, and its printing was up to the highest European standards. The shape of Cyrillic symbols might have deserved the criticisms it received from all sides for the above-said reasons, yet it rested on a firm tradition and concept.

The early 20th century was a promising time. Russian Constructivism and a general upsurge of creativity had an impact on visual culture. Regrettably, the drive and stamina ebbed and went into the oblivion as the

long era of Socialist Realism set in. There was only one office to design Cyrillic types at that time—the type department of Poligraphmach (the Moscow-based research institute of the printing press), with its small personnel working solely on government contracts.

Resources involved in the process were incomparably smaller than those involved in analogous work in the countries of the Roman alphabet. No wonder, Russia entered the era of computer printing with a miserable dozen typefaces and about fifty ethnic alphabets, which were invented by linguistic researchers and so included direly misshapen symbols, which were even more inept and far-fetched than the Cyrillic brainchildren of Peter the Great.

The extremely fruitful concluding decade of the 20th century and opening decade of the 21st spectacularly improved the Cyrillic type, and changed the situation beyond recognition. Type design and layout were computerized and so became more rapid and efficient, and far less affected by technical limitations. Publishing and printing cast off ideological fetters and freed of centralism and total control. The Unicode brought ethnic alphabets into order. Its software allowed work with multilingual texts. Last but not least, professional designers elaborated several hundred new types for texts and accidental use in advertising, street signs, etc. True, the Cyrillic alphabet still lags behind the Roman for the number and diversity of types, yet they suffice for more or less normal work.

Types and Linguistic Research Today

As we analyze the current state of typographics and the demand for types in the various parts of Russia, we see here proportions available in all the other spheres of national life—70% of orders come from Moscow and St. Petersburg and a mere 30% from the other vast territories—most probably, due to the uneven distribution of finance. The demand for ethnic language types is, however, considerable, so we regard support for ethnic types as an important part of our business. It is rather difficult to obtain statistics on particular languages as contemporary types are designed for a group of related languages. Thus, types in the Cyrillic-

Asian encoding support 35 languages plus Russian, and Unicode types can support even more. We assess the share of ethnic types in the overall volume of sold types as a mere 2-3%. The number of active users of those languages makes roughly 10% of the total population, according to the census, so, all other things equal, we can expect this share to increase to 12-15%, with an account for orders from the other former Soviet republics—which is not so little.

The use of ethnic languages is being brought into order, and local bylaws on languages are adopted—a process that must necessarily be accompanied by the appearance of universally accessible ethnic types of professional quality. Local bylaws on languages, as a rule, stipulate compulsory dubbing of texts and inscriptions in ethnic languages in official documents, road and other signs, etc. Apart from that, literature in ethnic languages—in particular, study books and dictionaries—must be available even when the law does not mention it. Ethnic web resources shall also develop. All this is impossible unless there are accessible types with ethnic support.

Ethnic types are really available. More than a hundred types in the ParaType library support Cyrillic-Asian, mostly Turkic, and several tens support Ural languages. There is a basic set of four types in the CIS encoding, which cover all written languages of the former USSR.

These are, however, commercial types of a private company, and though one particular face is low-price, and anyone who has an access to the Internet and a plastic card can buy a license and download a type in a matter of several minutes, these types cannot qualify as universally accessible. Truly universally accessible are such types as either are offered within an operation system or are freely accessible in the Internet. Universally accessible ethnic types also exist, but they do not comply with other demands. Those publicly accessible in the Internet are, as a rule, of deplorable quality, design- and technically-wise, while several types with an extended set of symbols offered by Windows cover only five ethnic languages on the Cyrillic-Asian list. Paradoxically, the population of a huge country with a seven trillion ruble budget mainly uses types made by a private American company. We have every respect for Microsoft and appreciate its serious and attentive attitude to ethnic traditions but we

cannot expect it to do more than it can and solve all the problems of safe-guarding and developing the writing of Russian ethnic minorities.

Universally accessible types are desirable but not indispensable for paperwork, book printing and the press. After all, government offices and private companies can afford several thousand rubles to purchase commercial types. The development of ethnic web resources, on the contrary, is impossible without free types. Even if an author uses legal types for his website, they must also be available in the computers of its visitors. Otherwise, the visitors either see the site in a different design or cannot read its texts at all. The following decision appears logical in this situation: the government contracts a designer of a set of national types to lay them out in the Internet. Desirably, the types should be included in localized operation systems in Russia. These types must support at least all languages with the number of speakers exceeding 10,000. Local governments of ethnic areas can also order their own type sets with support of ethnic alphabets and thus extend the pool of universally accessible types.

We must, however, finally clarify the situation with alphabets and the artistic design of ethnic symbol graphemes before we tackle technical design and dissemination of types, which is rather a simple matter that boils down to funding and supervision of allocation spending.

The design of a set of ethnic types made on a Bashkir government contract exemplifies recent endeavors the approach to which we consider extremely successful. Especially noteworthy is its treatment and organization. The client—the ethnic language institute—provided sketches of additional letters of the Bashkir language. The institute did all it could to collect, process and formulate demands to the construction of graphemes corresponding to the present-day developmental level of writing and to the understanding of available traditions of handwritten and printed symbol forms. Those sketches made the basis of types designed by professional ParaType artists, ethnically unbiased and with practical experience of many alphabets. All this helped them to correct the types in such a way as to give symbols used in related Turkic languages a multipurpose form acceptable in those languages.

Last but not least come another several remarks. The shift to computer technologies made types virtual products from the material

products they used to be. With all its pros, this shift has one major con. We cannot expect the profession of type designer to become popular with young people with the present scope of intellectual property piracy and inadequate efforts against it. As the result, the number of type designers trained even in the principal Russian cities is disastrously small, and there are none at all in the ethnic republics.

Surprisingly, the present national leadership does not pay any serious attention to types, though Cyrillic writing is the precious little something that brings us together and allows to see a kindred soul in a person of another ethnicity, culture and religion. No less surprisingly, the leadership of ethnic republics does not care about its ethnic types though the safeguarding and development of written culture is the cornerstone of ethnic identity, which is so hard to preserve in the globalizing world.

About the Authors

Alexander Arkhipov, Ph.D., Research Fellow, Institute of World Culture and Philology Department, Lomonosov Moscow State University

Elena Bogdanova, Deputy Minister for Nationalities Policy and Contacts with Religious Communities of the Republic of Karelia

Valery Boynich, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Karelia

Galina Galanicheva, Head of Department of Communications and Information Technology, National Library of the Republic of Karelia

Evgeny Kuzmin, Ph.D., Chairman, Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Programme; President, Interregional Library Cooperation Centre, Honored Worker of Culture of the Russian Federation, winner of the Government Award of the Russian Federation

Ekaterina Plys, project coordinator, Interregional Library Cooperation Centre

Zilya Valeeva, Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Culture of the Republic of Tatarstan

Natalia Volodina, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture, Nationalities Affairs, Information Policy and the Archives of the Chuvash Republic

Elmir Yakubov, M.Sc. (Information Resources), Director, Khasavyurt Central Municipal Library System

Emil Yakupov, Director, ParaType Inc.

Preservation of Linguistic Diversity: Russian Experience

Compilers: E. Kuzmin, E. Plys

Computer-aided makeup: I. Goryunov
Executive: S. Bakeikin