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Language attitudes: sociolinguistic aspect

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**Abstract.** Language attitudes are pivotal in shaping spheres of language use, impacting language change and policy. They reflect how communities perceive and value languages, influencing language choice, education, and social interactions. Studies on language attitudes explore preferences in language instruction, societal perceptions, and the potential for language discrimination. Positive attitudes can elevate language prestige, while negative ones may contribute to language decline. Loyalty to a language or a variety can resist influences from a dominant language, especially if a minority language prestige is high. The article comprises reviews on 'language attitudes' as a term, an overview of the history of research on the perceptions of a language, analysis of related changes occurring among speakers. The objective of the article is to provide a forecast for the future fate of Karelian, Kalmyk, and Yakut languages by analyzing language attitudes. The focus of the study was on the perceptions of a language held by members of a speech community, i.e., those who have no command of the studied language, as these perceptions were deemed highly significant. When the overall sentiment toward a language is positive, and speech community members recognize the importance of having at least a basic proficiency in it, the prospects for the language's growth appear promising. Such favorable attitudes may lead speech community members to actively encourage language study among their children or grandchildren or even decide to learn the language themselves later in life, creating a potentially fertile environment for a language to flourish.

**Keywords:** Language attitudes; Perceptions of a language; Language community; Speech community; Karelian language; Kalmyk language; Yakut language

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Языковые установки: социолингвистический аспект

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**Аннотация.** Языковые установки играют важную роль в формировании сфер использования языка, влияя на изменения в языке и языковую политику. Они отражают то, как сообщества воспринимают и ценят языки, влияя на выбор языка для получения образования и социального взаимодействия. Исследования языковых установок посвящены предпочтениям в обучении языку, восприятию языка в обществе, или возможности появления языковой дискриминации. Позитивные языковые установки могут поднять престиж языка, тогда как негативные – способствовать его упадку. Языковая лояльность, если она достаточно высока, способна противостоять влиянию со стороны доминирующего языка. В статье представлен обзор понятия «языковые установки» как термина, исследование по истории изучения языковых установок, анализ изменений восприятия языка, происходящих среди говорящих. Цель статьи – на основе анализа языковых установок составить прогностическую картину дальнейшей судьбы карельского, калмыцкого и якутского языков. В центре внимания исследования оказались языковые установки членов речевого сообщества, то есть тех, кто не владеет изучаемым языком, эти представления являются весьма значимыми. Если общее отношение к языку положительное и члены речевого сообщества признают важность владения им хотя бы на базовом уровне, у языка хорошие перспективы развития. Благоприятные языковые установки могут побудить членов речевого сообщества не только самим изучить язык, но и активно поощрять изучение языка среди своих детей или внуков, создавая потенциально благодатную среду для процветания языка.

**Ключевые слова:** Языковые установки; Восприятие языка; Языковое сообщество; Речевое сообщество; Карельский язык; Калмыцкий язык; Якутский язык

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## Introduction

Language attitudes, by far, play a crucial role in shaping language use among speakers, and as a consequence they influence language change and language policy. These attitudes can be quite influential in how speakers and language communities use, value, and judge different languages and varieties. Understanding language attitudes is essential for sociolinguists since they shed light on the complex social, cultural, and psychological factors that constitute language functioning within societies. Attitudes, that are persistent among speakers, can possibly have far-reaching implications on language policy, education, and social interactions and the future functioning of languages.

Language attitudes is a concept that is actively used in modern social languages in studies on language planning, language identity, language ideology, language preservation, bilingualism or multilingualism (Dyrkheeva and Tsybenova, 2020), (Khilkhanova, 2022), (Lasagabaster, 2015), (O'Rourke and Hogan-Brun, 2013). Overall, studies on language attitudes involve such topics as the language choice of the speaker, preferences in choosing the language of instruction for children, language use in various social contexts (Nagmatullina and Maksimova, 2019), (Salmon and Menjivar, 2019).

Language attitudes are studied in social languages in various ways. The studies involve research on the way the positive

perception of a language is shaped in a speech community, influencing language prestige. Reversely, negative attitudes towards a minority language are considered among speakers, for example, the ones that may contribute to its decline and eventual extinction. Disapproving attitudes can lead to stigmatization of certain dialects or accents resulting in language discrimination, which makes it an important field for monitoring. Language attitudes are conceptually linked to the notion of loyalty to a language or a variety, leading to positive attitudes towards it and resistance to language change or outside influences. However, some of such attitudes may become a cause for some instances of language purism, i.e., the policy aimed at cleansing the literary language from foreign borrowings, various kinds of newly coined words, from elements of non-literary speech (dialectisms, vernacular, etc.). Considering studies of language attitudes in the framework of language planning, i.e., activities referring to deliberate and future-oriented activities aimed at influencing or modifying the language behavior of a speech community or society<sup>1</sup>, it is possible to say that these attitudes may have bottom-up influence on such planning and, ultimately, political decisions. Authorities, institutions, and other actors of language planning may promote or discourage use of certain languages or variants based on speakers' societal attitudes and language ideologies.

### **Main part**

#### Language attitudes as a term

From a sociolinguistic point of view, language attitudes are subjectively conditioned opinions in relation to any language or language variety. By and large, language attitudes are considered both as psychological attitudes and subjective evaluations. As a result, the definitions vary. The concept of "language attitudes", used mainly in psycholinguistic research, is

defined as "the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others" (Crystal, 1997: 215). In social linguistics, primarily, the valency of individual language attitudes is considered, being it positive or negative: "assessments that speakers make about the relative values of a particular language" (Myers-Scotton, 2006: 109). Speaking generally, sociolinguists note that language attitudes are determined to a larger extent by social factors, rather than by psychological attitudes (Baker, 1992: 106).

At present, "language attitudes", as a terminological unit, is an emerging concept in Russian social languages, which has differences both in nominations and definitions. In the Dictionary of Sociolinguistic Terms, language attitudes are defined as social attitudes or "subjective attitudes of a speech/language community in relation to language, language variants"<sup>2</sup>. There is another, synonymous, nomination for this term, i.e., language beliefs (Borgoyakova and Guseinova, 2019: 343).

Nowadays, isolated environment for languages is scarcely possible. Therefore, typically a number of languages or language varieties coexist in the same speech community. Speech community refers to two or more languages that function in close contact, with speakers communicating mainly in the dominant language. Some speakers use the dominant language only, while others retain their own indigenous language as a second language of primarily home communication. Language attitudes can be considered from two points of view: from the point of view of its speakers, i.e., within the language community, and from the point of view of those who live and work among the people using this language, but do not have any command of it, i.e., within the speech community. In a bilingual or polylingual speech community, there are certain relatively stable attitudes towards a language that

<sup>1</sup> A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics. Ed. by J. Swann, etc. (2012). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, P. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Slovar' sotsiolingvisticheskikh terminov. Pod red. V. Yu. Mikhilchenko [Dictionary of sociolinguistic terms. Ed. by V. Yu. Mikhilchenko] (2006). Institut iazykoznanii RAN, Moscow, Russia, P. 205.

members of a speech community do not speak. The object of this article is to study attitudes among the members of the speech community towards an indigenous language used in their speech environment.

#### History and possible future trends of research on language attitudes

Language attitudes have been the subject of research for specialists in various fields of knowledge – social psychology, psycholinguistics, theory of communication, language anthropology, etc. In sociolinguistics, research on language attitudes has also attracted a lot of scientific attention over the past 70 years.

The study of language attitudes can be traced back to the early days of sociolinguistics. In 1950s W. Labov conducted studies on the perception of language variation in New York City, and that laid the foundation for further research on how speakers evaluate particular language variants or accents. Another notable achievement in the study of language attitudes was the introduction of the matched guise technique in the 1970s, which was quite often used in the studies of bilingualism and language contact. It is the method, where “listeners rate voices in terms of their speakers' competence, social attractiveness, etc.”<sup>3</sup> and rate them using a related scale. One of the practical applications of this method is found in the study of J. Edwards (1977), who analyzed the attitudes towards different accents in Ireland. The main differences in positive or negative attitudes were identified in terms of language competence, social attractiveness and moral assessments (Edwards, 1977: 280-286). Differences in language attitudes between speakers and non-speakers were studied by R. Bourhis in the analysis of Welsh identity among the inhabitants of Wales. The main focus of the study was to research the attitudes towards this language code from the members of the non-ethnic group (Bourhis et al., 1973: 447-460).

<sup>3</sup> A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics, P. 104.

Later on, language attitudes obtained relatively close attention from social linguists in the scope of the theory of social identity, as such attitudes are closely tied to the concepts of language group membership and ethnicity. Scientists proved the necessity to reinforce the social identities, “to ensure the right of citizens to independently choose their ethnic and language identification and, thus, minimizing obstacles – ideological, political and bureaucratic in the implementation of this right” (Tishkov, 2002).

Nowadays, as advances in technology have their effect on languages, social linguists begin to focus on the ways social media affects language attitudes and perceptions of language varieties. At the same time, following the recent trends in intersectionality, sociolinguists explore how intersecting identities, related to ethnicity, gender, age, etc., influence the perceptions of a language.

The future of sociolinguistic research on language attitudes is seen as quite diverse. Online communication is now developing at a quite substantial rate, so there is a clear potential for research on how language attitudes are shaped by digital platforms, including social media, messaging apps, and online communities. Investigating how online interactions influence language perceptions and ideologies could be a fruitful area of study. As communication becomes increasingly multimodal, combining texts, images, and even emojis, sociolinguists may explore how these various modes impact language attitudes, i.e., investigating the role of non-verbal cues in conveying language attitudes.

The fact that a speaker's language preferences may change with age is a potentially promising area of research in sociolinguistics. V. M. Alpatov notes the existence of the so-called “grandmother motif”, when women, not speaking the language of their ethnic group with their children, begin to speak it with their grandchildren (Alpatov, 2013: 17). Conducting long-term studies tracking

changes in language attitudes over generations or decades will definitely provide valuable insights into the evolution of language perceptions and ideologies.

Another, potentially fruitful area of sociolinguistic research is studying attitudes towards new words, grammar changes, and language innovations in existing languages and emerging varieties. With the development of new language varieties influenced by language contact, future research may focus on how people perceive and evaluate these emerging forms of language, such as hybrid languages, creoles, or internet-based communication styles.

Future sociolinguistic research in language attitudes is likely to be shaped by ongoing societal changes, technological advancements, and evolving patterns of communication, offering researchers exciting opportunities to explore these emerging areas.

#### Changes in language attitudes

Language attitudes are a social phenomenon that plays a role in forming opinions about a language and the people who speak it, where both individual assessments and the social environment play an important role: “language attitudes and the socio-cultural norms with which they are associated are an integral part of our communicative competence” (Hymes, 1971: 73). Positive language attitudes contribute to the development of the language, expanding its functional and demographic power, negative language attitudes lead to a decrease in language vitality, language nihilism and language discrimination of speakers. Thus, it can be argued that studying trends in language attitudes is important for predicting the language behavior of speakers. Such prognosis is especially important for a language where the number of speakers tends to decrease. Changing language attitudes in a positive direction is the first step in revitalizing a language, improving its language status and increasing language prestige.

Changes in language attitudes are

influenced by both natural and artificial factors. The reasons for changes in attitudes towards a language among speakers are different. The perception of language develops due to changes in the needs of a speaker or changes in their social environment. The influence here is exerted by individual needs for social success, the search for a more favorable social environment, or following certain role models. It is important to point out that political actions, as part of language policy, have a tremendous impact on language attitudes. The perception of the language is significantly influenced by the language policy and the actions of influential political groups, in particular, using the method of open speech influence or hidden influence, through indoctrination.

Generally speaking, the attitude towards a language is not static. Naturally, language attitudes are influenced directly by changes in the social needs of the speakers. In cases of migration of a language group to another language environment, speakers start using the language of the dominant language group. Due to religious or cultural reasons or business needs, speakers opt for a regional language or lingua franca in a larger part of their communication. Turning to history, one can recall many examples when, in the process of migration of several language groups, in circumstances of absence of a dominant language, speakers developed a Creole language for joint communication and their social demand for their native languages decreased.

Artificially, language attitudes change due to the impact of language planning. In the positive direction – by creating favorable conditions for speakers of a language: scholarships for students studying rare languages, bonuses for employees who speak an indigenous language, etc. For example, at Petrozavodsk State University in the Republic of Karelia, students, studying the Vepsian language, are paid an additional scholarship. Or in Wales (UK) there are positions available



only for bilinguals in English and Welsh<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, such a language policy has been carried out in Wales for several decades already and it proved to be fruitful. Around thirty years ago it was noted that “in order to become a teacher, administrator, clerk or secretary, the ability to communicate in Welsh and English is often made a prerequisite for employment” (Baker, 1992: 108). If we are talking about an artificial impact on changing language attitudes in a negative way, then the policy of language discrimination, infringement of language rights is applied: “violation of the civil and / or economic rights of an individual (ethnic group) due to ignorance or poor knowledge of the language numerically or socially dominant in this territory of an ethnos”<sup>5</sup>. Conditions for discomfort in language use can be artificially created so that speakers, when using the language, feel the inappropriateness of this in their environment. For example, a sociolinguistic study describes how the imitation of Spanish in an English-speaking environment was perceived by Spanish speakers as a mockery, creating language discomfort: “Mock Spanish is indeed perceived as potentially insulting” (Callahan, 2010: 314). The feeling of discomfort can be created through the imposition of certain attitudes: those who speak Karelian noted about past events: “It was not fashionable to speak Karelian around 50 years ago, it was shameful, my mother told”<sup>6</sup>.

### Materials and methods

In speech communities, where one or more minority languages coexist alongside the dominant language, there is always an imbalance between those who speak that

minority language and those who do not speak that language. The important question here is which of these two language groups has more impact? Will bilinguals who speak two languages, a dominant and a minority, become monolinguals? Or, conversely, will monolinguals who speak a dominant language become at least partially bilingual?

Language development can occur in two directions: motivation to improve language proficiency among those who speak it at a basic level, and an incentive to learn the language from scratch among representatives of the speech community who do not speak it. So, a crucial factor favoring the preservation of a language, contributing to the development of a language, is the favorable attitude of members of the speech community towards this language. And this is the object of this study.

Most sociolinguistic studies of language attitudes of speakers are devoted to the study of their valency: whether they are positive or negative. Just as important are the studies of language attitudes from the position of the categories of status and solidarity<sup>7</sup>. The category of status in language attitudes has a socio-economic perspective: the standard version of a language is perceived as having a higher status, as it is used by well-educated people, representatives of the dominant strata of society. Vernacular, dialect forms of the language have a lower status; language attitudes towards them are such that they are most common among the poor and poorly educated layers of the society.

The category of solidarity in language attitudes is based on the intra-group loyalty of speakers. Language is a symbol of the identity for the members of a language group. People are more inclined to express solidarity with the representatives of their language community, especially if the language they use has high rates of vitality in society. At the same time, it is worth noting that the solidarity among speakers is actually clearly manifested in adherence to non-standard

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Language Annual Report 2020-2021, available at: <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/what-we-do/strategies-and-plans/working-to-the-welsh-language-standards/welsh-language-annual-report-2020-2021/?lang=en> (Accessed 02 March 2024).

<sup>5</sup> Slovar' sotsiolingvistikeskikh terminov [Dictionary of sociolinguistic terms], P. 235.

<sup>6</sup> Interview – oral interviews with experts on the language situation, recorded during field research in the republics of Karelia, Kalmykia, Sakha (Yakutia) conducted in 2021–2022.

<sup>7</sup> A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics, Pp. 17-18.

language variants, here we are talking about the covert prestige of the language (see for better detail in S. V. Kirilenko, 2022 (Kirilenko, 2022: 146-148)).

In social linguistics, speakers' perception of language is usually studied using direct or indirect assessment. In a direct assessment analysis, informants are provided with audio recordings containing excerpts of sample statements, e.g., a number of varieties of one language, and a survey is conducted using scaling. Indirect assessment is implemented through studying the perceptions of a language or language variant by other speakers, representatives of other language groups. There is a third research option – it is called a societal approach (Dragojevic et al., 2021: 6-7). The societal approach uses the method of participant observation in relation to existing linguistic “artifacts”, for example, descriptions of language groups existing in the media. Research is carried out on the ethnography of speakers, discourse analysis and content analysis of statements.

In this study, indirect assessment was used. The scope of the study comprised language attitudes considered from the perspective of the categories of solidarity and status; the valency of the status of a language in the perception of speakers was assessed (overall positive or negative). Language attitudes were studied analyzing respondents' views on the titular language in the republics of Kalmykia, Karelia and Yakutia. Titular language is “the language of the titular nation that gave its name to the administrative-territorial entity”<sup>8</sup>.

The category of solidarity was evaluated on the basis of the following questions:

- Do you agree that knowledge of the state Russian and titular languages is the civic duty of every resident of the Republic? (Figure 1)
- What option for studying the title language is acceptable in the Republic? (Table 1)

- Would you like your children or grandchildren to communicate in the titular language of the Republic? (Figure 2)

The category of status and its valency was evaluated on the basis of the following questions:

- Do you think it is prestigious to speak the titular language in the Republic now? (Figure 3)
- How do you, your friends and colleagues assess the future and prospects of the titular language in the Republic? (Table 1)

Analysis of language attitudes, based on the selected elements, involves conducting a structural study. The research methodology was tested using questionnaire surveys in three republics of the Russian Federation in 2021-2022. The study was carried out by scientific researchers of Research Center on Ethnic and Language Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The surveys were conducted mainly among the residents of the capital cities in the republics of Kalmykia, Karelia and Yakutia.

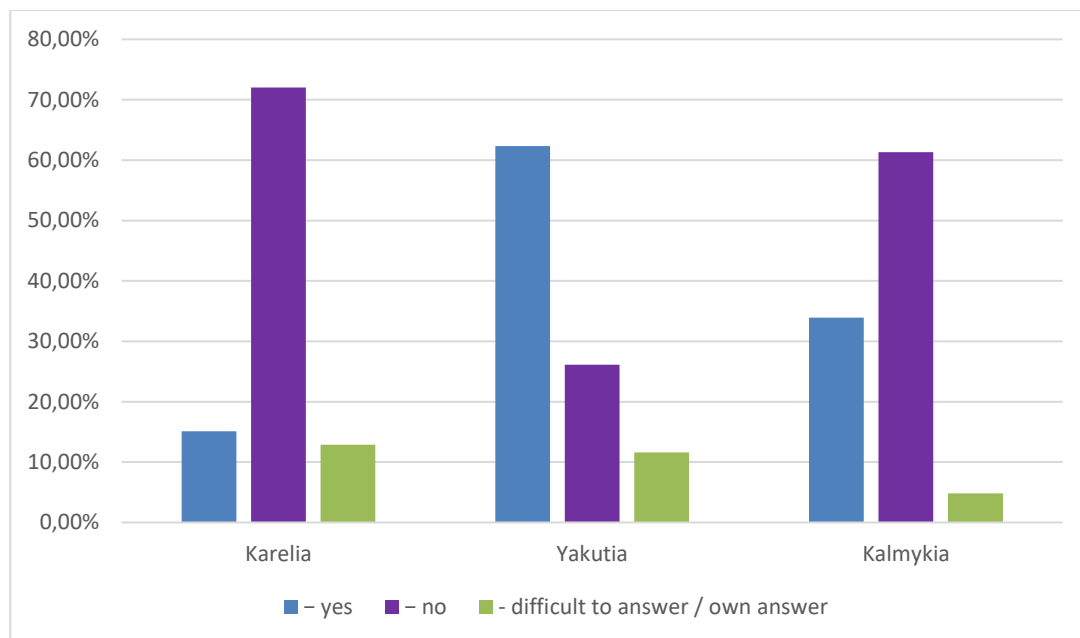
### Results and discussion

The article analyzes the categories of status and solidarity in language attitudes of representatives of the speech community of the Republics of Kalmykia, Karelia and Yakutia, in relation to the Yakut language (belongs to the Turkic family of languages), the Kalmyk language (belongs to the Mongolian family of languages) and the Karelian language (belongs to the Finno-Ugric family of languages). The respondents, who do not speak the titular languages of the republics, were selected from the general data set – the results of a bigger survey in the designated republics. Among those surveyed in the Republic of Kalmykia, there were 62 such respondents, in the Republic of Karelia – 93 people, in the Republic of Yakutia – 69 people.

<sup>8</sup> Slovar sotsiolingvisticheskikh terminov [Dictionary of sociolinguistic terms], p. 231.

**Figure 1.** Do you agree that knowledge of the titular languages is the civic duty of every resident of the Republic?

**Рисунок 1.** Согласны ли вы, что знание титульных языков – гражданский долг каждого жителя республики?



Some respondents gave their variant of answer to the question in Figure 1.

In the Republic of Karelia: “If I move to live in Karelia as an adult from a completely different region, why should I start learning Karelian ‘in my old age’? I didn’t come to another country; I remain within the territory of Russia with a common language – Russian”.

In the Republic of Yakutia: “knowledge of the state language is required. If there are several of them, then officials must know them in order to interact with native speakers”, “everyone chooses what they want,

the main thing is that there is opportunity and equal rights”.

Some respondents gave their variant of answer to the question in Figure 2.

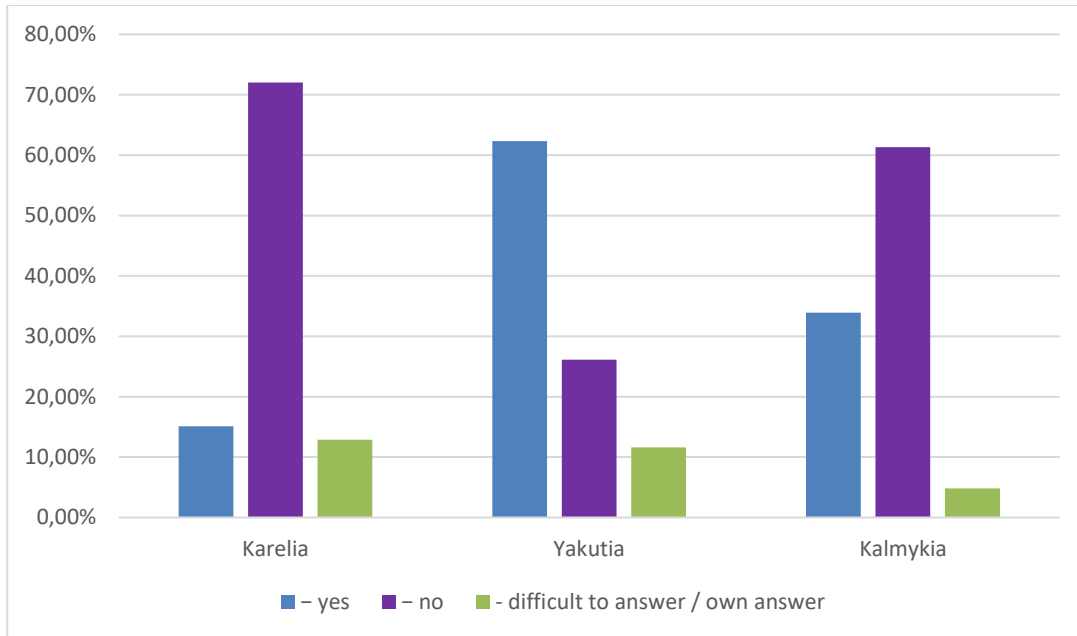
In the Republic of Karelia: “I would like to learn Karelian myself first”, “I don’t speak Karelian, but I would like to teach my child a few words”.

In the Republic of Yakutia: “no, because my parents taught me to speak Yakut, but now I find it difficult to speak Russian; I don’t want it to be difficult for my children to speak Russian”, “yes, because it is my native language”, “children should know the language of the republic”.



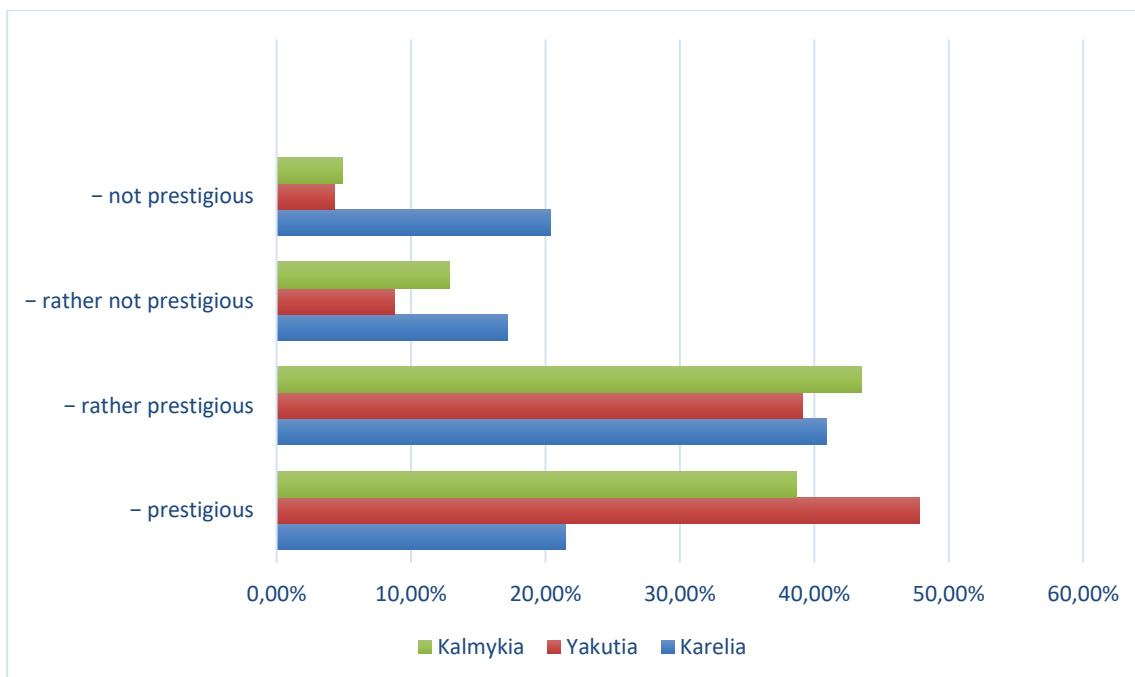
**Figure 2.** Would you like your children or grandchildren to communicate in the titular language of the Republic?

**Рисунок 2.** Хотели бы вы, чтобы ваши дети или внуки общались на титульном языке республики?



**Figure 3.** Do you think it is prestigious to speak the titular language in the Republic now?

**Рисунок 3.** Считаете ли вы, что сейчас в республике престижно говорить на титульном языке?



**Table 1.** Quantitative characteristics of respondents' answers  
**Таблица 1.** Количественные характеристики ответов респондентов

questions	variants of answer	Karelia	Yakutia	Kalmykia
What option for studying the title language is acceptable in the Republic?	– the title language must be studied by all students equally with the Russian language	9.7%	30.4%	no data
		59.1%	20.3%	
		9.7%	11.6%	
	– the title language should be studied only at will, regardless of the student's nationality	16.1%	11.6%	
		5.4%	26.1%	
How do you, your friends and colleagues assess the future and prospects of the titular language in the Republic?	– the title language should be mandatory for everyone, but to a lesser extent than the Russian language			no data
	– the titular language must be studied by representatives of the titular nationality, and other nationalities – optionally			
	– difficult to answer			
	– the title language will develop	14.0%	33.3%	
	– the title language will disappear after a certain number of years	35.5%	4.3%	
	– the title language will be preserved in everyday, colloquial form	41.9%	49.3%	
		8.6%	13.1%	
	– difficult to answer			

Results of the survey in the Republic of Karelia

Considering the category of solidarity, the survey showed the following results. A significant portion of respondents either disagreed or found it difficult to answer whether knowledge of the state Russian and Karelian languages is a civic duty, with only a small percentage agreeing with this statement. The majority of respondents (72.0%) do not plan any communication in the Karelian language among their children or grandchildren, while a minority (15.1%) intend to do so. When it comes to studying the Karelian language in the Republic, the most popular option among respondents (59.1%) is that it should be studied only at will, regardless of the student's nationality. Other options, such as making it mandatory

for all students equally with the Russian language or making it mandatory but to a lesser extent than Russian, received less support.

Talking of status, the prestige of speaking the Karelian language is relatively promising: a combined majority of respondents either find it prestigious (21.5%) or rather prestigious (40.9%) to speak the Karelian language in the Republic. However, a significant portion of respondents (37.6%) either consider it rather not prestigious or not prestigious to speak the Karelian language. Assessment of the future and prospects of the Karelian language are quite pessimistic: a substantial percentage of respondents (41.9%) believe that the Karelian language will be preserved in everyday, colloquial form; a significant portion (35.5%) holds the view

that the language will disappear after a certain number of years. A smaller percentage (14.0%) believes that the Karelian language will develop. Some respondents found it difficult to answer (8.6%), indicating uncertainty or varied perspectives on the future of the Karelian language.

Overall, the survey reflects a diversity of opinions and attitudes regarding language education and communication in the Karelian language within the Republic, with many respondents either disagreeing or finding it difficult to provide a clear stance on these issues. The survey results reveal a diverse range of opinions within the Republic regarding the prestige of speaking the Karelian language. While many see it as prestigious or rather prestigious, a significant proportion does not. Additionally, opinions on the future of the Karelian language vary, with some optimistic about its preservation and others more pessimistic, suggesting a complex and nuanced perspective on language and its role in the region.

#### Results of the survey in the Republic of Yakutia

Regarding the category of solidarity, the survey showed the following results. As for knowledge of the Yakut language as civic duty, a majority of respondents (52.2%) believe that knowledge of the Yakut language is a civic duty for every resident of the republic, reflecting a sense of cultural and civic responsibility. A smaller portion (14.5%) disagrees with this notion, while a significant proportion (33.3%) finds it difficult to answer or provides their own responses, indicating a level of uncertainty or varied perspectives on this issue. Considering the communication in the Yakut language among children or grandchildren, a substantial majority (62.3%) of respondents intend to communicate in the Yakut language with their children or grandchildren, showing a strong commitment to preserving and passing on their cultural and linguistic heritage. A minority (26.1%) do not plan to do so, while a smaller percentage find it difficult to answer (7.4%) or provide their own responses (4.2%). Speaking of

acceptable options for studying the Yakut language, there is no clear consensus on the preferred option for studying the Yakut language in the Republic, with various options having some level of support.

Talking of status, the prestige of speaking the Yakut language is quite reasonable. A significant percentage of respondents view speaking the Yakut language as prestigious (47.8%) or rather prestigious (39.1%) within the Republic. Only a minority consider it rather not prestigious (8.8%) or not prestigious (4.3%), suggesting that speaking the Yakut language is generally held in high regard.

Regarding the assessment of the future and prospects of the Yakut language, a majority of respondents (49.3%) are optimistic and believe that the Yakut language will be preserved in everyday, colloquial form, indicating confidence in its future. A smaller proportion (33.3%) believes that the language will develop, showing a positive outlook. A very small percentage of people (4.3%) think that the language will disappear after a certain number of years. Some respondents (13.1%) find it difficult to answer or, highlighting uncertainty.

All in all, the survey results illustrate a diverse range of opinions and attitudes within the Republic regarding the Yakut language preservation, education, and cultural identity. While there is some support in favour of the importance of the Yakut language, there is also significant variability in views on how it should be promoted and what its future holds.

#### Results of the survey in the Republic of Kalmykia

Considering the category of solidarity, the survey showed the following results. Views on the civic duty to know the Kalmyk language: approximately 64.5% of respondents agree that knowledge of the Kalmyk language is a civic duty for every resident of the Republic; about 12.9% disagree with this statement; a significant number of people (22.6%) find it difficult to answer. The questions “What option for studying the title language is acceptable in the

Republic?" and "How do you, your friends and colleagues assess the future and prospects of the titular language in the Republic?" were unfortunately missing in the questionnaire.

Speaking of status, the prestige of speaking the Kalmyk language is quite high. A total of 82.2 per cent of respondents believe that speaking Kalmyk is prestigious (38.7 per cent) or rather prestigious (43.5 per cent). A smaller percentage, 12.9%, view it as rather not prestigious. Only 4.9% consider it not prestigious. The desire for future generations to communicate in the Kalmyk language is not high. Only 33.9% express a desire for their children or grandchildren to communicate in the Kalmyk language of the Republic. A substantial 61.3% do not share this desire. A smaller percentage (4.8%) find it difficult to answer.

The majority of respondents believe that knowing the Kalmyk language is a civic duty, indicating a strong sense of cultural and civic responsibility among a significant portion of the population. The data suggests that a significant portion of respondents do not prioritize passing on the Kalmyk language to future generations. This could be indicative of changing linguistic and cultural dynamics within the Republic, possibly influenced by factors such as globalization, migration, or evolving societal norms. The data indicates that speaking the Kalmyk language is generally perceived as prestigious or at least rather prestigious by a significant majority of respondents. This suggests that, despite the differences in opinions regarding its civic duty, there is a positive perception of the language's value in terms of prestige within the Republic. All in all, the data reveals a complex and varied set of perspectives within the Republic.

### **Conclusions**

In speech communities with a number of languages coexisting together with a dominant language, the question of vitality of minority languages becomes most acute. The purpose of this study was to single out trends for perspective language attitudes among the members of the speech community in three

republics of the Russian Federation. The idea was to make a prognosis based on language attitudes whether the studied languages will develop or vanish in the future. The attitudes of the members of the speech community were studied as they seemed really valuable regarding the perception of a language. If it is overall positive and speech community members acknowledge the necessity to have some or good command of a titular language, then the future of a language development is surely positive. Members of the speech community may encourage their children or grandchildren study the language or learn it themselves even at a later age, and that is potentially a fruitful ground for a language to thrive.

Regarding the Karelian language, the survey results in the solidarity category reveal a complex set of attitudes towards the Karelian language. A notable portion of respondents showed uncertainty or disagreement regarding whether knowing Russian and Karelian is a civic duty. Additionally, a significant majority do not plan to communicate in Karelian with their future generations. As far as language education is concerned, the most favoured option is voluntary learning of the Karelian language, regardless of nationality, while compulsory options received less support. In terms of status, speaking Karelian is generally seen as prestigious by a combined majority, but a significant number of respondents still views it as not prestigious. Future prospects are pessimistic, with a substantial percentage foreseeing language preservation issue and a smaller fraction believing in its development. These findings underscore a complex and varied landscape of perspectives on the Karelian language's role and future.

Considering the Yakut language, the survey results on solidarity indicate that a majority of respondents see knowledge of the Yakut language as a civic duty, demonstrating a sense of cultural and civic responsibility. However, a significant portion appears uncertain or holds varied perspectives on this matter. In terms of communication with

children or grandchildren, a substantial majority view it positively, reflecting a strong commitment to preserving their language heritage. While the prestige of speaking Yakut is generally high among the surveyed members of speech community, the future outlook for the language is positive, as a majority believe it will be preserved in everyday use, while a smaller proportion expect it to develop further. These findings highlight a complex interplay of attitudes towards the Yakut language, ranging from a strong sense of duty to optimism about its future, but also uncertainty in some areas.

Speaking of the Kalmyk language, the majority of respondents feel it a civic obligation – to know the language, demonstrating a strong sense of cultural responsibility. However, a significant number of respondents do not seem to care about passing on the language to future generations, which may be due to changing cultural dynamics influenced by factors such as globalisation. Despite this, a significant majority of respondents view speaking Kalmyk as prestigious, indicating a generally positive perception of the language's value in terms of prestige within the Republic. In summary, the data reveals diverse perspectives for the Kalmyk language within the Republic, reflecting both a sense of duty and shifting cultural influences.

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