



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

ANDREI FILTCHENKO

Policy Analysis and Proposals Regarding Prerequisites for Preservation of Cultural/Linguistic Variety in Siberia

1999/2000



ANDREI FILTCHENKO

Policy Analysis and Proposals Regarding Prerequisites for Preservation of Cultural/Linguistic Variety in Siberia

The views in this report are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Center for Policy Studies, Central European University or the Open Society Institute. We have included the reports in the form they were submitted by the authors. No additional copyediting or typesetting has been done to them.

**Open Society Institute Budapest
International Policy Fellowship 1999-2000**

**" The ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of
our civilisation."**

Mahatma Gandhi

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION BACKGROUND

SETTLEMENT
CHRISTIANISATION
EDUCATION
PUBLIC POLICIES

CURRENT STATE

CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION
NATIONAL IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN SIBERIA
CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL POLICIES

FUTURE

SIBERIAN PROSPECTS
MAINTAINING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES
WORLD INDIGENOUS MINORITIES' EXPERIENCE

APPENDIX I

SAMPLE MODEL FOR NATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING
(based on models by R.E. Littlebear)

APPENDIX II

European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg.
Recommendations on the Implementation of Policy Measures
for Regional or Minority Languages

INTRODUCTION

The issue of Siberian indigenous cultures (particularly Khanty) is selected as an example (situation world-wide is remarkably similar) of a perceived conflict between modernisation/globalisation and accommodation of ethno-cultural diversity.

In Russia preservation of cultural variety though declaratively of importance, is consistently failing to be addressed by adequate policies, resulting in increasing marginalisation, depression, public apathy, social unrest in indigenous communities and

northern territories at large. One of the crucial forces which, acted to destroy the culture of indigenous people has been that of schooling - a strong "modernisation" tool.

Russian imperial national policies originate from "romantic nationalism" of "enlightened" intellectuals. Peter's I Russian breakthrough to Europe finally confirmed centralisation of official policies around European civilisation principles. Theories of Friedrich List (and later Marx) were received in Russia and observed influence on development of nationalism, under constant threat of criticism of "barbarism" from the west. Eternal dialogue (conflict?) between "tradition" and "modernity" found considerable implications in national policies of Russia. In pursuit of radical "modernisation" the "reformers" fiercely battled traditionalism in all its manifestations. However paradoxically, soviet life-order and political reforms were criticised as lacking "modernity" in its oppression of individual freedom by totalitarian dictate.

In Russia, as well as in other former and current colonial states, the rise and fall of assimilative national policies is also evidently associated with rises and falls of perceived outside threat to mainstream ideology - aggression, political expansion, increased immigration, etc. (in trans-Urals and Siberia - reaction to pan-Islamic/pan-Turkic threat, in Korelia - pan-Finnism), which can largely be considered as a form of xenophobia.

However currently, Siberian indigenous people and their cultures, for long, pose no threat or competition to mainstream society. Thus, the culture of indigenous minorities must now become from an object of suspicion and desired soonest assimilation into a unique socio-cultural resource. Perhaps, in Russia, in light of low probability of dramatic economic boost and political competitiveness with western democracies - ideologies, public acceptance and development of humanities and cultural diversity, as well as admittance of negative past policies may become a component of a new, searched for, "national idea".

A look at contemporary post-modern societal organisation reveals that in developed countries population pyramids¹ become increasingly reoriented, with a markedly growing portion of population involved in "symbolic" occupancies: e-commerce, financial management, politics, law, consultancy, ideology, etc., with a concurrent "globalisation" tendency of exporting the material production outside the system (production costs reduction). Consequently, in such societies, the "shrinking" bottom layer of the "pyramid" - material producers - is supplied/substituted from outside the system, i.e. by globalised economy - a function effectively executed in "early societies" by slaves and in recent "modern societies" by colonies. In any case, with obviously progressing globalisation tendencies, implying further "virtualisation" of values (vs. natural ones), indigenous communities - "colonial population" - and their cultures, intimately interrelated with and dependent upon natural environment - are evidently facing an ever increasing pressure from the mainstream.

In light of obvious competition in the process of globalisation between those "globalising" and those to become "globalised" (if not swift and persistent enough to globalise themselves), ethnic and cultural identity/diversity is perceived as contesting or even conflicting "global integration" as it conceptualise emphasis of "difference" and potentially leading to fragmentation.

Perception of cultural diversity as a threat to consolidated and integrated power persists in mainstream establishment for centuries and not necessarily ungrounded. Sad evidence of seemingly regular evolution of ethnic identity movements towards ethnic autonomies/ethnic

¹ Tyler, S. The unspeakable: discourse, dialogue, and rhetoric in the postmodern world/Stephen A.Tyler. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.

states - essentially conflicting multiculturalism - are plenty and of varying scale (XX century: Turkey; Germany; Canada/Quebec; Karabakh, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Lithuania, Latvia, Chechnya; Bulgaria; Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo). This tendencies, in turn, quite regularly call for a predictable lack of popularity of "ethnic nationalism" ideas, and by unfortunate extension - multiculturalism, with official establishment.

In modern, otherwise enlightened and humanistic times, with active public discourse on environment, biological diversity, civil rights, the issues of indigenous minorities are left somewhat in the periphery. This discrimination, however, does not retain the mainstream society unaffected.

The indigenous minority problem embodies a world-wide problem, whether material civilisation - the dictates of machinery and selfish individualism shall dominate man or whether man shall dominate them, subordinate them and use them².

Cultural democracy is paramount for prevention of further deterioration of overall (increasingly "globalised") societal moral, which is a key to many of the contemporary problems (recent examples of medicine, where traditional medical practices provide an inspiration for modern technologies, should be seen as illustrative). Cultural variety, in its indiscriminating sense, is an indivisible component of true democracy, if such is attainable, and consequently, efforts to maintain such variety are to be considered democratic "societal reform efforts" - true humanistic modernisation.

If modernisation/ globalisation does evolve around any universally acceptable principles, then these principles have to be Human Rights and cultural diversity. Furthermore, only global integration or "global globalisation" and not the one on specifically assigned and restricted territory, can truly and in long perspective provide for adequate securing of Human Rights³.

Problem formulation

The preservation of cultural democracy, though widely declared by the government of Russian Federation and the Constitutional Acts as being that of importance and emphasis, is presently effectively neglected. The issue of extinction and extreme threat of the majority of indigenous Siberian/Far East languages and cultures - the invaluable cultural, ecological, humanitarian wealth - is persistently and increasingly failing to be addressed by adequate government policies. Past and existing strategies are inadequate - paternalistic, assimilative in their output and largely discriminative. No effective policies concerning indigenous minority issues are implemented or offered for public debate, demonstrating lack of awareness of the scope and importance of the problem and factually resulting in increasing marginalisation, depression, public apathy and social unrest in indigenous communities and northern territories at large.

Preservation of the indigenous languages is one of the key components in the scope of Northern indigenous minorities (numerically small peoples) issues, capable of producing major impact. Developing policies in language and culture planning and maintenance is one of the essential components, undivorceable from other constituents of national policy.

² Collier, J. (1923, March). Our Indian policy. Sunset Magazine, 13-15 & 89-93.

³ Kovalev, S. 08/2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

Adequate language and culture planning is to be approached via implementation of reviewed indigenous education policies based on humanistic culture-based framework.

Absence of planned and coordinated course of action in preserving of indigenous languages and cultures entails a number of negative consequences:

- ✗ low efficacy of activities undertaken separately by various agencies
- ✗ low efficiency of resources allocated for the above activities
- ✗ development of negative attitudes towards the problem amongst indigenous communities, agencies and public

Background

Dramatic situation with indigenous education and language maintenance is indubitably a result of persistent and longstanding suppression of native cultures in all former colonial territories.

General analysis of policies in Siberia of XVII-XIX cent. reveals lack of capacity in central and local governments to adequately address the situation in Siberian provinces, because of lack of reliable information, lack of consultation with community representatives and experienced local lower level managers, lack of commitment and consistency in the implementation phase, and corruption. Despite the "conservation" efforts of the government the aboriginal population was effectively losing land ownership, becoming increasingly impoverished and highly addicted to alcohol.

First Russian colonial policies had an objective of conservation of the economies, social organisation of indigenous population⁴. However, the actual developments on the new territories were rarely congruent with officially declared policies and effectively left the governments with a reactive function of amending declarations to fit reality.

Corruption and disregard of traditional religion and culture on behalf of local administration, traders, non-native population and church provoked frequent uprisings and unrest of indigenous Siberian population. Factors contributing to the decline of indigenous cultures included alcohol addiction - widely exploited by the traders, and epidemic diseases.

During the Soviet era - the policies of collectivisation, enlargement and industrialisation resulted in erosion of traditional infrastructure, culture and occupancies, decreasing socio-economic status of the people and governments had to declare one after another campaign of "assistance to numerically small people of the North of Russia".

Government measures to maintain and develop traditional cultures and economies of indigenous Siberians had little effect, and the destruction of the way of life of the "Numerically small peoples of the North" - which ultimately meant the undermining of their self-sufficiency and human dignity - continued without check.

The religious beliefs and observances of the native peoples were an obvious target for the missionary zeal of communists, as of Christian missionaries before. However, despite of all the anti-religious measures employed by the Communist Party, shamanism continue in Siberia till nowadays.

New principal and dramatic development was the discovery in 1960s of the natural oil and gas-fields. One of the most serious ethnodemographic upheavals were provoked by wide scale exploration of the famous Western Siberia oil- and gas-depositions, located almost exclusively on the territories of traditional indigenous (Khanty) residence. In few years from a majority (although numerically small) in the area aboriginal people become an insufficient minority, while their traditional habitat suffered irreparable and uncompensated harm.

Regional governments were manipulated in the interests of oil industry, however state oil monopoly failed to provide high living standards to aboriginal people.

⁴ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.230.

The culture and language of the native Siberia's people were and still are widely referred to as underdeveloped or "primitive", even by some academicians and officials. However, neither anthropology nor linguistics provides any support for those who believe that there's a fundamental difference between "civilised" and "primitive" languages.

One of the crucial forces which has acted to destroy the identity and culture of indigenous people has been that of schooling. As in other parts of the world, the schools and what was taught in them offered a challenge to the culture of indigenous people. In Siberia, the introduction in 1960-1970's of the mandatory secondary education (boarding schools) applied a grave impact on traditional cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North, which in practice implied forced extraction of children from their families for a period between of 8-10 years and complete loss of traditional skills and values by younger generation.

Current situation

Under the changing conditions of the late twentieth century some elements of native culture of the peoples of the north-western Siberia were lost, but others survived. The awareness of the distinctive culture of the West Siberian forest-tundra peoples was still strong in those communities which succeeded in avoiding close contact with the mainstream.

In the late 1980s a kind of "native rights movement", somewhat similar to that in North America, emerged in many parts of Siberia, drawing its leadership from native intelligentsia, and using the forum of a more liberal official press and of the new parliament. However, neither national nor international cultural authorities, nor the relevant academic disciplines have so far developed the capacity to make use of what may well be the last opportunity to ensure the comprehensive documentation, theoretically informed analysis and production of reference and pedagogical materials for even just a few languages and cultures.

The result of neglect of and discrimination against native languages for some thirty years was that younger generations are frequently unable to converse with their own grandparents, being as monolingual in Russian as older generation is in native languages. It is therefore very possible that native languages of Siberia are in danger of complete extinction, depriving the national cultures of the very basis and eventually leading to seizure of existence of distinct native cultures themselves.

Alternatives

As follows from the extended international experience traditional cultures of the indigenous people, as any other culture, transform under the influence of various external and internal factors: industry, markets, political conditions, expansions, development of education, etc. Northern indigenous cultures in particular demonstrate a variety of means of adaptation to industrialisation, modernisation, acculturation. Being traditional in their nature, indigenous cultures maintain close interconnection of various aspects of economy, household, religion, education, etc., which, under the influence of industrialisation, eventually became autonomous and individually affected by various destructive factors⁵, thus radically altering the life of people. A range of internal, for indigenous communities, factors include contemporary tendencies for unification of priory isolated ethnic groups, merger of dialects, etc. The changes occur in migration and residence patterns, occupations, education status, life-support forms, etc. Affected by a wide scale industrial exploration of the North, indigenous traditional economies, deeply adapted to natural environment, experience decline, dramatically altering all, intimately dependent upon it, life spheres - their culture.

Contemporary discourse presents various alternatives of indigenous issues development:

⁵ Karlov, V.V. Narodnosti Severa Sibiri: osobennosti vosproizvodstva i alternativy razvitiya. //Sov. Etnografia. 1991.

- ✍ accepting the mainstream life-style model and eventually merging with mainstream society demographically, economically and culturally.

This scenario is largely implying for indigenous people to voluntary surrender any distinct ethno-cultural identity and complete assimilation. Loss of wealth of social, cultural, economic information accumulated over thousands of years.

- ✍ conservation of originality, maximally autonomous development of traditional cultures and traditional economies.

This model potentially implies mutual enrichment with mainstream society as well as a considerable conservation of indigenous cultures in types of "preserves" or "reservations". This model is implying a certain regress with problems of accommodation of the already firmly adopted innovations as well as a certain loss of some traditional elements.

- ✍ a compromise model, implying a combination of modern societal norms and socio-political realities on one hand and traditional, adapted over centuries, economic, social and cultural features.

This scenario presumes prerequisite development of traditional economies utilising modern technological, managerial, etc. experience as well as maintenance of traditional cultures, languages, education - ethnic identity.

Proposed strategies

The key to solutions of many of the contemporary social problems may lay in experience of small indigenous minorities. This especially holds true for issues concerning the very indigenous people.

In light of increasing difficulties in organising, delivering and effective functioning of mainstream social, educational, healthcare services, the potential policies to be implemented with regards to Siberian indigenous nations should bear indigenous in origin features similar to approaches implemented in Canada, where European practices in social and medical provisions, (education, etc.) are merged with traditional ones - developed and adapted to local conditions.

With regards to the above, the proposed immediate action may include:

- research minority education experience and practices in Russia, Europe, America, etc.
- native human resources development by means of support of native education and training to improve the quality of schooling and increase school completion rates
- continue work on generating theoretically informed reference and pedagogical materials for indigenous communities
- establish a task-force including indigenous representatives, government officials, domestic and international NGO's and independent experts
- compile a information pool on Language, History, Anthropology, Ethnography, Public Policies, etc. on native people for those who address the issues of preservation of aboriginal ethnoses.
- popularisation, encouragement and technical support of native institution building process to ensure the emergence of truly native self-government with real decision making power.
- generate a thesaurus of NGOs; associations; grassroots; researchers and activity groups working in the field of Siberian/world minorities' issues: RUSSIA, Hungary, Germany, Finland, Estonia, UK, USA, Canada, etc. to facilitate improved information exchange.
- develop recommendations and proposals for long term policies towards indigenous minority issues.

Education is a central element and a warrant of an open healthy democratic society and a sensible indicator of "health" of the society. Availability, accessibility and equity in education for indigenous minorities are to be considered as core elements of democracy. In light of civil society ideology the following conceptual principles are to be considered in the implementation of national policies towards Siberian aboriginal population.

- the maintenance of language and culture by the school is a matter of academic and social survival and must be considered a civil right. For these reasons bilingual education must be supported, if at all as a maintenance effort. Children must be educated by the best means available, and these include their native language.

- schooling must give the new generations of native people the possibility to both interact with the wider society and to preserve and further develop ethnic and cultural identity

- a culture-based approach should be prioritised and preferred to culture-oriented approach in education planning, development and administration

- in order to provide for the culture-based schooling, quality teaching complexes and reference materials should be produced based on competent and thorough research

- to provide for enrolment of the indigenous representatives - various forms of support & incentives (scholarships, training, grants, etc) to indigenous students, academicians, educators, activists, artists, etc. should be offered on regular long-term basis

- training and indigenous personnel development must be prioritised as a decisive factor in successful implementation of minority policies and securing active public participation.

- in the spirit of integration and multiculturalism a wide range of promotion means, education programmes and campaigning in mainstream public (children and adults) has to be maintained to reshape the stereotypes of indigenous people, rise the level of awareness of the problems (Video, TV, Internet, Radio, Cinematography?)

- to ensure the quality and efficacy of education and public advocacy actions, international experience in this disciplines has to be generalised (database) and positively applied.

BACKGROUND

SETTLEMENT CHRISTIANISATION
EDUCATION PUBLIC POLICIES

SETTLEMENT

[Contents](#) ↑

The natural process of formation of government institutions in Khanty communities was altered in mid XVII cent. by Russian colonisation. Part of aboriginal aristocracy fell in course of the colonisation wars and numerous uprisings, the remaining were deprived of their former political and economic influence. Increasing demand of the international markets for furs in the lead to intensification of the settlement of Russians in Siberia in XVI cent. in towns presenting the mixture of military fort and trade/taxation station. XVII-XIX cent. saw consistent development of rent of the fisheries and hunting grounds from indigenous tribes as well as active fish and game trade by new-coming merchants from European part of Russia. Indigenous population lacking legal and entrepreneurial experience, and often subjects to crime and violence, increasingly lost their lands to merchants and local non-native population in the environment of ineffective law-enforcement attempts of the State and corruption of local authorities. Social provisions in colonial areas left very much to be desired. Mortality rates of the indigenous population caused by epidemic diseases (incl. venereal) in XVIII-XIX were an evident fact and an object of increasing concern of the officials and few of the medical professionals in the area. Social organisation of indigenous communities was characterised by collective ownership of lands by directly related extended family members, "ideologically" united by worshipping the patron-spirits of the family and mutual sharing of spoils, and ruled by the tribal leader. Extended families were in turn united into clans, i.e. totemic-style ethnic and territorial communities with marital connections and common clan name, decision making being delegated to councils of tribal leaders.

Corruption and disregard of traditional religion and culture on behalf of local administration and non-native population provoked frequent uprisings and unrest of indigenous Siberian population. Orthodox church, as a symbol and ideology of new-comers was often a first object of attack, as well as newly converted fellow tribesmen were frequently deprived of possession and/or killed. In early XVIII-mid XIX cent. uprisings had mass and often interethnic character with charismatic leaders.

Civil War of 1918-1921 brought extreme devastation to aborigines of Siberia due to broken infrastructure and insecurity. Continuous reforming of the government structures in 1920's-1930's resulted in establishment of a number of nominally autonomous national

districts, however effectively governed and accountable to communist party structures. Collectivisation was accompanied by a cardinal cultural reform of indigenous life with persecution of traditional religious and social institutions, and compulsory introduction of modern ideology, education, etc. This essentially proved to deliver a dramatic impact on indigenous minorities - abandoning by them of the traditional settlements, destruction of religious and cultural heritage, traditional occupancies, culture, language - deterioration of ethnic identity.

Evacuation of big industries to Siberia during the WWII and wide scale natural resource exploration resulted in yet further direct amortisation of lands for industry needs, ecological disbalance and massive influx of new settlers and seasonal workers. By late 1980's Siberia was almost completely involved in industrial oil production, regional governments were manipulated in the interests of oil industry, however state oil monopoly did not provide high living standards to aboriginal people.

CHRISTIANISATION

[Contents](#) ↑

SETTLEMENT CHRISTIANISATION EDUCATION PUBLIC POLICIES

Christianisation attempts were concurrent with forced subjection campaigns and persisted with varied intensity to present moment. Active, often forced, Christianisation campaigns inspired further Khanty, and often inter-ethnic, consolidation resulting in numerous armed rebellions, at times of massive scale. Early XVIII cent. saw government (Peter I) decrees encouraging "converting infidel" implemented by a number of devoted and well educated missionaries and resulting in achieved Christianisation of small numbers of certain indigenous people, who, often would reverse to shamanism. In the 40's of the XVIII cent. Christianisation was accorded by promotion of theological education amongst indigenous youth. Last stage in evolution of Christianisation policies (early XIX cent.) based largely on revision of methodology, with a shift towards increased emphasis on education, translations, mother tongue learning, training of native-speaking missionaries - "missionary through education" concept by Ilminsky. Native languages were documented and taught in mission schools for native missionary cadre. Poor motivation for schooling was acted upon by introducing into curricular a set of new subjects - local crafts, country studies.

Schooling of native children as means of gradual conversion of aboriginal pagans in the XIX cent. gave birth to "boarding schools" framework, which however, did not enjoy wide scale due to active opposition of the native communities⁶.

A factor of utmost importance for the unsuccess of Christianisation of Siberian indigenous people was a firm identification in social awareness of aborigines of the notions "Christian" and "Russian" vs. "Khanty, Nenets (any other ethnos)" and "pagan", that stems from the indivisibility of traditional religion, culture, history, and thus, abandoning of religion meant ultimately the rejection of own ethnos. Becoming Christian meant equally becoming Russian, that is why some of the Siberian aborigines could nominally agree with being baptised "as one can never be a true Christian not being Russian" anyway⁷.

EDUCATION

[Contents](#) ↑

SETTLEMENT CHRISTIANISATION EDUCATION PUBLIC POLICIES

First documented "policy" concerning education of the population of Siberian colonies, was the decree by Peter I (9/01/1701), prescribing local nobles to establish schools

⁶ Dunin-Gorkavitch, A.A. Nuzhdy tobol'skogo severa i mery dl'a ikh udovletvorenia. "Iset" Shadrinsk, 1994. p. 66.

⁷ Kastren, M.A. Puteshestvie Alexandra Kastrena po Laplandii, Severnoi Rossii i Sibiri. 1838-1844, 1845-1849. - "Magazin zemledelia i puteshestviy", M., 1860, v.6, part 2, p.241.

at local churches with an aim of teaching "Slav grammar and other religious orthodox literature"⁸. Training conditions at church schools were extremely harsh, without a slight attempt to consider cultural and language environment of indigenous children, and wide application of corporal punishment. In the end of XIX cent. in Siberia there appeared a tendency in mission workers to come to understanding of the incompatibly high efficacy of communication/education in native languages as compared to attempts of imposing of the metropolia language. In Siberia, the orthodox missionaries in indigenous communities (Ilminsky, et al) observed the value of mother tongue in education and mission projects. In contrast to the success of native language instruction, reports on mainstream language instruction were often discouraging. Early XX cent. was marked with intensification of development of native schooling, production of indigenous language teaching aids, dictionaries, translations and mother tongue instruction, which however, was very soon abandoned in preference to Russian media education in congruence with an open shift to assimilation policies of the government.

After the revolution of 1917 in Russia the development of the issue of education of aboriginal people of the North received new momentum. In august 1919 the meeting dedicated to "management of non-Russian nations education" took place in Moscow, where, for the first time, the concept of autonomous education policy planning for each indigenous nation with wide consideration of cultural peculiarities and involvement of aboriginal representatives, competed with that of ideologically and organisationally unified education policy for all the nations, regardless of their national, regional or language status. The second concept, evidently prevailed, concluding the inseparability of national education from overall "cultural revolution" and thus, "it is to be based on all-Russia unified set of principles, forms and methodologies"⁹. In 1924 the government identified 26 most numerous (totalled 150-160 thousand people) "backwards nations" (including Khanty and Mansi) and declared their protection, with establishment of appropriate Committee and sub-committees (Committee of the North) assigned to manage the development of education for northern people. Languages of all of the above nations were to be systematically documented and orthographies and ABC-books produced by the teams of leading northern studies specialists. Orthography, and corresponding teaching and reference materials, were repeatedly reviewed, improved and unified (initially in Latin and later in Cyrillic graphics + diacritic scripts) in 1920's through 1937. However, the imperfection, lack of local cultural (occupations, religion, dialect) peculiarities consideration, frequent revisions, etc. restricted the popularity of these teaching materials both amongst children (lacking interest in alien contents) and educators.

State policies in education of indigenous minorities saw repetitive fluctuations between liberal "pro-mother-tongue" in schooling policies on one hand and harsh assimilative "Russian-only" on the other, with intermediately declared bilingual policies with absent choice (Russian only) in reality. The underlying reasoning varied from counteraction to pan-ideas (pan-Finnism, pan-Turkism, etc.) and bourgeois nationalism. Claims of inefficiency of mother-tongue education were stated with regard to extensive dialectal variation and lack in education quality as compared to Russian-media schooling.

Extremely low density of population, vast territory, nomadic and semi-nomadic life-style of the indigenous people, strong traditional codes of culture and behaviour, lack of any aboriginal education personnel, etc. brought out a concept of evolved missionary style boarding schools as "the most appropriate strategy" for indigenous education administration. The policy of boarding schooling would have presumably provided an environment promoting elementary cultural, hygiene, industrial skills and knowledge, in accord with preserving interest to the northern crafts and nature, so that these could modernise and

⁸ Krongauz F.F. K istorii sovetskoi shkoly na Krainem Severe. M.: "Uchpedgiz", 1948, p.124.

⁹ Gorodenko, D.V. Razvitiie obrazovania v Khanty-Mansiiskom avtonomnom okruge (1920-1930 gg.). Avtoreferat Diss.kand.ped.n. Moscow, 1995. p.8.

progress. However, in the factual implementation the expectations met were few, whereas problems and drawbacks accounted - numerous. Children were groundlessly expected to discover the extreme archaism and backwardness of their traditional cultures and lifestyles, and consequently actively enrol in the appropriate reform of it. In 1926 the People's Committee for Education "Narkompros" in collaboration with Committee of the North issued the standardised curricular for primary "northern school", in an attempt of "complex education" approach, the contents of the programs - strongly oriented towards northern studies and administration - adapted to seasonal and migration cycles in traditional economy (there were 3 variants: - nomadic (rain-deer breeding); - settled (fishing); - semi-nomadic (hunting)). Subject to traditional restrictions and imperfections of its brand (complex programmes in Russia of the time), the policy did provide a certain degree of scope of natural science, local economy, crafts and socio-political education¹⁰. Apart from boarding schooling policy of the 1930's education authorities implemented experimental "nomadic schools" policies, assigned to nomadic communities and travelling with them within seasonal migration cycle. The setting and equipment of such schools was described as primitive adapted for swift and simple relocation. This policy was deemed a temporary measure, with much lesser "educational-ideological" capacity than boarding schools, and presumably served as an initial preliminary stage for further boarding schooling. The approach, however, allowed for greater autonomy (as there were no unified programmes for such schools) and a chance (for devoted, pro-active teachers) to know and consider education and cultural traditions of the ethnoses¹¹. Generally, during Soviet times, a planned "swift and successful" education of the indigenous people was heavily obstructed by "traditional vestiges", in the view of zealots of new ideology. Shamanism was heavily persecuted during mass campaigns of "cultural revolution" of 1930's and "scientific-atheist activities" of 1960's.

Analysing first soviet official educational policies towards native population of north-western Siberia in 1920's-1930's, it can be observed that regardless of the hard socio-economic situation of the post civil war, the issue of education of the Siberian aboriginal population saw attention and development by government policies - evolving and actively transforming over time. However, lack in policy planners and implementers of regard, or indeed knowledge of, the local traditional cultures, languages, religious observances or largely climatic and social peculiarities, constrained considerably the expected efficiency and, in some respects, lead to development of largely negative attitude to education in aboriginal communities. Dictated by the imperative of the government decree for compulsory secondary education of August 31, 1925, mechanic transfer of European educational tradition to Siberian environment, or eventual "cultural inclusion" policy orientation by means of training indigenous schooling staff and development of translated or linguistically adapted teaching material with unsystematic and generalising incorporation of indigenous elements to the contents, provoked alienation and disregard to schooling contents and education in general, high drop-out rates on behalf of aboriginal students (both children and adults), or, in cases of enduring the complete course of education, almost entire assimilation. In the USSR, immediately prior-, as in the USA by the end of the World War II, a conservative reaction set in in colonial territories. "Old" disrespectful views on native cultures and languages were rehabilitated and superiority of majority civilisation restated, boarding schooling were exhumed to practice¹². In 1960's participation of the family in education administration and

¹⁰ Gorodenko, D.V. *Razvitie obrazovaniya v Khanty-Mansiiskom avtonomnom okruge (1920-1930 gg.)*. Avtoreferat Diss.kand.ped.n. Moscow, 1995. p.11.

¹¹ Gorodenko, D.V. *Razvitie obrazovaniya v Khanty-Mansiiskom avtonomnom okruge (1920-1930 gg.)*. Avtoreferat Diss.kand.ped.n. Moscow, 1995. p.12.

¹² Szasz, M. C. *Education and the American Indian: The road to self-determination since 1928*, 2nd ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico. 1977; Task Force Five: Indian Education. Report on Indian education: Final report to the American Indian Policy Review Commission. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1976.

management was minimised by new education campaigns. Schools often became an arena of cultural and deep psychological conflicts, where students carrying their traditional cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs, constituting their indigenous identity, were to subordinate to the general supra-national standards of mainstream school, with teaching methods "resembling indoctrination more than any other forms of teaching, because it insists on implanting a particular body of knowledge and a specific view of the world which often does not correspond to the life experiences that people have or might be expected to encounter" (Vine Deloria, Jr., 1990)¹³.

Generally, most of the successful experience in education of native students observed the use of native languages as instruction media assisting students in understanding teaching material. Views on appropriateness and applicability of indigenous languages in schooling process varied dramatically over time and depending on personalities of authorities.

PUBLIC POLICIES

[Contents](#) ↑

SETTLEMENT CHRISTIANISATION EDUCATION PUBLIC POLICIES

From early XII century aboriginal Yugra was a precious trade and taxation resource for Great Novgorod. Policies exercised by Novgorod and later Moscow (Ivan III and on) towards new colonial population included "*amanat*" procedure, being in actual terms a practice of taking hostages from aboriginal elite and keeping them in Russian towns/forts at generous state expense to ensure peace and proper taxation in due time. This practice was outlawed only in 1822 by the new policy of M.M.Speransky¹⁴. Early policies of the Russian state towards aboriginal people of Siberia combined military subjection with partnership in warfare against other indigenous nations and in establishing of new settlements, gradually transforming towards direct domination and assimilation in all spheres. Initially, tribal lands of Siberian aboriginal population were protected by the official policies caring for the source of "fur tax" collected from indigenous Siberians. However, from early XIX cent. indigenous population of western Siberia was gradually losing control over their lands. In policy planning exercises (until early XIX cent.) central government used information, which provided very general (to the extent of misleading) idea of the numbers and ethnic identification of natives. Administrative division of Siberia was made without consideration of existing traditional aboriginal divisions of the territories, the evidence of which can be traced in requests of aborigines for formal transfer to neighbouring administrative regions for family reunion or to prevent formal separation from tribal/economy lands. State officials of Siberian provinces "delegated" to tribal leaders the responsibility of tax collection, appointing supervisors for control over tribal leaders. There is evidence of frequent conflicts of clans with corrupt or unfair official supervisors (at times from different ethnos)¹⁵ and election of supervisors from own clan members. The latter, however, were often less controllable, actively opposing mapping of their territories, census, etc. in fear of future land take over and forced Christianisation by the State. In such cases the government policies combined assignment of own proteges (frequently gargantuanly corrupt) via local police with intermittent short-term self-government "pressure bleed-off" periods, thus, catering for main two-fold objective: avoiding less controllable self government of the aboriginal communities on one hand, and prevent the loss of fur tax revenues to corrupt intermediaries by "monopolising the robbery of aborigines"¹⁶. Initial Russian colonial policies declaratively had

¹³ Jon Reyhner. American Indian Language Policy and School Success. The Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students, Volume 12, Special Issue III, Summer 1993.

¹⁴ Glavatskaya, E.M. Khanty v sostave russkogo gosudarstva XVIII-XX veka. "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999. p.94.

¹⁵ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.180.

¹⁶ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.181.

an objective of "conservation" of the economies, social organisation, traditional occupancies of the indigenous population¹⁷. However, actual developments on the new territories were rarely congruent with officially declared policies and effectively left the governments with a reactive function to merely amend the declaration to attune to reality. Most of the policies were concerned with taxation, courts, Christianisation and trade relations. Government auditors consistently revealed major misconduct of the local officials retaining considerable portion of the revenue "in the manner counter to stately interests"¹⁸.

Reforms of Ekaterina II aimed to provide transparency and accountability for tax collection process led to establishment of central and regional commissions responsible for a new census and fixed tax calculation for all aborigines in respect to occupation and in agreement with tribal leaders on the whole of the western and eastern Siberia and Far East of the Empire. The policy failed to deliver a true reform (with increased authority to tribal leaders, freedom of choice of form of tax payment and fixed tax requirements per community) and rid of local corrupt intermediaries, however it produced more reliable demographic and socio-economic statistics, provided more clarity to existing system and introduced few individual novelties¹⁹. Main reason for unsatisfactory implementation were, seen by many of the observers, in inadequate performance of implementation teams (commissions) and deviation from or free interpretation of core principals of the policies. In conflict with main issues of the new policy tax was still calculated and collected per person by intermediaries and valuation at buying stations was heavily understated by corrupt officials with silent, obviously not disinterested agreement of regional government officials. Local courts, responsible for policy implementation and monitoring were failing at such due to wide scale ignoring of the policy by both non-native and aboriginal population.

Main factors contributing to failure of the XVII-XVIII cent. policies most probably are:

- Negligence of the opinion of the key participants and those to be influenced
- Lack of attention to "education/promotion" of the policy in those directly influenced
- Policy heavily relied on individual qualities of local implementers - obviously not ready for such commitments either through lack of information or corruption
- Lack of strong committed and consistent control over policy implementation both locally and centrally
- Poor information support both at the stage of planning and implementation

In 1822 the general-governor of Siberia M.M.Speransky proposed a new policy, supported by legislation "Statute on management of aborigines of Siberia"²⁰. As observed by various analysts, the inadequate planning based on shallow, false information severely restricted the success of implementation. The policy was categorising all the indigenous people into settled, nomadic and straying, assigning certain rights and duties to each category. Contemporary and more recent analysts tend to prise the "Statute" as a first "attempt to legalise the status of aboriginal population of colonial areas" and as an "...advanced and in certain respects unique for its time", "...attempting to preserve the original lifestyle of aborigines"²¹. According to policy, for the first time, the implementation phase was preceded by research and the education/promotion activities. Local authorities were obliged to inform the aboriginal population of the main aspects of the new policy, provide communities (leaders) with documentation and instructions. Attempts were made to translate the text of "issues concerning their rights and duties" into local indigenous languages, but there is no

¹⁷ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.230.

¹⁸ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.233.

¹⁹ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.240.

²⁰ Uchrezhdenie dlya upravleniya Sibirskikh guberniy. Ustav ob upravlenii inorodtsev Sibiri. St.Petersburg, 1822.

²¹ Bakhrushin, S.V. Sibirskie tuzemtsy pod russkoi vlast'u do revoliutsii 1917 g. - "Sovetskiy Sever", 1929g., #1, p. 85-86.

evidence of such attempts to be completed and contemporary reports reveal lack/absence of knowledge of the policy in local aboriginal communities²². Implementation of the policy met some obstacles, (egg. categorisation of the natives into settled and nomadic was made based on ambiguous criteria and at time of taxation those ethnoses classified as "settled" (and thus subjects to additional taxation) openly opposed to it and government had to make amendments and classify all north-western natives as nomads.

In general the analysis reveals lack of capacity in central government to adequately assess the situation in Siberian provinces and aboriginal communities, because of lack of reliable information and inadequate planning - without involvement of the experienced local lower level managers and community representatives, lack of consultation with/promotion in indigenous communities, lack of commitment and consistency in the implementation phase, wide corruption. Despite the "conservation" efforts of the government the aboriginal population was effectively losing land ownership to traders and local officials through debts and unfair deals; becoming highly addicted to alcohol and increasingly impoverished²³. Bulk of expense in XVIII and XIX cent. was allocated to administrative costs providing considerable income to the State, whereas resources allocated to "other" - including health care, education, care for exiles, etc. comprised only a miserable portion of all the costs. XIX cent. saw numerous instances of bitter criticism of the policies of the Empire towards indigenous people of Siberia on behalf of contemporary academicians and analysts, proposing various radical reforms in the main spheres of national policy²⁴.

After the Civil War of 1918-1921 in Russia, the efforts were taken by the new government to once again support consolidation of north-western Siberian aboriginal nations by policies to establish autonomous areas with self-government and centre in Khanty-Mansiisk, however, the policy was aborted in preference to establishment of the administrative centre in Tobolsk and the "Department for management of the northern people of Russia" at Peoples Committee for Nationalities "*Narkomnats*" in Moscow, thus, again withdrawing the issue of government from the hands of indigenous people. The mission of the new policy was to "assist the backwards people of the North to integrate with European Russia" by active soviet and party institutional building²⁵. In terms of the new policy in 1920's the tribal community leaders (remaining from pre-revolutionary times) were substituted by clan councils "*sovet*" and local, regional executive committees "*raispolkom*" staffed with elected ethnic representatives. State Committee of North "*Goskomsever*" assisted the new census, providing basis for a new administrative division, land use reorganisation and social security institutions (health care, education). Continuous reform of the government structures in 1920's-1930's resulted in establishment of Ostyak-Vogul "Khanty-Mansi" national district, however only nominally autonomous, effectively governed and accountable to regional, federal and central party and power structures. Attempts of national identity development and strives for increased self-determination were effectively neutralised by the soviet State ideology utilising the same tool employed repeatedly over time (1919-1990's)²⁶ - labelling the confederalism, national/ethnic self-determination with "bourgeois nationalism" term, originating from Marxist ideas regarding supra-nationalism. Thus, soviet policies utilised "nationalism" in its negative connotation as a tag for undesirable national movements. 1920's-1930's saw destruction of yet another aspect of ethnic consolidation - aboriginal

²² Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.256.

²³ Minenko, N.A. Severo-zapadnaya Sibir' v XVIII - pervoi polovine XIX v. Nauka. Novosibirsk, 1975.p.262.

²⁴ Gorodenko, D.V. Razvitie obrazovania v Khanty-Mansiiskom avtonomnom okruge (1920-1930 gg.). Avtoreferat Diss.kand.ped.n. Moscow, 1995, p.8.

²⁵ Glavatskaya, E.M. Khanty v sostave russkogo gosudarstva XVIII-XX veka. "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999. p.83.

²⁶ Argunova, Tatyana. Scapegoats of nationalism. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

leaders (elite) and shamans were deprived of civil rights and property, and later repressed following collectivisation, unrest and uprisings of mid 1930's. Active popularisation of cultural bases "Kul'tbasa"²⁷ - a combination of soviet social institutions (education, medical institution, etc.) - providing boarding schooling for children (compulsory and often forced), medical and veterinary care, ideological and administrative government, etc. This time signified dramatic stage in indigenous minority policies - relocation of residence to larger communities with pre-organised infrastructure, abandoning of the traditional settlements, destruction and disregard of religious sights. New policies implied surrendering of personal issues such as hygiene, reproduction, up-bringing to state medical/ social officials.

Socialist reform policies of the 1930's-1960's posed a decisive factor affecting traditional lifestyles of Siberian indigenous population leading to artificial settlement of indigenous population in large residential centres, abandonment of small clan settlements - basis for traditional occupancies, culture (language) and religion, further loss of ethnic territories and general assimilation. Often policy makers planning the economic development of the region, made assumptions based on inaccurate generalisations in respect to land-use models. In western Siberia this practice proved highly destructive from early 1970's, with the beginning of industrial oil exploration.

By late 1980's western Siberia was almost completely involved in industrial oil production, providing struggling soviet economy with cheap domestic oil and hard currency revenue from export²⁸. Thus, evolution persisted spiral-wise indeed, furs were replaced by timber, oil and gas; exploitation of aboriginal people and wild-life made way to savage crusade for natural resources. Eventually M.Lomonosov's "...the might of Russia shall grow by Siberia..." has acquired a somewhat sinister connotation. Although there is no direct documentary evidence, it poses probable, that the policy of "enlargement" (mandatory relocation to fewer bigger settlements) actively implemented in 1960's-1980's in western Siberia (Tyumen' , Tomsk regions), apart from promotional inspiration of providing modern social security (health care, education, employment, social support, recreation) to aboriginal population in the area, might have had quite less altruistic motivations of clearing the grounds for a large scale exploitation of anything worthy in Siberia. Regional policies were a subject of consistent manipulation in the interests of oil industry with numerous instances of shuffling of administrative and electoral divisions, repetitive relocation of indigenous communities in preference to ever increasing hordes of temporary oil workers with not a minor concern for traditional religious sights, economies historical and cultural monuments.

The growth and consolidation of national identity, developing internally over recent 50-60 years in reaction to ever aggravating status, received new momentum in late 1980's with increasing ideological and political freedom, establishment of NGO's and social movements like "Saving Yugra", found 1989, actively advocating for land and resource rights of indigenous people, revitalising traditional religion and culture. The autonomous region of Khanty-Mansi, though established in 1930, acquired the status of an equitable entity of Russian Federation only in 1993, as prepared legislation commenting on legal status, function and rights of it and provisions for social security for Siberian aboriginal people remained in its "draft form" for over 60 years²⁹.

²⁷ establishment of these was opposed by aboriginal people (Khanty), as even the word itself contained evil: *kul'* - 'devil' (Khanty). Glavatskaya, E.M. 1999. p.84.

²⁸ Wiget, Andrew. Black snow: oil and eastern Khanty. "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999. p.202.

²⁹ Glavatskaya, E.M. Khanty v sostave russkogo gosudarstva XVIII-XX veka. "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999. p.99.

Russian national policies of XVIII cent. originate from "romantic nationalism" of "enlightened" intellectuals, that evolved into "state nationalism" of Nickolas I³⁰. From Peter's I Russian policies finally shifted towards centralisation of policies around European civilisation principles, further driven to absolute by Ekaterina II, and persisting into XX cent. Soviet policies based largely on Marx-Engels theories, under constant threat of "barbarism" reprimands from Europe. There seems to be a jointly shared view among analysts that national policies of "Christianisation-Russification by any means" in XVIII-XIX cent. in both trans-Urals and Western Siberia were developing as an official reaction to pan-Islamic/pan-Turkic threat. Peculiarly, assimilative - Russifying policies were consistently in conflict with undesire of majority Russian public to accept indigenous minorities as equal subjects of Empire (Russian and later Soviet)³¹.

Evolution of national situation and national policies in Russia was affected by general European processes. Theories of Fridrich List concerning "national industries" were received in Russia (as in other European countries) and observed radical influence on development of nationalism in Russia by increased assimilationist-nationalist policies, equally influencing regional Russian nationalism movements³².

The eternal dialogue between "tradition" and "modernity" found considerable implications in national policies of Russia. In course of political reforms, often, soviet life-order was criticised for lack of "modernity" in its oppression of individual freedom by dictate of behaviour patterns³³.

However, soviet power did strive for highest degree of "modernity" in policies by rejecting and eliminating as much "traditional" as possible (atheism, collectivisation, education reforms, repression, etc.). However, in the implementation a compromise (willing or unwilling) of retaining/reshaping of some aspects of "traditional" was repeatedly exercised. The main nuance remains in the fact, that all, even the harshest, "modernisation" policies were delegated, in their implementation, to local agencies and individuals, themselves belonging to communities, strongly affected by "traditions" (egg. many Party leaders observed religious and social practices, etc.). Collectivisation proved to be a powerful "modernisation" tool, undertaken to alter the self-sustainability, self-determination and independence at lowest - individual level, by depriving people of autonomy in decisions and employing them into agricultural industries - "*Kolhoz*", thus ensuring their dependence on "collective" in all issues - employment, income, property, etc³⁴. The whole of the anti-traditionalism campaign, however, employed very "traditional" methods - exchange of old religion into new one with "traditional" attributes: icons-Party leaders; saints - Marx, Engels, Lenin; martyrs - revolution and war heroes, feasts - socialist holidays. By 1920's national policy of the new government still did not seem to be formulated distinctly and remained fractured. The policy implemented locally was remarkable for fragmentation and lack of systematicity³⁵.

Soviet national policies reveal a certain hierarchical stratification of nationalities into those "territorial" with a status higher than that of "not territorial"³⁶, as well as lack of clarity in differentiation between the statuses of federal and autonomous republics and lack of long

³⁰ Shorkowitz, Dittmar. "Young nations" and Imperial Policy in European Russia. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³¹ Werth, Paul. Inorodtsy on Obrusenie: Indigenous clergy, religious conversion, and negotiated assimilation. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³² Ananich, Boris. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³³ Hakamies, Pekka. Modernisation in Karelian village. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³⁴ Hakamies, Pekka. Modernisation in Karelian village. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³⁵ Vitukhnovskaya, Marina. Korely i Korelia v kontekste imperskoi politiki Rossii. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³⁶ Smith, Jeremy. "Unity through Diversity?" Soviet national policies from Lenin to Yeltsin. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

term national policy concepts. The evidence of the latter can be inferred from frequent radical amendments of national policies throughout soviet period:

- admitting the view of Russians as "oppressors of smaller nations" within Lenin's "great Russian chauvinism" concept
- 1920's: rebirth of Russian nationalism within Stalin's concept of great Russian nation - implementer and disseminator of socialist/communist idea to other nations; temporary nature of "nation" in perspective of creation of supranational "soviet people"
- 1930's: abandoning of the "temporary nations" for the benefit of admitted "permanent national features" rooted back in immemorial past with unique traditions/culture, and confirming the leading position of Russian as a core nation - "more advanced in development of communism"³⁷
- 1950's: (before arrest, immediately after Stalin's death, Beria forwarded proposal of returning to Lenin's national concept with ethnic representatives in the head of republican/regional party and admin. structures) - Khrushchev's rehabilitation of deported nationalities, promotion of national cadre to leading positions in Party and Administration, and simultaneous cancellation of mother-tongue education practices, proclaimed "merger of nations" into "soviet" one
- late 1960's - late 1980's: Brezhnev's "brotherhood of nations", admittance of permanent national variety, birth of "national mafias"

Soviet national policies, representing a "bundle of policy projects" (cadre policy, education policy, etc.) were effectively implemented by nationalities themselves, with weak, if any, continuity/consistency and without distinct institutionalisation and clearly defined agenda, agencies, actors, etc. Among many of political analysts, a notion is popular, that, probably, there was never general planning or governmental "blueprint" of national policies in Russia or Soviet Union. National policies were effectively in the domain of regional governments. Thus, evidence indicate against the existence of long term consistent imperial and soviet national policy³⁸, which is confirmed by obviously contradictory features, egg.: "soonest Russification by Christianisation/Sovietisation vs. particulars of "special status" for newly converted or ethnic minorities; ethnic territorial divisions; the "fabled" "range of settlement"(*cherta osedlosti*) and "fifth article" in the Soviet passport, etc.³⁹.

CURRENT STATE

CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION **CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION**
NATIONAL IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN SIBERIA **NATIONAL POLICIES**

CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

[Contents](#) ↑

Aboriginal peoples, although currently comprising the minority, still populate most of the region on their traditional hunting grounds, claiming rights for renewable natural resources as the basis of traditional economy over centuries. The main current problem for indigenous population of western Siberia is adaptation of traditional lifestyles to after-effects of oil/gas exploration policies implemented by the regional and national urban majority.

³⁷ Most likely that a switch from 1920's to 1930's policies was dictated by a preparation for a "big war", evidence of which is the employed methodology: strengthening of centre nation - Russian, collectivisation, deportation of unreliable, etc. - Smith, J. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

³⁸ Kappeler, Andreas.

³⁹ 5th line in official soviet forms mandatory indicated nationality - canceled during perestroika.

Collapse of the USSR had its catastrophic socio-economic and ecological consequences in Siberia and, quite predictably, indigenous population was the first to take the most severe impacts.

Loss of State organised and subsidised trade and supplies systems turned into a tremendously increased economic burden for indigenous people. Analysis of family economies and land-use models of Khanty, who still maintain traditional lifestyles on clan land lots, provides evidence of fragile balance of the aboriginal communities on the verge of self-sustainability with utter dependence on the ecological situation in the area⁴⁰.

Fragmentation of former oil mega-giants during privatisation lead to emergence of numerous young private piranha-companies, ambitious for fast profits and oblivious or thoroughly ignoring ecological, social or at large moral standards. Reduced overhead costs by such "unobvious" allocations as ecology, safety, equipment renovation⁴¹, social investments or quite often tax and wages to employees, allowed for swift incomes and consequently, delivered control over local administration and serious lobbying in regional and central governments. Recent take-overs and vertical integration into large corporations (YUKOS, LUKOIL, TYUMENOIL) still does not lead to improvement of technological efficiency, though demonstrates rapid evolution of lobbying and PR patterns. To meet the cost pressures of periodical construction works and such Khanty have to resort to settlement of so called "economic agreements" with local oil companies, presumably authorised by the regional and federal legislation, to offer compensations for reduced productivity of lands resulting from amortisation for oil exploration. The process and criteria of calculation of the size of compensations is non-transparent and unclear. The declared continuity in payments and regular exchange of technological products is not observed, thus, the comfort and productivity of this highly addictive goods and lack of promised consistency in supplies leads to further economic dependence of otherwise self-sustainable natives. Gradually tightening "vicious circle" leads to migration/shift of traditional economy lands in general direction of the north. Analysis of employment statistics provides evidence of greater unemployment and temporary employment rates amongst aboriginal population as compared to non-aboriginal in Siberia, that evidently originates from corresponding lower education rates (secondary, higher and special)⁴². Although employment/self-employment in local traditional economy or crafts is, naturally higher in aboriginal cohort, which basically provides for preservation and maintenance of ethnic identity.

Generally, according to surveys, among the factors posing the most threat to ethnic survival, marked majority of aboriginal (57.2%) and slightly lesser majority of non-aboriginal Siberians (51.5%) listed as a first - "increasing alcohol abuse", immediately followed by (for indigenous respondents) "decline in mother tongue competence" (42.8%), "erosion of cultural traditions" (39%), "natural environment destruction" (28.9%)⁴³.

Main expectations of indigenous population are associated with forming the prerequisites for economic development of indigenous communities and competent advocacy and presentation of their rights before local officials and oil companies. It is economic pressure, uncontrolled and invisible to outsiders, disregard of elementary moral and legal norms, that makes possible current increasing loss of aboriginal lands to oil companies.

⁴⁰ Wiget, Andrew. Economy and traditional land use in Eastern Khanty. "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999. p.171.

⁴¹ up to 3000 oil spills / year. Wiget, A. Black snow: oil and eastern Khanty. "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999. p.202.

⁴² Markhinin, V.V., Udalova I.V. Mezhetnicheskoe soobshestvo. Sostoyaniye, dinamika, vzaimodeistviye kul'tur. "Nauka" Novosibirsk, 1996. p. 30-37.

⁴³ Markhinin, V.V., Udalova I.V. Mezhetnicheskoe soobshestvo. Sostoyaniye, dinamika, vzaimodeistviye kul'tur. "Nauka" Novosibirsk, 1996. p. 131.

Analysis of the current economic, ecological, legal and ethno-cultural situation⁴⁴ provides grounds to conclude, that, unless urgent activities undertaken by local and central government, local and international governmental and public agencies aimed at preservation and development of unique indigenous cultures and their habitat, these cultures shall see rapid and complete extinction.

Concerns regarding traditional economies land-use advocates are with the fact that at the moment traditional crafts and occupancies lack in commodity, which makes them poorly competitive with industrial sub- and on surface resource production. This is due to various factors amongst which are: lack of technological and economic expertise, archaicity of production tools and technology and frequent (if not omnipresent in Siberia) difficulties with processing and marketing of production (meat, fish, furs, wild renewable natural resources).

State and local policies are expected (by indigenous communities, as well as mainstream) to demonstrate and persistently exercise commitment to humanitarian priorities in addressing indigenous minority needs by consistent implementation and enforcement of the existing and new legislation and provisions for participation of indigenous minorities in self-government, local community management without intervention of authorities or commercial interests (of domestic and trans-national industries) and non-preference to any indigenous/ethnic agencies based on the State's criteria, provisions for education and information access. It should be left to indigenous communities to make decisions upon the priorities in the indigenous minority issues (education, property, economy, etc.), but on the grounds of INFORMED CHOICE.

These are attempted to be addressed by currently developed policies, such as e.g.: "Programme on social-economic development of indigenous population" by Research Institute for Ob-Ugric people (Khanty-Mansiisk) - to be debated and adopted by the regional parliament.

Challenges:

- Central government does not intervene in any positive or negative manner (visibly)
- Factually allocated resources for development of indigenous communities and self-government have to increase considerably to meet official declarations⁴⁵
- Local authorities have to be more productive in passing out legislation supporting indigenous population
- Local indigenous intelligentsia have to be more active in developing public participation policies
- Local indigenous and majority communities could improve public participation
- Local governments have to stop ignoring the violations of the existing legislation by oil companies
- Efforts to analyse and utilise international (Canada, USA) experience in advocacy for indigenous population and public policies are sporadic and have low effectiveness.

Ideas:

Establishment of joint analytical teams (task force) with wide indigenous participation, international experts, official authorities with an objective of adopting pro-indigenous legislation and policies development and implementation.

Current legislation regarding indigenous minorities finds detailed published critique by indigenous leaders and associations. However, critique, comments and proposals concern predominantly definitions, issues and articles concerning property, land-use,

⁴⁴ "Ocherki istorii traditsionnogo zemlepol'zovania Khantov (materialy k atlasu)". "Tesis" Ekaterinburg, 1999; Shoji, Janhunen. Northern Minority Languages. Problems of Survival. "National museum of ethnology" Osaka, 1997.

⁴⁵ The Government official policy towards numerically small (indigenous) peoples was approved in 1996. By the summer 2000 only 2% of the policy budget is allocated.

self-government and representation in local and central governments. Which is quite predictably an area of considerable import for in the range of indigenous issues. However, the fact that not a single word of comment was offered to the issue of native language preservation and development, although current and proposed formulations concerning this issue are more than modest both in size and contents. The question arises: "Is the status and survival of indigenous Siberian languages really such a big issue?" and "Is the importance of the issue of mother-tongue maintenance and concerns for its viability overexploited?"

State of discourse

It is representative that among quite a few recent publications concerning analysis of the current status and development of Siberia (with such titles as: "Western Siberia - problems of development"⁴⁶, etc.) leading issues discussed in mainly concern technological monitoring and technical innovation in natural resource exploration, accompanied with modest accounts of the archaeological and geological past of the area, complete with a small portion of ecological monitoring.

Other publications, although initiated and sponsored by international agencies like UNESCO, provide inaccurate and misleading information concerning current status of indigenous population and their interaction with local administration and oil industry, with a tendency to overestimate the positive experience and enthusiasm of aboriginal communities about interactions with oil companies, probably originating from secondary information sources i.e. local officials, known for an inclination to over represent (not always well grounded) the positive instances and retaining "skeletons in the closet"⁴⁷.

Generally, for Siberian indigenous people it is characteristic, that contemporary sources, both domestic and international, provide the stereotype to the nature, that native Siberian population "has archaeology but no history, folklore but no politics, past but no future or indeed present"⁴⁸. Studies and presentations deal predominantly with past, but not with current or future issues, thus projecting largely over this ethnic groups the notion, for academic and general public, of their belonging to the past. This past is, typically for Russia, and indeed for any former or current colonial states, is quite dark and dramatic, and, in views of many, should remain there.

NATIONAL IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN SIBERIA

[Contents](#) ↑

[CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION](#) [CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION](#)
[NATIONAL IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN SIBERIA](#) [NATIONAL POLICIES](#)

National identity movement among indigenous minorities of north-eastern Russia followed similar trend and chronology. Formulated quite late - in early XX century, predominately following political transformations of 1905 - early 1920's marking emerging national identity discourse. Quite universally, discussion of "national idea" originated among local intellectuals, followed, at times quite late, by public debate. Evidently the advancement of such a discourse as well as a degree of public participation in it conditioned the latter, as well as an extent to which the corresponding ethnos was enjoying autonomy by the time of late 1920's - early 1930's, i.e. a certain deadline marked by settling of Stalin's regime and preparation for a "big war" - with quite low tolerance to any autonomy and self-determination. Equally, by virtue of historic progress, these features reflect the present state of ethnic identity development. After the establishment of national autonomies in mid-late 1920's, repression of 1930's, collectivisation and school reform - the debates of the issue expired. 1930's through 1950's the vast area saw industrial development by numerous GULAGs, followed by extensive subsurface exploration of 1960's-1980's, transforming indigenous population increasingly into a minority, accompanied by a decline of traditional cultures and languages.

First period of "perestroika" saw remarkable growth of political activity and self-government movement, involvement into local representative government structures of

⁴⁶ Western Siberia - problems of development. Institut problem osvoenia severa SO RAN. Tyumen, 1994.

⁴⁷ Kosikov, I., Kosikova, L. Khanty-Mansiiskii avtonomnyi okrug: Model of ethnology monitoring. Moscow, 1998.

⁴⁸ Rein Taagepera. 9 Finno-Ugric congress. Tartu, Estonia. 2000.

indigenous nations of Siberia, which gradually (from early 1990's onwards) was cancelled and neutralised by local and central authorities prioritising interests of industries (oil, gas, timber, chemical, atomic, etc.) - main tax revenue payers (though irregular and reluctant ones), and in the environment of collapsing central structures (state fur trade organisations, etc). Federal power, not wanting and incapable of controlling and assisting Siberian aboriginal population, "delegated" the considerable portion of responsibilities to local administrations - almost ultimately dependent upon main industries.

? Newly emerged debate of "national idea" by corresponding national intelligentsia in late 1980's became highly politicised and evolved through quite similar stages,

- demanding a special "core/title nation" status
- efforts and demands towards preservation and revival of ethnic cultures/languages
- demands for land-use and resource distribution rights
- legitimisation of issues declared in the Constitution
- efforts to extend the indigenous presence in local and central government

? as well as similar shortcomings:

- attempts of developing the issue of self-determination regardless of the issue of territorial unity, potentially leading not to civil society, but rather to ethnically disintegrated one, which naturally is a haughty issue with the State and causes concern and caution if not a certain counteraction, but surely lack of enthusiasm from the Centre.

- low public participation resulting from neglect of consultation and information provision by national elites

- easily debated legitimacy of rapidly established national and ethnic associations (regional and central), as representatives to such were not always elected by their communities with all procedural and legal nuances and thus, their decisions (especially uncomfortable ones) are thoroughly ignored or contested by the State, local officials and mainstream public.

There are various opinions concerning the explanation of frequent failure, after initial excitement, of identity movements to further effectively develop. Some of the proposed reasoning maintains, that current situation with Siberian/Russia Northern indigenous nations' self-determination movement and ethno-political developments may be conditioned, in a way, by prior Imperial and Soviet national policies. Explanation of today's numerous difficulties and speculations around ethnic elites and ethnic associations (accusation of corruption and lack of consultation with communities, competition for leadership, establishment of twin-associations, etc.) and resulting from the above crisis of public and international trust may rest in the past. The prerequisites for reversing such crisis of public confidence and participation in public institutions/activity can be in bridging the gap between indigenous communities and ethnic elites, probably, by a new generation of ethnic elite not constrained/corrupted by soviet mentality and combining both rural experience and aspirations on one hand and urban political skills on the other. That can be cultivated by education and promotion of the issue in public, as well as active interaction with other indigenous communities and leaderships, both domestically and internationally.

CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION

[Contents](#) ↑

[CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION](#) [CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION](#)
[NATIONAL IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN SIBERIA](#) [NATIONAL POLICIES](#)

Adoption of the "Law of Russian Federation on Education", approved by the Russian Supreme Soviet in 1992, confirms the new educational paradigm that calls for a humanitarian, learner-centred approach, and the individualisation of the process of learning and teaching. Education plays a crucial role in the formation of new civil society in Russia. Education on one hand is conservative in nature, serving as a means of reproducing the existing social structure and socialising the new generation, and on the other hand it gives the

society a developing impetus by creating new values and carrying out new processes and practices, serving as a means of modernisation. It is difficult to imagine that democratic civil society could develop in Russia without the active participation of educational institutions but, on the other hand, the question should be asked, whether education will, in the long term, be able to promote such values and ideals that are not accepted by society at large. As noted by Bruner⁴⁹, education is never neutral without social and economic consequences and, in broader sense, it is always political in nature. This is especially true in today's Russia. Thus, problems of reforming the education system should be viewed in the context of social and economic changes in the country⁵⁰.

As follows from the analysis of the previous educational reforms in Russia and critique of the current reform, the main common disadvantage and failure-agent is the fact that the educational policies were always dictated by state interests - "from above" - with little or no consultation with expectations both of professionals "in the field" and, most importantly, of the public - the final addressees of education. Thus, the present - recent reform has to offer an opportunity to develop and practice a new humanitarian ideology approach - complex and democratic, based on expectations of the State, public and educators, utilising prerequisites declared in 1988: democratisation, regionalisation, pluralism, openness and publicity, and ethnic character of education. Development of indigenous minority oriented schooling in Siberia and other northern Russian regions with consideration of recommendations for minority language maintenance strategies may offer an actual content to the new reformed Russian education policy, thus reacting to current criticism of unsupported declarations. Current statistics reveals that level of education for aboriginal population comparative to that of non-natives is markedly lower. That is evidently manifested in much higher levels of "drop-out" in aboriginal population at the stage of early or mid secondary schooling (especially in males).

One of key objectives of language maintenance (Khanty)⁵¹ - is seen in promotion of respect and prestige of mother tongue by various ways: support of participation of indigenous youth in international and domestic seminars, training, conferences, etc. to provide an example of respect and interest to mother tongue by peers from other indigenous nations.

Among the negative factors affecting the language maintenance activities are:

? (social)

- lack of public activism, awareness
- social preference towards majority nationality (in mixed families children prefer identifying themselves with majority nation: Russian, Ukrainian, etc., even in cases of obvious Khanty anthropological type)
- ignorance, disrespectful and "superiority" attitudes of majority nationals (often not the most exemplary representatives - oil workers, geologists), which leads to further deteriorating self-esteem, especially in youth
- compromised public organisations, (egg. "Saving Yugra" - subsidised by the local budget, thus is seen to be dependant on and to an extent subordinate to a "good will" of local government. Lack of communication, transparency and suspected corruption (voluntarism and misuse of resources by leaders) brought crisis of trust and reduction of participation of population.

? (education)

⁴⁹ Bruner, J. The culture of Education. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1996.

⁵⁰ Sirkka Laihia-Kankainen. Education in Russia - between the past and the future. IDÄNTUTKIMUS. Östeuropaforskning. Special issue. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland. 2000. 7 v.

⁵¹ Solovar V. (Khanty, linguist - educator, author of programmes for teaching the Indigenous Siberian Languages as a first and second language. Teachers' Training Institute in Khanty-Manisiisk). 9 Finno-Ugric Congress, Tartu, Estonia. 2000.

- regulatory constraints (mother tongue equals in status to foreign languages, thus time allocation is limited to 1-3hrs./week)
- revision of the above is effectively constrained by rigidity and reactivity of educational authorities and senior indigenous intelligentsia, as well as elder teachers
- low professional and language qualification of teachers (personnel development courses are frequently a formality)

Dramatic situation with indigenous education and language maintenance is a result of persistent and longstanding suppression of native cultures in all former colonial territories. So much more hypocritical are the statements to the nature of irrationality of efforts to develop indigenous education - culture-based, with direct participation and control by indigenous communities. It should be emphasised that any statements to the effect of incapability of a majority of indigenous students to retain their native languages and also be successful in the mainstream society, and those concerning the ultimate need to have majority language as the language of instruction - are counter to recent evidence from case studies and are essentially discriminative and racist.

It is quite evident, however, and unfortunately, repeatedly observed throughout indigenous communities of the world, that without dedicated and competent teachers, policies advocating the use of indigenous languages would make little difference. Very often, assignment of teaching staff to indigenous schools has no or little consultation with either will or capacity of a teacher to work in native community schools. Teachers appointed to native schools are often poorly qualified and lacking considerably in ethics and motivation⁵². Criticism of native education and especially boarding schools increases considerably discovering, that prevailing majority of native graduates return home rather than to majority community, but they find themselves handicapped in taking part in native life because of lack of techniques and customs of their own people. Imposed majority language schooling leads to development of language handicap in indigenous minority students, at times possessing no command in majority language, causing them falling behind in basic skill areas. Although discouragement of use of mother tongue is no longer an official policy, numerous reports indicate that it is still a practice.

In Russia, as well as in all mentioned former and current colonial states, the periodical emergence and rise of support for mainstream-only schooling can be quite directly associated with the rises and falls of perceived outside threats to mainstream society ideology by (aggression, political expansion, increased immigration, etc.) and "thus is a form of xenophobia"⁵³. This "threats", reshaping and concealed, still remain on the agenda, falsely perceived by the governments as a reason/excuse for inadequate support of indigenous education development efforts. However, if the tendency further persists, and the task of education of native people still falls into the hands of education authorities oblivious of and indifferent to indigenous culture and often of mediocre professional competence, education will remain alien to native students and their families, leading to marginalisation of indigenous people, social unrest and shrunk cultural diversity - resulting, in turn, in general low societal moral and social - political problems.

The efforts in developing a new culture-based concept of indigenous education are to persist, for today's situation with education of indigenous minorities and preservation of cultural variety is inappropriate, genocidal and inhuman. Prior, however, to active and universal implementation of either "mainstream-only" or "indigenous" education policies,

⁵² Hopkins, S. W. *Life among the Piutes: Their wrongs and claims*, edited by Mrs. Horace Mann. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co. 1883: 52; Annual report of the board of Indian commissioners. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office; Rules for Indian Schools, 1889, p. 139; North, I. *The Word Carrier*, 1891: 25.

⁵³ Jon Reyhner. American Indian Language Policy and School Success. *The Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students*, Volume 12, Special Issue III, Summer 1993.

there is a need to examine thoroughly why the XVIII-XIX century efforts in indigenous education of Ilminsky, Atkins, Morgan, and others failed. Moreover, there is a need to re-examine traditional attitudes toward freedom and self-determination advocated recently for minorities elsewhere in the world, while often ignoring these same basic human rights for own indigenous minorities⁵⁴.

NATIONAL POLICIES

CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION NATIONAL IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN SIBERIA NATIONAL POLICIES

The evolution of national policies passed a number of distinct stages:⁵⁵

- paternalistic assimilation ("for the sake of minorities"): with allocated territories and declared cultural autonomy - resulting in forced migration to larger rural and urban settlements, where indigenous population effectively comprised the poorest cohort
- conservationism (isolationism): with announcement of ethno-ecological territories, largely failing through lack of concern and consultation with native interests, inadequate self-determination and land-/resource provisions
- contracting/agreements with local and central government on one hand and corporations on the other, provides a wealth of positive (self-government and self-determination elements) and negative experience (dependence on outside donations/compensations; ethnic elites become increasingly focused on pursuit of more subsidies)

Shortcomings of the mentioned policies can be tackled with more emphasis on:

- catering for self-sustainability development in the environment of self-determination and friendly legislation
- consolidation of indigenous ethnoses into interethnic groups for more effective advocacy of indigenous interests

There is a number of popular stereotypes regarding interaction of traditional economy and industrial resource production:⁵⁶

- *modernist stereotype*: oil is more important than interests/issues of indigenous population, minorities are backwards, oil is vitally important for everyone, including minorities, as it provides new jobs

These can be immediately opposed with counter arguments:

- tremendous impact on ecology is harmful as to minorities so to majority (major registered ecological disasters: spills, chemical and mechanical pollution, fires, etc.) affecting humans and animals;
- delivered sustainability is debatable as jobs are provided only for small number of qualified employees - mainly not local; indigenous people are devoid of revenues for produced resources; equipment destroys habitat; outside oil-workers disrespect hunting/fishing and criminal laws (pouching)

- *green stereotype*: indigenous minorities are the victims of developing industry, they are "ethnic saints defending last ecological paradise"⁵⁷

These can be questioned by numerous instances of:

⁵⁴ Jon Reyhner. American Indian Language Policy and School Success. The Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students, Volume 12, Special Issue III, Summer 1993.

⁵⁵ Maximov, Alexandr. The property Rights of Indigenous Rain-deer herders in the Russian north. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

⁵⁶ Habeck, Joachim-Otto. Rain-deer and Oil in the Komi Republic and Nenets District: Reassessing Some Familiar Standpoints in the Debate on "Traditional" vs. "Industrial" land-use. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

⁵⁷ Dubeck, Stephan. Rain-deer herding vs. oil production: the personal dimension of the land-use conflict in the Khanty and forest Nenets region. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

- friendly/ partner/ commerce relations between oil workers and indigenous representatives
- assistance (transport, equipment) of oil-companies used by natives
- use of oil-equipment for household and traditional economy (wood, steel, etc.)
- use of rigs and flares for orientation
- welcomed use of compensation payments from oil-companies (although these often don't get through to community members)
- occasional employment of indigenous representatives by oil-companies or associated businesses

Current trends in the above-mentioned interrelations between traditional economies and industrial resource production are, and most certainly proceed, to be the following:

- environment pollution remains, with no visible improvement
- oil/gas-production contributions to budgets are incompatibly higher than those of traditional economies and thus their interests prevail for local and central governments
- frequent incapacity of the State/local governments to provide a set of constitutionally guaranteed rights (education, medical assistance, social support) allows oil-companies to use these as bargaining cheeps with minority communities
- departure of the ethnic elites from communities and resulting lack of trust and public activity
- legislative environment is, though slowly and inconsistently, but improving for indigenous communities and traditional economies
- EU articulated interest in increasing participation in Russian oil-production within "Northern Initiative"⁵⁸. The increase of international industrial presence in north-Russian oil-production (presumably bearing more experience and readiness to accommodate indigenous interests) is deemed unlikely in light of doubtful eagerness of local producers to share influence with newcomers as well as expectedly low business efficacy of such endeavours.

With above trends, regardless of their often appalling character, most likely to proceed for considerable time the constructive position is in developing dialogue and collaboration amongst indigenous communities and oil-companies and local governments.

The role of state policies, in regards to that, can be envisioned in providing legal support and if necessary legal defence to native communities in their interaction with oil-companies and local authorities, by consistent and committed implementation of legislation.

Close and active monitoring of issues by domestic and international NGO's and expert groups (Saving Yugra, Survival International, Minority Rights Group, etc.) with fast and effective notification and advocacy techniques can provide invaluable assistance in the implementation.

FUTURE

SIBERIAN PROSPECTS

**MAINTAINING INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES**

**WORLD INDIGENOUS
MINORITIES' EXPERIENCE**

SIBERIAN PROSPECTS

Contents



As follows from the extended international experience the traditional cultures of the indigenous people, as any other culture, transforms under the influence of various external

⁵⁸ Dubeck, Stephan. Rain-deer herding vs. oil production: the personal dimension of the land-use conflict in the Khanty and forest Nenets region. 2000. VI ICCEES World Congress. Tampere, Finland.

and internal factors: industry, markets, political conditions, expansions, development of education, etc. Being traditional in their nature, indigenous cultures maintained close interconnection of various aspects of economy, household, religion, education, etc., which, under the influence of industrialisation, eventually become autonomous and individually affected by various factors⁵⁹, radically altering the life of indigenous communities. A range of internal, for indigenous communities, factors include contemporary tendencies for unification of priory isolated ethnic groups, merger of dialects, etc. Changes occur in migration and residence patterns, occupations, education status, life-support forms, etc. Affected by a wide scale industrial exploration of the North indigenous traditional economies, being deeply adapted to natural environment, new experience decline dramatically altering all, intimately dependent upon it, indigenous life spheres - culture.

Contemporary discourse presents various alternatives of development, including:

- ✍ accepting the European life-style model and eventually merge the mainstream society demographically, economically and culturally.

This scenario is largely implying for indigenous people to voluntary surrender any ethno-cultural identities and complete assimilation.

- ✍ preservation/conservation of originality, maximally autonomous development of traditional cultures and traditional economies.

This model possibly implies mutual enrichment with mainstream society as well as a considerable conservation of indigenous cultures in types of "preserves" or "reservations" - the model employing a certain regress with problems of accommodation of the already firmly adopted innovations as well as a certain loss of some traditional elements.

- ✍ a compromise model, implying a combination of modern societal norms and socio-political realities and traditional adapted over centuries, economic, socio-cultural features.

This scenario presumes prerequisite development of traditional economies utilising modern technological, managerial, etc. experience as well as maintenance of traditional cultures, languages, education - ethnic identity.

At the moment, public surveys in indigenous communities demonstrate that only 10% of respondents express confidence in provisions for survival and revival of indigenous minorities of the North within current Russian State policies; 30% more - still hope that current Russian government is able to improve towards indigenous interests; the rest state either no improvement of the past negative policies or rather aggravation of the situation⁶⁰.

The irreversible influence of industrial culture on perceptions of indigenous people is observed in increasing group of marginalised population devoid of understanding of the value of cultural identity and perceiving national identity and cultural diversity as unimportant - 8,7% with probably additional 19,2%⁶¹ of those, who have no clear attitude to the issue.

The third among proposed alternatives in forming the concepts of official policies with regards to indigenous peoples reflects the expectations of the marked majority of indigenous public, in accordance with recent sociological surveys, in which only 4% of respondents expressed in favour of rigid traditionalism (positive to the question "if you prefer your children to follow your life-style"); 11,4% - in favour of assimilation (positive to "if you prefer your children to follow the life-style of their mainstream urban peers"); and 78,3% - prefer their children live on their ancestral land following traditional ways of ancestors, but utilising both in work and life many a "good" of civilisation⁶².

⁵⁹ Karlov, V.V. Narodnosti Severa Sibiri: osobennosti vosproizvodstva i alternativy razvitiya. //Sov. Engrafia. 1991.

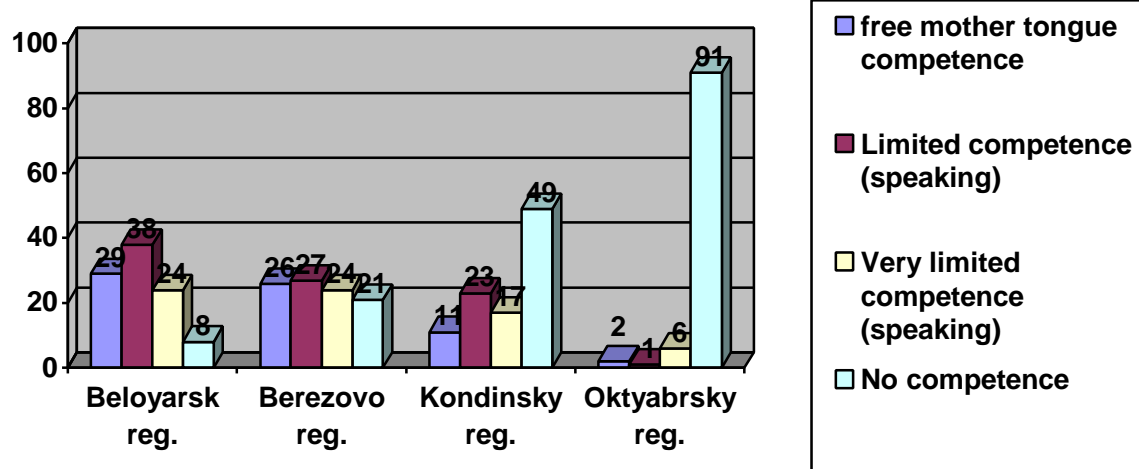
⁶⁰ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiesobskih ugrov na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

⁶¹ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiesobskih ugrov na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

⁶² Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiesobskih ugrov na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

Past decades of ethnocidal policies and following depression in indigenous communities resulted in current extensive concern about loss of native languages and cultural features. Native mother tongue competence in many regions of indigenous residence reduces with every generation.

Mother tongue competence in Khanty-Mansiisk autonomous region (based on public surveys)⁶³.

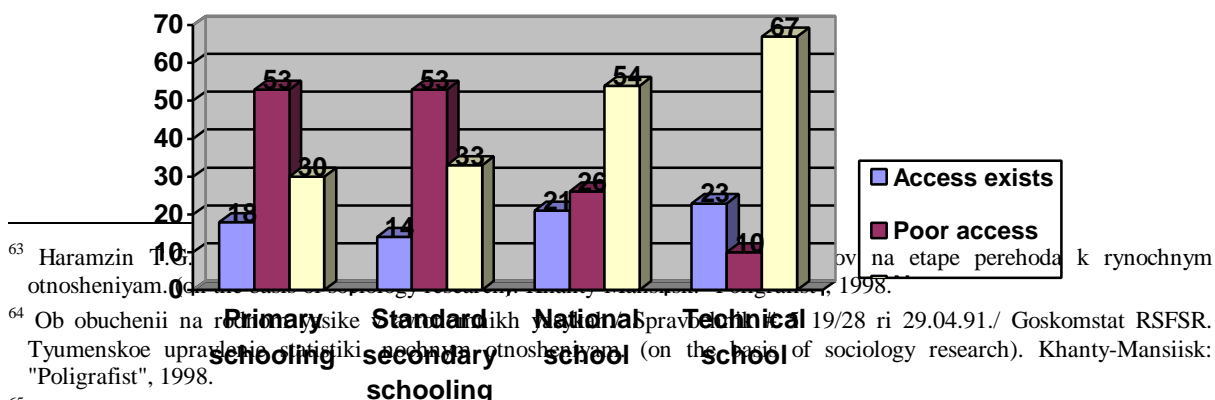


Indigenous nations of Siberia considering the native tongue their first language⁶⁴

	Khanty-Mansiisk Autonom. Reg.			Yamalo-Nenetsk Autonom. Reg.		
	1970	1979	1989	1970	1979	1989
Khanty	53,0	51,9	36,6	34,1	55,2	42,1
Mansi	52,7	55,7	56,6	95,4	95,5	94,2
Nenets	63,2	64,8	55,1	90,4	90,1	82,8
Selkups	66,7	73,1	73,1	83,8	89,1	82,7

The above is uncontestedly a result of inadequate planning and implementation of educational policies along previous decades of imperial and soviet government. Imposition of mainstream education patterns in most inhuman format boarding schools, that effectively prevented intergenerational consistency in maintaining of traditional cultures and languages. Current accessibility and quality of education remains persistently insufficient and highly inadequate in indigenous communities around Siberia.

Access to education in national communities in Khanty-Mansiisk autonomous region (public surveys)⁶⁵.



⁶³ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiye obshchiny na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

⁶⁴ Ob obuchenii na rodnym yazykakh i na traditsionnykh umeniyakh i iskusstvakh. Spravochnik. 19/28 ri 29.04.91./ Goskomstat RSFSR. Tyumenskoe upravlenie statistiki po obshchestvenno-ekonomicheskim otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

⁶⁵ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiye obshchiny na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

Currently, the value of education is generally assessed as high among all life values (rates #7-8). Evidently even higher assessments were prevented by current policies of the State with regards to education, commonly perceived as inadequate. Nevertheless the absolute majority of surveyed prefer their children to have at least complete secondary education (11 years). However, the expectations towards education are associated with rejection of the negative features of the past educational policies of understated and discriminated ethnic content, family and community participation. Traditional, developed over long history, education and up-bringing implied close extended family pedagogic methodology of knowledge and skills transfer, which provided immediate socialisation of experience. Traditional methodology widely employed imitation of examples and presentation of knowledge as a tale, clan legend, etc. Children in boarding schools were effectively deprived of these methods as well as of traditional entertainment, traditional food (to which they possess a certain cultural and perhaps genetic bias). Youth, undergoing the mainstream schooling, frequently could not return to home communities because of lack of traditional skills and knowledge, at the same time being poorly equipped for mainstream industrial society by low quality schooling, poor motivation and frequently discrimination attitudes. Frequently indigenous youth is deprived of choice in continuing education - being automatically referred to the same technical schools by authoritative decisions. Such strategies impose on people sets of skills and knowledge hardly applicable in traditional economies and habitat, but deprive of those.

Current - reform of system of schooling in the area still observes a number of serious shortcomings failing expectations of local indigenous communities:

- quality of schooling does not offer enough provisions for further education in technical colleges and universities - 53,3% respondents
- schooling often provides inapplicable knowledge and fails to provide necessary skills for living in the North - 50% respondents
- health of children deteriorates while schooling - 40% respondents
- children are completely separated from the family and community - 28,8% respondents
- while schooling children don't learn history, traditions, culture of their people - 69,4% resp.
- schooling does not provide adequate mother-tongue competence - 63,5% resp. (over 20% of respondents observe further deterioration in mother-tongue education in recent years)⁶⁶.

Evidently, the design and implementation as well as assessment of the efficiency of the educational policy have to exercise prime concern and consultation of the opinion of addressees of the policies - indigenous communities.

This failure of understanding the significance and consideration of ethnic cultural peculiarity in education continuously leads to loss of ethnically conditioned moral values, behavioural patterns, traditional competence and generally low adaptability to life, resulting, in return, in extensive anti-social behaviour, crime, alcoholism, suicides, etc., which unfortunately dominate accounts of contemporary indigenous Siberian life. The prevailing majority of indigenous respondents expect mother tongue to be taught in all grades of school, with over 30% insisting on instruction at schools exclusively in mother tongue, which, counter to opinions of some analysts, really does not have to "alter the access of indigenous students to the wealth of world culture"⁶⁷. Considerable part of indigenous respondents - 30% expect their children to be taught by a native-nationality teacher, with over 63% of respondents priorities high professional competence of teaching staff over their nationality. This presents a challenging demand for the developed policies in the part securing training of

⁶⁶ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiyeobskih ugrov na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

⁶⁷ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiyeobskih ugrov na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

national cadre. Over 52% of respondents see as most essential and over 20% as necessary element of school education the study of history of native ethnoses. Over 50% of respondents expect as mandatory requirement for improved school education - increased number and quality of textbooks, study and teaching aids in mother tongue⁶⁸.

There is lack of clear vision of structural reform of indigenous schools, however a considerable (over 20%) group of indigenous respondents forward concrete expectations with regards to rejection of boarding-school setting and changing the duration and sectioning of academic year and timing of holidays to make these more attuned to traditional seasonal calendar. Over 80% of indigenous respondents wish to see a native college and native teachers training faculty for indigenous youth to form the core of native cadre in education and other disciplines.

MAINTAINING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES



Contents

SIBERIAN PROSPECTS

MAINTAINING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

WORLD INDIGENOUS MINORITIES' EXPERIENCE

Every language, apart from communication function, bears "...an unspoken network of cultural values.., a major force in the shaping of person's self-awareness, identity, and interpersonal relationships (Scollon & Scollon, 1981). These values are psychological imperatives that help generate and maintain an individual's level of comfort and self-assurance, and, consequently, success in life. Normally these values are absorbed with mother tongue during the first years of life. Thus, providing the indigenous youth with an opportunity to study and maintain the mother tongue offers them a strong antidote to the culture clash many of them are experiencing but cannot verbalise⁶⁹. Consequently, provided that this youth is able to have educational access to wealth of the ethic and cultural norms codified in ethnic language, they are better prepared to interact fully with their traditional environment (family, community) as well as they possess a personality core to face the mainstream society, i.e. "walk in two worlds".

It is demonstrated repeatedly around the world that endangered indigenous languages may be preserved and revitalised, should the committed action be taken both by the public and governmental policies. The "success stories" are inspiring and illustrative to defy the arguments of the nature, that it is altogether too late and any efforts are doomed anyway. The revival of Welsh, Hebrew, Catalan, Canadian French, as well as recent and progressing development of native tongues of Hawaii, Maori, Navajo, Inuit, Saami, etc., are success examples to provide a reference base for future "language-shift reverse" projects.

The results of the latest U.S. Department of Education study of bilingual education programs show that native-language use in schools does not hurt children. It contributes to strengthening American Indian families. There can be little doubt that bilingual programs utilising and developing native-language fluency produce superior results. This is supported by the findings in the Department of Education study maintaining that parents were most satisfied with having their students learn both English and their home language and wanted their children to stay in bilingual programs longer (Ramirez, 1992).⁷⁰

Maintenance of indigenous minority languages is to be perceived as a constituent of larger efforts to preserve cultural diversity of the world. Cultural variety, in its indiscriminating sense, is an inseparable component of true democracy, if such is attainable, and, consequently, efforts to maintain such variety are to be considered democratic "societal reform efforts" leading to the "appreciation of the beauty and distinctiveness of other cultures as well as one's own". The question then is also, in this light, to what extent the government comprehends this and is ready

⁶⁸ Haramzin T.G., Hairullina N.G. Socialno-ekonomicheskoe rasvitiyeboskih ugrov na etape perehoda k rynochnym otnosheniyam. (on the basis of sociology research). Khanty-Mansiisk: "Poligrafist", 1998.

⁶⁹ Rayner, J., Tennant, E., Maintaining and renewing native languages. National Association for Bilingual Education. 1995.

⁷⁰ Rayner, J., Tennant, E., Maintaining and renewing native languages. National Association for Bilingual Education. 1995.

to evolve from ignoring the issue - to declaration of its commitment to "cultural democracy" - to supporting declarations by real functioning and consistently implemented policies and legislation. It is also to be noted that a commitment of the government to democratic and humanistic agenda in the issues of cultural/language diversity and preservation and revitalisation of indigenous minority cultures/languages may be indicated by a selection of policies that enjoy wide consultation and extensive delegation of control functions over the process to communities, i.e. policies of "facilitating and enabling" life enriching and bridging the cultures, rather than "compulsory and punitive"⁷¹.

Negative aspects of international and domestic experience demonstrate, that traditional "arsenal" of government colonial techniques may prove counter-effective. Any considerable direct influence from the centre (direct subsidies, etc.) may lead to developing of a dependence on it by indigenous representatives/communities, thus efforts are to be primarily directed at supporting the development of self-sustainability, self-government, self-determination via:

- a) support of indigenous minority education, training, etc. It may probably require lesser resources, (meager as they currently are in Russia);
- b) education of majority about indigenous minorities, as violent assimilative/ethnocidal policies often (if not always) originate from lack of understanding, fear of the threat of unknown.

For Russia, Siberian indigenous people, for long, pose no threat or competition to ambitions, as well as become extensively researched. Thus, indigenous minorities must become a unique and wealthy cultural resource in prospective of an indubitable value and positiveness of cultural diversity. Perhaps, in Russia, in light of obvious improbability of dramatic economic boost and political competitiveness with western democracies, public acceptance and development of humanities and cultural diversity, as well as admittance of the negative former policies and perceptions may become a component of a new, searched for, "national idea". There can be a rationale of a social nature in "Russia's revealing and reviewing that "skeleton in the closet", if not for the sake of those colonised, but for their own sake, as it was in cases of other former/current colonial states/nations"⁷².

Once public policy in Russia's indigenous minorities regions is sufficiently institutionalised through actually functioning indigenous associations and NGOs the native-language renewal has to receive support via public/community resolutions, adopted policies, legislation at local and federal levels, in accord with existing international experience and norms. As in majority of the cases around the world, most of the institutions governing the life of indigenous communities originate in mainstream society, operating "traditionally" with little regard and consultation with native interests. Such framework proved consistently ineffective, leading to current concern about the very survival of aboriginal cultures. New - indigenous institutions do not have to develop in conflict to national/regional government structures, but in complement to them. Indigenous institutions - with real power of decision making and implementation, should be granted a right and assistance to natural development, with own evolutionary shortcomings and recoveries.

On the level of community and NGO's, there is a rationale in formulating and publicizing at all levels a set of individual and joint indigenous representative resolutions/statements to the effect similar to that of international indigenous groups resolutions, such as Resolutions of American Indians National Association for Bilingual Education, Special Interest Group, American Indian/Alaska Native; Saami Council; Canadian First Nation Representatives; Northern Ute Tribal Business Committee; Pascua Yaqui Tribal Council; Navajo 1985 etc.:

- Indigenous people are rightful citizens of their countries

⁷¹ Rayner, J., Tennant, E., Maintaining and renewing native languages. National Association for Bilingual Education. 1995.

⁷² Rein Taagepera . 9 Finno-Ugric congress. Tartu, Estonia. 2000.

- Former majority language-only policies are extremely harmful, as they usually eliminate funding for bilingual education thereafter
- Not using the rights for adequate education, secured in Constitution - means not using the powers in disposal
- There is a need to formulate, organize and lobby the indigenous interests to start being recognized as the "Native/First People?"
- A map showing people who and where indigenous people are and what languages they speak is to be produced and made public in long term education campaigns (indigenous people of Siberia are over 40 ethnic groups with distinct languages and dialects)
- High percentage of indigenous people are at risk of losing their languages and cultures
- Indigenous languages of Siberian people are a functional, vital languages, compatible in expressiveness and beauty with any other language in the world, able of functional/lexical expansion into all modern disciplines and conceptual fields
- The native language is the language of the peoples' spiritual heritage rooting in the thousands year old culture
- Indigenous language is to be recognised as a first language of the community, and majority language is to be recognised as a second language;
- Indigenous youth has to be able to maintain competence in mother tongue as well as to be competent in majority language, benefiting from bilingual abilities in academic progress and other social areas
- Richness, functionalism and beauty of the indigenous language and culture are to be realised in the process of education at all levels
- Professionals in indigenous education are currently under-represented
- Teachers of indigenous students need constant professional development to promote excellence in education
- Successful educational practices that would benefit indigenous students would also be good for all students
- Indigenous students achieve at the highest standards with proven instructional strategies, culturally appropriate curriculum, and program design matched to needs
- The indigenous people have distinct educational concerns that are not apparent under the generic term "bilingual education"
- The indigenous children have the greatest need for bilingual education due to having the lowest academic progress and graduation rates
- Indigenous students are under-represented in programs for gifted and talented and over-represented in "special education" and other "at risk" programs
- Educational community has a responsibility to address problemes in indigenous education
- Indigenous children are often not classified as eligible for bilingual education services due to not being fluent in their heritage language, even though their majority language competence is at times not at academic level
- Special bodies should lobby on behalf of the educational rights of indigenous students by ensuring that the special needs of indigenous students are included in stately educational policies
- Educational of indigenous students should be promoted through retention and development of indigenous languages and majority language competence
- Lobby groups should consult with the indigenous interest/activist groups in the development of all legislation related to indigenous students; indigenous interest/activist groups should be involved in the review of future educational program proposals.
- Mutual coordination and consultancy among specialised institutions for Indigenous Issues and Indigenous grassroots interest groups and NGO's is to be organized and maintained with due commitment
- Regular monitoring of schools with indigenous programs are to be scheduled

- Avoiding lumping the indigenous nations and languages with the category "other" by authorities of all levels is to be encouraged

Local and Federal governments have to demonstrate their commitment to human values and "cultural democracy" by adopting the language legislation accommodating the concerns and aspirations of indigenous communities and public institutes (NGOs, Associations, etc.) with content probably similar to that of existing government resolutions of Norway, Finland, Canada, USA, Australia. The declarations of the above character are to be supported by entering the indigenous issues to priority developments instigating a wide scale situation assessment (inspections of schools, teaching staff competence reviews, curricular and syllabi revision, public surveys, etc.) to provide basis for policy evaluation.

The case is to be made for official and public attention, that adequate/improved education as well as revival of indigenous cultures/languages shall provide support for local self-government and prerequisites for general improvement of socio-economic conditions in indigenous territories, to remedy current depression and social unrest resulting from political disempowerment and minority status. Which, ultimately, contributes to overall revival of strong healthy Russian Federation, enjoying the wealth of cultural variety and genuinely democratic values.

Education policy strategies

The study of successful experience in maintenance and preservation of indigenous minority cultures and languages demonstrate that, important factors contributing to success of these efforts include a "need for sacrifice, self-help, self-regulation, and the establishment of boundaries for language use, intergenerational transmission of the language at home by families, not in government policies and laws".⁷³ Such grass roots efforts providing wide public awareness and participation are the key elements for preservation projects. Outside homes, minority-language use in early childhood centres, such as Maori and Hawaiian "language nests" and in pre- and post-natal programs for young mothers is important. In the community, minority-language use can also take place in co-operative markets, employment and recreational centres, legal aid services, credit unions, and so forth. Educators teaching subject matter in the home language should be tolerant to dialects variation. Fishman asserts "it doesn't pay to force a written standard, much less a spoken one, on an adamantly unwilling or seriously ailing speech community". Lastly, social boundaries must be developed that give minority languages an exclusive role in traditional family and community social activities.

Development of native-language media, publications, etc., would be an adjunct supportive environment to the main course, and eventually - a side product of it.

However, declaration of the policy, as well as its public support, being the key elements of the success of language and culture revival efforts, cannot be divorced from the detailed and comprehensive planning, monitoring and evaluation techniques and broad co-operation. Proposals for the development of detailed consistent planning of the language and culture revival may include generation of a step-by-step procedures - highly detailed and locally adapted - a kind of "Exercises for Language Planning". These exercises could include various activities for the community participation, such as:

- (1) dispelling myths about language learning and bilingualism;
- (2) identifying the values underlying the language;
- (3) recognising beliefs associated with language use and bilingualism;
- (4) articulating the future desired by the community;
- (5) setting goals based on the desired future;

⁷³ Fishman, Joshua A. 1991. Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages. Clevedon, Avon, England: Multilingual Matters; Rayner, J., Tennant, E., Maintaining and renewing native languages. National Association for Bilingual Education. 1995.

- (6) examining current community practices as they relate to the chosen goals;
- (7) establishing an information network to promote the goals;
- (8) recruiting individuals and groups to achieve the goals;
- (9) determining the key factors regarding language loss, maintenance, or renewal;
- (10) focusing on the unique functions of the local language;
- (11) developing language and educational policies;
- (12) implementing a practical, comprehensive plan.⁷⁴

It is highly rational to attract young parents to such initiatives in public assistance to teaching indigenous languages, to cater for active intergenerational language acquisition and renewal, as well as more sustainable language maintenance. Eventual transfer from early childhood in-community language training to school language instruction requires personnel development/teaching methods training which young adults are likely to be more susceptible to.

Native culture oriented schooling can further develop native language competence. Curricular, including development of reading, writing, speaking skills in native language, naturally with instruction in the mother tongue. This literacy training might precede that of majority language to allow for firmer mother-tongue skills entrenchment. General tendency can be - gradual decrease of mother tongue instruction over time - from 70-80% in pre-school and primary school, to 50-60% middle school and to 25-30% (local country studies, native history and culture studies) in senior school.

International experience demonstrates, that most of the teaching materials for mother tongue studies are produced by the teaching staff, supported by universities. That is also a case in Russia, with a number of universities and academia institutions historically active in native language maintenance activities. The successful essays and articles by native students may later supplement teaching aids. Native media may also provide reading matter for language and local studies (history, culture, geography, government, clanship) classes. General line should be the encouragement of oral and written practice both in mother tongue and majority language.

✍ In concordance with the demand and importance of training local indigenous cadre, existing indigenous technical colleges and teacher training institutes, as well as faculties in mainstream academia in (Khanty-Mansiisk, St.Petersburg, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, etc.) may provide basis for further development of Native college and university education stage. Native education should be aiming in stating its main mission to - development of a range of skills (technical, commercial, managerial, etc) that are truly demanded and relevant to the community. In its pursue of increased school completion by indigenous youth and further training and development, education initiatives may resort to assistance of private small and medium business, local corporations and governments to overcome the education reform pressures.

A number of international and domestic resources provide suggestions as to the contents of native language training, emphasising the preference of regular conversations (natural talking, asking questions, telling what to say in various situations) of family members and teachers with children, over just teaching separate words and names. Classrooms of co-operative learning techniques, with students conversing, questioning and peer tutoring each other, is a highly recommended methodology. Communicative natural language training methodologies, widely applied in foreign language training around the world, incorporate a set of key principles, to be addressed:

1. Putting primary emphasis on communication, not grammar
2. Using context that is real or at least realistic
3. Processing content of high interest to the learner

⁷⁴ Rayner, J., Tennant, E., Maintaining and renewing native languages. National Association for Bilingual Education. 1995.

4. Adjusting the pace of instruction to the students' progress
 - moving from simple to complex (generally speaking)
 - emphasising speaking over speaking correctly
 - putting comprehension before completion.

The mere fact of mother tongue being equal among other school subjects can prove extremely positive in restoring confidence and respect to native language and culture, as well as a strong motivation for native students.

Cost efficiency

Financial implications of "culture-based" education can be approached in a two-fold manner.

1. On one hand the proper research/initial assessment, comprehensive planning of implementation, monitoring and evaluation, methodology development, local cadre training and retraining, teaching materials development, promotion and public administration activities, possible expert consultancy, etc. will require resources exceeding routine allocations (cost-efficiency of which is to be still evaluated, however, initial impression does not provide evidence of it (cost-efficiency) to be currently very high).

This can be approached in a diverse manner.

- assessment of current cost-efficiency and generation of internal resources by revision of old and implementation of new resource utilisation strategies
- access of additional local and federal resources, which are declared in the budget as those to be allocated to the development of indigenous issues (local education development programmes, Northern regions development programmes, etc.) but which are not factually allocated for various reasons: lack of solid proposals, lack of lobbying, etc.
- solid, well planned and minority sensitive and publicly perceived programme proposal, adequately advocated for, will be able to attract resources of domestic and international humanitarian agencies
- locally operating national and trans-national/ foreign oil/gas producers can be approached for financial participation in the programme

2. Long term implications of successful implementation of the programme are to be considered by programme designers and authorities, and used in promotion process. As maintained above, native culture-based education development (as increasingly proved by international experience) will exercise lasting and considerable positive effects on the development of the territories economically and socially, reducing a variety of negative and unmeasurably more expensive phenomena: marginalisation, depression, violence, alcoholism, social tension.

Both domestic and international experience, demonstrates a certain degree of suspicion in indigenous minorities towards non-natives' tackling the native issues. Missionaries, modernisation proponents, scholars researched and used the native languages, for the purpose of spreading whatever ideology they deemed currently appropriate, unconcerned about little benefit to preservation of indigenous cultures. The development of the issues in future should follow the pattern of partnership of scholars, educators, authorities, indigenous community representatives (various generations), indigenous minority associations, NGO's, etc.

Native students require an environment developed and maintained in the community, to develop and use both native and majority-language skills. It has also to be made known to them that the development of majority language skills should not be at the expense of mother tongue. The key message to both indigenous minority and mainstream majority public has to emphasise the positive value of bilingualism and cultural variety.

WORLD INDIGENOUS MINORITIES' EXPERIENCE**CONTENTS** ↑**SIBERIAN PROSPECTS****MAINTAINING INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES****WORLD INDIGENOUS
MINORITIES' EXPERIENCE**

Mainstream society has to come to understanding of the need to respect indigenous minorities' peoples rejection and disgust of the old assimilationist-racist approach to indigenous education, observed in recent educational policy acts of a number of ethnoes around the world containing a statement of aboriginal communities' expectations towards education. While striving to preserve and revitalise native cultures and languages indigenous people do not defy the value of mainstream education and majority language competence.

What is searched for - is an appreciation of indigenous mother tongue and native culture as equal-value pillars, in complex with majority-language and mainstream ideology, of a new - culture-based or bilingual education concept to enable indigenous students to preserve their heritage and confidently interact in mainstream society, benefiting from employment and personal development opportunities. Such culturally diverse educational philosophy is going to prove indubitably beneficial and enriching for both native and mainstream students, should they be provided with an option of choice to study closely the wealth of indigenous cultures - often those in direct neighbourhood from them and yet shamefully unknown.

Many of currently undertaken educational reform initiatives either ignore indigenous language and culture issue completely or limit themselves to peripheral and superficial formulations. Any such persisting indefiniteness in the issue continues to provide premises for local rigidity, falsification of activities, negligence and outcoming discrimination.

Currently declared, in the Constitution and an array of official legislation, principles of cultural variety, humanistic values and accommodation of minority concerns still remain largely to be implemented in official policies at all levels: planning, implementation and evaluation. Policy and education authorities need to further develop, adapt, promote and disseminate successful practices of support of indigenous cultures.

APPENDIX I

[Contents](#) ↑

SAMPLE MODEL FOR NATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (based on models by R.E. Littlebear)⁷⁵

At Interface Alaska MRC 16, the staff took a look at how Native American language teachers are trained, if they are trained at all, about how to teach their languages. To overcome that frustration that was previously mentioned, the Interface Alaska MRC 16 decided to teach Native American language teachers how to teach their languages to slow or even stop the loss of languages that is occurring at an alarmingly high and accelerating rate.

The model was created for fluent speakers teaching native languages, oblivious of classroom management, teaching methods, development of appropriate practices. The native language development programs often fail resulting from lack of professional competence. Quite a few of the teachers are older, under-trained, are more traditional, may not have access to recent teacher preparation programs. The sample model thus provides basic skills and knowledge applicable in effective teaching of mother tongue. It is thus only a complementary measure to regular teacher training. Such models are envisioned as easily adaptable to local contents. The importance of the modeled approach poses a tool to help eliminate potential failure of the native language teaching efforts, as, increasingly every language planning project failure affects public confidence in such endeavors in general, which is unaffordable in current critical situation with indigenous languages.

Methodology

The model effectively resorts to methodologies well tested in various environments, proved considerably efficient and highly recommended, such as Total Physical Response (TPR) and The Natural Approach.

These approaches are orally-based, meaning that they develop language from the smallest oral components to eventual conversational and technical fluency. Even though they require much preparation and constant application, they do not need the in-depth preparation demanded by regular teacher preparation courses. Most importantly, both approaches require fluent speakers of the native language.

The model bases on five commands, initially introduced and persistently practiced with periodical repetition during the day (before breaks, beginning and end, etc.).

The Model

The basic format for the model entails a 7.5 hour day lasting five days. It can be expanded or contracted, depending on the time constraints of the local program. This model takes a language teacher from the affective domain, to the theoretical, to the mission statement development, to the introduction of classroom strategies, and finally to the practical application of all the previous topics.

The First Session: the affective domain and emotions

This session addresses the affective domain of teaching and learning. It also addresses the emotional aspects of language loss by presenting topics on the cycle of grief, the long-term effects of deprivation of land and culture, and positive self and cultural concepts. Along with the latter two topics, relevant activities were introduced and applied for the benefit of the native language teachers so that they could use these activities in their classrooms. There are also people who speak about what it means to speak a mother tongue, and what it means to be a indigenous person and not to be able to speak a indigenous language.

The 5 commands are introduced along with other vocabulary that will be added later on will be continued throughout the training process.

The Second Session: building a theoretical base

The second session established a theoretical base for the Native American language teachers by presenting them with the selected theories of first and second language acquisition. This theoretical base focused on the writings of Jim Cummins, James Asher, Steven Krashen, Lily Wong-Fillmore, and Tracy Terrell. All of these researchers produced

⁷⁵ The model was developed by the Interface Alaska Bilingual Multifunctional Resource Center, Richard E. Littlebear, Director. The information was compiled and written by Dr. R. E. Littlebear and edited by Dr. Alicia Martinez.

classroom oriented information and theories. They are used because, if the indigenous communities are going to abdicate their responsibilities of teaching their languages and cultures to the schools, then the schools will have to devise strategies that actually teach students to become conversationally proficient in their own languages.

This session also dealt with Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, BICS and CALP respectively. Also discussed was language acquisition and language learning and the differences between these two.

The Third Session: forming a personal or group rationale

This third session centers around forming a rationale as to why each of the native language teachers are in the language preservation program. The reason for this topic is to make the native language teachers think about why they are really in the program. This is to help set them firmly as to why they are in the program. The topics from the first two sessions will provide them with information to help them begin formulating their own personal rationale.

The reason for rationale-forming is that too often when indigenous language teachers are asked why they are in a language preservation program, their rationale goes only as deep as their immediate economic needs: it provides a check. While this is a justifiable rationale in its own right, it does not speak of long-term commitment to the language program, nor does it prioritize for the language teacher the need for continued education and training. It does not speak to the need for constantly honing their teaching skills. Having a shallow rationale for being a part of a language preservation program often leads to the failure of that program because a person who is not committed will abandon the preservation program when a better paying job becomes available.

The Fourth Session: classroom methods

In this session, the native language teachers are introduced to whole language, sheltered language, accelerated learning, Total Physical Response Approach, The Natural Approach, and cooperative learning. Just by the sheer range of classroom management topics involved in this session, all are necessarily just introductions. This session presents the above topics to acquaint the native language teachers with classroom management skills. Each of these topics are in harmony with teaching language by an oral-based approach. The linguistic structure of many native languages demands that more than simple, discrete, individual vocabulary word lists be taught. Native languages have been characterized as being "polysynthetic" languages, which means that many elements are pulled together, usually around a verb, to produce coherent meaning. In the meantime, some of those words that have been taught in vocabulary lists often disappear completely. The whole language approach lends itself to teaching native languages as whole phrases, clauses, or sentences and presents the learning of those languages in context. Accelerated learning techniques take advantage of the readily available, culturally embedded stories and songs to teach the language, which is one of their original purposes anyhow. The sheltered language method acquaints the students with those words, phrases, clauses, sentences that they will be learning and it teaches about them in preparation for the students to actually begin using them in context. Cooperative learning techniques use another culturally embedded value, sharing, to enable the native language teacher to manage the classroom.

The Fifth Session: practical applications

At this session, the presenters focus on lesson plan building, curriculum development and materials development. The various kinds of curriculum - such as the integrated, the parallel, and the thematic - are discussed. The presenters also introduce scoping, sequencing, expanding, or contracting curriculum that has been developed. These concepts are such essential classroom skills that the presenters introduce them because the native language teachers may also have to be the curriculum developers for their programs.

Follow-up: the aftermath of training

In later follow-up sessions, the presenters will go into depth concerning any of the above topics. The native language teachers will decide on the topics they want training. The whole idea behind this training model is to tailor the training process to meet the needs of the native language teachers. Embedded in the whole process is the flexibility to address other topics that the native language teachers need to discuss rather than providing "canned" or "prefabricated" training. Those kind of presentations usually do not address the immediate needs of the native language teachers.

Conclusion

Indigenous people are aware that they are losing their languages and cultures but it is useless for them to continuously lament these losses, to continuously blame the schools, the government, the churches, and the mass media for these losses. Indigenous people know these organizations are to blame, but they must further realize that these organizations are going to do little if anything to languages and cultures. It is up to indigenous people to preserve their languages and cultures. To help reinforce what the schools are trying to do, indigenous people should just talk their languages everywhere, with everyone all the time.

APPENDIX II

European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg. Recommendations on the Implementation of Policy Measures for Regional or Minority Languages

Explanatory Note

With support from the European Commission, and in close co-operation with the Council of Europe and the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) organised, on 23 and 24 June 2000, an international conference on “Evaluating policy measures for minority languages in Europe: Towards effective, cost-effective and democratic implementation”. Participants included noted scholars in minority issues, representatives from major international organisations, non-governmental organisations, and member countries of the Council of Europe. The conference is an important element in a larger project on the analysis of policies adopted in favour of minority languages, particularly, but not exclusively, in the context of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is a novel instrument in international law, in that its focus is not on the rights of minorities, but on languages themselves—although languages are, of course, used by individuals who belong to groups defined, among other possible criteria, by language. Hence, in the conference convened by ECMI, legal standards were taken as given, with debates emphasising instead issues of implementation.

Owing to the extreme degree of variability of situations between different regional or minority languages (and, of course, between the states in which these regional or minority languages are traditionally used), the purpose of the conference was not to make general recommendations regarding the set of specific measures that should be adopted in order to protect or revitalise these languages—this diversity of situations also explains the structure of the Charter itself, which gives states a wide range of options to choose from. Accordingly, the conference focused not on the specific measures that should be adopted by states (whether such measures are adopted explicitly in order to comply with Charter obligations or not), but on how authorities at various levels choose policy measures in favour of regional or minority languages, because some very practical issues of decision-making arise in all cases. More precisely, emphasis was placed on how can states meet principles of good public policy, in particular: (i) aiming at effective policies; (ii) aiming at cost-effective policies; (iii) aiming at democratic policies.

The concepts of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, as well as the characteristics of genuinely democratic policies in the context of language policy implementation, were discussed at length during the conference, generating consensus around the view that effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and democracy are among the core principles of “good practice”.

The following Recommendations, reflecting the results of discussions during the conference, are intended as a means to draw attention to relevant principles in the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of policies in favour of regional or minority languages, as well as an instrument assisting authorities in implementing the Charter, with a view to helping states that have not yet ratified (or signed) the Charter to assess the practical implications of doing so, and to offering assistance to other organisations, particularly NGOs, involved in minority language policies.

The following recommendations will be forwarded to the members of the Committee of Ministers and members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe the Secretary General of the Council of Europe the European Commission and members of the European Parliament the participating States of the OSCE and members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities language planning bodies and language boards in charge of promoting regional or minority languages in Europe non-governmental organisations whose activity addresses minority issues, in particular minority languages other relevant minority organisations

Recommendations

Preamble

With the active help of the participants at the International Conference on Evaluating Policy Measures for Minority Languages in Europe: Towards Effective, Cost-Effective and Democratic Implementation, convened on 22 to 25 June by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in Flensburg, Germany, the ECMI has formulated the following Recommendations.

These Recommendations are based on the firm conviction:

- (a) that regional or minority languages constitute a crucial element of Europe’s linguistic and cultural heritage;
- (b) that linguistic and cultural diversity is valuable resources contributing to the overall quality of life of all residents in Europe, and must therefore be recognised as a contribution to general welfare;
- (c) that the maintenance and revitalisation of regional or minority languages, allowing for their vitality in the long term, represents a core element of the identity of individual speakers of these languages, and as such represents a relevant policy goal in a human rights perspective;
- (d) that the maintenance and revitalisation of regional or minority languages requires committed and tangible support from states and international organisations;
- (e) that the maintenance and revitalisation of regional or minority languages is an issue taking on increasing saliency, as evidenced among others by the declaration of 2001 as the European Year of Languages, both by the Council of Europe and the European Union.

Participants at the Conference further note that there is a need, beyond the political dimensions and legal issues involved, for developing analytical and technical guidelines for the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of policy measures. While these guidelines must take account of the considerable diversity of cases and conditions, it is possible to formulate general principles and guidelines of good governance towards the management of linguistic diversity, with particular regard for regional or minority languages. These

Recommendations therefore aim at contributing to the necessary bridge-building between analytical principles of good policy and practical modalities for the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of policies. Participants at the Conference share the view that the resulting guidelines can be useful for states considering, planning or evaluating policy measures for regional or minority languages. Furthermore, such guidelines can also be useful for the communities using the regional or minority languages concerned, as well as for the civil society organisations also concerned with the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity in Europe. These ECMI Recommendations are formulated with particular reference to the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe opened for signature on 5 November 1992. States are therefore urged to accede to the Charter as soon as possible while ensuring that accession is rapidly followed by the adoption of policies reflecting the guidelines in these Recommendations, in compliance with the spirit and letter of the Charter.

It is the belief of the participants that the principles for the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of policy measures outlined in the present Recommendations can also be relevant in a broader range of policy contexts. The Participants at the Conference therefore underline the relevance of:

- (a) the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;
 - (b) the Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities;
 - (c) the Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities;
 - (d) the Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life;
 - (e) the relevant resolutions of the European Parliament;
 - (f) the relevant recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- In order to meet the obligations to which they subscribe by acceding to the Charter, states are urged to take into consideration the following guidelines.

I. Recognising the role and importance of minority language policy

1.MINORITY LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY:In addition to their relevance in the definition of human rights and minority rights standards, regional or minority languages should be explicitly recognised as essential elements of linguistic and cultural diversity as well as an important aspect of the identity of users of the regional or minority languages.

2.IMPORTANCE OF MINORITY LANGUAGE POLICY: In line with the standards developed in international instruments as mentioned in the Preamble, and taking account of the intrinsic value of linguistic and cultural diversity, governments should recognise the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of policies in favour of regional or minority languages as necessary tasks making a crucially important contribution to the good governance of modern societies.

II. Identification of and agreement on clear aims and principles

3.CLARITY OF AIMS: The successful implementation of minority language policies requires their aims to be clearly identified, defining in particular the criteria to be used to assess the attainment of policy goals by a particular set of measures.

4.CLARITY OF PRINCIPLES: Realising these aims requires good policy principles for the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of the corresponding policies, as described in particular in the following paragraphs of these Recommendations.

III. Recognising and applying good policy principles

5.PRINCIPLES OF GOOD POLICY AND THEIR ADAPTATION: “Good policy” is to be understood as an approach to public policy stressing in particular, though not exclusively, the effectiveness, the cost-effectiveness and the democratic nature of policies.

6.EFFECTIVENESS: Policies selected should be demonstrably effective, promising to result in a significant improvement in the position, status, use (or other relevant criterion) of the regional or minority language(s) being promoted.

7.ANALYSING AND SPELLING OUT EFFECTIVENESS: Effective policies require proper identification of the aims pursued, of the resources used, and of the processes through which policies can realise these aims. This requires in particular the proper identification of the needs and demands of the regional or minority languages for which policies are intended, and the supply, by the state or its surrogates, of appropriately defined facilities for minority language learning and use.

8.RECOGNISING URGENCY: The issue of the effectiveness of policies must be given particularly sustained attention in the case of particularly threatened languages, with a view to restoring, wherever possible, the conditions for the natural maintenance and development of all regional or minority languages.

9.COST-EFFECTIVENESS: Policies should be demonstrably cost-effective. The principle of cost-effectiveness, which is only a means to an end, is entirely compatible with adequate provisions for regional or minority languages, and requires a well-managed use of resources towards achieving desirable results. Cost-effectiveness favours the transparent use of resources allocated to minority language policy and demonstrates the authorities’

commitment to good policies; it is therefore a key factor for the acceptability, among majority opinion, of minority language policies. Demonstrated cost-effectiveness should be seen as an opportunity for increasing the aggregate volume of resources made available to minority language promotion.

10.DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES: Policy measures must be adopted through a demonstrably democratic policy process. Throughout the policy process, it is necessary to ensure broad consultation and participation, including through non-formal channels complementing the normal institutions of democratic states. Civil society organisations, including in particular non-governmental organisations, as well as the general public should therefore be encouraged to play an active role at all stages of this process, ensuring that the dynamic evolution of social and economic needs over time is duly taken into account.

11.AVAILABLE EXPERIENCE: Throughout the policy process in any given context, it is important to learn from the experience in good practices and from the successes already achieved in other contexts through appropriate measures in favour of regional or minority languages.

IV. Establishing the necessary structures

12.ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH: In order to develop States' capacity to adopt appropriate policy measures in favour of minority languages, particularly in the context of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, it is important for the authorities to provide facilities and support, including through applied academic research, for the study of the corresponding policies.

13.SHARING, EXCHANGING AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION: Civil servants and other social actors involved in the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of minority language policies can gather considerable and valuable information and experience in the course of their activities. It is essential for this information and experience to be regularly exchanged and disseminated through widely accessible publications, meetings, etc. In particular, the attention of public opinion must be drawn to success already achieved in the revitalisation of regional or minority languages.

14.EXPERT ADVICE: The Council of Europe, possibly with participation of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL), the OSCE, UNESCO, and other relevant organisations and research institutions, should establish a panel of independent experts whose services would be available to help governments and communities in the selection, design, implementation and evaluation of regional or minority language policies.

15.INDEPENDENT EVALUATION AND MONITORING: All policies should be evaluated at appropriate intervals, and their implementation and effects monitored by independent experts. As a general rule, these independent evaluations should be made widely accessible to the public and the media.

16.DEMOCRATIC DEBATE: States should establish the institutions and structures, for example in the form of regularly held Estates General of minority language policy, which will provide the necessary fora for such discussion. These fora must be open and accessible to individuals and organisations, including those emanating from the minority language communities concerned, and place particular emphasis on ensuring that relatively powerless individuals and groups have unrestricted access to these fora.

17.INTEGRATION IN ACTUAL POLICIES: Authorities, with the support of international organisations, in particular the Council of Europe, should ensure that the inputs from academic research, expert panels, independent evaluators, as well as from open democratic debate on successive stages of the policy process, are efficiently integrated into the actual selection, design, implementation and evaluation of policy measures.