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**Language Endangerment. A case of the  
Kalmyk language**

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## **Abstract**

Language diversity is a crucial aspect of social, cultural, and linguistic heritage. Currently, many languages are at risk of endangerment, which can lead to irreversible consequences. One of these languages is Kalmyk, the only representative of the Mongolian language family in Europe, an official language in the republic of Kalmykia, Russia.

The present thesis has two-fold objectives: 1) to apply sociolinguistic theoretical notions to the situation of the Kalmyk language, and 2) to carry out a small research project to confirm the Kalmyk language's current state and study participants' attitudes towards Kalmyk and towards activities in which that language is used. This thesis is divided into four chapters that report on (i) the language endangerment notion and the current sociolinguistic situation of the Kalmyk language, (ii) language policy and planning in the context of the Kalmyk language, (iii) language reclamation strategies and the role of language identity and attitude in possible language preservation measures, and (iv) the research project findings.

The research project employs a quantitative data collection method, a self-administered questionnaire. The total sample size is 276 participants.

Results suggest that the Kalmyk language is not actively used today. However, the respondents' attitudes to the language and language-related activities regardless of socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, place of residence are generally positive.

This project contributes to the sociolinguistic literature in the context of the Kalmyk language, with new data on its current state and especially on the type of attitudes held by people with different socio-demographic features towards it.

## Introduction

Language endangerment is a topic of increasing interest and has become an essential area of research within the field of linguistics over the past century. There have been a number of case studies addressed to various endangered languages (Crystal, 2000; Tsunoda, 2006; Sallabank, 2013; Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

The broad scope of this topic expansion and its importance attract the attention not just of academia but public organisations and the general public. Many works were dedicated to developing parameters for measuring the levels of endangerment (Fishman, 1991; Lewis & Simons, 2010; Brenzinger et al. 2003). Additionally, a separate branch appeared aimed at language maintenance and reclamation or revitalization. Other essential aspects concerning language endangerment are language policy and planning. The concept of language endangerment is inseparable from language policy and planning fields. In attempts to prevent language loss, various schemes and strategies are designed (Hinton, 2011; Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

The case of the Kalmyk language is an example of a minority language shift to a dominant language, in this case, Russian, that resulted in Kalmyk use decline and, thus, caused the status of Kalmyk as a definitely endangered language (Atlas of the world's languages in danger, 2010). Although there has been some research on the state of the Kalmyk language, there is still a lack of theoretical frameworks regarding its endangered status. It requires more attention from academic, governmental, and community members in order to take measures aimed at preventing potential language loss. Therefore, this project is aimed to contribute to sociolinguistic literature on the Kalmyk language endangerment. There are two main objectives of the present thesis: 1) to apply a theoretical framework on the fundamental concepts of language endangerment to the Kalmyk language, and 2) to carry out a small research project on the current Kalmyk language state and investigate attitudes toward the language and language activities. The design of the conducted research is descriptive, and it addresses the following questions:

- 1) What are the extent and contexts of the Kalmyk language use?
- 2) What attitudes do the participants express towards the Kalmyk language?
- 3) What attitudes do the participants express towards participating in Kalmyk language activities?

The thesis comprises four chapters:

Chapter 1 discusses the notion of language endangerment, various means of its classification, and the potential factors and consequences of this concept (§1.1). A brief historical overview of the Kalmyk language development is also given alongside a short description of its writing system, grammar, phonology, and syntax (§1.2). Furthermore, Chapter 1 describes the sociolinguistic settings in the republic of Kalmykia to consider the Kalmyk language in the context of language endangerment (§1.3).

Chapter 2 observes language policy and planning as crucial aspects of language maintenance and reclamation or revitalization. The brief overview of the language policy notion is represented in §2.1. and its historical development in the Russian Federation §2.1.1. Section §2.1.2 discusses administrative bodies and federal and local laws (acts) responsible for language policy implementation in the Republic of Kalmykia. The section on Language planning includes a short introduction of the concept in §2.2 and overviews its historical development in Russia §2.2.1. Finally, § 2.2.2 describes the language planning implementation in the Republic of Kalmykia, discussing corpus planning, status planning, and acquisition planning.

Chapter 3 presents and discusses endangered language reclamation and concepts of language identity and attitudes in this process and provides the context of the Kalmyk language. The notion of identity and its role in language maintenance and reclamation/or revitalization is observed in §3.1.1. Section §3.1.2 focuses on the topic of language attitudes and their influence on the language reclamation process. The case of the Kalmyk language is described in §3.1.3. Section §3.2 defines language reclamation and reviews its strategies and programs. The measures aimed at the Kalmyk language maintenance are reported in section §3.2.1.

Chapter 4 outlines the research project, reviews its methodology and discusses the results. The methodology section (§4.2) describes the chosen instrument, participants, and survey procedure in detail. Results (§4.3) present the findings related to the Kalmyk language use and respondents' attitudes toward Kalmyk and Kalmyk language activities. The following section (§4.4) is dedicated to commenting on the research questions' findings; it also outlines the potential implications and limitations of this project.

Finally, a summary of the key aspects and findings of the thesis is presented in the conclusion section.

## **Chapter I. Language Endangerment. The Case of the Kalmyk Language**

The present chapter introduces a broad overview of the language endangerment concept and the case of the Kalmyk language in particular.

It is generally recognized that language endangerment is an actual topic to be concerned about. To examine the language endangerment process it is important to reveal what is the notion of this process, the reasons which can cause it and the impacts. The section §1.1, proposes a number of surveys which discuss the levels of endangerment, potential factors and consequences of language endangerment.

Unfortunately, the issue of language loss is widespread: the number of endangered languages is high and its geography is wide. The only representative of Mongolic languages on the territory of Europe, Kalmyk, is also classified as an endangered language. The general information on its historical perspectives and linguistic structure is presented in §1.2. Furthermore, the section §1.3 contextualises sociolinguistic settings in the republic of Kalmykia and considers the factors that influenced the language attrition.

### **1.1. Language Endangerment**

Language is the very thing which makes us human and allows our societies to function, and a massive reduction in the diversity and variety of human languages is also a catastrophe with profound consequences for our cultural and intellectual future.

Bradley & Bradley (2019:1)

Language endangerment is a general notion concerning the state of a language which is exposed to the risk of becoming extinct due to loss of speakers, domains and functions. Endangered languages come to be used progressively less and less throughout the community, with some of the functions they originally performed either dying out or gradually being supplanted by other languages (Crystal, 2000).

The issue of language endangerment is not novel, languages were lost throughout human history. However, there is a consensus among linguists that today there is a radical decline in the number of languages (Crystal, 2000; Tsunoda, 2006; Brenzinger, 2007; Krauss, 2007; Lewis and Simons, 2014; Bradley and Bradley, 2019). Rehg and Campbell (2018) put in

evidence the recent acceleration in the language loss rate: “Of all the millennia in which languages could have disappeared, two thirds of these extinct language families became extinct in only the last sixty years” (p.4).

There is no relevant information on the exact number of endangered languages in the world, but they are in every continent, except Antarctica (Thomason, 2015). Ethnologue, a catalogue of the known languages in the world, reports that in 2021 at least 40% of the estimated 7,139 languages spoken in the world are endangered. However, that statistic is fluctuant, as languages and knowledge about languages undergo constant change, and therefore, the overall number of living languages in the world cannot be known precisely (Eberhard et al., 2021). Another complication to estimate the number of existing languages is distinction between languages and dialects. As an example, Bradley and Bradley (2019) points to the case of Burma, where the surveys of existing languages and dialects have not yet been completed and additional languages are still being located.

Actually, language endangerment is a highly topical and serious public concern worldwide, and, as Himmelmann (2008) notes, “language endangerment became an active field of research in linguistics” (p.340). Investigating the issue of language endangerment is a continuing concern within the linguistic society.

The first serious discussions and analyses of language endangerment emerged at the beginning of the 1990s. Around that time it was starting to become clear that the problem of language loss demands global attention and urgent measures: Krauss (1992) estimated that 90 per cent of the world’s languages would be at the edge of extinction or gone by 2100. According to more optimistic estimates such as Nettle and Romaine (2000), and Crystal(200) , ‘only’ 50% of the world’s languages would be lost.

Any attempt to give a definition of language endangerment and to categorise or scale the levels of endangerment is highly problematic.

As noted by Tsunoda (2006), language endangerment is a matter of degrees, and categorising languages according to the degrees of viability or endangerment is useful to survey the issue. There are different scales to categorise the degrees of language endangerment. However, endangerment is a continuum and it is extremely difficult to evaluate the state of language vitality (Bradley and Bradley, 2019). The intersection and interaction of many factors makes the classification of language endangerment a high complex task. One of the first formal



classifications of language endangerment, Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), was devised by the American sociologist of language Joshua Fishman in 1991. According to Fishman's GIDS, intergenerational transmission is pivotal in the maintenance of a language, and societal and institutional choices are main factors influencing the value that the community bestows on the language.

The GIDS is an eight-point scale, shown in Table 1.1 (Lewis & Simons, 2010)

*Table 1.1 Fishman GIDS*

Level	Description
level 1	The language is used in education, work, mass media and government at the nationwide level.
level 2	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services.
level 3	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders
level 4	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education.
level 5	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community.
level 6	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language
level 7	The childbearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children
level 8	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.

The GIDS is based on the use of a language in different domains (social spaces in which

languages are used). The scale consists of 8 levels which characterise the extent to which a language is endangered from 1 (fairly safe) to 8 (worst case). The levels present language status, broader domains of language use, effective language use in the community, literacy, and generational distribution of speakers. Although the scale is often used for plotting the status of a language, it has been criticised for the narrow range of aspects for the status evaluation of language that is taken into account. Bradley and Bradley (2019), for example, points out that GIDS is nonlinear because the levels presented in the scale do not combine. The scale implies the fact that if a language is used at the definite level, it means that it is used at all numerically higher levels: e.g., Level 2 implies Levels 3-8. However, a language can be used for local and regional mass media (Level 2), but it is not used orally in the community (Level 5), thus, this schematic approach does not evaluate the real state of a language in a community.

The same criticism can also be addressed to EGIDS, an adaptation and expansion of Fishman’s GIDS (1991), which was proposed by Lewis and Simons (2010). The EGIDS is a thirteen-point scale from levels 0 to 10, with two subcategories in levels 6 and 8 which allow for a finer-grained description of the intergenerational transmission conditions in presence of language shift (or revitalization) (Lewis & Simons, 2010). Like Fishman’s GIDS, the EGIDS measures a language's status in terms of endangerment or development, with a focus on various aspects of vitality at different levels. According to Bradley and Bradley (2019) the EGIDS has the same problem as the GIDS: nonlinearity due to combining status, domain and transmission characteristics (Bradley and Bradley, 2019).

*Table 1.2 Lewis & Simons EGIDS language endangerment scale*

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is used internationally for a broad range of functions
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media and government at the nationwide level

2	Regional	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services
3	Trade	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders
4	Educational	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education.
5	Written	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community.
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language
6b	Threatened	The language is used orally by all generations but only some of the childbearing generation are transmitting it to their children
7	Shifting	The childbearing generation knows the language well enough to use it among themselves but none are transmitting it to their children
8a	Moribund	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation
8b	Nearly extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language

9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes

An alternative framework for assessing the status and vitality of languages in danger was proposed by a UNESCO panel of experts in 2003 (Brenzinger et al. 2003). The UNESCO framework establishes six degrees of language vitality as shown by Table 1.3 with regard to Intergenerational language Transmission. The levels of endangerment are based on nine factors according to which the degree is determined (Moseley, 2012):

- Absolute number of speakers
- Intergenerational language transmission
- Proportion of speakers within the total population
- Community members' attitudes toward their own language
- Availability of materials for language education and literacy
- Shifts in domains of language use
- Response to new domains and media
- Type and quality of documentation
- Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies, including official status and use

*Table 1.3 Endangerment scale of UNESCO (2003) (Intergenerational language Transmission)*

Degree of endangerment	Intergenerational language transmission
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Safe	Language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted
Vulnerable	Most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home)
Definitely endangered	Children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home
Severely endangered	The language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves
Critically endangered	The youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently
Extinct	There are no speakers left

A major criticism of this framework is the absence of language revitalization measures in its structure; it focuses on endangerment rather than on measures to be undertaken to revitalise or revive languages (Sallabank, 2011).

The EICat project was designed as a platform consisting of materials based on crowdsourced information: the goal of the project is to foster the exchange of knowledge on endangered languages (Lee, 2018). EICat devised the Language Endangerment Index (LEI) to evaluate the level of language endangerment (see Table 1.4). LEI includes four factors: intergenerational transmission, absolute number of speakers, speaker number trends, and domains of use. Each factor is measured from 0 (safe) to 5 (critically endangered).

*Table 1.4 Language Endangerment Index (LEI)*

Factor\Scale	Critically endangered	Severely endangered	Endangered	Threatened	Vulnerable	Safe
	5	4	3	2	1	0

Intergenerational transmission	There are only a few elderly speakers	Many of the grandparent generation speak the language, but the younger people generally do not.	Some adults in the community are speakers, but the language is not spoken by children.	Most adults in the community are speakers, but children generally are not.	Most adults and some children are speakers.	All members of the community, including children, speak the language.
Absolute number of speakers	1–9 speakers	10–99 speakers	100–999 speakers	1000–9999 speakers	10,000–99,999 speakers	≥
Speaker number trends	A small percentage of the community speaks the language, and speaker numbers are decreasing very rapidly.	Less than half of the community speaks the language, and speaker numbers are decreasing at an accelerated pace.	Only about half of community members speak the language. Speaker numbers are decreasing steadily, but not at an accelerated pace.	A majority of community members speak the language. Speaker numbers are gradually decreasing.	Most members of the community speak the language. Speaker numbers may be decreasing, but very slowly.	Almost all community members speak the language, and speaker numbers are stable or increasing.

Domains of use	Used only in a few very specific domains, such as in ceremonies, songs, prayer, proverbs, or certain limited domestic activities.	Used mainly just in the home and/or with family, and may not be the primary language even in these domains for many community members.	Used mainly just in the home and/or with family, but remains the primary language of these domains for many community members.	Used in some nonofficial domains along with other languages, and remains the primary language used in the home for many community members.	Used in most domains except for official ones such as government, mass media, education, etc.	Used in most domains, including official ones such as government, mass media, education, etc.
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One key feature of ELCat is the quantitative measure that can be used to understand the level of endangerment of any language (Lee and Van Way, 2016).

### 1.1.1 Causes of Language Endangerment

Investigating the topic of language endangerment is important to understand the factors that cause this process. It is widely agreed that there is usually a combination of causes which lead to language endangerment and loss. As Dorian claims “the search for a single cause which inevitably leads to language death is futile” (1981; cited in Crystal, 2000, p. 70). There are numerous factors that can threaten a language, and linguists classify them in different manners, although the classifications often overlap and include common notions.

For example, Brenzinger and de Graff (2006) distinguish external and internal forces which cause language endangerment. Military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation are referred to external factors, while internal forces include negative attitudes towards a language and a general decline of group identity.

Campbell and Rehg (2018) in their turn suggest the following list of factors:

- 1) Economic factors: globalisation, poor economic situations, migration and migrant labour,

resettlement.

2) Political, geographical, demographic and sociocultural factors: discrimination, repressions, ethnic identity, official language policies, lack of revitalization and revival efforts, number and concentration of speakers, war.

3) Lack of institutional support: absence of institutional support as represented in the roles the language plays in the education, government, church, the media, etc. Lack of official recognition of the language.

4) Aspects of language, language use and language choice: influences from language contact, code-switching, different kinds of multilingualism, language instruction, restricted degree of competence in the minority language.

5) Subjective attitudes (motivations): attitudes of the speakers toward the languages under threat and toward the official language(s) and the dominant languages that surround them; attitudes of members of the mainstream society toward minorities groups and their languages, the relative prestige of the language (as a cultural symbol), the stigmatisation of a local language.

Austin and Sallabank (2011) (based on Crystal, 2000; Nettle and Romaine, 2007; Grenoble, 2011) propose another classification of language endangerment causes:

1) Natural catastrophes, famine, disease

2) War and genocide

3) Overt repression, often in the name of “national unity” or assimilation

4) Cultural/ political/economic dominance, plus historical and attitudinal factors

As it can be seen, the factors are overlapping and repeating: all three classifications mention economics, politics, education, and culture as one of the main causes for language endangerment. However, it is difficult to indicate the exact factors that cause language endangerment in specific situations. In fact, apart from natural cataclysms which lead to significant reduction of population such as the earthquake in 1990 in Malol, Papua New Guinea, the process of language endangerment is gradual and involves contexture of different factors. Hence, it is imperceptible and may result in drastic effects: overdue consciousness that a language is endangered. And that is the chief problem that a community may face with



language decline (Crystal, 2000).

Language endangerment is a consequence of factors and events, this process usually requires time, and if a community reacts before it is too late, this process can be stopped and language loss can be prevented.

### **1.1.2 Consequences of Language Endangerment**

Language endangerment demands attention as it may result in serious consequences such as language extinction. It is undeniable that language loss is a severe loss not only for linguistic diversity but for the community first off. As Tsunoda (2006) notes, there are two views on language endangerment: the view from the community, or local view, and the view from outsiders (such as language activists and linguists), or global view.

In fact, language loss affects communities and outsiders in different ways: for a community it means personal loss of non-material and spiritual heritage, loss of cultural connection with the ancestors and loss of identity determination. As for the outsiders, language loss is considered to be a loss of scientific resources, such as material for linguistic research.

Crystal (2000) lists 5 reasons to be concerned about language loss. The first reason is diversity, the need to maintain linguistic diversity, the more varied it is the richer humankind is. The second one is identity, as “Language is the primary index, or symbol, or register of identity”. The third reason is history, because language is living memories, a link with the past. The fourth reason is human knowledge, as languages contribute to the sum of human knowledge. The final reason is linguistic interest, it relates to the importance of cross linguistic comparison, to have a fuller understanding of language relationships.

In the introduction of their book entitled “Endangered languages”, Austin and Sallabank (2011) identify the following aspects to concern about: linguistic science, as languages are a valuable source of information for linguistics; cultural heritage, as languages are a means of transmitting culture; language and ecology, as a number of studies consider that there are parallels and correlations between linguistic diversity and biological diversity (e.g. Sutherland, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002); language and identity, as language can be thought of “as one of the ways in which people construct their identities” (p.9); linguistic human rights, as using one’s own language should be a basic right; education policy, as it is important to guarantee equal access to education in both languages in a bilingual environment.

Krauss (2007) provides the following arguments to prevent language loss.

Firstly, the ethical argument that refers to communities' human rights. Secondly, the scientific argument that includes three levels: the abstract level, which means that every language is a "unique interpretation of universal human experience" (p.15); the informational level, which defines language as a primary source of information about its speakers; the linguistic level, which refers to the importance of languages for linguistic science. And finally, the biological argument which according to Krauss (2007) is probably the most important of all. There are two components of this argument: biological/logosphere and biological/aesthetic. The biological/logosphere component relates to the comparison between linguistic and biological diversity in terms of system structure and Krauss here introduces the term "logosphere" which means the ecosystem of linguistic diversity. The biological/aesthetic component denotes the artistic expression of language both verbal and nonverbal.

The points of view about language endangerment listed above are partially overlapping or deliver similar ideas, but all of them share the idea that there is a strong need to preserve languages. For both communities and science, language endangerment is a serious matter to be concerned about, and as such it is important to be aware of its potential impacts.

## **1.2 The Kalmyk language**

The Kalmyk language (*xalyng keln*) is the official language of the Republic of Kalmykia, a sovereign entity within the Russian Federation. In the ethnic and linguistic sense, Kalmyks are descendants of the Oirat tribes (mostly Torgud and Derbet) who migrated westwards from their original homeland, Dzungaria, in the second half of the 16th century (Bläsing, 2003).

"Oirat" (with "Kalmyk") is a term denoting a well-defined cultural identity based on linguistic, historical, and cultural coherence, no matter where people claiming it live. The formation of the Kalmyk language as a separate branch of Western Mongolic started after the migration, where preserving the original Oirat character, the language underwent a strong influence from surrounding Turkic and Russian languages (Birtalan, 2020).

Maksimov (2008) considers two different views on the causes of migration: the first one is connected to the assumption of restoring the Genghis Khan Empire and launching its expansion. According to the second perspective, the migration was related to inner political

fighters and economic reasons. In support of the second theory Maksimov (2008) points at the historical context of events: amidst the major wars between eastern and western Mongols (Oirats) in this period, any joint policy of the Mongolian Empire was impossible, which prevented the acceptance of the first perception. Another argument advanced in favour of the second theory is Oirat feudal division and internecine dissension in the mid to late 16th century. Thus, a part of Oirats who underwent internal political pressure was forced to leave Dzungaria for the Russian state. In the early second half of the 17th century, after a long process of establishing contacts and interaction with Russian authorities, the Kalmyks settled along the Lower Volga and the Caspian Sea, submitting to the Russian protectorate. In 1661, after signing a final treaty, according to which the Kalmyk people were given the territory and the right of free trade in return for performing military services on behalf of the Russian state, the formation of the Kalmyk Khanate was officially formalised. Kalmyk cavalry had become an important part of Russian wars and in protecting the southern boundaries. Despite the apparent strength and prestige of the khanate, it disappeared from Russia in 1771.

In the first half of the 18th century, the political situation within the khanate became strained, and fights for power caused instability and tension in the Kalmyk society. As mentioned by Maksimov (2008), the tumultuous period was advantageous for the tsarist authorities to interfere with the internal affairs of the khanate. The khanate started to lose its self-government and was submitted to the restrictive tsarist policy, becoming a part of the general administrative system in Russia. The policy pursued by the tsarist administration was aimed at the restriction of the political and social order in the khanate by distributing the khanate's territories to cossacks and Germans, making Kalmyks adopt orthodoxy, frequent involvement of human and material resources for military needs, and apparent influence on the internal affair resulted in increasing disillusionment among Kalmyk people. Thus, the oppression of the tsarist administration forced the more significant part of the Kalmyk population to return in 1771 to Dzungaria, where they re-entered the composition of the rest of the Oirat. (Bläsing, 2003).

After the exodus of the major part of the Kalmyk population, Catherine the Great, in October 1771, the decree on the abolishment of the Kalmyk khanate and the title of khan itself was issued. The governmental powers over the remaining Kalmyks were passed to the governor of Astrakhan, and the tsarist administration became an inalienable and decisive part of governing the Kalmyk people. The remaining Kalmyk population has been isolated from the rest of the Oirats, and from this point, their lifestyle and language were influenced by the

Russian environment and interconnected (Guchinova, 2013).

### **1.2.1 The Historical Overview of the Standard Kalmyk Language**

Pavlov D.A., a prominent Kalmyk scientist, introduced the historical development of the standard Kalmyk language. Pavlov (1987) divides the language development into three periods:

1. The Early period, termed Common Mongolic, lasted till the end of the XIV century.

There is no data on the early Common Mongolic period. The language of Oirats, ethnic ancestors of the Kalmyks, in this period represented one of the Mongolic dialects. Oirats used a common Mongolian writing system, Hudma bichig (Bitkeeva, 2006).

2. The Middle period comprises two stages:
  - a. From the end of the XIVth century to the middle of the XVII century.

Throughout the stage in 1368, after the collapse of the Mongolian Empire, the Dzungar khanate was formed by the Oirat confederation, and the Oirat separate language attained its form. One of the most prominent characteristics of this stage is the development of the Oirat written linguistic unity. The Oirat monk Zaya Pandita (1599–1662) created in 1648 “clear script”, or “Todo bičig” (see Appendix A), a vertical writing based on the old Mongolian alphabet. Pavlov (1987) comments the main task of the new alphabet was to correct the deficiency of the Mongolian alphabet, such as distinguishing all sounds and to ease the transcribing texts from Tibetan and Sanskrit. As Bitkeeva (2006) notes, “Todo bičig” became a powerful tool for the development of the literary language. Extensive translations from Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Mongolian conducted by Zaya Pandita and his students enriched and extended the Kalmyk vocabulary. The language developed, became more expressive, and extended. The new writing was used for translations, writing literary works, study materials, and paperwork.

- b. From the mid XVIIth century to October 1917, XXth century.

Pavlov (1987) labels this stage as the nascent stage of the Kalmyk nation and the Kalmyk literary language development in written and spoken form. In this period, the name “Kalmyk” was recognized by the Kalmyks themselves as an ethnonym, which defines their self-identification (Darvaev, 2003).

The Kalmyk language was actively used in different spheres (paperwork, education, science, spiritual culture); it was observed and studied by many scientists: Kotvich, Bobrovnikov, Ramstedt, Popov, Vladimirtsov, etc. The first general descriptions and documentations of the language appeared at this time and played a crucial role in preserving oral, folklore, religious, and cultural written items (Bitkeeva, 2006)

3) The New period started in 1917 and lasted till the beginning of the 1990s.

Pavlov (1987) distinguishes two stages of the New period:

a) The first stage lasted from October 1917 - the mid-1950s.

The Great revolution in 1917 profoundly changed the course of Russian history and, as a result, the course of minor people on this territory: one of the most prominent outcomes became the right to self-determination on their own territories (Guchinova, 2013). Pavlov (1987) points out that the process of consolidation and formation of the Kalmyk nation was launched with the formation of the Kalmyk autonomous oblast' in 1920 and later, in 1937, its transformation into an autonomous soviet republic as an administrative unit. Thus, this period can be labelled as the "national period". Along with the social changes, there were changes in the language, and there was a need to narrow the gap between the old writing system and live speech.

The written language was abundant with archaisms, mongolisms, and obsolete grammatical forms, and it was a bookish language inaccessible to many Kalmyks. Therefore, the language was subjected to reforms several times. In 1924 the Todo bičig was switched to the Cyrillic alphabet with the addition of six Kalmyk letters:  $\Theta$ ,  $\Theta$ ,  $Y$ ,  $H$ ,  $h$ ,  $\mathcal{K}$ . From this moment, the graphic representation of Kalmyk was unified with Russian, which facilitated the study of the mentioned languages. This reform was aimed at literacy promotion among the population. Nevertheless, due to the Soviet Latinisation campaign in 1930, the Cyrillic alphabet was changed to the Latin one, and in this form, the alphabet existed until 1938. During this period, study books, periodicals, books, and pamphlets were printed in the Latin alphabet. However, the alphabet was reformed again and was replaced by the Cyrillic one in 1938 (see Appendix B). A number of inappropriate writing reforms led not to the progress but to the language development regress and reflected negatively in its functionality (Pavlov, 1987). However, the new language standards did not have time to be consolidated in practice due to Stalin's repressions; the Kalmyk autonomy was abolished in 1943, and the Kalmyk people were exiled to Siberia for 13 years. They were resettled in different parts and thus did not have an

opportunity to keep cultural and linguistic ties. The forced deportation drastically changed all the spheres of the Kalmyk people's life, and after the rehabilitation of 1956, it has been still taking a long time to restore the lost (Bitkeeva, 2006).

- b) The second stage of the New period is the mid-1950s - beginning of the 90s XX century.

The second stage is characterised by the completion of the formation of the new standard Kalmyk language, stabilisation, and further development of its norms (Pavlov, 1987). As this stage came in the post-deportation period, it started with the reconstruction of Kalmyk national schools. Despite opening schools where education was conducted in Kalmyk, the number of speakers gradually decreased because of rapidly increasing bilingualism. The Russian language became more functional due to Soviet politics to form a “soviet person”, which negatively reflected the cultural and linguistic state of ethnic minorities (Bitkeeva, 2006, p.52). Nevertheless, at the same time, a significant contribution was made to the studying structures and systems of kalmyk. Extensive research on syntax, morphology, writing, lexicon, and phonology was published by Kalmyk linguists: Pavlov D.A. (1963, 1968) on phonology, Badmaev B. B. (1966) on morphology, Bitkeev P. C. et al. (1983) on phonology and morphology, as well as Ochirov U. U.(1964), Pyurbeev G. C. (1977–9) on syntax, and many more.

Bitkeeva (2006) observes that today, Kalmyk’s standard language has established literary norms, outlined in orthographic rules, developing stylistic and terminological systems, and a well-developed inner structure.

### **1.2.2 Modern Standard Kalmyk language**

#### *Phonology*

Birtalan (2020) argues that Kalmyk’s sets of vowels and consonants can be traced back to a standard Mongolic system. The main differences concern the development of the affricates, the voiceless velars, the diphthongs, the degree of palatalization, and the reduction of the non-initial syllables.

The phonemic composition of the modern standard Kalmyk language consists of 18 vowels and 28 consonants displayed by the 39 letters of the Kalmyk alphabet (Pyurbeev, 1997). The presence of long counterparts of short vowels explains a relatively high number of vowel phonemes.

The vowel system is composed of 18 short and long phonemes and the reduced schwa /ə/ (Table 1.5). There are no diphthongs, long vowels replaced them, and all the vowel sounds on the basis of articulation are monophthongs. Like many other Mongolic languages, the Kalmyk features tongue-root vowel harmony, which is assumed to distinguish clearly between tense and lax vowels. The harmonic vowel pairs: /a/~ /æ/, /o/~ /ø/, /u/~ /y/, [ɪ]~[ɨ] (allophonic pair) (Birtalan, 2020).

As it was mentioned above, all vowels have long (or doubled) counterparts: aa ää oo öö ee uu üü ii. Vowel length is used for the semantic differentiation of words. The opposition between short and long vowels is used in the language as a phonetic feature; in spelling, it is valid only for the initial syllable. (Bläsing, 2003). In present-day orthography, long vowels are represented just in the initial syllable by doubled letters. In contrast, short vowels of the first syllables and long vowels of non-initial syllables are represented by single letters. Short vowels of non-initial syllables and so-called reduced vowels are not indicated at all, e.g./odin/‘star’, /adamtfə/‘tomato’ (Pavlov, 1968). Some of the Kalmyk vowel phonemes are able to perform independently as lexical units, e.g./u/‘wide’, /ə/‘sound’.

Table 1.5 Vowels

height	backness				
	front		central	back	
	unrounded	rounded	unrounded	unrounded	rounded
	ed			d	d
high	i i:	y y:	ɨ		u u:
mid	e ee	ø ø:	ə		o o:
low	æ æ:			a a:	

Table 1.6 Consonants

manner of articulation			place of articulation					
			bilabial	labiodental	coronal	palatal	velar	uvular
sonorant	stops	voiced	b		d, dʲ		g	
		voiceless	p		t, tʲ		k	
	fricatives	voiced		w	ʁ, tʃ̣	j		ɣ
		voiceless		f	s ʃ stʃ̣			x
obstruent	affricates	voiced		tʃ, tʃ̣	ʈʂ			
		voiceless						
	nasal laterals trill		m		n nʲ		ŋ	
					l lʲ			
				r				

The consonants of the Kalmyk language differ according to the following properties: 1) involvement of noise and sonority, 2) place of articulation, 3) manner of articulation 4) presence or absence of softness (Table 1.6).

The Kalmyk consonant system consists of 28 phonemes, 25 phonemes originally Kalmyk b, p, m, w, t, tʲ, d, dʲ, tʃ, tʃ̣, ʈʂ, n, nʲ, s, ʃ, ʁ, l, lʲ, r, j, k, g, ŋ, x, ɣ and three phonemes which entered from the Russian tʃ̣, f, stʃ̣ which are used only in loanwords. Unlike vowels, Kalmyk consonants can not act as separate words; they correspond to a distinct part of a syllable (Pavlov, 1968).

*Morphology: Word structures*



Like other Mongolic languages, Kalmyk has an agglutinative structure: word formation occurs due to adding suffixes to the word stem. The system of suffixes in the Kalmyk language is rich and productive both for nouns and verbs (Pyurbeev, 1997).

Ilishkin and Muniev (1997), illustrating the morphological composition, state that word structures can be divided into primary, derivative, and complex. Primary words are words that are composed only of the root and in which affixes cannot be distinguished, e.g., *yar* 'hand', *ɣaxa* 'pig'. Derivative words are formed by attaching various affixes to the stem or root, e.g., *nom-t-nr* 'scientists', *kədl-mʃ* 'work', *kədl-mʃ-tʃnr* 'workers'. Complex words in the Kalmyk language are presented in three structural groups: solid, compound, and blended words.

1. Solid words are formed by combining two stems into one lexical unit: *en ødr* became *endr* 'this day', *irʃ uga* became *irʃgo* 'will not come'.
2. Compound words according to structural and derivational features are divided into:
  - Compounds are formed by doubling two different stems: *ek-ētšk* 'parents', *ax-du* 'brothers'.
  - Compound-repeated, formed by reduplication of words: *dəkn-dəkn* 'again and again', *əɾə- əɾə* 'barely barely'. This group of words includes rhymed repetitions reduplications: *ʃə-mə* 'tea and the like'.
3. Blended words are represented by Russian loanwords, e.g., *kolxoz* 'collective farm', *Komsomol* 'Komsomol'.

### *Lexicon*

The Kalmyk language in different periods of history was susceptible to external influences. Its lexicon was enriched and expanded from the interaction with various languages.

The basic lexicon of Kalmyk coincides with other Mongolic languages (Birtalan, 2020). Owing to the translation of Buddhist religious texts, there are a large number of Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Uighur borrowings in Kalmyk, e.g., *nom* 'teaching', *degr* 'book', *lam* 'lama'. Also, linguistic and cultural contacts between Chinese and Oirats can be traced in the Kalmyk vocabulary, e.g., *nojn* 'feudal lord', *ʃaazŋ* 'porcelain' (Bläsing, 2003).

Historically, due to the prolonged and close contact with Turkic peoples, there are many pure Turkisms in the language, e.g., *bilg* 'gift', *terz* 'window'. Also, occasional Persian words

entered the language via the intermediation of Turkic, e.g., bars ‘tiger’, bold ‘steel’. The modern standard Kalmyk has a strong impact from Russian, resulting in many Russian loanwords (Pyrbeev, 1997).

### *Syntax*

As in all Mongolic languages, the basic sentence structure of the Kalmyk language is SOV. However, changing the communicative setting leads to the change in sentence order and its structure, the S and O positions. For example, bakʃə namagə duudv ‘Teacher called me’ and namagə bakʃə duudv ‘Me teacher called’ (Pyrbeev, 1997).

Sentences can be divided into two categories according to structure - simple and compound. According to their types, simple sentences can be declarative, imperative, exclamatory, and interrogative. All the types have the same word order but differ by intonation, e.g., ʒkə ɪryv. ‘mom arrived.’, ʒkə ɪryv! ‘mom arrived!’, ʒkə ɪryv? ‘Did mom arrive?’ (Ilishkin and Muniev, 1997).

There are several markers to express negation in sentences described by Pyrbeev (1997). Postpositional particles: uga, -go. -sh ‘not’ and a negative word biʃə ‘not’, e.g., en degtr mini biʃə ‘this book is not mine’. Moreover, prepositional particles of negation esə ‘not’ and of prohibition, which is used in imperative form bitʃə, bitʃkə ‘not’, e.g., bitʃə jov! ‘Don’t go!’

Compound sentences in Kalmyk include coordinated sentences and complex sentences. Coordinated sentences are composed of two equal clauses: salʲkyn kədlvə, xur ɔrvə ‘wind blew, it started raining’. Complex sentences are made up of main and subordinate clauses: xamayac yylin ɣarna, mendəs xur orna ‘where the clouds come from, where the rain comes from’ (Ilishkin & Muniev, 1997).

### **1.3 The Kalmyk Language in the Context of Language Endangerment**

To describe the current Kalmyk language situation, it is necessary to provide the context of its existence. The sociolinguistic setting can be represented in the following aspects: demography, geography, politics, and policy.

Kalmyk language speakers live predominantly on the territory of Russia, the republic of Kalmykia, but there are also smaller groups who live in China (Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region of China) and Kyrgyzstan (Issyk Kōl region). Separately, it is possible to note the existence of Kalmyk migrant groups or diasporas; the larger ones are in the USA and Western

Europe (Bitkeeva, 2006). Still, the only region where the Kalmyk language is officially recognized is the Republic of Kalmykia. There are two main dialects in Kalmyk: Torghut and Dörbet, and a newly formed dialect Buzawa, a mixture of Torghut and Dörbet. The distinguished dialects are named after the main sub-ethnic groups of the Kalmyks. Torghut is mainly spoken in the eastern part of the republic, Dörbet is widespread in the north of modern Kalmykia, and the Buzawa dialect is spoken by the Kalmyks who settled in the Don steppes. Bläsing (2003) notes that the dialects are mutually intelligible as dialectal differences are minor.

From a demographic perspective, Kalmykia is a multinational republic consisting of over 30 nationalities, according to the 2010 census. Its total population numbers are 289,481: 57,4% of them are Kalmyks, and 42,6 % are other nationalities, indicating the heterogeneity of speakers in the republic. On the entire territory of the Russian Federation, the number of Kalmyks is 183,372, and 80,546 Kalmyk speakers. However, the data on actual speakers can be inaccurate, Bradley and Bradley (2019, p.121) comment that ‘census statistics on ethnic background are often based on self-report of ethnic identity, those who do report a particular ethnic identity may also claim to speak the group’s language, even if they do not’.

As for the language policy, Mikhhalchenko (2021) defines the language situation in the republic of Kalmykia as a two-component model characterised by the presence of two dominant official languages: Russian and Kalmyk. According to the law “On languages in the Kalmyk ASSR - Khalmhg Tangch”, in 1991, the Kalmyk and Russian languages were proclaimed state languages of the republic. The law guarantees the free development and use of the languages. Also, it determines the legal status of the state languages of the republic, the rights of citizens to use the languages, and their functional distribution in public life.

Although the statuses of the languages are legally equal, Kalmyk is functionally inferior to Russian. Nevertheless, the language policy pursued in the republic implies concern for the preservation and development of the language. Its revival, preservation, development, and expansion of the environment of use are the priority tasks of the authorities of the Republic of Kalmykia (Bitkeeva, 2006).

Today, despite the official status and support for the Kalmyk language, the number of Kalmyk speakers is decreasing. According to the UNESCO Atlas of Endangered Languages (2010), the language is defined as definitely endangered.

As it was mentioned before, there are many various factors that cause language endangerment (Bradley & Bradley, 2019; Crystal, 2000; Grenoble, 2011). Language endangerment is a long and complex process that is caused by overlapping various factors. The most common factors are generally accepted to be political, economic, cultural, and attitudinal. The combination and permanence of the factors influence the level of language development and its vitality. Hence, the current state of the Kalmyk language is the result of the consequences of different factors and events. The major factors related to the Kalmyk language endangerment will be outlined below.

Demographic loss is one of the decisive factors which affected the Kalmyk language state. In the historical context, the first significant demographic crisis was the exodus of a substantial part of the Kalmyk population in 1771 back to their original homeland, Dzungaria. Although there are no precise statistics on the number of migrated Kalmyks, there is a consensus that it was a larger part, so for example, Darvaev (2003) speaks of two-thirds of the population. Thus, by the end of the XVIII century, the number of Kalmyks in Russia decreased dramatically. The impact of the October revolution in 1917 and the subsequent civil war in Russia was no less. Kalmyk society was divided: part of the Kalmyks (mainly, the Kalmyks of the Don Army) took the side of the White Army and, after its defeat, were forced to exile. In addition to massive waves of emigration, poor living conditions and famine of the 30s resulted in high mortality and low birth rates in the XIX - early XX centuries had a negative impact on the reproduction of the Kalmyks. According to the results of the All-Union Census of 1939 quantitative composition of the population of the Kalmyk ASSR was 220,684 (107 315 of them are Kalmyks). On the whole country territory there were 134,402 (Ediev, 2003).

From the beginning of World War II, about 26000 Kalmyks were mobilised for the Soviet army. Nevertheless, the Kalmyk people were charged with unfounded accusations of collaboration with fascists. The mass operation on the deportation of the Kalmyks, codenamed "Ulusy", was subjected to all residents of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, which was abolished on December 27, 1943, Kalmyks by nationality, regardless of their official position. The operation was carried out on 28-31 December 1943 and resulted in the forced relocation of more than 93000 people to Siberia. The deportation was carried out in the most difficult conditions: there were cattle wagons unsuitable for transporting people in severe winter. It took more than two weeks with no medical care, hot meals, and basic hygiene to arrive at the aimed special settlements. Socio-cultural and labour conditions in places of special settlements, moral and psychological shock, a sharp climate

change seriously affected the state of health of the deported Kalmyk population (Maksimov, 2013).

Meanwhile, according to the Decree on January 8, 1944, Kalmyk soldiers who were serving in the army were moved from the front to the Shirokovsky Forced Labour Camp (Shiroklag), the construction of hydropower stations. However, part of Kalmyks remained in the military units of the Red Army and continued to serve until the end of the war in May 1945. Difficult working conditions, poor nutrition, and harsh climate led to high morbidity and mortality among Kalmyks in Shiroklag. Beyond the physical suffering, Kalmyks suffered from psychological humiliation, which did not contribute to the maintenance of moral strength. Because of inaccurate documentation records, there is no exact data on the repressed Kalmyks in the camp. However, according to N. K. Sharapov, who worked in the Shiroklag department of statistics, the total number of Kalmyks was 3600, and the mortality rate in the first year was 911. The demobilisation of the Kalmyks from Shiroklag was completed only in September 1945, likewise the demobilised front soldiers, most of them were sent to the special settlements their families lived in. (Ochirov & Vorobyova, 2020).

During the deportation period, Kalmyks were actually deprived of freedom and civil rights and were declared enemies of Soviet society. As Guchinova (2013) writes:

The ethnonym Kalmyk was forbidden in social discourse. Ethnicity took on a stigmatised character. A stigmatised ethnicity, in association, with a phenotype foreign to the dominant society, induced the ethnic group, both at the time of their deprivations and also in the post-traumatic period, to reject the clearest markers of their ethnic culture: personal names, the language of social intercourse, demonstrations of religiosity and national festivals (p. 886).

Before the deportation, the majority of Kalmyks were monolingual or had minimal knowledge of Russian. However, after thirteen years of living in dispersed settlements over different territories without regular language contact, Kalmuks were obliged to use the Russian language, thus weakening the mother tongue state. Guchinova (2013) mentions that although Kalmyk was used at the household level, Russian was a language of survival and partially the language of social rehabilitation. Also not rarely Kalmyk children who were orphaned during this period were brought up in the local orphanages and consequently forgot their mother tongue and started to speak Russian. So, for example, when my grandmother was 10, she lost her family on the way to Siberia and was sent to an orphanage. She did not

speak or understand Russian, but when she came back to Kalmykia, she did not speak Kalmyk anymore.

The Siberian exile lasted 13 years. The Kalmyk people were rehabilitated in 1956 and were allowed to return to their home region in 1957. By this time, Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast was established, and in 1958, officially regained its name as Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Ediev (2003) cites data from the 1959 census: 64,882 Kalmyks in the territory of the republic and 106,066 in the entire territory of the USSR. The consequences of the deportation had a long-lasting impact on the Kalmyk people and language.

Also, the national state policy conducted by the Soviet regime significantly impacted the Kalmyk language: the Soviet literacy campaign which resulted in unambiguous Russification, gradual narrowing of the domains of the Kalmyk language use, and finally, a change of attitude about the language (Esenova, 2015).

Grenoble (2017) claims that the early Soviet language policy was aimed at illiteracy eviction by providing indigenous language instruction in schools, which was not reached. However, educational practices promoted transitional bilingualism that fostered the acquisition of Russian. In accordance with the stated policy, Kalmyk was used as a language of instruction in primary schools in the 1920–1930s. However, constant orthography changes and, therefore, changes in study materials interfered with the learning process. The following war and deportation of the Kalmyk population to Siberia discontinued the teaching of Kalmyk in schools. The return of the language to the education system happened with the return of the people to the home: from 1958 to 1962, Kalmyk was a language of instruction in rural schools and was taught as a subject in secondary school. Later, Russian became the only language of instruction, and despite the closure of the elementary school in Kalmyk, the language was preserved in the school curriculum (Baranova, 2020).

The Soviet authorities promoted the policy of Russification, i.e., active implementation of the Russian language into official life and all spheres of social life. Thus, national languages gradually cede the domains of use, developing mostly in cultural and family domains. The growing prestige of Russian resulted in the development of bilingualism, mostly asymmetrical (Hogan-Brun & Melnyk, 2012). The case of the Kalmyk language is a good illustration of the conducted policy.

The presence of the Kalmyk language in cultural domains also underwent changes through

the Soviet period. Kalmyks have a rich ethnocultural heritage, it is represented by various kinds of folk arts: oral folklore, songs, folk dances, and epic art. (Guchinova, 2013). Many aspects of the Kalmyk arts are directly connected to religion, such as national festivals, astrological traditions, ritual ceremonies, and rites. Atwood (2004) points out that with the establishment of the Soviet regime, religion was repressed, and in 1930, the first persecutions of Buddhist clergy started and the closing of khuruls<sup>1</sup>. The abolition of religion, as a cultural aspect, and its consequences greatly influenced the state of the language. The lack of religious activities, practices, and festivals depleted the performance of speech acts in the language. Astrology, which was an integral part of the Kalmyk culture, was also suppressed: astrological calculations, instructions, and calendars were observed at all levels of the Kalmyk society. One of the significant consequences of the demolition of astrological traditions was the cease of general use of the lunar-solar calendar (Atwood, 2004). The national cultural heritage has undergone fundamental changes resulting both in cultural and language attrition.

Esenova (2015) describes the current language situation in the Republic of Kalmykia as the predominance of the Russian language in all domains of use. The Kalmyk language practically ceases to be a functional language, although it is partially used in education (partially as a language of instruction in primary school and a separate subject of curriculum), mass communication (newspapers, TV, and radio programs) and ethnocultural aspects (theatre, music, museums).

The main factors that influenced the endangerment of the Kalmyk language, as it was noted above, are overlapped and consecutively interconnected. Therefore, the combination of historical events caused by the conducted politics resulted in grave consequences for the language state.

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<sup>1</sup> Buddhist monasteries

## **Chapter II. The Role of Language Policy and Language Planning in Language Endangerment. The case of the Kalmyk language**

This chapter discusses the topics of language policy and language planning, reviewing them in the context of the Kalmyk language.

Language policy is an essential component in the perspective of language endangerment, which is why there is a need to examine it and engage with it. There are many approaches to defining the field of language policy, some of which are considered in section §2.1.

It is important to provide a historical overview of language policy development in Russia to introduce the current implementation of language policy in the Republic of Kalmykia. Section §2.1.1 reviews the main reforms during different stages of Russian history and the consequences on the minority languages of the country. Furthermore, section §2.1.2 describes the administrative bodies (federal, local) and federal and local laws (acts) responsible for language policy implementation in the Republic of Kalmykia.

Section §2.2 is devoted to the topic of language planning. It covers the description of the field: definitions, approaches, frameworks, and goals in section §2.2. The historical development of language planning in the Russian Federation is discussed in §2.2.1. And final section §2.2.2 examines the language planning implementation in the Republic of Kalmykia, reviewing corpus planning, status planning, and acquisition planning.

### **2.1. Language Policy**

Language policy is a broad topic of high interest for study and research. There is a considerable amount of work devoted to exploring and discussing this field, such as Spolsky (2004, 2012), Tollefson (1995), Schiffman (1996), Ricento (2009), and many more.

Grin (2006) views the term ‘language policy’ as an extensive concept that presents sociologic, linguistic, political, and economic dimensions. In his turn, Ricento (2009) defines language policy “as an interdisciplinary field stimulating research relevant to language matters in education, economics, political science, history, sociology, geography, and other fields, while insights from these same fields have contributed to the development of integrated models in LP, such as linguistic imperialism and linguistic human rights” (Ricento, 2009, p.18).



Spolsky (2004) outlines three interrelated but independent components which compose the language policy model: practices, beliefs, and management. The first component, 'practices', means actual language practices of the speech community: the variety of language used for communicative functions, chosen linguistic features, and variants used with various interlocutors. Thus, by creating 'the conventional unmarked pattern of a variety of languages' (Spolsky, 2004, p.9), language practices are the 'real' language policy of the community.

The second component, 'beliefs', denotes the attitudes of a speech community towards each variety and variant of a language and beliefs about the importance of the values assigned to it. Sallabank (2011) notes that the beliefs about the language are fundamental, and managing them plays a significant role in implementation of language policy.

The third component, 'management', refers to the modifications of language practices or beliefs in the speech community conducted by an individual, or a group, or institution who have or believe they have authority in the domain (Spolsky, 2004). The most evident example of language management is a legal establishment of an official language. Another example is the manifestation of language management in the family domain, e.g., the choice of a language used at home.

In 2019 Spolsky revised the model described above and suggested two considerable modifications. Firstly, to distinguish between advocates who do not obtain power and managers with authority within the language management component. Secondly, to incorporate a distinct level of the individual or self-management, "the attempt of speakers to modify their own linguistic proficiency and repertoire" to the model (Spolsky, 2019, p.326).

Language policy is an integral part of any political entity or institution, application of legislation on language status, standard form, and reforms tend to be policy decisions. The historical examples demonstrate, language policy has been a main instrument of nationalism and building national identity (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

According to Sallabank (2012), the field of language endangerment study and language policy refer to the similar aspects such as language choice, usage, or attitudes to language (or language shift), and the responses from language policy to language endangerment are relevant with language maintenance and revitalisation. Also, Brenzinger and De Graaf (2009) notes that there is a need for supporting and developing language policy as it plays a vital role in the process of endangered language maintenance. According to them, the task of

formulation of language policies is to set out and implement the most effective mechanisms for sustaining and reclaiming endangered languages.

### **2.1.1 Language Policy in the Russian Federation**

Krouglov (2021) provides a historical overview of language policy and planning in Russia to trace its development and analyse its current state. In the article, he outlines important events in history which influenced the position of Russian and other languages in the country. The language policy of the period of the Russian Empire is marked by “strengthening the dominant position of Russian as the official language of the empire” (Krouglov, 2021, p.3). The process was named “Russification”, it was aimed at "strengthening the empire through the use of a single language" by implementing Russian in all domains (Krouglov, 2021, p.5). One of the instruments of Russification was the Russian Orthodox Church which promoted the language by converting non-orthodox people into the Orthodox faith.

However, Krouglov (2021) notes that there was a short period of relaxation from the Russification policy, from 1905-1917. During this period, questions were raised about the national minorities and their rights, and national schools (schools teaching in local languages) were opened. After the Revolution in 1917, with the advent of the Soviet government, the primary task was eliminating illiteracy. A literacy campaign was launched, and education became compulsory in the country. The issue with non-Russian regions was solved in 1918 with the resolution “On Schools of National Minorities”, which declared that all people have a right to an education in their native language (Krouglov, 2021, p.8).

In the Stalin period (1934-1953) language policy and planning were subjected to profound changes. With the resolution “On the Obligatory Study of the Russian Language in National Republic and Regional Schools”<sup>2</sup> in 1938, Russian became compulsory in all schools of the USSR. Although the teaching of and in national languages was not officially suppressed, the status of these languages was significantly lowered by restricting the domains of their use (Krouglov, 2021).

The main postulate of the Soviet nationalities’ policy was the idea of the equality of peoples and, thus, the equality of languages. However, despite the idea of language equality, the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://docs.historyrussia.org/ru/nodes/123876-postanovlenie-tsk-vkp-b-i-snk-sssr-ob-obyazatelnom-izuchenii-russkogo-yazyka-v-shkolah-natsionalnyh-respublik-i-oblastey-13-marta-1938-g>.

Russian language had the dominant role as the language of higher status. (Zamyatin, 2015). As Krouglov (2021) notes, language policy at the beginning of the post-Stalin period was aimed at the development of bilingual education. According to the new law “On Strengthening the Link between School and Life” in 1958, it was possible to choose the language of instruction in schools but with the Russian language was compulsory in the curriculum.

In 1978 the decrees “On Measures for Further Improvement of the Study and Teaching of the Russian Language in the Union Republics” and “On Measures for Further Improvement of Russian Language Teaching in National Schools of the Republic” were adopted (Krouglov, 2021, p.11). The new legislation was formulated to further the spread of Russification and to enhance the dominant position of Russian. The result of this policy was the narrowing of the domains of non-Russian languages use and thus their limited functional capacity (Krouglov, 2021).

The post-Soviet language policy started with new approaches to language issues in the newly formed country (Krouglov, 2021). The law “On Languages of the Peoples of the RSFSR” proclaimed “language sovereignty of every people and person” and “equal protection and equal opportunities for all languages of the peoples of Russia” and became the forerunner for the main official language policy document, the State National Policy Concept, in June 1996 (Zamyatin, 2015, p.284). The main ideas of the Concept are the priority of equality, preservation, and development of the languages of the peoples of Russia and the use of the Russian language as the common state language. However, as Zamyatin (2015) notes, the Concept does not deal with language issues, as according to it, language issues are related to the national culture rather than a political area.

Despite the multiethnicity of the Russian Federation, the Concept does not include the principle of multilingualism. Instead, it directs the regional programs of the policy on nationalities “to ensure [...] development and broadening of the domains of language use of the national languages, to affirm principles of cultural pluralism, bilingualism, and multilingualism, through the integrating role of the Russian language” (Zamyatin, 2015 p.286). In 1998, the Russian Federation ratified the European Convention on Human Rights<sup>3</sup>

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<https://www.srji.org/en/echr/russia/#:~:text=The%20Russian%20Federation%20ratified%20the%20European%20Convention%20on,The%20first%20judgment%20against%20Russia%20came%20in%202002.>

(ECHR) and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), which became an important step in recognising and protecting national minorities' rights. The role of the Framework Convention is to provide a detailed analysis of the minority legislation and practice and further recommendations to improve the situation in the state under review. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities published the report "Fourth Opinion on the Russian Federation" in 2018 (Jankiewicz, Knyaginina & Prina, 2020). The report stated that despite the ethnic diversity of the Russian Federation, official minority policies accentuate the role of the Russian ethnicity and language and define it as "the core of an overarching all-Russian national identity" (Fourth Opinion on the Russian Federation 2018, p.1) . There are serious concerns about the ineffective language policy for supporting minority languages amid the emphasis on strengthening Russian, as lack of support for linguistic diversity leads to the vulnerability of minority languages. Indeed, the Atlas of the world's languages in danger (2010) cites 128 languages on the territory of the Russian Federation that obtain the status of endangered languages.

Another indicator of the conducted language policy is that in 2001 Russia signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), but it was not yet ratified. As Bowring (2019) claims, there are concerns about the possible outcomes of the Charter's enactment, such as the recognition of languages other than Russian.

Currently, as a consequence of the aggression against Ukraine the Russian Federation is excluded from the European Convention on Human Rights, but still remains a Contracting Party to Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The changes and amendments to the Federal Law on Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation from 1991 and the Federal Law on Education in Russian Federation No. 273-FZ from 2012 led to the centralization of education and the reduction of teaching minority languages (Krouglov, 2021). Moreover, the adoption of the Federal Law on the State Language of the Russian Federation in 2005 strengthened the role of the Russian language giving it a predominant position in Russia's language legislation (Zamyatin, 2015).

### **2.1.2 Language Policy in the Republic of Kalmykia**

The language policy of the Republic of Kalmykia is regulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Law of the Russian Federation "On the languages of the peoples of

the Russian Federation", 1991 and other regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation, the Stepnoe Ulozhenie (Constitution) of the Republic of Kalmykia and represented by this law and normative legal acts of the Republic of Kalmykia. According to the Decree "On the Languages in the Kalmyk Soviet Socialist Republic", in 1991, the Kalmyk language became an official language of the Republic of Kalmykia alongside Russian. The law provides equal status for the official languages of the Republic of Kalmykia in the governmental administrative, socioeconomic, cultural, and educational spheres. Here are the excerpts of the Law of the Republic of Kalmykia "On the State Languages of the Republic of Kalmykia and Other Languages in the Republic of Kalmykia, which relate to language use in the republic (Grin, 2000) :

“Article 12 The texts of laws of the Republic of Kalmykia and of other legal documents are published in the state languages.

Article 13.1 The state languages of the Republic of Kalmykia are used in the work of state bodies, enterprises, institutions, and organisations of the Republic of Kalmykia.

Article 14.1 Legal proceedings and record keeping in the courts and judicial authorities are carried through in Kalmyk and Russian.

Article 14.2 The state languages of the Republic of Kalmykia are used in the texts of forms, seals, stamps, and signs with the names of state authorities of the Republic of Kalmykia, local governments of the Republic of Kalmykia, state enterprises, institutions and organisations of the Republic of Kalmykia and municipal enterprises, institutions, and organisations in the Republic of Kalmykia.

Article 15.1 Official correspondence and other official relations between state authorities of the Republic of Kalmykia, local authorities, state and municipal enterprises, institutions, and organisations are conducted in the state languages of the Republic of Kalmykia.

Article 16.1 The state languages of the Republic of Kalmykia, as well as other languages in the Republic of Kalmykia, are used in the mass media in the Republic of Kalmykia.

Article 19 Arts and culture organisations carry out cultural and creative activities on the territory of the Republic of Kalmykia, taking into account national traditions in any language of the peoples of the Russian Federation, providing, if necessary, translation into the state languages of the Republic of Kalmykia.

Article 20 The state languages of the Republic of Kalmykia are used in names and inscriptions of geographical objects, roads, and information signs.

Despite the legislative acts to guarantee an equal status to the Kalmyk language to deliver state programs on preservation, study, development, and functioning of it, the language, according to the Atlas of the world's languages in danger (2010), is classified as a definitely endangered one.”

## **2.2 Language Planning**

Language planning is an academic field of an interdisciplinary character: Romaine (2021) indicates the connections with such disciplines as linguistics, political sciences, education, economics, and many others. Moreover, it is a broad concept that encompasses various aspects of language change. The term was first introduced in Haugen’s research on the development of standard Norwegian in 1959 and denoted the normative codification. As Hornberger (2006) notes, although the original scope of language planning was extended beyond the normative codifications, the contradiction between descriptive linguistics and the practical application of linguistic knowledge is still relevant in the development of the field. There are different perspectives on what respects to imply the language planning meaning. So, Tollefson and Pérez-Milans (2018) define language planning as efforts that are determined to affect the structure (usage, corpus) or function (use, status) of languages. In turn, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) claim that language planning is a discipline that is oriented on changes in language use and occurs at three distinct levels: macro level (governmental agencies), meso (sub-national institutes), and micro levels (local agencies), and also language planning may be overt (explicit) or covert (implicit). Kloss (1969), for his part, in explaining language planning distinguishes two dimensions of it: corpus planning and status planning. Corpus planning refers to the form and structure of language itself (graphization, standardisation, and modernization) and is regulated by linguistic experts. In turn, status planning refers to the status and use of language within a given community and is exercised by government and educational authorities.

The historical development of language policy and planning is represented by three stages focusing on three types of factors that are considered to be instruments of this development (Ricento, 2000).

The first type is macro-sociopolitical, which includes events and processes at the national and supranational levels. The following epistemological factors refer to paradigms of knowledge and research, and strategic factors relate to the ends for which LPLP research is conducted.

The first stage of the LPLP development, "early work", falls within the period of the emergence of the discipline in the 1960-1970s. It is characterised by the development and the growth of academic research in the attempt to solve language problems of newly formed states through language planning. In this period, the classical conceptual framework was introduced by Haugen (1966). The framework distinguished status planning and corpus planning further, Cooper (1989) added acquisition planning to the framework. According to the framework, there are three stages in the planning process: Formulation, Implementation, and Evaluation. Formulation corresponds to defining aims and programs for attaining the goals. Implementation refers to the process of executing a planned program to achieve the stated aims. Evaluation is the assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation process. This classical framework is not recognized as a model or theory of LPLP, but the traditional or neoclassical approach to LPLP appeared during its formation. The neoclassical approach has two main ideas: 1) the focus of LPLP activities on the nation-state, primarily national education authorities, and 2) LPLP specialists should work on technical solutions to language problems (Tollefson, 2011).

The second phase lasts roughly from 1970 to the 1980s; the period is accompanied by an understanding of the ineffectiveness and inherent limitations of the early LPLP work.

The third stage starts approximately in the mid-1980s and lasts until the present period. As Ricento (2020) observes, it is still in the process of formation, which is why it is challenging to define it. The recognized application of this stage is the historical-structural approach that views historical and structural factors as reasons affecting particular policies and planning and constraints of individual choice. In other words, the historical-structural approach implies that detailed historical analysis is fundamental in policies and practices as it outlines social relations among groups distinguished by structural factors (Tollefson, 2011).

There is a different perspective on the LPLP discipline from the "early work", the present period focuses on the multidisciplinary approach to the field and considers the role of individuals and communities in the LPLP development as a key one.

Nahir (1984) identifies the following goals of language planning, which Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) refer to as macro-level goals:

- 1) Language purification focuses on linguistic uniformity and language standards through developing prescriptive grammar and dictionaries.
- 2) Language revival comprises language restoration, revitalization, and reversal. All the sub-categories refer to efforts at restoring languages in different states of extinction.
- 3) Language reform suggests changes in orthography, spelling, lexicon, or grammar with the purpose of facilitating language use.
- 4) Language standardisation is considered a primary goal of language planning, as its function is to identify a basis for effective communication. The key instruments of standardisation are pedagogical grammar and dictionaries.
- 5) Language spread in language planning means the attempt to expand the number of speakers of a language, often at the cost of another language(s).
- 6) Lexical modernisation consists in enriching language vocabulary to describe new concepts and technologies.
- 7) Terminological unification, also known as term planning, focuses on defining unified terminologies, particularly in scientific and technological domains.
- 8) Stylistic simplification is a simplification of language usage in social and formal contexts by changing the lexicon, syntax, and language style.
- 9) Interlingual communication aims to facilitate communication between members of distinct speech communities, sometimes by enhancing language modifications in cognate languages (Nahir, 1984).
- 10) Language maintenance intends the preservation of a community language when it is threatened with extinction and of a dominant language when it is threatened with excessive deviation from the recognized standard forms. (Kaplan Baldauf, 1997)
- 11) Auxiliary-code standardisation implies setting uniform standards for auxiliary aspects of language such as “signs for the deaf, place names, and rules of transliteration and



transcription, either to reduce ambiguity and thus improve communication or to meet changing social, political, or other needs or aspirations” (Nahir, 1984, p. 318).

### **2.2.1 Language Planning in the Russian Federation**

The formation of language planning in the Russian Federation dates back to the rule of Peter the Great (1696– 1725). It was during this period that changes in status, corpus, and acquisition of Russian and other languages in the country began. The significant changes promoted by the tsar were an influx of foreign words and reforms to the Cyrillic alphabet: the number of letters was reduced, and the letterforms were simplified and rounded, which became the basis for the establishment of the civil script. The civil script also was characterised by eliminating diacritics and streamlining the use of capital letters and punctuation marks. The process of the standardisation of Russian was started by a scientist, poet, and grammarian, Lomonosov, who compiled the first scholarly grammar of the Russian language. The corpus planning was continued by A. Pushkin, who is considered to be the greatest Russian poet and the founder of modern Russian literature. He developed a new variety of literary language by combining colloquial speech and high style in his works and augmenting the Russian lexicon with foreign words. Pushkin's language determined all subsequent Russian literature and the Russian language overall (Krouglov, 2021).

Language planning in the Soviet era was subjected to transformations several times and changed its trends depending on the political agenda. The changes in the language planning concerning all the languages in the country that occurred in the Soviet period were fundamental. Thus, the decree on new spelling rules in Russian was issued in 1918; it established a new alphabet of 33 letters instead of 35 and changed spelling rules for prefixes and endings. Another part of the language change was the vocabulary: new words appeared in the language to denote new concepts of the new order, and the words referring to the pre-revolutionary order were withdrawn from use (Krouglov, 2021). The acquisition planning, or language-in-education, was also subjected to changes: in 1918, alongside the Russian language, minority languages got the right to be languages of instruction. This period can be characterised by an effort at standardising minority languages via a new approach to language planning, Nativisation, or Korenizatsiia. This approach, from the perspective of status planning, was aimed at giving official status to national languages in the Soviet Union. The emphasis soon shifted from strengthening the positions of national languages to strengthening Russian. One of the reasons for the promotion of the Russian language was the

need to unite all the peoples of the Soviet Union by facilitating communication. This policy led to the decline of national schools in the country and further strengthening the position of the Russian language.

National-Russian bilingualism became the main approach to language planning in the post-Stalin period. However, Krouglov (2021) states that government agencies responsible for determining language planning, in most cases, could not define the objectives of this approach and the ways to achieve these objectives. The role of bilingualism meant equal use of languages; however, in practice resulted in promoting Russian and building its prestige through the implementation of the language in different domains of use, such as science, technology, and economics, and lowering the status of non-Russian languages. The subsequent changes in language planning continued the course of Russification, and the status and functionality of many non-Russian languages steadily declined (Krouglov, 2021).

The first decade after the USSR dissolution aimed at reconsideration of the status, acquisition, and corpus planning of all the languages in the country. The language legislation of this period resulted in giving the official status of titular languages in the republics, development of projects on the revival of minority languages, and impetus to education in these languages (Jankiewicz et al, p.64). The corpus planning underwent significant changes - language norms and use, democratised like the political regime in the country. The lexicon also was renewed: the obsolete lexical items of the Soviet period were removed, and new lexical items and foreign borrowings were accepted (Krouglov, 2021).

The general policy of the Russian Federation in the 21st century focuses on centralization and "cultural homogenization" through the rise of the Russian language and culture in the country (Jankiewicz et al., 2020, p.64). The political course, as Zamyatin (2015) notes, impacts on the conducted language planning overall, but to a greater extent, on status and acquisition planning. Krouglov (2021) mentions that educational reforms of this period are directed at standardisation and centralisation, and consequently, the role of minority languages is diminishing in the educational domain.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws exercise supreme authority throughout the territory of the Russian Federation. As Zamyatin (2015) claims, the current role of the official status of the state languages in the republics is to formalise ethnicity. As a result, the republics do not have sovereignty, which challenges the status of their state languages. There are spelled out two languages in the Constitution: state language, which is

Russian, and native language, which has an ambiguous definition, it can be the state language of republics, or it can still be Russian.

Globalisation processes affected corpus planning by introducing foreign loan words in media and everyday use. Nevertheless, the tendency towards nationalism and authoritarianism in the country led to a change in the rhetoric of political discourse during the last few years. Within the current war context, the Russian language adapts to the situation, military jargon, hate speech, and new collocations with negative connotations are included in everyday use (Krouglov, 2021).

### **2.2.2 Language Planning in the Republic of Kalmykia**

The language planning in the Republic of Kalmykia reflects the historical development of language planning in the Russian Federation. From the perspective of status planning, the Kalmyk language has a legislative status of a state language, so it is co-official with Russian in the republic. The Kalmyk Language implementation in different spheres is legally recognized, and monitoring of the implementation in educational sectors is conducted by governmental agencies.

Nevertheless, despite its official status and stipulated domains of use in the legislation, the Kalmyk language belongs to the "definitely endangered" languages (Atlas of the world's languages in danger, 2010).

In the field of corpus planning, Kalmyk is a language with an old established writing system, although its standard norms emerged in the 1930s. There are literary and spoken language variants; Baranova (2009) also notes a difference between oral and written language use: the older generation prefers oral forms, while a written one prevails in younger generations. As for the Kalmyk lexicon, it was significantly enlarged with an influx of borrowings from Russian and with new lexical items which were calqued from foreign words. Kornusova (2005) outlines language purism and modernization as important aspects of language reforms for creating prerequisites for the functioning of the language in the new context.

Acquisition Planning, implemented in a formal setting, is regulated by the Law On Education in the Republic of Kalmykia. According to the previous version of Art.3(2) of the law, the Kalmyk language was a compulsory subject. In 2017 amendments to the abovementioned law removed the study of the Kalmyk language from the list of obligatory subjects, and its teaching and learning must follow the Federal State Educational Standards (FSSES). The

FSES is a set of mandatory requirements and state educational standards for a certain level of education<sup>4</sup>.

The Federal law stipulates that there is a free choice of the studied native language from among the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation, including the Russian language as a native language, the state languages of the republics of the Russian Federation and it is carried out at the request of the parents (or legal representatives) (Jankiewicz, et al., 2020).

Today, the Kalmyk language is studied at all levels of education in the Republic of Kalmykia. Therefore, language instruction starts from the preschool level and continues at the school level, with potential continuation at secondary and high levels of education (Kharchevnikova & Lidzhieva, 2021)

The system of preschool education in the republic of Kalmykia is represented by 138 preschool educational institutions comprising two national kindergartens and 50 preschool educational institutions, which contain 105 groups with the ethnocultural component of language education, an ethnocultural component is aimed at forming a child an awareness of national culture and development of national identity.

There are 167 public school educational institutions in the Republic of Kalmykia. These include two national schools (educational institutions with full or partial use of the national component), 59 educational institutions which contain 187 classes with ethnocultural components in educational programs of primary education, and seven educational organisations with 20 advanced Kalmyk classes.

In educational institutions of secondary and higher education, the study of the Kalmyk language is optional and of choice, with the exception of the faculties which prepare future teachers of the Kalmyk language and literature.

Kharchevnikova and Lidzhieva (2021) argue that the development of the concept of a continuous system of teaching the Kalmyk language in the Republic of Kalmykia within the framework of the FSES is ongoing. Thus, over the last 20 years, curricula have been developed or updated, learning materials have been published, and teachers of the Kalmyk language and literature undergo training and skills enhancement programs. However, there are issues in the preparation of educational methodological bases for the development of

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.ncpa.ru/index.php?id=251&Itemid=375&lang=en&option=com\\_content&view=article](https://www.ncpa.ru/index.php?id=251&Itemid=375&lang=en&option=com_content&view=article)

educational institutions. One of them is the absence of systematic financial support that led to the underdevelopment of educational and methodological complexes in the Kalmyk language and the Kalmyk literature. Nevertheless, Kornusova (2005) states that the Kalmyk language is actively developing in the education sphere in contrast to other spheres.

As regards acquisition planning in the informal setting, there is an increasing number of language courses, organisations aimed at language development, the use of internet tools, and social media activities for the promotion of the Kalmyk language and culture. The performed actions meet the community members' interest and encourage their involvement in these actions (Kharchevnikova & Lidzhieva, 2021).

### **Chapter III. Language Reclamation. The Case of the Kalmyk Language**

This chapter discusses the concepts of language identity and attitudes in the process of endangered language reclamation and this process and provides the context of the Kalmyk language.

Focusing on identity and attitudes is essential in maintaining and reclaiming a minority language (Sallabank, 2013).

Section §3.1.1 represents the identity concept and its role in the language maintenance and discusses language's role in forming ethnic identity. Section §3.1.2 examines the topic of language attitudes and their influence on the language reclamation process. The situation concerning language identity and attitude in the Republic of Kalmykia is outlined in section §3.1.3.

Section §3.4 is devoted to language reclamation and reviews its strategies and programs, such as school-based revitalization, community-based learning, adult language learning, and family-based learning. The measures aimed at the Kalmyk language maintenance are described in section §3.4.1.

#### **3.1 Language Identity and Language Attitudes**

##### **3.1.1 Language Identity**

The term “identity” covers a variety of meanings depending on the context of its use. Recently, identity has been viewed as a complex, fluid, multifaceted concept constructed by positioning individuals themselves or by others within various established contexts. Omoniyi and White (2008) summarised the following positions on the concept of identity:

1) identity is not fixed; 2) identity is formed within the given contexts and may be different depending on context; 3) the contexts are managed and defined by social variables and expressed through language(s); 4) identity is a key element in every communicative context; 5) identity enables to define social relationships and therefore defines the communicative exchanges that characterise them; 6) identity can be more than one in a given context, in this case there will be a dynamic of identities management.

Sallabank (2013) indicates two spheres of identity manifestation: private and public. Identity manifestation in the private sphere relates to language choice and transmission, whereas the public sphere concerns symbolic identification (such as performance at festivals and the use of local languages in signage) and promoting the idea of language.

Language is one of the identified ways of constructing identity. Safran (2010) refers to language as a marker of individual and collective identity. From the perspective of social psychology, language is considered to be a link between individual and collective ethnic identity. This link is explained by the significance of language to the individual as a tool for denotation, a matter of linguistic interaction in child-raising, and considering language as a characteristic feature of ethnic groups. Although not all members of the ethnic group need to speak the ethnic language, it is readily available and can act as a symbol of ethnic identity, especially if the language used within the family is ethnically distinctive (Libkiend, 2010). However, Sallabank (2013) points out that language is only one of the markers of identity, such as gender, religion, social class, etc., and language loss is not synonymous with a loss of ethnic identity. Regardless of the existing points of view on the causal connection between language loss and ethnic identity loss (Nettle Romaine, 2000), she claims that ethnic identity continues existing by describing the situation with Guernsey French. (also Irish Gaelic).

As it was noted above, the construction of identity is a multi-aspect process, and ethnicity is a significant aspect of this process (Fought, 2011). Ethnic groups are often categorised by distinctive linguistic features. According to sociolinguistic research on ethnic groups, there are a number of linguistic resources that can be applied in constructing ethnic identities.

These include:

- A “heritage” language is a language other than the dominant language (or languages) in a particular social context;
- Specific sociolinguistic features, the use of certain linguistic features within the dominant language or variety;
- Code-switching can be an efficient means for both the dominant and heritage language speakers to indicate ethnic identity;
- Suprasegmental features, the use of suprasegmental features for many ethnically related language varieties, is a distinguishing feature in revealing ethnic identity;

- Discourse features and language use, pragmatic aspects may also serve a distinctive feature between ethnically related language varieties. Using a “borrowed” variety means using a code different from the ethnic group for constructing ethnic identity.

Although, not all of these resources employed in the minority ethnic communities represent choices involving the indexing of ethnic identity (Fought, 2011).

Garcia (2012) claims that the co-development of ethnic and language identity results in forming an ethnolinguistic identity as a separate component of ethnic identity. Ethnic identity, in its turn, is an identification with a distinct ethnic group categorised by a set of features or practices in a specific context, e.g. sharing a common ancestry. As she notes, it is necessary to distinguish the following statements concerning ethnic and ethnolinguistic identity. First of all, ethnic identity and an ethnolinguistic identity<sup>5</sup> can be self-defined internally or can be imposed externally. Also, there is always the influence of socio-political and socio-economic forces on the performance and negotiation of ethnic and ethnolinguistic identity. Finally and most importantly, ethnic and ethnolinguistic identity can include hybrid ethnic identities.

It is also significant to note that the link between language and ethnicity is often paralleled by the link between language and religion. A large part of ethnolinguistic communities belong to a particular traditional religion, which is delivered through traditional community language. For instance, religious texts are represented in traditional language scripts, and ceremonial services are held in traditional languages. Hence, there is a strong association of language with a spiritual aspect of ethnic identity Fishman (1997).

It is of high importance to maintain and strengthen ethnic identity in the era of globalisation - this can be reached with the help of language planning efforts, as language is one of the crucial components in constructing identity (Sallabank, 2013) For many members of endangered language communities, links between language, culture and identity are subjectively real. Similarly, Garcia (2012) argues that there is “a strong link between ethnic identity and language identity; a strong ethnolinguistic identity is a necessary prerequisite for language policies to support the efforts of an ethnic community that performs its identity languaging in certain ways” (p.88). Thus, reference to ethnic identity may be used as an effective means to encourage language revitalisation.

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<sup>5</sup> The term was introduced by Fishman (1996)



Bradley and Bradley (2019) define ethnicity as a sociocultural construct of a complex structure that may change through time due to social changes. National-level policy, in its turn, may institute ethnic group membership. In the case of the Russian Federation, alongside Russians, a majority group, there are minority nationalities with a recognized territory. Currently, within the Russian Federation, 21 national republics are granted constitutional recognition to the ethnic minorities inhabiting these territories. However, despite the recognition which encompasses the right to use and develop the language, general social attitudes and top-down national policies override this right by promoting the majority language.

### **3.1.2 Language Attitudes**

The concept of attitude is complex and broad. Bradley and Bradley (2019) cite different scholars to shape a definition to attitude from the view of social psychology:

Attitude is the predisposition of some individual to evaluate some symbol or object or aspect of his [sic] world in a favourable or unfavourable manner (Katz, 1960, p.168), divided into affect (what one feels), cognition (what one thinks) and behaviour (what one does) (Triandis, 1971, pp. 2-4; Dawes, 1972, pp.15-16) (p.71).

There are two main components of forming attitudes: personal experiences and social environment. Attitudes are learned through various processes, for instance, observational and instrumental learning. Observational learning refers to learning through examining other people's behaviour and detecting the results of this behaviour. Instrumental learning, on the other hand, is a type of learning in which attitudes are formed by their consequences (rewards or detriments) (Garret, 2010).

Attitudes can function both as "input" and "output" in different contexts. So, for example, in the context of language planning, attitude is a pivotal input factor to language learning, and successfully delivered language learning may cause a positive attitude among learners. Also, in the context of language reception and production, attitudes can be viewed as input and output, which influence the process of communication (Garret, 2010).

Bradley and Bradley (2019) highlight a similar effect of language attitudes on fluency in a language. The effect is delivered through language transmission and use within a group,

language stability, formulation and implementation of language policy, and results of language reclamation efforts.

Tsunoda (2006) classifies language attitudes into two types: attitude toward their own language and attitude towards other groups' languages. In addition to these types, negative attitudes, positive attitudes, and indifferent attitudes are also distinguished.

A negative attitude seems the commonest in the context of language endangerment. Also, a negative attitude to minority languages is common among speakers of the dominant language. Low status in the society of a minority ethnic group, caused by different types of oppression, results in low prestige of its language and culture and may even be a subject of stigmatisation by outsiders. Consequently, speakers themselves form a negative evaluation of the language. so Dorian (1986) mentions that many parents avoid language transmission to their children due to the negative value attached to their traditional language.

Among positive attitudes, Tsunoda (2006) points out the following subtypes: language loyalty, language purism, and language optimism.

*Language loyalty* can play a crucial role in language maintenance: if speakers are loyal to the language, then the language has a better chance of survival than otherwise.

*Language purism*, a pursuit of language preservation against new influences, can be considered a reaction of speakers to defend the traditional language (Ostler, 2011). However, language purism can be both a productive force in language reclamation and counterproductive in language maintenance, even leading to language shift (Olko & Sallabank, 2021)

*Language optimism* means the speakers' refusal to believe that their language is in the process of extinction, which influences in a negative manner on language maintenance.

Indifferent attitude, which suggests a disregard for language, alongside language optimism, may lead to tardy awareness of impending language loss threat.

Bradley and Bradley (2019) claim that there are five important interrelated factors in attitudes about language identity:

- 1) *ethnolinguistic vitality* refers to the ability of speakers to maintain their language and culture through intergenerational transmission.

2) *language as a core cultural value* which is a fundamental component of a language speakers' group. However, there are examples of groups where identity and components of culture function without traditional languages. These languages are at high risk of extinction, despite ethnic vitality, language policy, and institutional support.

3) *attitudes to bilingualism* are crucial: communities with positive attitudes to the use of more than one language have more chances of language maintenance, contrary to the others, where bilingualism is undesirable, a majority language is dominant, and negative attitudes to other languages are present.

4) *attitudes about the languages in the community* involve the attitudes of language speakers' groups toward their traditional language, other minority languages, language of majority and global languages, such as English.

5) *views about the status and functions of languages* are the attitudes to practical and aesthetic aspects of a language that are displayed in language policy. Positive views contribute to language prestige and its maintenance.

Olko & Sallabank (2021) note the pivotal role of language attitudes both in the process of language decline and language revitalization.

Language endangerment is a direct reflection of negative language attitudes. Successful language maintenance or revitalization comes from positive in-group attitudes and results in intergenerational transmission and language development. Changing attitudes depends on community members; outsiders can help by providing materials, training community members, and developing their skills and self-esteem, but it is community members who decide. Prestige planning can be addressed as a type of language policy to promote positive attitudes about endangered languages (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

### **3.1.3 The Case of the Kalmyk Language**

The Kalmyk language is one of the minority languages presented in the territory of the Russian Federation. The current language situation in the republic of Kalmykia can be described as unequal bilingualism. The Russian language is functionally dominant compared to the traditional Kalmyk, as it has a higher status. The promotion of the dominant role of the Russian language in all domains negatively influences the attitudes toward minority

languages in the country. The majority is convinced to transmit and learn the dominant language, as it is more valuable and practical and gives more opportunities for socioeconomic progress (Bradley & Bradley, 2019). Even with its official status and language policy efforts to maintain it, today, the Kalmyk language is on the list of endangered languages. Krouglov (2021) explains this situation by the results of the all-Russian language policy conducted during the historical development, such as Russification, the constant promotion of the Russian language domination, and ineffective policies toward minority languages.

For Kalmyks, traditional language is intrinsically linked to ethnic identity. Therefore language identity forms on the basis of belonging to the ethnic group but not the actual level of proficiency and use of the language (Aduchieva, 2014).

The sociological research conducted by the Kalmyk Institute for Humanitarian Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the republic in 2000, 2004, and 2005 concludes that the Kalmyk language is an integral aspect of the ethnic identity, due not to its use, but to its symbolic membership role of the ethnic group. Also, according to the research, the most important component of ethnic identity is cultural and traditional. However, it should be noted that ethnicity is variable, so the link between language and ethnicity is also transformative and hence must be empirically measured in each case (Namrueva, 2020).

As mentioned before, there is a direct link between religion and language. For Kalmyks, who are the only representatives of Buddhism in Europe, the Buddhist culture is a crucial component in ethnic identification. Buddhism played a pivotal role in the formation of the Kalmyk ethnos and Kalmyk ethnic identity. So, for instance, Buddhist monk Zaya Pandita invented the Kalmyk writing system, Todo Bičig, which made it possible not only to translate canonical texts but to create secular literature in the traditional language. Scripts should be treated not just as an instrument for writing but as an ethnocultural and ethnoreligious symbol (Fishman, 1997).

The present situation with the Kalmyk language indicates that language policy efforts are insufficient for language maintenance, and other tactics are needed. As one of the main causes of ceasing language use might be a negative or indifferent attitude to the language, so it is essential to reveal the speakers' group attitudes toward the language and language activities.

### 3.2 Language Reclamation

There is a great variety in the terminology of the phenomenon aimed at language restoration, maintenance, and preservation in the field of language endangerment. Fishman (1991) uses the term Reversing Language Shift, which implies the process of endangerment reversal. Another term that generalises all the processes is language revitalization (Hinton, 2011; Tsunoda, 2006).

Amery (2016), in his turn, defines the concept as language reclamation, which relates to language resurgence, measures aimed at language usage extent, an increase in the number of speakers, or the process of language restoration. Bradley and Bradley (2019) also provide the term language reclamation, which encompasses various subtypes. Throughout this dissertation, the term language reclamation will be used to refer to all the connotations and distinctions: language maintenance, which refers to efforts focused on maintaining endangered languages, but still alive, and language revival, which refers to efforts focused on reviving the extinct languages.

The efforts to preserve endangered languages may come from individuals or communities, within a language group, or with the involvement of outside experts. The overall goal of language reclamation is to increase the use of a traditional language within its community. Moreover, it is also important to notice that language revitalization programs involve not only language but maintenance of cultural aspects of the community.

The typology of language restoration proposed by Bradley and Bradley (2019) in their book "Language Endangerment" include the following subtypes:

*Revitalization* strategies are applied when language is out of daily use but has yet to be extinct; for instance, it is used only by the older generation. The most widely used and known strategies are the Language-Nest model, the Master-Apprentice method, and heritage language classes.

The Language-Nest model implies the involvement of older-generation fluent speakers in early childhood education. The model originated in New Zealand in the 1980s as an effort to revitalise the Maori language under the name Kohanga Reo. It had substantial success - hundreds of children started speaking Maori fluently. However, there was a problem with continuing education in the language caused by the need for more institutions and

Maori-speaking teachers. To solve the problem, the direction of Kohanga Reo organised language classes for adults to consolidate their children's language development (Amery, 2016). Today, according to the statistics<sup>6</sup>, New Zealanders have a better command of Maori and support its use in everyday life. Also, the positive outcomes of the Language-Nest model applied in New Zealand evoked the replication of the model for revitalising other languages, for instance, Hawaiian in the USA, Nivkh in Russia, and Võro in Estonia.

The Master-Apprentice method, introduced by Hinton (1994), is based on the principles of language immersion. This method focuses on developing new speakers through learning from competent older speakers who are not professional teachers: a language student is paired with a language master on a regular basis. The meetings are held only in a traditional language and include participating in daily or traditional activities; the duration of the meetings is at least ten to twenty hours per week. The design of the strategy means in-group language learning that can take place without the help of external experts. Many programs based on this method are applied worldwide, including in Canada, Brazil, Australia, and Spain (Hinton, 2011).

Another widely-used method is heritage language classes, which imply education-oriented strategies. The typical goal of the method is to reintroduce a traditional endangered language in the school curriculum as a heritage activity aimed at developing cultural knowledge, as a formal language study aimed at general language knowledge, or as an instruction language of some subjects (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

The successful results of revitalization strategies depend on the level of persistence of the language within the language group.

*Revival*, a particular subtype of language reclamation, deals with languages that are extinct or out of everyday use. The data for the revival obtained from the recorded linguistic materials is usually descriptive, and such materials often do not reflect authentic conversations in the language. Therefore, borrowings from closely related languages are commonly used to reconstruct a hypothetical conversational interaction (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

One of the most famous revival strategies is the Formulaic method proposed by Rob Amery for the Kaurna language. The method involves the gradual incorporation of the expressions in an endangered language within the conversation in a natural way, and entails the subsequent

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/te-reo-maori-proficiency-and-support-continues-to-grow/>

expansion of endangered language use and replacement of a dominant language (Amery, 2016).

Revival is very challenging because of a limited quantity of materials and the absence of an authoritative spoken model (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

The positive outcomes of revival strategies depend on the period during which language is asleep, the maintenance of group identity, and the quantity of available language information.

*Renativization* means the return of traditional language use by extending its use in case it was used in restricted domains. Renativization strategies focus on developing new vocabulary and communicative competence based on established literary language, which is out of daily use. The success of the strategies depends on language standardisation, the scope of language use domains, and language materials.

*Nativization* is a process in which a new contact language develops within a community where several languages are spoken. The nativization strategies usually use a prestige language as a lexical source, which can lead to a negative attitude to the nativized language (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

*Heritage*, as a type of reclamation, entails the symbolic use of a traditional language in public events and cultural or folkloristic activities. Heritage activities can be present in the communities where the language is still in use and in the communities where the language is not in active use; the activities focus on displaying community identity and preserving pride.

Heritage strategies may be a starting point for extending language reclamation activities (Thieberger (2002) cited in Bradley & Bradley, 2019)

*Denativization* is the development of a new standard based on existing spoken varieties. The process of denativization is aimed at consolidating these varieties on equal terms through top-down planning. Bradley and Bradley (2019) note that denativization differs from the subtypes of language reclamation mentioned above, as it is imposed from outside.

According to Hinton's (2011) suggestion, the programs on language revitalization can be divided on the basis of a type of learning: school, community, adult learning, and family.

a) School-based language revitalization

Today, schools take an active position in the language revitalization process; they are effective sources of delivering programs aimed at teaching endangered languages. The considerable advantages of school-based learning programs are an extensive cover of the language learners and learners' age, in which language learning is afforded easily and quickly.

*Language classes* are a widespread form of teaching endangered languages and can be carried out through formal education. There are various approaches to the teaching of an endangered language, which are dependent on the objectives and methodologies. However, the presence of endangered language classes in the school curriculum does not guarantee a successful revitalization of the language, as in the case of Kalmyk. Despite the presence of language classes in schools and other educational institutions, the language is considered endangered. Some of the possible issues with endangered language instruction which influence the programs are the need for teachers, materials, orthographies, and fluent speakers (Hinton, 2011).

*Bilingual education* is a term that refers to the use of both a native and a dominant language as a medium of instruction for academic subjects. Although bilingual education is conducted with governmental support and aimed at promoting and learning a dominant language within minority indigenous communities, this method can still be seen as a way for language revitalization. So, for example, the use of an endangered minority language in the context of the school enables learners to develop a positive attitude toward the language and enhance its prestige.

Also, bilingual education programs are helpful in terms of the development of language lexicon, learning materials, and writing systems if required. Thus, bilingual education can be related to school-based language revitalization program.

*Immersion schools*, or language survival schools, are types of schools where all the subjects and activities are conducted in the endangered language in the maximum language surroundings. The immersion process can also involve training and exposure to indigenous knowledge of the environment, cultural practices, and activities (Hinton, 2011). One of the most successful language immersion programs is the Language Nest model, designed for Maori revitalization. Implementation of this program requires the engagement of a significant number of resources and proficient teaching staff.

b) Community-based learning



Community-based learning is an approach to language revitalization by the agency of the programs developed within a community through its efforts and intentions, also known as informal learning styles or natural learning. Many communities, recognizing the need for language revitalization, organise summer language and culture camps, workshops, and various traditional activities to unite community members creating the context to practice the language. The focus of these programs is on domains of language use, e.g., participation in a traditional community activity provides an opportunity to communicate in the language. (Grenoble & Whaley, 2005). Also, differently from school-based learning, community-based learning has a bottom-up model, i.e., initiatives come from community members, and the process is not analysed in terms of the educational aspect. As this type of language revitalization intends to develop language use by means of cultural settings, this allows learners to develop closer ties to the heritage values of the community and the community itself (Hinton, 2011). The design and delivery of effective community-based programs depend on resources, such as people, financial resources, availability of materials, locations, and so more the community possesses (Grenoble & Whaley, 2005).

#### c) Adult language learning

Adult language learning is a crucial component of language revitalization. Nevertheless, there are not so many options for adults to learn their traditional language. A small number of minority endangered languages are presented in higher education, and language classes that communities offer are usually not enough to develop language proficiency. However, adult learners have more possibilities to find their resources and form and manage their learning process. One of the successful examples of adult language learning is the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program described above. This method is mainly aimed at developing oral communication in the endangered language. In most cases, the program results in conversational proficiency in the language (Hinton, 2011).

#### d) Family-based language revitalization

Family-based language revitalization focuses on language maintenance in the family domain. As Hinton (2011) points out, the development of language use depends not only on learning and using language at school or other language programs but rather on language use at home.

The family domain is critical for intergenerational language transmission. It is the most effective way to acquire language from birth and use it on a daily basis during the upbringing

process, thus creating new competent speakers. Intergenerational transmission supports expanding the endangered language to children and thus encourages its use in other domains. Also, if school-based learning of the endangered language is unavailable out of the domain, families become the only source for maintaining the language and the continuation of culture.

Language reclamation is challenging and requires a lot of effort and resources, but it is achievable if a realistic approach is applied, which demands appropriate materials and methods, there are case studies that prove this (Bradley & Bradley, 2019). Furthermore, achieving the goals of language reclamation demands a deep knowledge of many fields, such as education, language acquisition and teaching, and many more (Hinton, 2011) .

Currently, the awareness of the importance of language reclamation receives more attention in the academic context, at governmental level, and in the general community (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

### **3.2.1 Language Reclamation in the Context of the Kalmyk language**

The efforts on reclamation of the Kalmyk language started in 1993 with administrative solutions concerning the national system of education. The Kalmyk language learning is present in the school curriculum. There has been systematic work aimed at strengthening the methodological base for language teaching since 2008. Various programs on language development are created and implemented into a practice designed by the Educational and methodical Council of the Kalmyk Republican Institute of Advanced Training of Education Workers and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic. The Educational and Methodological Council of the Kalmyk Republican Institute for Advanced Training of Educators is a budgetary educational institution of additional professional education for advanced training of educators, providing scientific and methodological, informational, and organisational assistance to educational and other social institutions and governments in the implementation of social projects and programs<sup>7</sup>.

The Republic government proposed another top-down language support measure in 2012, the Decree on the Public Council for the Development of the Kalmyk Language<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.kripkro.ru/images/uch\\_doc/ustav\\_KRIPKRO.PDF](http://www.kripkro.ru/images/uch_doc/ustav_KRIPKRO.PDF)

<sup>8</sup> Decree N 103 on the Public Council for the Development of the Kalmyk Language of 3 August 2012

The tasks of the Council are to develop recommendations for the dissemination of the Kalmyk language, attract citizens and public organisations to assist in the implementation of language and cultural projects, and support individual initiatives aimed at preserving, studying and developing the Kalmyk language. in the republic (Head of the Republic of Kalmykia, 2012).

From the bottom-up perspective, there is also a growing number of public organisations activities and voluntary efforts made by individuals, who promote language use through social media, directed to the preservation and development of the Kalmyk language. So, for instance, the project "The Kalmyk language lessons buddhism basics" was designed and conducted by the Central Khurul of Kalmykia, "Golden Abode of Buddha Shakyamuni", which is popular among the residents of the Republic. In the framework of this project, classes on traditional writing, Todo bičig, are held. The fund for the promotion and development of the Kalmyk language, "Syaahn Keln", provides offline and online language classes, reading clubs, and other cultural activities aimed at the popularisation of the language (Kharchevnikova and Lidzhieva, 2021).

Despite government and community efforts to reclaim the Kalmyk language, the Kalmyk language remains endangered. Programs developed and projects carried out to encourage everyday use of the Kalmyk language are found to be insufficient. Also in this time-consuming and long process, attitudes towards language and motivation play a significant role. Increasing motivation and building a positive attitude towards a language and its heritage culture should be an integral component of the process of language revitalization (Bradley & Bradley, 2019).

## Chapter IV. The Research Project

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research project, reviews its methodology, and discusses the results.

The Kalmyk language is an official language in the Republic of Kalmykia and one of the minority languages in the Russian Federation. In recent decades, the language has been considered endangered (Kornusova, 2005). Although extensive research has been carried out on the investigation of the linguistic structure of the Kalmyk language, only a few attempts have been made to review the sociolinguistic situation in the Republic, such as an extensive work by Bitkeeva (2006).

The aim of the project is to develop a better understanding of the current situation of the Kalmyk language, with a focus on language background and use, and study attitudes toward the language and language activities according to the following socio-demographic categories: place of current residence (within or outside the Republic), age, and gender.

The study was conducted in the form of a structured questionnaire to reach more respondents, with data gathered via online and offline forms.

The survey examines the general language use of the Kalmyk language by investigating language background, language proficiency, frequency, and domains of language use.

Furthermore, the study seeks to depict participants' attitudes toward the Kalmyk language within and outside the Republic of Kalmykia. Language attitudes are critical in language endangerment, as they can be instruments for language maintenance and decline (Olko & Sallabank, 2021).

The study intends to determine the participants' attitudes toward participating in language activities. Item 13 lists different language activities to determine what activities appeal to the participants the most. Respondents needed to identify their readiness/willingness to participate in each one. Language activities play a crucial role in language reclamation, as they aim not just to promote language use but also to link people with their traditions and culture to form a tighter connection with their heritage language (Grenoble & Whaley, 2005).

### *Research questions*

The present research project aims to contribute to the literature on the Kalmyk language endangerment by describing the current state of the Kalmyk language use and attitude toward the language and language activities across a range of respondents from the Republic of Kalmykia and out. This study seeks to address the following research questions:

- 1) What are the extent and contexts of the Kalmyk language use?
- 2) What attitudes do the participants express toward the Kalmyk language?
- 3) What attitudes do the participants express toward participating in language activities?

## **4.2 Methodology**

### *Participants*

Participants in this project were 276 individuals who identified themselves as Kalmyks. The participants were recruited via snowball sampling (a participant recruited other respondents to participate in the survey) and voluntary response sampling (a participant responded to an advert on social media).

The majority of respondents who participated in the survey were female, totaling 207 (75%), male and other respondents were 66 (23,91%) and 3 (1,09%), respectively.

The age range of the participants included four groups: 18-29 y.o. - 114 (41,3%), 30-49 y.o. - 105 (38,04%), 50-69 y.o. - 47 (17,03%), 70+... - 10 (3,62%).

The respondents who indicated the Republic of Kalmykia as a current place of residence were 204 (73,91%), and those who indicated a place out of the Republic were 72 (26,09%).

### *Data collection instrument.*

The instrument to gather the data for the current project was a self-administered questionnaire. Questionnaires were opted for this survey because they are convenient instruments to obtain an individual's personal information, language background, use, and attitudes toward languages.

The present questionnaire was constructed based on the Second National Indigenous Languages Survey (NILS2) and was delivered via online and offline modes. The model of the questionnaire was revised and adjusted to the present research questions. It consists of 20 items (open-ended, matrix, and Likert scales questions) and is divided into three sections:

The first one, Language background and language use, asks respondents about their language background and proficiency, frequency of language use, and the contexts of language use.

It is worth noting that the term 'proficiency' is used here to refer to the following levels :

- 'no proficiency' (I do not speak the language at all).
- 'words and sentences' (I can say some words and simple sentences).
- 'part-speaker' (I can have a conversation in limited situations. I cannot express everything in this language).
- 'full-speaker' (I can have a conversation about everything in all situations. I can express almost everything in this language).

The contexts of language use were defined with matrix questions: the items represent domains of use within 'social relationships' and 'setting', and for each category, predetermined options were provided, namely 'always', 'often', 'sometimes', 'rarely', 'never', or consider the question 'not applicable'.

The second section's questions, Language attitude and attitude toward language activities, aim to define the respondents' attitudes toward the Kalmyk language, its role in their identity, and their perspectives on language activities. To assess positive (1-3) or negative (4-6) attitudes of participants toward the language, the questions were compiled on a six-point Likert scale: 1. Strongly agree, 2. Agree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Somewhat disagree, 5. Disagree, 6. Strongly disagree

The third section provides respondents' socio-demographic information (age group, gender, current place of residence, and education level).

### *Procedure*

The survey was carried out employing questionnaires collected via google forms and paper versions (attached in Appendix C).

All the questionnaires were written in the Russian language to encompass more respondents. A brief introduction of the questionnaire aims and instructions to interviewers was presented at the beginning of the questionnaire. Also, there was a note of gratitude for participating and a reminder that the answers would be kept anonymous.

All the questions in the questionnaire were marked as required to obtain complete information. Each respondent could submit an answer just once.

The respondents' answers were automatically added to a Google sheet file, and the answers of the collected printed versions were manually entered into the same form for analysis.

### **4.3 Results**

By the end of the survey period, data had been collected from 276 respondents, 204 from the Republic of Kalmykia and 72 from outside the Republic.

The first section of the questionnaire aims to reveal the extent and contexts of the Kalmyk language use (Research Question 1).

The extent of language use is presented in *Language background* and *Proficiency* items. The items concerning the *Language background* are:

1. The language respondent used in childhood.
2. The language a respondent commonly uses currently.
3. The language most commonly used in their community now.
4. When and how a respondent learnt the Kalmyk language.

The overall participants' answers concerning the first two items are presented in Table 4.1. Then, two categorical variables were chosen, namely 'Kalmyk' and 'Kalmyk and Other', to show if there are changes in language use over time in the Kalmyk language (Table 4.2). According to the data, a small percentage of the participants (10.14%) used the Kalmyk language in childhood. Furthermore, a decrease in language use can be seen, as only 2.54% of respondents currently use Kalmyk. The same decline is also evident in 'Kalmyk and other' languages use: 27.9% of participants used two languages, and currently, only 9.42% use both Kalmyk and other language(s).

Table 4.1

Item	Kalmyk	Russian	Kalmyk and other	Other
1. The language which a respondent used in childhood.	10,14%	59,42%	27,9%	2,54%
2. The language a respondent commonly uses currently	2,54%	79,35%	9,42%	8,7%

Table 4.2

Item	Using in childhood	Using currently	Difference
Kalmyk	28	7	-75%
Kalmyk and other	77	26	-66,23%

The participants' answers concerning the language used in their community (Item 3) can be seen in Table 4.3. It can be noted that a higher percentage of participants (75,72%) indicated 'Russian' as the most used language in the community, compared to 'Kalmyk' (2,9%).

Table 4.3

Item	Kalmyk	Russian	Kalmyk and other	Other
The language is most commonly used in their community now.	2,9%	75,72%	12,68%	8,7%

Table 4.4 shows the number and percentage of the total number of respondents who indicated when and how they learnt the Kalmyk language (Item 4).

Table 4..4

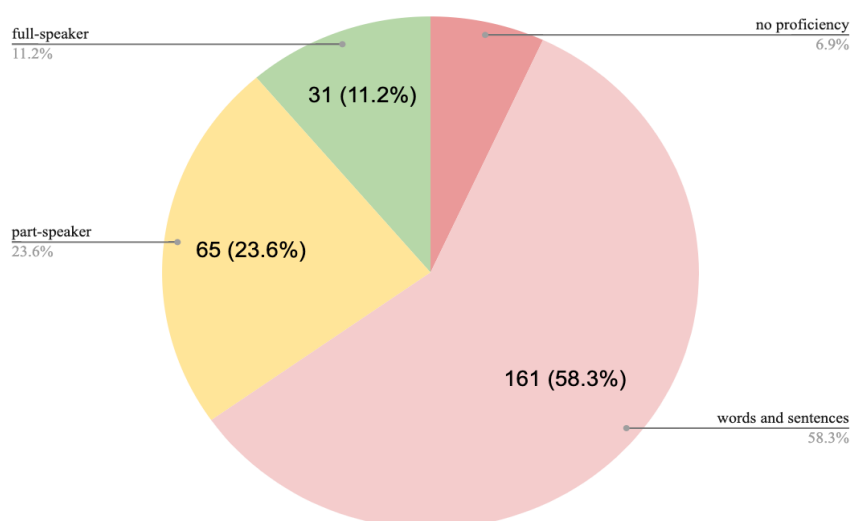
Item	respondents
As a child	164 (59,4%)
As an adult	36 (13%)



From my parents	106 (38,4%)
On my own	32 (11,6%)
At work	10 (3,6%)
In school	206 (74,6%)
Through a language program	12 (4,3%)
From books	33 (12%)
On television	16 (5,8%)
I never learned the language	41 (14,9%)
other	15 (6%)

Figure 1 (Item 5) illustrates the participants' responses regarding their language proficiency. Out of the total respondents, 11.2% (31) considered themselves full-speakers, 23.6% (65) were part-speakers, 58.3% (161) claimed to know only "some words and simple sentences," and 6.9% (19) reported having no proficiency in Kalmyk.

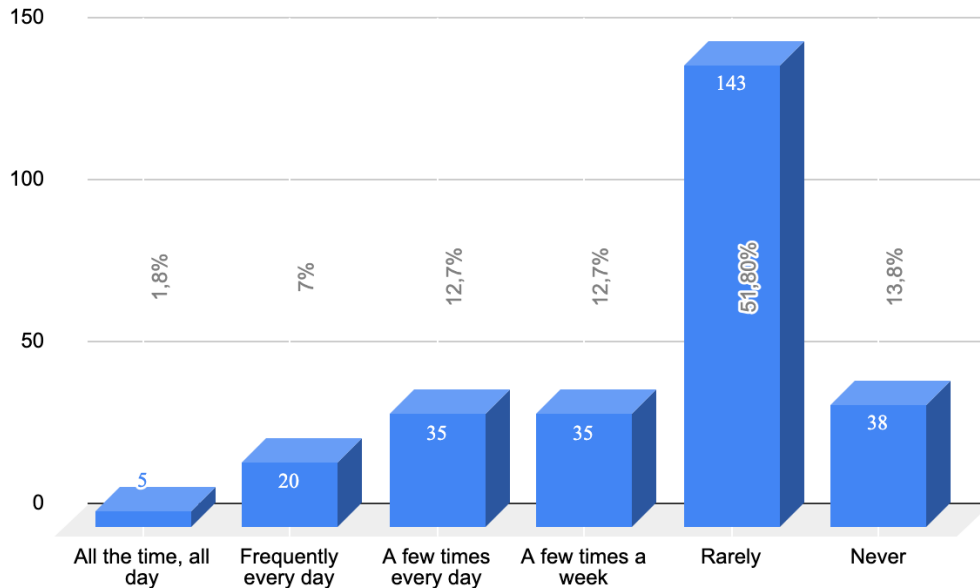
*Fig.1*



*Language use*

The respondents' answers concerning *Frequency of language use* (Item 6) are shown in Figure 2. The data indicates that more than half of the respondents (51,80%) indicated that they use the Kalmyk language 'rarely'.

Fig.2

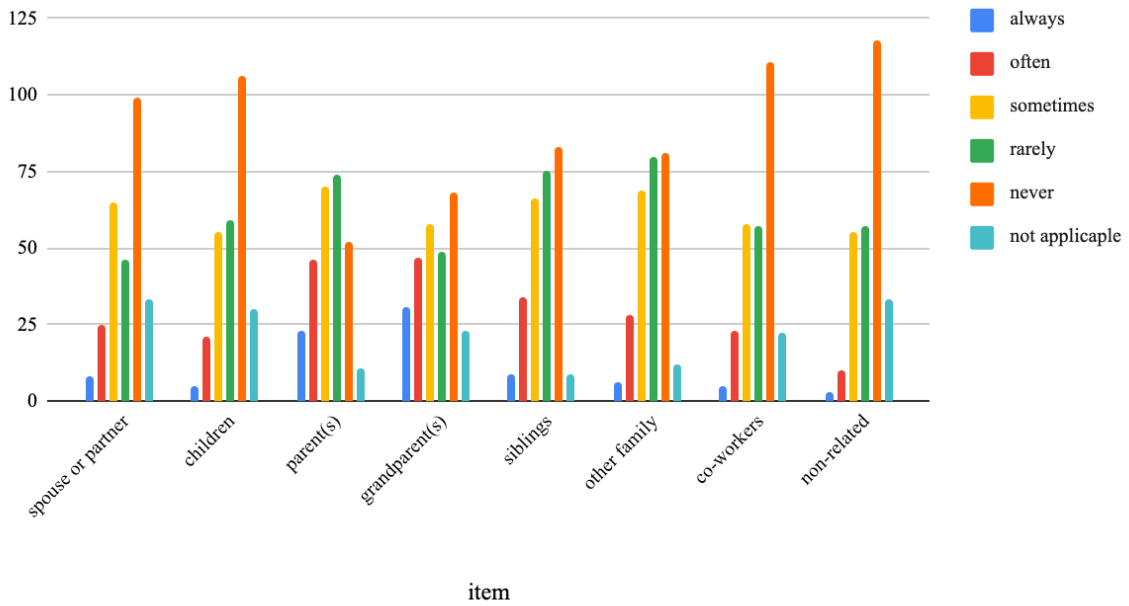


The contexts of language use are categorised into two domains. The first domain is represented by Item 7, 'social relationships', and the second is represented by Item 8, 'setting'. The results are shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4, respectively.

The data from Figure.3 represents the frequency of the Kalmyk language use across social contexts. Overall, it suggests that participants tend to use the language more frequently with 'parents' and 'grandparents' categories.

Fig.3

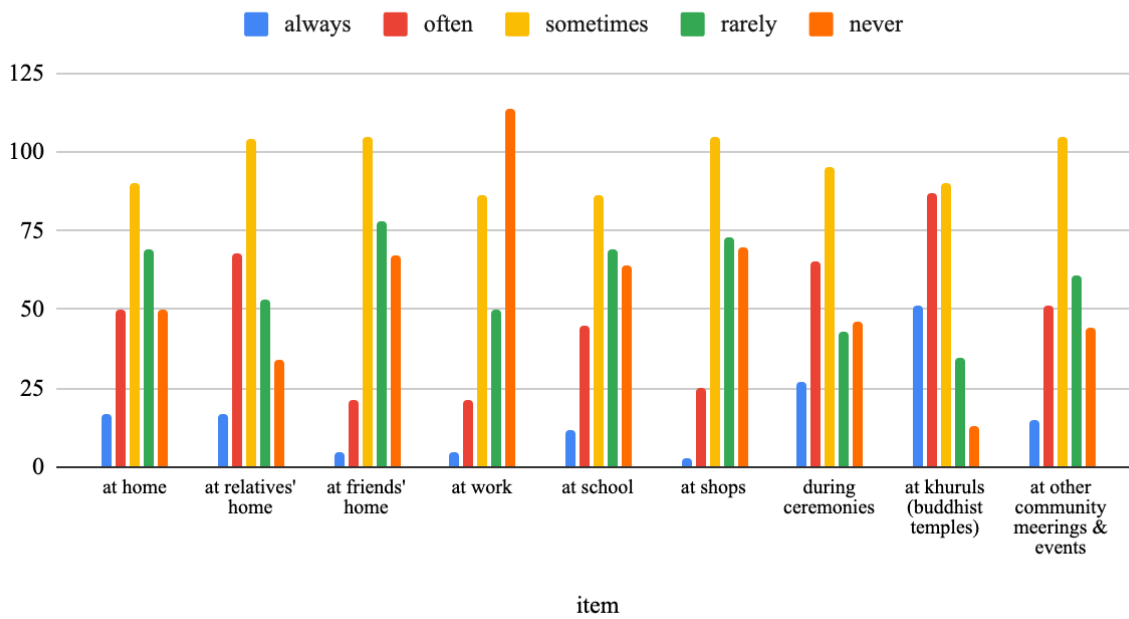
## social relationships



The data from Fig.4 represents a high percentage of respondents' answers indicating 'khuruls' (Buddhist temples) and 'ceremonies' as the setting where the Kalmyk language is most often used”

Fig.4

## setting



The second section of the questionnaire reports the Attitudes toward the Kalmyk language and language activities.

The items concerning the *Attitudes toward the Kalmyk language* express the importance of the Kalmyk language in the following:

9. It is important for Kalmyk language speakers to pass on their language to future generations

10. It is important for me that I know and use Kalmyk

11. It is important for me that my children learn and know Kalmyk

12. Traditional culture (Kalmyk) can survive without the Kalmyk language.

Firstly, the respondents are divided into two groups: Group 1 is composed of the respondents who identified their current residence within the Republic of Kalmykia, and Group 2 is composed of the respondents who identified their current residence outside the Republic of Kalmykia. In addition, each group is divided into two subgroups depending on positive or negative attitudes toward the items, which are determined by the score of the Likert scale. Positive attitudes include answers: 1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3. Somewhat agree. Negative attitudes include: 4 Somewhat disagree, 5 Disagree, 6 Strongly disagree. The results from the respondents' answers are summarised in Tables 4.5, 4.6, 4.7

Table 4.5

Item	Group 1 percentage of respondents with positive attitudes	Group 1 percentage of respondents with negative attitudes	Group 2 percentage of respondents with positive attitudes	Group 2 percentage of respondents with negative attitudes
Transmission to future generations	98,04%	1,96%	100%	0%
I know and use Kalmyk	88,73%	11,27%	91,67%	8,33%
My children learn and know Kalmyk	81,37%	18,63%	90,28%	9,72%

Traditional culture and Kalmyk	86,27%	13,73%	90,28%	9,72%
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Table 4.6

Item	'18-29' positive attitudes	'18-29' negative attitudes	'30-49' positive attitudes	'30-49' negative attitudes	'50-69' positive attitudes	'50-69' negative attitudes	'70+' positive attitudes	'70+' negative attitudes
Transmission to future generations	97.37%	2.63%	99.05%	0.95%	100%	0%	100%	0%
I know and use Kalmyk	81.58%	18.42%	93.33%	6.67%	97.87%	2.13%	100%	0%
My children learn and know Kalmyk	69,30%	30,70%	93,33%	6,67%	95,74%	4,26%	90%	10%
Traditional culture and Kalmyk	83.33%	16.67%	87.62%	12.38%	93.62%	6.38%	100%	0%

Table 4.7

Item	'Female' positive attitudes	'Female' negative attitudes	'Male' positive attitudes	'Male' negative attitudes
Transmission to future generations	98,55%	1,45%	98,48%	1,52%
I know and use Kalmyk	87,92%	12,08%	93,94%	6,06%
My children learn and know Kalmyk	83,09%	16,91%	83,36%	13,64%

Traditional culture and Kalmyk	88,89%	11,11%	83,33%	16,67%
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Table 4.8 is a pivot table that observes the positive attitudes toward all the items across all categories of respondents.

Table 4.8

item	Age '18-29'	Age '30-49'	Age '50-69'	Age '70+'	Residence in the Republic	Residence outside the Republic	Male	Female
Transmission to future generations	97.37%	99.05%	100%	100%	98,04%	100%	98,55%	98,48%
I know and use Kalmyk	81.58%	93.33%	97.87%	100%	88,73%	91,67%	87,92%	93,94%
My children learn and know Kalmyk	69,30%	93,33%	95,74%	90%	81,37%	90,28%	83,09%	83,36%
Traditional culture and Kalmyk	83.33%	87.62%	93.62%	100%	86,27%	90,28%	88,89%	83,33%

The results of Research Question 3, *Attitudes toward the Kalmyk language activities*, are illustrated in Tables 4.9, 4.10, 4.11. The Kalmyk language activities listed in Item 13 are Language courses, Reading newspapers, watching TV/listening to the radio, viewing websites, language classes at school, and attending cultural programs.

The participants are divided into two groups according to the place of current residence: Group 1- in the Republic of Kalmykia and Group 2 outside the Republic. Then, each group is divided into two subgroups depending on positive or negative attitudes toward the items. Positive attitudes include answers: I would participate, and I have already participated. Negative attitudes include: I would NOT participate (Table 4.9).

*Table 4.9*

Item	Group 1 positive attitudes	Group 1 negative attitudes	Group 2 positive attitudes	Group 2 negative attitudes
Language courses	79,41%	20,59%	80,56%	19,44%
Reading newspapers	66,18%	33,82%	63,89%	36,11%
Watching TV/listening to the radio	76,96%	8,33%	76,39%	23,61%
Viewing web-sites	75,49%	24,51%	80,56%	19,44%
Language classes at school	79,41%	20,59%	83,33%	16,67%
Attending cultural programs	83,33%	16,67%	93,06%	6,94%

The respondents are grouped into four age categories: '18-29', '30-49', '50-69', and '70+'. Then, each group is divided into two subgroups according to positive or negative attitudes toward the items (Table 4.10).

*Table 4.10*

Item	'18-29' positive attitudes	'18-29' negative attitudes	'30-49' positive attitudes	'30-49' negative attitudes	'50-69' positive attitudes	'50-69' negative attitudes	'70+' positive attitudes	'70+' negative attitudes
Language courses	74.56%	25.44%	82.86%	17.14%	85.11%	14.89%	80%	20%
Reading newspapers	56.14%	43.86%	69.52%	30.48%	74.47%	25.53%	90%	10%
Watching TV/listening to the radio	67.54%	32.46%	81.90%	18.10%	85.11%	14.89%	90%	10%
Viewing web-sites	74.56%	25.44%	80.95%	19.05%	78.72%	21.28%	50%	50%
Language classes at school	78.07%	21.93%	80.95%	19.05%	85.11%	14.89%	80%	20%
Attending cultural programs	82.46%	17.54%	88.57%	11.43%	89.36%	10.64%	80%	20%

Table 4.11 provides the results from the participants divided according to gender categories: female and male. Then, each group is divided into two subgroups depending on positive or negative attitudes toward the items.

*Table 4.11*

Item	'Female' respondents percentage of positive attitudes	'Female' respondents percentage of negative attitudes	'Male' respondents percentage of positive attitudes	'Male' respondents percentage of negative attitudes
Language courses	80,19%	19,81%	78,79%	21,21%
Reading newspapers	65,22%	34,78%	68,18%	31,82%
Watching	76,33%	23,67%	78,79%	21,21%



TV/listening to the radio				
Viewing web-sites	76,81%	23,19%	78,79%	21,21%
Language classes at school	79,23%	20,77%	84,85%	15,15%
Attending cultural programs	86,96%	13,04%	83,33%	16,67%

Table 4.12 provides an overall percentage of positive attitudes toward all the listed language activities from all the respondents' categories.

*Table 4.12*

Item	Age '18-29'	Age '30-49'	Age '50-69'	Age '70+'	Residence in the Republic	Residence outside the Republic	Male	Female
Language courses	74.56%	82.86%	85.11%	80%	79,41%	80,56%	78,79%	80,19%
Reading newspapers	56.14%	69.52%	74.47%	90%	66,18%	63,89%	68,18%	65,22%
Watching TV/listening to the radio	67.54%	81.90%	85.11%	90%	76,96%	76,39%	78,79%	76,33%
Viewing web-sites	74.56%	80.95%	78.72%	50%	75,49%	80,56%	78,79%	76,81%
Language classes at school	78.07%	80.95%	85.11%	80%	79,41%	83,33%	84,85%	79,23%
Attending cultural programs	82.46%	88.57%	89.36%	80%	83,33%	93,06%	83,33%	86,96%

#### 4.4 Discussion

The project's findings address the current Kalmyk language state and attitudes toward the language and language activities. The results obtained in Research Question 1 support the statement that the Kalmyk language is endangered. The participants' answers, on average, showed a positive attitude toward the language (Research Question 2) and demonstrated a slight difference between the groups of respondents, divided according to their current residence, age, and gender. The findings concerning attitudes toward the language activities (Research Question 3) also reveal a slight difference between the groups and report an overall positive attitude to the language activities.

##### *Research Question 1*

The results on Research Question 1 demonstrate an apparent difference between the Kalmyk language use in childhood and adulthood. This difference, or decline in language use, can be attributed to the finding that most respondents learnt the language in school, as revealed in Item 3. Also, it can be attributed to Kalmyk's low use in the community, as seen from Item 4 results. These results suggest that the Kalmyk language is not currently in active use within the community.

In addition, the findings show that the participants have a low level of language proficiency. A large number of the participants self-evaluated their proficiency as "can only say some words and simple sentences" or "no proficiency" at all. So this also supports the assumption that the Kalmyk language is in a state of decline.

The data on the frequency of language use is in line with the current low usage of the language in the community, as most respondents indicated that they use the Kalmyk language 'rarely'. Hence, it can be suggested that Kalmyk is not frequently used in daily life, so there is another evidence for the language decline.

The project also aimed at investigating the domains of the Kalmyk language use, focusing on 'setting' and 'social relationships'. The findings reveal that the language is mainly used in the context of 'khuruls (Buddhist temples)' and 'ceremonies'. Furthermore, the language is predominantly used with the representatives of a senior generation, namely, parents and grandparents. Thus, it can be supposed that there is little intergenerational transmission and that the language is used in certain specific contexts.

The overall results of the extent and contexts of the Kalmyk language use contribute to the assumption that the Kalmyk language is 'definitely endangered', as Atlas of Endangered Languages (2010) reported. The low proficiency levels, low frequency of use, and limited language use contexts confirm Kalmyk's current decline. The obtained results highlight the importance of efforts to preserve and promote the use of the Kalmyk language, particularly among younger generations, in order to prevent its eventual disappearance.

### *Research Question 2*

The questionnaire section aims to reveal the participants' attitudes toward the Kalmyk language. The participants are divided into the following socio-demographic categories: place of current residence, age, and gender.

The category 'place of current residence' includes two groups of participants: within and outside the Republic of Kalmykia (Table 4.5). Both Group 1 and Group 2 showed a positive attitude towards the transmission of the Kalmyk language to future generations, the importance of knowing and using the language, and the importance of the language in traditional culture. However, Group 2 showed a slightly more positive attitude towards these aspects compared to Group 1. Similarly, two groups of the participants expressed an apparent positive attitude toward their children learning and knowing Kalmyk, again with a more favourable attitude of Group 2.

Regarding the age category, participants demonstrate a highly positive attitude toward the Kalmyk language (Table 4.6). However, a slight gradation can be seen: the older the age category is, the more positive attitude it expresses. These results can be attributed to the fact that older participants may have a stronger connection to traditional culture and language.

Furthermore, the results suggest that gender does not influence the participants' attitude toward the Kalmyk language, as both male and female respondents expressed an evident positive attitude toward it (Table 4.7).

Overall, the results of section 1 demonstrate a positive attitude towards the Kalmyk language among the participants, regardless of their socio-demographic categories (Table 4.8). Still, it is interesting to note that there is a slightly lower level of positive attitudes towards the item 'my children know and use Kalmyk' compared to the item on 'transmission to a future generation'. This may suggest that although the participants value the importance of the

Kalmyk language transmission to future generations, they do not see it necessary for their own children to know and use the language. It can be due to the low command of Kalmyk among parents and limited domains of language use as it can be seen from the results on the Research Question 1 .

However, as the obtained results report on a generally positive attitude toward the Kalmyk language, it can be suggested that there is a high potential for successfully taking measures to maintain and promote the Kalmyk language.

### *Research Question 3*

The results of Research Question 3, participants' attitudes toward the Kalmyk language activities, show that all the respondents' categories have an evident positive attitude toward this aspect. However, it is to be noted that socio-demographic factors, namely age, gender, and place of residence, may influence respondents' attitudes toward certain activities.

The most engaging activity for respondents in all categories is 'Attending cultural programs', and the least attractive activity is 'Reading newspapers' (besides the age category '70+').

These findings suggest cultural activities may be more effective than traditional language learning methods, such as reading newspapers or taking language courses. As discussed in §3.2, cultural activities aim at language learning mainly by developing closer ties to the heritage values of the community and the community itself (Hinton, 2011).

Moreover, it is interesting to note that there are similarities between the respondents' attitudes toward each kind of the listed language activities.

By comparing the percentages across different categorical variables on attitudes to the Kalmyk language activities, the following results can be observed (Table 4.12):

Positive attitude toward participation in 'Language courses' is higher with a higher age category (besides category '70+', however, this can be explained by the fact that the majority of the representatives of this category have a good command of Kalmyk).

Positive attitude toward participation in 'Language courses' is slightly higher for the respondents who reside outside the Republic compared to those who reside in the Republic. As for the gender category, male respondents express a little higher positive attitude toward this item than female respondents.

On the whole, the positive attitude toward 'Reading newspapers in Kalmyk' is lower than toward other listed activities. An apparent increase in positive attitudes toward this activity can be seen with an increase in the age category of the respondents. The 'male' representatives' are more inclined toward this activity. Participants with a residence in the Republic express a higher percentage of a positive attitude toward the item.

In all categories of respondents, the activity of "Watching TV/listening to the radio in Kalmyk" demonstrated similar patterns of response.

The data shows that a positive attitude toward the 'Viewing websites in Kalmyk' activity differs across age groups. The highest willingness to participate in this activity is expressed by the '30-49' age category, then '50-69', '18-29', and '70+'. As for the gender category, males have a higher percentage than females. Furthermore, respondents who reside outside the Republic demonstrate a more favourable attitude.

The results concerning 'Language classes activities at school' show an overall positive attitude from the respondents. In age categories, the highest percentage was expressed by '50-69', then the category '30-49', then '70+', and finally '18-29'. The respondents who reside outside the Republic express a more favourable attitude to this activity. According to the gender category, male respondents have a higher percentage than females.

The data indicates an activity, 'Attending cultural programs', to have more positive attitudes from the respondents of all the categories. The lowest level of positive attitudes toward this activity comes from the '70+' category. A gradual increase in the percentage figures can be observed as the age category of the respondents increases. Females have a more favourable attitude toward this activity. Also, respondents with a residence outside the Republic express a more positive attitude toward the item than those who reside there.

#### *Implications and limitations of the project*

Overall, the project's findings describe the current Kalmyk language state and participants' attitudes toward the Kalmyk language and language activities. The project's theoretical implications contribute to the existing sociolinguistic literature on the current state of the Kalmyk language. Furthermore, the project may have practical implications: the findings can be used to develop language preservation and promotion strategies based on the attitudes toward the Kalmyk language. In addition, the project provides valuable insights into the

attitudes of different categories of respondents toward various Kalmyk language activities. These findings may be helpful for language teachers, policymakers, and individuals who want to promote the Kalmyk language and culture.

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current project is subject to limitations. The methodological choices were constrained by time and resources. The questionnaire-based study is limited in its structure: the number of questions does not include all the aspects to investigate fully the extent and contexts of language use (Research Question 1). Additionally, potential response bias or inaccuracy in respondents' answers can occur.

Another potential problem can be measuring complex constructs such as attitude to the language and language activities (Research Questions 2,3). Self-administered questionnaires may be insufficient to capture the actual respondents' beliefs and behaviours. As Bradley and Bradley (2019) note, it is crucial to use direct observation besides questionnaires and interviews for language attitudes study.

A further limitation is sample bias, as participants were recruited on a voluntary basis. Consequently, a sample can be non-representative, and could impact the obtained results and limit the generalisability of the findings.

## Conclusion

The present thesis has discussed the case of the Kalmyk language in the context of language endangerment. The main goals of the thesis were: (1) to apply sociolinguistic theoretical notions to the current Kalmyk language state and (2) to carry out a small-scale project to further investigate the Kalmyk situation and study attitudes toward language and language activities.

To introduce the context of the Kalmyk language endangerment, the following concepts were considered: language policy and planning, language identity and attitudes, and language reclamation.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Kalmyk language is 'definitely endangered' (Atlas of the world's languages in danger, 2010). In order to understand the causes of the present language condition, the sociolinguistic settings in the Republic of Kalmykia were contextualised, and a brief history of the Kalmyk language development was described. This overview suggests that historical events' consequences can be considered the main factors contributing to the current language state. Whereas today, political and economic factors chiefly influence the Kalmyk language's decline.

From the perspective of language policy and planning implementation in the Republic of Kalmykia, overall governmental authorities and public organisations are interested in maintaining the Kalmyk language. The language is officially recognised and has legal support from the federal and local levels. Also, Kalmyk is presented in the curriculum of all educational institutions and cultural spheres. Nevertheless, the language remains at risk of decline despite the implemented policies. This situation may be due to the narrowing of the spheres of practical use of the language since the Russian language occupies a dominant position in society (Bitkeeva, 2006).

Chapter 3 served as an overview of the concepts of language identity and attitudes and their role in the process of language reclamation. Although strong identification with a language and a positive attitude to it do not guarantee its vitality, these concepts are still crucial in language maintenance/ or revitalisation process (Sallabank, 2011). In the case of the Kalmyk language, the speakers view their language as an integral aspect of their ethnic identity mainly due to its symbolic association with the ethnic group rather than its use (Namrueva,

2020). Therefore, it can be proposed to develop strategies and programs for preserving the Kalmyk language, focusing not only on ethnocultural aspects, as is currently the case, but also on implementation in social spheres: public, academic, and professional.

In order to address the second objective of the dissertation, a small research project involving 276 participants was carried out.

The main findings confirmed the endangered status of the Kalmyk language. The results showed a low level of proficiency in the Kalmyk among the participants and a low frequency and limited contexts of its use. However, the respondents demonstrated generally positive attitudes toward the language and towards activities in which that language is used. Still, it is worth noting that the results may be limited in validity as a direct method of attitude assessment was only used. In fact, it is possible that utilising indirect approach methods to studying language attitudes would show different results.

Language endangerment is a challenging issue which demands close attention and effective response. The present work provides a descriptive analysis of the current Kalmyk language state. It can serve as a starting point for future research to provide a more thorough investigation of the topic.

A further study could examine potential correlations between language use and attitudes. Furthermore, a more comprehensive analysis of attitudes toward the Kalmyk language and language-related activities is needed to obtain more reliable and valid data for developing effective strategies and programs for language maintenance. Finally, future research could investigate the role of ethnolinguistic identity in the Kalmyk language transmission and use in order to consider its influence on language maintenance.



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8) Head of the Republic of Kalmykia. (2012, August 3). Decree N 103 on the Public Council for the Development of the Kalmyk Language. Retrieved from <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/460200084>



## Appendix A: Old Kalmyk writing system ‘Todo bičig’

### Vowels

Initial	ᠠ	ᠡ	ᠢ	ᠣ	ᠤ	ᠥ	ᠦ	ᠨ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	
Medial	ᠠ	ᠡ	ᠢ	ᠣ	ᠤ	ᠥ	ᠦ	ᠨ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	
Final	ᠠ	ᠡ	ᠢ	ᠣ	ᠤ	ᠥ	ᠦ	ᠨ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	
Latin	a	e	i	o	ö	u	ü	aa	ee	ii	oo	öö	uu	üü

### Consonants

Initial	ᠨ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
Medial	ᠨ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
Final	ᠨ	ᠬ					ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ			ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
Latin	n	b	h/γ	g	k	x	m	l	r	t	d	y	z/ʃ	s	w/v

## Appendix B: Modern Kalmyk writing system

Аа Әә Бб Вв Гг Һһ Дд Ее Ёё Жж  
Жж Зз Ии Йй Кк Лл Мм Нн Њң Оо  
Өө Пп Рр Сс Тт Уу Үү Фф Хх Цц  
Чч Шш Щщ Ъъ Ыы Ьь Ээ Юю Яя

## Appendix C: The project's questionnaire

Dear respondent,

This survey is carried out as part of the Master's research project at the University Ca' Foscari, Venice.

This questionnaire is aimed at studying the state of the Kalmyk language, attitudes towards the language, and language activities.

Your answers will help in this study.

The questionnaire is anonymous, and the data obtained will be analysed through statistical generalisation.

Thank you for participation in this study.

### Section 1

#### Language background and Language use

- 1) What language did you speak in your childhood? You may list more than one.

- 2) What is the language that you speak most often now? You may list more than one.

- 3) What language is most commonly used in your community now? You may list more than one.

- 4) How well do you speak the Kalmyk language? Please tick the most appropriate answer.

I do not speak the language at all.

- I can say some words and simple sentences.
- I can have a conversation in limited situations. I cannot express everything in this language.
- I can have a conversation about everything in all situations. I can express almost everything in this language.

5) When and how did you learn the Kalmyk language? Please tick all that apply.

- As a child
- As an adult
- From my parents
- From my grandparents
- At work
- On my own
- In school
- Through a language program
- From books
- On television
- I never learned the language
- From language speakers outside my family
- Other (please specify below)

6) How often do you currently speak the Kalmyk language? Please tick the most appropriate answer.

- all the time, all day
- Frequently every day
- A few times every day
- A few times a week
- Rarely
- Never

7) Who do you talk to in the Kalmyk language and how often? Please tick the most appropriate answer for each category of people.

Person(s)	always	often	sometimes	rarely	never	not applicable
Spouse or partner						
Children						
Parent(s)						
Grandparent(s)						
Siblings						
Other family members						
Co-workers						
Non-related community members						

8) Where and how often do you hear the Kalmyk language being spoken? Please tick the appropriate answer for each place.

Where	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
at home					
at relatives' home					
at friends' home					
at work					
at school					
at shops					
during ceremonies					
at khuruls					

(Buddhist temples)					
At other community meetings & events					

## Section 2

### Language attitude and attitude towards language activities

9) What is the name of the language you identify with? You may list more than one.

10) Traditional culture (Kalmyk) can survive without the Kalmyk language.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11) It is important for Kalmyk language speakers to pass their language knowledge to future generations.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12) The use of Kalmyk language is a strong part of my identity as a Kalmyk person..

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13) It is important to me that I know and use the Kalmyk language.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

14) It is important to me that my children learn and use the Kalmyk language.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

15) Enough is being done to support the use of the Kalmyk language in my community.

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

16) Would you be interested in the following language activities? Or have you already participated in any of them. Please tick your answers.

Activities	I would <b>NOT</b> participate	I would participate	I have already participated
Attending the Kalmyk language classes			
Reading newspapers written in the Kalmyk language			
Watching TV or listening to radio programs carried out in the Kalmyk language			
Viewing websites where the content is in the Kalmyk language			
Using language curriculums for schools			
Attending Kalmyk			



language cultural programs			
Other			

### Section 3

#### Personal information

17) Which age group do you belong to?

- 18- 29
- 30- 49
- 50- 69
- 70 + years

18) What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other

19) Where do you currently live?

20) What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- Primary school
- Secondary school
- High school
- Secondary education

- University degree
- Other (please specify below)