

The Conflict of Languages of Power and Languages of Identity:

Issues of Regionalism, Nationalism, and Globalism

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Abstract

This study investigates, through careful consideration of three case studies – Tajikistan, Kenya, and Ukraine – the conflict that exists between languages that construct power and those that construct identity. It looks first at the linguistic history of each region and discusses how history has shaped the current linguistic landscape. It then moves on to examine how power and identity are manifested and maintained through language, and finally evaluates the effect of the conflict of languages on social and economic development. It concludes that the existence of a language of power excludes groups that determine their identities through another language from engaging in opportunities for advancement.

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Introduction

“Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, ‘Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, ‘Come, let’s build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.’

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.’

So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel – because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.” (Genesis 11:1-9)

Our planet plays host to some 6,000 distinct languages. Of these, some are official state languages. They are used in formal state education, in governance, and public advertising campaigns. Many others – in fact, the vast majority – are minority languages, including ethnic languages, which in some cases are omitted from schooling and official interaction. This does not suggest that they are linguistically invalid. Nor does it detract from their import to the groups that use them or to the geographical areas where they are heard. While some languages connote and grant power, others conduct and illustrate identity and culture. Languages both of power and of identity hold important value in their societies. In many cases, however, languages of identity and their speakers find themselves threatened by state language policies that denounce them and that raise the speakers of the official language to an elite status. These policies necessarily place speakers of other

languages in a lower social class, condemning them to underdevelopment and excluding them from opportunities for advancement. This paper presents a discussion of power and identity languages, and examines case studies of three groups – the Pamiri peoples in Tajikistan, the urban youth population of Kenya, and the Kiev population of Ukraine. In each case, there is a disconnect between the construction of power through language and the construction of identity through language. It is this disconnect that perpetuates underdevelopment for specific groups.

Methodology

This study conducts research into the relationship between language policy, power, identity, and underdevelopment. It first examines the literature that exists, and then analyzes three specific case studies – Tajikistan, Kenya, and Ukraine. In each case, the study examines the linguistic history and the current situation of language use. It then delves into the manifestation of power in each country, as well as the development of identity for a specific group. Finally, it looks at development issues and considers how the linguistic landscape creates situations of underdevelopment.

Theoretical and Literature Review

The literature addressing the conflict between linguistic power and language identity is extensive and, at times, enters into great debate. It looks at the explanations behind the emergence of a language of power, and at the ways in which that power is manifested in the community. It also looks at how language creates identity, for sub-state level groups, for state-building groups, and for groups looking toward global cultures. It

finally examines how language is related to underdevelopment and minority-group exclusion.

Joseph (1987) argues that when one community's language or dialect asserts itself as the official or standard language, it is "both a manifestation of that community's power and a base for expanding it" (p. 43). That is, it is the powerful community that is able to endorse its own native or preferred language as "official," and, in a cycle that returns greater power to the already powerful, it is the official language that grants power to its native speakers. Accepting that this is the case, the literature examines why one language might come to power over another, and in what ways power then becomes manifested within a community.

In questioning why one language becomes more power than another – or many others – scholars offer a great many explanations. Kymlicka and Grin (2003) argue that the mere nature of society demands that one language be chosen over another (p. 9). One language must be used in such arenas as public administration, courts, bureaucracy, the military, schools, the media, and signage, because it would be highly inefficient – even if such a thing were possible – to conduct these public spaces in all languages one might hear or use in a given community (Kymlicka & Grin, 2003, p. 9). The simple fact that one language becomes so publicly visible and necessary will make it fare better than the minority languages not in public use (Kymlicka & Grin, 2003, p. 9). Languages in constant, official use are better equipped to succeed in a given linguistic environment.

Cooper (1989) defines language planning as a "deliberate [effort] to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes" (p. 45, as cited in Robinson, 1996, p. 12-13). Given this definition,

official language policies attempt to dictate how citizens communicate with each other, and which languages are acceptable in which arenas. Many scholars claim that deliberate language planning in general – though, as evidenced by the situation in Ukraine, not always – causes the official language to be that of the elite, for it is those who are in power who determine the linguistic landscape of a country (Marten, 2012, p. 33), and, inevitably, the language they choose to support will be the one they themselves speak with the most ease. Robinson (1996) further asserts that the basis for a country's language policy may not include linguistic factors at all, but rather be primarily “non-linguistic issues, such as the maintenance of [elites], power prestige or socio-economic status” (p. 23). Thus, a ruling class might use language policy as a tool for maintaining the status quo of both political and economic power.

Another factor that certainly affects which languages hold power over others is imperialism. All three cases examined in the present are taken from countries with a history of imperialist rule. Both Tajikistan and Ukraine came, at different times, and with different intensities, under Soviet rule, and Kenya was, until 1963, an overseas colony of Great Britain. Colonial history has, in each case, played some role in the creation of a language of power. Robinson (1996) cites colonialism as a source of socio-cultural identity conflict (p. 243), which results in an imbalance of power where one group can assert its language as one of power. Joseph (1987) states that in a situation of imperialism, “if... the conquerors possess the more prestigious culture, they may press hard for the imposition of their language, both to assert their cultural dominance and to assimilate the conquered people” (p. 45-46). Furthermore, “if the subordinate-group members do not make the necessary adjustments, then the dominant group... may pass official acts of enforcement”

(Joseph, 1987, p. 46). In this case, the colonial power's language will become the language of the elite, even within the colonized state. This was the case, as discussed in this study, in Tajikistan, Kenya, and Ukraine, at some point in the countries' histories.

Finally, there is a gap in the ability to assert the power of written and non-written languages. "Writing," Joseph (1987) argues, "has a visible, palpable material reality that speech lacks" (p. 37). It is this reality that allows it to become the more powerful language, for it has more legitimacy than spoken-only languages. Since many ethnic and tribal languages lack writing systems, it is easy for them to lose power when a written language comes into play.

The literature then moves to look at the ways in which power is manifested. When one language becomes the medium of communication in public spaces, those whose language differs become marginalized. Le Page (1985) points out that this encompasses "the vast majority of the people in the world" whose "vernacular community" is one that uses a language that is not "the language of the law of politics, of education" (p. 236). Power is thus presented as "unequal access to resources" such as education, information, and employment (Robinson, 1996, p. 245).

Joseph (1987) writes that the institutions of education maintain a language's power (p. 43). While it allows the standard language to "spread to those who did not previously have access" to it, it also establishes that language's superiority (Joseph, 1987, p. 44-45). Therefore, while instructing school children in the language that gives its speakers power invites them into that group with access to power, it also reaffirms that one language is "higher" than others and reaffirms the idea that social lines are drawn along linguistic boundaries.

Additionally, scholars argue that a language can assert its power through by creating an elite composed solely of its own speakers. When one group is considered superior, this status will be transferred to the language itself, as social “prestige... tends to be converted into [linguistically] ‘good, correct’” (Le Page, 1985, p. 236). Thus, speakers of a higher language become synonymous with a country’s upper class. Kelman (1971) writes that the use of a Western language in a non-Western country – using English in Kenya, for instance – creates an elite and widens the social gap (p. 43, as cited in Robinson, 1996, p. 21). Hand in hand with the creation of an elite of power language speakers, a stigma against non-speakers is necessarily formed when one language holds power, and it is these people who become marginalized.

In addition to conducting power, the literature generally agrees, language plays some role in the creation and maintenance of identity, though there is some debate over the extent of this role. Iraki (n.d.) stresses that “language is one of the most important conveyors and repositories of culture” (p. 1), and Robinson (1996), that language becomes “a symbol of belonging, a distinguishing feature with respect to other groups, or a means to (re)discover a cultural tradition (p. 5). Fromkin (2007) refers to local language as “the major medium through which a culture is maintained” (p. 487). Thus, it seems that all three scholars feel deeply that identity can be found in one’s language. These arguments clarify the reasoning behind language preservation, a process by which, “under the sponsorship of language clubs, and occasionally even governments, adults and children learn an endangered language as a symbol of the culture” (Fromkin, 2007, p. 487). Eastman (1984), on the other hand, claims that though languages may change, that change does not necessarily predict a shift in or a loss of ethnic identity (p. 274-275, as cited in Robinson,

1996, p. 20). Joseph (1987), too, points out that “ethnic identity can be maintained and will be maintained in the absence of language maintenance [and] that the latter is too costly to contribute to the ultimate social good” (p. 48). Thus, clearly the idea that language is a necessary measure of identity construction does not reflect universal thinking.

Some of the identity language discussion relates to regionalism (for the purposes of this paper, the somewhat ambiguous term will refer to sub-state groups). That literature looks primarily at the relationship that mother tongues and ethnic languages have to the official state language. Le Page (1985) suggests that “members of a group who feel their cultural and political identity is threatened” are more interested than others in protecting their mother tongue (p. 236). Robinson (1996) holds that a local language serves “as the means of access to and expression of local cultural identity” (p. 249). All over the world, languages are spoken by regional ethnic groups in countries composed of any number of ethnicities, and are a way of maintaining ethnic identity. This study explores regionalism as it exists in Tajikistan, with regard to the Pamiri groups in the country’s southeastern province.

A second form of identity that can be expressed through language is national identity. In many places, state building has become an important process by which regional groups can be brought together to coexist peacefully. This has been of particular importance in the post-colonial era where in many cases state lines do not reflect ethnic borders. Blackwood (2012), in comparing the linguistic landscapes of France and Italy, finds that in countries where the state is stressed over identity, where minority ethnicity is seen as subordinate to national culture, language laws and policies will require the national language to appear alongside any other language (p. 113). Furthermore, the

“homogenization [of ethnic groups] will help to create feelings of national identity and trust, shared sympathies and loyalties” (Mill, 1972, as cited in Kymlicka & Grin, 2003, p. 12) so that state building can occur. This homogenization should not reflect one group overpowering the other or others, but rather all groups coming together as one body (Kymlicka & Grin, 2003, p. 12). Nationalism will be discussed here through the case of Nairobi, Kenya, which has a history of ethnic conflict and where nation building is critical to peace and development.

Finally, language can help to build global identity. Joseph (1987) states that knowing a “standard” language, one can build globalization and enter into world culture (p. 48). Additionally, Robinson (1996), while stressing the importance of maintaining regional cultural identity through a mother tongue, admits that globalization has made multilingualism, and especially Western languages, invaluable (p. 5). In this era of growing interconnectedness, the need to be able to participate in global, interethnic trade has never been greater. For this reason, there is a discussion of lingua francas, and a comment that “minority groups accept the requirement that they should learn the majority language” (Kymlicka & Grin, 2003, p. 12). Globalism is in this study represented in the case of Ukraine, where residents of Kiev seek to construct an international culture and engage outside of state boundaries.

Underdevelopment ties closely identity and power issues. Pool (1972) cites a link between language diversity and underdevelopment, noting that where the greatest linguistic diversity exists, so too the greatest development problems endure (as cited in Robinson, 1996, p. 26). Identity groups who choose to favor their ethnic languages over the language of power that surrounds them will forever find barriers to their human, social,

and political development. With this in mind, Momanyi (2009) argues that “any country that values the development of its people must incorporate them in all development processes” (p. 129), and this includes utilizing their own language. Robinson (1996), conducting research in Cameroon, presents findings that “all [development agents there] responded that the principle language they use... is French” (p. 204). This necessarily excludes non-speakers from development opportunities. However, when questioned about this, agents responded that “instructions could not be given to staff to learn the local language since there is no government policy to that effect” (Robinson, 1996, p. 205). Thus, again, it becomes clear that official state language policy excludes certain groups.

Tajikistan: The Pamiri Peoples and Regionalism

Historical Background

Today’s Tajiks consider their nation to be some twelve hundred years old, citing as its founder the leader Ismaili Somoni (Hickson, 2003, p. 354). This, however, is a retrospective conclusion. It would actually be centuries before the nation was consolidated into a single state. While the Tajiks came under Russian Tsarist rule in the eighteenth century, the “development of an independent nation and [its] linkage to a larger state identity” did not occur until the 1925 creation of a Tajik region of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (Hickson, 2003, p. 354). The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was separated from the Uzbek state in 1929 (Hickson, 2003, 355). Included in these borders were the mountainous Pamiri lands in the eastern part of the Tajik possessions. Soviet power lent significant wealth to the region, and saw huge increases in education and literacy, even in

the most rural areas of the state (Bliss, 2006, p. 4-5). Following the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990's, six newly independent Central Asian states – Tajikistan included – were established as homelands for their titular majorities – in the case of Tajikistan, the Tajik peoples (Rubin, 2006, p. 7). This created some friction among the minority populations in all six states, which in Tajikistan erupted into civil war in 1992. The Tajik Civil War was resolved in 1997 with the signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord, following years of negotiations.

The focus of this discussion will be on the conflict between the official language of Tajikistan and those languages of Gorno-Badakhshan whose speakers divide into over forty ethnic groups and whose isolation from each other and from the capital have allowed them to maintain a separate identity. A short discussion of the history of the Gorno-Badakhshan region and its people, therefore, is necessary.

In 1904, Russia annexed the Pamiri lands, which fell then under the control of the Tsar and later of Soviet Communism (Akiner, 1986, p. 376). Upon creating a Tajik region within the Uzbek SSR, The Osobaja Pripamirskaija Oblast (Special Pamir Province) became the only autonomous province within the Tajik region (Akiner, 1986, p. 376; Bliss, 2006, p. 245). The oblast had a single town and no settlements (Akiner, 1986, p. 376). This status as an autonomous oblast carried significant meaning in the era of Soviet rule, and much of that significance remains. The region had the right to be represented in the Soviet of Nationalities, one of two chambers of the Supreme Soviet (Bliss, 2006, p. 245). The Soviet of Nationalities was composed equally of the nationalities represented in the Soviet Republics. Gaining a voice within the Soviet granted some power and independence to the ethnic groups of the Gorno-Badakhshan region, allowing, for the first time, the opportunity

for Pamiri concerns and needs to be heard by the entire Soviet Union. Additionally, the province gained, in being classified as an autonomous oblast, the right to determine its own official language (Bliss, 2006, p. 245). While this was true in theory only, and never put into practice, it is clear that “the oblast’s autonomous status was intended... to assure conservation of national and ethno-linguistic differences” (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 18). Today, the region remains the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) of independent Tajikistan. Its people are almost exclusively members of one of the seven Pamiri groups, and mother tongue speakers of one of the Pamiri languages.

Linguistic History and the Current Linguistic Landscape

Tajikistan has a rather complex linguistic history. Prior to 1928, the Tajik language was written in the Arabic script and was nearly indistinguishable from the Iranian Farsi language (Bliss, 2006, p. 77). In 1928, during the push toward universal literacy, the Soviet government changed the Tajik writing system to the Latin alphabet (Bliss, 2006, p. 77). In the early 1940s, during the era of Russification of all Soviet national republics, Stalin ordered the writing system to again be changed, so that the language was written in Cyrillic (Bliss, 2006, p. 77). Along with this change, Arabic loan words were replaced with the corresponding Russian terms (Fouse, 2000, p. 313). These official changes to the language used by the population of Central and Western Tajikistan constituted “a serious setback for the entire education system, and led to large numbers of the population... becoming illiterate again” (Hayit, as cited in Bliss, 2006, p. 77). Today the language remains written in the Cyrillic script, and Russian influence, particularly in the cities of Tajikistan, persists.

Soviet imperialism, then, has played a major role in shaping the linguistic landscape that exists today, some twenty years after the country declared its independence.

As discussed below, Tajiki is only one of many languages used in the country. Each of the Pamiri groups uses its own language for intra-group communication. Akiner (1986) notes that there exist references to at least three such languages – Shugni, Rushani, and Wakhi – from as early as the second century (p. 375). Shugni was even allowed, briefly from 1931 until 1937 to be used as a language of instruction, and to develop a Latin script (Bliss, 2006, p. 77). However, with the advent of Russification in Tajikistan, this privilege was revoked and Tajiki, Russian, and Uzbek became the only languages allowed in school. Shugni remains the most widely used and understood of the Pamiri languages.

Currently, only Tajiki is recognized as an official language of Tajikistan. Russian is no longer given any official authority, though it continues to be pervasive in Tajik society and social interaction, as well as in the media. There also exist a number of Pamir ethnic languages, each spoken by one small group. These include Shugni, Bajuwi, Rushani, Bartangi, Roshorvi, Khufi, Sarikoli, Yazgulami, Wakhi, Ishkashimi, Sangliche, and Zebaki (Dodykhudoeva, 2004, p. 148-149). These languages are not given governmental or legal official status, though a 1989 law granted legal recognition of the autonomy of, and an allowance for the development of, the languages of the Pamirs (Dodykhudoeva, 2004, p. 149). Up until that point, however, with the exception of six years in the 1930s, no recognition had ever been given to the ethnic languages of the mountainous eastern province.

Shugni is by far the mother tongue of the largest number of Pamiri peoples. Bliss (2006) writes that most or all dialect speakers in the Roshân region speak Shungi with

some measure of competence, and are able to use it to communicate (p. 101). The Ishkhashimi language has all but died out, and Ishkashimis have adopted Shugni as “the lingua franca of [the] microregion” to communicate within their group, and with nearby groups (Bliss, 2006, p. 101). Tajiki, too, has become a lingua franca, and one that can be used to communicate with Central and Western Tajiks, as communication between the Pamiri peoples and other groups in Tajikistan becomes more critical (Rastorgueva, as cited in Lewis, 1972, p. 29). It is also the language used in education, government, and administration.

The differences between Tajiki and Pamiri ethnic languages, however, make it difficult for mother tongue speakers of a Pamiri language to learn and use Tajiki comfortably. Tajiki is related to the West-Iranian group, while Pamiri languages are more closely descended from the North-Iranian language group, which also includes Ossetian and Pashtu (Janata, 1975, as cited in Bliss, 2006, p. 94). Thus, the Pamiri languages are not by any means mutually intelligible with Tajiki, and they also share few similarities and instances of overlap with one another (Bliss, 2006, p. 98). Thus, engagement, both with Central Tajiks and with Pamiris of foreign ethnic groups requires the reliance on a language completely unrelated to the mother tongue.

The Construction of Power Through Language

Tajikistan, like many transitioning and developing countries, is a state in which ethnic origin and language are highly relevant to the granting of political power (Dodykhudoeva, 2004, p. 148). The literature examined above has discussed why one language might hold higher prestige in a country than another. Tajikistan’s complicated

linguistic history has included many instances of deliberate language planning where one language has been favored over others. At all times of language policy, Tajiki has been given favor over Pamiri languages, by allowing it to rule in education, and in government and administration. Even during the period of Korenizatsiia, when Soviet support for minority groups was high, and native languages were to be used in education and administration (Fouse, 2000, p. 313), only Tajiki – and for a short time, Shugni – were to be given such privilege. Additionally, as mentioned above, though the 1989 Language Law recognized the autonomy of all Pamiri languages, the 1992 Constitution clearly designates only Tajiki as a legal and official state language. Tajiki, then, through official language laws, becomes a language of power.

Additionally, as Joseph (1987) points out, written language holds more legitimacy than does spoken language. Written languages are able to maintain and preserve culture through literature. However, no Pamiri language has had the opportunity to create a written tradition (Akiner, 1986, p. 378). Even today, most Pamiri languages have no script, so it has been hard for them to develop any sustainable literature (Dodykhudoeva, 2004, p. 149). Because Tajiki has the most stable writing system of the languages used in Tajikistan, Russian aside, it has been able to assert its influence over all groups.

As discussed in the literature, power of a language is manifested in a few ways. When Shugni was outlawed as a language of instruction in 1937, Russian and Tajiki became the only languages allowed in the classroom (Bliss, 2006, p. 77). Education, then, is most readily available to students in Central and Western Tajikistan where Tajiki is also the language used in the household. Employment opportunities, too, are made available primarily to speakers of Tajiki, as well as speakers of Russian. The two languages allow

would-be employees “to benefit from a range of training and job opportunities which would otherwise have remained closed to them” (Bliss, 2006, p. 256). Students who attend school in a language different from the one they heard at home are less adequately prepared to learn Russian, as they must, at the same time, struggle to learn Tajiki. Students for whom the language barrier makes obtaining any level of education difficult are further excluded from employment because they lack knowledge of the official language.

The Construction of Identity Through Language

In Tajikistan, a sub-state identity is being created and maintained. Culture becomes indistinguishable from language, and communicating through ethnic languages becomes critical to the preservation of identity. The Pamiri peoples, residing in the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, have, due to the isolation of their existence, distanced themselves culturally from the Tajiks to the West of their province, and from each other. Pamiri people, Bliss (2006) discovered through anthropological research, do not identify as Tajik or even Pamiri, but rather as belonging to their particular ethnic group within the broad category of “Pamiri” (p. 91-92), which includes, according to the 1989 census, 47 nationalities in GBAO alone (p. 245). Thus, “the Pamiris are small communities living in close proximity, but representing quite distinct ethnic groups” (Akiner, 1986, p. 374). Like their languages, their cultures are “related, but mutually incomprehensible” (Akiner, 1986, p. 374).

The differentiation of the culture of the Pamiri peoples stems, at least in great part, from physical, geographic isolation. Akiner (1986) describes GBAO as “one of the most remote [areas] in the whole of the Soviet Union” (p. 375), and Lewis (1972) points to the

Pamiri peoples residing there as “inhabiting almost inaccessible areas of the [Gorno-Badakhshan] mountainous regions (p. 29). The region known as Roshân, home to the Rushani language, in particular is “cut off for months from the outside world,” as dangerous mountain passes close through the winter, sometimes for as long as six months (Bliss, 2006, p. 184). The bombings during the Civil War magnified the isolation experienced by residents of GBAO, as they destroyed the roads linking the region to the capital (Bliss, 2006, p. 4). Though the overland pass eventually re-opened in 1998 (Bliss, 2006, p. 7), for years “GBAO was completely cut off from the rest of Tajikistan after the road to Gharm had been destroyed” (p. 297). Thus the civil war, on top of natural isolation, contributed hugely to the difficulties of communicating between groups “in a high mountain region traversed by raging rivers and where only narrow passes (snowed in for months in winter) lead from one valley to another” (Bliss, 2006, p. 184). The isolation of the Pamiri peoples from each other, and from their Tajik neighbors to the West have allowed them to be “remarkably successful until recently in preserving their native tongue” (Lewis, 1972, p. 29). With the preservation of native language has also come the preservation of native culture.

However, as is the sad case for many minority regions where minority languages are consistently at odds with a language of power, Pamiri peoples are experiencing some amount of mother tongue death. As discussed above, the Ishkashimi language is still spoken by only a tiny population. The region of Darwâs – alternatively, Darvaz or Darvoz – has lost its mother tongue, overtaken by Tajiki (Bliss, 2006, p. 100). Visitors to the region, with no knowledge of the Darwâs language force inhabitants to use Tajiki or lose out on opportunity for interaction (Bliss, 2006, p. 100). Dodykhudoeva, in 2004, noted a dangerously low mother tongue competency among various Pamiri groups, where the

people have turned to other forms of communication (p. 149). Loss of language equates to loss of oral tradition and storytelling, and a loss of connection with one's ancestors.

Yet another important conveyor of culture is religion. Pamiri peoples are separated from other Tajiks by important religious differences. Nearly all Pamiris are Shiite Ismailis, while in Central and Western Tajikistan most people are Sunnis (Bliss, 2006, p. 222). This creates yet another barrier – in addition to the extreme difficulty of accessing the villages seated so high in the mountainous regions – to the intermixing of Pamiri and lowland Tajik culture. This difference is also important to the consideration of language as building identity, because much of the Ismaili religion, as practiced in Tajikistan, is tied to Pamiri languages (Dodykhudoeva, 2004). This important connection arouses fears that loss of ethnic GBAO languages could go hand in hand with the loss of religious understanding and practice. Therefore, maintenance of the religion demands that Pamiri people maintain their language. It becomes the medium through which identity is expressed.

By examining in particular the Tajik Civil War, the identity differences between GBAO Pamiris and Western Tajiks are made even more apparent. The war, lasting from 1992 until 1997, left some 80,000 dead and close to ten times that displaced. The war was primarily fought between those who had favored Soviet rule and Tajik ethno-nationalists (Rubin, 2006, p. 11). The political elite, concentrated somewhat in the area of what was then known as Leninabad – today, the city of Khujand – joined with Tajiks from Kulob and supported the government against resistance criticism (Akiner & Barnes, 2001, p. 17). The opposition was made up of a number of groups, ethno-nationalists included – with various intentions, including the promotion of democratic values, Islamic values, and nationalist values, and joined forces to create the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) (Akiner & Barnes,

2001, p. 17). The ethno-nationalists of the Gharm and Pamir areas of the new country formed the group known as Lali Badakhshan, a separatist movement, which did join the UTO in opposition to the government. The group declared their province independent on December 9, 1991, so as to set up a government that more adequately and accurately represented their interests (Bliss, 2006, p. 276). This was considered by the authorities in Central Tajikistan an act of hostility, and resulted in the targeting of Pamiris residing in Dushanbe – Tajikistan’s capital – and generally outside of the eastern province of Gorno-Badakhshan (Pamiris, n.d.), and, beginning in 1992, in the cutting off of supplies sent from Dushanbe to the Pamirs (Bliss, 2006, p. 276). Though the war was eventually brought to a close in 1997, the country remains highly divided, and issues of Pamiri identity persist.

Underdevelopment from the Conflict of Languages

The existence of a language of power that differs from the languages spoken throughout GBAO has allowed for a situation of underdevelopment of the area. Even within Tajikistan – the poorest of the former Soviet Republics – GBAO suffers from a comparably low per capita income. The region is “characterized by persistent poverty and a high level of dependence on external humanitarian support” (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 6). Over ninety percent of the region, Bliss (2006) cites, relies on aid (p. 281-282). This extreme poverty, eased only by the assistance of external groups, can be traced to the power held by speakers of Tajiki over speakers of identity-constructing languages.

It has already been discussed here that linguistic power can be manifested through education. While Shugni, at one time, was allowed as a language of instruction, that time

has long past, and it has been replaced by Tajiki and Russian. However, the Shugni people still, in general, learn Shugni as their first language. In the Gorno-Badakhshan region, only the cities of Khorog and Murgâb boast significant populations of native speakers of one of the two languages given preference in the classroom (Bliss, 2006, p. 77). Yet all over the region, students are banned from using Pamiri languages in school, where they often have their first exposure to the medium of instruction (Bliss, 2006, p. 256). This kind of monolingual education system necessarily caters to students whose first language is Tajiki – often only those living in Central and Western Tajikistan – at the expense of those whose parents speak at home only an ethnic Pamiri language. On top of this, post-Soviet economic decline, exacerbated by the civil war, made it difficult for students to attend school, as every cost – from teacher’s salaries to students’ shoes – became a burden on the community (Bliss, 2006, p. 288). Poor education opportunities prevent graduates and young adults from finding adequate employment, adding to the economic distress, and the cycle of poverty continues.

Power is further manifested through the availability of employment opportunities, and prospects for socioeconomic mobility. First, there is great emphasis on potential workers’ knowledge of Russian. “The common man in the countryside,” states Fouse (2000), is “not receiving a solid foundation in Russian” (p. 314). While the 1992 Constitution lists only Tajiki as an official state language, the entire former Soviet region’s emphasis on Russian persists. Lacking a background in Russian severely “restrict[s] an individual’s employment prospects and has had a generally negative effect on the country’s economy” (Bliss, 2006, p. 256). In the Pamiri regions, where even Tajiki is most often a second language, students struggle with education in the Russian language, perhaps in part

because most of Tajikistan's ethnic Russian minority population has chosen to settle in Dushanbe and the surrounding region, rather than in the mountains where employment and wealth prospects are poor.

Socioeconomic mobility is further limited by the severe isolation of the economy of the Pamiri region. This economic isolation is due to a number of factors, and will be difficult to overcome. The strategic location of GBAO, tucked between China and Afghanistan, extremely close to Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan, and with tight cultural ties at least to Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan, suggests that the region might "serve as a bridge to facilitate exchange in the region between" the four countries and Central Tajikistan, given proper circumstances (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 25). Yet "trade with neighboring countries is almost non-existent" (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 18). One explanation is the persistence of a language barrier. Linguistic isolation has created economic isolation, because of the lack of a lingua franca used with ease by all parties that might serve as a link between GBAO and its foreign and domestic neighbors. In addition, there exists in GBAO a culture of isolation, thanks to centuries of natural geographic isolation, as well as political isolation resulting from its Soviet status as an autonomous oblast. Pamiri "economic leaders have a regional, isolationist attitude and a tendency to stick to traditional schemes" (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 25). Understanding themselves as separate and apart from Dushanbe, and unattached even to other Pamiri groups, leaders are unwilling to engage in economic activity outside of their communities. This is detrimental, given the small size of each of the Pamiri populations. Restricting economic expansion creates limits on the possibility for income generation.

In assessing the possibilities for development in the Gorno-Badakhshan region of Tajikistan, it is crucial to investigate the linguistic situation. A language of power clearly exists, as do languages that build identity, but inhibit the social and economic growth of its speech community. Tajiki, and in many cases, Russian, is critical for obtaining sustainable employment, as deliberate language planning has dictated. The power of these two languages over ethnic Pamiri languages is manifested in Tajik society through education and employment opportunities, which are, by far, more readily available to speakers of Tajiki and Russian than Pamiris who speak only, or primarily, an ethnic mother tongue. Yet this speech community is unwilling to trade their identity, as constructed through their language, for economic opportunity. Speakers of the Pamiri languages feel too strong a connection between their language and their culture to relinquish it.

However, as discussed in the Centre for Development and Environment (2003)'s report, continued resistance to activity with external communities can only further devastate the impoverished population of GBAO. With the ever-growing globalization of our world, no society can remain in a vacuum, separated from its neighbors by linguistic differences, or geographic natural boundaries such as exist in Central Asia. "Better regional integration... will be the key to future economic development" in the Gorno-Badakhshan region of Tajikistan (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 25). This "regional integration" includes integration with non-Pamiri Tajiks, as well as across borders to China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan. It must also include, as stated in the same report, both "economic and political integration" (Centre for Development and Environment, 2003, p. 25). This demands engagement in supraregional economic activities, and participation

in Tajik and Central Asian political discussion, both of which the region has, until now, fastidiously avoided.

Kenya: The Urban Youth and Nationalism

Historical Background

Kenya is bordered, to the northeast by Somalia, to the north by Ethiopia, to the northwest by South Sudan, to the West by Uganda, and to the southeast by Tanzania. Its southeastern corner, an Indian Ocean coastline has, since as early as the seventh century, allowed for trade between the Swahili people residing there and others. Through the fifteenth century, the region's prosperity grew as Indian, Malay, Indonesian, and Chinese traders arrived at the port at Mombasa, and elsewhere along the East African coast. The exchange of goods, ideas, and people created a hugely diverse population in what has since become Kenya. The early nineteenth century saw Kenya and Tanganyika fall under the control of Omani Arabs, and the East Africa Protectorate, or the Kenya colony, was established in 1895.

British rule saw the construction of the Uganda Railway from Mombasa, in the Southeast of Kenya, along today's Tanzanian border, to the Kenyan city of Kisumu, in the West. This inspired the integration of an even greater number of ethnicities, as British Indian workers were brought to Kenya, and white Europeans continued to migrate to the colony. Kenya became an independent state in 1963, with Jomo Kenyatta becoming the country's first president in 1964.

Linguistic History and the Current Linguistic Landscape

During the 68 years of colonial rule, English was the only official, standard, state language. Even so, English-language education was made available only to the wealthiest Kenyans, and it became a tool by which the British Empire could assert its power over its African subjects (Iraki, 2007, p. 231). By excluding native Kenyans from learning English while instituting policies that demand the use of English in public spaces, the British excluded them also from high paying jobs and from access to higher education, thus perpetuating the class divide (Nabea, 2009, p. 122). The Kenyan population, if they had the ability to attend school, was largely restricted to Kiswahili, or else relied on one of the country's 40-some ethnic languages for communication. In the 1950s and 1960s, the young people migrating out of the countryside, into Nairobi, and largely into the informal settlements of Eastlands, for the first time were confronted with countrymen of different ethnic groups, whose mother tongues differed from their own (Go Sheng, 2012). These youths desperately needed a way to communication with one another, and Sheng, an informal language, something of a meeting of English and Kiswahili, began to emerge (Go Sheng, 2012).

In the mid-1960s, following the declaration of Kenyan independence from the British Empire, Jomo Kenyatta rose to power and became the country's first President. In his inaugural address, he made a symbolic switch from English to Kiswahili, encouraging his populace to understand it as a national, common tongue, to be used for the unification of all ethnic groups in Kenya (Iraki, 2007, p. 234). He urged people to understand English as the language imposed upon them by their British rulers, and to take ownership of Kiswahili as the country's own language. In 1974, Kiswahili formally became Kenya's

national language – English was maintained as the official language – to unite the country and create a common ground between the ethnic groups (F. K. Iraki, personal communication, January 27, 2012). Despite these promotions of Kiswahili, interest in the language remained relatively low. Until 1985, Kiswahili was not an examinable subject in schools – by then all taught in English. It was given only two periods per week, whereas English was given seven (Iraki, 2007, p. 235). This is not even a fully accurate representation of the stress that remained on English language instruction, as all classes, Kiswahili aside, were taught in English, and so might be considered additional time with the colonial language. Even after becoming examinable, Kiswahili is still taught one hour less per week than English – students take five periods of Kiswahili and six of English (Iraki, 2007, p. 235). Thus the government shows that, despite its attempts to give Kiswahili national status, it remains more invested in the teaching of English than of Kiswahili (F. K. Iraki, personal communication, January 27, 2012).

In Kenya, particularly Nairobi, which will be the concentration of this study, most young people are exposed to at least four languages, and they are expected to be familiar with each of these in order to achieve success in every area of their lives. It is argued by much of the scholarship examining linguistic issues in Kenya that each language serves a distinct purpose. The first of these is English. Still the official language, it is used in school, in government, and as the language of global interaction (Iraki, 2007, p. 241). As English remains the language used primarily by the elite to communicate, students find it uncomfortable to engage with it in informal situations (N. Abdullahi & J. Njoroge, personal communication, February 23, 2012) and to use it in this way might be seen as arrogant or “showing off” (F. K. Iraki, personal communication, January 27, 2012). Thus, other

languages are chosen for communication with peers, outside of education, employment, and government.

Kiswahili, like English, belongs to a higher class than Sheng or Kenya's ethnic languages, and, also like English, if used in improper arenas could be viewed as overly professional or formal (Muraya, personal communication, February 23, 2012). It belongs to the people who are outside the Sheng populace (H. H. Abdullahi & H. O. Ibrahim, personal communication, February 23, 2012). This out-group largely consists of adults – though even they have begun to normalize Sheng – and wealthier Kenyans. Kiswahili also persists as the language of trade in East Africa (Momanyi, 2009, p. 128). Limited knowledge of the language limits economic opportunities outside the states borders.

Ethnic languages, too, hold an important place in Kenyan society. Much like the Pamiri peoples of Tajikistan, discussed previously in this study, Kenya's ethnic groups are distinct from one another. They are separated geographically, and their lands can be easily found and labeled on a map. In rural Kenya, the groups do not intermingle, and often harbor suspicions and prejudices about one another. This encourages the preservation of Kenya's ethnic languages, as rural Kenyans, engaging in economic activity almost exclusively within their ethnic group, have little need of an inter-ethnic language. Within Nairobi, however, where the focus of this study lies, ethnic languages are declining in importance and use, though they still promote ethnic cultures, to some degree (Iraki, 2007, p. 241). Young people in Nairobi, however, no longer feel the same tie to their ethnic identity as did their parents and grandparents, and so the presence of ethnic languages in the city is diminishing somewhat.

The final major language in Kenya is the one that this analysis most closely examines. Sheng, the slang of the urban youth that has developed over the last half-century or so, originated in the informal settlements in the region of Nairobi known as Eastlands. Stigmatized as “low” by non-speakers and speakers alike, it is the language most widely used in the informal business sector, most notably, perhaps, in the public transportation field. Many scholars and linguists have been highly critical of the language, arguing that it lacks a community of speakers, a legitimate grammar, and stability and universality (Iraki, 2012, p. 4). It has been associated with touts – the companions of the drivers of Nairobi’s network of buses, who call out destinations to would-be passengers and collect fares – as well as “drug pushers, hip hop musicians and school drop outs” (Momanyi, 2009, p. 134).

Despite Sheng’s origins in Nairobi’s slums, it has, over the last fifty years – developed into a much more widespread presence in Kenyan society. It has spread throughout Nairobi, though different “dialects” of the slang are used in different districts. Wealthier Nairobians, for example, communicate through a Sheng-like argot known as Engsh (Nabea, 2009; F. K. Iraki, personal communication, January 27, 2012). Engsh, like Sheng, is derived from both English and Swahili, but it is identified with a wealthier, more educated youth population. Sheng has also spread outside of Nairobi, to other urban centers, including Kisumu and Mombasa, and also to rural areas. F. K. Iraki explains that this is the result of the perception of the urban identity and lifestyle – even that of the slum area of Nairobi – as more successful and as denoting a “higher” culture than exists in the rural areas (personal communication, January 7, 2012).

Finally, Sheng has grown to occupy a more public space than it once did. Whereas it was formerly used solely between peers as an informal way to communicate, it can now be

found elsewhere. Radio and television programs in Sheng, which, years ago, were unheard of, have gained popularity and increased in number (Wrong, 2009, p. 150). Go Sheng (2012), too, has issued a number of resources in Sheng, from crossword puzzles to lyrics, poetry, and discussion forums. The organization also seeks to translate the Kenyan constitution into Sheng, that it might be made available to the widening population of Sheng speakers (Go Sheng, 2012).

The Construction of Power Through Language

Kenya's linguistic landscape, which includes such a vast array of languages, has allowed for the formation of a system in which various languages assume particular status in society. Some languages – English and Kiswahili – are allowed to construct power in Kenya, and grant a higher status to its speakers, while other languages – ethnic languages and Sheng – detract from the social standing of their speech communities. Kenya remains economically driven by both English and Kiswahili, and thus knowledge of one, or both, preferably, of the state languages is an invaluable skill for any Kenyan wishing to engage in economic activity to improve his life.

From the time when Kenya came under British rule, in 1895, English has been the language through which leaders could come to power. Even today, despite the handover of leadership in Kenya to Kenyans themselves, English remains a language of economic desirability. It is the language with which employers and potential traders seek to engage. English is still viewed as the language of the educated, which makes employers more receptive to applicants who engage with it. Musau (2003) writes that in many aspects of Kenyan society, “English takes the lion's share” and “gets top priority followed by Kiswahili

[while] the mother tongues appear to be losing out” (p. 159). For instance, the four “most widely circulated newspapers, *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, *The Kenya Times* and *The People* are all in English” (Musau, 2003, p. 160). Kenya prints only one major newspaper, *Taifa Leo* in Kiswahili (Musau, 2003, p. 160). This suggests the great power that English holds in Kenyan society. Speakers of English enjoy political and economic access, as well as access to news sources, that non-speakers do not. Thus, they are able to obtain and sustain power to a much greater degree.

While English has, historically, been the language that conducts power since Kenya achieved independence in 1963, Kiswahili, named the country’s national language, has been, more and more, perceived as another language of the educated, and has become an important language of power. Today, both English and Kiswahili skills are necessary to prove one’s education and competence when seeking legitimate or formal employment (B. Williams, personal correspondence, February 20, 2012). Access to high-quality education in both languages is a privilege that is denied to a large percentage of Kenya’s population, however, and thus power is concentrated in the hands of the fortunate. Similarly, engagement with politics is almost always in Kiswahili and English – though this study will discuss the more recent use of Sheng by some politicians. For the most part, however, English and Kiswahili are required codes for becoming an active citizen.

Far below the status of English or Kiswahili, Sheng is largely regarded as an informal slang language. Power cannot be found through the use of Sheng, aside from recognition and approval from one’s peer group. Youths who attempt to utilize Sheng when seeking job opportunities are more often than not turned away, because it is perceived as sounding uneducated and illiterate (Y. Abdullahi and A. M. Issack, personal communication, February

23, 2012). Its speakers are often therefore excluded from employment, judged on the basis of the language with which they choose to engage as uneducated and of an undesirable social class. Employers consistently hire those who present themselves in English over those who present themselves in Sheng.

The Construction of Identity Through Language

Joseph (1987) writes, “the possession of a common national identity becomes a crucial symbol” (p. 47). This section analyzes first the importance of nationalism and state building, most especially in a country, such as Kenya, where so many ethnic groups are present, and where ethnic identity has, like many African states, triumphed over state identity. It will then turn to Kenya’s use of language to construct this identity, and discuss whether this construction has been successful.

As is the case for many or most former colonies, Kenyan borders were drawn by the imperial power, in line with the interests of that power, with little regard for the ethnic lines and divisions that were already in place. This has had the result that, as today can be observed in nearly every sub-Saharan African state, different ethnic groups are forced to coexist under one leadership, utilizing and dividing one country’s resources, and following one code of law. In Kenya, over forty ethnic groups reside together, and, as a result, the country is no stranger to battles over land and government. In rural Kenya, this has been something of a non-issue, as groups tend, for the most part, to keep to themselves within their villages and ethnic groups. The story in the urban centers, however, is quite different.

Every ethnicity in Kenya is represented to some degree in Nairobi. As people move to the city in search of opportunity, they are, some for the first time, forced to intermingle

with members of other ethnic groups, and, at times, power struggles ensue. Inevitably a member of only one ethnic group is brought to leadership over all others, and he has, in every administration since Kenyan independence, favored those Kenyans with whom he shares an ethnic identity. Conflict, at times, results from the “failure of states to address fundamental needs and ensure an equitable distribution of resources and benefits a variety of competing... groups” (Appleby, 2001, p. 826). When, for example, a Kikuyu-dominated state values the demands of fellow Kikuyus over those of, say, members of the Luo group, the state has failed in this regard, and is in danger of witnessing serious conflict.

Consider, as an example, Kenya’s tragic 2007 post-election violence. As political parties in Kenya are largely formed along ethnic lines (Kanyinga, 2009, p. 328), any political event becomes more likely to spark ethnic conflict. The focus on tribalism contributed hugely to the violence in 2007. Incumbent Kibaki, a Kikuyu, faced contender Raila Odinga, a Luo. When Kibaki was pronounced the victor in the presidential race, many accused him of stealing the election, and, outraged, cried that the government had committed fraud. The situation, in a matter of hours, escalated, and Odinga supporters in Nairobi opened violence against their Kikuyu neighbors. This violence, and retaliation attacks by Kikuyus against Kalenjin and Luo groups, resulted in hundreds or thousands of deaths – sources report vastly different figures for the casualties of the violence – and an additional half million or more displaced citizens. Events like Kenya’s post-election violence are huge arguments for the development of national identity over ethnic identity. When members of different ethnic groups must live in such close quarters – though this idiom hardly captures the living situation in Kibera, Nairobi’s largest slum – only through the construction of a national identity can the groups be encouraged to peace.

Another result of the rapid migration of rural Kenya's population to urban centers such as Nairobi is somewhat more promising for the building of peace. For young people in particular, urbanization encourages them to shed their mother tongues and ethnic identities as they adopt Sheng as a means by which to communicate with new neighbors, who may or may not share an ethnic heritage (F. K. Iraki, personal communication, January 27, 2012). While the preservation of a mother tongue may be important in that it allows one to maintain ties with his ancestry, to acquire Sheng encourages the creation of ties with one's peers, particularly when those peers' heritage is different from one's own. Those who are raised in towns, unlike those in villages dominated and populated almost exclusively by members of a single ethnic group, attend school with people with a variety of ethnic mother tongues and heritages, and find that they must use a common language to communicate (B. Williams, personal communication, February 20, 2012). Encouraging interethnic communication and discussion by allowing young people to use the interactional language of their choice – Sheng – lets them create bonds that span tribal lines, and diminish the likelihood of violence.

A similar situation arises in the workplace. Urbanization, for the first time, sends to work together people from more than one ethnic group, whose traditional languages of communication do not allow them to reach everyone. If an employee must interact with others who do not share his heritage, he must have a common language with which to converse. Such a problem is described in *It's Our Turn to Eat*, in which Hussein Were, a Luhya surrounded by Kambas at work, finds that he cannot understand the language that the others are using (Wrong, 2009, p. 59). This anecdote illustrates the problems with an urbanizing society, in which people who do not share a mother tongue suddenly are forced

to interact with each other. Such a society must engage in state building and encourage nationalism. Some efforts in this direction have been made, most notably Kenyatta's inaugural code switching and naming of Kiswahili as the country's national language. Yet through an analysis of Kenyan society and the linguistic landscape there, it becomes unclear whether Kiswahili has been as unifying as her first president hoped it would be, and whether Sheng might be more suited to this role.

In Tanzania, Kiswahili has, since the 1960s, been the official state language (Reuster-Jahn & Kießling, 2006, p. 73). It has served the country's population as a symbol of national identity, and might be expected to have done the same for the population of Kenya. However, in Kenya, the language has not successfully become a common medium of communication (Reuster-Jahn & Kießling, 2006, p. 73). This is clear from the complaints of students, mentioned in this study, that Kiswahili seems overly formal, and it is not the language used among peers. Miguel (2002) offers by way of further explanation, that Kiswahili has been forced "to [compete] with English... in official settings" (p. 11). Because English remains the country's official language, it is in constant conflict with Kiswahili, and thus the national language has struggled to gain a foothold in official Kenyan society. Perhaps because of the failure of Kiswahili to become pervasive in Kenya, it has remained a language learned to proficiency only by the most well-educated, and therefore it has not achieved universality or been able to successfully unify all members of Kenyan society under one linguistic roof.

Sheng, however, might be able to accomplish this, if allowed to develop to fullest capacity. While Kiswahili is too formal and awkward to truly unite the youth population (H. Abdullahi and H. O. Ibrahim, personal communication, February 23, 2012), Sheng is the

language used with the most ease by that group. In a state with the demographic composition of Kenya, it is crucial that any language looking to unify the population cross both class and ethnic lines. Sheng, many scholars and speakers agree, is able to transcend both. Wrong (2009) claims that more than any other speech code, it “represents... a force for national identity” and could be a class-leveler, which Kiswahili has failed to become (p. 151-152). Whereas Kiswahili is, again, not made available to individuals from every social class, virtually all youth, especially in the urban centers, are exposed to Sheng and have the opportunity to learn and use it to converse with their peers, regardless of access to formal education.

Likewise, Sheng has the ability to unify the people of Kenya's forty ethnic groups. The language was founded, after all, by people in search of an urban identity, and hoping to discard their tribal cultures (Iraki, 2007, p. 236). It is important to note that the adoption of Sheng as an alternative to an ethnic language represents not the disposal of a heritage identity, but, far more importantly, the development of a new, urban identity, which contributes to the development of nationalism in the country. An inability to converse in Sheng would prevent a young person in Nairobi from entering into this group, and would exclude him from conversation with his peers (Lumbasi, cited in Muigai, 2012). Additional evidence for the creation of a new identity is that parents, especially those raising their families in the cities, whose mother tongues are not the same, are beginning to raise their children with Sheng as their first language (Iraki, 2012, p. 3), thus inspiring the idea that the new generation will be born into this newly created urban identity. Furthermore, the identity created by youth languages like Sheng is often more sustainable, especially in an urban setting, than an ethnic, tribal identity (Reuster-Jahn & Kießling, 2006, p. 74). As

young people of different ethnic groups, even those that, traditionally, do not live well with one another, come to occupy the same space, nationalist movements can encourage peace between the groups. Kenyan citizens must begin to identify as “Kenyan” before “Kikuyu” or “Luo” or “Kalenjin,” and this has begun already through the development of Sheng.

Underdevelopment from the Conflict of Languages

Unfortunately, the use of Sheng to create a national identity has resulted in a situation of marginalization and underdevelopment for its speakers. As in Tajikistan, the linguistic landscape in Kenya constructs power for a specific group, while excluding from economic and political opportunities members of a different language group. Despite the change in government in the 1960s, there has been no post-colonial movement to make English classless (Nabea, 2009, p. 128). As discussed in examining the country’s linguistic history, during British rule, English was instituted as the language of the elite European population, as a means of maintaining British superiority over the Empire’s Kenyan subjects. While English has since entered into Kenya’s general school systems, the achievement of linguistic competence in the language, and its use outside of the classroom, is still very much limited to the wealthy and to the descendants of Kenya’s colonizing population, while the vast majority either do not learn it or do not use it. Kiswahili, likewise, is reserved for the highly educated population. People in Eastlands, for example, are often not exposed to Kiswahili, due to limited opportunities for formal, government-sponsored education, and so its use in Kenyan society excludes them (A. Gachira, personal communication, February 11, 2012). Both English and Kiswahili are highly necessary for success in school and the professional world, but the youth, focused on learning the

language of their group, discard the state languages. This prevents them from accessing certain opportunities throughout their lives.

One of the most troubling issues with Sheng for many linguists is the fear that it interferes with the learning of standard Kiswahili, as suggested by continually dropping Kiswahili scores. Some scholars argue that “the pervasive use of Sheng [makes] it difficult for students to master Kiswahili” with the result that students underperform on examinations (Muidi, 2012). Perhaps due to some overlap between Sheng and both Kiswahili and English, some students admit that they have trouble keeping Sheng out of their formal classes in both languages, and, at times, answer questions unintentionally in Sheng (H. H. Abdullahi and H. O. Ibrahim, personal communication, February 23, 2012). This is, for teachers, unacceptable, as most see no place for Sheng inside school walls, and so they grade Sheng users harshly, so that student performance is low (Muindi, 2012). If students cannot separate Sheng from English and Kiswahili, their education will suffer severely.

Similarly, students’ inability to separate their peer-group language from their formal language in the classroom suggests that in the future, they will be unable to do so in their professional lives. Students who cannot articulate themselves well in either Kiswahili or English will find that they are unable to obtain formal, gainful employment. Prospective employees who present themselves in Sheng are viewed by would-be employers as incompetent, and undesirable workers (N. Abdullahi and J. Njoroge, personal communication, February 23, 2012). Yet this favors those who, due to, most often, family wealth and prestige, are more exposed to English over their less well-to-do peers, whose primary – or sole – language of interaction has always been Sheng. The latter group lacks

any form of social mobility in Kenyan society, as they struggle to present themselves professionally, because a code is required of them to which they have had little exposure in their lives. That English is still seen as the language of the educated opens up job opportunities to privileged English speakers, and those with limited knowledge of the language (F. K. Iraki, personal communication, January 27, 2012).

The conflict of languages in Kenya provides further difficulties as it is unclear in which language development ought to be conducted. While official language policy would dictate the use of either Kiswahili or English, this would exclude from development programming the very group that most needs such activities – the population of Sheng speakers, whose access to English and Kiswahili education is the most limited. Momanyi (2009) argues that “any country that values the development of its people must incorporate them in all development processes” (p. 129). In the case of urban development in Kenya, such incorporation must include Sheng. This is of particular importance given the assumption that “the future of the nation is in the hands of the youth” (Iraki, 2012, p. 5). If this is the case, the youth population must be part of decision-making and discussion in the development process, and so must be their language.

Consider that there are any number of HIV/AIDS campaigns ongoing all over Africa. These campaigns must directly target the youth, and specifically those with little or no formal education, for it is they who are most at risk. Further, it is this group that has the least familiarity with Kiswahili and English, the traditional languages of Kenyan development campaigns. Given this low level of linguistic proficiency, such campaigns are unlikely to make much impact. In the words of Ogechi (n.d.), “success will always be elusive unless and until those leading in the campaign understand and incorporate the youth code

when dealing with the youth” (p. 21). Thus, in Kenya, Sheng must dominate the linguistic landscape of the development arena, including all oral discussions, literature, posters, dramatic presentations, and other media (Ogechi, n.d., p. 21). While not officially condoned by state language policy, using Sheng in these spaces will open up potential for change for Kenyan youths.

Luckily, it seems that the country is moving in that direction – toward greater incorporation of Sheng in the visibility of the public eye. As previously mentioned, television and radio programs have grown recently in number and popularity, and some companies have begun forming advertising campaigns in Sheng, in an attempt to specifically target youths. Safaricom, Zain, Equity Bank, and Barclays Bank are all examples of companies that have engaged in such campaigns (Iraki, 2012, p. 5). Additionally, some politicians, including Kibaki himself, recognizing the sheer mass of the urban youth population – the median age is 18.8 years old, and some 61% of the population is below the age of 24 – have utilized Sheng, in an attempt to garner youth votes (Iraki, 2007, p. 237). These changes in language use in Kenya suggest that Sheng is gaining some public support, and, though the language conflict persists, it may be lessening.

The linguistic landscape in Kenya is dominated by three languages, in addition to over forty ethnic languages that are also present. English and Kiswahili, due in large part to Kenya’s history with colonialism, and an attempt to create a standardized national language, have come to connote power, and to grant it exclusively to their speakers. Sheng, however, has been used to create a national identity, at least among the youth population in the cities, despite being considered a “low,” “informal” language. Continued use of Sheng to construct an identity that transcends ethnicity will be of great value to a society scarred by

conflict between sub-state ethnic groups. “Homogenization,” according to Mill (1972), “will help to create feelings of national identity and trust, shared sympathies and loyalties” (as cited in Kymlicka & Grin 2003, p. 12). Unfortunately, the stigma against Sheng, and the requirement by all formal employment of both English and Kiswahili knowledge places less wealthy Kenyans at a huge disadvantage, as they are not able to obtain meaningful employment and find themselves trapped in poverty cycles, as their primary means of communication bears connotations of under-education and un-employability. Further, the Sheng’s unofficial status often excludes it from development programs, when, if they are to have any success in reach the youth population, it should be the preferred language of development agents.

Ukraine: Kievites and Globalism

Historical Background

The Eastern European state of Ukraine borders, to the east, Russia, to the northwest, Belarus, to the west, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary, and to the southwest, Romania and Moldova. Its coastline along the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov separate the country from its neighbor across the seas, Turkey. The country is bisected by the Dneiper River, which flows from the Valdai Hills in Central Russia to the Black Sea, through Ukraine’s capital and largest city, Kiev.

The state known as Kievan Rus, founded in the 9th century, became a powerful nation during the Middle Ages, but had collapsed by the 12th century. Some two hundred years later, the territory had been divided between three empires – the Golden Horde (a

Mongol State), Lithuania, and Poland. After the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav, the region was re-distributed, divided along the Dnieper River, with Western Ukraine under the control of the Austrian Empire, and the Eastern region belonging to the Russian Tsar (Fouse, 2000, p. 25). While at first, under Russian imperialist rule, Ukrainian was regarded as a regional language, and allowed to develop and flourish in all parts of Ukraine, as the Russian empire expanded, it began repressing ethnic minority groups, particularly after the Polish national uprising of 1863 (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 37). In an attempt to prevent the formation of a Ukrainian national movement, a policy of Russification was heavily pursued.

In 1918, Ukraine declared its independence as the Ukrainian People's Republic, but descended quickly into Civil War. The Russian empire, experiencing similar chaos, fell to Soviet rule following the 1917 revolution, and the Russian Red Army in 1921 regained control of some two-thirds of Ukraine, establishing there the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Western-most third of Ukraine became a territory of Poland. During Lenin's rule, he stressed the importance of encouraging national identities within the National Republics of the Soviet Union, claiming that "the working masses of other nations are full of distrust... toward Great Russia, as... [an] oppressor nation" (Doyle, 1986, p. 45, as cited in Martin, 2001, p. 68). Lenin argued that to gain the trust of the citizens of the national republics, it was crucial that Russia allow their identities to thrive. Thus, "national elites were trained and promoted to leadership positions" and national languages were encouraged (Martin, 2001, p. 67). During Stalinism and the Second World War, Ukraine suffered severe losses, as Stalin targeted Ukrainian elite and intelligentsia, and Nazi occupation through 1944 killed some 5 million Ukrainians. Following the end of the war, Ukrainian lands formerly owned by Poland were united with Eastern Ukraine. Ukraine

remained a republic of the Soviet Union until the collapse in 1991, when it became an independent state.

Linguistic History and the Current Linguistic Landscape

As has been suggested through the study of the linguistic history in Tajikistan, Ukrainian linguistic history has been largely shaped by Tsarist and Soviet language policy. In 1863, the Tsar banned all scientific and instructional books in Ukrainian, in an attempt to stem any nationalist sentiments harbored by his Ukrainian subjects (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 37). Similarly, schools and literature were to be conducted only in Russian, but given that most of the peasant population was, at the time, illiterate, this encouraged Russian assimilation only among the wealthy, urban Ukrainians, while the rural population was widely ignored. (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 38). In Kiev, over the next years, the population became widely immersed in Russification, and Russian became the dominant language of both government administration and informal interaction, so that by 1874, some 80% of Kievites claimed Russian as their mother tongue (Hamm, 1993, as cited in Pavlenko, 2012, p. 38). The distinction between language used in Kiev and language used in rural Ukraine is important. Since peasants spoke little or no Russian, “Ukrainian nobles only used Ukrainian to communicate with the peasants” (Fouse, 2000, p. 27). Thus it was inevitable that the language would, as discussed further in this study, come to be stigmatized as a “low” language, while Russian became considered the language of the wealthy.

Until 1905, Ukrainian “was excluded from education, the press, and religion” (Fouse, 2000, p. 34). Following the events of Bloody Sunday, on January 22, 1905, when demonstrators in St. Petersburg were fired upon by the Imperial Guard, Tsar Nicholas II

was forced to make some concessions to his population, which included the ethnic minorities (Fouse, 2000, p. 34). Some of these concessions brought about a more tolerant language policy, so that official publications in Ukrainian increased tremendously, but this came to an end with the election of a more conservative Duma in 1907, just two years later (Fouse, 2000, p. 35). To further affect the linguistic situation in Ukraine, the second decade of the 1900s saw the influx of Russian workers to Kiev, seeking employment. These workers brought with them their Russian language, and it became, to an even greater extent than it previously had been, the major language in government and in daily relationships (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 38).

As an early Soviet state, however, Ukrainian again enjoyed success as a national language in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The earliest days of the Soviet Union saw the standardization of Ukrainian, the re-introduction of Ukrainian language education, the printing of Ukrainian dictionaries and newspapers, and the production of Ukrainian radio programs and theatrical performances (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 38). Under Lenin, all titular national languages were made the official languages of their republics, even when this “necessitated the creation of a written language where one did not exist” (Martin, 2001, p. 67). In addition, throughout the early 1920s, Ukrainian was the sole language used in more than half of the schools in Ukraine (Fouse, 2000, p. 39). For all the effort put into making Ukrainian the language of all Ukrainians, however, Ukrainianization was never fully successful. Ukrainian remained connected, in the minds of the elite, with peasant backwardness (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 39), and Russian remained the favored language of the educated.

Joseph Stalin, coming to power in 1922, pursued much the opposite policy of his predecessor with regard to language. As early as the late 1920s, he was looking toward homogenization, and to a “fusion of nations, languages and cultures” (Stalin, as cited in Lewis, 1972, p. 54) as a means by which to create “Socialism in One Country,” a more desirable society, in his eyes, than the union of more autonomous national cultures that Lenin had imagined. In Stalin’s “Great Purges” where any potential opposition to his rule was removed through either execution or imprisonment, “hundreds of Ukrainian writers, artists and editors were rounded up and shot” (Fouse, 2000, p. 42), ensuring the failure of the Ukrainian language’s sustainability. Russian, once again, became the language of Ukrainian government, and of all national republic government.

As Stalin was replaced by later leaders of the Soviet Union, language policies relaxed again. However, by the 1950s, it was understood that Russian was far more important in securing employment and engaging in official activities than was Ukrainian. When, between 1958 and 1959, Soviet parents were allowed to choose to send their children either to Russian language schools or to schools taught in the titular majority language, it was expected that most parents would choose to have their children study in their ethnic language (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 39). While in the Central Asian republics of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan this new policy did indeed encourage nationalism, in Ukraine, most parents chose Russian schools over Ukrainian schools (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 39). Further Ukrainianization policy is evidenced by the 1989 language act that declared Ukrainian the only state official language, with Russian relegated to the status of “minority language” (Stepanenko, 2003, p. 116).

The effect of Ukraine's linguistic history on the linguistic landscape observable today is enormous. Since Ukrainian independence in 1991, Ukrainian remains the only official language, but, as evidence presented by this study suggests, Russian still dominates outside of official settings, especially in Kiev (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 39). Ukrainian, an Eastern Slavonic language, is closely related to Russian, and is written in a slightly modified Cyrillic script (Fouse, 2000, p. 22). Though Russian is spoken by most people in Kiev and understood by virtually all, it has been "banished away from the public eye" (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 36), in an attempt to reverse the Stalinist process of Russification and establish legitimacy for Ukrainian statehood. Yet 17.3% of Ukraine's population is ethnically Russian, and 29.6% of Ukrainians are native Russian speakers, and Russian remains the language most used in daily interactions in Kiev (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 41). It is important to note that, though the Russian minority in Ukraine is extensive, some 12.3% of the population is ethnic Ukrainians but native Russian language speakers (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 41). This reflects that the Russian language is not limited to the Russian diaspora population and is, in fact, the language used by the ethnic majority group.

True, the villages tell something of a different story. Rural Ukrainians do rely more heavily on the national language (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 41). This is noteworthy, as generally, and in the two other cases examined in this analysis, the language of government is more widely spoken in the urban centers, while the official language tends to exclude rural populations. Here, the opposite is true, as the state language is more commonly the mother tongue of the lower class. This has an interesting effect, in that it perpetuates the stereotype of Ukrainian as a peasant language and of Russian as a language of culture and modernity, and inspires the learning of the minority language over the official language

(Pavlenko, 2012, p. 42). Rubin (2006) offers an explanation for this rather strange language distribution. During Soviet rule, “Russian-speaking minorities settled primarily in the capital cities of the... republics” when they arrived to find work or to participate in governing the national Soviets (Rubin, 2006, p. 8). Because the ethnic Russian populations continued to reside in the urban centers, the Russian language flourished there, and became the language most used among the urban elite.

The Construction of Power Through Language

Both Russian and Ukrainian can be said to construct power in Ukraine. While Ukrainian is the official language, by law necessary for state interaction, political participation, and formal economic activity, Russian connotes high social class, urbanization, and sophistication. Thus, while Ukrainian conducts tangible power, Russian lends perceived power to its body of speakers. For the purposes of this study, the definition of power will be limited to real power – what is constructed by Ukrainian – while perceived urbanity will be discussed as the building of identity.

In considering why one language might have power over another, some scholars have concluded simply that logistics demand a single powerful language in a state. In the Soviet Union, while nationalism was considered, at least by Lenin, an important issue, and attempts were made to encourage the development of national languages, it became necessary to have a single state language. Though at one point leaders supported printing literature and offering state services in all minority languages, the “necessary translation facilities [were] often simply not available” (Akiner, 1986, p. 27), and this ultimately proved

an impossible task. Thus, though sub-Soviet Union nationalism in theory was impressive, in practice it was never successful.

Ukrainian's status as the language of power in Ukraine is due to the government's attempt to reverse Russification policies of the Stalin era. It is the language most commonly used in public education, and, at least officially, in government administration. It is the language that occupies, legally, all public space in Kiev. As Pavlenko (2012) points out, Russian "speakers do not have the same rights and entitlements as speakers of Ukrainian" (p. 43).

There is some debate among the scholarship, however, over whether maintaining Ukrainian as a state language is viable and beneficial to the Ukrainian people. Some argue that, because it is, historically, the language of the country's titular majority, and serves as a marker of the country's statehood, maintaining Ukraine's sovereignty and independence from Russia, especially given its decades of oppression by Russia and by the Russian language (Stepanenko, 2003, p. 120). These arguments allow Ukrainian to remain the official language of Ukrainian government, thus continuing to grant power to those who speak it more comfortably, by giving them the most access to political and economic opportunities.

The Construction of Identity Through Language

While Ukrainian conducts power, Russian is a conveyor of identity and culture in Kiev. Russian-speakers living in the capital city seek to be part of a global culture, accessible through global languages but not through Ukrainian. Linguistic human rights, to which all people are entitled, include access to "major languages of global communication,"

which can enable people to ‘access... information sharing in the twenty-first century’ and to ‘bridge the gap between the rich and the poor countries’” (Hurst & Lansdell, 1999, p. 3, as cited in Musau, 2003, p. 155). Kievites wishing to be a part of this culture of “information sharing” must engage with Russian, and not with Ukrainian, whatever its role within the state. The urban population of Ukraine, a great deal of which interacts most comfortably in Russian, despite Ukrainian’s prevalence in the world in which they live, uses their language as a tool for international interaction, even outside the region of the former Soviet republics (Lewis, 1972, p. 63). This allows them to build a more global identity than their Ukrainian-speaking countrymen.

In examining that such a global identity is being constructed through the use of Russian in daily life, especially within the borders of Kiev, some of the scholarship has argued for the reintroduction of Russian as a state language. Such a move would foster this global identity in Ukraine, and create a culture of international communication. Citing the importance of Russian to identity building in Ukraine, Stepanenko (2003) notes that Russian is, first of all, the preferred language of over half the population of Ukraine, and already the language used in informal communication (p. 120-121). To adopt a language policy which names Russian as a state language would cater to this massive group, excluded from current language policy, which gives Russian no legitimate status, and protect their linguistic rights (Stepanenko, 2003, p. 121). Assuming that providing these rights should be a goal of – and is, in fact, the responsibility of – the government, the status of Russian in Ukraine should be reconsidered.

Underdevelopment from the Conflict of Languages

As in Tajikistan and Kenya, the existence of more than one language in the state has not been peaceful. Language conflict in Ukraine has made it difficult for speakers of one language to achieve success, as the language of power at times prevents the development of identity through a second language. The conflict, as in Kenya, is between the official state language and the language more often used for the purposes of informal interaction. In the case of Ukraine, the official language – Ukrainian comes into conflict with the interactional language – Russian. Interestingly, however, as discussed, in Ukraine the suffocated language is the one used by the more urbanized, sophisticated population in Kiev, while the language of power is more often found in the rural areas populated by the peasantry. In theory, Ukrainian has surpassed Russian as a state language (Fouse, 2000, p. 53). It is therefore the language commonly used in government and official documents. This has created a situation of exclusion for the Russian-speaking population, since 1991, “as the political elites of the newly independent [Ukraine] and the national [language is] almost exclusively derived from the titular [nationality]” (Rubin, 2006, p. 8).

Russian culture, as mentioned, has, since the days of Lenin, been “stigmatized as a culture of oppression” loathed by non-Russian Soviet citizens (Martin, 2001, p. 78). The globalizing culture now developing in Ukraine, suffers under the same stigma, so that their language – Russian – is kept out of official society. Thus they struggle to move in official circles, unable to place themselves successfully within Ukrainian administration. Likewise, since the demotion of Russian to minority language status, fewer and fewer schools exist where students are taught in Russian, replaced to a growing extent by Ukrainian language schools (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 43). This replacement is carried out by government official

policy without regard to the wishes of the population, so that parents who still wish their children to be educated in Russian – in pursuit of a global identity – are unable to find places in Russian language schools; the demand far exceeds the supply, while Ukrainian language schools are far more plentiful than necessary to cater to the far smaller number of students wishing to attend them (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 43).

Similarly, the amount of Russian language mass media made available in Ukraine, and even in Kiev has decreased significantly since the Soviet era (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 43). This excludes a large portion of the population from accessing information in their own language. Additionally, public signage must, by law, appear in Ukrainian, or Ukrainian accompanied by Russian (Pavlenko, 2012). It is noteworthy that in Pavlenko (2012)'s research on the presence of Russian in a society legally dominated by Ukrainian, and specifically its presence on signage, she discovered that while official signs with Russian as the dominant or only language are were rare, commercial signs were far more numerous, and private signs more numerous still (p. 45). This clearly suggests that while in most cases Russian is forbidden from public visibility, in putting up private or commercial signs people tend more to use the language of their choice, regardless of official policy, and this language is generally Russian. Demanding that the population use Ukrainian in official spaces, when, as evidenced by private and commercial signs seen in Kiev, they are more comfortable communicating in Russian, clearly excludes a large portion of the population of Kiev from opportunities. If students are not able to be educated in the language they find most valuable, and Kievites are discouraged from promoting the global identity they are in the process of creating, they are being excluded from important development opportunities

This analysis of language in Ukraine has suggested that Ukrainian is supported publically as a language by which power is created. Russian, on the other hand, has emerged as a language that will be able to build a global identity, allowing the population of Ukraine – and especially Kiev – to engage in international activities, outside of its borders. While both languages serve a purpose, and are employed by different members of Ukrainian society, with rural Ukrainians more commonly utilizing the national language, and urban citizens favoring Russian, the conflict between the two languages has caused Kievites to be excluded from development opportunities. To eliminate either language would be to the further detriment of one or both groups. However, “mutual intelligibility of the two main languages can make possible a situation of nationwide dialogue and mutual tolerance” (Stepanenko, 2003, p. 133). Thus, a bilingual society, where government and official activities account for the importance of both languages, could be highly successful, and should be considered as a possible language policy for the state to pursue.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study has sought to analyze how language, in constructing both power and identity, contributes to underdevelopment. To do so, it looked deeply into the linguistic situations in three states: Tajikistan, Kenya, and Ukraine. It first analyzed the shaping of the current linguist landscape in each case, examining linguistic history to understand how the present situation emerged, highlight political as well as social factors. In each case, the study then examined how power is constructed by one particular language that emerges as the official state language, and in what situations that power is manifested. The study then

examined how other languages contribute to the building of identity for certain groups. In Tajikistan, the identity constructed through language is regional, in Kenya it is national, and in Ukraine it is global. Finally, the study looked at the conflict between languages of power and of identity, and analyzed how the conflict places one group at a disadvantage in society, and creates a situation of underdevelopment.

In Tajikistan, the research presented here has found, Tajiki, the official language, is necessary for economic and political access. The Pamiri groups residing in the isolated Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province, however, construct their identity through their own ethnic languages. These groups thus find themselves excluded from engaging in economic and political activities outside of their own small ethnic group. In order to become more successful and improve their situations, these groups will need to look toward external trade activities. To do so will require the use of a lingua franca, and a policy encouraging bilingualism should therefore be pursued, to ensure that all citizens of Tajikistan have their needs met.

In Kenya, the official language remains English, the language of the colonial power that ruled until 1963. Despite government efforts to encourage the growth of English, one's knowledge of English is still determined by his level of education, and thus his wealth and social class. One of Kenya's most pressing issues, as evidenced by the violence that followed the 2007 presidential elections, is the persistence of tribalism. Though following independence in 1963, Kenya's first president Jomo Kenyatta declared Kiswahili a language of nationalism, with the potential to bring together Kenya's forty ethnic groups, this has been largely unsuccessful. Sheng, however, a slang language developed among the youth of Nairobi's Eastlands, can provide a more effective code for the youth of various ethnicities to

communicate, and, if allowed to flourish, could have a very positive effect on Kenyan society. Unfortunately, the stigma against Sheng has made it a tool of underdevelopment for its speakers, as it makes it difficult for them to find meaningful employment and obtain quality education. Reducing this stigma would allow a “Kenyan” identity to thrive while also ensuring that the youth becomes better able to access education and employment prospects.

Finally, the study looked at Russian-speaking citizens of Kiev as an example of a group whose language creates for them a global identity. While officially Ukraine is a monolingual state with Ukraine as its sole official language, the number of Russian speakers, especially in Kiev, amounts to more than half of the total population. This group seeks integration into an international culture, integration that their language could easily provide, but this is prevented by Russian’s status as a minority language, with the result that not all those wishing to learn it fully have the opportunity to do so, and those who do learn it lack forums in which to use it. Ukrainian’s power in Ukraine is due largely to an attempt to foster Ukrainian statehood, where policies of Russification were promoted during the Soviet period, and are therefore viewed harshly and with suspicion, and simply not tolerated. The exclusion of Russian from Kiev is an infringement on the rights of Russian speakers, and on those who would hope to become Russian speakers in order to fully participate in global activities. Fortunately, that Russian and Ukrainian are such similar languages, closely related and essentially mutually intelligible, suggests that a bilingual official language policy, in which both languages are acceptable in government and other public spaces, and each represented to meet the demand in education, could both allow the support for Ukrainian statehood, and cater to the largely rural population for

whom it is the most widely used language, while also addressing the needs of Russian speakers.

Language policy is closely tied to underdevelopment. In bilingual or multilingual countries, one language almost always becomes more conducive to power than the other or others, and citizens who lack access to the language of power are excluded from important development activities. Understanding that this is true is crucial to implementing real change so that every society's linguistic needs and rights are met, and to ensure that every citizen has the same access to employment, education, and other social opportunities, regardless of his linguistic and ethnic identity.

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