

JONATHAN POOL

Developing the Soviet Turkic Tongues: The Language of the Politics of Language

Language planning¹ often aims to fix the statuses, roles, and functions of languages, and hence the choices among languages that speakers and writers make. This has been called “language status planning.” A second object of language policy, however, is the content and structure of languages themselves: vocabularies, sound systems, word structures, sentence structures, writing systems, and stylistic repertoires. Intervention of this kind is “language corpus planning.” The Soviet distinction between the “functional development” of a language and its “internal development” or “enrichment” is parallel. Soviet language policies deal both with status problems (for example, how long and how widely should language X be used?) and with corpus problems (for example, how should language X be developed and regulated?).² The Soviet Turkic languages exhibit these issues with particular complexity because of their number, their close interrelations, their similarity to a non-socialist country’s language (Turkish), their dissimilarity to Russian, their pre-Soviet Arabic (if any) alphabets, and their traditions of borrowing from Arabic and Persian, associated culturally with Islam and perceived backwardness.

Soviet ideas about correct language policy have gone through phases connected with nationality policy and other aspects of politics. But, according to a recent observer, the basic ingredients have not changed: “all that has happened . . . is a series of periodic shufflings and re-shufflings of the same

1. Recent works in this field include Joshua A. Fishman, Charles A. Ferguson, and Jyotirindra Das Gupta, eds., *Language Problems of Developing Nations* (New York, 1968); Joan Rubin and Björn H. Jernudd, eds., *Can Language Be Planned?* (Honolulu, 1971); and Joshua A. Fishman, ed., *Advances in Language Planning* (The Hague, 1974).

2. See, for example, M. N. Guboglo, “Etnolingvističeskie kontakty: Dvuiazyčie,” in Iu. V. Arutiunian et al., eds., *Sotsial’noe i natsional’noe* (Moscow, 1973), p. 230.

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pack of ideas, or elements of the original prescription, formulated before the Revolution even began." The shuffling is said to result in "an inevitable oscillation" between "language as ethnic symbol" and "language as the instrument of proletariat advancement," and between "centripetal" and "centrifugal socio-linguistic policies."³

This study is about the ingredients, not the oscillations. It accepts the working hypothesis that, even if policies have changed, the principles of legitimacy used to justify or attack policies have remained stable, at least since the 1930s. The aim is to identify these principles and show how they are invoked in arguments.

The main finding will be partly like Binder's in Iran: a "variety of co-existing and competing legitimizing formulae." Binder found that the Iranian intellectual "equates inconsistency with hypocrisy In the face of five coexisting legitimizing formulae, he rejects them all and either seeks some extreme solution or sinks into despair."⁴ The Soviet intellectual, however, accepts and even uses them all, without perceiving inconsistency.

How Soviet intellectuals justify social policies is clearly important. Even if they play a merely apologetic role for official decisions, the arguments used tell us the criteria of legitimacy that authorities believe will influence public opinion, and the alternatives considered. But there is also evidence that Soviet social scientists are participating substantially and increasingly in the formulation of alternatives and policies.⁵ If so, their debates presumably constitute part of the decision process itself.

The policy domain covered here is focused in two ways. First, attention is on corpus policy, not status policy. The former was barely touched on by Marx, Engels, and Lenin; thus there is more leeway (or necessity) for other legitimacy principles. Corpus planning is also more decentralized, hence more debated and more dependent on persuasion and justification.⁶

Second, examples deal mainly with Azerbaidzhani. This language presents a unique combination of attractions: (1) It has a comparatively old and large language planning establishment and relevant literature. (2) It has an old written tradition and hence the problem of what to do with that tradition. (3) It is particularly close, linguistically, to Turkish. (4) It contains many words from Arabic and Persian.

3. E. Glyn Lewis, *Multilingualism in the Soviet Union* (The Hague, 1972), pp. 51, 54, 87.

4. Leonard Binder, *Iran: Political Development in a Changing Society* (Berkeley, 1962), p. 62.

5. Jeffrey W. Hahn, "The Role of Soviet Sociology in Social Policy-Making," paper presented at the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Toronto, February 26, 1976 (cited with permission).

6. Winfred P. Lehmann, ed., *Language and Linguistics in the People's Republic of China* (Austin, 1975), p. 130; Lewis, *Multilingualism*, p. 284.

Language corpus policy can be conceptualized as the attempt to answer a list of questions for each language. The major ones (at least for the Soviet Turkic languages) are: (1) How much regulation should the language be subjected to, and by whom? (2) How uniform should the language be? (3) What should its dialectal base be? (4) What relationship should exist between the written and the spoken language? (5) What system of writing symbols should be adopted? (6) Within the adopted writing system, how should words be written? (7) What should the policy be on inclusion and exclusion of words on the basis of their national origin? (8) What should the policy be on acceptance or rejection of syntactic and phonological features borrowed from unrelated languages?

Participants in debates about language policy invoke principles or standards.⁷ The Soviet literature on language corpus policy discloses fifteen "primitive" principles of legitimacy, that is, principles not reducible to others in the same set. Each can be expressed as a rule.

One group of principles has to do with the community of reference. They are: (1) *authenticism*: choose that which is indigenous to the language over that which is not; (2) *Russianism*: when one alternative enhances or recognizes the Russian language or people more, choose it; (3) *Sovietism*: when one alternative is more in accordance with Soviet principles or interests, choose it; (4) *internationalism*: choose that which contributes more to the rapprochement of peoples.

A second group of principles deals with the criteria for language policy. They are: (5) *traditionalism*: choose that which is longer established in usage or conforms more to precedents; (6) *populism*: choose that which conforms more to the language and preferences of the masses; (7) *egalitarianism*: when one alternative contributes more to the enjoyment of equal rights, choose it; (8) *standardism*: choose that which contributes more to orderly, uniform, clear norms of language usage; (9) *economism*: if one alternative will cost less, choose it; (10) *developmentalism*: choose that which contributes more to the richness of the language and the progress of its speakers' civilization.

Principles in the last group express general orientations toward the language planning process. They are: (11) *activism*: make and implement language policy in a thorough, decisive, organized, and coordinated way; (12) *professionalism*: apply the norms of science or linguistics; (13) *moderatism*: avoid extremes and be reasonable; (14) *pragmatism*: consider nonlinguistic as well as linguistic variables, and the obstacles to implementing policies as well as the desirability of adopting them; (15) *voluntarism*: avoid coercion against individuals and speech communities.

7. See Otto Jespersen, *Mankind, Nation and Individual from a Linguistic Point of View* (Bloomington, Ind., 1964 [1st ed., 1925]), chapter 5.

Omitted here are some vague or tautological quasi-principles, including: (a) *goodness*: choose that which is better; (b) *necessity*: when there is only one alternative, choose it; (c) *nature*: choose the natural over the artificial.

These principles are used in combination as well as singly in the rhetoric of justification. Among arguments bringing more than one principle to bear, we can distinguish two ideal types, which might be called "political" and "technical." In a political argument, each principle is invoked separately. The oppositions among them are not revealed; formulas for reconciling them are not given. A technical argument, by contrast, ranks, weights, or otherwise reconciles the relevant principles, letting anyone with enough knowledge make decisions even when principles conflict (as they generally do).⁸ Leaving no room for discretion, technical argumentation would be expected to increase the security of subordinates against reprimands from above in the policy apparatus.

Arguments approximating both types may be found in the Soviet language-policy literature, but the typical argument is closer to the political than the technical ideal. Writers often invoke conflicting principles in similar cases, without explicitly recognizing the conflict.

Let us see, in more detail, how the eight policy questions enumerated earlier are answered.

How much regulation should the language be subjected to, and by whom? Activism and voluntarism are the most relevant to this question. Activist arguments say that language should be centrally regulated. The alternative is described as "chaos," in which various commissions operate "in total isolation" and allow language users to disregard their decisions. Using egalitarianism, too, activists complain that uncoordinated language planning gives similar committees "unequal rights and opportunities" by leaving them under different agencies in different places.⁹

According to the opposite view, however, voluntarism is important and central control inherently undesirable. An Azerbaidzhani terminologist writes:

In bringing order to terminology, it is wrong to give administrative orders. It is essential here to deal with the relationship between language and society, and to determine what objective laws govern social processes.

Periods do indeed arise in the historical development of a given lan-

8. See Valter Tauli, *Introduction to a Theory of Language Planning* (Uppsala, 1968), pp. 29–42.

9. T. M. Garipov, "Vystuplenie," in V. V. Vinogradov et al., eds., *Voprosy razvitiia literaturnykh iazykov narodov SSSR v sovetskuiu epokhu* (hereafter cited as *Vop. raz. lit.*) (Alma-Ata, 1964), pp. 210–11; M. Sh. Shirāliiev, "Dil mādāniīati māsālālārimiz," in M. Sh. Shirāliiev, ed., *Nitg mādāniīati māsālālāri* (hereafter cited as *Nitg*), vol. 1 (Baku, 1969), p. 6.

guage when positive, normative intervention is inevitable. But a precise determination is needed as to whether such a period is at hand or not.¹⁰

One of the obstacles to voluntarism in language is that people everywhere tend to want to be told what is linguistically correct.¹¹ Voluntarists invoke professionalism to combat such demands:

There are . . . comrades who, although they work in a particular field, expect from linguists the creation of terms belonging to their own field, or the discovery of counterparts for Russian or foreign terms. . . . This is definitely an unjustified request. The help that linguists *can* give them consists of showing them whether terms they have created conform to the rules and laws of Azerbaidzhani.¹²

Another principle supporting voluntarism is traditionalism, since Soviet language policy is viewed both as traditionally voluntaristic and as voluntarily traditional. For example, the choice of scripts has been "a free one," and languages with particular traditional scripts like Georgian and Armenian have chosen to keep these.¹³

How uniform should the language be? According to Haugen, there is a universal tendency toward uniformity within each language,¹⁴ and the legitimacy of standardism in the Soviet Union testifies for this view. Azerbaidzhani discussions of language policy are generally normative. They abound in such words as "*düzgün*" (correct), "*səhv*" (mistake), "*küsurlu*" (faulty), and "*nögsan*" (deficiency). They frequently call for the "*nizama salynma(sy)*" (putting in order, systematization) of divergent usages. Sometimes it is taken as self-evident that standardism is good, and an author attacks divergent usages merely by showing they exist.¹⁵ Where reasons are needed, standardism is sometimes combined with developmentalism: "the development of our civilization has reached a level that makes the provision of orthoepic [pronunciation] rules one of today's pressing problems," writes an Azerbaidzhani linguist.¹⁶ Populism is also used to support standardism, by distinguishing "words and phrases that are clear to and are used by the common people" from "words and phrases that belong to just one particular dialect and accent."¹⁷ In a

10. M. Sh. Gasymov, *Azərbaycan dili terminologiyasının əsasları* (hereafter cited as *Az. dili term.*) (Baku, 1973), p. 110. All translations in this article are mine.

11. Jespersen, *Mankind*, pp. 85–86; Einar Haugen, *Language Conflict and Language Planning: The Case of Modern Norwegian* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), pp. 142–44.

12. A. A. Orujov, "Terminoloji leksika haqqında bəzi gədlər," in *Nitg*, p. 16.

13. M. I. Isaev and O. B. Gobeti, "Problemy razvitiia natsional'nykh iazykov v SSSR v osveshchenii burzhuaiznykh avtorov," *Voprosy istorii*, 1969, no. 10, p. 44. For status policy, see V. A. Chernyshev, "K probleme iazyka-posrednika," in F. P. Filin et al., eds., *Iazyk i obshchestvo* (Moscow, 1968), p. 209.

14. Haugen, *Language Conflict*, pp. 288–89.

15. R. I. Khälilov, "Mahnlyarda täläffüz," in *Nitg*, p. 79.

16. Shiräliiev, "Dil," p. 9.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

scientific and technical context, a terminologist objects to the proliferation of terms on grounds of economism: synonyms increase the cost of learning the concepts and terms of any field.¹⁸

What should the dialectal base of the language be? Here the range of alternatives has historically been wide, but some are motivated by pan-Turkism, an illegitimate principle in the USSR. One study distinguishes twenty-six living Soviet Turkic languages, of which twenty are written.¹⁹ The option of treating all Turkic speech varieties as dialects and standardizing a single written language for them all is attacked as pan-Turkist, and the option of grouping the Turkic varieties under a smaller number of written languages²⁰ is also rejected. Instead, Soviet policy has been to increase the number of recognized languages by standardizing varieties formerly treated as dialects. While many outsiders interpret this as a Russian-nationalist or divide-and-rule policy, the principle mainly cited to justify this proliferation of written languages is populism. The larger the number of standard languages, the closer each will be to the speech of its users.

The question of how far to proliferate is sometimes raised for clusters of unwritten dialects. When it is decided to standardize separate languages for two or more dialects, this is justified by populism: bringing the standard language to the people. The opposite decision, to group two or more dialects under the same standard language, is justified by developmentalism and economism, which both militate against a multiplicity of languages spoken by small groups.²¹

Given the dialects to be served by a standard language, the question remains which one(s) shall be used as the "base." Populism would dictate the dialect(s) most easily understood and used by the largest number of people. Traditionalism would point to the dialect already serving in this capacity. Developmentalism would favor the dialect richest in (especially modern) vocabulary, or richest in phonemes, to facilitate word borrowing. Russianism would favor the dialect with the most phonemes similar to those in Russian, or the most Russian words. Egalitarianism would dictate that

18. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, p. 106.

19. N. A. Baskakov, *Vvedenie v izuchenie tiurkskikh iazykov* (Moscow, 1969), pp. 382–83; N. A. Baskakov, ed., *Voprosy sovershenstvovaniia alfavitov tiurkskikh iazykov SSSR* (Moscow, 1972). Another scholar says there are eighteen written Soviet Turkic languages: K. M. Musaev, "Voprosy razrabotki i dal'neishego sovershenstvovaniia orfografi tiurkskikh literaturnykh iazykov Sovetskogo Soiuz," in K. M. Musaev, ed., *Orfografi tiurkskikh literaturnykh iazykov SSSR* (Moscow, 1973), p. 8.

20. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, lists two branches, six groups, and twelve subgroups.

21. V. I. Lytkin, "Osnovnye protsessy v formirovanii i razvitii finno-ugorskikh i samodiiskikh iazykov v sovetskuu epokhu," in N. A. Baskakov, ed., *Zakonomernosti razvitiia literaturnykh iazykov narodov SSSR v sovetskuu epokhu: Osnovnye protsessy vnutristrukturnogo razvitiia tiurkskikh, finno-ugorskikh i mongol'skikh iazykov* (Moscow, 1969), pp. 251–53.

several dialects be drawn upon, not just one. Finally, the no longer legitimate principle of archaism would select the dialect best preserving ancient features.²² All these reasonings can be found in the literature.

To support the populist solution, one scholar combines it with Sovietism, and the quasi-principle of naturalism.

The battle over the dialectal base of the national standard language was associated with the political battle. . . . [B]ourgeois-nationalist elements, aiming to divert Uzbekistan from the mainstream of development of the languages of socialist nations, tried to "put together" an artificial standard language on the basis of the old language of letters, with a predilection for the use of Arabo-Persianisms not understood by the people.²³

Yet, for languages with substantial writing traditions, a traditionalist stance is common: the previously accepted base dialect is selected. This dialect, moreover, need not be that which populism would have revealed:

For standard Azerbaidzhani pronunciation . . . the basic source is . . . the cultural center. This pronunciation is certainly not local Baku pronunciation, however; it is the generalized pronunciation of the capital as exhibited in meetings, conferences, schools, offices, and so forth, by those who have a perfect knowledge of the literary language.²⁴

Whether the base dialect is selected on populist or traditionalistic grounds, the argument is still made that other dialects ought to be represented. Egalitarianism and developmentalism both find a place here. In Azerbaidzhani, "clustered around the dialect of Shemakha and Baku, each dialect has woven in a strand of its own, contributing to the growth and enrichment of the national language."²⁵ A terminologist complains, "Some experts arrive at the hasty judgment that there is no word in Azerbaidzhani that can express this or that concept." He points out that "there is rich material in the dialects for the development of the terminology . . . and the enhancement of the precision of terms." An illustration is the fact that "as many as 120 varieties of apple are known in Guba, and 35 varieties of grape in Baku." Because this richness is unexploited, users of the language are at a loss for words. For example, Azerbaidzhani geologists have not agreed on whether to use the Russian *lavina* or the coinage *gar uchgunu* for "avalanche," although "in the northern group

22. Ibid., p. 251.

23. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, pp. 188–89.

24. A. Afāndizadā, "Azārbaījan ādābi tālāffūzū ḡaggynda," in *Nitg*, p. 49. Cf. Shirāliiev, "Dil," p. 9.

25. M. Sh. Shiraliev and M. Sh. Ragimov, "Azerbaidzhanskii iazyk," in Iu. D. Desheriev, ed., *Zakonomernosti razvitiia literaturnykh iazykov narodov SSSR v sovetskuiu epokhu: Vnutristrukturnoe razvitiie staropis'mennykh iazykov* (Moscow, 1973), p. 228. Cf. Paul Wexler, *Purism and Language: A Study in Modern Ukrainian and Belorussian Nationalism (1840–1967)* (Bloomington, Ind., 1974), pp. 182, 190, 217, 293–94.

of Azerbaidzhani dialects the word *markhal* exists, which exactly expresses this meaning."²⁶

What relationship should exist between the written and the spoken language? The main principle applied to this question is populism. "In establishing the standards of the literary language one must not permit a great cleavage between the literary language and the popular colloquial language."²⁷ Developmentalism and Sovietism can be used to support this policy. Following the Revolution, standard Tadjik was declassicalized and colloquialized, for "Revolutionary propaganda demanded a simple, accessible language . . ."²⁸ Once the standard language has been popularized, literary critics have two new enemies: (1) writers who erroneously portray popular speech as uncultivated,²⁹ and (2) writers who themselves use "faulty, unnatural words and compounds not found in the people's language . . ."³⁰

But populism, like all principles, is tempered with moderatism. The first quotation in this section still implies that there should be leaders who define linguistic norms. And, indeed:

The writer, when bringing elements of the popular colloquial speech into the literary language, must not copy the popular speech mechanically and naturalistically. To express his idea clearly, he must choose from the colloquial language clear, precise, and rich words and grammatical forms.

In addition, the writer, using all the means of word formation in the language, also creates new words, which are used first in the language of belles-lettres, and later in the language of the broad masses as well.³¹

Moderatism allows populism to be reconciled here with activism, a potentially hostile principle.

What system of writing symbols should be adopted? In the Turkic languages, the switch from an Arabic to a Roman alphabet, or the choice of a Roman alphabet in the first place, is explained by developmentalism (the "old Arabic alphabet . . . was unable to satisfy new demands"), by professionalism (it had a "sharp divergence in the symbolization of consonants"), and by populism (even the reformed Arabic alphabet "aided the conservation of the . . . old written language, basically far from the popular colloquial language").³² The basic question was "how to construct writing systems that would facilitate

26. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, pp. 117–18. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, pp. 115–16, 239–40.

27. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, p. 203.

28. E. K. Mikerov, "K voprosu o roli sotsial'nykh faktorov v razvitii blizkorodstvennykh iazykov," in *Iazyk i obshchestvo*, p. 227.

29. M. I. Adilov, "Täbligatchynyn dili haggynnda," in *Nitg*, p. 112.

30. Ä. Bağyrov, "Azärbaijan sovet romanlarynyn dili haggynnda," in *Nitg*, p. 65.

31. Shiräliiev, "Dil," p. 11.

32. N. A. Baskakov et al., "O sovremennom sostoianii i putiakh dal'neishego razvitiia literaturnykh tiurkskikh iazykov," in *Vop. raz. lit.*, p. 157.

the rapid acquisition of literacy by the masses.”³³ The decision to go from Roman to Cyrillic alphabets was more controversial and the arguments surrounding it invoked more principles. One treatment of this decision in the course of two pages invokes *eleven* of our fifteen principles.³⁴

There is still considerable controversy over how Russian the Cyrillic alphabets of Soviet languages should be. Those who resist the notion of maximal Russianness appeal to authenticity and professionalism:

In Azerbaidzhani the letter *ts* in Russian and international words is not necessary, because borrowed words are subjected to the phonetic and grammatical laws of the borrowing language. . . . Specialists proved scientifically that the letters *ia*, *iu*, and *e* do not correspond to the phonetic and grammatical norms of Azerbaidzhani³⁵

In addition to the question of resemblance to Russian, the question is debated as to how closely the Turkic alphabets should resemble each other. Unification is held desirable for both internationalist and economic reasons: making kindred literatures mutually accessible, mass-producing universal Turkic typewriters, and so forth.³⁶

Within the adopted writing system, how should words be written? First of all, the consensus is standardistic: each word should be written just one way in the language. When periodicals in Azerbaidzhani began to appear in the Roman alphabet in the 1920s and spelled words as many as four different ways, “this kind of inconsistency in orthography was sharply criticized. . . .”³⁷ Although orthographical norms are much more firmly established now, complaints about remaining ambiguities³⁸ and about frequent violations of the existing norms³⁹ are common. In Azerbaidzhani poetry, “lexical, grammatical, and orthographical rules are made a shambles.”⁴⁰

It is not self-evident that a language must have a unitary set of norms for writing. Langacker states that “we could get along perfectly well if everyone spelled words as he thought they should be spelled.”⁴¹ Thus the Soviet

33. K. M. Musaev, *Alfavitny iazykov narodov SSSR* (Moscow, 1965), p. 8.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19. Those not cited are nos. 1, 5, 11, and 13.

35. G. G. Ismailova, “K istorii azerbaidzhanskogo alfavita,” in *Voprosy sovershenstvovaniia*, pp. 36–38. Cf. the complaint about the contemporary Turkmen alphabet not reflecting that language’s distinction between long and short vowels: B. Charyarov, “Iz istorii turkmenskogo alfavita,” in *Voprosy sovershenstvovaniia*, pp. 153–54.

36. A. Tybykova, “Ob usovershenstvovanii i unifikatsii alfavita altaiskogo iazyka,” in *Voprosy sovershenstvovaniia*, p. 46.

37. Shiraliev and Ragimov, “Azerbaidzhanskii iazyk,” p. 238.

38. Shiraliiev, “Dil,” p. 5.

39. K. Aliiev, “Här sözün öz ieri var . . .,” in *Nitg*, p. 89; R. I. Khälilov, “Müasir she’r dilimizdä bä’zi fonetik-grammatik nögsanlar,” in *Nitg*, pp. 124–33.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

41. Ronald W. Langacker, *Language and its Structure: Some Fundamental Linguistic Concepts*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1973), p. 60. See, however, Haugen, *Language Conflict*, pp. 288–89.

(and common world-wide) norm of standardism, especially applied to poetry, is optional, not something implied by the nature of language itself.

Given the desire for a standard, one must be chosen. In the case of orthography, the polar alternatives for the Soviet Turkic languages are a phonetic orthography, reflecting pronunciation, and a morphological orthography, revealing the inflection and derivation of words. Neither one of these purely linguistic principles is given legitimacy. Rather, they are acknowledged as contradictory and as requiring moderatism and pragmatism:

there cannot be and there must not be a unique principle for the establishment of rules of orthography, since this is a topic of many facets, aspects, and levels, requiring in each separate case a special examination. . . .

The defects of actually implemented orthographies are related to the fact that the framers of some of them have attempted until now to apply, in theory, a single solitary principle to all kinds of rules: this contradicts the aim of finding a practical solution to the problem.⁴²

A special problem arises for the spelling of borrowed words, especially words borrowed from Russian. Russianism would seem to require they be spelled exactly as in Russian. This principle is applied by the leading Soviet Turkologist, Baskakov, with some help from traditionalism and populism:

a well-known tradition has already arisen . . . : old borrowings take forms that correspond to their pronunciations as determined by the phonetic rules of the national language in question, while terms borrowed since the Great October Socialist Revolution receive forms that take account of the tendency for the orthographical forms . . . to approach their Russian forms.

The violation of these established traditions . . . would lead the languages . . . to tear away from their respective colloquial national tongues.

Along with this there is another danger: the tearing away of the languages of the peoples of the USSR from Russian Such a cleavage would have pernicious effects, especially on the mastering of Russian in non-Russian schools.⁴³

The Russianist position even extends to the point that place names in one Turkic language are borrowed by other Turkic languages through Russian instead of directly.⁴⁴

The above use of populism depends on an assumption: non-Russian speakers who use Russian words pronounce them as in Russian. "Why write *Sovettär Soiuzy kosmonavy* or *Měškäu-Almaty poezy*, when the whole middle-aged generation of Bashkirs, not to mention the youth, succeeds in pronouncing

42. Musaev, "Voprosy razrabotki," pp. 10, 17ff; cf. p. 20.

43. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, pp. 208–9.

44. Musaev, "Voprosy razrabotki," p. 44.

kosmonavty and *poezdy*?"⁴⁵ But Russian-like pronunciation is not universal, and distortions are particularly common in Turkic languages.⁴⁶ This allows debaters to use Russianism as a two-edged sword. One specialist on Bashkir argues that, if the aim is "full lexical comprehension" of borrowed words, that is, an understanding of them by the speaking population, then the people must also have a "complete phonetic comprehension" of them. This means a "partial alteration of the orthography of borrowed Russian words in conformity with Turkic norms of pronunciation." All the more obvious is the need for "liberating the writing of specifically Turkic words from the influence of Russian orthography."⁴⁷ And even the advocates of Russianism in orthography temper their claims with moderatism, professionalism, and pragmatism:

The question of the orthography of borrowed words . . . must not be resolved identically for all standard languages. It is essential here to take into account the degree to which borrowings are naturalized; the traditions of old literary languages and their absence in languages recently reduced to writing; and so forth. This, in turn, requires empirical research on borrowed words.

It is also essential to have data on degrees of bilingualism and on the use of the native language and of Russian in both writing and speech Only a consideration of the variables mentioned above, and many others, can provide the key⁴⁸

A final special issue is the spelling of words borrowed from Russian but not native to Russian. Since Russian frequently modifies common international forms in the borrowing process, there are three possible natural options: an international, a Russian, and a nativized one. Although the first two points of view were once advocated,⁴⁹ the Russian solution has now become the accepted one. It is defended by traditionalism (this is the way usage has developed), Russianism (this helps speakers of other languages learn Russian), and Sovietism (this allows all Soviet languages to approach a "common lexical stock"). Still, the international solution is practiced in some cases, particularly in Azerbaidzhani.⁵⁰

What should the policy be on inclusion and exclusion of words on the basis of their national origin? This question receives the most attention from

45. Garipov, "Vystuplenie," p. 210.

46. For Azerbaidzhani, see, for example, Āfāndizadā, "Azārbaījan," pp. 50–52; Z. I. Budagova and G. G. Ismailova, "Orfografiā azerbaidzhanskogo iazyka," in *Orfografiī*, pp. 57–58.

47. A. G. Biishev, "O bashkirskom alfavite," in *Voprosy sovershenstvovaniia*, p. 56. Musaeu, "Voprosy razrabotki," p. 44, describes this as a minority view.

48. Musaeu, "Voprosy razrabotki," p. 46. Cf. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, p. 209.

49. Shiraliev and Ragimov, "Azerbaidzhanskii iazyk," p. 238.

50. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, pp. 165–70; cf. David Nissman, "Is the Influence of Russian Orthography on the Wane in Azerbaidzhan?," *Radio Liberty Dispatch*, February 16, 1971.

Soviet and outside discussants and is commonly referred to by those who criticize the USSR for linguistic "Russification." Desheriev has written that the sources for the lexical development of Soviet national languages are (1) their own resources, and borrowings from (2) Russian, (3) other Soviet languages, and (4) foreign languages.⁵¹ But for the Turkic languages a more relevant classification might distinguish (1) Turkic, (2) Arabic-Persian, (3) Russian or Russian plus international, and (4) non-Russian international origins. Still, the debate is often simplified to an East-West, or internal-external, dichotomy: Arabic, Persian, and Turkic words versus Russian and Western European ones.

The most natural principle on which to prop the Russo-European answer is, of course, Russianism. It is a short step to join Sovietism and populism to the argument as well. The Soviet people are naturally attracted to the Russian language and to "the use of its lexical tools for the lexical enrichment of their native languages . . .": an indication of cultural "rapprochement" and "of the solidarization of all peoples around the Great Russian people."⁵² This argument is extended to attack early "nationalists" for "artificially" replacing Russian and international borrowings with "Arabic and Persian words foreign to the masses, and . . . with artificially created 'national' words and terms, . . . also foreign and incomprehensible to the people."⁵³ An Azerbaidzhani terminologist supports this view with a touch of traditionalism ("the taking of words from Russian by Azerbaidzhani has become a tradition") and asserts that such words "have become such an indispensable part of our language, and our ears have become so accustomed to them, that their origin does not even cross our minds . . ."⁵⁴ As evidence for this view, examples are given where the colloquial language has adopted a Russian word, but the more conservative written language continues to employ an Arabic-Persian or Turkic one.⁵⁵ The Russian solution also receives support from internationalism, in a particular sense: "the zonal internationalization of scientific-technical terminology."⁵⁶ Desheriev describes terms like Azerbaidzhani *hidroġen* and *oksigen* as "deviant" and "national," in contrast to the forms *vodorod* and *kislород* in Uzbek, borrowed from Russian in conformity with the norm of "unification of chemical terms."⁵⁷

51. Iu. D. Desheriev, *Zakonomernosti razvitiia i vzaimodeistviia iazykov v sovetskom obshchestve* (Moscow, 1966), p. 131.

52. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, p. 204. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, pp. 184–85.

53. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, p. 189. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, p. 163.

54. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, p. 155. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, p. 63.

55. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, pp. 155–56.

56. V. N. Iartseva, "Osnovnye tendentsii vozdeistviia nauchno-tekhnicheskoi revoliutsii na tipologiiu sovremennykh iazykov," in A. N. Baskakov, A. D. Shveitser, and L. B. Nikol'skii, eds., *Nauchno-tekhnicheskaiia revoliutsiia i funktsionirovanie iazykov mira (Tezisi dokladov)* (Moscow, 1974), p. 19.

57. Desheriev, *Zakonomernosti*, p. 187. Cf. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, p. 156; and Wexler, *Purism*, pp. 162, 248–49.

A further important support for borrowings from Russian is developmentalism. Russian is

one of the most developed and richest languages in the world today. Thanks to massive borrowing . . . , a common lexical stock has been compiled In a multi-national socialist country, developing on the basis of unitary, union-wide economic planning and a substantively unitary culture, this factor has fundamental significance.⁵⁸

The effect of Russian words on the languages that borrow them is called "enrichment." Apparently no amount of word borrowing would by itself reach beyond enrichment. The replacement of native terms by Russian and European borrowings in current popular science and medical usage, and the nearly complete cessation of non-Russian coinages and borrowings in chemistry, are both described under the rubric of enrichment by an Azerbaidzhani terminologist.⁵⁹ The borrowing of stock phrases, such as "cross the Rubicon," "Achilles' heel," and "pass like a red thread through," is seen as something which "enriches the phraseological stock [of Azerbaidzhani] not only quantitatively but also qualitatively."⁶⁰ Those opposing borrowings from Russian are attacked as reactionary:

Sometimes even a step backward is taken in the attempt to replace established terms with "new" ones (for example, "candidate in legal sciences" is expressed by *adliia fanlari nomzodi* instead of the commonly accepted *iuridik fanlar kandidati*) or in the striving for totally unjustified "innovations" and "improvements" in the area of national orthography (for example, attempts to write *Khamzatov* instead of *Gamzatov*, *khektar* instead of *gektar*, *Arastu* instead of *Aristotel*, and so forth). Such "innovations" not only fail to enrich and perfect the national languages, but in the last analysis do them harm, because they concentrate attention on questions that have been long since decided.⁶¹

Russian borrowings are thus justified by several principles. But the other side of this question is argued equally vigorously and even more cleverly. The principle invoked most simply here is authenticity. It is typically combined with the assertion that the language is rich, either in words or in word-forming capacity:

58. K. Khanazarov and N. Guliamova, "Dal'neishee razvitie iazykov narodov SSSR na osnove ravnopravii i vzaimoobogashchenii," *Kommunist Uzbekistana*, 1970, no. 8, p. 47.

59. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, pp. 100–102, 153.

60. M. I. Adilov, "Rol' perevodov v obogashchenii azerbaidzhanskogo iazyka frazeologizmami," in N. A. Baskakov et al., eds., *Voprosy frazeologii i sostavleniia frazeologicheskikh slovarei* (Baku, 1968), pp. 100–101. Contrast this with George Orwell's statement that "Achilles' heel" is a "lump of verbal refuse [belonging in] the dustbin . . ." "Politics and the English Language," in Max J. Skidmore, ed., *Word Politics: Essays on Language and Politics* (Palo Alto, 1972), p. 23 (originally published 1945).

61. Khanazarov and Guliamova, "Dal'neishee razvitie," p. 48.

It is the basic lexical stock of the language itself, with its core of roots, that serves as the vastest and richest source for the enrichment of the vocabulary of a particular language. The possibilities for word formation in each language are inexhaustible.⁶²

Given this, it is an “inadequacy” to make “less than full use of the means of word formation in the native language for the formation of new words and terms” in the Turkic languages.⁶³

Most strongly formulated, the authenticist argument rejects even the notion that words borrowed from Western languages come to belong to the receiving language. An Azerbaidzhani linguist, for example, attacks the phrase *Baky ashaghy voltly aparatlar zavodunun kollektivi* (the Baku low-voltage machine factory collective). “Only one little word in this expression, namely *ashaghy*, is Azerbaidzhani,” he says.⁶⁴ The ultimate in authenticism is exhortative phraseology assuming the reader’s sympathy with the cause: “going to battle for the sake of the purity of the language is the obligation of every single individual and of the entire people.”⁶⁵

For more skeptical readers, other principles can be mixed in—for example, professionalism. “[A] number of difficulties on the level both of word formation and of semantics arise when terms are borrowed.”⁶⁶ Furthermore, synonyms are harmful in scientific terminology, and “one of the main reasons for the existence of synonymy is the borrowing and use of terms from Russian without need.”⁶⁷ At the most *ad hominem* level, professionalism is applied by arguing that word borrowers are not even competent speakers and hence cannot serve as models:

Especially some of the young people, in order to look original, try to talk fancy and keep on repeating a bunch of words that have become “camp.” Those who use words like *pozhaluista*, *tochno*, *uzhe*, *mezhdū prochim*, and so forth, when speaking Azerbaidzhani are ridiculous. Strangely enough, such types don’t know Russian completely either, or when they speak Russian they once again use words from another language: this time Azerbaidzhani.

The greatest sons of our people have always done battle against

62. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, p. 191. Cf. Desheriev, *Zakonomernosti*, p. 131; and Wexler, *Purism*, pp. 47–48.

63. Baskakov et al., “O sovremennom sostoianii,” p. 168.

64. Shiraliiev, “Dil,” p. 7. For Slavic languages, extreme authenticism can take the form of choosing, from among indigenous synonyms, that which is most dissimilar to Russian; see Wexler, *Purism*, pp. 50–51, 213, 231.

65. Adilov, “Täbligatchynyn dili,” p. 111.

66. M. Sh. Gasyimov, “Osnovnye sposoby obrazovaniia terminov v sovremennom azerbaidzhanskom literaturnom iazyke,” *Sovetskaiia tiurkologiia*, 1972, no. 4, p. 23.

67. Gasyimov, *Az. dili term.*, p. 107. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, p. 275.

ignoramuses like these who litter and pollute the language and tear it limb from limb.⁶⁸

Populism provides more support for native elements: they are believed easier for the ordinary people to understand and use, especially since they are already in use by the people:

we must collect and study the rich store of words in the living language of the people. . . . [T]here is nothing that the people use without having a name for it.⁶⁹

In fact, even Russianism can be an ally against indiscriminate borrowings from Russian, via a what's-sauce-for-the-geese-is-sauce-for-the-gander argument. In the words of an Azerbaidzhani linguist:

The experience of the Russian language in creating terminology should be a model for our scholars. . . . At one time [Russian natural scientists] collected . . . names . . . current among the people, systematized them, and used them widely in their own scientific writings.⁷⁰

What should be the policy on acceptance or rejection of syntactic and phonological features borrowed from unrelated languages? This question is analogous to the previous one, but it is widely believed that phonology and especially syntax are more resistant to change, and more characteristic of the irreducible essence of a language, than its vocabulary.⁷¹ Thus, one division of opinions would be: (1) lexical, phonological, and syntactic borrowing are all good; (2) lexical borrowing is good, but phonological and syntactic borrowing are not; (3) none of these is good.

The principle of developmentalism is commonly used to support the extreme proborrowing view. A kind of manifest-destiny approach to the question is revealed in the statement that

the phonetic systems of various Turkic languages recently reduced to writing have been considerably filled out thanks to borrowings from Russian. . . . In fact, in Bashkir new rules have appeared for the juxtaposition of sounds, contradicting the laws of the language⁷²

68. Adilov, "Täbligatchynyn dili," p. 111. On a visit, in April 1975, to Azerbaidzhan and Turkmenistan, I observed native speakers of Turkic languages, including intellectuals involved with language policy, using such Russian adverbs as *imenno*, *srazu*, *uzhe*, *voobshche*, *kak raz*, *sovsem*, *naverno*, *tol'ko*, and *znachit* in their Azerbaidzhani and Turkmen informal speech.

69. Orujov, "Terminolozhi leksika," p. 17. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, pp. 60 and 113.

70. Orujov, "Terminolozhi leksika," p. 16. Cf. the almost identical passage in Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, pp. 116–17. Cf. also Robert J. Barrett, "Convergence and the Nationality Literature of Central Asia," in Edward Allworth, ed., *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central Asia* (New York, 1973), p. 27.

71. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, p. 79.

72. V. A. Vladimirskii, "K voprosu o sotsiolingvisticeskikh printsipakh zaimstvo-

Going beyond phonology, an Azerbaidzhani linguist thanks Russian borrowings for “new types of syllables,” “change in the character of accentuation,” and “changes in word order.”⁷³ Baskakov details a range of new developments in the Turkic languages, including fundamental ones: new phonemes, new phoneme combinations, the relaxation of vowel and consonant harmony rules, new affixes to permit the derivation of adjectives from nouns, changes in the cases governed by particular verbs, and even changes in the syntax of sentences like “I must go.” These changes, all in the direction of Russian, are called “the perfection and polishing of their grammatical structures. But all these changes do not in the slightest degree disturb the basis of the language, which has been formed over the centuries.”⁷⁴ Thus even authenticity is called upon to support grammatical changes toward the features of Indo-European languages and especially Russian.

Authenticism, however, is of much clearer use in the opposite side of the debate. A fundamental assertion here is that each language has its own rules, and that these must be respected. “All borrowed words enter the system of the language on the same basis and use the same system of word formation and change as do native words; that is, they are subjected to the internal laws of development of the language.”⁷⁵ This is especially the case if the language is self-sufficient and does not need help from the outside: “Thanks to the high degree of development of its syntactic structure, Azerbaidzhani is presently capable of expressing the most complex scientific-technical concepts.”⁷⁶

If authenticity can be used to support Russian-like changes in phonology and syntax, then Russianism can be used to oppose such changes. One device for this is the argument that the ultimate victory of Russian as the universal language of the Soviet Union makes it unnecessary to Russianize the remaining languages.⁷⁷ Another application of Russianism against Russianization is to use Russian as a model of self-sufficiency, analogously to the case of vocabulary. Here Russian is viewed as a “catalyst” or “impulse” for the use of a Turkic language’s own developmental capacities.⁷⁸ Indeed, Russian authen-

vaniia obshchestvenno-politicheskikh terminov v mladopis'mennykh iazykakh narodov SSSR,” in Iu. D. Desheriev et al., eds., *Sotsiolingvisticheskie problemy razvivaiushchikh-sia stran* (Moscow, 1975), p. 311.

73. M. Sh. Shiraliev, “Osnovnye voprosy vzaimodeistviia i vzaimoobogashcheniia iazykov narodov SSSR (Na materiale azerbaidzhanskogo iazyka),” in N. A. Baskakov et al., eds., *Vzaimodeistvie i vzaimoobogashchenie iazykov narodov SSSR* (Moscow, 1969), p. 113. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, p. 290.

74. Baskakov, *Vvedenie*, pp. 199–201.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

76. I. Mamedov and A. Mamedov, review of *Grammatika azerbaidzhanskogo iazyka* in *Sovetskaia tiurkologiia*, 1971, no. 5, p. 123.

77. I. A. Andreev, “Vystuplenie,” in *Vop. raz. lit.*, p. 207.

78. Baskakov et al., “O sovremennom sostoianii,” p. 168.

ticism and Turkic authenticity can support each other against the common threat of international inundation. Claiming that Russian is losing "its clarity, freshness, expressiveness, and its national basis," a Russian writer exhorts, "the battle against weird compound words, tasteless clichés, and monstrous jargon words is the business of each and all" (compare with the Azerbaidzhani call to battle above). And he goes on to envision an all-Union authenticist coalition:

I have been using the words "Russian language" so often because it is my native language, and I might say, following Rasul Gamzatov, "And if tomorrow my language is to die, then I am ready to die today." And if any one of my colleagues of another language should begin to lose his native tongue, he will find in me a helper and friend.⁷⁹

We have seen how fifteen principles of legitimacy are used singly and in combination to argue about policies toward the development of the Soviet Turkic languages. Of all the principles enumerated above, the one receiving most unreserved and emotional invocation is populism. Populism has connotations of democracy and national equality, and relieves the expert of the need to accept responsibility for personal decisions. In addition, practically any language policy can be given some populist justification. An Azerbaidzhani linguist illustrates the degree to which it is acceptable to embrace populism:

the language of the people is a mighty wellspring. It does not accept every alien hue. It has its own colors, its own dyes, its own harmony. Everything which sprouts, grows, and ascends there is natural and beautiful. Hence everyone who is rising, who is moving ahead, who cares about his future should take the people's language and its laws as the test for all newly emerging and newly arriving words.⁸⁰

But the main feature of the language of the politics of language in the USSR is the plurality of principles, all of them legitimate, and a tendency to apply them "politically" rather than "technically." Use is made of whichever principle fits the occasion; the problem of contradictory principles is largely ignored. Thus, the one who categorizes a thing is able to determine whether it is good or bad. In one study, when a borrowed word is liked (for example, *fonetika*) it is called "international"; when it is disliked (for example, *lingvistika*) it is called "foreign."⁸¹ To name the phenomenon is to choose the principle according to which it shall be judged.

As an inspection of the footnotes to this paper reveals, the "debate" about

79. Vil' Lipatov, "Slovo v opasnosti . . .," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, August 18, 1971.

80. Gasymov, *Az. dili term.*, p. 116.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 94. Cf. Wexler, *Purism*, p. 318: "Enthusiasm for native resources is expressed through a variety of criteria which can be applied arbitrarily, whenever the occasion permits."

which we have been talking is not expressed mainly as a controversy among people with clear and opposing positions. There are many cases of counter-vailing principles within the same work, chapter, or page (often joined by *odnako* or *bununla belä* [nevertheless] or the like). Occasionally one can find contrary principles even in the same sentence:

From the very beginning of its activities, the Terminological Commission operated on two principles: maximum employment of the lexical resources of the Kirghiz language itself, and the borrowing of international terms without translation.⁸²

This is ideal-typical of what I have called political argumentation. Such argumentation, of course, can be found not only in discussions of Soviet language policy but also in debates about other issues and in other countries.⁸³

It appears from the dominant style of argumentation in Soviet language policy that participants are motivated to reason from principles, but generally not to reason so tightly that only one operational conclusion can be drawn.⁸⁴ The resulting formulations may protect their authors from later criticism—many in the past who have proposed unmistakable policies, such as thoroughly authenticist orthography or unlimited borrowing from Russian, are being criticized today. On the other hand, if the climate should change from language politics to language planning, demanding technical arguments with precise policy implications, then most of the literature we have been examining here could become the object of attack.

82. B. O. Oruzbaeva, "Sovremennaia kirgizskaia terminologiia," *Sovetskaia tiurkologiia*, 1972, no. 4, p. 73.

83. See Meg Greenfield, "The Prose of Richard M. Nixon," in *Word Politics*, pp. 120–21 (originally published 1960).

84. See Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana, Ill., 1964), chapters 3 and 7.