

# *The fate of linguistic heritage. Introduction: the case of Siberia*



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## Языки Сибири



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●	кетский
▼	североокагирский
▲	южноокагирский
■	чукотский
■	корякский
■	ительменский
◆	эскимосские
▼	алеутский
●	нивхский
▲	корейский



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*Some results of a sociolinguistic survey of 60 autochthonous communities of Siberia done within the two last decades*

*Today practically all speakers of autochthonous languages of Siberia are bilingual speaking Russian as their second or as their first language. In the majority of the surveyed communities the main means of communication both at home and in the community life is Russian.*

*Intergenerational language transmission is broken, but for a handful of families.*



## *Why parents choose not to pass the ancestral language to their children*

- They want their children to learn the official language of the country, the language that opens the way to education, career, wealth etc.
- They don't think the ancestral language might be useful for their children.
- In their childhood they spoke their ethnic language, but when they started learning at school they found out they couldn't do without the majority language. They learned it pretty soon, but it was not easy at the beginning. Now they want to make the life of their children easier teaching them "the useful language" instead of the ancestral one.
- Young parents might be left without ancestral linguistic heritage themselves, so they have nothing to pass on to their children except the language of the majority.



## *Why parents choose not to pass the ancestral language to their children*

- They think the ancestral language is only necessary for those who lead traditional way of life hunting, fishing, herding reindeer.
- They suppose the ancestral language is associated solely with the past, the future being connected with the majority language of the country and such foreign languages as English or German.
- They think the ancestral language does not suit the modern world.
- They don't keep the ancestral language for anything that really matters.



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*How can we persuade parents not to deprive children of their linguistic heritage or to try to return that heritage to their children and to themselves?*

*It is not possible to involve children into language revitalization activities without agreement and support from their parents, without their parents' wish to participate. That is why it is crucial to be able to persuade parents that all such activities will benefit their children.*



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*To motivate parents to send their children to a language nest, e.g., to a group, in which local minority language is taught, or to start attending language courses themselves, language activists should find arguments showing advantages of multilingualism over monolingualism. Children should also be motivated to learn minority languages.*



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*Instruments and channels for supporting minority languages*

*Legislative system*

*Education*

*Science*

*Culture*

*Press*

*Radio and TV*

*Internet*

*Audio and video production on CD, DVD ect.*



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*The internet is a powerful instrument of minority language support and a sphere for communication in minority languages*

*Minority language data posed on the internet work wonders, arousing children's interest in ancestral languages.*

*Many grandchildren would never listen to the stories of their grandparents, incomprehensible for them, but as soon as a video with these stories appears online, the stories begin to interest children and to make them proud of their elder relatives and of their language.*



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*The internet is a powerful instrument of minority language support and a sphere for communication in minority languages*

*During the pandemic year the internet provided communication between people all over the world.*

*The volume of the internet communication in minority languages increased significantly, and hopefully it will continue to increase.*



*Thank you!*