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Russian Language as a Tool
of Geopolitical Influence

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Abstract: After the breakup of the USSR, sovereign initiatives revitalized ethnic, religious and national origins. The basic legitimation strategy of the newly created states became the merger of the so-called "new ethnicity" with strategic descent, then de-Russification. In the 21st century, these initiatives have been hampered and Russian language has again become a highly positioned tool for geopolitical influence in the region. The aim of this article is to analyze the catalog of language influence tools in the soft power of the Russian Federation and to show the importance of using this instrument in the geopolitical relations of the region.
Keywords: language policy in the post-Soviet area, Russian language, Russian soft power, post-Soviet geopolitics

Introduction. Soft Power Apparatus in Geopolitics

The processes of globalization, regionalization and the increasing importance of modern forms of communication affect the specificity of the resources used by actors of contemporary international relations to conduct foreign policy.[1] After the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the satellite system in Central and Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, interest in the relations of states in the region did not diminish in intensity, on contrary, the place of ideological confrontation was taken by the geopolitical rivalry of old and new actors of international relations. The number of regional and local conflicts

1 М.М. Лебедева [M.M. Lebedeva], 'Акторы современной мировой политики: тренды развития' [Actors of Contemporary World Affairs], *Вестник МГИМО Университета* [Bulletin of MGIMO University], no. 1, 2013, pp. 38-42.

has not declined, although their specific characteristics have changed since they do not always take the form of armed force. Nowadays, in the race of influence, winning are those state and non-state entities that consider geopolitics in a holistic way, and are able to use a whole spectrum of modern methods and tools of ascendancy.[2]

Geostrategic challenges compel states to conduct a multifaceted foreign policy that redefines the notions of strength and pressure. Affecting the global position of participants in the international system, traditional determinants like the size of the country and its geographic location, the length and nature of borders, or the number of people, nowadays have ceased to be crucial for the potential possibility of expansion of the sphere of influence. According to M. Sułek, the three dimensions of the power of the state—economic, military and demographic-spatial—are solely elements influencing the crucial phenomenon of the power of the country, i.e., the pursuit of states to maximize their power, which means an increase in geopolitical potential.[3] These tendencies increase the importance of non-military geopolitical elements, such as economic, social, information or religious factors.[4] The geopolitical position is also influenced by globalization and the accompanying transboundary and transcultural phenomena.[5]

One of the basic tools of modern geopolitics is soft power, the ability of the state to use cultural and ideological attractiveness in international contacts.[6] Its use, which allows exerting global influence by

2   К.Э. Сорокин [K.E. Sorokin], *Геополитика современности и геостратегия России* [Geopolitics of Modern Times and Geostrategy of Russia], Москва [Moskow]: РОССПЭН, 1996, p. 168.

3   M. Sułek, 'O potęgonomii i potęgometrii' [The Science of the Power of the State and the Science of Shaping and Measuring this Power], in: Z. Lach and J. Wendt (eds), *Geopolityka. Elementy teorii, wybrane metody i badania*, [Geopolitics. Elements of Theory, Selected Methods and Research], Częstochowa: Instytut Geopolityki, 2010, pp. 57-68.

4   'O ekonomizacji kosztem militaryzacji i zmianie pozycjonowania rywalizacji gospodarczej w stosunkach międzynarodowych' [About Economics at the Expense of Militarization and Changing the Positioning of Economic Rivalry in International Relations], in: C.V. Prestowitz, R.A. Morse, A. Tonelson, *Powernomics. Economics and Strategy After the Cold War*, Economic Strategy Institute, Washington: Madison Books, 1991, pp. 25-31.

5   В.А. Колосов [V.A. Kolosov], 'Российская геополитика: традиционные концепции и современные вызовы' [Russian Geopolitics: Traditional Concepts and Contemporary Challenges], *Общественные науки и современность* [Social Sciences and Modernity], no. 3, 1996, pp. 86-90.

6   J.S. Nye, *Soft Power. Jak osiągnąć sukces w polityce światowej* [The Means To Success In World Politics], Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, 2007, p. 67; J.S. Nye, *Przyszłość siły* [The Future Of Power], Warsaw: PWN, 2012, p. 30.

non-military resources, is the essence of the so-called new geopolitics.[7] Naturally, political influence, military presence and arms trade are still good ways of positioning the state in international relations, but there is a clear tendency to expand the catalog of available and potential resources facilitating conducting of conflict, such as hybrid forms.

With regard to the "return of geopolitics" to the sphere of international relations, the natural purpose of the activity of every geopolitical player is to increase the catalog of so-called soft geopolitical influence instruments. Some countries, in view of their civilization, historical or geographical context, are in particular predisposed to use cultural or economic tools.[8]

Soft-power instruments include both tools that promote conciliation and dialogue, as well as pressure, although the latter, usually linked to material resources, are relatively infrequently used to build soft power.[9] The presence of foreign-language rhetoric in the area of human rights and citizenship, the status of minorities, the protection of individuals under-represented by the state are particularly important. Many of these elements of political discourse are the basic political techniques used in multilateral diplomacy today.[10]

The aim of the article is to analyze how, through the Russian language, the Russian Federation rebuilds its geopolitical influence in the post-Soviet region. Tools of linguistic influences were also cataloged, and the elements of the linguistic policies of the former USSR countries, which affect the status and positioning of the Russian language in the post-imperial space, were examined. The article uses a factorial method to synthesize the obtained results.

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7   J. Potulski, *Geopolityka w świecie ponowoczesnym* [Geopolitics in the Postmodern World], Częstochowa: Instytut Geopolityki, 2010, pp. 160-161.

8   Compositions of CNP (comprehensive national power).

9   'O kategorii nakazowej potęgi, polegającej na zachętach lub zagrożeniu' [About Category of Imperative Power, Consisting of Incentives or Threats], in: M. Sułek, op.cit.

10   B. Piskorska, 'Soft power jako efekt ewolucji rozumienia siły we współczesnym ładzie międzynarodowym' [Soft Power as a Result of the Evolution of Understanding of Force in Contemporary International Order], in: R. Czulda, R. Łoś and J. Reginia-Zacharski (eds), *NATO wobec wyzwań współczesnego świata* [NATO Facing the Challenges of the Modern World], Warszawa-Łódź: Wydział Studiów Międzynarodowych i Politologicznych Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2013, pp. 376-377; K. Cordell, T. Agarin and A.R. Osipov (eds), *Institutional Legacies of Communism: Change and Continuities in Minority Protection*, London-New York: Routledge, 2013.

1. Language as a Political Category

Language is the basis for enabling the creation of a common group of a people's history, religion and traditions. Through it, a mentality and axiology common to the members of the group is created, which enables them to integrate into specific social structures. Literature on the subject presents the triple role that language can play in society. First, it is a basic communication tool, and second, language identification is a fundamental element of national and ethnic identity.[11] The third task of language is to open up access to a specific cultural circle that the language represents. Of these roles performed by language, two key considerations are communicative and symbolic, identifying and integrating a group of people using the same language.[12]

Furthermore, in its original essence, language is not a political phenomenon, but for various reasons, it may be politicized.[13] It is a perfect tool of domestic and foreign policy, but also a means of legitimizing political power or a way to build the authority of the leader. In the process of language politicization, its potential is used to build national unity and create other types of political communities. In politics, language serves two roles: applicative and symbolic. In specific contexts, it becomes a political tool, often even a tool of political struggle. The question of language status, the extent of its functioning, and derivative problems may naturally be the consequences of a state-lingual language strategy, but may also be artificially created for the current political situation. The particular role of issues related to language status is revealed during an election campaign. This phenomenon can be observed, for example, in countries with different ethnic and linguistic structures, because there is a close correlation between the language of communication with voters and their electoral behavior.[14]

Language policy is a multi-faceted and multidimensional phenomenon, the shape of which has a direct impact on most areas of

11   An identity marker is, for example, religion, race or language.
12   Although this is not an obvious dependency, as for Ukraine and Belarus.
13   Н. Борисова [N. Borisova], 'Политизация языка и языковая политика в этнических территориальных автономиях' [Language Politicization and Language Policy in Ethnic Territorial Autonomy], *Мировая экономика и международные отношения* [World Economics and International Relations], vol. 60, no. 9, 2016, pp. 70-75.
14   The problem of the status of the Russian language has appeared many times during the election campaigns, e.g. in Ukraine.

the state and citizen activity. As a rule, it is not an ad hoc action, so its assumptions are concepts, doctrinal documents and short and long-term strategies.[15] The basis of language policy is to conceptualize itself, from which priorities, objectives and tasks are defined, so that all these elements create an optimum state for part of public policy. The state's linguistic policy is a fragment of public policy and the distinctive feature of a particular political system is its scope. Most often, the authorities and institutions responsible for its implementation are designated at the central level. The linguistic policy of the state is implemented indirectly, by shaping the so-called linguistic situation, and directly by specifying language functions in the state.[16,17] The primary function of language policy is to act as the state language as the primary means of social communication, but a consequence of it also is the status of other languages present on its territory.

The objectives of the state's linguistic policy also depend on its nature. A different one would be established by a mono-ethnic state, while a multi-ethnic, centralized state would implement different concepts than a distinct unitary and federally decentralized one.[18] The role of language policy is clearly increasing in the federations and in transitioning countries because language becomes the communication construct of the state and, in parallel, the basis of political, social and economic relations. Then, the key role is played by formal or informal favors of certain languages dominating the socio-political space.

15 A. Patten, 'Political Theory and Language Policy', *Political Theory*, vol. 29, no. 5, 2001, pp. 691-700.

16 The linguistic situation is a set of factors that determine how a language works in a given country. It consists of, among others, legal acts concerning languages, historical conditions and the demographic potential of languages. Shaping so-called language situation consists of designing and implementing the assumptions of migration, education or economic policy. It is also influenced by geopolitical factors.

17 R. Szul, *Język, naród, państwo* [Language, Nation, State], Warsaw: PWN, 2009, p. 58; W. Baluk, 'Ukraińska polityka językowa w kontekście polityki narodowościowej i przewidywane zmiany' [Ukrainian Language Policy in the Context of National Policy and Anticipated Change], in: J. Albin and J. Kupczak (eds), *Z badań nad współczesną problematyką państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej* [Research on Contemporary Issues of Central and Eastern European Countries], Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2000, pp. 47-76.

18 И. Скачкова [I. Skachkova], 'Языковая политика и языковое планирование: определение понятий' [Language Policy and Planning: Defining of Concepts], *Политическая лингвистика* [Political Linguistics], vol. 1, no. 51, 2015, pp. 125-131.

Promotion of a particular language can also be considered as a sign of a clear position in international relations.[19]

Limiting the role and reach of languages of minorities and ethnic groups can be seen in the political space as fighting separatist tendencies, threatening the security of the state and the whole region. There are many examples of countries where sensitive language policy issues have become a source of long-standing national conflicts.[20] Examples of the most dynamic actions in this area are the new language laws adopted in Ukraine. The origin of these phenomena often has its roots in the aggressive policy of linguistic and cultural assimilation carried out by the state. Sometimes a derivative of linguistic policy is the emergence of linguistic nationalism. Bilingualism or multilingualism does not have to be only a burden on society. Diverse and effective language policy is one of the pillars of state stability, especially with complex national composition. Belgium, the Netherlands, the US and Switzerland, thanks to their skillfully implemented language strategy, have made this feature an asset.

2. The Problem of Postcolonialism and Linguistic Policy in Post-Soviet Countries

Ethnic politics is a function of the domestic and foreign policy of the state, while language policy is a derivative of the state's concept of ethnopolitics. For the past 25 years, the states formed after the breakup of the Soviet Union have implemented other elements of ethnic policy, and the Russian Federation reacts relatively slowly to changes in their ethnic structure, resulting in a decrease in the number of Russian diasporas.[21] For example, in the Central Asian states, the Russian population has dropped by half since 1991, and three-quarters of the population of the former Asian republics of Russia live in Kazakhstan, which makes slow, but systematic steps towards leaving the cul-

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19 R. Brubaker, 'Language, Religion and the Politics', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2013, pp. 15-17.

20 An example of East Pakistan, Flanders and Quebec.

21 Е.Д. Катульский [E.D. Katul'skij], 'Демографическое развитие России как зеркало реформ переходного периода' [Demographic Development of Russia as a Reflection of Transitional Reform], *Безопасность* [Security], no. 3-4, 1998, pp. 75-77.

tural-civilizational influences of Russia. The Baltic states, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkmenistan methodically limited the consequences of Russification, which obviously reflected their position in the Russian language.[22] The newly formed states have faced the task of reconstruction and, in some cases, the construction of state identity. Its fundamental foundation was to be the language of the titular nation.

Table 1. Users of Russian, Ukrainian and Ukrainian Dialects

Region of Ukraine	Ukrainian language users	Russian language users	Ukrainian dialects language users
Western	94.4%	3.1%	2.5%
Central	61.2%	24.4%	14.6%
Central-Eastern	31.9%	21.7%	46.4%
Southern	5.2%	82.3%	12.4%
Eastern	3.7%	86.8%	9.6%

Source: A. Yuhas and R. Jalabi, 'Ukraine's revolution and Russia's occupation of Crimea: how we got here', *The Guardian*, 5 March 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/05/ukraine-russia-explainer [2017-08-01].

After the collapse of the USSR, in all of the states forming the geopolitical map of the post-Soviet area, two main linguistic groups were established. The first one used the language of the titular nation, while the other one was the so-called Russian-speaking, which included both ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking people, who, according to the Kremlin concept of the so-called Russian world belonged to the so-called Cultural Russians.[23] Depending on the political context, these societies have relationships of various kinds, often competing in both the political and cultural spheres. The area in which the confrontational tendencies between these groups are clearly increasing is usually the information space.

The positioning of the titular language and the Russian language undergo a change correlated with the processes of political, social and

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22   D. Trenin, *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization*, Moscow: Carnegie Endowment, 2001, p. 22.

23   J. Potulski, *Społeczno-kulturowy kontekst aktywności międzynarodowej Federacji Rosyjskiej* [Socio-cultural Context of International Activity of the Russian Federation], Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo UG, 2008, pp. 144-145.

economic transformation.[24] Until the mid-1980s, titular languages were considered less prestigious than Russian. The status of valuable education was learning the Russian language, and the political and cultural elites used the Russian language. Russian was considered a mean of communication mainly in urban areas as opposed to provinces and villages, where less popular languages were spoken. The end of the 1980s brought a dynamic development of national and national liberation movements in the Soviet area, and with them, the importance of national languages grew, followed in the 1990s by the strengthening of national languages. At the same time, it continued the process of Russian language elimination from the public sphere, the elimination of Russian schools and universities. The nationalist motivation for mastering the state language was present, though not all the former Soviet republics worked equally for the unification of the language of society.[25] The consequences of passivity and abandonment in this area are still felt today by Ukraine, whose linguistic division has been perpetuated by political and geopolitical determinants (see Table 1).

States supported, also financially, initiatives promoting literary creativity in national languages, a broadly understood area of the arts, cinematography and theatre, signed by artists representing titular nations. This tendency was a characteristic of postcolonial states. Some of them used even more radical measures to strengthen the position of the state language, legally guaranteeing its application in offices and services, at all levels of education and in science, culture and the media.[26] In Uzbekistan in 1995, the Act on the State Language of Uzbekistan abrogated Russian as a language of contacts between nations. In Tajikistan, the state language law passed on October 7, 2009, states that all official contacts with state authorities should be held only in Tajiki. From 2013 in Kyrgyzstan, all official documents are expected

24 R. Brubaker, 'Accidental Diasporas and External "Homelands" in Central and Eastern Europe: Past and Present', in: E. Ben-Rafael and Y. Sternberg, *Transnationalism: Diasporas and the Advent of a New (Dis)order*, Leiden-Boston: BRILL, 2009, p. 470.

25 R. Brubaker, *Nacjonalizm inaczej. Struktura narodowa i kwestie narodowe w Nowej Europie* [Nationalism in Different Perspective. National Structure and National Issues in New Europe], Kraków: PWN, 1998, p. 80.

26 Intensive de-Russification activities include cultural area in Ukraine, including, among others, organizing cultural events and theatrical performances in Ukrainian language, Ukrainian subtitles added to foreign language performances, films dubbing in Ukrainian, Ukrainian-language advertisements.

to be prepared only in Kyrgyz. In Ukraine, according to Article 10 of the constitution, the state language is Ukrainian and the state must guarantee the possibility of its comprehensive development and presence in all spheres of public life. Simultaneous to the mentioned state's tasks, are the freedom of development and protection of minority languages, furthermore, there are officially recognized and officially classified 18 languages of regional communication (Russian, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Armenian, Gagauz, Yiddish, Crimean, Moldovan, German, Polish). In Georgia, attempts have been made to carry out a "linguistic revolution" that involves the replacement of the Russian language with the English language.

However, the elimination of the linguistic colonial past of the post-Soviet areas was mostly not coupled with the de-Russification of the media sphere of states. As a result, the number of Russian minorities in Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan declined sharply at the time. Naturally, the size of the Russian language group was changing, but that language never ceased to exist in Central Asia or in any of the former states of the Empire.[27] For the contemporary legacy of the first decade of independence, could be considered the fact that in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, the majority of citizens speak the national language.[28] At the background of the region the exception is Turkmenistan, where in 1996 the Russian language lost its status as a language of universal communication, and by 2000 the elimination of the Russian language from universities had begun while the consequent promotion of Turkmen in public policy.[29]

For decades, the USSR's language policy provided a hegemonic position for the Russian language among the languages spoken in the empire. The development of national languages was deliberately

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27 A. Wierzbicki, *Etnopolityka w Azji Centralnej. Między wspólnotą etniczną a obywatelską* [Ethnopolitics in Central Asia. Between Ethnic and Civic Community], Warsaw: Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA, 2008, p. 377.

28 А.С. Панарин [A.S. Panarin], 'Россия в Евразии: геополитические вызовы и цивилизационные ответы' [Russia and Eurasia: Geopolitical Challenges and Civilizational Responses], *Вопросы философии* [Questions of Philosophy], no. 12, 1994, pp. 20-25.

29 А. Де Танги [A. De Tangi], *Великая Миграция: Россия и Россиянине после падения железного занавеса* [Great Migration: Russia and the Russians After the Fall of the Iron Curtain], Москва [Moskow]: РОССПЭН [ROSSPEN], 2012, p. 383.

impeded, which was not a major challenge given the Soviet policy of eliminating the intellectual and artistic elites of individual republics.[30]

Redefining the methods and objectives of Russia's geopolitics was initiated by President Vladimir Putin. He cultivates a pragmatic foreign policy and does not seek to return to the level of popularity that Russia had in imperial times, when it served as a tool of unification of the political and cultural space. He conducts an ethnopolitics of small steps, which allows concentration of state efforts on feasible tasks, such as maintaining the prestige of Russian-language education or using the migration wave from Central Asia to change the positioning of the Russian language in immigrant communities. These activities are effective because the attractiveness of the Russian language has not decreased at the same rate as that of the Russian diaspora.[31] Despite the different official status of the Russian language and the generational change that took place in the countries of the region, Russian actually remained an instrument of inter-ethnic and intercultural communication.[32]

Table 2. Determinants of the Status of the Russian Language in the Post-Soviet States

Determinants shaping the official status of the Russian language in the post-Soviet countries	Determinants shaping the actual status of the Russian language in the post-Soviet countries
The size of the Russian diaspora	The role of the Russian diaspora in the internal policy of post-Soviet states
Range of Russian-language education	Prestige of Russian-language education
Participation of Russian and Russian-speaking media in media systems	The scale of popularity of Russian and Russian-speaking media and their opinion-forming character, influence of Russian culture on mass culture

30 S. Bieleń, *Tożsamość międzynarodowa Federacji Rosyjskiej* [International Identity of the Russian Federation], Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR, 2006, p. 240.
31 К.П. Боришполец [K.P. Borishpolec], 'Механизмы взаимодействия государства с национальными диаспорами' [Mechanisms of Cooperation between the State and the National Diaspora], *Ежегодник ИМИ* [Yearbook IMI], 2012, pp. 80-81.
32 M. Karolak-Michalska, 'O polityce Rosji wobec swoich rodaków *żyjących* na obszarze poradzieckim' [About Russia's Policy Towards its Compatriots Living in the Post-Soviet Area], *Studia Gdańskie. Wizje i rzeczywistość* [Gdańsk Studies. Visions and Reality], no. XIII, 2016, pp. 231-235.

The size of the Russian-speaking publishing market	Size and importance of the publishing market reserved for the nation of titular language
Approximate path of social advancement for people who know and do not know Russian	Acceleration of social promotion for Russian-speaking people

Source: Author's own elaboration.

Due to the specific ethnic structure that was a result of the implementation of the Soviet Union's policy deliberately disrupting natural ethnic and national processes, the Baltic states[33,34,35] have particularly intensive de-Russification language policy. For example, Latvian citizenship was automatically granted to the population living in the Republic of Latvia up to 1940 and its descendants.[36] The rest of the population of the state could undergo a naturalization process, culminating in an examination of knowledge of Latvian language and Latvian history and as a result obtaining citizenship. However, within the territory of the country remained a group of so-called Non-citizens who have not decided to accept Latvian citizenship, who do not have passive or active electoral rights, and who cannot be employed in state institutions. These activities were also undertaken in education; in 2004, a school reform was implemented that increased the number of subjects taught in Latvian in Russian schools. One of the ways of legitimizing limitation of the influence of the Russian language was also a direct democracy instrument in the form of a referendum. On

33 A. Wierzbicki and M. Karolak-Michalska, *Mniejszość rosyjska w etnopolityce państw Europy Wschodniej i Azji Centralnej* [Russian Minority in the Ethnopolitics of States of Eastern Europe and Central Asia], Warsaw: Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2016, pp. 297-302.

34 Latvia has one of the more restrictive language policies. Article 4 of the Constitution establishes the Latvian language as an official language of Latvia, Article 18 underlines also the need to defend the Latvian language as an instrument of an independent and democratic state. The official language is Latvian and it is also the only official language in which all communication in the institutional sphere takes place. Latvian is also used in most of the public sphere, but the obligation to communicate in that language applies to private companies as well. The employer is obliged to conclude a contract of employment with a person who knows the language at the appropriate level and if he or she repeatedly violates this provision may be forced to pay up to 1400 Euros in fine.

35 There is a specially appointed National Authority Language Center for this purpose, which has control powers, detailed competence: http://www.vvc.gov.lv/ [2017-08-05].

36 In Latvia, on July 1, 2016, no citizens constituted 11.57% of the population.

Table 3. Status of the Russian Language in the CIS Countries

State	Official status of the Russian language	Alphabet	The actual position of the Russian language
Uzbekistan	■ Foreign	■ Latin	■ Since 2010, there has been a trend to stop de-Russification and the Russian language has ceased to be displaced from public space. ■ Representatives of the elites, including political ones, are openly pro-Russian. ■ About 70% of the population speaks Russian, in the administration is genuine bilingualism and even the predominance of the Russian language in central offices.
Azerbaijan	■ The language of contacts between nations	■ Latin	■ At present, the citizens of this country freely use the Latin alphabet. Such changes, however, are not only linguistic but also political, geopolitical, cultural and even civilizational.[1] ■ The high prestige and level of Russian-language education have been maintained.
Kazakhstan	■ Official ■ The constitution requires the official use of the Russian language as well as the Kazakh language in state organizations and local government bodies.	■ In 2013, it was decided to change Cyrillic to Latin (within 15 years). [2]	■ Separatist activity of the Russian minority (claim the status of a nation-state). ■ The Russian language dominates the information space. ■ Kazakh society speaks Kazakh, but mainly in spoken form. This language is characterized by strong Russification, which can be seen especially in the field of lexis and syntax.[3] A relatively small part of the population has the ability to read and write in Kazakh. This situation is determined by w whole set of circumstances, the basis of which is the domination of Russian-speaking media.[4]
Tajikistan	■ The language of interethnic communication.	■ Latin	■ In all Tajik schools, Russian is compulsory (two semesters). ■ The presence of multi-million Tajik immigrant labourers in Russia. Russian facilitation for labor immigrants is support for the regime and an instrument of restraining anti-Russian sentiment: repatriation of income (transfers made only by the banking system—not counting private cash—equates to almost half of GDP).
Turkmenistan	■ Foreign	■ Latin	■ The Russians have no representatives in the elite of power. ■ Systematic Turkmenization of all areas of public life. ■ The closing of Russian-speaking institutions (libraries, schools, scientific institutions). ■ Hindering access to Russian-language media, blocking Russian-language websites and restricting the distribution of Russian-language newspapers. ■ Around 2000, the Russian language was suppressed from higher education, with the possibility of studying in that language abolished.
Kyrgyzstan	■ Official	■ It was decided to change the Cyrillic alphabet to Latin, but because of the cost of the initiative), the project was delayed.[5]	■ The pro-Russian policy of the central government, trying to stop the outflow of Russian elites. ■ The very strong position of education in Russian. ■ Basic means of communication in all spheres of public life. ■ Mandatory Russian language teaching at the school and university levels. ■ The alphabet latinization plans are used in political struggles.

Country	Status of Russian	Alphabet	Description
Belarus	Second language[6]	Cyrillic	- Belarusian language displaced from the public sphere. - According to Belarusian data (Bielstat), only 5.8% of the population of the capital and only 23% of all Belarussians speak Belarusian at home. - Media space dominated by the Russian language. - The country's advanced Russification was temporarily suspended on the president's initiative—"Belarusianisation"[7] (the process of imparting the characteristics of Belarusian culture to persons or communities previously active in other cultures, strengthening the position of Belarusian culture and language in a given field or in a given area). However, these actions can be seen as elements of the provisional legitimacy of the Belarus leader, who is trying to symbolically become independent of the Russian patron.[8]
Ukraine	Language of the national minority	Cyrillic	- The discussion about the linguistic situation in Ukraine is strongly idealized and politicized.[9] - Use of the problem of "two Ukraines" in the current political struggle.[10]
Moldova	Foreign	Latin	- Trying to give the Russian language the status of the official language. - Russian language in the circle of representatives of the intelligentsia, culture and art. - The lack of an attractive identity model.
Armenia	Foreign	Armenian	The main language spoken in schools and institutions of higher education is now Armenian. By 2016, the number of Russian language classes in schools had been reduced. Reducing the Russian-speaking information space. In 2016, adoption of the controversial laws "On universal education" and "On the language," which will enable in Armenia functioning of schools with the foreign language of instruction. In practice, this means the return of Russian-speaking schools.
Georgia	Foreign	Georgian Mkhedruli	The language problem is highly politicized. The problem of linguistic nationalism. The scope of the Russian language is clearly decreasing. Russian language classes in Georgian public schools stopped being compulsory in 2006.

Source: Author's own elaboration.

1 For example, in the twenties of the 20th century, the Republic of Turkey changed the alphabet to symbolically renounce the Ottoman Empire's legacy, and in the 1930s the Soviet authorities changed the alphabet of the Kazakhs to weaken the influences of Islamic culture in society.

2 The long-term goal of the reform of the alphabet is to improve the social status of the Kazakh language, to upgrade the prestige of education in that language, and to shift Kazakhstan to a different segment of the cultural space. In Russia, the plans for Kazakhstan's transition from Cyrillic to Latin alphabet are interpreted as a way of moving away from the Russian civilization and strengthening the independence of the state and consolidating its identity.

3 M. Mazur, *Polityka narodowościowa Republiki Kazachstanu (1991–2007)* [National Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1991–2007)], Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2012, p. 200.

4 Having Kazakh nationality does not require knowledge of the Kazakh language and the constitution guarantees the citizen the right to choose the language he or she will use. Russian language is still present in communication in offices, utilities and justice. In Russian-speaking schools continue to learn approx. 700,000 children, of which 30% are Kazakhs.

5 A decisive opponent of this project was also the president Kurmanbek Bakiyev.

6 Alongside of two state languages: Belarussian and Russian, another one is "Trasian", a popular language after the end of World War II, a mixture of Russian and Belarusian.

7 For example, Belarus joined the Bologna Process in May 2015.

8 Belta, "Лукашенко поручил проработать вопрос о создании вуза с белорусским языком обучения" [Lukashenka Instructed to Study the Issue of Establishing an University with the Belarusian Language of Instruction], Belta.by, 3 February 2017, http://www.belta.by/president/view/lukashenko-poruchil-prorabotat-vopros-o-sozdanii-vuza-s-belorusskim-jazykom-obuchenija-23190-2017/ [2017-08-16].

9 N. Horska, *Aktywność narodowa mniejszości rosyjskiej na Ukrainie (1991–2004)* [National Activity of the Russian Minority in Ukraine (1991–2004)], Toruń: Europejskie Centrum Edukacyjne, 2009, p. 270.

10 A. Karnaukh, *Pomiędzy ukraińskością a sowieckością. Ukraińcy, Rosjanie i Bułgarzy na Zaporożu* [Between Ukrainian and Soviet Identity. Ukrainians, Russians and Bulgarians on Zaporozhye], Kraków: Nomos, 2015, p. 98.

18 February 2012, a referendum was held in Latvia on the recognition of the Russian language as the second state language. An important signal of the significance of this event was voter turnout—70% of eligible voters cast ballots (over 1 million people). In addition, the constitution was amended and the Latvian language was included in the preamble as one of the fundamental values of the state.

In 1995 in Estonia, a naturalization procedure was adopted as well. In which, for example, an Estonian language exam has become compulsory. For this reason, many Russians did not decide to obtain Estonian citizenship.[37]

However, the symptoms of liberalization of linguistic policy have been observed in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and naturalization benefits have also been applied.[38] These actions can be seen not only as a shift to Russian-speaking citizens of the state but also as a geopolitical declaration. In Estonia, there have even appeared plans to eliminate the status of people with undetermined citizenship and to announce political amnesty for Russian-speaking citizens living in the country for at least 25 years.[39] Interestingly, the authorities plan to open Estonian language centers offering free language courses. Furthermore, several schools in Tallinn and north-eastern Estonia will be able to teach in the Russian language as long as their graduates take the final exams in Estonian. In addition, the rules for granting citizenship of children whose parents are third-country nationals and have a permanent residence permit in Estonia have been simplified. Since 2016, the procedure for obtaining Estonian citizenship for children of Estonian citizens who do not have Estonian citizenship was also facilitated. Solutions have been adopted as well for the circulation of documents in Russian. Furthermore, the Estonian parliament has adopted amendments to the Law on Legal Aid, according to which the court should accept and translate a Russian-written application at its own expense.[40]

37 M. Patyna, 'Problem integracji Rosjan w Estonii w latach 1989-2005' [Problem of Russian Integration in Estonia in 1989-2005], *Wschodnioznawstwo*, no. 1, 2007, pp. 115-138.
38 A. Priedīte, 'Surveying Language Attitudes and Practices in Latvia', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol. 26, no. 5, 2015, p. 410.
39 In 2016, the number of stateless persons in Estonia was 81 238 or 6.1% of the population of Estonia.
40 Tema, 'Рийгикогу принял закон: обращаться в суд можно будет и на русском языке' [The Riigikogu passed the law: it will be possible to apply to the court in Russian], Tema.ee, 15 December

In Lithuania, English learning has been promoted at all levels of education over the years.[41] In the meantime, it turned out that the demand for Russian-speaking workers is increasing in the labor market, especially in the transport and construction sectors. An interesting example of the position the Russian language occupies in this country is the linguistic preference of the Polish diaspora, for which the language of daily communication is more often Russian than Polish, and the first choice is Russian television. The tendency, to change language policy into one more favorable for the Russian language also has been embraced by other post-Russian Empire states.[42]

3. The Geopolitics of Russian: Aims and Instruments

Language is the mirror of the changing social and political reality of the state. Leadership in international relations can be documented with the hegemonic position of this means of communication in a particular region of the world. Since ancient times, cases of using one language in international communication have been known, e.g. using Greek, Latin, Arabic, French or English. The possibility of positioning anew the Russian Federation on the geopolitical and geocultural map of the region is appearing thanks to the special position of the Russian language resulting from the language policy pursued by tsardom and then the Soviet Union.[43]

The position of a particular language often reflects the status of its users. Russia is inhabited by over 180 nations. There are 300 languages and dialects, of which there are 89 national languages in the public education system, 30 of which are teaching languages and at least 59 are research subjects. Russia's preferential policy towards a chosen group of national languages allows for political stability but

2016, http://tema.ee/2016/12/15/riygikogu-prinyal-zakon-obrashhatsya-v-sud-mozhno-budet-i-na-russkom-yazyike/ [2017-10-24].

41 A. Ivlevs, 'Minorities on the Move? Assessing Post-enlargement Emigration Intentions of Latvia's Russian Speaking Minority', *The Annals of Regional Science*, vol. 51, no. 1, 2013, p. 34.

42 M. Antonowicz, 'Polskojęzyczny „Ruski Mir" na Litwie', *Eastbook*, 9 January 2017, http://www.east-book.eu/2017/01/09/polskojezyczny-ruski-mir-na-litwie/ [2017-10-24].

43 M. Domańska, *Uwarunkowania procesów integracyjnych i dezintegracyjnych na obszarze poradzieckim* [Conditions of Integration and Disintegration Processes in the Post-Soviet Area], Warsaw: Aspra, 2013, p. 150.

simultaneously, through legal regulations, protects the supreme position of the state language. The Russian language is eighth in terms of the number of people who are native speakers and fifth in terms of the total number of other people speaking Russian. It is taught in more than 140 countries and is ranked fourth in the world among the most translated languages.

The rise of "soft power" in Russian politics has obviously coincided with the economic difficulties of the state and the gradual deceleration of some segments of the arms race.[44] The Russian Federation lost its position as a regional hegemon after the collapse of the USSR, but never ceased operations to maintain the status of a high geopolitical player. It should be remembered that this country is the second largest number of immigrants (after the US).The condition for the development of this state is to create a communication space in which all the people living on the territory of Russia can participate.

Diplomatic, economic and cultural activity has become a major complement to the comprehensive rebuilding system for the state, which geopolitical and geostrategic position has deteriorated significantly since 1991. It turned out then that the seemingly marginal elements of contemporary Russian activity, such as linguistic politics, sports and the artistic activity of Russian artists, can become effective and relatively low-cost instruments of geopolitical influence. Their significance has increased even in the context of the sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation. The catalog of Russian soft power tools contains such inconceivable elements in the area of broadly understood culture as linguistics with elements of language history, archaeology or cinematography. For example, research on the origin of languages: Russian, Ukrainian or Belarussian are often in Russia marked by the requirement of political correctness.[45]

Maintaining the reach and prestige of the Russian language is a vital Russian interest, although some commentators, not without malice, define these actions as applied imperatives. The historical and

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44 A. Kudors, 'Russian Soft Power and Non-Military Influence: The View from Latvia', in: M. Winnerstig (ed), *Tools of Destabilization. Russian Soft Power and Non-military Influence in the Baltic States*, Stockholm: FOI, 2014, p. 96.

45 A. Szeptycki, *Ukraina wobec Rosji. Studium zależności* [Ukraine and Russia. The study of coherence], Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2015, pp. 322-334.

social context of building the language of the empire, which was re-
lated to the dominant social status of the Russians (often highly qual-
ified), who occupied mainly the metropolises and industrial centers,
should be noticed.

**Figure 1. Objectives of the Geopolitical Activity of the Russian Federation
in the Field of Politics and Culture**

Supranational Language Community

↓

Political consolidation of Russian users

↓

Supranational political and cultural community

Source: Author's own elaboration.

It is thanks to the political encoding of Russian culture that the so-
called Russian world, the key to which is the Russian language, has
emerged. It allows the creation of all the meta-reality saturated with
elements of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Russian history, culture and
tradition.[46] In this syncretic world, alongside historical heroes, half-
mythological stories from Russian folk tales and pop culture idols, the
interpretation of the Russian lifestyle determinants also has its place.[47]
In addition, in state documents are references to the role of the Rus-
sian language as an important element for the construction of the en-
tire Russian state ideology:

- The concept of migration policy of the Russian Federation un-
til 2025 assumes creating infrastructure facilitating the integra-
tion and adaptation of migrant workers (information centers,

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46 M. Laruèlle, *The "Russian World". Russia's Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination*, Washington:
Centre on Global Interests, 2015, p. 21.

47 Л. Бызов [L. Byzov], *Контуры новорусской трансформации. Социокультурные аспекты
формирования современной российской нации и эволюция социально-политической
системы* [Outline of the New-Russian Transformation. Socio-cultural Aspects of the Formation
of the Modern Russian Nation and the Evolution of the Socio-political System], Москва [Mos-
cow]: РОССПЭН, 2013, p. 390.

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legal aid centres, education centers offering Russian language courses, history and culture).[48]

■ The strategy of the state's national policy of the Russian Federation until 2025 emphasizes the linguistic diversity of the state. The condition of the` development of the Russian state is to protect Russian culture and to expand the Russian-speaking area.[49]

■ The Russian Foreign Policy Concept adopted in 2016 assumes the strengthening of Russia's role in the global humanitarian space, the spread and strengthening of the Russian language in the world, the dissemination of national culture and the consolidation of the Russian diaspora. As part of Russia's foreign policy, it is planned to strengthen the position of Russian mass media in the global information space, to convey the broad Russian international community.[50]

Language is the basis of the internal consolidation of the multi-ethnic Russian state, but it is also the building of Russian political subjectivity in the international area. Exerting geopolitical influence through linguistic tools is done through a variety of activities, which are:

■ Application of formal and legal instruments,

■ Utilizing active media resources,

■ Activities in science, culture and arts,

■ Support coming from institutions and organizations,

■ Activity in the symbolic sphere.

48 Президент России [Presindent of Russia], 'Президент утвердил Концепцию государственной миграционной политики Российской Федерации на период до 2025 года' [The President Approved the Concept of State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation Until 2025], *Документы* [Dokumenty], http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/15635 [2017-08-18].

49 О Стратегии государственной национальной политики Российской Федерации на период до 2025 года [About the State National Policy Strategy The Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025], http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody&link_id=0&nd=102161949 [2017-08-18].

50 Указ № 640 Президента Российской Федерации от 30.11.2016 г. 'Об утверждении Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации'[Decree No. 640 of the President of the Russian Federation of November 30, 2016 on Approval of the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation], http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/41451 [2017-08-18].

Table 4. Catalog of Language-Impact Tools Used by the Russian Federation

Types of activities	Examples of activities
Application of formal and legal instruments	■ Projects for the establishment of the National Russian Language Fund, the main objective of which is to support the development and popularization of Russian language at home and abroad.[1] ■ CIS member state cooperation programs.[2]
PR activities	■ Actions aimed at weakening the position of the Latin alphabet in the region, interpreting Latinization in terms of conflicts. ■ The popularization of the day and year in the Russian language in foreign spaces. ■ Persistence of the hierarchy of languages dating back to the Soviet roots. The promotion of the so-called reverse pyramid of linguistic prestige, in which at the top of the pyramid is the Russian language and at the bottom the national language of the states of the post-Soviet area. ■ Active actions to recognize the Russian language as one of the means of international communication reflected in the introduction of it into the official languages of international organizations. ■ Inhibition of English language expansion in public space. ■ Raising the rank and competitiveness of the Russian language in the global and regional information space. ■ Use of the Russian language and the Russian language date as an instrument for promoting the Russian language. ■ Building and maintaining the prestige of the Russian language. ■ Promotion of bilingualism as an interpretation of modern state linguistic policy.[3]
Utilizing active media resources	■ Maintaining linguistic hegemony in the infosphere. ■ Russian-language social media.[4] ■ Russian-language advertising campaigns (including large format), press and radio and television. ■ Presence in the network of active Russian-speaking commentators promoting Russian culture and Russian language. ■ Funding for trolling activities, which reduce the prestige of a non-Russian education. ■ Creation of Russian-language web domains.[5] ■ Creation of television channels directed exclusively to immigrants, enabling them to improve their linguistic skills and help in the socio-cultural adaptation of immigrants.[6] ■ Creation of Russian-language television channels in post-Soviet states.
Activities in the field of culture and art	■ Development of the Russian-speaking music industry. ■ Promotion of Russian-language literature. ■ Supporting the development of the Russian-speaking publishing market. ■ Funding and promotion of Russian-language cinematography.[7]
Actions in the field of science	■ Activities of representatives of the Russian-speaking scientific community. ■ Russian-language scientific and popular science publications, speeches at conferences and other scientific events. ■ Upholding the prestige of Russian scientific institutions. ■ Creation of the Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library, which is to be part of the whole national and international library system. As a part of the system, it is also planned to create a library network (using digital technology), which simultaneously will function as information and leisure centers.[8]

Types of activities	Examples of activities
Tools in the field of education	■ Creating a system of international Russian language school Olympiads.[9] ■ Moderating the content of school textbooks and curricula. ■ Learning Russian at all levels of education. Increasing number of schools incorporating Russian.[10] Increasing the number of Russian language classes in schools. ■ Implementation of a global distance-learning program in the Russian language, which would include not only members of the Russian diaspora but also representatives of other nationalities interested in learning the Russian language. ■ Allow Russian-speaking students from post-Soviet states to gain an education in Russian universities in Russia and beyond its borders.[11]
Institutional and organizational support	■ Creating political infrastructure to safeguard the interests of Russian-speaking groups, including the Russian diaspora.[12] ■ Constructing educational infrastructure aimed at popularizing the teaching of Russian. ■ Creating a system of social and cultural adaptation and integration of immigrants, who would ultimately pass on the acquired language skills, knowledge of Russian culture and history in their home countries. ■ Creating language training centers that prepare students for studies in Russian, and learning Russian in vocational schools in countries from which most immigrants come to Russia. ■ In 2007, the establishment of the foundation "Russian world," to which belong about 80 centers in 40 countries in the world.[13] ■ A federal agency that refers to the Commonwealth of Independent States, Nations Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Co-operation "Rossotrudnichestwo".[14] The agency has 93 offices in 80 countries around the world.
Activity in the symbolic sphere	■ Promotion of ideological projects (e.g., the concept of the "Russian world ").[15]

Source: Author's own elaboration.

[1] Послание президента Федеральному Собранию. Стенограмма [The President's Address to the Federal Assembly. Transcript], http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=118549 [2017-08-18].
[2] Also among the young, cf. Стратегия международного молодёжного сотрудничества государств—участников Содружества Независимых Государств на период до 2020 года [Strategy for International Youth Cooperation of Countries Participating in the Commonwealth of Independent States for the Period up to 2020], http://kremlin.ru/supplement/812 [2017-08-17].
[3] Russian language is recognized as one of the official languages also by the separatist territories such as South Ossetia, Transnistria and Gagauz, Abkhazia.
[4] Ukraine wanted to block Russian-language social networking "VKontakte" and "Одноклассниик" in its territory. Their place had been intended to replace by Ukrainian-speaking hare, "Ukrainians".
[5] In 2013, Russian was ranked second in the most popular Internet languages.
[6] Russian-speaking channel 'Первый Информационный Кавказский' [First Information Caucasian] in Georgia, increasing RTR-Planeta, ORT, and Russia Today coverage.
[7] For example, attempts to introduce a ban on distributing "Cool Tango", "Viking", fairy tale "Masha and Bear", in Lithuania, https://ria.ru/world/20170627/1497361646.html [2017-08-15].
[8] The Presidential Library was opened on May 27, 2009, details of its activities: http://www.prlib.ru/ [2017-08-16].
[9] See the website of the institution: http://www.ruscorpora.ru/ [2017-08-11].
[10] In Armenia, in 2016, the laws "On universal education" and "O language" were adopted in Armenia, which in practice allow the return of Russian-speaking schools.
[11] A. Kuczyńska-Zonik, 'Russian-speaker NGOs in the Baltic States', *Yearbook of the Institute of East-Central Europe*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2017, pp. 165-183.
[12] The foundation of the Slavic University in Bishkek.
[13] Details about foundation: http://www.russkiymir.ru/, See also the map of its resorts on https://www.google.com/maps/d/embed?mid=1_j-kesjn-VWTIM9AIlR43_ROnGro&ll=39.76301003519733%2C37.72448212500001&z=2 [2017-08-20].
[14] Agency details: http://rs.gov.ru/ru [2017-08-16].
[15] Russian World, http://www.russkiymir.ru/ [2017-08-13].

Conclusion

It is legitimate to say that one of the greatest successes of Russian foreign policy is the skilful creation of a linguistic geopolitical influence tool.[51] The main geopolitical goal of this state is to re-establish the Russian language as *lingua franca* in the post-imperial area and, second, to make it a language of international communication competing against English and French.[52] As in the early 20th century, Russian can also serve as a tool to hamper the Islamization of the public sphere in post-Soviet Muslim states.

To sum up, it should be noted that the intensification of soft-power activities based on the language policy instrument is determined by a number of factors, the most important of which is:

- initiatives for the implementation of the post-Soviet consolidation projects;
- implementation of instruments of integration of ethnic Russians and cultural Russians;
- lobbying for the institutionalization sub-ethnos of Russian in the countries of Central Asia and granting them special language preferences;
- institutional and infrastructural development of Russian language promotion organizations; and,
- systematically weakening the intensity of anti-Russian sentiments and fighting the manifestations of language derivation.

It should also be noted that the process of Creolization, which resulted in a hybrid culture that synthesized elements of the dominant culture (the colonizer) and the imitator (native), has survived in varying intensity for the 25 years that have passed since the fall of the empire. In some post-Soviet countries, the supremacy of Russian culture continues to make participation in the autochthony prestigious and ennobling, and has been and remains one of the tools of social and political positioning.

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51 О. Неменский [O. Nemenckij], 'Русский мир и русская земля: территориальный аспект русской идентичности' [Russian World and Russian World: Territorial Aspect of Russian Identity], in: С. Пантелеев [S. Panteleev], *Русская идентичность на постсоветском пространстве* [Russian Identity in Post-Soviet Space], Москва [Moscow]: ИнфоРос [INFOROS], 2008, p. 34.

52 V. Chudowski, 'Imperialism to Realism. The Role of the West in Russian Foreign Policy towards Ukraine', in: G.P. Herd and J.D.P. Moroney (eds), *Security Dynamics in the Former Soviet Bloc*, London: Routledge, 2013, pp. 95-96.

However, it should be noted that the issue of language policy of the Russian Federation is more often brought up in the rhetoric related to its security.[53] All threats to the position of the Russian language, both in the country and abroad, are interpreted as a threat to this security, with the initiative of changing from Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet is interpreted not as a delayed manifestation of decolonization but as an attempt to limit the language rights of the Russian diaspora. The mere decision to refer to the status of the Russian language is recognized not only as a question of the sphere of internal politics of the state but also as a geopolitical declaration. Actually, all actions taken to limit the extent of the Russian language and weaken its rank are interpreted as Russophobic and anti-Russian. The relationship to Russian is interpreted as a clarification of the position towards the Russian Federation and even the entire Russian civilization. Automatically, this view holds, Russian-speaking people are considered "second-class" citizens, whose interests must be secured directly by Russia.

According to the Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation, adopted in 2000, the Russian language is expected to be a bond of spiritual unity between the nations of the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States.[54] Additional elements have been added to the Russian Federation Information Security Doctrine of 2016, which seeks to follow the main assumptions set out in the document from 2000 but in which the need to combat overt discrimination against Russian media and Russian journalists was emphasized.[55] Similarly, the Strategy of Counteracting Extremism in the Russian Federation until 2025, approved in 2014, indicates one of the main sources of threats in contemporary Russian language extremism, whose field of influence includes, in particular, the inter-

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53 M. Musiał, 'Język państwowy jako narzędzie ochrony politycznej suwerenności państwa' [State Language as a Tool to Protect the Political Sovereignty of the State], in: S. Wojciechowski (ed), *Europejskie dylematy i wyzwania* [European Dilemmas and Challenges], Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe INPiD UAM, 2004, p. 190.

54 Доктрина информационной безопасности Российской [The Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation], http://www.ng.ru/politics/2000-09-15/0_infodoctrine.html [2017-08-16].

55 Указ № 646 Президента Российской Федерации от 05.12.2016 г. Об утверждении Доктрины информационной безопасности Российской Федерации [Decree No. 646 of the President of the Russian Federation of 05.12.2016 on the Approval of the Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation], http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/41460 [2017-08-16].

net.[56] Finally, the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, endorsed by the presidential decree of 31 December 2015, as a means of addressing national security issues in the fields of science, technology and education, recommends improving the quality of teaching of Russian, literature and national history; active development of international relations in the field of science and education; increasing export of high-quality educational services (mainly in the CIS countries); and, increasing the attractiveness of Russian language education in the global market for educational services.[57] According to this document, a threat to national security in the field of culture is, among others, is the reduction of the role of the Russian language in the world and the quality of its teaching in Russia and abroad. Particular importance for strengthening national security in the sphere of culture is to use the Russian language to create the foundations for the development of integration processes in the post-Soviet area. Russia pursues programs to support the learning of Russian language in the CIS member states to accelerate the integration of Eurasia. It is hard to imagine a more precise interpretation of the role of the language policy of the Russian Federation in the countries of the region.

The linguistic tools that the Russian Federation employs as a soft power allow for effective foreign policy, especially in the so-called "near abroad."[58] We are dealing with the symbolic return of Russia to the Soviet region, the reorientation of Russia's foreign policy and the intensification of its activities, especially in Central Asia.[59] Also, the dynamic political situation on the Moscow-Kyiv line and the related annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation led to the emergence

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56   Стратегия противодействия экстремизму в Российской Федерации до 2025 года [Strategy for Countering Extremism in the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025], http://legalacts.ru/doc/strategija-protivodeistvija-ekstremizmu-v-rossiiskoi-federatsii-do/ [2017-08-18].

57   Указ № 683 Президента Российской Федерации от 31.12.2015 г. О Стратегии национальной безопасности Российской Федерации [Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 683 of December 31, 2015 About the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation], http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/40391 [2017-08-18].

58   А.А. Прохожев [A.A. Prochozhev] and Н.И. Турко [N.I. Turko], *Геополитические факторы обеспечения безопасности государства* [Geopolitical Factors of Ensuring State Security], Москва [Moscow]: РАГС, 1995, p. 48.

59   A. Wierzbicki, *Etniczność i narody w Europie i Azji Centralnej. Perspektywa teoretyczna i egzemplifikacyjna* [Ethnicity and Nations in Europe and Central Asia. Theoretical and Exemplifying Perspectives], Warsaw: Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych, 2014, p. 80.

of a new linguistic situation on the peninsula.[60] Currently, there are three official languages—Russian, Ukrainian and Crimean Slavic—but Russia's policy towards the non-Russian population of Crimea tends toward forced assimilation, also reflected in the hegemony of the Russian language.

It should also be noted that the catalog of instruments of Russian influence on the geopolitical situation of the post-Soviet area is systematically refined and is constantly being expanded with new tools.[61] The Russian language has found itself in the new areas of communication, and traditionally effective infotainment channels such as television and newspapers have not been neglected. It can also be risked that the current linguistic policy of states created after the collapse of the USSR proves that Russia has effectively returned to their cultural and educational space.[62]

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Antonowicz, M., 'Polskojęzyczny „Ruski Mir" na Litwie', *Eastbook*, 9 January 2017, http://www.eastbook.eu/2017/01/09/polskojezyczny-ruski-mir-na-litwie/ [2017-10-24].

Baluk, W., 'Ukraińska polityka językowa w kontekście polityki narodowościowej i przewidywane zmiany' [Ukrainian Language Policy in the Context of National Policy and Anticipated Change], in: J. Albin and J. Kupczak (eds), *Z badań nad współczesną problematyką państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej* [Research on Contemporary Issues of Central and Eastern European Countries], Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2000, pp. 47-76.

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