

Language Policy and Planning in Russia, China and the USA through the Lens of Mass Media of the 21-st Century

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Abstract

The study focuses on defining specifics of the language policy and planning in the Russian Federation, the USA, and China within the modern political discourse of the 21st century by means of exploring materials from Russian, American and Chinese media. The empirical base of the study included statistical and sociological data describing the sociolinguistic situation in the studied countries as well as materials from the latest Russian-language and English-language media which served as a source of factual and linguistic data. The authors investigated electronic publications of the following newspapers and their applications published from 2005 to April 2020: “Arguments and Facts”, “Vedomosti”, “Izvestia”, “Kommersant”, “Rossiyskaya Gazeta” (835 extended contexts) in the Russian Federation, “The Washington Post”, “The New York Times” (998 extended contexts) in the USA, “News.cn”, “Shanghai Daily”, “China Daily” (846 extended contexts) in China. The examination of data was carried out using corpus linguistics methods (context selection, concordance analysis and frequency study) and lexical-semantic analysis as well as contextual (distribution) method, content analysis, indicative method, BIG DATA analysis, CAWI method. Furthermore, the study employed such analysis tools as Time Traveler, Google trends, etc. The study reports current trends in the development of language policy and planning in Russia, the USA and China in the 21st century. The analysis of media content allows to outline the prospects for mutual enrichment through integrating the latest positive trends in the development of language policy for a globalizing world while preserving and maintaining the orientation towards self-identity of every country, every language and every culture.

Key words: *Language policy, Language planning, Sociolinguistic situation, Media.*

Introduction

In the 21st century multinational countries, especially those actively involved in foreign policy, have to face a number of challenges. By studying agendas and Language Policy and Planning (LPP) tools employed by various countries we can get an idea of LPP strategies at all levels (including corpus, status and acquisition planning) and their outcomes. In this respect, comparative studies may have both research and practical value.

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While internal LPP issues require action at home, the issues of language spread abroad increase competition between countries on the global education market as well as soft power rivalry. The seemingly natural rivalry, however, may appear to hold opportunities to mutually beneficial cooperation.

Language policy and planning is extremely wide research and activity field where the language is considered primarily as an object. However, language can be a research tool that provides not exclusively linguistic data but gives valuable information on the social and political situation thus being an efficient instrument for policy-making decisions (Parker, 2019; Strunc, 2020; Wildes, 2020).

This study is an attempt to combine methods of sociology and linguistics emphasizing their mutually complementary nature. Another idea behind this research is to find out if LPP in multinational and linguistically diverse countries may be mutually beneficial in some respect as well as discover possible areas of cooperation and sharing experience.

Thus, the paper aims to explore LPP of the USA, China, and Russia, show its connection with the countries' soft power, the latter being revealed through the use of mass media content analysis and quantitative data obtained using methods of corpus linguistics. By doing so we expect to arrive at conclusions relevant to LPP and soft power theory and check out if the findings of content analysis match those of corpus-based research.

Literature Review

This study is based on the four-component structure of LPP: status planning, corpus planning, acquisition planning (Kloss, 1969; Cooper, 1989; Ricento, 2009) and external LPP (Yudina & Seliverstova, 2020a). The latter appears to have a direct bearing on soft power. The term soft power introduced by Joseph Nye was coined to contrast it to hard power, implying “the ability to establish preferences [...] to be associated with intangible resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions.” (Nye, 1990, p. 49). Further evolution of his soft power concept shifts emphasis from the idea of appeal to pragmatic considerations. Soft power comes to be defined as “getting others to want the outcomes that you want” (Nye, 2004) or “the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes” (Nye, 2011, p. 20).

Among soft power resources, Nye (2011) lists culture, political values, and foreign policies. Extending Nye's idea, the soft power index research focuses on the following assets: "the quality of a country's political institutions, the extent of their cultural appeal, the strength of their diplomatic network, the global reputation of their higher education system, the attractiveness of their economic model, and a country's digital engagement with the world" (<https://softpower30.com/what-is-soft-power>).

The bi-directional connection between external LPP and soft power, as well as a review of external LPP with regard to the soft power of the USA, China, and Russia is disclosed in our earlier paper "External Language Policy and Planning as Part of Soft Power Policy" (Yudina & Seliverstova, 2020a).

Another view on the interdependence of soft power and LPP is proposed by G. Pashayeva who claims the connection between the average English proficiency level of a country and its soft power index (Pashayeva, 2017). Based on the comparative analysis of data provided by EF English Proficiency Index and soft power rating list, she finds the correlation index that proves the proposed connection (Pashayeva, 2017). Of special significance, this factor is said to be for smaller countries now in the process of forming their soft power. Another important point is the supposedly similar role of the Russian language for countries of the former USSR (Pashayeva, 2017).

The idea of language possessing its own power and soft power potential laid the grounds for research on power language index that is "a systematic way of evaluating the influence and reach of languages using 20 indicators to measure 5 basic opportunities afforded by language: geography, economy, communication, knowledge & media, and diplomacy" (Power Language Index, 2016, p. 6) based on the variables presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Sets of Variables to Measure the Effectiveness of Language*

| Count | Geography (22.5%) | Economy (22.5%) | Communication (22.5%) | Knowledge and media (22.5%) | Diplomacy** (10%) |
|-------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Countries spoken* | GDP (PPP) | Native speakers | Internet content | IMF |
| 2 | Land area | GDP/capita (PPP) | L2 speakers* | Feature films* | UN |
| 3 | Tourists (in)* | Exports | Family size* | Top-500 universities | WB |
| 4 | | FX markets* | Tourists (out) | Academic journals* | Index of 10 SNOs |
| 5 | | SDR composition* | | | |

Note. Adapted from Power Language Index. May 2016. Kai L. Chan. Retrieved from http://www.kailchan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Kai-Chan_Power-Language-Index-fullreport_2016_v2.pdf, p. 6

*Half weight within its opportunity; indicator weights are otherwise distributed evenly within each opportunity.

** Indicator variables that take on value of 1 if an official/working language of the institution and 0 otherwise.

The variables of power language considerably resemble some of those considered by soft power index, which gives grounds for further investigation of the interdependence between language and power.

Methods

The aim of this paper is to explore LPP of the USA, China, and Russia in connection with their soft power concept revealed through the use of linguistic research tools. As the aim suggests, the article highlights two phenomena: LPP and soft power.

In order to make the research more comprehensive, we will first give a review of the countries' LPP using the traditional three-component LPP structure: corpus planning, status planning, acquisition planning. To give a brief insight into the background and more up-to-date data, we obtained information through statistics and media discourse analysis. In the case-study of Russia, we also conducted a survey with the CAWI method to get an idea of people's awareness of language policy and planning in Russia and their attitude to it.

Our second focus in this paper was each country's external LPP and its supposed connection with soft power. With a view to finding out the universal and specific characteristics of soft power, we employed corpus analysis of media discourse.

Corpus aided analysis is instrumental to understanding the nature of each country's soft power and the place held by language and culture in the corresponding soft power policy, since "ideologies are crystallized in and managed through language, and are distributed via powerful channels" (Diaz & Hall, 2020)

The corpus for this analysis was collected from printed media and their official web-sites for the period from 2005 to 2020. For each country, we have chosen newspapers with the highest circulation and the biggest number of readers in the corresponding period. These newspapers included: "Arguments and Facts", "Vedomosti", "Izvestia", "Kommersant", "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" in the Russian Federation, "The Washington Post", "The New York Times" in the USA, "News.cn", "Shanghai Daily", "China Daily" in China. The authors have tried to analyze a different number of media in order to obtain a comparable size of corpora to make the results more valid. Using the advanced search engine, we have collected all concordances of the word combination "soft power" making up in total 835 for Russia, 998 for the USA, and 846 for China. The prepared corpora were analyzed with the help of a corpus manager to find out keywords and record their frequency value.

Based on the resulting data, we have made a graphic representation of the soft policy associative semantic field which represents the projection of people's perception of items from their lexicon including all words creating the context (Churilina, 2001). By ranking and ordering the words according to their frequency we can get a layered structure with the core in the center presenting the key component with the highest frequency value; other layers are organized in a descending order containing words with the lowest frequency but also inherent to understanding the concept under study.

Results and Discussion

USA Case-Study: Language Policy and Planning

The USA is known for considerable linguistic diversity which has been a distinctive feature of the country since the time of the Founding Fathers. Although English is a predominant language in

the US, its status is not officially determined at the federal level. Contemplating over the reason behind the decision of the Founding Fathers to stick to “policy not to have a policy” (Crawford, 1999, p. 10), we can go back to their ideas of democracy and respect for human rights, language choice being one of them (Alogali, 2018; Girdap, 2020; Liu, 2019). Thus “language laws have been rejected as a threat to individual liberties” (Crawford, 1999) Moreover, the dominance of English was self-evident, rendering an official policy unnecessary (Boutelier, 2019; Wiley, 2004) Language was meant to be as a unifying force rather than an apple of discord. The latter, however, contributed to making the status of English in the USA a highly disputable issue.

While the de-jure status is still unspecified, the de-facto status is determined by immigration flows throughout the country’s history, which appear to be directly related to the protectionist public sentiment and the “Official English Movement”. This connection between the influx of immigrants and public sentiment can be clearly seen in the periods presented in the description by Wiley with a focus on covert LPP (see Table 2).

Table 2

Periods in the United States LPP

| Period | Description |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1779-1880 | No explicit designation of English at governmental levels and a great tolerance to the ‘use’ of other languages |
| 1880-1920, then until WWII | Official designation of English at State and Federal levels with clear use of these language requirements to exclude and discriminate against various minorities and immigrant groups |
| WWII to 1980s | Relaxation of the restrictions and even encouragement of other languages until the mid-1980s |
| 1980s to the Present | Tendency back towards restrictions |

Note. Adapted from “Comparative Historical Analysis of U.S. Language Policy and Language Planning: Extending the Foundations” by Wiley, T., 1999. In E.B. Davis, *Sociopolitical Perspectives on Language Policy and Planning in the USA.*, p.29. Copyright 1999 by John Benjamins Publishing Company.

The described trend towards restrictions can be explained by the current sociolinguistic situation in the country. We have made some research into census and demographic data using the US official census website (<https://www.census.gov>) to find out a considerable increase of nearly 162% (since 1980) in the number of people who speak a language other than English at home and

an even more considerable rise in the number of people with reported zero English proficiency of 176.4% meaning that as many as 20.7% of the total population over 5 years old live in non-English language households. The results of the comparative statistical analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3*Demographic Trends in Language Use and English Proficiency Level in the USA*

| Measure | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2009-2013 | Changes 1980-2013 (%) |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total US population (5 years and over) | 210,247,455 | 230,445,777 | 262,375,152 | 291,484,482 | +38.6 |
| Speak non-English language at home | 23,060,040 (10.96%) | 31,844,979 (13.82%) | 46,951,595 (17.9%) | 60,361,574 (20.7%) | +161.8 |
| Speaking English ability reported "not at all" | 1,217,989 (0.6%) | 1,845,243 (0.8%) | 3,366,132 (1.3%) | No data available | +176.4 |

Note. Based on data from the US Census official web-site <https://www.census.gov>.

Possible administrative and legislative LPP tools at the federal level in status planning include the following: 1) amendments to the Constitution; 2) amendments to the United States Code; 3) immigration-related Acts; 4) education Acts. While the former two would mean the implementation of overt status planning, immigration and education legislation means continuing with the covert policy by indirectly influencing language choice and language learning opportunities.

The described sociolinguistic trends caused the appearance of two lobby movements to encourage the official status of English: US English and English First. The latest attempt has been made in 2017-2018 by introducing the English Language Unity Act of 2017 which did not receive a vote in Congress. Even though their aim has not been achieved at the federal level, it has been rather successful at the state level, with 28 states having declared English as their official language since 1981 with the total number being 32 (as of June 2020).

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Alabama (1990) | Massachusetts (1975) |
| Alaska (1998) | Mississippi (1987) |
| Arizona (2006) | Missouri (1998 & 2008) |
| Arkansas (1987) | Montana (1995) |
| California (1986) | Nebraska (1920) |
| Colorado (1988) | New Hampshire (1995) |
| Florida (1988) | North Carolina (1987) |
| Georgia (1986 & 1996) | North Dakota (1987) |
| Hawaii (1978) | Oklahoma (2010) |
| Idaho (2007) | South Carolina (1987) |
| Illinois (1969) | South Dakota (1995) |
| Indiana (1984) | Tennessee (1984) |
| Iowa (2002) | Utah (2000) |
| Kansas (2007) | Virginia (1981 & 1996) |
| Kentucky (1984) | Wyoming (1996) |
| Louisiana (1812) | West Virginia (2016) |

To sum up the US status planning background and current agenda, we can clearly see the overt nature of bottom-up LPP and covert top-down policy at the federal level. Thus, the de-facto status can be derived from the analysis of language acquisition planning through education policy. According to the Education Act of 1968, schools were supposed to offer instruction in their students' native languages. However, with the flow of immigrants and increasing language diversity, schools could no longer meet this requirement which leads to a revised Education Act of 1984 with a focus on the transition to bilingual programs as well as Family English Literacy Programs aimed at developing English proficiency with household and not limiting themselves to children.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 put an added emphasis on the assessment of educational outcomes which appear to have a direct bearing on the level of English proficiency and are in reverse proportion to the share of non-English speakers in the student population. Moreover, the idea of bilingual education was replaced by English language acquisition through English immersion. According to the American Institutes for Research, "ELs tend to fare worse than their non-EL peers academically when assessed in English, and their graduation rates are lower" [<https://www.air.org/resource/what-will-essa-mean-english-learners>] which is a real challenge for schools considering that "English learners (ELs) have become an increasingly significant student population, outpacing the demographic growth of non-EL students by more than 40 percent nationwide and growing by as much as 800 percent in some states" and schools'

obligation to provide ELs with “appropriate language assistance services to become proficient in English and to participate equally in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time” (ibid).

The year 2015 was marked by the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was focused on regular standardized assessment in key subjects, English being among them. Major responsibility has been given to states (not districts as in the NCLB Act) in that they can develop their own accountability systems. They are to develop the entrance procedures and monitor progress to assess spot the moment when no additional language service is needed. Unlike the NCLB Act, however, ESSA allows states to “include reclassified English learners in the EL subgroup for four years – not just two” (ibid).

From the short review above we can see two major trends in the US LPP: 1) a trend towards rapid assimilation of the non-English speaking student population with their language rights interpreted as the right for English learning support, rather than preserving their native language; 2) a trend towards centralization along with increased accountability and assessment.

A detailed overview of English language policies in the US presented in the paper “From English-Only to Multilingualism: English in the Language Policy of the United States” concludes by saying “As long as the U.S. remains a country committed to receiving immigrants from other countries, there will be a steady influx of speakers of other languages.” (Wang, 2015, p. 38) The resulting multilingualism may become an asset rather than a hindrance, in the case of the English Plus policy which may “produce well-developed skills in many languages to enhance international competitiveness and national security”. (Wang, 2015, p. 38)

Corpus planning in the US appears to be historically no less disputable than status planning and goes back to 1780 when John Adams proposed to establish “the American Academy for refining, improving, and ascertaining the English Language”. However, the proposal did not fit the ideology of liberty and was never accepted. The evolution of American lexicography that followed was a constant search for consistent language norms either based on Johnson’s norms of the British English or distancing itself from it in pursuit of the American language own identity. In this view, lexicographic activity by Noah Webster aimed “to preserve the purity of the American tongue” is called by J. Crawford “Declaration of Linguistic Independence” (Crawford, 1992, pp. 33-34).

The absence of coordinated corpus planning in the USA resulted in the descriptive rather than the prescriptive nature of dictionaries and grammar reference books. Lexicography is driven

considerably by publishing companies and market competition. Thus, the choice of books made by educational institutions becomes a policy-making decision.

Another factor to be considered with regard to corpus planning is political correctness which accounts for a social ban on certain words because of their racist or other ethical issues, the appearance of new words, or developing new meanings of existing ones due to gender equality and feminism agenda. So, corpus planning similarly to status planning, is a bottom-up process, however unlike status planning it hardly encounters any top-down counteraction.

USA Case-Study: External LPP and Soft Power

The idea of external LPP has been a big part of the US LPP. Going back to John Adams with his Language Academy proposal, we read “English is destined to be the next and succeeding centuries more generally the language of the world than Latin was in the last or French is in the present age. The reason of this is obvious, because the increasing population in America, and their universal connection and correspondence with all nations will aided by the influence of England in the world, whether great or small, force their language into general use” (Crawford, 1992, p. 32). The prediction proved right. The opinions about reasons behind the spread of English are varied, from considering it a result of a well-targeted LPP to arguing that the decisive factor in language spread is “the power of people who speak it” (Crystal, 2004, p. 10). D. Crystal in his book provides a detailed description of historical, economic, political, and cultural factors for this large scale spread of English which taken together make up soft power.

In this research, we would like to focus on the nature of soft power as reflected in printed media using corpus-driven approach.

The corpus for this aim was made up of concordances containing the word combination “soft power” extracted from “The Washington Post” and “The New York Times” (998 contexts in total). The collected corpus was subsequently analyzed with corpus management tools to find out keywords and their frequency. According to the frequency rate, they were sorted out to make a representation of associative semantic field which is indicative of the specific nature of the country’s soft power and the place of language and culture in its structure. Figure 1 shows the resulting structure of the associative and semantic field of soft power in media discourse.

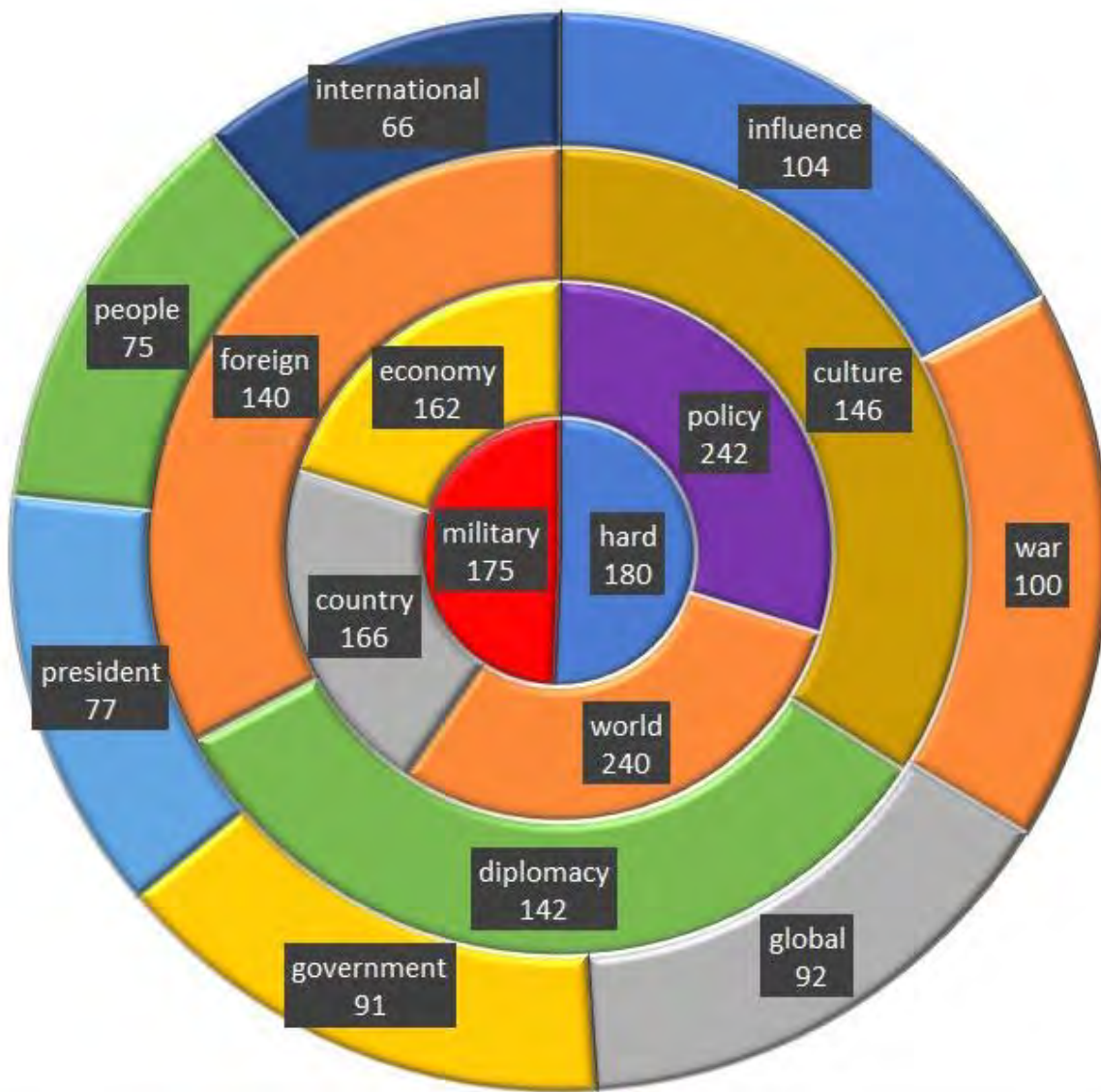


Figure 1. Associative and Semantic Field of Soft Power in the US Media Discourse

Note. The lexemes in the figure are distributed the core to the shell according to their frequency in the collected corpus. Each lexeme represents a set of all forms with the same meaning) and is accompanied by a number showing its frequency.

The core is made up of two synonymous notions – military and hard, whose frequency taken together largely outnumbers each of the rest of the components. The essence of soft power is hence revealed through contrasting soft power and hard/military power as another way to achieve the

goals needed. Another evidence of the predominant position of this component is the lexeme war in the shell zone. Predictable enough is the presence of lexemes like policy, world, country (in the core) and president, government, people, international (in the shell) which signifies that soft power is a country's image in the world originated from its policy. The lexemes culture, economy, diplomacy, foreign specify the soft power assets.

The lexeme language appears to have a low frequency and could not be included in the chart. It may signify that language is not perceived as a valuable soft power resource, and the cause-and-effect relationship may be different: language spread may be a result of the US soft power, gained by a policy in other fields. It may also have a bearing on the covert character of American LLP.

China Case-Study: Language Policy and Planning

Similarly, to the US, Mandarin in China does not hold the official language status; however, it is referred to as the national language. The Constitution guarantees language rights by stating that “the people of all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, and to preserve or reform their own ways and customs” [<https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/cn/cn147en.pdf>]. The Constitution also specifies languages used in trials and the use of autonomous languages in allowing “the organs of self-government of the national autonomous areas, in accordance with the autonomy regulations of the respective areas, employ the spoken and written language or languages in common use in the locality”. Thus, besides the national language there are also regional varieties and minority varieties (topolects), making up all together 298 living languages (Lewis & Simons, 2013). The main focus of Chinese LLP is on corpus planning rather than status planning.

Chinese society with 56 nations on its territory is extremely linguistically diverse. Although the majority represent one nationality (Han-Chinese nationality), “the language spoken by this majority is by no means uniform, the varieties of Chinese are so diversified, that most of them are mutually unintelligible, and some linguists even call them separate languages. The remaining 10% speak languages that are classified into five language families” (Kurpaskathe, 2017, p. 14). According to Zhou, there are 120 minority languages (Zhou, 2004, p 179).

The promotion of Putonghua is guaranteed by Article 19 of the Constitution and stressed by the Language Law, adopted in 2001, declaring that “[a]ll citizens shall have the right to learn and use the standard spoken and written Chinese language” (GOV.cn 2000 site).

In order to promote Mandarin at home and abroad, China had to take considerable corpus planning effort for reforming the language, to simplify the spelling and make it uniform through standardization. This resulted in a unique situation when several sets of characters were in use simultaneously:

- 1) the first set mainly in use in continental China, Singapore, and some countries of South-East Asia, embraces traditional characters along with new simplified ones;
- 2) the second set is based on traditional elements only without newly introduced characters and is used in Taiwan;
- 3) the third one includes traditional characters and Cantonese ones and is widely spread in Hong-Kong and Macao;
- 4) the fourth one also combines traditional and Cantonese elements and is used in Guangzhou (Zav'jalova, 2020).

Considering the population of China, this transition to uniform language use is likely to take much time. To facilitate the process, a massive campaign to control the use of normative language in mass media, theatre, cinema, and the Internet was launched. Another measure was unprecedented publishing activity resulting in a great number of dictionaries of all types, including bilingual dialect ones (Zav'jalova, 2020).

All these corpus planning measures go hand in hand with language acquisition planning and education policy. According to Article 12 of the Education Law, “the Chinese language, both oral and written, shall be the basic oral and written language for education [...]” and “shall in their educational activities popularize the nationally common spoken Chinese and the standard written characters”. The Law also mentions the right of “schools or other educational institutions which mainly consist of students from ethnic minority groups” to use “the language of the respective ethnic community or the native language commonly adopted in that region”. Considerable corpus planning efforts were put into creating scripts and writing systems for minority languages since the 1980s, however not all of them have been adopted, e.g. “the Li preferred Mandarin instead of the newly created writing system, the Hani used one and abandoned another, and the Yi did not like the new writing system created for them, but preferred the improved and standardized traditional one instead” (Zuo, 2007). Another problem discussed by Zou is the impact of globalization and market economy: young people choosing Putonghua in order to be more compatible in the labor market. Spolsky also mentions this factor as one enhancing the spread of

Putonghua arguing that “the shift to Putonghua is being accelerated in large measure by the phenomenal rate of internal rural-to-urban migration” (Spolky, 2014, p. 168). Promoting high literacy standards at home China has made proficiency in Putonghua a compulsory requirement for state service.

China Case-Study: External LPP and Soft Power

In the recent decade, China has been focusing a lot on promoting Chinese abroad. Sometimes these efforts are referred to as language diffusion (Spolky, 2014, p. 173). Its external LPP is based on a wide network of Confucius Institutes, whose primary linguistic task is to teach Mandarin, but they also aim to spread Chinese culture, encourage trade, and improve China’s image abroad (ibid.) which is exactly what soft power is all about. Describing the success of this soft-power policy, J. Kurlantzick writes that “Chinese-language and -cultural studies have skyrocketed in popularity in the developing world” which is especially noticeable in Argentina, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia. Moreover, Chinese has begun to challenge English as a second language. Today Chinese has reached far beyond Asia, with educational institutions in Australia, some European countries, and the USA are introducing it into their curriculum.

However, the determination of China’s authorities and their dedication to language spread entails a controversial situation in education at home. Ying Wang describes an existing “discrepancy between international students-oriented language policy at national level and language practice at the interpersonal level, with language policy at institutional level taking a mediating position” arguing that despite promoting Chinese medium instruction (CMI) for international students as necessary, “English is used and treated as essential in actual classroom interaction and disciplinary studies” (Wang, 2017, p. 50). Giving a detailed account of support offered by the Ministry of Education as well as by universities at the institutional level, Y. Wang claims that interviews and classroom observation show a considerable presence of English as a medium of instruction and personal interaction in class, thus revealing “a policy vacuum with regard to EMI for international students in China” (ibid. p. 57). In the context of our research this idea also shows discrepancy between the overt nature of state level policy and language choices of grassroots users. The overt nature of China’s external LPP as well as its connection with the soft power concept (although the latter is not directly mentioned but skillfully described) is revealed in the statement on the Ministry of Education official web-site: “Teaching Chinese as a foreign language (TCFL)

... is of strategic significance to popularize the Chinese language and culture throughout the world, to enhance the friendship and mutual understanding as well as the economic and cultural cooperation and exchanges between China and other countries around the world, and to elevate China's influence in the international community” [http://en.moe.gov.cn/Cooperation_Exchanges/201506/t20150626_191367.html].

In order to take a closer look at the Chinese idea of soft power, we have conducted a research on media discourse. Based on “News.cn”, “Shanghai Daily”, “China Daily” we have collected a corpus of 846 extended contexts including soft power. The results obtained by frequency analysis laid grounds for the associative-semantic field presented on Figure 2.

As we can see, the core concept of soft power with frequency value largely outnumbering the following components is culture, which supports the ideas presented in studies by a lot of researches about culture being the major tool of Chinese soft power. The lexemes world, country, nation, global, foreign, policy, government are indispensable in understanding the agency and scope of soft power, just like in Russia and the USA. Noteworthy are lexemes develop, promote, boost that are specific to China and illustrate its determination to work and grow. Diplomacy and economy present in Figure 2 are rather typical for the idea of soft power as assets and tools allowing to influence other countries in a non-military way. Industry is not a common element of soft power concept which is specific to China. International is linked with the scope of soft power and is its indispensable element just like in Russia and the USA.



Figure 2. Associative and Semantic Field of Soft Power in English Language Media Discourse in China

Note. The lexemes in the figure are distributed the core to the shell according to their frequency in the collected corpus. Each lexeme represents a set of all forms with the same meaning and is accompanied by a number showing its frequency.

Russia Case-Study: Language Policy and Planning

While speaking about LPP tools in Russia, we should distinguish administrative, academic, educational, media, and cultural tools.

Administrative tools include laws and other legal acts of federal and regional levels specifying the status and use of languages on the territory of Russia. The Constitution is a major legislative tool laying grounds for federal and local acts, declaring the Russian language “a state language on the whole territory of the Russian Federation” (Article 68) [<https://xn--2020-94damyi5albn6b6i.xn--p1ai/>]. The recently adopted amendments to the Constitution declare the Russian language as a “language state-forming people in the multinational union of peoples with equal rights”. Alongside Russian, the republics of the RF “have the right to establish their own state languages. In the bodies of state authority and local self-government, state institutions of the Republics they shall be used together with the state language of the Russian Federation” [<http://www.constitution.ru/en>]. Under Article 19 “the State shall guarantee the equality of rights and freedoms of man and citizen, regardless of [...] language [...]. All forms of limitations of human rights on social, racial, national, linguistic or religious grounds shall be banned” [<http://www.constitution.ru/en>]. Language rights are specified in Article 27 and include “the right to use his or her native language, to a free choice of the language of communication, upbringing, education, and creative work”. A comprehensive comparative and contrastive analyses conducted and presented in the paper “Language Policy and Youth Development: International Background and Russian Multinational Practice” by Valentina V. Stepanova and Larisa Yu. Lutskovskaia reveals “differences, discrepancies and inconsistencies in legal approach to the language policy at federal and regional levels” (Stepanova & Lutskovskaia, 2019, p. 318).

Basic principles laid down in the Constitution are further developed in RF Federal and State Laws. The Federal Law “On the State Language of the RF” specifies spheres of the state language use and describes responsibilities of the federal authorities in charge of language issues. The language norm establishing process is also stated in the law, declaring that the RF Ministry of Education is to compile a list of grammar reference books and dictionaries on the advice of a special committee including academics, researchers, linguists, and the Government representatives. Language acquisition policy and planning is regulated by Federal State Educational Standards which list language competences to be developed at each level of education.

The Federal Target Program “The Russian Language” considers language as an administrative LPP tool; it sets LPP guidelines and goals for a period of four years. The Program is to be implemented by allocating funds to certain academic, educational, and practical projects that

would contribute to achieving the goals. Four programs of this type have been implemented since 2002.

The lower level of administrative LPP tools is regulated by regional legislative acts. Laws in the RF regions may vary to a certain extent; however, they must never contradict federal laws and mostly serve as intermediaries providing details as to the fulfillment of the above-mentioned acts and programs.

Academic tools are created by researchers and linguists working in the following areas:

- investigating language changes and developing dictionaries, grammar reference books to establish the language norm;
- studying language situation in regions and the entire country with the view to spot and resolve language conflicts, violation of language rights, assessing the results and implementation of LLP;
- developing methods of teaching Russian at all levels of education, including teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The latter field is closely connected with educational LPP tools. Language education is not limited to Russian only; it also includes teaching foreign languages as well as national languages in republics that have established other languages as state ones alongside Russian. Such regions work on developing and introducing bilingual education. An account of problems and achievements multinational and linguistically diverse regions have to face are reviewed in Tatarstan case-study in the paper “Transformation of the System of Bilingual Education in the Republic of Tatarstan: Crossover Ethnolinguistic Controversies” (Maximova, Belyaev & Laukart-Gorbacheva, 2017). The framework for language education is set by the aforementioned Federal State Educational Standards which list language competences to be developed at each level of education. Within the framework of language competences, schools develop their curriculum and choose methods, approaches and course books that better serve the specified aims. With regard to the vast size of Russia, many languages, national, and economic diversity of its regions, the framework helps maintain the integrity of the educational system throughout the country. A more detailed review of LPP in higher education is provided in our earlier open-access paper “Research and Engineering at Academic Institutions as LPP Factor: Russia Case Study” (Yudina & Seliverstova, 2020b)

Media tools include mass media programs and internet resources designed to promote language learning to attain better levels of communicative competence. There has been a growing interest

in popular projects (podcasts, blogs, etc.) sharing language-related facts and explaining intricate language norms. Another case of media LPP tools is radio and TV channels broadcast in national languages thus satisfying the demand for native language information sources in republics and preserving national languages.

Cultural LPP tools involve projects by NGOs, libraries and volunteer projects that are mainly aimed at dissemination of knowledge about the cultural heritage of the country presenting language diversity as its valuable asset, thus raising people's awareness and creating motivation for learning languages. These tools also promote to successful intercultural interaction (Kuzembayeva et al., 2019).

To summarize the above, Russia's LPP can be described as an overt top-down activity with clearly stated aims designed by the governmental bodies and an extensive network of lower-scale actors undertaking the task of implementation.

The overt nature of the Russian language policy and planning is revealed by the survey conducted with the CAWI method for this research. The survey conducted from April 1 to May 10, 2020, was designed to assess people's awareness of LPP in Russia and their evaluation of its tools, methods, and perspectives. Five hundred six respondents from 40 regions of Russia took part in the survey by filling up an online questionnaire.

The results show that as many as 15% of respondents could not answer the question about the meaning of the LPP term. The majority of those who did (42%) defined it as government's regulation of language norm and language promotion, with other 30% mentioning status planning of the official language and language rights of nations living in Russia, and 13% specifying language education and language competence as issues constituting the scope of LPP. Figure 3 represents graphic data of what respondents include in the scope of LPP in Russia.

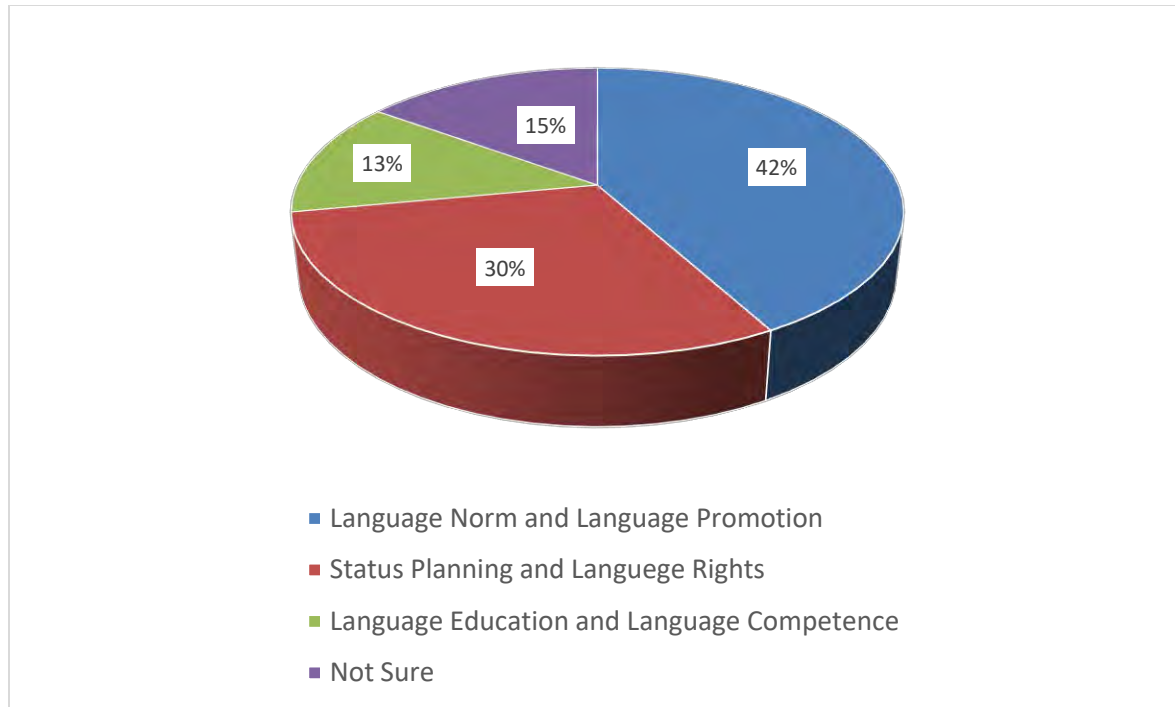


Figure 3. LPP Scope as Seen by Respondents

Noteworthy is that only 5% are aware of regional authorities being involved in LPP, while the rest 95% attribute LPP to federal-level politics. As to LPP tools, respondents specified the following:

- laws and legislation
- education policy (with focus on compulsory Russian in secondary schools)
- state exams in Russian
- exams in Russian for migrants
- developing and publishing dictionaries and books
- promoting Russian via mass media
- support to national languages and linguistic diversity
- Federal Target Program “The Russian Language”

When asked to comment on the idea of legislative regulation of LLP, 59% expressed their support, while 32% denied the need for one, 8% arguing that is a self-policing system requiring no interference. The results are presented in the Figure 4.

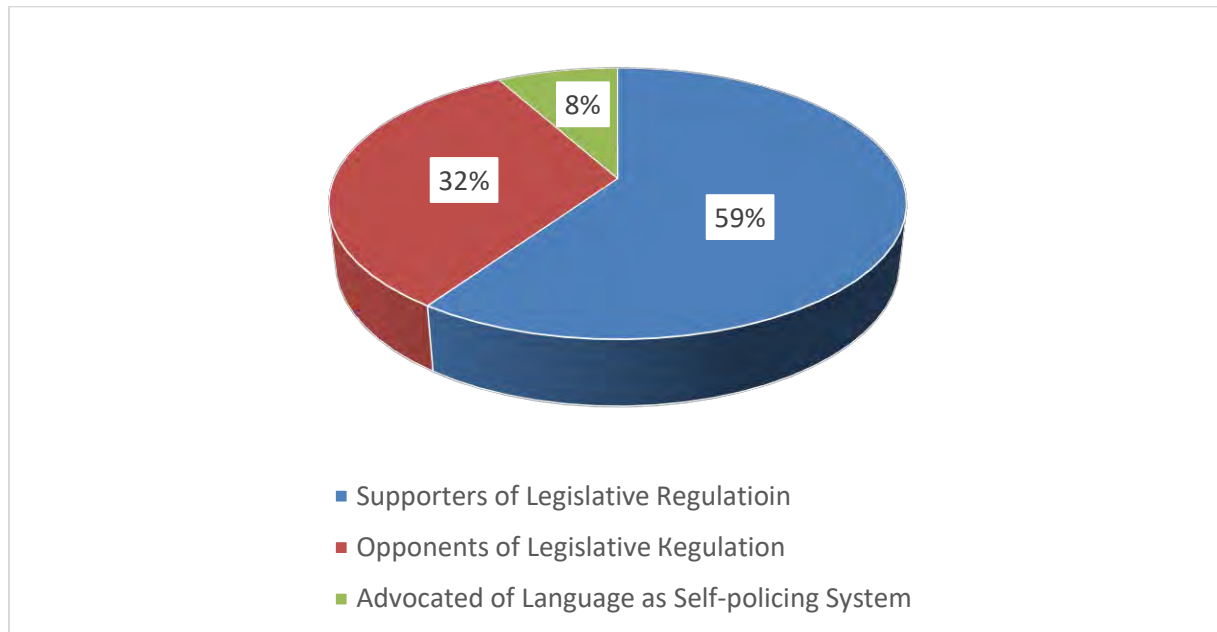


Figure 4. Attitude to Administrative LPP Tools

Russia Case-Study: External LPP and Soft Power

Another important focus of Russia's LPP is the promotion of Russian abroad. The roots of Russia's external LPP go back to 1966 when The Centre for methods of teaching Russian as a foreign language was established at the Moscow State University followed by launching the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature. However, after the break-up of the USSR and during the decades that followed the declining number of people speaking Russian as a second language made the Government put an added emphasis on preserving and enhancing the role of Russian in the world.

The connection between external LPP and soft power has become evident in recent years both to the authorities and the researchers in Russia. Describing the role of the Russian language in its soft power policy, " language presents itself as a useful public-relations tool – not only because it functions as a 'common tongue' with one of the largest diasporas in the world, but also because it serves as a means of defining national identity beyond the more restrictive parameters of bloodline or ethnic ties" (Gorham, 2011, p. 24).

External LPP in Russia has been based on a series of Federal Target Programs "The Russian Language" launched in 2001 and continuing into 2020 to address the most urgent needs in support and promotion of the Russian language abroad. Thus, in the field of corpus planning, the Program encouraged a major project on creating the 'National Corpus of the Russian Language', which

Gorham characterized as “an ambitious attempt to catalogue the entire living language in a searchable online database (<http://ruscorpora.ru/>) similar to COBUILD” (Gorham, 2011, p. 27). After year 2007 proclaimed as a Year of the Russian Language, 2008 was marked by launching Cyrillic-based domain ‘.рф, which was meant to become an area of internet communication of the Russian speaking people across the globe, an active instrument for the establishment of a common Russian-language cultural space (Trofimova, 2004). The same ideas of unity, as well as language and culture spread were behind the establishment of the Russian World (Russkiy Mir) Foundation created in 2007. It has created a network of Russian Centers to support Russian language learning programs abroad. It also provides grants to NGOs engaged in language support and promotion. Another major actor of Russia’s soft power and external LPP is Rossotrudnichestvo, Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation, established in 2008. The statement on its official web-site runs: “Rossotrudnichestvo promotes the use and the teaching of Russian language abroad. The federal target “Russian language” program for 2016-2020 is a strategic instrument for the pursuit of this policy. Today, thousands of people have an opportunity to learn Russian with the help of Russian language courses at the offices of Rossotrudnichestvo in many countries around the world and to receive confirmation of the proficiency level of the Russian language. With a view to help advance the Russian language, the Agency establishes conditions for its practical application and the acquirement of education in Russian” (<http://rs.gov.ru/en/about>). The results of the Program are yet to be evaluated, however, there’s a need for research into the nature of Russia’s soft power and its potential.

To sum up, on the one hand, the strategy of language spread is meant “to strengthen the role of the Russian language in constructing an all-Russian national identity”, stressing that “that Russians are all part of the wider Russian World, whether they live inside Russia’s borders or outside” (Tiido, 2018, p.1); on the other hand the efforts are made to show through language its cultural values and traditions with a view raise the appeal to this wider Russian World and attract people who could share these values.

The corpus analysis of media discourse revealed the following structure of the concept of soft power. As can be seen from Figure 5, the core component (country) does not reveal the specifics of Russia’s soft power representing an element inherent to the idea of soft power as such and present in both of the above countries along with such elements as policy, world, government,

president. It may be accounted for relatively young model of soft power. However, the presence of such elements as economy, culture, education, language in the outer layers probably shows us its emerging face. Especially noteworthy is the lexeme language which again shows the link between language and soft power.

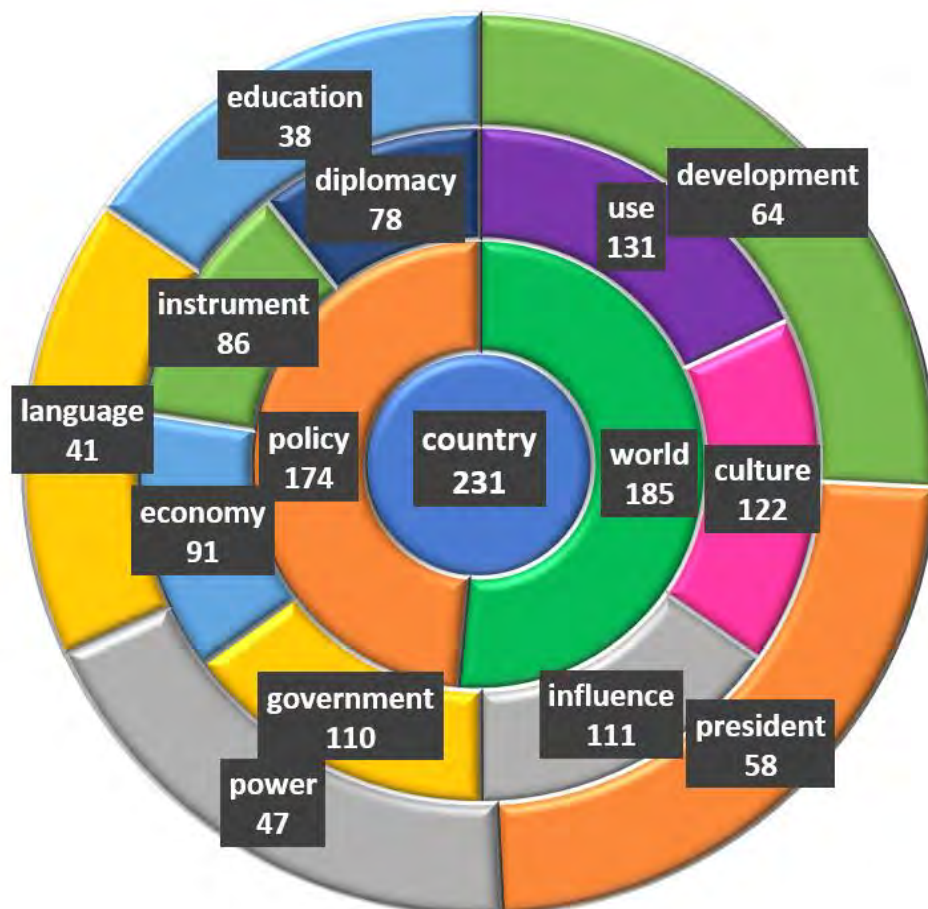


Figure 5. Associative and Semantic Field of Soft Power in English Language Media Discourse in China

Note. The lexemes in the figure are distributed the core to the shell according to their frequency in the collected corpus. Each lexeme represents a set of all forms with the same meaning and is accompanied by a number showing its frequency.

Conclusion

The research presented in this paper shows that there are a number of LPP issues all the three countries have to face. The most burning controversial issue concerns intensive immigration

along with people's considerable awareness of their civil rights and language rights and capabilities of education systems to meet the demands of ever-growing linguistic diversity. Thus, in terms of status planning, the problem is to guarantee equal language rights to all people in the country and be able to observe these rights.

Another problem bringing forth the language policy and planning (LPP) issue is the controversy between the need for preserving minority languages and low demand for them in the education system due to advantages expected from proficiency in languages of wider communication because in highly competitive labor markets language proficiency may be treated as a valuable asset.

In the case of acquisition planning, the increased immigration which brings about a steady rise of language diversity becomes a burden to the education systems. Considering the evident benefit of language proficiency in more than one language, the resulting multilingualism should be treated as an asset, and implementing programs of bilingual education is likely to be beneficial both for the governments and individuals. In this respect, language promotion appears to be a unique field where cooperation between the countries is mutually beneficial. The country exporting its language benefits from enhancing its soft power, while the accepting country benefits from the multilingualism of its people and increased intercultural competence.

Along with the seemingly similar agendas, the nature of LPP varies considerably from top-down to bottom-up, from overt to covert LPP. However, one thing remains obvious: there are discrepancies between the declared overt policy at the state level and language choices at the level of grassroots users, often influenced by pragmatic considerations of the latter. As Elana Shohamy put it, "the real de-facto language policy occurs through a variety of additional devices, or mechanisms, beyond the official policies that are included into language policy statements and laws" (Shohamy, 2006, p. 4). Thus, the scope of LPP should be extended to include practices and language choices in different contexts and address discrepancies or "vacuum areas" discovered. In this respect media may offer valuable data along with surveys and observations.

The corpus analysis of media discourse proved the validity of linguistic methods applied to social and political studies by revealing uniform and specific elements of soft power. Soft power based on sharing culture and language appears to be a promising field of research and practical activities. The increased emphasis noticeable in recent years in understanding soft power as an alternative

to hard or military power but having the same aims and agenda might be a dangerous view, which gives way to information wars and hinders potentially fruitful cooperation.

Acknowledging the potential of language spread in boosting soft power the language resource should not be treated as a primary soft power asset, since language choices are directly dependent on pragmatic needs, in other words, “the general rule of instrumental language learning seems to be that one learns the language of the group with more power than one’s own” (Wright, 2016, p. 117).

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