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### **The Ethnic Languages Maintenance in Urban Areas (Makhachkala Case Study)**

Daghestan is a multicultural republic with more than 40 languages coexisting on the common territory [Chirikba, 2008; van der Berg, 2005]. Many Daghestanian people are multilingual. However, in urban areas minority languages are almost redundant as Russian has become to be the lingua franca [Daniel, Dobrushina, 2013; Catford, 1977]. Furthermore, the share of ethnically mixed families has been growing lately [Soroko, 2014]. Therefore, there appears the problem how to maintain the minority languages on the republican level as well as on the family level. For minority languages the author uses the term ethnic languages comprising two terms, i.e. *natsional`nyj yazyk* (which is the Russian equivalent for “ethnic minorities language”) and heritage language [Shakhbanova, 2011; Polinsky, Kagan, 2007]. In order to discover the attitudes towards the ethnic language maintenance the author held on the research in Makhachkala having interviewed three generations of urban citizens, i.e. having their *grandparents* relocated (3<sup>rd</sup> generation), or *parents* relocated (2<sup>nd</sup> generation), or having relocated *themselves* (1<sup>st</sup> generation).

First, the study deals with the personal motivation for an ethnic language use and the domains where it is preferred to lingua franca. Second, this study reveals the differences in their personal motivation to maintain ethnic languages and their attitudes towards language transmission to children. Third, language policy appears to be a means of language maintenance [Spolsky, 2004]. The first generation imposes language policy, which restricts the Russian language use at home, while the second and the third generations take it less strictly. Finally, ethnically mixed families turned out to be unique. Siblings can acquire from one to three languages (including Russian) in dependence of how well their parents know the ethnic languages. But still, a village traditionally stays the main source of language maintenance. These are Daghestanian highland villages where most of the population speaks native language quite fluently.

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