Self-Reported Russian and Belarusian Language Utilization in Key Economic, Political, and Social Domains in Belarus

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The elicitation of language usage in the present study was carried out by means of a survey. Language utilization was surveyed in the home, in school, at work, and in government institutions to ascertain whether a functional hierarchy of domains in Belarusian and/or Russian obtains in Belarus. In addition, the study examines whether domain-specific language utilization varies according to participants' sex. Respondents were asked to evaluate choice of language as "useful" or "necessary" for each domain. Findings reflect self-reports from 559 students born in Belarus and attending eight different institutions of higher education, cumulatively. Data were collected in three cities, namely Minsk, Vitebsk, and Grodno. Preliminary findings suggest that Belarusian lacks sufficient grassroots support, as evidenced in particular by student self-reports relative to the "home" domain. Responses to language utilization in the "school" domain reflect continued government support of the national language in spite of relatively low utility accorded Belarusian in actual "government institutions."

Application of a market forces framework when analyzing Belarusian and Russian usage in the "work" domain underscores the emblematic role that Belarusian plays versus the ever-expanding functional role that Russian plays both in public and private life.

INTRODUCTION

The study of language choice within individual speech communities received scholarly attention in Ferguson's (1959) seminal work on diglossia in which he persuasively argued for the differentiation of certain bilingual communities into discrete linguistic sub-communities that reflect actual functional areas of one or another language. Each sub-community, according to Ferguson, required the use of either a high variety of language (meaning a language other than the regional dialect) or a low variety (the regional dialect). These discrete linguistic sub-communities, generally referred to as language domains, also received attention from Schmidt-Rohr (1933) who cited, among other domains, the family, the playground and street, the school, the church, literature, the press,

the military, the courts, and the government administration. Fishman (1967) expanded Ferguson's concept of diglossia to include the relationship between diglossia and bilingualism in speech communities. The present research addresses language utilization within discreet domains in Belarus and seeks to identify key factors that contribute to the makeup of the country's sociolinguistic landscape by examining language utilization in key economic, political, and social domains. Data presented in this research reflect findings from a site visit to Belarus in 2001.[1]

Economic Domain

According to Wurm (1991), when two speech communities experience contact on the economic level, the speech community possessing the stronger economy invariably will expand its influence linguistically. Such linguistic expansion reflects a natural inclination to want to participate in and profit from the dominant economy. Viewing language from a market forces standpoint, Brecht and Rivers (2005) discuss the need for policymakers to analyze language markets similar to the way they analyze financial markets when drafting legislation and allocating public resources. If viewed from the perspective of economic theory, centralized government intervention becomes a significant player in determining a language's potential maintenance or shift.

Wurm (1991) also points out that a linguistic generation gap often results when senior members of a speech community continue to speak their native language while members of the rising generation use the language of the prevailing economy. Fishman (2001) cites globalization, particularly globalization of pan-Western culture as both a "constructive and destructive phenomenon:" constructive in the sense of bridging nations and economies, but destructive in the sense of de-emphasizing differences, including language differences, in an effort to promote a world community. Competing economies and their respective languages rarely represent a level playing field, thus confounding the term "colonization" with its euphemistic partner "globalization." Accordingly, Fishman asserts that "efforts to safeguard threatened languages must oppose the very strongest processes and powers that the world knows today" (ibid.). Yet, the question arises as to whether

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speakers of minority language necessarily want to make every effort to curb language shift, and in some instances, reverse it.

In his research addressing language attitudes towards Kazakh, Rivers (2002) provides compelling data in support of allowing language shift to occur in the direction of the dominant language, particularly with respect to female students. Although Fishman (1991) rightly argues that mothers more so than fathers play a key role in transmitting a minority language from one generation to the next, he does not address the possibility, as does Rivers (2002), McDonald (1994), and Constantinidou (1994) that speakers of the minority language, particularly females, may in fact have definite motives for passing down the dominant language to successive generations, not the least of which being an interest in their children's educational opportunities and material well-being.

Social Domain

In addition to economic influences, social influences – such as the prestige of a language – have a significant impact on individual speech communities.[2] Ferguson (1959) points out that prejudices against the low language in a diglossic speech community can run so deep that its members may only acknowledge the high language. He further states that even where such prejudices do not exist, there remains an underlying belief that the high language is "somehow more beautiful, more logical, better able to express important thoughts, and the like." Dorian (1998) points out that when a low-prestige language acquires a negative reputation and image, potential speakers avoid using the language so as not to be associated with its unappealing image. Citing Grillo's writing on European polities, Dorian states that speech communities that possess a prestigious language oftentimes seek to elevate their status by distancing themselves from dialects considered inferior and insignificant. Members of the prestige-language speech community often view native dialects as inadequate and incapable of properly organizing and governing the affairs of the world. Perhaps unsurprisingly, members of the

[2] The term "prestige," as it is used in this study, has both fiscal and pragmatic implications. Indeed, as Grin (1990) points out, throwing money at minority languages will have short-lived results unless people themselves view activities associated with minority languages as prestigious. In this vein, Dorian (1987) suggests that the success of Irish stems largely from there being ample opportunity to engage in it if members of the Irish community are so inclined.

minority language community often adopt a hypersensitive attitude toward their language in response to negative attitudes of dominant-language speakers (Dorian 1987).

Related to the issue of language prestige is the linguistic phenomenon of mixed speech, which in the case of Belarus involves a mixture of Belarusian and Russian, Belarusian and Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian, or all of these combinations. Nationally oriented intellectuals in Belarus pejoratively refer to such mixed forms of speech as "trasianka" (literally a mixture of hay and straw), while some scholars, Nina B. Mechkovskaya in particular, view trasianka as nothing more than the product of ongoing linguistic evolution and one that does not necessarily conflict with defining one's national identity. Mechkovskaya (2003) matter-of-factly characterizes the phenomenon of trasianka as "a multitude of Belarusian idiolects that have been spontaneously russified to various degrees." Although dismissed by Belarusian scholars for many years as a topic unworthy of serious academic consideration, trasianka has become an increasingly important field of research among scholars interested in describing the current sociolinguistic landscape in Belarus.[3] Domain specific usage of trasianka in contemporary Belarusian society represents a body of research by itself and exceeds the scope of the research under consideration, given that the focus of the present research represents a first step in ascertaining the utility of Belarusian and/or Russian[4]

Political Domain

Mechkovskaia (2000) describes how a nation's government can foster as well as impede the use of certain languages spoken by its citizens. She claims that governmental support of a language generally falls somewhere in between two polar extremes: an open, democratic and liberal society or a closed, totalitarian and authoritarian society. According to Mechkovskaia, democratic governments seek out ways to create harmony between interethnic groups and their native languages. As such, they encourage pluralism and secure equal

[3] At the 5th International Conference "Language—Literature—Culture" in Honor of Professor L.M. Shakun held at Belarus State University in Minsk, Belarus on November 16-17, 2006, three papers specifically addressing the phenomenon of trasianka in Belarus were presented and subsequently published in the form of conference proceedings (see Brown (2007a), Hentschel and Tesh (2007) and Mechkovskaia (2007)).
[4] For additional discussion of trasianka in Belarus, see Brown (2005). With kind permission of Springer Science and Business Media.

rights for their members, whereas closed totalitarian governments typically impose their will on the people and favor centralization and consolidation.

Alpatov (2003) argues instead that the degree of democratization within a country does not necessarily correspond proportionally to the degree of language tolerance and pluralism. Citing the United States as an example of a nation founded on democratic principles, Alpatov claims that relatively little has been done on the federal level to protect and encourage language pluralism. Only in recent years have states addressed the issue, largely in response to the rapid spread of Spanish. As a counter-example, Alpatov cites the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which compared with other regions of Europe, exercised greater authoritarian than democratic power and influence, yet exhibited considerable tolerance and support of languages other than German.

Rather than using language policies as a yardstick by which to measure the degree of democratization in a country, Faingold (2004) asserts that a "'hands off' approach to constitutional implementation of language legislation may be appropriate for some nations, while a 'hands on' approach is a better fit for others, given geographical and immigration differences." Drawing from language legislation specific to 187 constitutions from around the world, Faingold makes a strong case for a "best-fit" approach to constitutional implementation of language legislation that seeks to account for the individual circumstances and needs of a country, including its people, history, and culture.

Language Politics in Belarus

The Belarusian language has and continues to struggle in terms of distinguishing itself from Russian and neighboring Polish and Ukrainian, in particular. Belarusian or *prosta mova* once occupied a prestigious governmental and societal function as the chancery language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during its union with Poland. Subsequent to Russia establishing the Vilna Educational District in 1803, Belarusian quickly became a symbol of Polish and Belarusian nationalistic thought. In an effort to crush the efforts of nationalist groups, the Russian government acted swiftly in 1823 by exiling leaders and sympathizers of the groups, and implementing a Russian only language policy in the university. Restrictions on Belarusian by the Russian government continued unabated until by 1839, the Russian government prohibited the use

of Belarusian altogether, a language that, according to Mechskovskaia (2003), officials deemed as merely a Polish dialect.

Belarusian flourished briefly following the 1905 revolution when Tsar Nicholas II lifted a ban directed against printing in non-Russian languages. Additionally, the early years of Soviet rule sanctioned a policy of *korenizatsiia*, or indigenization, which had both an affirmative action objective in the form of promoting national elites and a linguistic objective in terms of promoting local national languages in the non-Russian speaking territories (Martin 2001). However, early ambitions mapped out for national languages ultimately succumbed to the All-Union demands of Stalin's five-year plans that valued function over form.

By the 1960s, Belarus found itself lacking a substantial cadre of nationalist-minded individuals capable of steering the country toward increased national and cultural autonomy. Soviet language laws during this period indirectly limited the use of national languages, including Belarusian, by offering incentives to speakers of Russian. In fact, parents could choose whether to have their children instructed in their native language or in a different union language. Considering, however, the economic, social, and political advantages associated with speaking Russian, parents typically encouraged the use of Belarusian at home and elsewhere.

Gorbachev's liberal policies of "perestroika" and "glasnost" during the second half of the 1980s revived language policy discussions throughout the Soviet Union. Indeed, as a group of 28 intellectuals from Belarus wrote in a letter to then-General Secretary Gorbachev: "Language is the soul of a nation, the supreme manifestation of its cultural identity, the foundation of its true spiritual life. A nation lives and flourishes in history while its language lives. With the decline of the language, culture withers and atrophies, the nation ceases to exist as a historical organism" (Letters to Gorbachev, 1987). Such nationalistic sentiment culminated in the adoption of the "Law About Languages" on January 26, 1990 by the Supreme Council of the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic. According to the 1990 law, Belarusian represented the only official language in the country.

Yet the very movement that led to the adoption of the Belarusian-only language policy and, ultimately, independence for Belarus in 1991, likewise

contributed to the decline in Belarusian nation-building. As Marples (1999) observed, "once the support from the 'center' ended, i.e., the USSR collapsed, there was no longer any significant support for the national awakening." One finds evidence of a shift away from nation-building in Belarus in responses to a referendum, sponsored by President Aleksandr Lukashenka in 1995, which included the following question: "Do you agree with granting the Russian language equal status with Belarusian?" According to government published results of the referendum, 83 percent of voters in Belarus supported granting Belarusian and Russian equal status.[5]

Demographics

Data from the 1999 census in Belarus shed light on the current demographics of the country, including reported utilization of Belarusian versus Russian in the functional domain of the home. According to census data, the population totals 10,045,000 persons. Of that number, 6,961,000 persons (69 percent) live in urban centers, whereas 3,084,000 persons (31 percent) live in rural regions. Of the 69 percent of urban dwellers, 67 percent live in 15 cities with populations that exceed 100,000 persons (Narodnaia gazeta 1999). The census reports that more than 130 nationalities reside in Belarus: 81 percent of the population self-identifies as Belarusian, 11 percent as Russian, ~4 percent as Polish, 2 percent as Ukrainian, and 0.3 percent as Jewish. In addition to questions of native language and nationality, census takers reported the language(s) they usually speak at home. Census figures indicate that 3,683,000 persons (37 percent) reported to speak Belarusian at home, of which 3,373,000 persons (92 percent) are of Belarusian nationality. Interestingly, 6,308,000 persons reported to speak Russian at home (63 percent), of which 4,783,000 (76 percent) are of Belarusian nationality (Natsional'naia ekonomicheskaia gazeta 2000).[6]

NULL HYPOTHESES

- A functional hierarchy of domains for Belarusian and/or Russian does not obtain in Belarus.

[5] Official results of the May 1995 referendum raise a number of concerns with respect to reliability owing to the manipulative wording of the question.
[6] See Brown (2005).

- Choice of language, i.e., Belarusian versus Russian, does not differ significantly between sexes.

METHOD

Data used in this research were collected in three urban centers in Belarus, namely Minsk, Grodno, and Vitebsk using a questionnaire modeled after those employed by Camelot Marshall (2000) in Ukraine and William Rivers (2002) in Kazakhstan (see Appendices 1-3). In an effort to avoid possibly biasing participants' responses, the researcher arranged for three local university students from Minsk to administer the questionnaire under the auspices of European Humanities University rather than personally administer it. The fieldworkers administered questionnaires to students congregated in halls near classrooms during the week of final exams. They also asked students entering and exiting campus buildings to respond to the questionnaire. This article reflects self-reports from 559 students born in Belarus who cumulatively represent eight different institutions of higher education.

Participants had the choice of responding to the questionnaire in Belarusian or Russian. The frequency of responses in each city represented approximately equal distribution between sexes. However, the frequency of selection of Belarusian versus Russian language questionnaires to which students responded differed significantly: 73 (13.1 percent = Belarusian) versus 486 (86.9 percent = Russian). Respondents' ages ranged mainly from 18-21. The sample thus represents the generation that received the bulk of its education since Belarus declared independence in 1991.

In an effort to elicit information about the relative language utility of Belarusian and Russian, those administering the questionnaire asked respondents to describe each language as "useful" or "necessary" in select domains (in Russian: "Какой язык Вам полезен, а какой—необходим в каких ситуациях?"; in Belarusian: "Якая мова карысная Вам, а якая—неабходная ў якіх сітуацыях?"; and in English "Which language is helpful and which is necessary for you and in which situations?") This method of classifying a language allowed the researcher to approximate the degree to which individuals claimed to use Belarusian and/or Russian. A response of "useful" suggests that the participant values knowing Belarusian and/or Russian in a specific domain but that he/she could also function normally without it.

Conversely, a response of "necessary" implies that a participant considers a language indispensable in a certain domain and that functioning without the language would be impossible. The design of the survey question afforded participants eight possible ways of describing their usage of Belarusian and Russian in the prescribed domains: (1) Belarusian useful, (2) Belarusian necessary, (3) Russian useful, (4) Russian necessary, (5) Belarusian useful/Russian useful, (6) Belarusian useful/Russian necessary, (7) Belarusian necessary/Russian useful, and (8) Belarusian necessary/Russian necessary. A response of Russian "necessary" versus Belarusian "useful"/Russian "necessary" suggests primacy of Russian over Belarusian in a particular domain due to the former response lacking a statement whatsoever relative to the utility of Belarusian.

RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

At Home

The home represents a pivotal domain in terms of language maintenance, particularly when the language spoken at home does not reflect the lingua franca of the region in question. Maintaining, and in some instances, reversing language shift in such a linguistic environment often requires what Kibrik (1991) refers to as "extraordinary circumstances." One finds an analogous linguistic environment in contemporary Belarusian culture, in which Russian serves as the lingua franca, whereas Belarusian acts as a formal language of government and academia and occasionally as a language of hearth and home, particularly in homes with family members who have moved to urban centers from the countryside. Table 1 presents respondents' answers to the question of language spoken at home. The category of Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian received the highest number of responses (181 or 33.1 percent) followed by the category of Belarusian useful and Russian necessary, which received 159 responses (29.1 percent). Of the 547 participants who responded to the "home" domain, only 24 (4.4 percent) considered Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary.

Entire generations have grown up in Belarus speaking Russian almost exclusively, owing in part to an intense Russification policy begun under the tsars subsequent to the partitioning of Poland in 1796. Indigenous languages experienced a brief reprieve under Lenin, who instituted a policy that

encouraged and even mandated the use of indigenous languages both from within and without the government. Such efforts aimed at empowering speakers of languages other than Russian fell victim to Stalin's nationalities policies, which eventually favored assimilation over diversity in all spheres of culture (Grenoble 2003). So prolonged and penetrating were russification policies leading up to and during the Soviet era, particularly in Belarus, that individuals from there felt that Russian and Belarusian culture represented a "monoculture," similar to what occurred in Friesland among members of the Frisian and Dutch communities (Fishman 1991).

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Language Spoken at Home

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Valid	Russian necessary	181	32.4	33.1	33.1
	Belarusian useful/ Russian necessary	159	28.4	29.1	62.2
	Belarusian useful/ Russian useful	68	12.2	12.4	74.6
	Russian useful	39	7.0	7.1	81.7
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian useful	33	5.9	6.0	87.8
	Belarusian useful	25	4.5	4.6	92.3
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian necessary	24	4.3	4.4	96.7
	Belarusian necessary	18	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	547	97.9	100.0	
Missing	System	12	2.1		
Total		559	100.0		

Many Belarusians learned their native language as a foreign language in school, and did not speak it at home. According to the above data, Russian currently functions as the primary language of the home. The fact that respondents most often indicated the language utilization category of Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian suggests a general disregard of Belarusian altogether in this domain. Such a finding bodes ill for Belarusian in the near and distant future. Indeed, as Huss (2000) observed in relation to her

efforts at facilitating a bilingual Swedish and Finish environment in the home, "a prerequisite for language maintenance and revitalization is the intergenerational transmission of the minority language in families."

And yet, parents rightfully feel obligated to pass along to their children a language that offers maximal opportunities and prestige in life. For some, the conscious decision to raise children in the dominant language of the country requires moving to the capital from the countryside (Dalby 2003), while for others already living in urban centers, such a decision could involve sending a child to a school that offers classes exclusively in the dominant language. Rivers (2003) further observed that females in Kazakhstan prefer to raise their children speaking Russian owing to its economic advantages in terms of upward mobility.

In school

Universities and other institutions of higher education often attract the attention of political leaders anxious to shape the mindset of young people. Naturally, matters of language usage in education have intrinsic importance when conveying political rhetoric and establishing a national ideology. Table 2 presents respondents' answers to the question of language utilization in the sphere of education.

The "education" domain yields the highest response rate of any of the domains discussed here, relative to the language utilization category of Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary (206 or 37.5 percent). Responses to the category of Belarusian useful and Russian necessary received the second highest number of responses (116 or 21.1 percent), while the language category of Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian received only 58 responses (10.6 percent).

Findings from this domain reflect the present language law in Belarus that requires students in institutions of higher education to fulfill a Belarusian language requirement in order to graduate. Evidence of this language requirement stems from data suggesting that participants from each of the cities cited Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary more frequently than Belarusian useful and Russian necessary. The unusually low percentage of participants finding Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian,

otherwise one of the most frequently responded to domains in this study, suggests that students may consider Russian necessary only in their chosen field of study, but not overall.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Language Spoken in School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Valid	Belarusian necessary/ Russian necessary	206	36.9	37.5	37.5
	Belarusian useful/ Russian necessary	116	20.8	21.1	58.7
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian useful	70	12.5	12.8	71.4
	Russian necessary	58	10.4	10.6	82.0
	Belarusian useful/ Russian useful	32	5.7	5.8	87.8
	Belarusian necessary	31	5.5	5.6	93.4
	Belarusian useful	18	3.2	3.3	96.7
	Russian useful	18	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	549	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	10	1.8		
Total		559	100.0		

Some academicians would like to expand the role of Belarusian in schools by creating an institution of higher education in which all courses would be taught in Belarusian. In 2000, an initiative group gathered approximately thirty thousand signatures from people interested in establishing Belarus National University—an institution devoted to instruction solely in Belarusian; however, the Minister of Education rejected the proposal citing a lack of sufficient resources as his reason. The Presidential Administration likewise rejected the proposal stating that such an initiative reflected a "political action, which has no serious organizational, material and creative developments" (Belarus Helsinki Committee 2000).

Ironically, two years prior to rejecting a grassroots initiative aimed at educating Belarusian youth in their native language, Lukashenka and other government officials assured interested groups on several occasions that the Belarusian language and culture would continue to thrive in a "democratic"

atmosphere of choice. According to Vasilii Strazhev, former Minister of Education in Belarus and current president of Belarus State University, the dual-language policy will "give equal status to both languages in all spheres of life, and provide people with the right to choose which of the two languages they should use for their education" (Belapan 1998). In addition, Strazhev stated that in 1998, approximately 500,000 students received instruction in Belarusian whereas one million students received instruction in Russian (Ibid.).

Table 3: Cross-Tabulation of Sex versus Language Spoken in School

Language Spoken in Sphere of Education		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Belarusian necessary/ Russian necessary	Count	82	124	206
	Expected	103.6	102.4	206.0
Belarusian necessary/ Russian useful	Count	38	32	70
	Expected	35.2	34.8	70.0
Belarusian useful/ Russian necessary	Count	73	43	116
	Expected	58.3	57.7	116.0
Belarusian useful/ Russian useful	Count	15	17	32
	Expected	16.1	15.9	32.0
Russian necessary	Count	27	31	58
	Expected	29.2	28.8	58.0
Russian useful	Count	11	7	18
	Expected	9.0	9.0	18.0
Belarusian necessary	Count	16	15	31
	Expected	15.6	15.4	31.0
Belarusian useful	Count	14	4	18
	Expected	9.0	9.0	18.0
Total	Count	276	273	549
	Expected	276.0	273.0	549.0

Chi-Squared: $\chi^2 = 23.698$; df = 7; α (2-tailed) = .001

In addition to examining language(s) spoken in the "education" domain, the study cross-tabulates sex versus language spoken in school in an effort to

determine whether choice of language differs significantly between sexes, as shown in Table 3.

The data reveal that of the 116 respondents who considered Belarusian useful and Russian necessary, 43 were females and 73 were males. However, cross-tabulated data indicate that of the 206 respondents who indicated Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary, 124 were females leaving only 91 males. Both figures differ substantially from the expected count (Chi-Squared = .001).

The question arises as to why such a high frequency of females considered both languages necessary. In an effort to discover a possible explanation, the research selects for the above 206 respondents and cross-tabulates their respective major fields of study by sex.

Table 4: Cross-Tabulation of Sex versus Major Field of Study as Selected for Belarusian Necessary and Russian Necessary Responses

Major Field of Study		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Social Sciences	Count	22	43	65
	Expected	25.3	39.7	65.0
Sciences	Count	30	13	43
	Expected	16.8	26.3	43.0
Humanities	Count	15	49	64
	Expected	24.9	39.1	64.0
Total	Count	67	105	172
	Expected	67.0	105.0	172.0

Chi-Squared: $\chi^2 = 24.362$; df = 2; α (2-tailed) = .000

Data from Table 4 indicate that the humanities and social sciences attract more females than males; the inverse relationship applies to the sciences, which attract more males than females. Comparatively speaking, undergraduate

research and study in the social sciences and humanities requires a background in both Belarusian and Russian, whereas research and study in the sciences primarily requires proficiency in Russian, perhaps in part explaining the disparity in male and female responses relative to the "education" domain (Chi-Squared = .000).

At work

The following analysis of language utilization in the work place seeks to ascertain the degree to which Belarusian and/or Russian play(s) a useful/necessary role in respondents' stated professions. Table 5 presents a frequency distribution of respondents' answers to the survey question of language at work.

Table 5: Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Language Utilization at Work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Valid	Belarusian useful/ Russian necessary	242	43.3	43.8	43.8
	Russian necessary	133	23.8	24.1	67.8
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian necessary	45	8.1	8.1	75.9
	Belarusian useful/ Russian useful	44	7.9	8.0	83.9
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian useful	36	6.4	6.5	90.4
	Russian useful	19	3.4	3.4	93.9
	Belarusian useful	17	3.0	3.1	96.9
	Belarusian necessary	17	3.0	3.1	100.0
	Total	553	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	6	1.1		
Total		559	100.0		

Of the 553 participants who responded to the question of language utilization at work, 242 (43.8 percent) indicated that they considered Belarusian

useful and Russian necessary. A substantial number of participants (133 or 24.1 percent) indicated that they considered Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian. The frequency of responses drops substantially thereafter with Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary receiving the third highest number of responses (45 or 8.1 percent). Compared to the large number of participants who considered Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian, only 17 participants (3.1 percent) indicated that they considered Belarusian necessary with no statement of Russian.

In order to examine possible differences in language utilization according to occupation, the questionnaire asked participants to specify their "profession." Professions cited by respondents totaled 46, far exceeding that of a manageable data set for statistical purposes. Many responses reflect a subset of the same sphere of occupation and therefore appear in the re-coded data under a general category such as "medicine" or "business." The re-coded data include eight categories, one of which entitled "other," comprises responses that lie outside the broad categories specified.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Professions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Valid	Student	332	59.4	67.9	67.9
	Education	68	12.2	13.9	81.8
	Math and Sciences	26	4.7	5.3	87.1
	Humanities	20	3.6	4.1	91.2
	Medicine	13	2.3	2.7	93.9
	Other	12	2.1	2.5	96.3
	Law	9	1.6	1.8	98.2
	Business	9	1.6	1.8	100.0
	Total	489	87.5	100.0	
Missing	System	70	12.5		
Total		559	100.0		

Of the 489 respondents who answered the question, an entire 332 (67.9 percent) indicated the profession of "student." "Education" (including

responses such as "teacher") received the second highest number of responses with 68 participants (13.9 percent) and "math and sciences" with 26 participants (5.3 percent). Respondents who indicated "humanities" as their profession, a field that for participants included such responses as "artist" and "musician," totaled 20 (4.1 percent). Interestingly, only nine respondents (1.8 percent) indicated "business" as their profession, a somewhat surprising figure in light of the explosion of business activity in countries of the former Soviet Union. Table 6 presents a frequency distribution of participants' responses to the question of profession.

Table 7: Cross-Tabulation of Respondents' Specified Profession versus Language Spoken at Work

Language Spoken at Work		Profession								Total
		Law	Medicine	Humanities	Math & Sciences	Business	Education	Other	Student	
Bel nec/ Rus nec	Count	1	2	2	1	0	8	0	25	39
	Expect	0.7	1.0	1.5	2.1	0.7	5.5	1.0	26.5	39.0
Bel nec/ Rus use	Count	0	0	0	1	0	13	1	18	33
	Expect	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.8	0.6	4.6	0.8	22.4	33.0
Bel use/ Rus nec	Count	4	3	8	12	3	18	3	158	209
	Expect	3.9	5.6	8.2	11.2	3.9	29.2	5.2	141.9	209.0
Bel use/ Rus use	Count	3	2	1	3	0	6	2	24	41
	Expect	0.8	1.1	1.6	2.2	0.8	5.7	1.0	27.8	41.0
Rus nec	Count	0	5	6	3	6	15	4	78	117
	Expect	2.2	3.1	4.6	6.3	2.2	16.4	2.9	79.4	117.0
Rus use	Count	1	1	0	3	0	2	1	10	18
	Expect	0.3	0.5	0.7	1.0	0.3	2.5	0.4	12.2	18.0
Bel nec	Count	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	11	16
	Expect	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	2.2	0.4	10.9	16.0
Bel use	Count	0	0	2	2	0	2	1	6	13
	Expect	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.2	1.8	0.3	8.8	13.0
Total	Count	9	13	19	26	9	68	12	330	486
	Expect	9.0	13.0	19.0	26.0	9.0	68.0	12.0	330.0	486.0

Chi-Squared: $\chi^2 = 77.853$; df = 49; α (2-tailed) = .005

Gloss of abbreviations: Bel = Belarusian, Rus = Russian, nec = necessary, use = useful

In an effort to ascertain respondents' language utilization within each of the above-mentioned professions, the study cross-tabulates language spoken at work versus profession, as shown in Table 7.

Of the 330 respondents who indicated the profession of "student," 158 considered Belarusian useful and Russian necessary. Responses of Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian received the second highest number of responses (78). According to responses from those who indicated "business" as their profession, Belarusian plays an insignificant role, its presence in participants' responses appearing in the categories of Belarusian useful and Russian necessary (3) and in Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian (6). Similar to "business," responses to "medicine" relative to the language utilization category of Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian exceed that of Belarusian useful and Russian necessary (five versus three respectively). "Humanities," "math and sciences," "education," and "student" represent the only professions that received the rare response of Belarusian necessary with no statement of Russian.

One finds in Belarus a practical example of how market forces influence language utilization, as illustrated by the dominant participant response of Belarusian useful and Russian necessary, followed by Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian. Belarusian plays a "useful" role while Russian a "necessary" one for participants self-reporting "student" as their professions; however in business, where functional communication across nationalities often determines profit margins, national languages such as Belarusian simply cannot compete on a level playing field with Russian.

Applying a market forces framework developed by Brecht and Rivers (2005) to the language situation in Belarus, *need* for Russian in business significantly exceeds that of Belarusian in terms of social and profit margins, which in turn creates real *demand* in the form of marketing and carrying out negotiations and transactions in the language of demand. Such factors directly influence the *supply* of beneficial services available in the dominant language, while the *supply* itself reflects a governing polity's *capacity* to provide needed linguistic services.

Urban centers, of necessity, gravitate toward a lingua franca in order to bridge an array of languages and dialects. Such is the case in Belarus, where

Russian links individuals from rural regions and from neighboring countries with individuals from key urban financial institutions and businesses. Instances in which one's work involves interaction with members of a local speech community, such as a farming community, to the exclusion of interaction with individuals living in cities, represent an exception. More often than not, minority speakers from the countryside more so than their counterparts from major cities find that they must become bilingual or multilingual in order to compete effectively in urban markets (Dalby 2003).

In Government Institutions

With Russian acquiring the same status as Belarusian in 1995, many Belarusian nationalists feared the demise of Belarusian. Although ostensibly equal in status, the two languages garner varying degrees of popularity among government officials. In effect, the change in language policy gave unfettered freedom to government officials to use Russian, since Belarusian no longer functioned as the sole official language. As Kelman (1971) writes regarding co-official languages, "A major source of complication is that two languages that are equally official do not necessarily occupy the same status within the society. One of the languages may well be dominant, partly because it is spoken by a larger proportion of the population but more importantly, because of differences in the level of economic development of the two groups." Compounding the problem for threatened languages, as Fishman (2001) points out, is the absence of "outside support of any operational significance to fall back upon. Even if there are promises of assistance from outside the ranks of their own community of speakers and activists, these promises necessarily come at a price."[7] Table 8 presents respondents' answers to the language(s) they speak in government institutions.

Relative to previous domains analyzed, the "government" domain elicits a high number of responses to the language utilization category of Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary (74 or 13.4 percent). A substantial number of

[7] Brecht and Rivers (2005) discuss support of minority languages from the perspective of governmental compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For a US government agency or organization funded by the federal government to provide unequal access to public services, e.g. translation services, is tantamount to violating fundamental tenants of social justice, which guarantee fair and equal access to public services regardless of minority language and/or national origin.

respondents (149 or 27.0 percent) considered Russian necessary with no statement of Belarusian, slightly more than double the number who considered Belarusian necessary and Russian necessary, while the category of Belarusian useful and Russian necessary received the highest frequency of responses (175 or 31.7 percent).

Table 8: Frequency Distribution of Language Spoken in Government Institutions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Valid	Belarusian useful/ Russian necessary	175	31.3	31.7	31.7
	Russian necessary	149	26.7	27.0	58.7
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian necessary	74	13.2	13.4	72.1
	Belarusian necessary/ Russian useful	57	10.2	10.3	82.4
	Belarusian useful/ Russian useful	33	5.9	6.0	88.4
	Belarusian useful	26	4.7	4.7	93.1
	Russian useful	26	4.7	4.7	97.8
	Belarusian necessary	12	2.1	2.2	100.0
	Total	552	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	7	1.3		
Total		559	100.0		

Some political leaders in Belarus have experienced three different official language policies first-hand: Russian only, Belarusian only, and most recently, Belarusian and Russian equally. Policy changes, however, have done little in the way of changing actual day-to-day communication, at least in private conversation within the confines of one's office. Public speeches and legislative debate occasionally take place in Belarusian but generally occur in Russian, in part due to politicians' limited knowledge of Belarusian. Although Belarusian appears to play a prominent role in society, suggested by its usage on signs at official and non-official sites, its presence does not reflect a trend toward

communication in Belarusian in these domains.[8] Rather, Belarusian plays the role of a political pawn—subject to ongoing manipulation and victim to the individual interests of those in power. Similarly, while political leaders have dutifully substituted the traditional red-and-white striped Belarusian flag for the newly adopted national flag in their offices, language utilization has changed very little in government correspondence since the Soviet era. Even during the Shushkevich administration when Belarusian served as the only official language, government officials often spoke in Russian behind closed doors. Thus, one could argue that the Russian language receiving "official" status in 1995 did little more than justify an extant language situation.

Government officials received official license to use Russian rather than Belarusian in public and private capacities following the passing of an amendment to the law about languages in 1998, which specifically employed the conjunctions "and/or" with regard to utilization of Belarusian and Russian (Goujon 1999). Overall, responses to language usage in government institutions indicate a narrowing gap between those who consider Belarusian useful and Russian necessary, versus those who consider Russian necessary with no mention of the utility of Belarusian.

CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has sought to ascertain the degree to which Belarusian and Russian coexist in contemporary Belarus as reflected in student self-reports of language utilization. Overall, responses to the specified domains in this study suggest that Belarusian faces the strong likelihood of becoming a relic in functional domains such as "work," or "government institutions," whereas it will continue to serve a traditional symbolic function in the "education" domain. The chance of broad rehabilitation of Belarusian likely will decrease proportionally to the length of time that it remains excluded from use in functional domains, particularly in the "home," since language maintenance generally requires constant, everyday interaction. Limited usage of Belarusian in government, education, and work spheres certainly does not ensure perpetuity of Belarusian in the homes of future generations.

[8] See Brown (2007b).

This study focuses on three geographically and culturally distinct urban centers in Belarus: Minsk, Grodno, and Vitebsk. The target population consisted of university-age students, who often share similar views and opinions with members of Belarus' intelligentsia. The choice to target such members of society stemmed from the idea that they stand a greater likelihood of pursuing positions of political, economic and social influence capable of impacting the direction of future language policies than individuals from rural regions of the country and/or lacking rigorous academic training. However, research investigating rural language utilization employing similar empirical and survey-based methodological instruments used in this study remains at large and, hence, an untapped source of potentially valuable data capable of contributing to an understanding of language usage and the attendant effects of language policies and planning in Belarus.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE IN RUSSIAN

Европейский гуманитарный университет
(г. Минск, Беларусь)
проводит опрос
с целью изучения употреблений белорусского и русского языков
в Республике Беларусь.

Пожалуйста, ответьте на предлагаемые ниже вопросы. Ваше участие в этом опросе поможет выявить реальную картину развития языковой ситуации в Беларуси.

Анкета носит анонимный характер. Вся полученная информация будет использована только для нужд вышеуказанного опроса. Собранные данные в обобщенном виде будут использованы исключительно в научных целях.

Заранее Вам благодарны!

1	Какой язык Вам полезен, а какой—необходим в каких ситуациях? (Отметьте птичкой выбранные ответы)					
	Белорусский язык	полезен	необходим	**Русский язык**	**полезен**	необходим
	на работе			на работе		
	дома			дома		
	в госучреждениях			в госучреждениях		
	в сфере образования			в сфере образования		

2. Ваш пол: м. _________ ж. _________

3. Возраст _________

4. а) Профессия ____

   б) Специальность по образованию _____________________________

5. Страна Вашего рождения (укажите республику) _________________

6. Страна рождения Вашего отца (укажите республику) _____________

7. Страна рождения Вашей матери (укажите республику) ___________

8. Страна Вашего проживания _____________________________________

Благодарим за заполнение анкеты!

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE IN BELARUSIAN

Еўрапейскі гуманітарны універсітэт
(г. Мінск, Беларусь)
праводзіць апытанне

з мэтай вывучэння выкарыстання беларускай і рускай моваў
у Рэспубліцы Беларусь.

Калі ласка, адкажыце на прапанаваныя Вам ніжэй пытанні. Ваш удзел у гэтым апытанні дапаможа выявіць рэальную карціну развіцця моўнай сітуацыі на Беларусі.

Анкета мае ананімны характар. Уся атрыманая інфармацыя будзе выкарастаная толькі дзеля патрэбаў вышэйназванага апытання. Сабраныя дадзеныя ў абагульненым выглядзе будуць выкарастаныя выключна ў навуковых мэтах.

Наперад Вам удзячныя!

1	Якая мова карысная Вам, а якая—неабходная ў якіх сітуацыях? (Пазначце галачкай выбраныя адказы)					
	Беларуская мова	**карысная**	**неабходная**	**Руская мова**	**карысная**	**неабходная**
	на працы			на працы		
	Дома			дома		
	у дзяржустановах			у дзяржустановах		
	у сферы адукацыі			у сферы адукацыі		

2. Ваш пол: м. _________ ж. _________

3. Узрост _________

4. а) Прафесія ____

   б) Спецыяльнасць, па якой Вы атрымалі адукацыю _______________

5. Краіна Вашага нараджэння (назавіце рэспубліку)__________________

6. Краіна нараджэння Вашага бацькі (назавіце рэспубліку) ___________

7. Краіна нараджэння Вашай маці (назавіце эспубліку)_______________

8. Краіна Вашага пражывання _____________________________________

Дзякуем за запаўненне анкеты!

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

European Humanities University
(Minsk, Belarus)
is conducting a survey
with the goal of studying the usage of Belarusian and Russian languages in the Republic of Belarus.
Please answer the proposed questions below. Your participation in this survey will help clarify the developing language situation in Belarus.
Questionnaire data will remain anonymous. All information received will be used strictly for the needs of the aforementioned survey. Gathered data will be used exclusively for research purposes.
Thank you in advance!

1	Which language is useful to you and which necessary and in which situations? (Indicate your response by using a check mark)					
	Belarusian	**useful**	**necessary**	**Russian**	**useful**	**necessary**
	at home			at home		
	at school			at school		
	at work			at work		
	in government institutions			in government institutions		

2. Sex: male _________ female _________

3. Age _________

4. a) Profession ____

   b) Major field of study _______________________________________

5. Birth Country (indicate republic) ______________________________

6. Birth country of your father (indicate republic) __________________

7. Birth country of your mother (indicate republic) _________________

8. Country where you currently live ______________________________

Thank you for filling out the questionnaire!

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