Copyright Undertaking

This thesis is protected by copyright, with all rights reserved.

By reading and using the thesis, the reader understands and agrees to the following terms:

1. The reader will abide by the rules and legal ordinances governing copyright regarding the use of the thesis.

2. The reader will use the thesis for the purpose of research or private study only and not for distribution or further reproduction or any other purpose.

3. The reader agrees to indemnify and hold the University harmless from and against any loss, damage, cost, liability or expenses arising from copyright infringement or unauthorized usage.

Pao Yue-kong Library, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Kowloon, Hong Kong

http://www.lib.polyu.edu.hk

COMPARISON OF THE LANGUAGE VITALITY BETWEEN OROQEN AND RUSSIAN CHINESE IN THE HULUNBUIR REGION OF INNER MONGOLIA, CHINA

BAI XIAODAN

MPhil

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

2021

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies

Comparison of the Language Vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese in the Hulunbuir Region of Inner Mongolia, China

Bai Xiaodan

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy

August 2016

CERTIFICATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it reproduces no material previously published or written, nor material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

_____   _____ (Signed)

__BAI Xiaodan___ (Name of student)

Comparison of the Language Vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese in the Hulunbuir Region of Inner Mongolia, China

BAI Xiaodan

M.Phil
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies

Abstract

In this study, the language vitality of Oroqen and Russian Chinese in the Hulunbuir region of Inner Mongolia, China will be examined from a comparative perspective. The goals of the study are to determine the corresponding language vitality and to analyze the factor(s) that cause(s) such difference between these two ecologically very similar language varieties. There are only a few studies in the literature dealing with this topic, and none has followed the specific line of this study.

This study employs the nine factors proposed by UNESCO to assess the vitality of a language. The samples from various administrative regions including counties (Erguna city, Oroqen Banner), townships (Labudarlin, Alihe) to the villages (Enhe, Tuohe) were selected. The situation of Oroqens and Chinese Russians and their ethnic languages is examined.

The findings of this study revealed the critical factor that there would be insufficient language usage in Oroqen communities, as only a few seniors, and middle-aged Oroqen people still speak the language. Unlike Russian, Oroqen plays no role in business trades, the employment market, education industry etc. Due to this, Oroqen language usage has narrowed down even though Oroqen people still have strong national sentiments. Therefore, for the goal of the revitalization of Oroqen, it is necessary to promote the language usage by people, and make considerable planning as well as the concerted effort from different parties.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Abbreviations

IMAR: Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

EV: Ethnolinguistic Vitality

LP: Language Policy

PRC: People's Republic of China

SEV: Subjective Ethnolinguistic Vitality

Chapter 1 Research Proposal and Theoretical Framework

1.1 Motivation

As an Oroqen, the author is very concerned about the future of her native language, which has been classified as an endangered language by atlas of language from UNESCO in 2001 (UNESCO Atlas of the World's language in Danger). The wish to address the problem of how to alter the situation of language loss is one of the central motivations of this study. To better identify and solve the key problems, we select a comparable ethnic group which in most respects had to live under similar circumstances as the Oroqen. For this purpose, Russian speakers in Erguna, another locality in the Hulunbuir region, were chosen for study.

There are some similarities between the two groups: they each have populations of similar size in Hulunbuir, counting only thousands of people, and they have the same language environment under the same political context of China, where all aspects of social life are regulated by the central authority. With regard to their language environment, it is worth emphasizing the point that most of them are settled down in their own communities which are surrounded by other groups with much more population. According to the previous studies (Bai, 2011; Nie,2007; Whaley,1999; Zeng,2003 etc.), both the Oroqens and local Russians are facing language loss.

Since there are similarities between the two ethnic groups in many respects, the differences between them with regard to their language vitality should be noticed as well, and the factors that cause these differences should be further examined. This study aims to explore their current status of language usage, as well as the language vitality, to reveal factor(s) which may threaten, or contribute to maintain or revitalize one ethnic language.

1.2 Research significance and value

It can be seen that Oroqen and Russian Chinese share many similarities with regard to their internal issues and external environment. However, the measures to revive their language will turn out to be different. The findings of this study reveal some of the factors that mostly influence the language vitality, so as to improve the vitality of Oroqen through this comparison.

Oroqen belongs to the Tungusic language family which includes languages like Manchu, Xibe, Kilen, Ewenki, Solon, along with the historical languages such as Jurchen in China as well as Evenki, Negidal, Nanai, Ulcha, Oroch language and Udihe and Russian (Hölzl 2015: 118-119, 132).

The Oroqen is a society of hunters who lived in the forest, derived a number of knowledge from forest, and they have mastered laws of the environment around them and know how to use in any kind of condition, their language hides a great deal of the knowledge which should be explored. Therefore, preserving and protecting Oroqen language is important and urgent to us, and it is also meaningful to maintain language varieties in the worldwide.

The current research hopefully serves as a case study for other endangered ethnic languages, and might provide an insight, practices and ideologies for other endangered ethnic languages.

1.3 Research Questions

The situation of Oroqen and Russian Chinese language in Hulunbuir region is almost the same in many aspects. However, their language vitality should be different due to the influence of different factors. The differences and contrasts between the two ethnic groups is the starting point of the current research. This study will evaluate their language vitality and present their difference based on the identified factors, find out the dominant factor(s) that could contribute to reversing the situation of the endangered Oroqen language, so as to preserve and protect it.

This study will find out the similarity and difference regarding the factors which influence their language vitality; which factors influence their language vitality most, and any difference cause their ability of language vitality through comparison with the two targeted groups; to analyze which factor(s) lead to the language maintenance and language revival; which factors should be strengthened to protect and maintain the Oroqen language through the comparison with Russian Chinese.

In order to conduct the research, I will try to answer to the following questions:

  (1) Which factor(s) cause the differences regarding the language vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese.

  (2) Which factor(s) should be considered as the decisive one(s) to improve the language vitality and help its maintenance?

  (3) Which factor(s) should be strengthened and concerned to improve the language vitality of Oroqen language?

1.4 Theoretical framework and literature review

This section will offer the theoretical framework and literature reviews regarding language vitality and the targeted groups.

1.4.1Theoretical Framework

This part will introduce the Ethnolinguistic vitality theory and proposed factors by UNESCO
.

1.4.1.1Ethnolinguistic vitality theory

Ethnolinguistic vitality theory is from the research of Social Identity Theory, which was developed by Tajfel & Turner (1986). The following process leads

to the formation of social identity:1) Group members are put into categories, and given negative and positive values. 2) Group members who consider themselves as belonging to a specific community, try their best to associate with each other, to achieve positive self-esteem. 3) Individuals would compare with other groups to evaluate their own group across many areas, demonstrating a favorable bias toward their own group.

Social identity theory serves as a starting point for Ethnolinguistic vitality (EV), a term that has been introduced by Giles, Taylor, Bourhis since the 1970s. Giles (1977) defines the term "ethnolinguistic vitality that refers to the ability of a group to survive as a distinctive entity surrounded by other groups, especially the groups with more powerful and aggressive setting (p.308). It aims to identify factors determining language maintenance or shift. Giles (1977) asserts that groups members will maintain the competence of ethnic language use within a high ethnolinguistic vitality, and meanwhile, the language vitality will influence their motivation to learn and use the other language.

The ethnolinguistic vitality model refers to the societal variable which has an effect on the structural factor that fosters or impedes the preservation of societal language.

Giles (1977) originally took Ethnolinguistic Vitality as a theoretical framework to analyze the social-structural factors that have an effect on intergroup relations with other different groups within a contact situation, identifying the following factors related to language vitality: the demographic, institutional support and status dimensions. The dimensions also bring out the Subjective Ethnolinguistic Vitality (SEV), and many scholars tend to believe that the SEV---is what determines language and culture maintenance or shift (e.g. Giles, Bourhis & Rosenthal, 1981).

All the factors mentioned above in the EV model that served and discussed regarding the three main constructs: *the demographic, institutional support, and status dimensions* which have an effect on language maintenance, and support

4

EV either positively or negatively.

Demographic factors

Demographic factors are important to language maintenance and shift, including the number of ethnic minority speakers and geographical distribution. The more speakers they have in a particular area, the more possibility to maintain their own native language. By contrast, the less native speakers they have dispersed in a wide area, the less possibility to maintain the native language. Scholars such as McConnell (1992), Appel & Muysken (1987) agree with this view.

There are some other demographic factors such as immigration and emigration pattern that influence the distribution of ethnic language speakers. The factor--- whether one lives in an urban or rural area, it is a factor influencing language maintenance. Normally, rural speakers preserve the native language longer than urban ones (Baker,2001, p. 71).

Institutional Support Factors

Giles (1977) introduces the term Institutional Support Factors, which refers to the language of ethnic groups that are supported in the various institutions of the nation, region or community. The same idea is adopted by Allard &Landry(1994b) who referred to political and cultural factors. As Appel & Muysken (1987) emphasized, the representation of the minority groups in various government institutions allows to maintain more value and power. Furthermore, the minority language becomes valorized if the ethnic group is offered to use the native language in the political domain. Government policies have an effect on group members' tie, as well as their motivation to take action as a group.

Other political activities related to ethnic language are the effort of language policies and planning from the government. One of the most important contributions is to offer school education with minority language study, and

also to provide financial support, qualified teachers and pedagogy (Büttner, 1993). Hechter & Okamoto, (2001, p. 198) stated that political recognition will raise the self-awareness of an ethnic group.

With regard to cultural factors, education as a key is considered. Landry and Allard (1992, 1994b) indicate that if native language is fostered by the teaching from school to minority students, the ethnic language will be maintained.

Religion is another important institution for preserving language, as religion is deeply rooted in the culture.

The mass media such as broadcasting, books, newspapers programming on TV etc. influence language shift, which may occur if the information received through the media is in the majority language. If it is in the minority language, the maintenance of the minority language might be facilitated. (Fishman, Cooper, & Ma, 1971).

The public and commercial signs as an informational and symbolic function in majority or minority language in a given region are very important for language maintenance (Mackey, 1972). These signs present the feeling of the group members in terms of value and status to other languages and their own language with the sociolinguistic setting.

Status Factors

Language status is an important factor influencing different groups. Each language has a certain situation determined by various factors. For instance, English, Spanish and French enjoy high status due to their international dominant usage, owning a large number of speakers worldwide.

Economic factors refer to the economic situation of group members as an indicator of their language vitality (Allard & Landry,1994b). Paulston (1994) claims that minority groups who are given incentives and opportunities shift to

6

the dominant language (p.9), and also with the economic incentive, minority groups still maintain their language.

Douglas & Nancy (1985) carried out a research on spatial assimilation, finding that the minority group members with higher education and income are more likely to access to the neighborhoods with comparable socio-economic status in the dominant society.

The various factors and subfactors involved in EV are generally interacting, it is complicated to say which factor is the dominant one.

1.4.1.2 Factors from UNESCO

In 2003, linguists from UNESCO released a report "Language Vitality and Endangerment" regarding the factors which evaluate language vitality of ethnic groups worldwide. These are, respectively:*(1) proportion of speakers within the total population; (2)absolute number of speakers;(3)intergenerational language transmission; (4)trends in existing language domains; (5) response to new domains and media; (6) materials for language education and literacy;(7) governmental and institutional language policies, including official status and use; (8) community members' attitudes toward their own language; (9) amount and quality of documentation.*

These factors will be taken advantage in this study to compare the language vitality between the two target groups. For a systematical comparison, the following section will introduce how to use these factors.

According to the UNESCO's report, every factor has a scoring range from 0-5 to evaluate the status of each factor, the detail explanation and scoring standard can be checked in Appendix A. For fulfilling the goal of this study, the nine-factor can be rearranged into four parts, to be specific, factor (1)(2) and (3) are directly linked to quantifiable indicators in a straightforward way, so they will

be put together for a clearer presentation of the comparison. The UNESCO report indicates that the factor, the number of language speakers is difficult to calculate because the adopted sources employ different criteria in data collection.

With respect of the comparison, each factor will evaluate and score the target group's language vitality according to the marking requirement of UNESCO report.

1.4.1.3 Discussion

This study will take advantage the theory of Ethnolinguistic vitality, methods of proposed factors from UNESCO. As in the theory of EV, it aims to identify factors determining language maintenance or shift, the factors proposed by UNESCO are to evaluate language vitality of ethnic groups. which is the direct way to complete the comparison, to figure out the research outcomes.

1.4.2 Literature Review

This section will start with the previous research to Ethnic language, then introduce the study regarding ethnic language vitality in China, and last but not least, the studies related to the targeted groups will be referred.

1.4.2.1 Research to ethnic language

Paulston (1998) indicated the term "minority" as representing a group with smaller population surrounded by a large majority group. Vitality of language indicates the ability of a language to live or grow in such a situation.

Heller (1987) notes that ethnicity normally implies a group where people have their own particular language, behaviors, lifestyle, and value. The language is a key to symbolize the group identity and becomes the emblem of the identity, especially when the group has contact with different groups.

For decades, many linguists, anthropologists, and educators have been engaged in the research on factors resulting in language shift (Fishman 1971, 2001; Sapir, 1958; Paulston, 1994; etc.). Allard & Rodrigue (1987) consider social contact and personal contact as important variables related to language maintenance or shift. So as to reverse the trend of minority language loss, linguists, individual communities and interested organizations have taken rescue measures that have come to be known as language revitalization. Due to these efforts, the diagnostic factors of language vitality and endangerment have been explored.

Giles & Johnson (1981,1987) have developed ethnolinguistic theory, pointing out the significance of language as an outstanding marker of group membership and social identity, and bilingualism is achieved due to individual networks of linguistic contact. In their findings, they indicated many facts that referred to immigrants' language shift. The first generation is monolingual. In this case, minority language can be maintained and the dominant language can be learned. Then the second and third generations go to school and learn the dominant language, and they learn the mother tongue at home. In this situation, bilingualism is happening. In the end, the fourth generation generally only speak the dominant language. Based on the previous studies from immigrants cases the minority groups often follow this kind of language shift pattern.

Garcia & Diaz (1992) stated the fact that an amount of immigrants in United States shifted to English by the third generation. According to Paulston (1994) the Italians in Pittsburgh also have a three-generation language shift.

There are many factors that lead to language maintenance and language shift. According to the Paulston (1998) and Giles, Young & Doreen (1985), these factors are considered in their study, seem to coincide in many aspects, and to offer a tool that adopt the criteria, which is later used in Allard and Landry's model. This model contains most of factors described by Conklin & Lourie (1983) and Paulson (1994), and those identified by Giles (1985) that referred to

encouraging ethnic language vitality. They have reached a consensus that an ethnic group with high language vitality is more likely to maintain its own culture and language.

Appel & Muysken (1987) found that the people in Quebec Province in Canada who speak French have the tendency to speak English, and proposed that they might be at the beginning of a process of language shift, to incline to the dominant language, and it might also appear a stage that these people realize the importance of their own native language, to do something to prevent the language from disappearing.

According to Fishman, a vital role in the field of sociolinguistics has been a leader in the movement of the language revitalization, and he has been publishing extensively on language vitality since 1960s.

Paulston (1994) indicates that ethnic groups within a modern state, given opportunities and incentives, are more likely to shift the language to the dominant group.

Ferrer (2010) conducted a survey on language planning on language, finding that language policy has an obvious effect on language attitude, and further influences the language use. Mukhuba (1998) researched the effect of the language policy of South Africa on local minority languages, finding that promoting minority languages to official language instill confidence, reinforce the cultural identity of the local ethnic minority, and also help them in matters of employment.

Marley (1999) also conducted a similar survey in a middle school of Morocco, finding that the teachers and students have a positive attitude toward bilingualism, and agree in bringing in foreign language classes in the early period of education. Ethnolinguistic vitality closely interacts with language behaviors, language attitude and group identification.

Following the ethnolinguistic vitality theory, Ladegaard and Saehdev (2002) pointed out American culture has a higher level of objective vitality in many parts of world besides USA.

Landweer (2006) adopted the 8 indicators that determine the situation of a language regarding vitality and endangerment. She makes use of the static methods for evaluation, even though some of these indicators are hard to measure. These indicators are:

(1) The extent to which a group resist influence by dominant culture;

(2) The domain of language usage;

(3) Code switching

(4) The distribution of speakers

(5) The recognition of a group;

(6) Prestige compared with other languages;

(7) Economically development;

(8) The mass of fluent speakers;

The proposal is focused on the degree of language vitality, which helps to determine the choice of strategies to be adopted. The factors are adaptable into a program for action.

1.4.2.2 Ethnic minorities languages and language vitality in China

Numerous research studies are available regarding ethnic minority languages in China. Most of these studies are focused on the situation of ethnic languages and endangered languages. The publication: "*Research on Modern Linguistic Theory and Chinese Minority Language* (Dai, 2003), "*Chinese Minority Languages*" (Nie, 2007) describe the general language status of ethnic groups in China. Fan & Xiao (2007) indicate that national language census should set up a scientific system, needs more clearer target and task, high-qualified team, efficient data acquisition, processing and evaluation.

Sun, Dai and Wang focus on the research of endangered language. Dai (2004) "The Case Study of Chinese Endangered languages" gives a general view of the situation of Chinese endangered ethnic languages through case studies.

1.4.2.3 Russian in China for literature review

In China, the research of Russian Chinese is limited. In 1950s, Russian Chinese was not included in the national survey for the ethnic minorities. In 1987 Xinjiang People Press published the "History Series of Chinese Minorities" which mainly describes the history of Xinjiang Russian. In 2003, Yunnan University has organized and conducted the "China ethnic village survey" in Tacheng (Yu, 2004). On-the-spot investigation was made in Erguna Russian of Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang province. This investigation is to compare the ethnic Russians living in the two regions regarding indicators such as population changes, family structure, economic status, children's education. This research fills the blank of study of the minority groups.

In 2005 and 2006, Central Minzu University of China supported the project of investigation of Erguna Russians, which has presented a preliminary research results, Professor Qi Huijun has published "An Investigation Report on Economic and Social Development of Russian Chinese in Erguna, Inner Mongolia" (Qi,2003). Dr. Bai Ping published respectively "The characteristics of the lexicon of Russian language in Inner Mongolia"(Bai,2011), and "the characteristics of lexicon of Russian language in Inner Mongolia"(Bai, 2009), which are focused on the Erguna Russian language study, and found that the change and the difference of the language use between Erguna language and Russian in Russia.

1.4.2.4 Research on Oroqen language

Research on related Altaic and Manchu-Tungus languages have been conducted

by linguists. However, few research was focused on Oroqen Language, especially from a comparative perspective. The article *"Language Policy and the Loss of Tungusic Languages"* (Grenoble and Whaley ,1999) provides an explicit analysis of language policy and its effect on Oroqen communities in English. This article concerns the language policy of Oroqen in China and Evenki in Russia, and explores the reason of why language loss of Oroqen and Evenki language, even though the two language are protected by the language policies of China and Soviet Union, and also it analyzes the reason why the loss of Oroqen language occurs faster than Evenki. This work compares the language policy of the two languages from 1951 to 1991, describes the status of the languages and their language policy during that time, and furthermore, analyzes the effects of the language policies on their languages from a perspective of the party will in each country.

Many scholars have published books and periodicals about the Oroqen language, mainly including: Hu zengyi's "the Oroqen language Jian Zhi" (1986), He Qinghua's "Interpretation of Oroqen language" (2011), Yin Tiechao's "comparative research on language of Oroqen and Inuktitut" (Yin, 2002), Whaley, Lindsay J and Li, Fengxiang (1998), "Contact ,attrition and structure shift: evidence from Oroqen". These scholars almost did the Chinese translation of the Oroqen language, carry on the analysis of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and morphological level etc. In the Yin Tiechao's "comparative research on language of Oroqen and Inuktitut", he made a comparison between the two indigenous nations through the research of phonetic, morphological, sentence patterns and sentence structure, vocabulary, affix, and proved that these two languages are related. Hasbartul's "In the discussion about the endangered Oroqen language" (Hasbartul,2008) introduces the field survey in 2000 in Oroqen Autonomous District, and found out that the number of people who could speak the Oroqen language have a sudden fall for the worse, only some elder and a few middle-aged Oroqen people could communicate well with each other in the daily life, while Oroqen children and young people barely could.

13

In 2001, the United Nations classified the Oroqen language in the "Atlas of endangered languages" (Atlas on Endangered Languages) as an endangered language. This language as a communication platform has been disappearing, which lead to the fact that the display of particularity of Oroqen ethnic minority has huge limitations.

1.4.2.5 Conclusion

According to Dai (2003), China has more than 100 million ethnic minorities, most of them are facing the problem of the loss of their native languages. Many scholars focus on the maintenance and archiving of minority languages, and some of them are engaged in the language issues such as language policy, language attitude, education, which are all related to the language vitality, However, there is no systematic study on the minority language vitality, especially from the perspective of comparison among minority groups.

Referred to the target groups, current work is focused on archiving their languages and traditional cultural issues, little research has been conducted on their language vitality, especially in a comparative perspective. Furthermore, none has sought to assess EV in the Oroqen and Russian Chinese context. This study wishes to offer a unique view by presenting a way that can reverse or improve the situation of a minority language as a case study for other researchers who have been engaging in the field.

Chapter 2 Methodology

This chapter will start with the basic introduction of methods adopted in this study, then the design of methods, instruments, data collection, data analysis will be introduced.

2.1 Introduction

The adopted methodology, it needs to be designed for answering research questions, in the following sections will provide the research instruments, explanation for the data collection, the reliability of the data and the findings.

We will mainly adopt qualitative methods, including formal and non-formal conversation, non-participants observation and ethnographic interviews. The study will combine documents and fieldwork data at various level (village - county -city), which are better ways to understand systematically the target groups' language attitude, perception as well as the language environment.

The goal of our qualitative study is to identify which factors differently influence the target groups' language vitality, and evaluate the factors that have an effect on the target groups, then to determine which factor(s) should be strengthened to promote the language vitality of Oroqen language. For fulfilling the research, beyond the interviews and observation, the data and documents regarding the two target groups should be acquired from all levels of ethnic affair departments and research institutes.

2.2 Design of study

For completing the study, the design should follow the process that aims to compare the language vitality of the target groups, and assess the language

vitality by proposed factors from UNESCO, and then to explain how these factors contribute to the language vitality through the comparison and assessment.

For achieving this study, the following chapters would incorporate four stages of language vitality analysis:

a: description and interpretation of the identified factors on the target groups mainly based on the documents and fieldwork.

b: comparison of the groups on the basis of identified factors.

c: evaluate language vitality through nine factors

d: find which factor should be strengthened to improve the situation of Oroqen language.

2.3 Instruments

In Hulunbuir region, Language issues are under the management of two main institutions: governmental departments and schools which regulate and guide how to use the ethnic scripts and other languages in society life. For better understanding the situation of language usage in each region, 2 sets of interview sheets were prepared, one is for cadres and staff in the governmental departments related to ethnic language issues, one is for native speakers, school students and teachers. The contents of interview questions are based on the criterial of assessment of language vitality of the factors from UNESCO.

Spradley (1980, p.3) points out that ethnography is from people's life. Johnson. Giles & Bourhis (1983) give a certain of characters of participant observation. For the purpose of this study, informants who can speak native language are needed. At the prefecture level, governmental officials, scholars who are familiar with the situation of language usage and the implemented language policies are needed. Education industry is a major source of information for ethnic language study, language derivation, and language attitude. At the school level, school principals, teachers, students will be interviewed.

In so many interviews, a semi-structured interview is needed, it is a meeting that authors have not to follow the formalized questions, is more flexible way to do the interview according to the different occasion. Note-making as well as recording is necessary during the interview, and recording should first get permission from interviewees.

Research questions and methodologies are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: ***Research questions and Methodology***

Research questions	Methodologies
RQ1, which identified factor(s) share similarity and cause difference regarding the language vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese?	Documents review: national language policy, governmental demography and reports, institution research Observation: governmental actions on minority language issues; language use of native speakers Semi-structured interview: target interviewees
RQ2, which factor(s) factors should be considered as the decisive or dominant one(s) to improve language vitality and keep the language maintenance?	Semi-structured interview: target interviewees Observation: governmental actions on minority language issues language usage of native speakers

RQ3, which factor(s) should be strengthened and concerned to improve the language vitality of Oroqen language?	Documents review, Semi-structured interview, Non-participation Observation: government officials, scholars, native speakers, teachers, students

RQ1: To tackle this, first step involves checking the historical and current documents from all levels of government and research institutions, seeking for the detail information of language situation of the two target groups, based on the population, cultural, geographical, economical background differences.

RQ2: To answer this, nine identified factors related to language vitality will be compared between the two target groups, which demonstrate the difference of language vitality based on the comparison of each factor, which helps to find out the decisive factor(s). The data collected should be from governmental and institutional documents, observation, semi-structured interview, questionnaire.

RQ3: The answer of this question would be based on the analysis of data collection, demonstrates which factor(s) should be strengthened in governmental LP, so the data and data analysis are all from governmental and institutional documents, observation, semi-structured interviews.

Data should be collected scientifically and representatively. Oroqen autonomous banner and Erguna city were considered and selected. In addition, the two regions are located in Hulunbuir, which is more convenient to conduct the survey, and the data collection is more comparable. With regard to Oroqen community, Alihe area as the center town has been chosen to conduct the survey, as there are many Oroqen official leaders and policy makers are living

there, and also some important native speakers who are engaging in the language maintenance and preservation. Referred to Erguna city, Larmudalin is the center town, where overall situation of Russian Chinese can be observed. Furthermore, Enhe ethnic township is a Russian community, officially recognized as the Russian Chinese community, where the data of language usage, language situation can be collected.

2.4 One Typical Study of a Region

One typical study of a region includes:

a: 3-5 interviews with people in their 50s or above whose first language is Oroqen or Russian in each region.

b: 2-3 interviews with officials who work in education department and government.

c: 1-3 interviews with the school principals and teachers who can speak native language or teach ethnic language.

d: 1 focus group interview with 10 students who are Oroqen or Russian Chinese in each region.

e: 1-3interview with Oroqen or Russian people aged 50s above in each region.

f: Field note regarding language usage in the workplace, family, school or under any circumstance where people can speak and use their native language.

Semi-structured interviewing: Based on the explanation of the proposed factors by UNESCO, the framework for evaluation of language vitality between the target groups is determined. According to the standard of evaluation given by UNESCO, different types of informants are needed. For the purpose of the study, administrator, officials, teachers, students, researchers, and normal native speakers are the informants who help to do the survey to dig out whether they need to use their language in daily life, whether they are shy or embarrassed to speak their native language, the frequency and preference use of minority

language in daily work, and any special files or rules referred to native languages use at work, any formal minority language use to be considered in some circumstances, any pros and cons when they can use native language or not. The whole process is face-to-face, note taking was used during the interview, all recordings were done after getting permission from interviewees.

Non-participation observation: all related language issues would be concerned in the target communities, such as: the language use, the implemented language policy, if students use native language and so forth.

Exploring ethno-linguistic environment: to test the following aspects: whether there are activities involved in native language, the support funds that foster people to use the native language.

Documentary review: this study needs a broad range of materials, including written language policies, academic reports, official reports, textbooks, teaching plans etc.

2.5 Conducting Data

The process of data conducting will be introduced, it includes getting connection with target groups, translating data collecting tools, data collection, and analyzing the collected data. The field work was carried out for 2 times in Hulunbuir region, and it involved several key steps. First, translating the interview questions into English and Chinese. Second, establishing trust and cooperative relationship with the people in the target groups, include: official cadres, staffs working in the related language departments, teachers and students in school, native speakers. At last and not least, I conducted field work, non-participation observations in the target regions.

In each region, some key actions should be taken, such as: acquiring the information of situation of native language usage; what measures are taken to promote native language by local government; the language attitude from

government and target groups; watch and understand the issues regarding native languages; interview teachers and students to know the status of local ethnic language education; meet native speakers to know their language experience and their language attitude. Overall, it took me 2 visits, spent one week in each region to complete the fieldwork.

2.6 Data Analysis

For completing this study, two core steps were taken to analyze data:

(1)   The data derived from documents aims to compare certain identified factors, including demography, the number and proportion of fluent native speakers, language policy, the quality of documents.

(2)   The data derived from interviews and observations can be taken advantage in the factors "education, media, the scope of language usage". The resulting performance statistics are fundamental, and comply with result of interviews and the findings.

2.7 The Challenge of Data Collection

During the field work, I have encountered some difficulties to collect data, including: obtaining documentary resources, as I was questioned by officials, the refusal to answer questions was normal, it would be a challenge for any researchers. Bureaucracy in the target regions made the fieldwork and data collection more difficult. With no connection, it is very hard to read any documents and official reports. The other issues that should be shared here is that common official staffs and community members sometimes are really shy to answer any questions, especially in front of other people or leaders, so I need to make chances to ask questions when no one is around, and try to convince them to answer.

2.8 Conclusion

This research is a mixture of evaluative, explanatory, exploratory study. This chapter focus on the adopted methods for tools use, data collection, and data analysis. These methods mentioned above are to portray, explore, and compare how identified factors impact the language vitality of target groups.

This study is explorative and investigative with no hypothesis, although the study in a certain extent is motivated by the documents, literature, socio-political forces of target languages. This topic will not be involved in any inequality and sensitive minority issues. The methods adopted are for fulfilling the goals of the study, based on the research questions and ethnic language environment. Hopefully, this study will fill the gap in the literature on the language vitality of Oroqen and Russian Chinese.

Chapter3   Comparison of Language Vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese through Factors

This chapter will start with introduction of the research background, which will mainly introduce the target groups and their languages in each region. In the following section, the cases of proposed factors of target groups will be presented from fieldwork, and then to compare and evaluate the language vitality of Oroqen and Russian Chinese based on the explanation of UNESCO,

3.1 Introduction of Research Background

The aim of this study is to compare the language vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese, two officially recognized ethnic minority groups in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR) of China. Most members of these two

groups are living in the Hulunbuir region, Chinese government has dedicated to minority languages experienced several stages since 1950. The basic background information of this topic will be introduced in the following sections.

3.1.1 Inner Mongolia

Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR) was officially established in 1947 as one of the provincial-level divisions of China, located in the north of the China mainland, containing most of China's border with Mongolia, and a certain section of the border with Russia, there are eighteen trading border gates set up adjacent to Mongolia and Russia. Many of northern ethnic groups have been living in IMAR since centuries ago. The official languages in IMAR are Chinese and Mongolian.

IMAR has the great stretch in the north of China, it borders eight provinces including Heilongjiang, Shanxi, Ningxia etc. Its capital is Hohhot. IMAR covers 12% of China land area, spanning around 1,200,000 km^2. It is the third largest subdivision of China. According to the 2010 census (2010 Census), the recorded population is about 20millions, Han majority accounts for 80% of the population (Statistics and Census Service, 2012). There are over 4.4 million Mongols in IMAR, the rest of Mongols is distributed across the Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Jilin, Qinghai and Xinjiang provinces in China.

Table 2: *Ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia* (2010 census)

Ethnicity	Population	Percentage
Han Chinese	19,650,687	79.54%
Mongol	4,226,093	17.11%
Russians	4,741	0.02%
Oroqen	3150	0.01%

As most of Oroqen and Russian Chinese are distributed in Hulunbuir region, next we describe the Hulunbuir region.

3.1.2 Hulunbuir Region

Hulunbuir is a region as a prefecture-level city located in the northeastern part of Inner Mongolia, whose name is after the Hulun and Buir lakes. This region has been the nomadic pastures from the past, Hailar District is its administrative center. It borders Mongolia to the south and west, it borders Russia to the north and the west, and it neighbors with Heilongjiang province. Hulunbuir is divided into thirteen county-level jurisdictions: one district, five county-level cities, four banners and three autonomous banners. Hulunbuir has a humid continental climate, where winters are very severe ,long, and dry, while summers are short. Hulunbuir is an area of language diversity, as there are different ethnic groups settling down here, Mandarin is the official language, Mongolian dialects such as Khorchin and Buryat have mostly been used among Mongols especially in the grassland, and some Tungusic languages including Oroqen , Evenki, Xibe are spoken there.

Table3: *The population of ethnic groups in Hulunbuir region* (Source: Hulunbuir sixth national cencus in 2010)

ethnic group	population in 2000	share
Han Chinese	2,199,645	81.85%
Mongols	231,276	8.6%
Manchu	111,053	4.13%
Russians	4,673	0.18%
Oroqen	3,144	0.12%

The map of Hulunbuir(source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hulunbuir)
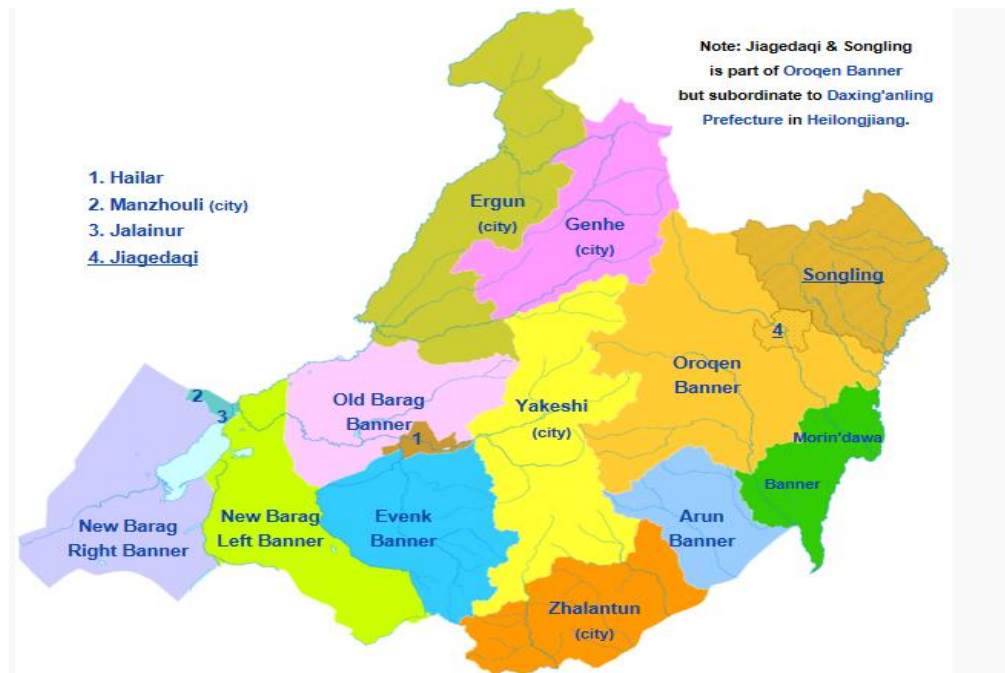
Given that Oroqen banner and Erguna are the places inhabited respectively by Oroqen and Russian Chinese, the following sections will introduce the regions, the two minority groups and their languages.

3.1.3 Oroqen Banner

Oroqen Autonomous Banner was established in 1951 as the first ethnic minority administrative region, governed by the Hulunbir city, and it lies directly south of the urban district of Hailar in Hulunbuir, the southern part of Greater Khingan Mountains. Oroqen banner is close to the Heilongjiang province, covering a total area of 59880 square kilometers, which accounts for the largest administrative region in the Hulunbuir. According to the national statistics in 2010 (2010 Census), the population of this region is 263904, Han majority accounts for 88% of population. the region belongs to both the Monsoon climate zone and continental climate zone, and winter last for more

than half of the year, average temperature is below zero. There are six towns and one township under its jurisdiction. Local people generally use the Northeast dialect of Chinese.

In 1951, Oroqen banner was officially established, at that time the total population there was 778, and the Oroqen people were 774, accounting for 99.84% of the whole population (Records of Oroqen, 1991). By contrast, in 2000, the population of Oroqen banner reached to almost 300,000, while Oroqen people were only 2050. A massive number of immigrants, mostly belonging to the Han Majority group, have entered the region (2010 Census).

Table4: *The population of Oroqen banner in 2010:*

Nationality	Population	Percentage
Han Chinese	257,861	88.28%
Mongols	12,045	4.12%
Oroqen	2,050	0.7%
Russians	37	0.01%

Alihe serves as Oroqen banner's administrative, economic, cultural, transportation center, has a population of about 270000(Government report, 2010). Besides the Han majority, there are twelve ethnic minorities including Oroqen, Mongol, Evenki, Daur etc.

3.1.4 Oroqen people and their language

Majority of Oroqen people were hunters before 1990s, they mainly spread in

Kinghan Mountain, half of them were settled in IMAR, the other half dispersed in Heilongjiang province. As Oroqen had lived as hunters in the Kinghan mountain for centuries, they have fully preserved hunting skill, and formed an unique culture. Their language stores a large amount of knowledge derived from the forests and the mountain. In 1996, Oroqen people have dropped off hunting guns after government released the gun-forbidden policy, they turned to engage in farming.

Oroqen language belongs to the Northern Tungusic language. It is believed that this language has 70% similarity to the Evenki language. Their language is still unwritten. Many Oroqen seniors are multilingual, as they often speak the languages of the neighboring ethnic groups: Daur, Evenki, Chinese. Bilingual and trilingual is common to see among them, some of them can even speak Russian and Japanese.

3.1.5 Erguna City

Ergun City is a county-level city and it is located in the northern part of Hulunbuir region. According to the local government census in Erguna city (2010 census), Lamudarlin is the central town, the total population of the region is 76667 in 2010, and 14 ethnic groups are living here, including Han majority, Russian, Mongols, Hui etc. The region covers more than 28,400 km^2. The western and northern part of Ergun city borders with Russia by a river called Ergun river. There are three towns and 3 townships under its jurisdiction, and one single Russian township and Hui township settled down here. There are also two first-class ports named Heishantou and Shiwei. Despite Han majority, 22% of total population is ethnic minority, almost half of them are Chinese Russian, about 7700, and the rest is mainly taken up by Mongols, about 8000.

3.1.6 Russian Chinese and their language

Chinese Russians are one of the ethnic minorities in China, the population is about 15000, mainly distributed in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang. The Chinese Russians in Inner Mongolia take Erguna City as their inhabited area, and most of them are the descendants of Russia colony or Russia colony, intermarriaged with Han majority. The first Russians moved to China territory in the mid-19th century. As the two most populous ethnic groups in this area, Russian and Han majority got married, which formed a new contact between cultural transit and language use. However, due to the geographic barrier and to interracial marriages, combined with social change and economic development, Erguna Russians gradually lost the original language from Russia in the course of the last century.

Erguna Russian is the only Indo-European Slavic language in China, it's a cross-border language, and went through consistent change by self-adjustment, ultimately formed the unique features in phonology, lexicon, grammar and other aspects in the process of contacting with Chinese. However, they still learn formal Russian language at school.

3.2 Comparison and Evaluation

In this section, the detailed case studies from my field work will be presented. The discussion starts by giving an overview of the location, the background of the town I visited, the level of ethno-linguistic vitality in the community, and the description of the language policy implemented there in Section 3.2.1. After these, I provide my observations and analysis of local language status and LP practices.

Each section addresses the key factors in order to the compare these between

the two minority groups. The characteristics for the various comparative criteria for each sample group are presented, as well as the challenges entailed by the implementation of current language policy.

3.2.1 Demography, native speakers, and intergenerational language transmission

It is important to have a certain degree of close interaction in a specific area for an indigenous group, which encompasses the possibilities of its members to form networks, use oral language, and develop the ability to successfully demand the fulfillment of its need from the dominant society.

This section discusses the population, proportion of language use, and intergenerational language transmission of Oroqen and Russian Chinese, which covers the UNESCO factors (1), (2), and (3). I will first provide an overview of the demographic information, and then discuss the status of language use among the two groups.

It is hard to do a statistical calculation of the factors (2) and (3). Previous studies regarding the factors (2) and (3) will be introduced in the following sections.

3.2.1.1 Oroqen

According to the national statistics (Statistics and Census Service,2013), the Oroqen population in the Oroqen banner was about 2754 in 2013. The local government in 2000 conducted a survey regarding Oroqen language use in four Oroqen communities (Xu & Guan,2001). They found that Oroqen people aged above 50s were retaining the language well, in daily life, as they often communicate with group members in Oroqen. People in their 30s had usually

still mastered a certain vocabulary, but were unable to actively speak Oroqen. Among the younger generation, even passive understanding is very limited or entirely absent. Overall one third of Oroqen people can speak Oroqen well, but most of them are seniors, while the majority of younger generation and children cannot use the language at all.

In 2007, Professor Hasbartul of the Manchu Language Research Center of Heilongjiang University conducted another survey on the usage situation of Oroqen in the Oroqen banner（Hasbartul,2008）. He used questionnaires to test the proficiency level of local Oroqen people, finding that Oroqen grammar was gradually being replaced by Chinese grammar. In terms of usage, the degeneration of Oroqen grammar goes with a narrower scope of overall language usage.

According to my own observations during fieldwork, in some Oroqen communities such as the Oroqen hunter villages in Tuohe, Wulubutie, and Duobukuer, the Oroqen language is maintained relatively well. Oroqen people aged above 50 mainly communicate in Oroqen, and a few younger individuals speak it to the seniors in daily life, but it is not used at all in the communication among younger speakers. In the family, children usually cannot understand Oroqen, and parents speak Chinese to them. Furthermore, most Oroqen have intermarried with other ethnicities, particularly from the Han majority, and these families exclusively communicate in Chinese to begin with. In daily social life, people generally use Chinese. In school, all teachers use Chinese, so do classmates among themselves. To sum up, the scope of Oroqen language usage has narrowed down substantially.

3.2.1.2 Russian Chinese

According to the national census of 2013 (2013 census), there are 5020 Russians of Chinese citizenship living in Erguna. In 2007, the research institute on Chinese Russian of IMR has conducted a survey to determine the actual number of Russian Chinese, finding that there are 7086 Russian Chinese living in IMAR, including Russians whose household registration is not Chinese Russian, but in fact it is recognized to be Russian Chinese in the relationship by blood.

The actual numbers of population of Russians should be higher, as they suffered severe oppression during the Cultural Revolution, when it was forbidden to use Russian, which severely impeded Russian language transmission at that time. In addition, many people had to change their nationalities to Han majority or other minority groups to evade suppression- another factor that negatively affected language transmission.

At present, very few people use Russian in Erguna, only the second generation of Russians aged above 70 hold a reasonable command of Russian, while the number of language users has declined drastically, and they just speak a few words and phrases in the third and fourth generation.

Based on the field work in the Enhe village which is an ethnically Russian township, elders in the family generally teach the younger generation the language. Seniors generally speak Russian well, middle-aged people tend to have some command of Russian, but among teenagers there are only some who understand daily expression, but cannot actively speak Russian with other people. Enhe is separated from Russia only by a river, because of trade needs many people would like to learn Russian in school - a situation not uncommon in Hulunbuir as a whole.

3.2.1.3 Evaluate and Compare

As can be seen from the above discussion, the situation of language usage of

the two minority groups is almost the same: Both are small minority groups; the main speakers are seniors; the overall community mostly use Chinese instead of their ethnic language. In terms of the explanation from UNESCO criteria of factor (1)(2)(3):

Degree of Endangerment: the language is used mostly by the grandparental generation and up; A minority speak the language. Grade is given 2.

The evaluation of the two groups is the same:

Table 5: *The evaluation of factor (1)(2)(3) for Oroqen and Russian Chinese*

Group Factor	Grade of Oroqen	Grade of Russian Chinese
Intergenerational Language Transmission	2 (Severely endangered)	2(Severely endangered)
Absolute Number of Speakers	2(Severely endangered)	2(Severely endangered)
Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population	2(Severely endangered)	2(Severely endangered)

3.2.2 Trends in Existing Language Domains

This factor concerns the range of language usage, such as where the language is spoken, who uses the language.

3.2.2.1 Domain of Language Usage of Oroqen

Based on my observation, Oroqen people aged above 50 mainly speak Oroqen with their relatives and friends. Oroqen, as an unwritten language, generally cannot be used in any workplace. However, for developing the tourism industry,

the local government organizes activities that are intended to display an ethnic characteristics and charm in the Oroqen language. In addition, for ethnic community events, the local government organizes the festival "Bonfire Night" every year, during which Oroqen songs, dance, and stage performances are performed in the Oroqen language. Consequently, Oroqen language retains a limited function in the cultural domain.

3.2.2 2 Domains of Language Usage of Russian Chinese

Although the language of the Erguna Russians is different from the official Russian of Russia, Erguna Russians consider the Russian of Russia as a standard variety, so they still learn the Russian in formal schools or from their relatives in Russia. The language use in Erguna is more or less the same as the language use of the Oroqen, seniors aged above 70s consider it as their first language, and communicate in Russian with their relatives or friends.

However, Russian itself is an international language, according to the incomplete survey, there are about eight hundred Russian professional teachers, nearly two hundred teachers served in public Russia school, and the number of students who learn Russian as public foreign language is twenty or thirty thousand in China. During the period of 2006 to 2009, the number of students who learn Russian was close to seventy-five thousand in middle school. In addition, there are many short- term Russian training classes in the China-Russia border trade cities, about ten thousand people were offered Russian language training in these schools. In colleges or Universities, there are about twenty thousand students majored in Russian language, and about fifteen thousand Chinese students studying in the Russian school. (Gu, 2011(3):136-137).

Russian is one of six official language of the United Nations, and also an official language in Russia, widely spoken as a first language in Russia, Belarussia and Ukraine, Middle Asia etc. There are about 260 million Russian

speakers in the world, of which 144 million speakers speak Russian as their first language. There are more than one hundred countries in the world that run Russian language courses（Polkovsky, Valerii, 2002).

3.2.2.3

Compare and Evaluate

The domain of language usage between these two groups is different, according to the explanation of this factor from UNESCO: Highly limited domains: *the language is used only in a very restricted domains and for a very few functions.* Grade is 1; *Limited or formal domains: the language is used in limited social domains and for several functions.* Grade is 2.

It can be listed in the following table:

Table 6: *The domains of language usage between Oroqen and Russian Chinese*

Group / Domain	Oroqen	Russian in Erguna	Russian in the world
Government	No use	No use	Use in many countries
Public offices	No use	No use	Use in many countries
Education Institutions	Few	Use	Use in many countries
Family	Use mostly among seniors	Use mostly among seniors	First language in many countries
Others (culturally)	Few	Few	First language in many countries

Based on the explanation from UNESCO, the evaluation of the factor "**Trends in Existing Language Domains**" in the target groups is shown below:

Table7: *The evaluation of domains of Oroqen and Russian Chinese language*

Score Factor	Score of Oroqen	Score of Russian in Erguna	Score of Russian
Trends in Existing Language Domains	1(highly limited)	2 (limited or formal domains)	5 (Universal use)

3.2.3 Education

Formal education has played a major role in language maintenance, as it accentuates differences by promoting certain forms of knowledge and values. According to Landry&Allard (1992a), if schooling offers an opportunity to use the mother tongue, students like to use the language, and also have a positive attitude toward it. StorakerKilander (2001: 79–80) hold that the choice of national symbols, official language(s), and school curricula reflects the status of minority groups.

3.2.3.1 Situation of Ethnic Education in Oroqen Banner

According to the staff working at the ethnic education departments of Oroqen banner, Oroqen banner has 11 ethnic schools distributed over 8 towns. I chose Oroqen middle school located in Alihe for a case study. The reason I chose this school is that it has been established more than 50 years ago, and enrolls the most Oroqen students from all areas of Oroqen banner every year. Locals I spoke to tend to believe that this school performs the best out of all ethnic schools for Oroqen students.

Oroqen middle school: is the first school to offer Oroqen language courses, in 2002, it was proposed by an Oroqen teacher, and then the school decided to hire one additional teacher to teach Oroqen students from all grades. This course consists of two classes, totally about 70minutes per week. This subject is not compulsory, if students are busy preparing for final exams, it can end in advance.

The leaders of the school assume students should start with daily conversation. As most Oroqen children are not good at spoken Oroqen, even though they have textbooks from Heilongjiang, which, however, are considered somewhat problematic due to the clear dialectal difference between IMAR and Heilongjiang. The teacher thus prefers teaching students some basic daily words, dialogues on her own way, and in the course of this class, the teacher also educates the student about Oroqen traditional cultural customs in the past forest life. Every semester, the teacher makes the students perform on the stage in Oroqen, let them perform Oroqen songs, dances, dramas in Oroqen for the New Year festival activities or other activities. These activities are meant to encourage the students to use Oroqen as much as possible. The teacher sends some students who speak Oroqen well to compete in some language competitions activities.

The Oroqen language teacher originally received a part-time salary of 60 RMB

in 2002, which was raised to 800 RMB over time. She told me that she is willing to do something for the Oroqen language heritage without thinking about the income issues.

Since 2014, Oroqen banner has promoted several activities supporting the inheritance of ethnic culture in schools. More specifically, preschool offers Oroqen language teaching to children irrespective of their ethnicity, to ensure that they can learn at least two words every day. Primary and middle schools, have already been offering Oroqen language teaching earlier on. The goal is to make students learn more about Oroqen traditional customs, hunting activities, and Oroqen language, to ensure that these students master a certain vocabulary related to forest animals, and daily conversation, to train them in Oroqen folk dance, and to have them sing at least 3 folksongs during school hours.

Financially: the local government have invested overall 1 million RMB on the school since 2008. Every year, the government is spending 280 thousand RMB on the teachers who teach Oroqen. This money is divided among all schools which offer Oroqen courses, these teachers gets 800 RMB or less per month. Since the 1980s, every Oroqen students can get a learning allowance, from 30 to 320 RMB each semester.

3.2.3.2 Status of Ethnic Education in Erguna

In Enhe Ethnic Township, there is only one primary school, but children are sent to Larmudalin for middle school. After 2000, schools have not been offering Russian classes in either place. Every Russian student can get 600 RMB per year as a student grant, and this money has increased little by little since 2000. Each student receives an extra 15 credits for high school entrance exams and 10 credits for college entrance examination, and there are three colleges in IMAR which enroll Russia students with scores under the official requirement, offering preparatory classes for these students.

In the early days of Communist China, teachers from Russia opened Russian schools for local people (Erguna had one this kind of school), but these schools were dissolved after the deterioration of relations between Russia and China, and the teachers had to go back to Russia. After the 1990, local public schools opened Russian classes for students irrespective of ethnicity. After 2000, these classes were gradually cancelled because of the teaching level, financial problems and other reasons.

In Hulunbuir region, there are many short-term Russian language training schools in places such as Erguna, Hailar, and especially Manzhouli, a major city at the Russian border, for business needs, there is more and more requests for people who can speak both Chinese and Russian. It is common for Russian Chinese to take Russian classes in these cities.

Wang & Xia (2011:5 - 8) stated that Chinese Russian education has experienced three stages in Communist China. Hu Wenzhong (2009:163-169) found that there was a "one-sided" diplomacy emerging at the beginning of Communist China in a special international and domestic environment which led to an extremely fast development of Russian education as a single subject. However, Russian education fell in to a steep crisis along with the relations deterioration of Sino Soviet and China, the Russian teaching nearly disappeared for many years in China. From 1980s, after the gradual improvement of the relationship between the two countries, the field of cooperation has been expanding. Along with the cultural exchanges, economic and trade cooperation has gradually deepened, more people who can use Russian are required in many industries, the employment rate of such people has gradually been rising. Hence, a number up to 120 colleges and universities gradually reopened or started setting up Russian courses for the need, and their rate of enrollment has been expanding by the year. (Wang Jinrong, 2010:95-98).

3.2.3.3 Compare and Evaluate

At present, Oroqen banner has adopted some measures to promote Oroqen language teaching in preschool, primary school and middle school, and they have introduced Oroqen textbooks for the respective age groups. By contrast, Erguna does not offer Russian courses for pupils in school, but it has a few Russian training schools for adults. It can be summarized that language teaching in both targeted areas is quite limited, but instantiated quite differently.

With regard to the UNESCO factor **Materials for Language Education and Literacy**, it is worth noticing that Oroqen has no established orthography due to its status as an unwritten language, and textbooks for students are more or less ad hoc transcribed in IPA or Pinyin. Simultaneously, Erguna city does not provide much to Russian students in terms of Russian language education, Russia itself has a complete and functional orthography system. According to the explanation from UNESCO: Grade 5: *There is an established orthography, literacy tradition with grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature, and everyday media. Writing in the language is used in administration and education.*
 Grade1: *A practical orthography is known to the community and some material is being written.*
The result of evaluation is shown in the table 8 below.

Table 8: *The evaluation of education between Oroqen and Russian Chinese*

Score / Factor	Score of Oroqen	Score of Russian in Erguna
Accessibility of Written	1	5

Materials		

3.2.4 Response to New Domains and Media

This section mainly discusses the current situation of media and new domains of Oroqen and Chinese Russian they use, then compare and evaluate them.

3.2.4.1 Oroqen

Oroqen is an unwritten language, which prevents it from being used in any written setting in printed or new media, a factor which in turn contributes to the failure in language transmission. To better spread the language within the region, the local government take actions and provide financial support for the protection of Oroqen language and culture, local TV broadcasting station has in recent years made some Oroqen language programs, including "Oroqen language learning" which teach some basic words and dialogues in daily use; "Telling stories in the Oroqen language" which encourages Oroqen people to speak and use the language; movies referring to Oroqen past forest life have been made as well. These programs are broadcasted every day from morning to the deep night.

There are two FM radio station, looping broadcasting few programs. They make 3 programs for 1 hour every two weeks, but it is said that the coverage of their programs is too narrow due to the other dominant media. They will perform some Oroqen songs as the background music of the programs. On annual festival days, they will make special programs about Oroqen traditional culture and custom.

With the development of Internet, many institutions often present Oroqen images or traditional cultural customs on some websites, and also they use some other main Apps of mobile media that are dedicated to the tourism or the publicity of the unique culture and customs of Oroqen.

3.2.4.2 Russian Chinese

Within Erguna city, most of Russian Chinese are gathered in Enhe town and Sanhe town. According to my observations and interviews, people in Erguna city almost exclusively use and speak Chinese. Official media seldom broadcast programs related to Russian issues.

In the Russian township Enhe, in the last five years, Russian cultural codes would be used to impress tourists for developing the tourism industry, brands boards with Russian words in Chinese, people dressing like Russian stylish can be seen here everywhere. Furthermore, people here are likely to sing Russian songs and dance, especially to act in front of tourists for attracting more attention.

Generally, seniors here can speak Russian, and keep contact with some close relatives who are living in Russia. Despite this, younger generations who are interested in Russia can surf online to explore more about Russian issues. One interesting finding is that most young people all are too shy to speak Russian in front of other people, so they secretly speak it to close friends and relatives.

Throughout the field work in Enhe, Russian turned out to be the specific language of seniors who are aged above 70s, while the other generations almostly do not use it and speak it, However, among them, some people learn Russian for employment because of sufficient job demands of border trades in Hulunbuir, and in recent years, many people who own family hotels or restaurants were likely to learn some Russian words for attracting tourists.

3.2.4.3 Compare and Evaluate

The identified factor **Response to New Domains and Media,** covers new work environment, school, and new media including TV, or internet. Based on the section 4.3, and observation, Oroqen banner has taken positive actions to accept new domains and media. By contrast, Erguna city has not focused much on this minority group, although Russian Chinese themselves personally make use of new medias. However, in general neither of the two target groups use their native language in the workplace. Based on the explanation of UNESCO: Grade 2: *The language is used in some new domains.*

The evaluation result of this factor is shown below:

Table 9: *The evaluation of new domain and media use between Oroqen and Russian Chinese*

Score / Factor	Score of Oroqen	Score of Russian in Erguna
New Domains Media Accepted	2(coping)	2(coping)

3.2.5 Language Attitude

This section will provide an overview of the language attitude found at the governmental, institutional, and community level.

3.2.5.1 The attitudes held by government and institutions

The language policies implemented would reflect the language attitude to ethnic language held by government and institutions. Consequently, this part will introduce the major language policies based on official documents.

For better understanding the language attitude from government, this section introduces the language policy toward minority groups first. As in the context of China, all levels of government all follow the upper ones' calling and regulations to carry out their duties. The following section concerns the language policy of the central government that applies to the Oroqen banner and Erguna.

3.2.5.1.1 Macro scope of language policy toward minority language

The National State Council has released several official documents to regulate ethnic minority development and their social progress. Minority policy in China has undergone constant change in the perspectives of different politicians and shifts in ideology, attitude. Most of minority groups are living in the remote or border areas of China. Before PRC established in 1949, they had much less communication with the Han majority. After 1949, up to our days, according to

the Lam (2005), the language policy on ethnic minorities can be divided into five phases:

1. Publicize egalitarianism (1949-1956)

2. Unstable policy (1957-1965)

3. Suppression (1966-1976)

4. Repair stage (1966-1976)

5. Bilingualism (1977-1990) (Lam, 2005. p 124)

These stages were explored respectively by He (1998), Wang (1998a), and Zhou (2003). During these periods, the main focus was on whether the minority groups should learn and use their ethnic language while providing them with education in Mandarin as a means to integrate these ethnic groups into the dominant society. Mandarin as the major communicative tool in China has been used for decades, it has also served ethnic groups to enter mainstream society.

Before 1949, a policy of providing houses and schools for minorities was implemented by Chinese Community Party, so as to grant ethnic people including officials the use of their native language in ethnic regions, and this policy was re-affirmed by the central government in 1949.

In 1950, the Central Institute of Nationalities was founded to train ethnic cadres for minority language issues, as Mandarin was not spread nor taught widely in ethnic areas, such as Tibet, Guangxi, Yunnan, etc. The requirement of Mandarin use was already clearly set forth by the government. (State Language Commission, 1996, P. 15).

In 1952, the first Constitution of the People's Republic of China stated that the "ethnic groups have the right to freely use and promote their native language and script" (He, 1998, pp. 70-71). Later in the same year, the State Council released the "*Guidelines for Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minority*", which stated that "all the autonomous governments need to use the ethnic languages within their jurisdiction for minorities" (Zhou M, 2003, P. 44).

44

In 1958, the *Chinese Pinyin Scheme* was completed and taught in ethnic areas. All parties reached a consensus that the minority language orthographies need to be consistent with the *Chinese Pinyin Scheme,* as the minority languages were respected and recognized (Zhou M, 2003, pp. 111-112).

From 1966 to 1976, during the Cultural Revolution, ethnic languages were severely suppressed, and considered to be useless and backward (He,1998). From 1966 to 1971, ten institutes for minority affairs were put out of service, a number of teachers who taught ethnic languages were severely punished (Wang,1998. P. 8). However, some ethnic languages with large populations such as Mongolian, Kazak, Yi and Tibetan were still used by native people. (Zhou M, 2003, pp. 77).

After 1976, minority language policy began to receive attention, and got restored gradually in the course of several years. Most institutions for ethnic affairs were reopened, publishing many articles to reaffirm the position of minority language. During the 1980s, minority language issues received high attention from the central government, and some new written scripts for ethnic minorities were created and officially recognized. (Lam, 2005).

Up to 1991, bilingualism among the minority groups was more evident in China. The term for ethnic groups had been changed to "Minzu". According to the National People's Congress, the "Law on Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in the People's Republic of China" was passed in 1984 and revised in 2001, from which some relevant regulations for the minority languages are listed below:

Regulation 10. The autonomous governments need to safeguard the right of minority groups to freely use and promote their languages and written scripts.

Regulation 21. Government offices who speak and use ethnic languages should

be promoted in the ethnic areas; They can use mother tongue language or more languages or scripts if multilingual use occurred.

Regulation 37. If conditions are available, the schools should teach and offer text books in minority languages. Based on the actual circumstances, school should start Chinese lessons for students from lower or upper primary in standardized Chinese characters.

Regulation 47. According to the needs, the justice departments have the right to use the ethnic languages or the scripts to judge cases or review documents……in order to ensure ethnic groups use their language in legal proceeding.

Regulation 49. The government in the autonomous regions should encourage all the cadres who are Han majority to learn minority languages and scripts. Cadres who are local minority nationality should learn their own languages and scripts as well as learn Mandarin and Standardized Chinese characters. Minority cadres who can use more than two languages well should be rewarded.

Using Mandarin in primary schools of ethnic areas was clearly pointed out in Regulation 37. Bilingual use was the requirement for both ethnic and Han officials in article 47, which serves for the purpose of forming more efficient and high qualified communication between ethnic groups and Han majority as well as between government and local citizens.

In 2002, the "Decision of Deepening the Reform to Accelerate National Education" from the State Council was released. In 2007, "Minority Issues 'Eleventh Five-year Plan" has been passed by State Council, it clearly addressed that the next focal point is to prepare and train high- quality bilingual teachers.

In 2006, a joint article has been issued on raising fiscal aid by the Ministries of Finance and Education, it stated that special funds would be offered for teachers

who are working in minority regions especially in the western and central part of China. In November 2007, the joint authority departments of central government cooperated to enhance and support more publications of ethnic languages. It required governments at all levels to increase the subsidies for publication in minority language. For example, in IMAR, financial support for books increased from 8.11 million in 2006 to 9.34 million in 2007. Due to these policies.

3.2.5.1.2 Micro scope of LP in IMAR

3.2.5.1.2.1 Language Policies toward IMAR and Mongolian Ethnic Minority

On the basis of Regional Autonomy law, the IMAR later released specific regulation on language use, including the "*Regulations of Inner Mongolian language*" in 2004, as the exclusive regulation for Mongolian language use in the region. In 2007, the "*National Common Language Law of People's Republic of China* " defined how Mandarin should be used officially in every aspect of social life and government departments. In article 4, it specifically announces that every minority group in IMAR has the right and freedom to promote their own languages. since Mongolian language in IMAR is a common language，all levels of government are entitled to use Mongolian language and script during performing related duties.

3.2.5.1.2 .2 Oroqen banner

"Regulations on Self-made Management of Oroqen banner" was released in 1996. In the second chapter of it, it stated that more job opportunities should be offered to Oroqen people in all levels of government department and individual enterprise. In article 20 of chapter 3, it points out that the court and procuratorate shall use Chinese, Oroqen or other languages to prosecute cases, which protect the rights of the minority citizens to use their own languages.

In the chapter 6, it regulates that local government should take care of Oroqen students in terms of their entrance and grants in school, and offer more financial support to the teachers of ethnic schools. And in the article 47, it states that Oroqen banner should develop news, publishing, radio, film, television and other cultural undertakings with ethnic characteristics.

The "Regulations of Ethnic Education in Oroqen Banner" were passed in 2002. they state that local government should support ethnic education of "three small minority groups" namely, Oroqen, Evenki, Daur, and they give basic guidance in terms of school facility, teachers, teaching, grants, awards, a lowered score in entrance examination etc.

3.2.5.1.2.3 Erguna:

In Erguna, it has no specific law released for Russian Chinese. In reality of life, the Russian Chinese have benefited from the government in terms of job opportunities and school enrollment. Every year, 1-3 positions in local governments departments are given specifically to Russians.

Oroqen banner and Erguna city have followed the superior's calling as almost the same as the whole country's condition. To summarize, Chinese government has the same attitude towards all ethnic groups including Oroqen and Russian Chinese.

3.2.5.1.3 Compare and Evaluate

It can be seen that language policies toward the ethnic groups in China are almost the same. Although Erguna city does not have more policy inclining to Russian Chinese compared to Oroqen's, Oroqen government take more positively actions on protecting the ethnic language, while Erguna government just follows the guidance of the central government, it does not affect the result that the central government holds the same attitude toward all minority groups.

Based on the explanation of proposed factor by UNESCO, the evaluation result is presented in the Table 10.

Table 10: *The evaluation of official language attitude toward Oroqen and Russian Chinese*

Score / Factor	**Score of Oroqen**	Score of Russian in Erguna
Official Attitudes toward Language	5(equal support)	5(equal support)

3.2.5.2 Community Members' Attitudes toward their language

For obtaining community members' attitude toward their own language, I have interviewed over 40 members living in each community in each region. These people are official cadres, staffs, businesspeople, teachers, students, villagers. Besides officials, the others are Oroqen and Russian Chinese from each region. My question for Oroqen/ Russian Chinese people:

1.Can you speak Oroqen/ Russian Chinese, and to what extent?

2.When you are in the family or work place, do you use Oroqen/ Russian Chinese?

3. Do you speak Oroqen/ Russian Chinese to your friends or neighbors?

4.Do you speak Oroqen/ Russian Chinese in the following contexts: supermarket, meet friends, telling a joke or a story?

5. In what kind of environment, do you prefer speaking Oroqen/ Russian Chinese?

6. Do you feel embarrassed and shy when you speak Oroqen/ Russian Chinese?

7. In what kind of environment do you want to hear or wish someone to speak Oroqen/ Russian Chinese with you?

8. Do you or your children want to learn Oroqen/ Russian Chinese in the future?

9. Do you think Oroqen/ Russian Chinese language will disappear in the future?

10. Do you think Oroqen language will survive, and do you have any ideas how the language can survive?

Besides the above 10 questions, my questions for Oroqen/ Russian Chinese officials are listed below:

1.   What is your department engaged in, especially with regard to minority language?

2.   With regard to minority language, what specific work has done?

3.   Do you think that the situation of the native language has been improved through your work, and if so, in which area?

4.   Do you have any opinions on these measurements on minority language?

5.   What are your concerns on the minority language, and its future?

6.   What is your personal opinion on protecting and maintaining minority language?

7.   What do you think how the native language could be revived?

In each region, question 1-3 are smoothly answered. These answers are written down in the language policy part.

Referred to question4-7, all answers are blurred, and they have different responses to the questions.

In Oroqen banner, I interviewed 13 cadres and staffs who work in government, education, cultural, language and religious protection, TV broadcasting departments etc. Most of the staffs that I interviewed are not Oroqen. They generally replied that they have no specific opinions on the measures regarding minority language, any work they may have done in this regard entirely derives from their leaders' requirements, and the requirements from departments at a higher administrative level. They are not sure if the Oroqen language would be revived or not. I met two Oroqen people working in the education department and the office of Oroqen language research, who really wished that the Oroqen language can get revived and offered more information about the work they do. They both stated that they are honored to work in their position, and are trying their best to make the language get better, they stated that they cannot judge the policy of the country, and that hopefully more people will participate in this area, and especially that more Oroqen children get interested in the language. 2 cadres did not give any opinion on the question 4-7. One Oroqen cadre expressed that he thinks that the Oroqen language will be dead, based on the central government's will, we will get united as one nation, and in future, China will not have any ethnic groups.

Oroqen students: 8 Oroqen students got interviewed in Oroqen middle school from all grades. They can learn Oroqen in the given course in this school, but in daily life, they do not use Oroqen language to other people, and feel shy to talk in Oroqen. 3 of these Oroqen students from the countryside speak some Oroqen to their grandparents or some close relatives, but most of the time, they are likely to speak Oroqen mixed with Chinese. These students all express that they want to learn Oroqen for preserving and protecting the ethnic group well, they have national sentiment to Oroqen, and think it is good to see people speak Oroqen. They do not think of the question if the language will disappear or not.

Oroqen seniors: 6 Oroqen seniors (all aged above 63) from Alihe, Tuohe, and Wulubutie were interviewed at their homes. They prefer speaking Oroqen with

friends and relatives all the time. They have a strong feeling about the Oroqen language, and express the hope that more people will get involved in the preservation of the language to help them to preserve their own language and traditional culture. They wish that their children can learn Oroqen language, but do not want to push them. 5 of these seniors tell that their sons and daughters can speak, though not as well as they wish, fortunately, they all can understand all when the seniors speak Oroqen; one of these seniors from Wulubutie tells that she has 7 children, that they all can speak Oroqen and know how to hunt and make traditional handy-craft with fur and barch, but that they seldom speak it to other people in the town and on the workplace. These seniors all claim that their grandsons and granddaughters all live in the town, and even though they taught them Oroqen in the childhood time, after several years, these children all forget how to speak. They also do consider Chinese as an important tool, as it would help them and their children get into the mainstream society. A senior named Erdenggua from Alihe told her stories, at first, she learnt Chinese in school in 1950s, the language really helped her to understand and know more the world in a broad horizon in the following decades, and experienced many things that she never had dreamed of before. She expects that Oroqen language will be replaced by Chinese in future. However, she hopes for more work and support to change this destiny, or at least to prolong the struggle before the language death.

Russian Chinese:

In Erguna city, 10 cadres and staffs who work in government, education, ethnic affairs, TV station departments from Lamdarlin and Enhe township were interviewed. 2 of these, both from Enhe township, were Russian Chinese.

 The cadres in Lamdarlin stated that they have no specific language policy for Chinese Russian, and even no Russian classes for ethnic students right now. However, they still offer 3 positions in governmental departments for Russian Chinese every year, and give extra 10-20 scores for Russian students for getting enrollment in high school and college. Some Russian people would learn the

52

language in the city training schools because of business needs. In recent years, in Russsian communities, most of Russian Chinese people are doing business for tourism, and to better show the unique features of their ethnic group, they focus on outer appearance in many aspects, such as building the Russian-style house, offering the Russian-style foods, wearing the Russian–style clothes, etc. This type of business plays a role in Russian language spoken in the entire Enhe township .

Pupils aged less than 15 year-old were interviewed. They stated that they do not have time to learn Russian, ordinary school work is heavy enough, while the 10 extra points that they get do not make much of a difference. 3 students stated that they have no intention to learn Russian now or in the future. The others hope to learn Russian someday to make them different from other people. They all expect that the Russian language will be maintained well.

Seniors: They say they really hope their children would learn Russian in future, and one senior named Shaoyun mentioned that she sent her daughters to a Russian training school after she failed to enter a college, her daughter is now working in a trade company of Manzhouli city, earning more money than she expected, her daughter often invites her to the city to live with her. They all think the Russian language will be maintained well.

3.2.5.2 .1 Community Members'Attitudes toward Oroqen

10 Oroqen people I interviewed answered my questions for testing their language attitude, including 3students, 3 Oroqen seniors, 4 Oroqen officials.

Want to speak the Oroqen language

	The number	%
desire	4	40%

wish	1	10%
uncertain	3	30%
Totally not	2	20%

learn Oroqen language in the future

	The number	%
Will learn	5	50%
uncertain	2	20%
Totally not	3	30%

Oroqen language will exist

	The number	%
Totally agree		
Uncertain	7	10%
Disagree	1	70%
Totally disagree	2	20%
Total		

Oroqen will become extinct and lost

	The number	%
Totally agree	5	50%
Disagree	2	20%
Uncertain	3	20%
Totally disagree		
Total		

3.2.5.2 .2Community Members' Attitudes toward Russian Chinese

10 Russian Chinese people I interviewed answered my questions for testing their language attitude, including 3students, 3 seniors, 4 officials who are Chinese Russian.

Want to speak the Russian language

	The number	%
desire	3	30%
wish	2	20%
uncertain	3	30%
Totally not	2	20%

Learn the Russian language in future

	The number	%
Will learn	4	40%
uncertain	3	30%
Totally not	3	30%

Russian language will exist

	The number	%
Totally agree	10	100%
Disagree		
Uncertain		
Totally disagree		
Total		

Russian language will become extinct and lost

Totally agree	The number	%
Disagree		
Totally disagree	10	100%
Total	10	

3.2.5.2.3 Compare and Evaluate

Based on the explanation of the factor from UNESCO, it refers to what attitude community members to their own language. According to the questions they answered, it can be concluded that: Oroqen and Russian Chinese all see each language as essential to their community, identify with it and want it promoted. According to the explanation from UNESCO: Grade 5: *all members value their language and wish to see it promoted.*

The result of the evaluation of this factor is shown in the following table.

Table 11: *The evaluation of language attitude of communnity members*

Score / Factor	Score for Oroqen	Score for Russian in Erguna
Language attitude to their language	5	5

3.2.6 Documentation

3.2.6.1 Oroqen:

At present, most of the work on Oroqen language has been focused on language rescue and archiving. Since the 1980s, the local government has been

cooperating with higher level of administration and university scholars on several occasions to record and document the oral language of Oroqen communities for several times. Many scholars (Bai Lan, Han Youfeng) have engaged in the research of Oroqen cultural traditional customs, shamanism, folkstories, published several works related to these topics. Some linguists (Han Youfeng, Hu Zengyi) published books containing a grammatical description of Oroqen. Some Oroqen seniors (He Qinghua,Guan) published their memory of Oroqen language, folksongs and folkstories.

3.2.6.2Russian Chinese

The situation of documents of the Russian Chinese is almost the same. Erguna Russian language is different from formal Russian in Russia, it has been changed due to the changing living environment. According to the previous study, the language has adapted features of the northeast dialect of Chinese, and its pronunciation includes retroflex sounds. Some scholars focus on the differences of lexicon and grammar in contrast to Standard Russian, some research centers cooperate with the local government in exploring their historical and cultural peculiarities, relying on elderly Russian informants.

In addition, as discussed in section 4.2, the scope of Russian use is broader due to its status as an international language.

3.2.6.3 Evaluate and Compare

Based on the explanation of the factor from UNESCO criteria, it refers to the type and quality of the language materials. Oroqen is an unwritten language, so the current documentation is transcribed, translated. Some Oroqen researchers working in institute center took advantage of the organization source to document the language with professional audiovisual equipment, and also some scholars (Hu, Han) focus on the Oroqen language description in IPA regarding language description, grammars and dictionaries.

Russian Chinese in Erguna city normally do not have the ability to use written Russian. Russian language expert Dr. Bai Ping has engaged in exploring and archiving the unique difference of the Erguna Russian from formal Russian. However, Russian itself, as an international language spoken worldwide, is active in many areas, the documentation of Russian is unusually rich. Based on the explanation from UNESCO, the Grade 3: *there may be an adequate grammar or sufficient amount of grammars, dictionaries, and texts, but no everyday media; audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality or degree of annotation.* The result of the evaluation of Documentation is shown below:

Table 12: *The evaluation of documentation between Oroqen and Russian Chinese*

Score / Factor	Score of Oroqen	Score of Russian in Erguna	Russian language
Amount and quality of documentation	3(fair)	3(fair)	5 (superlative)

3.2.7 Conclusion

58

This chapter mainly compares and assesses the language vitality of Oroqen and Russian Chinese based on the identified factors from UNESCO, the result of the comparison of language vitality between the two target groups can be concluded as follows: In terms of the similar situation of the given factors, the target groups have the same performance in the factor (1)(2)(3). To be more specific, Oroqen and Russian Chinese in Hulunbuir region have small population, most native speakers are seniors, while most of children cannot speak the language on their own; and also in the area of state-wide language policy, the Chinese government encourages and supports all ethnic minority groups to use and promote their native languages. The factor of Media for language usage in the target regions is almost the same, the government departments take advantage of internet, TV broadcasting for the promotion of language use and tourism, individuals of the target groups are free to use these sources if they wish to use and learn their native languages.

It can be seen from the research that an individual from the minority is likely to gain some benefits from learning the dominant language, but not to be completely accepted and assimilated by the majority group because of differences between them. People from the two targeted groups express strong feeling for their ethnicity, they all strongly hope their own group can get better.

With regard to the different situation of language usage, the given factors that differ are: the domains of language usage of the Oroqen and Russian Chinese are obviously different, as Russian itself is an international language, the scope of its language usage is broader than that of Oroqen which is only spoken by local community members. It also affects the education area, even though Erguna city has not offered Russian language course for students, the business needs lead to more Russian language schools coming out, plus, there are more official Russian schools or courses offered in Hulunbuir region, not to mention the context of the whole China. By contrast, the result of evaluation of Oroqen banner who has contributed more to Oroqen students still gets a lower score. Consequently, With regard to the language attitude, the government holds the

same attitude toward all ethnic groups within the state based on the declared language policy. It can be seen that in the answers in the interviews, Russian Chinese community members have more optimistic views toward their language, while some Oroqen members hold negative attitude toward future language loss.

If we separate the target groups from the outside world as two individual communities, it can be found that the eight identified factors except the factor of **Education** are almost the same in each community: Inside of the each of community, the two target groups have a similar and small population; they are facing the crisis of endangered language; only seniors use their own ethnic languages; community members have desire to see more children to speak in native language; on rare occasions, they use their languages; the governments and institutions have given them some assistance; so far, the documents about Oroqen and Russian Chinese are relatively limited.

Although Oroqen banner puts more effort into ethnic language education, while Erguna city does not do anything recently years, it still can be found that more people who can use Russian are needed in the border trade cities with Russia in Hulunbuir region, because of these business needs, more people including Han majorities and the other ethnic groups would take the initiative to learn Russian, and naturally, there are more language training schools setting up in this area.

In fact, it can be seen that Russian has the strong language vitality even if Russian Chinese do not use it in daily life, that still does not affect its language vitality. Therefore, it can be concluded that the most difference between the two languages is the domains of language usage, the Oroqen language as only a communication tool among the community members is highly limited used.

Chapter 4: Discussions and Suggestions

The discussion is drawn from census, interviews, descriptive information. It takes into consideration the nine criteria of UNESCO for evaluation of the language vitality. In this final chapter, I will discuss the key findings of this study and give some suggestions.

4.1 Discussion

My field work and the descriptive data, which I collected specifically on the Oroqen and Russian Chinese target minority groups, enable me to offer a more precise picture on the objective language vitality of this local varieties. While information on some criteria such as the number and proportion of fluent native speakers was not available, some comparable evidence between the two target groups has been acquired. Based on the findings of the study, the following sections will try to provide answers to the research questions based on the findings of the study.

RQ1: Which identified factor(s) share similarity and cause difference regarding the language vitality between Oroqen and Russian Chinese?

In this case study, the Oroqen and Russian Chinese share similarities and are different from each other in several aspects. From the comparison of nine factors proposed by UNESCO, the vitality of Oroqen and Russian Chinese in each region has likely deteriorated. With regard to the factor (1) (2)(3), the two target groups are in the same situation, they have small populations of about

3000 people dispersed in different places surrounded by the other groups, their languages are mainly spoken by people aged above 50, while the majority of children cannot speak the language at all. With regard to the factors from (4) to (9), Oroqen banner has devoted different kinds of resources to promote the language, but the evaluation forms still indicate that Oroqen in Oroqen banner has a lower language vitality than Russian in Erguna city, which has not paid much attention to its ethnically Russian Chinese.

RQ2: Which factor(s) should be considered as the decisive or dominant one(s) to improve language vitality and allow for language maintenance?

RQ3: Which factor(s) should be strengthened in order to improve the language vitality of Oroqen language?

It can be concluded that Russian itself is an international language that is needed between Russia and China, in the Hulunbuir region, because of the trade needs, sufficient employment market of Russian translators, Russian itself can maintain a higher language vitality and somewhat an active pool of learners, even though the number of the Russian Chinese is small ,and the number of fluent native speaker is declining. Russian is still active and vital as its functional load is increasing in many areas.

From the point of view of the statement of previous chapters, it can be summarized that the domain of Oroqen language usage is too limited. This becomes obvious in many areas: the population of Oroqen people is less than 0.1% of the total population of Oroqen banner, and in addition its speakers are scattered in different places of the region. As the better national unity and national integration goals asserted from central government, the dominant language use of Mandarin, it leads to Oroqen language is bound to cede, so that its usage has narrowed down, even among Oroqen community members. It can thus be concluded that Oroqen lacks domains of language usage, which would have to be reinstated to reverse its endangered situation.

4.2 Suggestions

Despite the fact that the sociolinguistic situation of the target groups exhibits clear similarity in a certain aspect, Oroqen language is encountering a substantial problem with regard to the domain of language usage. It would be a huge challenge to improve its situation of lacking of domains of language usage. However, in recent years, some Oroqen researchers (Baiying, Bailan) have visited the Russian province of the Far-east, Siberia, Novosibirskiye of Russia for cultural and academic exchange. They observed that they can talk in Oroqen with some Tungusic inhabitants of these regions, to which Oroqen in China is thus a type of dialect. They also noticed that some people there claim themselves as "Oroqen", even though these people have been assigned a different nationality in Russia. In addition, there are also Oroqen people living in Heilongjiang province, settled down in dozens of Oroqen communities. Furthermore, in China, Evenki and Oroqen has shared 70% similarity of the language, and the population of Evenki in Hulunbuir counts more than 30000 individuals (2010 census). It can be presumed from these findings that the scope of Oroqen language use could be broader.

The map of eastern part of Russia

(Source:http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/europe/russia/)

If it can be fulfilled, authorities should play a major role in achieving interaction between these groups who speak Oroqen, taking actions like increasing the cooperation in the areas of culture, economic, language maintenance and so forth, internal desire plus external incentives could easily add up to expanding the domain of the language usage and protect the language.

The UNESCO criteria can be treated as focal points in contributing to reverse the declining status of Oroqen language, it is necessary to take actions such as giving institutional and political support for media representation, language documentation, and language education. However, blindly seeking help from multiple parties is not possible in reality, while stimulating potential need that exists inside the community might work out. Take the current popular short video as an example: Oroqen is an unwritten language, in addition, it is not easy for young people to learn their mother tongue conveniently because of the influence of the dominantly Mandarin environment. However, short video websites which have become very popular among the younger generations over the years, it offer everyone an equal chance to show themselves by only using a

smart-phone. Some young ac Oroqen people who still do speak sufficient level of Oroqen can take advantage of such platforms to attract more young people to learn. Short videos would accumulate over time, and are convenient for people to watch at any time, any place. If local government and institutions lend more professional guidance or financial support, it would also be easier to attract younger people and document the language with a broader range of participation in a flexible way.

In recent years, Oroqen banner especially set up a kindergarten for Oroqen children between the ages of 3 to 7 in Alihe town. They specifically separated these children from those the other groups, so as to better to cultivate their Oroqen language, teach them Oroqen songs and dances, and to make them form a distinctive ethnic consciousness from an early age. Such projects should be reduplicated in other localities. If the local government or public agencies were to produce some certain programs like cartoons and other child-oriented media in Oroqen language, it would become more easier for children to learn.

To sum up, an internal mobilization of the resources of the Oroqen community plus help from multiple external parties might still be able to again broaden the domains of usage of the Oroqen language.

Conclusion

Overall, this thesis has offered a comparative perspective based on the UNESCO criteria to assess the language vitality of Russian Chinese and Oroqen in Hulunbuir region, aiming to figure out which factors would be pivotal for language vitality, and could be focused on in reversing the endangered status of the Oroqen language. Through this comparison, the domains of language usage turned out to be the pivotal factor which negatively affects language vitality of Oroqen as opposed to Russian Chinese, even though Oroqen has a higher score in the others indicators. The author suggests that these domains could be broadened again by, first, breaking the isolation of the Oroqen language community of Hulunbuir within the remaining Tungusic world, and, secondly, by broadening the domains of usage in areas that are specifically relevant for children

Bibliography

Allard, Réal; & Landry, Rodrigue. (1994a). *Introduction. Internatio nal Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 108, 5–13.

Allard, Réal; & Landry, Rodrigue. (1994b). *Subjective ethnolinguistic vitality*：*a comparison of two measures. International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 108, 117–144.

Appel, René; & Muysken, Pieter. (1987). *Language contact and bilingualism*. London: Edward Arnold.

Bai Lan.(2007). *Dawoerzu Ewenkezu Elunchunzu Wenhua Yanjiu* [Study on the Culture of the Daur Evenki and Oroqen].Hohot: Neimenggu Jiaoyu Chubanshe.

Bai Ping.(2011). *Neimenggu Eluosiyu Gaikuang* [Overview of Russian language in Inner Mongolia] [J]. Ethnic Language,2011(4):70-80.

Bai Ping. (2009).*Neimeng Eyu de Cihui Tedian* [Lexical Features of Russian in Inner Mongolia][J]. Ethnic Languages,2009(5): 40-43.

Bourhis, Richard. (1983). *Language policies and language attitudes*: Le mode de la Francophonie. In Ellen Bouchard Ryan & Howard Giles (Eds.), *Attitudes towards language variation* (pp. 34–62). London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd.

Bourhis, Richard; Giles, Howard; & Rosenthal, Doreen. (1981). *Notes on the construction of a 'subjective vitality questionnaire' for ethnolinguistic groups.* Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Develo pment, 2, 144–66.

Clyne, M. (1982). *Obstetric performance in medical marriages*. Lancet, 319(8264), 168. Baker, Colin. (2001). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Clevedon/

Buffalo/Toronto/Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Committee for Compilation of Historical Records of Erguna Right Banner. (1993). *Erguna Youqizhi*[Record of the Right banner of Erguna].Neimenggu Wenhua Chubanshe.

Conklin, Nancy; & Lourie, Margaret. (1983). *A Host of Tongues.* New York: The Free Press.

Dai Qingxia .2009. "*Language and script of Chinese Minority groups*".Peiking Chinese publisher.

Dai Qingxia .2006. "*Study of language of Chinese Minority groups during first "fifteen years*".23(1).Yunan university publisher

DaiQingxia .2004. "*cases study of endangered language in China*" Peiking publisher.

Ferrer R C, Sankoff D. *Identity as the primary determinant of language choice in Valencia*[J]. Journal of Sociolinguistics, 2010, 7(1):50-64.

Fishman, Joshua. (2001). *Can threatened languages be saved?* Clevedon/Buffalo/Toronto/Sydney: Multilingual Matters.

Fishman, Joshua; Cooper, Robert; & Ma, Roxana. (1971). *Bilingualism in the barrio.* Bloomington: Indiana University

Fishman, J. A. 2001a. "From theory to practice (and vice versa): Re view, Reconsideration and Reiteration". In: J. A. Fishman,ed.op.cit., 451-83.

Fishman,Joshua A,Solano,FrankR.,and McConnell,Grant.D.,1991,A methodological check on three crosspolity studies of linguistic hom ogeneity/heterogenity,in Mary E. McGroarty and Christian J,Faltis(e ds.), *Language in school and society:policy and pedagogy*(pp.21-30).Berlin and Newyork: Mouton de Gruyter.

García, Ricardo L.; & Diaz, Carlos F. (1992). The status and use of Spanish and English among Hispanic youth in Dade County (Miami) Florida: A sociolinguistic study, 1989–1991. *Language and Education, 6(1),* 13–32.

Giles, Howard; & Johnson, Patricia. (1981). *The role of language in ethnic group relations*. In J.C. Turner and H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup Behavior*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Giles, Howard; & Johnson, Patricia. (1987). Ethnolinguistic identity theory: A social psychological approach to language maintenance. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 63,* 69–99.

Giles, Howard; Rosenthal, Doreen; & Young, Louis. (1985). Perceived ethnolinguistic vitality: The Anglo and Greek Australian setting. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 6,* 3–4, 253–269.

Governmental Statistics in Inner Mongolia in 2010 (2011, 24th June), Source: http://www.nmg.gov.cn/art/2013/9/2/art_4213_210142.html

Governmental Statistics in Hulunbuir Region, Source: http://www.hlbe.gov.cn/content/channel/540978d09a05c2264220a201/

Governmental Statistics in Oroqen Banner, Source: http://www.elc.gov.cn/Category_30/Index.aspx

Governmental Statistics in Erguna, Source: http://zhengfu8172.e-fa.cn/introduce/

Governmental Statistics in Hulunbuir Region in 2010, Hulunbeiershi 2010 nian diliuci renkou pucha gongbao:[Hulunbuir 2010 sixth national census data] Retrieved from http://tjj.hlbe.gov.cn/index.php/index/acticle/index/id/3.html

Grenoble L A & Whaley L J. *Language policy and the loss of Tungusic languages*[J]. Language & Communication, 1999, 19(4):373-386

Gu Jiaqi. *The History and Present Situation of Chinese Russian Teaching*[J] .. Chinese Adult Education, 2011(3): 136-137.

Hasbartul.(2008). *Guanyu Elunchunyu Binwei Xianxiang de Tantao*[Discussion on the endangered Phenomenon of Oroqen language][J]. Manchu Studies, 2008(1):24-33

Han Youfeng.(1991). *Elunchun Fengsuzhi* [Record of Oroqen Customs]. Beijing: Zhongyang Minzu Chubanshe.

He Qinghua & Morigenbuku. (2011). *Elunchun Shiyi*[Interpretation of Oroqen].Zijincheng Chubanshe.

He, J.S. (1998). *Zhonguo shaoshu minzu shuangyu yanjiu:Lishi yu xianshi*[Research on bilingualism among China's ethnic minorities: History and reality].Beijing : Central University of Nationalities.

He, B. (2005). Minority rights with Chinese characteristics. In W. Kymlicka & B.He (eds.), *Multiculturalism in Asia* (pp. 56-79). Oxford University Press.

Hechter, Michael; & Okamoto, Dina. (2001). Political consequences of minority group formation. *Annual Review of Political Science, 4,* 189–215.

Heller, Monica. (1987). The role of language in the formation of ethnic identity. In J. Phinney &M. Rotheram (Eds.). *Children's ethnic socialization* (pp. 180–220). Newbury Park: Sage.

Haugen,Einar,1966b, *Linguitics and language planning in William Bright*(ed.), Sociolinguistics(pp.55-71). The Hague:Mouton

Hu Zengyi.(1986). *Elunchun Yu Jianzhi* [A Brief Record of Oroqen language]. Beijing: Minzu Chubanshe.

Johnson, Pat; Giles, Howard; & Bourhis, Richard. (1983). The viability of ethnolinguistic vitality: A reply. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 4(4),* 255–69.

Lam, A. (2005). Language education in China: *policy and*

experience from 1949. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Landweer. A Melanesian perspective on mechanisms of language maintenance and shift: *case studies from Papua New Guinea*[J]. University of Essex, 2006.

Landry, Rodrigue; & Allard, Réal. (1992a). Ethnolinguistic vitality and the bilingual development of minority and majority group students. In W. Fase, K. Jaespaert, & S. Kroon (Eds.), *Maintenance and loss of minority languages*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.407

Landry, Rodrigue; & Allard, Réal. (1992b). Subtractive bilingualism: The case of Franco-Americans in Maine's Saint John Valley. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 13(6),* 515–44.

Landry, Rodrigue; & Allard, Réal (Eds.). (1994b). Ethnolinguistic vitality. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 108*. McConnell, Grant D. (1992). *A macro-sociolinguistic analysis of language vitality*. Quebec: Université Laval.

Mackey, William F. (1972). The description of bilingualism. In J.A. Fishman (Ed.), *Readings in the sociology of language* (pp. 554–584). The Hague: Mouton.

Massey, Douglas S, and N. A. Denton. "Spatial assimilation as a socioeconomic outcome." *American Sociological Review* 50.50(1985):94-106.

McConnell, Grant D. (1992). *A macro-sociolinguistic analysis of language vitality*. Quebec: Université Laval.

National People's Congress. (1999). *ZhongHua Renmin Goheguo Xianfa* [The Constitution of the People's Republic of China]. Beijing: Falu Chubanshe.

National People's Congress. (2001). *Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui Changwu Weiyuanhui Guangyu Xiugai 'Zhonghua Remmin Gongheguo Minzu Quyu Zijifa'* concerning the amendment of 'The Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities in the

People's Republic of China']. *Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Changwu Weiyuanhui Gongbao* [National People's Congress General Affairs Committee Notices] 2001 (2), 121-148.20010 Cencus2010

National People's Congress. (2001). *Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui Changwu Weiyuanhui Guangyu Xiugai 'Zhonghua Remmin Gongheguo Minzu Quyu Zizhifa'* concerning the amendment of 'The Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities in the People's Republic of China']. Quanguo RenminDaibiao Dahui Changwu Weiyuanhui Gongbao [National People's Congress General Affairs Committee Notices] 2001 (2), 121-148.

Nie,Hongyin.(2007).*Chinese Minority Languages*.[M] Peiking Chin ese publisher.

Paulston, Christina Bratt. (1994). *Linguistic minorities in multilingual settings: Implications for language policies*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Paulston, Christina Bratt. (1998). Linguistic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe: *An introduction. In Christina Bratt Paulston & Donald Peckham* (Eds.), *Linguistic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe*.

Polkovsky, Valerii. (2002)."The Russian Language Today." *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 44. Sep-Dec.

Qi Huijun.(2003). *Neimenggu Eergunashi Eluosizu Jingji he Shehui Fazhan Diaocha Baogao*[Investigation Report on Economic and Social Develoment of Russians in Erguna City, Inner Mongolia] [J]. Heilongjiang Ehinic Series, 2003(5): 92-95.

Spolsky, Bernard. *Language Policy* [M]. UK: Cambridge University Press,2004.

Spradley J, Spradley J P, Spradley J, et al. *Participant-observation*[J]. Anthropological Quarterly, 2010, 53(4):260.

State Language Commision. (1996). *Guojia yuyan wenzi zhengce fagui huibian (1949-1995)* [Collection of national language policy (1949-1995)]. Beijing YUwen Chubanshe.

Storaker Kilander, Fredrikke. (2001). *Explaining variation in indigenous mobilization: A comparative study of the Ecuadorian and Peruvian Andes.* Master's thesis (ETD format), University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway.

Tajfel, Henri; & Turner, John C. (1986). *The social identity theory of intergroup behavior.* In Stephen Worchel & William G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7–24). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

The Compilation Committee of Historical Records of Oroqen Autonomous Banner9(1991). Elunchun zizhiqi qizhi[Records of Oroqen Autonomous Banner].Hohot: Inner Mongolia People's Publishing

The Ministry of education, the State Language Commission. 2013. "Report of Chinese language life status" Shangwuyinshu publisher.

The Writing Group of History of Russian Chinese. (1987). *Eluosizu Jianshi*[A Brief History of Russian Chinese]. Xinjiang: Xianjiang Renmin Chubanshe.

UNESCO. 1953. *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education. M onograph on Fundamental Education VIII. Paris*, United Nations E ducational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

UNESCO Ad Hoc Group .2003. "*Language vitality and endangerm ent providing a list of nine evaluative*".

Wang, T.Z. (1998a). *Xin Zhongguo minzu zhengce de xingcheng yu fazhan* (Shang)The formation and development of educational policy for ethnic groups in New China (part 1)]. in the P.R.C., Part 1. *Minzu jiaoyu yanjiu* [Research in Ethnic Education]35, 3-9.

Whaley,L.J,Grenoble,et al. Revisiting Tungusic classification from t he bottom up : *A comparison of Evenki and Oroqen*[J]. Language, 1

999, 75(2):286-321.

Xu Shixuan & Guan Hongying.(2001). E*lunchunyu Shiyong Xianzhuang* Fenxi[An Analysis of the Current Use of Oroqen Language][J]. Manchu Studies,2001(1): 133-137.

Yin Tiechao.(2002). *Elunchunyu Yu Yinniuteyu Bijiao Yanjiu*[A comparative Study of Oroqen and Inuit Language]. Heilongjiang Renmin Chubanshe.

Yu Jianzhong etc..(2004). *Zhongguo Minzu Cunzhai Diaocha Congshu- Eluosizu—Xinjiang Tachengshi Ergongzhen, Neimenggu Eergunashi Weixiang Diaocha*[Investgation Series of Ethnic Villages in China- Investigation on Russian Chinese in Tacheng City, Xinjiang and Shiwei Township ,Erguna Ciity, Inner Mongolia]. Yunan Daxue Chubanshe.

Zeng Xiangjiao.(2003). *Eerguyna de Eluosizu*[Russians in Erguna][J]. Grassland Taxation, 2003(8): 19-12.

Zhang Yingzi. (2010). *Eeegunashi Eluosizu Cunluo Yuyan Xianzhuang Diaocha Fenxi—Yi Linjiangtun Yuyan Diaocha Cailiao Weili* [An Investigation and Analysis of the Language Situation of Russian Villages in Erguna City—Taking Linjiangtun Language Survey Materials as an Example][D], Central University for Nationalities, 2010

Zhou,minglang,Sun,Hongkai,2004. "Language Police in People's Republic of China: *Theory and Practics Since 1949*. KluwerCadenic publishers 2004.

Zhou, M.L. (2003). Multilingualism in China: *The policies of writing reforms for minority language 1949-2002*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Zhou, M.L. (ed.) (2004) *Language policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and practice since 1949*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Zhou, Q.S. (2003) State, nation and language: *A study of language*

policies and national differences. Beijing: Yuyan Chubanshe.

Zhou, S.Z. (2003) *An Investigation Report of the Quality of English Teachers in Mongolian Middle Schools*: Journal of Research on Education for Ethnic Minorities14(2), 13-16.

Appendix

Language Vitality and Endangerment
UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages
Document submitted to the International Expert Meeting on UNESCO
Programme Safeguarding of Endangered Languages
Paris, 10–12 March 2003

4.2Language Vitality Assessment
Factor 1: Intergenerational Language Transmission
Six degrees of endangerment may be distinguished with regards to Intergenerational Language Transmission:

Safe (5): The language is spoken by all generations. There is no sign of linguistic threat from any other language, and the intergenerational transmission of the language seems uninterrupted.

Stable yet threatened (5-): The language is spoken in most contexts by all generations with unbroken intergenerational transmission, yet multilingualism in the native language and one or more dominant language(s) has usurped certain important communication contexts. Note that multilingualism alone is not necessarily a threat to languages.

Unsafe (4): Most but not all children or families of a particular community speak their language as their first language, but it may be restricted to specific social domains (such as at home where children interact with their parents and grandparents).

Definitively endangered (3): The language is no longer being learned as the mother tongue by children in the home. The youngest speakers are thus of the parental generation. At this stage, parents may still speak their language to their children, but the children do not typically respond in the language.

Severely endangered (2): The language is spoken only by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may still understand the language, they typically do not speak it to their children.

Critically endangered (1): The youngest speakers are in the great-grandparental generation, and the language is not used for everyday interactions. These older people often remember only part of the language but do not use it because there may not be anyone to speak with.

Extinct (0): There is no one who can speak or remember the language.

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	**Speaker Population**
safe	5	The language is spoken by all ages, from children up.
unsafe	4	The language is used by some children in all domains; it is used by all children in limited domains
Definitely endangered	3	The language is used mostly by the grandparental generation and up.
severely endangered	2	The language is used mostly by the grandparental generation and up.
Critically endangered	1	The language is used mostly by every few speakers, of great-grandparental generation.
extinct	0	There exists no speaker.

Factor 2: Absolute Number of Speakers
It is impossible to provide a valid interpretation of absolute numbers, but a small speech community is always at risk. A small population is much more vulnerable to decimation (e.g. by disease, warfare, or natural disaster) than a larger one. A small language group may also merge with a neighbouring group, losing its own language and culture.

Factor 3: Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population
The number of speakers in relation to the total population of a group is a significant indicator of language vitality, where "group" may refer to the ethnic, religious, regional, or national group with which the speaker community identifies. The following scale can be used to appraise degrees of endangerment.

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Speaker Population
safe	5	All speak the language.
unsafe	4	Nearly all speak the language.
Definitely endangered	3	A majority speak the language.
severely endangered	2	A minority speak the language.
Critically endangered	1	Very few speak the language.
extinct	0	None speak the language.

Factor 4: Trends in Existing Language Domains
Where, with whom, and the range of topics for which a language is used directly affects whether or not it will be transmitted to the next generation.
Universal use (5): The language of the ethnolinguistic group is the language of interaction, identity, thinking, creativity, and entertainment, and is actively used in all discourse domains for all purposes.
Multilingual parity (4): One or more dominant languages, rather than the language of the ethnolinguistic group, is/are the primary language(s) in most official domains: government, public offices, and educational institutions. The language in question, however, may well continue to be integral to a number of public domains, especially in traditional religious institutions, local stores, and those places where members of the community socialize. The coexistence of the dominant and non-dominant languages results in speakers' using each language for a different function (*diglossia*), whereby the non-dominant language is used in informal and home contexts and the dominant language is used in official and public contexts. Speakers may consider the dominant language to be the language of social and economic opportunity. However, older members of the community may continue to use only their own minority language. Note that multilingualism, common throughout the world, does not necessarily lead to language loss.
Dwindling domains (3): The non-dominant language loses ground and, at home, parents begin to use the dominant language in their everyday interactions with their children, and children become *semi-speakers* of their own language (*receptive bilinguals*). Parents and older members of the community tend to be productively bilingual in the dominant and indigenous languages: they understand and speak both. Bilingual children may exist in families where the indigenous language is actively used.
Limited or formal domains (2): The non-dominant language is used only

in highly formal domains, as especially in ritual and administration. The language may also still be used at the community centre, at festivals, and at ceremonial occasions where these older members of the community have a chance to meet. The limited domain may also include homes where grandparents and other older extended family members reside, and other traditional gathering places of the elderly. Many people can understand the language but cannot speak it.

Highly limited domain (1): The non-dominant language is used in very restricted domains at special occasions, usually by very few individuals in a community, e.g. ritual leaders on ceremonial occasions. Some other individuals may remember at least some of the language (*rememberers*).

Extinct (0): The language is not spoken at any place at any time.

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Speaker Population
Universal use	5	The language is used in all domains and for all functions
Multilingual parity	4	Two or more languages may be used in most social domains and for most functions
Dwindling domains	3	The language is in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains.
Limited or formal domains	2	The language is used in limited social domains and for several functions
Highly limited domains	1	The language is used only in a very restricted domains and for a very few functions.
extinct	0	The language is used only in any domain and for any function.

Factor 5: Response to New Domains and Media

New areas for language use may emerge as community living conditions change. While some language communities do succeed in expanding their own language into the new domain, most do not. Schools, new work environments, new media, including broadcast media and the Internet, usually serve only to expand the scope and power of the dominant language at the expense of endangered languages. Although no existing domains of the endangered language may be lost, the use of the dominant language in the new domain has mesmerizing power, as with television.

If the communities do not meet the challenges of modernity with their language, it becomes increasingly irrelevant and stigmatized.

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Speaker Population
dynamic	5	The language is used in all new domains
Robust/active	4	The language is used in most new

		domains.
receptive	3	The language is used in many domains
coping	2	The language is used in some new domains
minimal	1	The language is used only in a few new domains
inactive	0	The language is not used in any new domains.

The type and use of these new domains will vary according to the local context. One example of the possible use of this criterion is: an endangered language enjoys one new domain, broadcast media, including radio and television, but only for a half-hour a week. Though the availability of these media gives the language a potentially high ranking, the extreme time limitation results in limited exposure to the language, which thus would rank only a 2 or 3. Inevitably, there will be different levels of achievement in different media.

In education, assigning criteria can be based on two dimensions: up to what level, and how broadly across the curriculum, the endangered language is used. An endangered language which is the medium of instruction for all courses and at all levels will rank much higher than an endangered language that is taught only one hour per week.

All new domains, be they in employment, education, or the media, must be considered together when assessing an endangered language community's response.

Education *in* the language is essential for language vitality. There are language communities that maintain strong oral traditions, and some do not wish their language to be written. In other communities, literacy in their language is a source of pride. In general, however, literacy is directly linked with social and economic development. Needed are books and materials on all topics for various ages and language abilities.

Grade	Accessibility of Written Materials
5	There is an established orthography, literacy tradition with grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature, and everyday media. Writing in the language is used in administration and education.
4	Written materials exist, and at school, children are developing literacy in the language. Writing in the language is not used in administration.
3	Written materials exist and children may be exposed to the written form at school. Literacy is not promoted through print media.
2	Written materials exist, but they may only be useful for some members of the community; and for others, they may have a symbolic significance. Literacy education in the language is not a part of the school curriculum.
1	A practical orthography is known to the community and some material is being written.
0	No orthography available to the community.

4.2.2 Language Attitudes and Policies

The maintenance, promotion, or abandonment of non-dominant languages may be dictated by the dominant linguistic culture, be it regional or

national. The linguistic ideology of a state may inspire linguistic minorities to mobilize their populations toward the maintenance of their languages, or may force them to abandon them. These linguistic attitudes can be a powerful force both for promotion and loss of their languages.

Members of the dominant culture shape the ideological environment, propagating a value system in which their own language is seen as a positive asset, and believed to be a unifying symbol for the region or state. When several larger linguistic communities compete for the same political or social space, they may each have their own conflicting linguistic attitudes. This leads to the general perception that multiple languages cause divisiveness and are a threat to national unity. The fostering of a single dominant language is one attempt to deal with this *real* or *merely perceived* threat. In doing so, the governing body may legislate the use of language. Accordingly, the policies may discourage or even prohibit the use of other languages. National policy, including the lack of overt policy, has in any case a direct impact on the language attitude of the community itself.

4.2.2.1 Language Attitudes and Policies: Dominant and Non-dominant Language Communities

A country's government may have an explicit language use policy for its multiple languages. At one extreme, one language may be designated as the sole official language of the country, while all others are condemned. At the other extreme, all languages of a nation may receive equal official status. Equal legal status, however, does not guarantee language maintenance and long-term vitality of a language.

Factor 7: Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes And Policies, Including Official Status and Use

Governments and institutions have explicit policies and/or implicit attitudes toward the dominant and subordinate languages.

Equal support (5): All of a country's languages are valued as assets. All languages are protected by law, and the government encourages the maintenance of all languages by implementing explicit policies.

Differentiated support (4): Non-dominant languages are explicitly protected by the government, but there are clear differences in the contexts in which the dominant/official language(s) and non-dominant (protected) language(s) are used**.** The government encourages ethnolinguistic groups to maintain and use their languages, most often in private domains (as the home language), rather than in public domains (e.g. in schools). Some of the domains of non-dominant language use enjoy high prestige (e.g. at ceremonial occasions).

Passive assimilation (3): The dominant group is indifferent as to whether or not minority languages are spoken, as long as the dominant group's language is the language of interaction. Though this is not an explicit language policy, the dominant group's language is the *de facto* official language. Most domains of non-dominant language use do not enjoy high prestige.

Active assimilation (2): The government encourages minority groups to abandon their own languages by providing education for the minority group members in the dominant language. Speaking and/or writing in non-dominant languages is not encouraged.

Forced assimilation (1): The government has an explicit language policy

declaring the dominant group's language to be the <u>only</u> official national language, while the languages of subordinate groups are neither recognized nor supported.

Prohibition (0): Minority languages are prohibited from use in any domain. Languages may be tolerated in private domains.

Degree of Support	Grade	Official Attitudes toward Language
equal support	5	All languages are protected.
differentiated support	4	Minority languages are protected primarily as the language of the private domains. The use of the language is prestigious.
passive assimilation	3	No explicit policy exists for minority languages; the dominant language prevails in the public domain.
active assimilation	2	Government encourages assimilation to the dominant language. There is no protection for minority languages.
forced assimilation	1	The dominant language is the sole official language, while non-dominant languages are neither recognized nor protected.
prohibition	0	Minority languages are prohibited.

Factor 8: Community Members' Attitudes toward Their Own Language

Members of a speech community are not usually neutral towards their own language. They may see it as essential to their community and identity and promote it; they may use it without promoting it; they may be ashamed of it and, therefore, not promote it; or they may see it as a nuisance and actively avoid using it.

When members' attitudes towards their language are very positive, the language may be seen as a key symbol of group identity. Just as people value family traditions, festivals and community events, members of the community may see their language as a cultural core value, vital to their community and ethnic identity. If members view their language as hindrance to economic mobility and integration into mainstream society, they may develop negative attitudes toward their language.

Grade	Community Members' Attitudes toward Language
5	*All* members value their language and wish to see it promoted.
4	*Most* members support language maintenance.
3	*Many* members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
2	*Some* members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
1	Only *a few* members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
0	*No one* cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use a dominant language.

Factor 9: Amount and Quality of Documentation

As a guide for assessing the urgency for documenting a language, the type and

quality of existing language materials must be identified. Of central importance are written texts, including transcribed, translated, and annotated audiovisual recordings of natural speech. Such information importantly helps members of the language community formulate specific tasks, and enables linguists to design research projects together with members of the language community.

Documentation	Grade	Language Documentation
superlative	5	There are comprehensive grammars and dictionaries, extensive texts; constant flow of language materials. Abundant annotated high-quality audio and video recordings exist.
good	4	There are one good grammar and a number of adequate grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature, and occasionally updated everyday media; adequate annotated high-quality audio and video recordings.
fair	3	There may be an adequate grammar or sufficient amount of grammars, dictionaries, and texts, but no everyday media; audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality or degree of annotation.
fragmentary	2	There are some grammatical sketches, word-lists, and texts useful for limited linguistic research but with inadequate coverage. Audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality, with or without any annotation.
inadequate	1	Only a few grammatical sketches, short word-lists, and fragmentary texts. Audio and video recordings do not exist, are of unusable quality, or are completely un-annotated.
undocumented	0	No material exists.

.