Local Language Planners in the Context of Early Soviet Language Policy: The Case of Mariupol Greeks

Planificateurs linguistiques locaux et politique linguistique soviétique des débuts : le cas des Grecs de Mariupol'

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LOCAL LANGUAGE PLANNERS IN THE CONTEXT OF EARLY SOVIET LANGUAGE POLICY: THE CASE OF MARIUPOL GREEKS

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INTRODUCTION

According to Cooper’s (1989: 31) definition, one of the most significant parameter of language policy is the question: ‘Who plans?’ Classical researches on language policy and planning (LPP) focused on action of state and its results. Haugen’s model (1966, 1983) of language planning included four stages (selection, codification, implementation, elaboration) and emphasized the conscious efforts and macro-level of language policy. However, recent important works highlight the micro-level practices in language planning (Davies, Ziegler 2015, Liddicoat, Baldauf 2008, Baldauf 2006, Spolsky 2004). When investigation of language planning starts to explore a new area of action in small close-tied communities or even in families, it enters a new theoretic perspective for understanding the process of influence on language.

Within such a framework, the focus has shifted from the process of language planning per se to the individual contributions of different actors. As Baldauf states, ‘This shift in focus led to a rethinking of agency – who has the power to influence change in these micro language policy and planning situations’ (Baldauf 2006: 147). Zhao and Baldauf (2012) investigate the individual agency roles in relation to stages on the LPP implementation continuum. Spolsky (2004: 5) suggests the term ‘language management’ for ‘any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management’. His understanding of language management includes the individual’s role in prestige language promotion. It should be noted that another interesting point is the influence of biographical circumstance on language management, i.e. subconscious language attitudes.

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Given the points made above, I am going to focus on the early Soviet language policy to understand the individual role of language planners. During the first two decades after the October Revolution, language policy was oriented to promote minority languages’ use in education, publishing, and local administration (Grenoble 2003, Kirkwood 1989, Kreindler 1985). Nevertheless, this policy led to different results according to region, and one of the reasons for this is the organization of LLP by a lot of different actors who made individual contributions to the process.

To enter the ongoing debate on the nature of Soviet language policy and education in native languages, however, it is important to clarify how these studies articulate the relationships between the actions of local elites in language planning and the language policy of the central authorities. The micro-level is usually not taken into consideration in previous investigations of Soviet language policy, although there are a few interesting works with an accent on individual theory of language in early Soviet linguistics (Simonato 2008, Uhlik 2008 and some others). Other interesting works take into account the role of professional groups, for example, the contribution of Soviet ethnographers who assisted in ethnic categorization (Hirsch 2005).

The Mariupol or Azov Greeks are a large Greek group in Ukraine. The size of the community nowadays lies in the range of 100,000 and divides into two parts: Turkish-speaking (Urumy) and Greek-speaking (Rumei). The LPP of the early Soviet period should have supported the native language in Priazov’e but the bilingualism of the group and non-trivial identity of these people left open the question about which mother-tongue(s) should be promoted. By examining language policy and discourse about language(s) in Mariupol, the local context and origin of actors will be taken into account.

The paper deals with the role of language planners among Mariupol Greeks in the frame of Micro Language Planning. More specifically, my study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What was the role of local activists among Mariupol Greeks in language planning in the 1920s-1930s?

2. How did the biographical context of local language planners, including their native languages and language attitudes, influence the process of language selection and minority language treatment at a micro-level?

This study will focus in particular, though not exclusively, on the personal contribution of language planners among Mariupol Greeks in the 1920s-1930s including both the conscious individual efforts of language leaders and the invisible influence of their biographical backgrounds, beliefs and native language varieties on decision making. One of my aims is to show that this context is necessary to clarify the fluid process of language planning in the post-Revolutionary Soviet Union.
The analysis relies on different sources. The main data are language policy documents from archives. Additional materials are the memoirs of local activists (Leventis 1998) and interviews with former pupils of Greek schools collected during my fieldwork in Priazov'e (2001-2005).

The history of Soviet national and language policy in the 1920s-1930s has been documented from the archives better than any other periods. There is a Greek collection in the Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (CDAVO, Kiev) and in the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine (CDIAK). There is a regional collection kept by the State Archives of Donetsk Oblast (DADO, Donetsk). Some documents were published (Greki 2000), but most data used in this study comes from unpublished documents (1918 – late 1930s) from the above-mentioned archives.

It should be noted that data include documents of different types, from records of village Soviets and school meetings to official letters from the Central Committee. The same facts concerning language situation are represented in different discourses, including the transcription of speech of ‘ordinary’ people, reports from member of the local elite and central authorities. The documents from different levels of administrative process show the implementation of political decisions in localities and, vice versa, the reaction to the local reports on the republic level, which makes it possible to trace the stage of decision making.

MARIUPOL GREEKS AND THEIR LANGUAGE(S)

A brief historical overview

The Mariupol Greeks moved from the Crimea to the Azov Sea region in the late 18th century. The size of community at the end of 18th century was estimated around 75,000. They founded the city of Mariupol and a number of villages with Crimean names (Staryj Krym, Jalta, Urzuf and so on).

As noted above, linguistically they can be divided into two groups. Their self-nominations, Rumei and Urumy, origin from the same historical roots with phonetic metathesis (Rumei, Urumy < Roman). Both communities are Orthodox Christians and share the same traditions and ethnographic practices. The Rumei and Urumy lived separately, and each village was Rumean or Uremean, except Bolshoy Yanisol (now Velikonovosilka) and Mariupol city. There were different trade and working contact between villages, and at the same time, mixed marriages between Rumei and Urumy were rare, as well as with Ukrainian, Russian, Albanian and other neighbouring groups in the multiethnic coast of the Azov Sea. There was some competition between the two groups which is shown in ethnic jokes about neighbours. The Urum language was a way of communication between the two Greek groups after their resettlement. At the turn end of the 20th century, Russian language took on the function of communication between
the two groups (Baranova 2010). The Azov Greeks had privileges including their own administration (Greek court) and church autonomy, tax exemption for the first time of their settlement and others, but during the 19th century they gradually lost these advantages.

Inside of their communities, Urumy and Rumei used their own languages. Rumean is genetically related to the Northern group of Modern Greek dialects. Due to centuries of development in isolation from Greece and in contact with Crimean Tatar and later Russian, its structure and lexicon differ greatly from those of Modern Greek. Several varieties of Rumean were spoken in twenty villages in Priazov'e, Ukraine. They called their language Rumejka. The Urum language is a Turkish language close to the Crimean Tatar language. Russian was spreading step by step, which led to a language shift. Most of Urumy and Rumei by Priazov'e speak Russian as a first language nowadays (Viktorova 2006, Baranova 2010).

It is noteworthy that before the mid-nineteenth century, most of the Mariupol Greeks were illiterate. Priests and administrative staff used the Greek script for Greek (Katharevousa) and the Urum language. Shortly after resettlement, in 1820, a private school was opened in Mariupol. The language of instruction in this school was Russian (Mariupol 1892: 171) although in the villages priests taught Greek literacy to both Urumean and Rumean children (Serafimov 1998 [1862]: 92). This practice has ceased because of the rising number of Russian primary schools and finally it stopped after the 1864 Law («Положение о начальных народных училищах») which restricted instruction in languages other than Russian. As a result, at the beginning of the 20th century, 90% of Mariupol Greek adults could read or write in Russian, but not in Greek. At that time, Mariupol Greeks sought to acquire Russian. They did not clearly understand that primary education in their mother-tongue might have a comparative advantage for children, although between the 19th and the 20th centuries there was a gradually emerging debate about ethnic identity among elites, and the opportunity to learn in their native languages.

1. Misleadingly, the label ‘Urum’ refers to two different languages and community, Mariupol Greek and Turkish-speaking Greek in East Georgia (Tsalka district). Last one is close to Turkish.
2. For example, CDIAK holds a collection of transcripts written in 1799 in Urum with Greek letters from Mariupol ‘Greek court’ which combined judicial procedures with administrative work (ЦГИАУ, ф. 1576, оп. 1, дела 3, 5 and the following).
3. ГАДО-парт, ф. 11 оп.1 д. 214 Лл. 26-32 Протокол межведомственного совещания при Крым.ЦИКе по вопросу об увязке работы НКПроса УССР и Крыма по культурному обслуживанию греко-татарского и греко-эллинского населения УССР от 26 дек. 1929.
THE PUZZLING SITUATION OF THE TWO LANGUAGES OF THE AZOV GREEKS

There is a different estimate of the number of Azov Greeks after the Revolution and the *Urume* and *Rumei* ratio because all censuses defined both of them as ‘Greeks’ without any specification; furthermore, not all Ukrainian Greeks are Azov Greeks. The census of 1926 pointed 104,666 Greeks in USSR (Jali 1931). The most reliable source is the local census of the Donetsk region in 1923 (Столиная подворная перепись Донецкой губернии) because it makes it possible to define Urumean and Rumean villages. According to this source, there was a total of 86,281 Greeks (Itogi 1923, see also discussion in Greki 2000). There were 38,981 *Rumei* and 35,309 *Urume* in relevant villages and 6,138 Greeks in cities. There were also 5,853 Greeks from both groups living in mixed villages and small new *khutors* (farms) which could not be attributed as Urumean or Rumean.

In the Soviet period, the Greek ethnicity of the group was supported by official categorization in passports and census. The *Rumejka* and *Urume* languages were also counted as Greek languages. A census, as Anderson (1991) claimed, is one of the ways to influence on ethnic identity of people. The *Urume* did not give up considering themselves as *Greeks* because the Greek ethnicity was ascribed to them in documents and censuses.

The ambiguous position of *Urume* – Greeks with Turkish language — causes constant discussions about their ethnic identity. Any speculations about it (either by *Urume* or by other groups) is based on finding out that there is a constant “inborn” ethnicity and it should have the same title as language, religion and land. *Urume* and their neighbours consider the language of the group as the main marker, which forms the borders of the community. At the beginning of the 1920s, this consideration was reflected in reports and determined the debate on LPP in Mariupol.

EARLY SOVIET LANGUAGE PLANNING IN MARIUPOL

Overview of the history and organization of the process

The history of language planning does not strictly speaking belong to the central topic of this study, but it must be briefly mentioned here to understand the context. The factual background of language planning in the 1920s-1930s is well studied, and there are sufficient works with relevant statements about it in Ukraine, or solely about Mariupol Greeks (Jakubova, Rublov 2014, Baranova 2010, Jakubova 1999), and therefore I will only point out key moments about it.

As mentioned above, early Soviet language policy was oriented to promote minority languages’ use in education, publishing, and local administration. Language planning or so-called ‘linguistics building’ presupposed the development
of new literary languages, the creation of alphabets for languages that did not yet have literacy, and a standardization process. A main aspect of the new policy was primary schooling in minority languages, but it supported the development of high education for languages with an ethnic autonomy or a republic.

Language policy in Mariupol was typical in this sense. The Executive committee and the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR (Sovnarkom) agreed to establish conditions for providing equal rights for all minority languages («О подходах к обеспечению равноправия языков и помощь в развитии украинского языка», 1923). It supposed the official usage of minority languages, including school teaching, legal proceedings and administrative work. The implementation of law in Mariupol district included primary education in Greek (Demotic) in Rumean villages from 1926 and in Crimean-Tatar for Urum from 1930 or even 1931. The Mariupol Greek Teacher College was divided into Greko-ellinskij and Greko-tatarskij departments, as well as Summer Training courses for those involved in teaching and publishing activities as well as for the benefit of Greek theater. These organizations employed both cultural activists from Azov Greeks and political emigrants from Greece.

The main problem was educational literature, and all reports after school monitoring asked to send books. For Rumei, Demotic textbooks in reformed Greek orthography with 30 letters (i.e. without doubling letters like omega and omicron) were printed in Rostov and consisted of some features of other Greek dialects, and Azov Greek teachers were dissatisfied with them (ЦГАВО, ф. 166, оп. 6, д. 5159, л. 12). Mariupol Greek Teacher College asked Narkompros in 1928 about the possibility to buy textbooks in Athens, Greece (ЦГАВО, ф. 166 оп. 6, д. 5159, л. 37). Only at the beginning of the 1930s, a Mariupol textbook with Rumejka dialectal features was printed (Φορτυν ατοβα, 1932). Often, in the absence of textbooks, teacher and students used the local Greek newspaper ‘Kollectivistis’ and children’s magazine ‘Pioneros’ for instruction. The language for Urumy was debated in the 1920s, which is the reason why teaching in the ‘native’ language at the Urumean school started later. It used textbooks for the Crimean-Tatar language printed in Crimea with the Latin alphabet.

National policy in the early Soviet years presupposed the active participation of the ethnic community’s representatives (so-called korenizatsia, i.e. ‘indigenization’). The ethnic background offered an opportunity for career advancement. Preference recruitment of ethnic Urumy or Rumei can be viewed as positive discrimination (see Martin’s theory ‘affirmative Action Empire’ 2001). It was also a challenge for administrative work, because the new government officials had to be ideologically and ethnically restricted as well as having sufficient working skills, while human resources were limited. In the next paragraphs I shall show who were the new ethnic intellectuals and leaders of the Mariupol Greeks. Finally, it should be mentioned that no law was passed to cease the support of minority languages in Mariupol. Nevertheless, this was stopped after
massive arrests among Greek cultural activists in 1937-1938. Administrative Russification was the only form of language planning afterwards.

Another important aspect is the role of Ukrainian. The well-studied history of Ukrainization in early Soviet time (see, for example, a recent book by Pauly 2014) has peculiarities in the ethnic regions of USSR. It was decided not to introduce Ukrainian in the administrative area and to try to use Greek in electoral and political brochures. The reports of the members of the central authorities were often written in Ukrainian. Ukrainian was present as a subject in the curriculum of schools and teachers’ college, but some documents pointed out an insufficient level of Ukrainian among Greek students.

**Language planners in the Mariupol district and language selection**

As one should expect, after October Revolution new elites emerged. Comparing names of politicians in Mariupol between 1905 and 1917 and in the Soviet period (for example, the minutes of the city Duma (Zhurnal 1909) with early Soviet documents, we see different names. Furthermore, the new activists were sufficiently young and most of them did not have previous experience of administrative work or even education. The most important was the Communist party affiliation. For example, one of the most prominent figures of the period, the Head of the Greek section in the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee (VUVCK), Savva Jali, was born in 1895 in the Rumean village of Sartana, and then in 1917, at the age of 22, he became Council Secretary in Sartana district. He was a member of the Bolshevik party (from 1918) and a volunteer in the Red Army (1919-1921). An autobiographic sketch (Jali 1931) shows that his rapid career after demobilization from Red Army consisted of a sequence of different administrative positions for a few months in Mariupol, Ekaterinoslav and Kharkov with gradual promotion. At the same time he studied in Kharkov Institute of National Economy. From 1925 to his arrest (he was shot in 1938), Jali’s work was tied with the National Committee in All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee. Another famous person was Georgij Kostoprov (1903-1938) who was a Rumean poet, editor of the Greek newspaper ‘Kollectivistis’ in his 20s, and a consultant of the Communist Party of Ukraine in the field of ethnic minorities.

Another remarkable trend was the changing of the ethnic origin of cultural elites. On the one hand, there were a number of recent Greek emigrants from Greece and Turkey. They moved to the USSR after 1924 for political reasons. For example, N. Christilidi graduated from the Gymnasium in Trapesund and studied for three months in Athens University⁴. Other important persons were the teacher in Mariupol Teacher Training I. Levkopulos, the editor of the Greek children’s magazine ‘Pioneros’ F. Samarchidis, and others emigrants from

⁴. ІДАВО, Ф.166 оп.6, д.5159, л.10
Greece. On the other hand, during this period the important persons among Mariupol Greeks were *Rumei* (as mentioned above Jali, Kostoprav and others) and not *Urumy*, in contrast to the previous time when most educated people were *Urumy*, because they were more educated urban people while Rumeans were rural citizens.

How did their biographical background influence the process of language planning? Two interesting points in the Mariupol Greek context are language and alphabet selection in the community and the debate about the Turkophone group with Greek ethnic identity. To understand these issues, let’s look what language and alphabet was chosen for both groups.

**The selection process: choosing one variant for Greek all over the world**

It should be noted that with regard to Mariupol Greeks, the first of Haugen’s (1983) stages of language planning – selection of idiom(s) for minority group – presupposed a lot of possible variants. There were local language (*Rumejka*), other Greek dialects in USSR (Pontic) and two variants of Greek, *Katharevousa* and *Demotic*. *Katharevousa* is an archaic and complicated variant and it was often described as a descendant of the ancient Greek language; *Demotic* (*Dimothiki*) is a standard version of the vernacular and became the official language of Greece in 1974. Before that year, such a distribution is a classic example of *diglossia*, according to Ferguson (1959). Noteworthy, the choice of Demotic was understood in the Soviet discourse as a language simplification and as a part of the movement for democratization. It was repeated from one document to the other that *Katharevousa* is a *bourgeoisie* variant and Demotic is a *proletarian* language which is a simple oral one. The idea of simplifying written languages also was part of the political debate in Greece at that time, especially in education (Mackridge 2009) and it also was discussed in terms of class and political ideology (Sideri 2012: 50). Nevertheless, the standard variant in education and literature in Greece was *Katharevousa*.

The selection of language for Greek schools and implementation process were based on the reports of local communists from villages near Mariupol, under the coordination of republic government and cultural elites of Soviet Greeks as a whole. School education in Rumean villages was to be governed by rules of Union Conference among Greeks of the USSR (‘Всесоюзное совещание по вопросам просвещения и культурного строительства среди греческого населения СССР’, 1926), which decided to use Demotic for all Greek groups in the USSR, despite the difference of Greek idioms in North Caucasus, Georgia, Krasnodar and Mariupol.

After applying the Republic law, there were community meetings in Greek villages in Stalinsk and Mariupol region to discuss the new nation policy and to vote the implementation of new rules in practice. As a rule, at the beginning administrators from the center explained the new policy to the community members;
after that, there was a discussion (*prenija*) including different reaction of local people. For instance, the protocol of agitation meetings in the village of Jalta includes presentation of key speakers from VUCK (Jali, Bogaditsa and Janson) with common ideas about advantages of native language and its underestimation before Revolution. An interesting point of the discussion was about the status of native language, because some of hearers stated that their language was a not full-fledged language but a ‘poor’ dialect.

It is necessary to use it in the common life but not for education because there is no literacy. Our language is a jargon and differ a lot from true Greek.

A lot of documents discussed the opposition between ‘Hellenic language’ and ‘local Greek dialects’ or ‘local jargon’. The key point for government officials was, however, to affirm that the Greek language was an objective condition for power consolidation.

Т. Богадица: Участие в совстроительстве может быть полным только на своем родном языке. Характерны случаи, когда крестьяне заявляют, что не пойдут в то или иное учреждение, потому что там их не поймут, что понять грека может только грек. Необходимо, чтобы в греческих местностях в учреждении был бы хоть один грек.

Real participation in Soviet planning may be only via native language. There are typical cases when peasants reject to deal with some public institution, because only Greek could understand Greek. It is necessary that every official place will have at least one Greek.

As a result, as mentioned above, Demotic was chosen for Rumean school and it was called ‘Hellenic language’. The initiatives of local language planners changed after the participation in Union Conference among Greeks of the USSR. For instance, at the beginning of *Hellenization* Jali supposed that Greek alphabet was possibly not suitable for Rumean and suggested to use Cyrillic script. Finally, the Greek alphabet with simplification of doubling letters was used in Rumean schools and Jali agreed.

However, *Demotic* is far from *Rumejka* and teachers in Summer training courses tried to learn a new variant. At the beginning, parents were opposed to the Hellenization of the school, demanded the transfer to schools in Russian or, if there was a choice, sent their children to Russian classes. They told that:

5. ЦДАВО, ф. 413 оп.1, д. 56, лл. 11-14об. Протокол заседания ялтинского месткома рабпрос совместно с представителями ЦК ВУВЦК т. Яли и т. Янсон и т. Богадица, 03.09.1925.
6. Ibid.
7. ЦДАВО, ф.413. Оп. 1, Д.100, лл. 87-88. Доповіда записка члена ЦК нацменшин при ВУЦК С.Г. Яли щодо етнічного походження греків Маріупольської округи. 4 липня 1925 (the document was published in Greki 2000: 179).
[…]. The reaction to parents claims’ among policy makers was a discussion on the ways to overcome such negative attitudes among citizens via convenience of teacher in Summer training courses; they did not speak about the transformation of their system.

Looking into the agency role in every step of LPP, as Zhao and Baldauf (2012) suggest, we can see that activists impacted the language situation in Rumean villages in two ways. Firstly, their mother-tongue(s) determined the language of teaching or writing, due to the limited number of well-educated teachers and administrator with Greek origin, i.e. the codification of language. For instance, the editor of newspaper ‘Kollectivistis’ was the Rumean poet Georgij Kostoprav (1903-1938), and the language of this publication was mainly Rumean with additional lexical elements from Demotic, whereas materials in children magazine ‘Pioneros’ were predominantly Demotic (Jakubova, Rubl’ov 2014) which was the mother-tongue of the chief editor, Feodor Samarchidis (1907, Greece – 1937, USSR).

Secondly and maybe more significantly, the activists had affected community’s attitudes to local idioms, especially for Rumean. The most influential in this aspect were communist Greek refugees who were considered as experts in the language both by central authorities and by Rumei. Instructors in the Summer training courses for teachers were Greeks immigrated from Greece to the USSR in 1924. They did not consider Rumean as a full-fledged language, but as a poor dialect incapable of expressing great ideas. For example, I. Levkopolus often pointed out that students of Teaching courses (Rumei) ‘did not understand Greek language’ and ‘had a lot of dialects’ (govorok)10. Such expert views determined the attitudes among native Rumei. Remembering his first meetings with emigrants from Greece in Mariupol teacher training, a member of the Greek newspaper ‘Kollectivistis’, Leventis, writes about Rumean and Hellenic (Demotic):

Our dialect of Yanisol was distorted and too poor and I hardly understood my teacher. It was the first time I felt myself as Greek and I felt uncomfortable


8. ГАДО, ф. Р-2, оп. 1, д. 100, лл. 44-46. Протокол №2 заседания родительского собрания 2-ой Большеянисольской трудшколы им. Н.К.Крупской, состоявшийся 5 марта 1929 г.
9. ЦДАВО, ф. 166 оп. 6, д. 709, лл. 48-50об.
10. Ibid., л.12, Протокол заседания педтехникума от 24.01.1928. Доклад Левкополуса о работе греч. группы
because I did not know the language. I was fascinated of melody and expres-
siveness of Lefkopulos’s language.

Cultural activists among Rumei adopted the attitude to Rumean as ‘poor’
dialect and spread such attitudes among ordinary people. The discourse of Greek
communists from Turkey and Greece was powerful. They were ‘people with
expertise’ in terminology of Zhou and Baldauf (2012). Nevertheless, cultural
activists from ethnic Rumei like Kostoprav or Leventis in their production
tended to use Rumean with lexical borrowings from Demotic. For example,
Kostoprav in his poems of the 1930’s (Kostoprav 2012) created a Rumean
poetic language from elements of Sartana and Yanisol local varieties with addi-
tional lexems from Demotic.

To sum up, the LPP in Rumean villages was influenced both by local
activists and Greek communists in the frame of the central policy tending to
unify the Greeks in Soviet Union with unprivileged language of proletariat in
Greece. The actual linguistic features of Rumejka and differences from Demotic
was underestimated as far as the reactions of the parents. The Greek experts
and local Rumei activists shared the explanations of the distance between Rume-
jka and Demotic as ‘poverty’ of local variant. At the same time, the writers cre-
ated Rumean literature and did not shift to pure Demotic.

Categorization of Urum: creating the double nomination

The next case shows the local debate about LPP without any significant influ-
ence of the central ideology like international Greek language. Categorization of
Urum was reflected in the denominations of group and selection of language
for schools in Urumean villages. It should be noted that neither officials nor local
activists were Urumy and that is why it is difficult to explore the individual
agency. The discussion about Urumy and their language was organized by dif-
derent actors including government officials from Kiev and Kharkov and local
officials and activists from ethnic Rumei. It is strange, however, that the debate
about Turkophone group did not include the active members of Urumy them-
selves. Their attitudes was reflected only in the minutes of the meetings held in
Urumean villages.

External evaluation was reflected in the reports of Inspector from
People’s Commissariat of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspectorate (Народный
комиссариат рабоче-крестьянской инспекции) Aref’ev. He wrote that the
main characteristic of every ethnic group is language. According to this, Urum
is Tatar and relates to Crimean Tatar. He explained the ‘Greek’ name of the
community as an extension of religious identity which should not be very
important in Soviet time.
Поскольку главным этнографическим признаком является язык, а не вера, то эта группа является, безусловно, тождественной и родственной крымским татарам, так как говорит на их языке.


Nevertheless, it is not the sole explanation. The local officials from Rumei like Jali tried to avoid the nomination Tatar or Turks. For example, Jali who in his first papers repeated that Urumy are not ‘true’ Greeks (maybe he followed an understanding well-spread among Rumei according to which there is a line between the two communities) and pointed that they may be descendants of Alans or Goths according to the previous ethnographers and travelers (Grigorovich 1874). Nevertheless, Jali criticized the evaluation of external Russian-speaking official (like Aref’ev) that an Urum is just a Tatar (Jali 1930). He argued that Urumy are ethnic Greeks who lost their native language in.

According to the ethnic description of Urumy as Greeks who lost their native language and had shifted to the dominant language of the unfriendly group, there were ideas to teach them Greek language in order to ‘return’ them to their mother-tongue. Transcripts of rural gatherings showed that such suggestions were not accepted by peasants. The explanation of it is that the identity of Urumy persisted in their language attitudes. For instance, there was discussions about learning ‘Hellenic’ language in Mangush, but inhabitants showed loyalty to the Uromean language.

Исторически мы утратили свой национальный язык как греки. Русский для нас также не есть родной. Быть может, и турецко-татарский также не родной. Но поскольку мы на нем говорим, то он для нас является материнским. Нужно дать возможность пользоваться родным языком и в школе.11

Historically, we lost our national language. Russian is not native for us. Maybe Turkish-Tatar too is not native, but we speak it and that’s why it is our mother-tongue. There should be the possibility for us to use our mother-tongue at school.

So, in most villages, peasants voted for selection ‘Turco-Tatar language’ with special attention on choosing Russian (i.e. Cyrillic) alphabet12 as a route for making non-Russian language more similar to the prestigious Russian. On the other side, Urumy themselves rejected the Tatar identity. Aref’ev noted that Urumy обижаются, если их называют татарами, а не греками, так как они считают греческую национальность более высокой, чем татарскую (Jakubova 1999: 122).

11. ЦГАВО, ф. 413 оп.1, д. 56, лл. 18–20. Протокол заседания месткома рабпрос от 04.09.1925. Note-worthy, there is a polyfusional use of term родной язык as ‘ethnic’ or ‘titul language’ and as a ‘mother-tongue’ or ‘first language’.
12. ЦДАВО, ф. 413, оп.1, д. 56, лл. 25-25об. Протокол №11 общего собрания граждан Староигнатьевки от 09.09.1925. However, central authorities wanted to create a New Turkish alphabet for all Turkish languages in the USSR (Alpatov 2000: 65-70).
The debate resulted in both teaching Crimean Tatar language and giving support to ‘Greek’ ethnic identity of Urumy. According to the linguistic division, the bivalent nature of Urumy – reflected in the bi-nomination \textit{Greko-Tatary} and \textit{Rumei} – was called \textit{Greko-Helleny} (Greek-Hellenic). These terms appeared in official reports (but not in censuses or passports) and spread among common people; the attributes \textit{Greko-tatarskij} and \textit{Greko-ellinskiy} were also created to designate their languages. Nowadays the community use such ethnic labels. Crimean Tatar language is not so far from Urumean. There were no protests of parents like in Rumean villages. Interviews with former students in villages Karan and Staryj Krym show that most of them understand Crimean Tatar language and remember with pleasure some short poems or songs from the lessons.

\section*{CONCLUSION}

These data allow us to draw some conclusions about language planning in the Mariupol region and the role of local activists in the language policy of early Soviet time.

In the beginning of “indigenization” policy, the central authorities had not fixed ideas about Mariupol Greeks or considered the group in a way which was changed later via the investigation in the villages, negotiating with local activists. The main idea of providing equal opportunities for native language left open the question about mother-tongue for each group with bilingualism or mixed identity. The Republic level of LPP also had transformation during this short period. It is difficult to say how it could be further developed because the period of school teaching on native languages was very short.

To sum up, the case of Mariupol Greeks shows how language planning emerges from biographical/ethnic background and ideological discourse shared by the actors. The standardization of Rumean was closely tied with choosing Demotic and the union of the Greek language for proletarian international revolution. Communist refugees from Greece had a negative attitude to Tatar/Turks and partly a low loyalty to the dialects. The discourse of emigrants from Greece and their followers from \textit{Rumei} influenced the language attitudes of rural teachers. However, Rumei preferred to develop Rumean literature.

From a more general perspective, these data show that there is no strict central language policy as far as a structural demarcation between local elites and new Soviet government. The process of decision making in the field of language planning was a very fluid one and it was influenced by different actors, including local activists and even ‘common people’ who rejected the possibility for Urumy to ‘return’ to Greek language. A network of agents is responsible for the development of native languages and implementation LPP in different localities.

\textit{Zhow and Baldauf (2012)} distinguish different groups in LPP – \textit{people with expertise}, \textit{people with influence}, \textit{people with power} and \textit{people with interest}.
Their interests interact on different levels of LPP. Sometimes they find a compromise – as in the case of the interaction between active persons (‘people with interest’) in the village of Mangush and other Urumean settlements and officials (‘person with power’).

Looking into the Soviet LPP through the selection, codification, implementation and elaboration levels, we can see that process of selection predominantly occupy ‘people with power’. There was a central policy to promote native languages and authorities preferred to choose one variant for some groups. It had both ideological (proletarian language) and practical reasons, like the minimization of items (like with Urumy and Crimean Tatars). At the same time, local activists among cultural elite had predominantly an influence on the other levels of LPP.

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CDIAK – Central’nij derzhavnij istorichnj arhiv Ukraini (Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine)

DADO – Derzhavnij arhiv Donec’koi oblasti (State Archives of Doneck oblast)