

# Mapping linguistic diversity of Moscow

Yuri B. Koryakov, Julia V. Mazurova  
Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences

CONTACT-DRIVEN MULTILINGUAL PRACTICES

International Conference at the University of Helsinki  
(1-2 June 2017)



# The project “Languages of Moscow”

## Institute of linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences

Main goals:

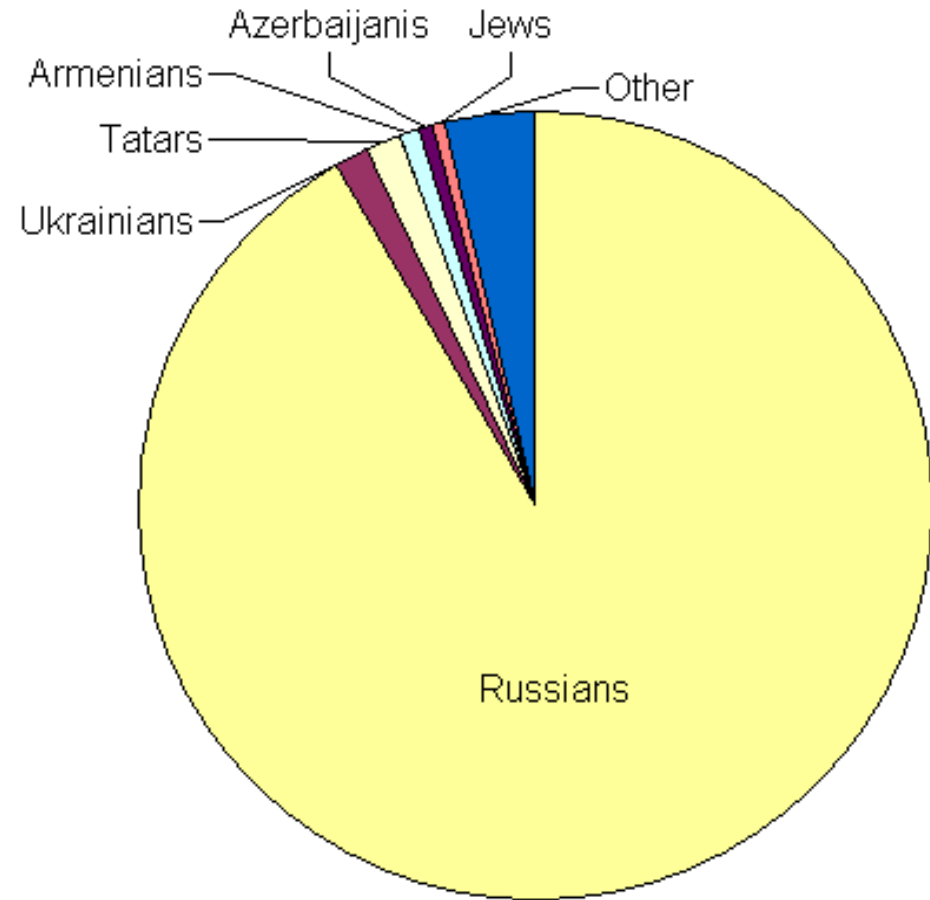
- ❖ To describe the metropolis as a multilingual linguistic area in context of urban linguistics
- ❖ To investigate the languages spoken in Moscow and to estimate the number of their speakers and the degree of language maintenance in different ethnic/age groups
- ❖ To research the functional aspects of language use in ethnic groups, i.e. the functioning of languages in the public sphere and the media
- ❖ To estimate the degree of knowledge of the Russian language among the members of the groups whose native language is not Russian and to observe the ways those groups acquire the Russian language.
- ❖ To study the Moscow government’s language policy and education of migrants’ children



# General demographics

Total Moscow population:  
**11,503,501** (2010 census)  
indicated their ethnic affiliation:  
94%

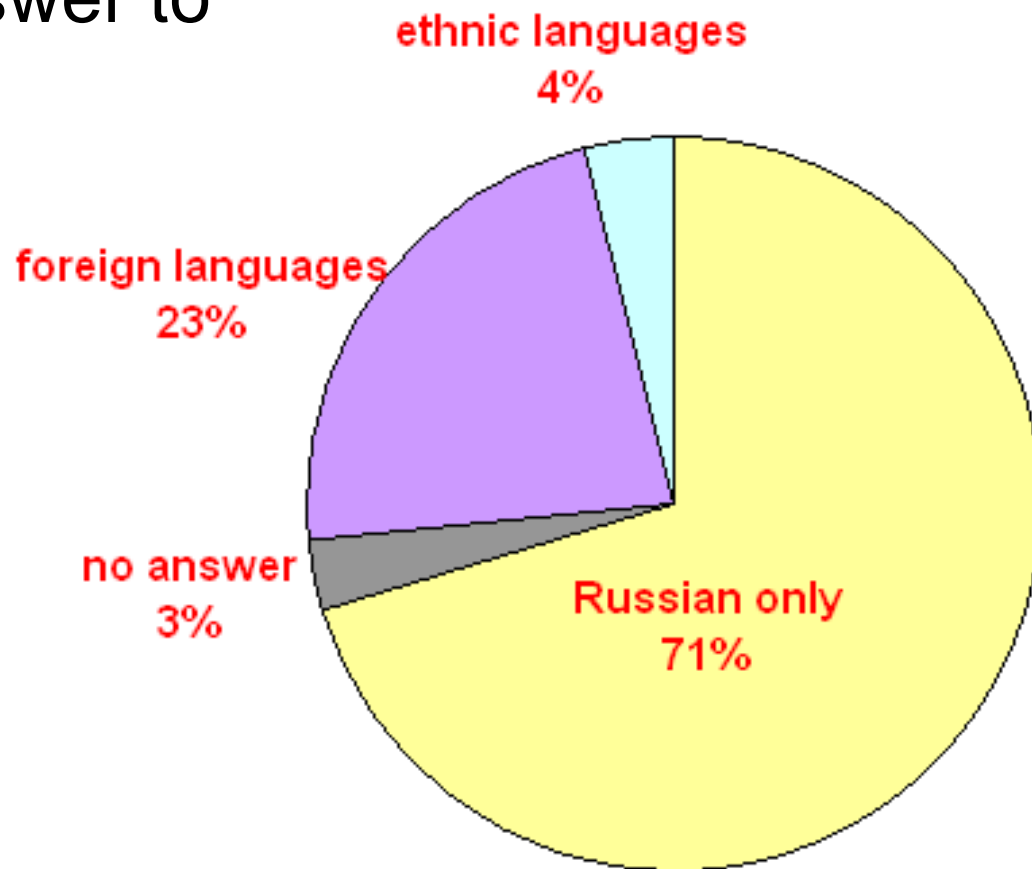
1. Russians: 92 % (86%)
2. Ukrainians: 1,42% (1,34%)
3. Tatars: 1,38 % (1,3%)
4. Armenians: 0,98% (0,93%)
5. Azerbaijanis: 0,53% (0,5%)
6. Jews: 0,49% (0,46%)





# Language statistics

- 3% (353,026) gave no answer to any of language questions
- 99.7% speak Russian
- **26%** (2,927,120) speak other language(s)
  - 22% - foreign languages
- 182 languages listed in census for Moscow





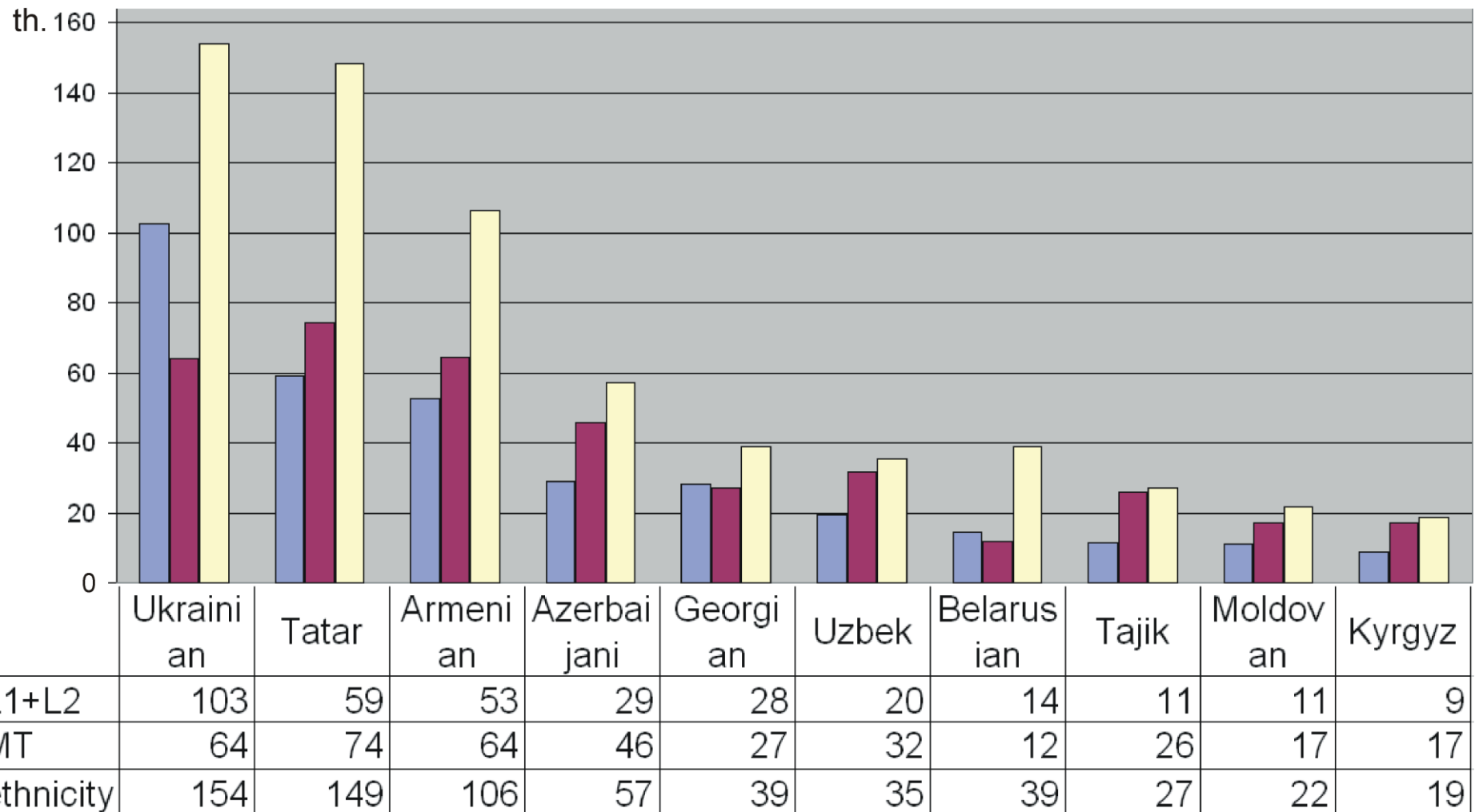


# Ethnic languages

- "Ethnic languages" – languages spoken mainly by corresponding ethnic group.
- 405,000 or 3.7% speak such languages.
- The largest ethnic languages in Moscow are spoken by migrants from former Soviet republic not by migrants from other parts of Russia (exc. Tatar)

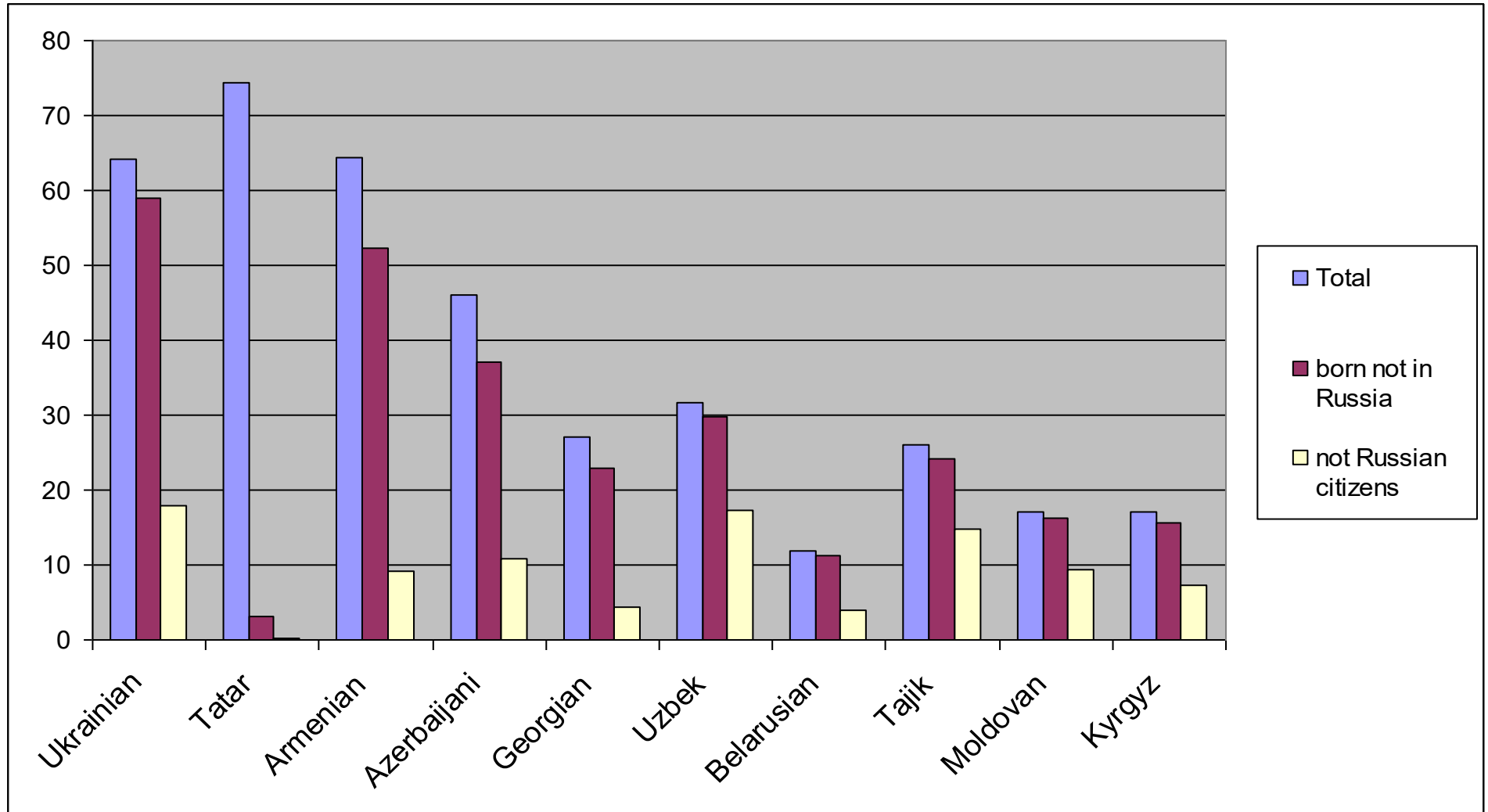


# Largest ethnic languages





# Ratio of Migration





# Foreign languages

- «Foreign languages» are languages spoken mainly as L2 by other speakers of other languages.
- For foreign languages, number of L2 speakers outruns number of native speakers at least 2–3 times, often ten or even hundred times.
- English – 583 times more
- German – 234 times more
- French – 169 times more

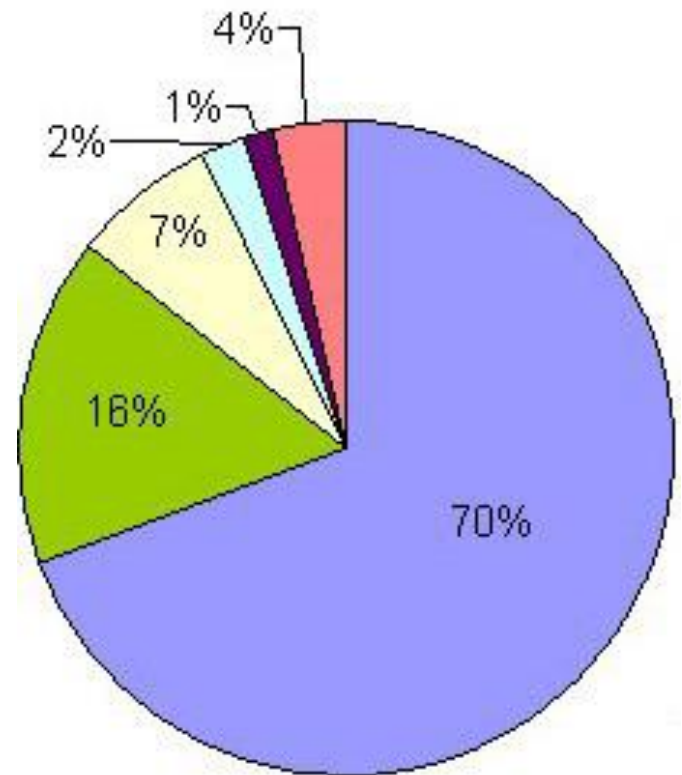




# Foreign languages

## Number of speakers:

- English – 1726 th., 16%
- German – 404 th., 4%
- French – 180 th., 2%
- Spanish – 61 th., 1%
- Italian – 29 th.
- Polish – 10 th.
- Turkish – 9,5 th.
- Chinese – 9,4 th.
- ...Latin – 5,6 th.



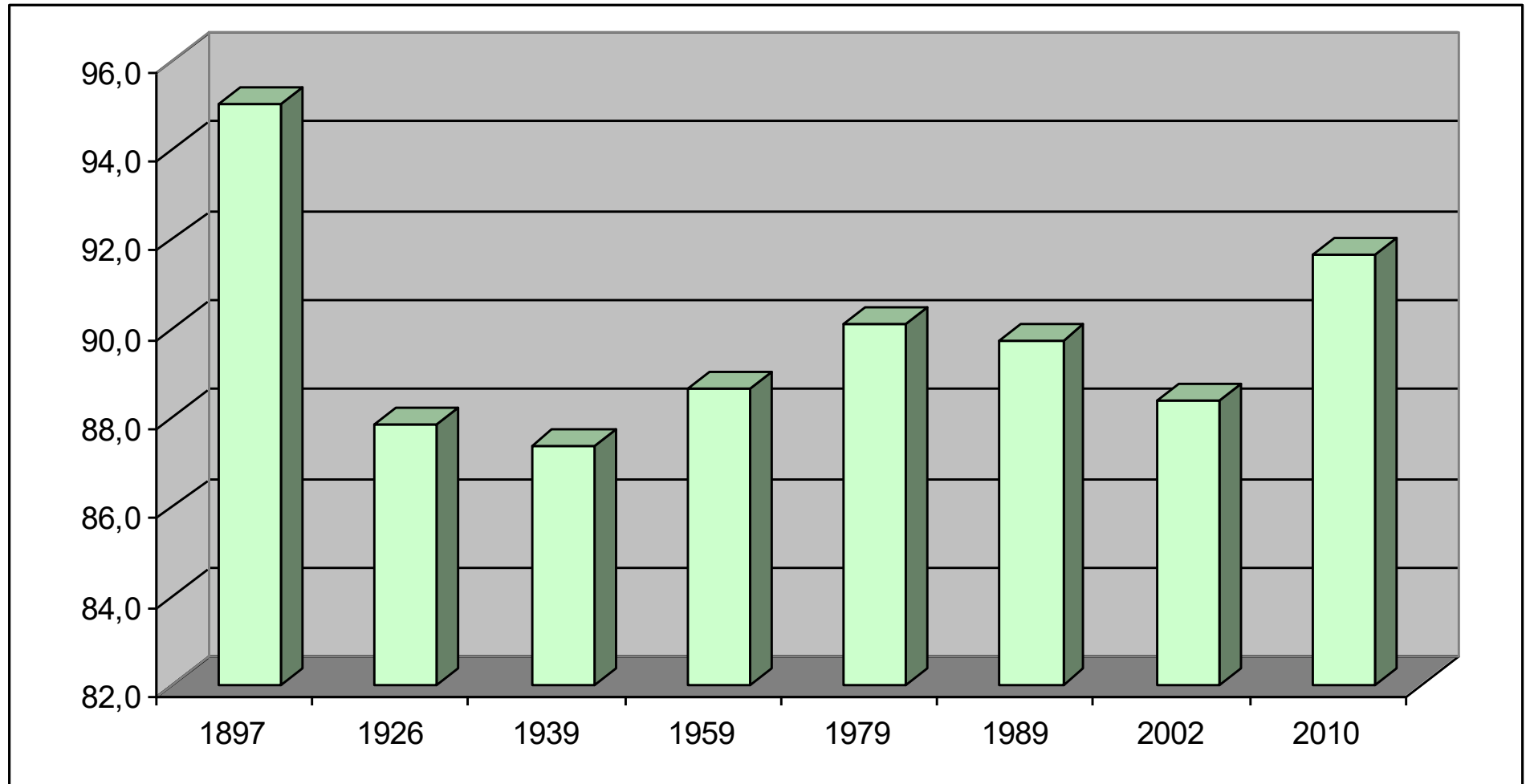


# Geographical distribution of languages in Moscow

- No ethnic ghettos in Moscow
- Ethnic groups are distributed evenly all over the territory of the capital
- There are districts with cheaper accommodation which are more attractive for labor migrants, but different groups of migrants and Muscovites live there together
- No districts where maximum share of speakers of other languages exceeds the Moscow average by more than 5%



# History: Share of Russians





# History: other ethnic groups

	2	3	4
1897	Germans	Polish	Jews
1926	Jews	Tatars	Ukrainians
1939	Jews	Ukrainians	Tatars
1959	Jews	Ukrainians	Tatars
1979	Jews	Ukrainians	Tatars
1989	Ukrainians	Jews	Tatars
2002	Ukrainians	Tatars	Armenians
2010	Ukrainians	Tatars	Armenians



# History: Jewish languages

## Yiddish:

- 1897: 1<sup>st</sup> largest non-Slavic language in Russia, but very few (5070) in Moscow
- 1926: 2<sup>nd</sup> largest language in Moscow – 44,623, 2.2% (or 34% of all Jews in Moscow)
- 2010: spoken only by 501 (219 as mother tongue), 1% of all Jews in Moscow (53,111), but
  - **Hebrew** – 5917 (1633 as MT), 11%
  - “Jewish” – 1228 (1567 as MT)



# Structural characteristics of ethno-linguistic communities

## 1. General information

1. Name of the community
2. Name of the language
3. Language of the Russian Federation / Language of the former Soviet Union / Foreign language

## 2. General description of the language

1. Geographic localization
2. Number of speakers
3. Communicative and functional status of the language
4. Use in education
5. Language vitality





# Structural characteristics of ethno-linguistic communities

## **3. History of the ethno-linguistic community**

1. When this ethnicity came to Moscow
2. What generations of migrants live in Moscow (first, second)
3. What generation prevails now



# Structural characteristics of ethno-linguistic communities

## **4. Socio-linguistic characteristic of the ethno-linguistic community**

1. Number of people in the Moscow community
2. Number of speakers of the ethnic language
3. Social characteristic of people (income, sector of employment, education)
4. Official organization(s) in Moscow / Language(s) in use
5. Ethno-cultural center(s) in Moscow / Language(s) in use
6. Unofficial centers of cultural ethnic activities / Language(s) in use
7. Religious organization in Moscow / Language(s) in use



# Structural characteristics of ethno-linguistic communities

## **4. Socio-linguistic characteristic of the ethno-linguistic community (cont.)**

8. Regular national festivals, cultural events in Moscow / Language(s) in use
9. Educational institutions with ethno-cultural component
10. Language courses for children and adults in Moscow. Other means to maintain mother tongue.
11. Newspapers, magazines, websites for the ethno-linguistic community /  
Language(s) in use
12. Social networks for the members of the ethno-linguistic community in Moscow /  
Language(s) in use
13. Preferable districts in Moscow, where the members of the ethno-linguistic community reside



# Comparison of ethno-linguistic communities

Main goals of the current project:

- Collecting material from all possible sources for a detailed and comparable description of the ethno-linguistic communities in Moscow
- Explanation for the observed phenomena



# Comparison of ethno-linguistic communities

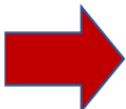

Two major **needs** of the ethno-linguistic communities in Moscow

- Necessity of understanding
- Necessity of identification



# Comparison of ethno-linguistic communities

Two major **linguistic characteristics** of the ethno-linguistic communities

- Necessity of understanding  Knowledge of Russian
- Necessity of identification  Vitality of mother tongue





# Comparison of ethno-linguistic communities

**Factors** that should be taken into account in order to explain the linguistic features of the community:

- Linguistic
- Social
- Historical
- Economic
- Political



# Comparison of ethno-linguistic communities

Major **factors** in the focus of this research:

- Origin or “nationality” of language

*(Language of the Russian Federation / Language of the former Soviet Union / Foreign language)*

- Number of people in the Moscow community

*(Large vs. Medium vs. Small communities)*

- History of the ethno-linguistic community

*(Old vs. New communities)*



# “Nationality” of the language

- Languages of the Russian Federation
- Languages of the former Soviet Union republics
- Foreign languages



# “Nationality” of the language

- Languages of the Russian Federation
- Languages of the former Soviet Union republics



# Languages of the former Soviet Union republics

## The largest communities

- Ukrainians
- Armenians
- Azerbaijanis
- Belarusians
- Georgians
- Uzbeks
- Tajiks
- Moldavans
- Kirgiz



# Balanced bilingualism

- Armenians
- Georgians





# Georgian community in Moscow

At least a part of the Georgian community in Moscow are full bilinguals in Russian and Georgian.

Factors in favor of this situation:

1. Despite political conflicts between the Russian and Georgian governments, the economic and cultural ties between two countries remain very strong
2. The migration flows in both directions are substantial
3. Older generation received their education in Russian during the Soviet time and in some cases they teach Russian to their children and grandchildren
4. The role of the Russian language in Georgia is still important and Russian is studied in many schools in Georgia
5. The Georgians have strong attachment to their roots, the Georgian culture and language



# Georgian community in Moscow

- ✓ Very active community in all domains of the capital's life
- ✓ Regular national festivals and cultural events with hundreds of participants
- ✓ Georgian church (Georgian language)
- ✓ Kindergarten and school with the Georgian ethno-cultural component (instruction in Russian, Georgian language and other subjects in optional program)
- ✓ Use of Georgian in family and some other domains



# Number of people in the Moscow community

- Large communities (more than 10,000 people)
- Medium communities (1000-10,000 people)
- Small communities (less than 1000 people)



# Number of people in the Moscow community

Other factors important for the large communities:

- The linguistic vitality of the language in general
- The period of residence in Moscow



# Large communities: Belarusian community in Moscow

- ✓ Active community
- ✓ Official and civic national organizations
- ✓ Regular cultural events
- ✓ Mostly use of Russian in all domains



# Large communities: Belarusian community in Moscow

The factors for little use of Belarusian:

- This situation is not specific to Moscow; it is a general tendency in Belarus itself, which began long ago
- Similarity of Russian and Belarusian: when two languages are closely related and one of them becomes more prestigious (such as Russian in the Soviet Union), it always affects the vitality of its less prestigious counterpart





# Large communities: Tatar community in Moscow

- ✓ Active community
- ✓ Official and civic national organizations
- ✓ Regular cultural events
- ✓ School with ethno-cultural component
- ✓ Mostly use of Russian in all domains



# Large communities: Tatar community in Moscow

The factors for little use of Tatar:

- This situation is specific to Moscow; in Tatarstan, the Tatar language is rather vigorous
- The Tatar diaspora first settled in Moscow in the XVI century, and now this is a highly socialized and adapted social group.
- The factor of assimilation is closeness to the Russian environment



# Small communities: Karachay-Balkar community in Moscow

- ✓ About 1000 people
- ✓ Very active and highly integrated community
- ✓ Civic national organization “Elbrusoid”
- ✓ Regular cultural events (in Russian)
- ✓ Website for Karachay-Balkars (in Russian)
- ✓ Translation of books, movies, cartoons into Karachay-Balkar
- ✓ Use of Karachay-Balkar in family and with friends



# History of the ethno-linguistic community

- “Old”, having long history of residence
- “New”, formed by the new migration flows during the recent years



# History of the ethno-linguistic community

- “Old” communities: Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians, Tatars, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Jews...
- “New” communities: Tajiks, Kirgizs, Uzbeks



# History of the ethno-linguistic community

- Main issue of “old” communities – preserving national identity
- Main issue of “new” communities – integration into Moscow environment



# History of the ethno-linguistic community

- Main issue of “old” communities – preserving national identity → preserving mother tongue
- Main issue of “new” communities – integration into Moscow environment → learning Russian



# New communities: Kirgiz community in Moscow

- ✓ About 200-300 thousand of migrants (mostly from rural areas)
- ✓ Only half of them knows Russian well, some of them do not know Russian at all
- ✓ “Kirgiz-town” in Moscow with no spatial localization - Kirgiz cafes, medical and sports centers and so on (in Kirgiz and Russian)
- ✓ Social networks for Kirgizs in Moscow - jobs, accommodations (in Kirgiz and Russian)
- ✓ Kirgiz children go to ordinary Russian schools with Russian speaking children; teachers usually do not have any support or special knowledge of training non-native speakers; the result depends on school administration and teachers
- ✓ Almost no state program and efforts for adaptation of migrants and their children





# Concluding remarks

Moscow is a multilingual linguistic area which deserves a detailed study

- ❖ In order to investigate linguistic situation in this area one should take into account a lot of non-linguistic factors – social, historical, economic, political
- ❖ The official data does not provide a full picture of linguistic landscape, especially for new migrant flows. In order to obtain more objective data, we have to use different sources and methods.
- ❖ There are many strategies to maintain mother tongue in Russian-speaking environment, and Moscow communities demonstrate a whole range of possibilities. The vitality of a language depends on a number of factors
- ❖ The degree of knowledge of the Russian language among the members of the ethno-linguistic groups varies a lot. There are many residents in Moscow who know little Russian or do not speak Russian at all. The Russian language of every national community (=ethnolect) has linguistic peculiarities that should be studied
- ❖ The Moscow government's policy in respect of integration of migrants and education of migrants' children is insufficient and the process of adaptation including linguistic adaptation is mostly spontaneous