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Kamilla Kaiser: The Udmurt 'Come up with a new word' project in the light of language planning and management

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## The Udmurt '*Come up with a new word*' project in the light of language planning and management

The present paper aims to describe the Udmurt '*Come up with a new word*' competition as a language planning and a language managing activity. Examining the project – that ran in 2013 – will allow us to gain insight into the mechanisms of language planning and language management in the context of minority languages in the 21st century, and factors that play a role in a programme that attempts to induce lexical changes and influence the language choices of speakers, being carried out by the members of the same language community. At the same time, in the second part of the study, the impact of the project is examined by quantitative methods – a corpora-based analysis (Arkhangelsky & Medvedeva, 2014; Arkhangelsky, 2018; Bezenova, 2019) – in order to measure whether the neologisms created within the scope of the programme have become part of the vocabulary of the Udmurt language, thus providing evaluation for the completed activity.

Keywords: Udmurt language, language planning, language management, neologism

### 1. Introduction

This paper investigates how the Udmurt '*Come up with a new word*' – *Малпа выль кыл* [maɫpa viɫ kɪɫ] – word creating competition, that was organised in 2013 can be fitted into the general framework of language planning (LP) and language management (LM). The general aims, apart from the analysis of the aforementioned project, are best described with the help of Sándor (2003: 383), as she stated, that measuring the impact and consequences of language planning activities is of great importance, if we mean to ensure their success.<sup>1</sup>

In this spirit I not only provide an overview of the '*Come up with a new word*' project and attempt to examine it through the lens of LP and LM, but in the second part of the study I attempt to estimate its impact on the lexicon and language use of the Udmurt-language community by quantitative methods – a corpora-based analysis.

Udmurt is an endangered language (cf. section 2 for details) and any intervention in the life of such a language can be of immense importance regarding its future prospects. Consequently, I believe it is essential to pay

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<sup>1</sup> „Az elvégzett nyelvtervezési lépések hatásának mérése, következményeinek számbavétele kiemelkedően fontos, ha biztosítani akarják a nyelvtervezési folyamat sikerét” (Sándor, 2003: 383)

attention to projects like this current one, so that research results could also contribute to their effectiveness and the success of future activities.

### **1.1. Aims and research questions**

The main goal, on the one hand, is to determine if the observed project can be identified as a language planning or language managing activity and to measure its effectiveness by quantitative methods. In order to accomplish that, I need to examine activity in detail and break it down to different points. I determine these points as sub-questions with the help of Gazzola et al. (2024: 2) as follows:

- 1) What is the starting point of the '*Come up with a new word*' project?
- 2) What were the aims of the organisers?
- 3) What means were used to achieve the objectives?

On the other hand, in the second part of the study, I will assess the outcomes and measure the effectiveness of the project. I cross-checked the words created within the programme with corpora (Arkhangelsky & Medvedeva, 2014; Arkhangelsky, 2018; Bezenova, 2019) in order to gain an overview on the usage of said words in Udmurt-language texts, thus determining whether they have become part of the vocabulary or not.

### **1.2. Previous research**

The general topic of the research – language planning and management concerning endangered and minority languages – is not new. There are plenty of existing materials both from a theoretical point of view and in the form of case studies with different approaches to their target languages. Wilson et al. (2015) discusses the languages Manx, Guernésiais and Jèrriais, giving an overview on grassroots activism and governmental efforts for preserving the languages as they face increasing threats of extinction. Another study to be mentioned is by Reo et al. (2019) on Iñupiaq and Yupik, spoken mainly in the territory of Alaska. The paper explores the connections between environmental changes and the indigenous people's language use in the Arctic by open-ended interviews in order to gain insight into how the communities adapt by promoting their heritage language to be used in new domains, presenting one more instance for the role of individuals in preserving languages and possibly broadening their fields of use. I deem these examples relevant, because even though they have different scopes and applied different methods, their aims are similar to mine: the examination and assessment of efforts made to preserve a language – in our case, Udmurt. One more theme, language use in the digital sphere should also be connected here. The '*Come up with a new word*' project itself was brought up as an example for utilising the online space as a tool in activism (Fenyvesi, 2014), but the place of the Udmurt language on the Internet in the last decade was also analysed previously by Pischlöger (2014; 2021).

## 2. The Udmurt language

In order to get the complete background on the research topic, I believe it is necessary to briefly describe the current situation of the Udmurt language and the circumstances of its speaker community. In terms of genealogy, it belongs to the Finno-Ugric, more narrowly to the Permian branch of the Uralic language family, its closest linguistic relatives are the Komi-Zyrian and Komi-Permyak. It is divided into four main dialect groups: northern, central, southern and peripheral (Klumpp, 2022). According to the most recent census in Russia, done in 2020, 255 877 people speak the language and 386 465 people declared themselves to be Udmurt by ethnicity. Most of them live in the territory of Russia, mostly in the Udmurt Republic, where they account for approximately 20% of the population, but there are also Udmurt villages in neighbouring Bashkortostan, Tatarstan and in the Mari Republic (Edygarova, 2022; Taagepera, 2000; Rosstat, 2022a; 2022b).

Moving on to the sociolinguistic situation, in terms of status, Udmurt is considered an official language in the Republic of Udmurtia alongside Russian since 1995 (Edygarova, 2024), but in everyday life the presence and usage of Russian and Udmurt are not in balance. In the sphere of education, which could be one of the main areas for language use, it is typically only taught as a subject – 2 hours per week on average – and not as the language of teaching, as a medium for transferring knowledge (Klumpp, 2022: 417; Suntcova, 2023: 185). The number of speakers is steadily decreasing, and is classified as *Definitely Endangered* according to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (Moseley, 2010: 37–38).

Due to its contact with Russian dating back to centuries, it has had a significant influence at almost every level of the Udmurt language, but the most obvious impact is on the lexicon. At the same time, amongst speakers, there is and has been a rising need not to adopt or borrow terminology for every new phenomenon, but rather to create their own Udmurt terms. For example, this demand motivated the writer, poet and activist Kuzebai Gerd (1898-1937) to work in the field of language renewal in the 1920s (Gerd, 1926; 1928), but the Udmurt language is still subject to language planning and management processes, such as the ‘*Come up with a new word*’ project, which will be examined in detail in this paper.

## 3. Theoretical background: language planning and management

For the sake of clarity, first I introduce the definition and description of each segment that I will work with. Then I explain why I consider them relevant here in order to provide a base framework (or frameworks) for identifying if and how the ‘*Come up with a new word*’ project can be fitted into any of them.

### 3.1. Language planning

Starting with the earliest theme, the term language planning appeared in the 1960s in close relation with the modernisation efforts of newly independent countries in the post-colonial era (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997: 6–7; Sanden 2016: 520; Spolsky, 2009: 4–5), and it was to take effect both on the speaker and the language itself, as described by Haugen (1983: 269–271), Kloss (1969: 81) and Sándor (2003: 382–385). The former, namely status planning, aims to set a standard or a norm by *selection* – a language out of many or a variety of a single language – to be used as an official language of the government, education and all spheres of official and administrative activities. For this chosen language or variety to be *implemented*, for it to become the standard, various measures must be employed, by legislation and through institutes, even the education system, if the language planning activities are state coordinated, however community organisations, activist groups or individuals (Haarman, 1998) can also take up the role of the planner. In such cases, when government funding and official resources are scarcely or not at all available – especially true for minority languages –, it falls on the community or some prominent members of it to raise awareness and spread the norm.

The other big branch of language planning is corpus planning, which can be divided into several smaller prescriptive steps: *codification*, aiming to strengthen the chosen standard includes graphization for (re)forming the writing system, grammatication for setting and consolidating grammatical rules, and lexication for fixing the vocabulary. Lastly *elaboration*, i.e. further steps, adjustments and corrections can be made to tend any matters raising in the process, for example further broadening the lexicon or introducing new styles. (Haugen, 1983: 271–273; Sándor, 2003).

As we can see, language planning in general is a number of activities combined with both extra- and interlinguistic aims to achieve greater reforms, and as Cooper suggests, LP can be defined as “*deliberate efforts to influence language behavior*” (1989: 45). It can be said to be outdated and some argue (Jernudd & Neustupný, 1987: 71; Spolsky, 2009: 5), that the term should be left to refer to language related problems of the past, but I believe that the framework created and refined under the name of language planning – as drafted above – could still provide a useful and stable base for the present research.

### 3.2. Language management

Language management can be described as a branch or an upgraded version of the language planning theory, according to Lanstyák (2023: 254). He also states that LM aims to consciously influence the linguistic realisation of existing or future speech products, to change the linguistic system itself or some elements of it as a mental reality, generally to induce linguistic changes (2023: 255).

The base model for language management, as set by Jernudd & Neustupný (1987: 75–76) can be described as follows:

- 1) Monitoring the language, comparing it to the norm and noting deviations;
- 2) Evaluating any deviations from the norm;
- 3) Designing corrections and adjustments;
- 4) Implementing the corrections.

In addition to this, based on Kimura's reasoning (2014: 267), we should list one more point in the form of 5) *Feedback or evaluation*. He argues, that as the final step, the implemented corrections must be observed and evaluated, so, if necessary, further adjustments can be made in order to achieve better results.

### 3.3. Language policy

There is one more term to address and explain, why it is not included as background in the present paper. Language policy presupposes an institution, typically under the control of a state or government (Gazzola et al., 2024: 4–5), thus in the current research the theme cannot be utilised as a strictly relevant point. Since the project in question – described in detail in section 4 – is of smaller scale and even though the organisers could have applied for support, it does not belong to a governmental institution. The programme can only be identified as a group's aims to influence individuals' decisions in setting up language practices, and will not be discussed as language policy in this research.

### 4. About the 'Come up with a new word' project

As the activity ran almost entirely in the digital space, having a website – currently available via the *Internet Archive*<sup>2</sup> and a *Vkontakte* [ВКонтакте] page – a social media service similar to Facebook, widely used in Russia, the information provided here is sourced from those sites (Malpa vyl kyl, n.d.-a; n.d.-b) and from the material of a presentation by Malykh et al. (n.d.)<sup>3</sup>.

The 'Come up with a new word', or in Udmurt, *Малпа выль кыл* [maɫpa viɫ kiɫ] project was aimed at expanding the lexicon of the language. The organisers of the activity wanted to involve the speaker community by organising a word-creating competition to find Udmurt equivalents for previously selected Russian or Russian-transmitted English words, a list of which is given in the Appendix. They used a collaborative approach, in which the speaker community is the main executor in the language development process (Malykh et al., n.d.). In the course of the competition, they first allowed each participant to make their own suggestions, followed by a public vote and the involvement of a panel of experts to select the neologisms they considered most appropriate, and finally prizes were awarded to the five most effective language innovators. As the organisers stated in their introduction, the aim of the competition was to create Udmurt equivalents

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<sup>2</sup> A non-profit archive, capable of retrieving currently not available websites and media (<https://archive.org/>)

<sup>3</sup> Although, I assume it must be from 2013 or 2014, see the end of section 4.2.



for *borrowings* and *foreign words* that have been imperceptibly incorporated into the language, to involve Udmurt speakers in the creation of new Udmurt words, to give the Udmurt language a breath of fresh air<sup>4</sup> (Malpa vyl kyl, n.d.-b).

Here the terms *borrowings* and *foreign words* are shortly addressed to clarify what is meant exactly under those terms by the organisers. I assume, borrowings concern items from Russian, as due to historical and still ongoing contacts any Russian word can be a potential borrowing, also given that over 90% of the speaker community is Udmurt–Russian bilingual (Salánki, 2007), for them Russian words will never be as *foreign* as for example English, which I suppose they mean here by *foreign words*. (For more details on the exact items chosen by the organisers, see section 4.3. and the Appendix.)

#### 4.1. The implementers of the project

The project was run by three organisations: The *MUSH* ([МУШ] ‘bee’) working group, the *Udmurtlyk* ([Удмуртлык] ‘Udmurtness, being Udmurt’) association and the *Shundy* ([Шунды] ‘sun’) youth group. The information on them is mostly available online, through their websites and social media pages (listed under *Online sources*), so I will refer to those when describing each group.

The activists of the *MUSH* working group are participants and not infrequently organisers of events promoting the Udmurt language and culture. Their website, which was created in 2013 and updated until July 2020, regularly reported on these events, and they also published the list of words I examined there (MUSH, 2013). The group has been a major force in preserving and strengthening the status of the Udmurt language, having taken the initiative in 2018 to declare November 27<sup>th</sup>, the Day of the Udmurt Language, a holiday (MUSH, n.d.).

The *Shundy* youth group was founded in 1992, its main activities include the organisation of cultural events and social programmes for young people. This includes, for example, the *Shundykar* ([Шундыкар] ‘suncity’) summer camp, which provides support and development opportunities for talented Udmurt children in artistic fields such as literature, drama and fine arts (Shundy, n.d.).

The *Udmurtlyk* association's *Vkontakte* page was created in 2007 to provide a virtual community space for Udmurts living anywhere in the world. Their website – also available only via the Internet Archive – functioned as a news portal, but also provided a space for several projects related to the association, including the website of the ‘Come up with a new word’ competition (Udmurtlyk, n.d.)

<sup>4</sup> “Љошатсконлэн ужпумез – удмурт шӧмо аналогъесты асэстэм но каръяськымтэ кунгожсьӧрысь кыльёслы кылдытыны, удмурт кылын вераськисьёсты выль удмурт кыльёсты кылдытонэ отъыны, удмурт кыллы салкым шокчон сётыны” (Malpa vyl kyl, n.d.-b)

## 4.2. The course of the project

The project, which was launched in April 2013, has its own website, as described above, but most of the communication about the competition has been done on its *Vkontakte* page, which currently (as in 2024) has 228 members. As the initial step of the project, a list of altogether 45 Russian or Russian-transmitted English words was published there in five parts. It must be mentioned that in one instance for one intended Udmurt meaning they gave two synonyms as a starting point, but here I counted them as one, since both point to one result. (Russian *потребитель* [pətɐrʲɪˈbʲitɕɪlʲ] ‘customer, user’ and *клиент* [klʲɪˈjɛnt] ‘client’)

In the beginning, suggestions were open for five lexemes at a time, but at the end of the submission period, the entire collection was published as a whole. According to the organisers’ announcement, they tried to choose such words as a starting point that were not yet embedded in the language, so that they could be more easily replaced by Udmurt variants, possibly based on their own notions as native speakers. Based on Malykh et al. (n.d.) they received over 600 suggestions from 21 active contributors. The participants were typically female, aged 23-30 years and generally had connections to the Udmurt language via their work or education.

In the second stage of the programme, which started in June 2013, anyone interested could vote on the recommended words, also broken down into sections as in the suggestion period. Here, around 100 people were involved, but in parallel, an expert committee of four also reviewed the recommended items. Its members were Aleksandr Shklyayev (writer, university professor), Sergei Maksimov (linguist), Viktor Shibarov (literary scholar, university professor, member of the Terminology Committee) and Lidia Nankina (writer). The suggested words were examined from three different approaches, as the organisers put it: how appropriate they were considering the grammar of the Udmurt language, could they be used in contemporary media and would they fit aesthetically in fine literature. However, they did not elaborate further on these aspects in any of the sources, thus we must make the assumption that they mean that the neologisms should comply with the morphological rules of the Udmurt language and are not unusably lengthy even if they created by lexicalizing descriptive constructions.

The results were published on the website of the *MUSH* working group in October and at the same time the chosen words were added to the *Russian-Udmurt Dictionary of Neologisms*. The winners of the competition were announced at an on-site event in Izhevsk – capital of Udmurtia –, finally stepping outside of the online space. Afterwards several newspaper articles and blog posts were published reporting on the outcome.

Shortly after the end of the project, in December 2013, a presentation was held at the *MinorEURus* conference in Helsinki. Artyom Malykh, Alexey Shklyayev and Olga Urasinova, members of the *MUSH* working group and organisers of the

competition, gave a talk on the topic, titled *Veme berykton*<sup>5</sup> as a social technology. In June 2014, Artyom Malykh gave another talk at the ‘Endangered languages. Comprehensive models for research and revitalization’ conference in Wilamowice, titled ‘The case of Udmurt online competition in new terms creation and collaborative approach towards language development’.

### 4.3. The items on the lists

In order to gain an overview of the contents, I grouped the 45 items in the initial list: in the first there are obviously Russian-transmitted English adaptations that have appeared in the last few years, such as *стартап* [ster'tap] ‘startup; newly founded enterprise’ or *тимбилдинг* [tjm<sup>0</sup>b'ild'ink] ‘teambuilding’. The second type of words are international, such as *креативность* [kr'ɪɐ't'ivnəs'tʲ] ‘creativity’ or *приоритет* [pr'jɪɐ'r'jɪ'tet] ‘priority’, and the third are clearly of Russian origin, such as *общественность* [ɐp'ɕ:estvʲɪn(:)əs'tʲ] ‘public, publicity’ and *открытка* [ɐt'krʲtkə] ‘postcard’. As for semantics, most of the items are connected to the topic of modern workplace, business and the digital sphere.

Examining the resulting Udmurt variants, not all of them are consciously created neologisms in the strictest sense of the term. There are preexisting words that were suggested:

a) as they are, having an already established meaning for the same thing, like *арберу* [arberi] ‘thing’ in Udmurt for *штуковина* [ʂtɔ'kov'ɪnə] ‘thing’ in Russian from the list.

b) to be used in expanded meaning, like *найдаё* [pajdajo] ‘useful/usefully’, ‘healthy/healthily’ to be used also for the Russian *эффективно* [ɛf'ɪ'kt'ivnə] ‘effectively’.

c) to be used in restricted meaning, such as *вачевераськон* [vatʲɕeveraʂkon] ‘conversation, dialogue’ to mean solely *собеседование* [səb'ɪ'sʲedəvən'ɪɪə] ‘job interview’.

d) as part of a compound where one stem already had the intended meaning like in *дункулэстон* [dunkuleston] ‘discount’, created from *дун* [dun] ‘price’ and *кулэстон* [kuleston] ‘discount’ (from the verb *кулэстыны* ‘to reduce’) for the Russian word *скидка* [ˈskʲɪtkə] ‘discount’ in the original list.

There are some errors as well that occurred in the results which are ought to be addressed. Of particular note is the word *выльадэ́йтос* [vɪladdʲɪtos], chosen as the Udmurt equivalent of the Russian *презентовать* [prɪzɪntə'vatʲ] ‘to present’ by public voting. Here, we must assume some mistake must have been made in the selection of the lexemes or in the publication of the word list, because the Udmurt word – a compound – is a noun, although one of its stems is formed from a verb, so its meaning is presumably ‘presentation’. There are few, only six verbs among the published items, but they are consistently in the infinitive form ending

<sup>5</sup> Meaning ‘community translation’ as in the Udmurt culture *veme* [веме] stands for work done together; *berykton* [берыктон] is ‘translation’.



in *-ыны* [ini] (cf. in the same meaning chosen by the committee: *тодматскытыны* [todmatskitini] ‘to present’).

It is also necessary to mention that the words *розница* [ˈrozniˈtsə] and *питейл* [piˈtɛɪ] both mean ‘retail’, yet they were used separately in the competition, with different Udmurt versions given, such as the committee’s choice of *оглыквуз* [oglikvuz] and *ничилыдэнвузан* [pitɛiˈlidenˈvuzan], and the winners of the voting *эрказвузан* [erkazvuzan] and *огенвузэм* [ogenvuzet]. All four are newly created lexemes, their meanings are composed as follows: *ог-лык-вуз* consists of the shortened version of the numeral *одӱз* [odig] ‘one’ as *ог* [og] plus the suffix *-лык* [lik], commonly used to create nouns with more abstract meaning (Alasheeva, 2011: 58). The final item *вуз* [vuz] means ‘goods’. The *ничи* [pitɛi] part of *ничилыд-эн-вузан* means ‘small’, *лыд-эн* [liden] is the word for ‘number’ in instrumental case, and *вузан* [vuzan] means ‘trade’, as in the third word, *эрказ-вузан*. Its other member *эрказ* [erkaz] stands for ‘freely’. Finally, the *ог* [og] element of *ог-ен-вузэм* points again to *одӱз* [odig] ‘one’, here being in instrumental case. The other part *вузэм* is a noun formed from *вузаны* [vuzani] ‘to trade’, not used by itself.

## 5. The project as a language planning and language managing activity

Before moving on to the details, I think it is important to note that it should not be expected from the project to cover the whole of the theoretical background, since language planning and language management processes do not always include all the steps and segments of the models (Kimura, 2014), and in the case of Udmurt, for example, there is already an established standard, which is used in telecommunication, scientific texts and fine literature. Its writing system has also gained stability since the beginning of the reforms in the 1920s. At the same time, the vocabulary of language users trying to keep up with the changing world can be expanded through language planning and managing activities, in addition to the naturally occurring borrowings.

First of all, the events that have taken place in the life of the Udmurt language over the last hundred years and are still ongoing can be understood as a prolonged, complex language planning activity. From the aforementioned consolidation of the orthography to the language renewal activities of Kuzebai Gerd (Domokos, 1975: 161, 165–173; Kaiser, 2024), there have been a number of (sub)processes that fit neatly into the theoretical framework. Within this complex course of actions, the ‘*Come up with a new word*’ project can be classified as corpus planning activity, closely the broadening of vocabulary (cf. section 3.1.), since it aims to further expand and refine the already established standard.

Meanwhile, the project can also be understood as a language management process, since – returning to Lanstyák – its aim is “*to induce linguistic changes*” (2023: 255). As stated earlier, the project in itself does not cover all the steps of language planning, however it is not required to do so. At the same time, it can be

used to model almost the entire process of language management: If we take as a norm – or idealized norm – that speakers should use only Udmurt words when communicating in Udmurt, then deviating from this (using Russian words) means a deviation from the norm that requires a solution. This solution was designed and then implemented within the framework of the ‘*Come up with a new word*’ project. The remaining step, to give feedback and evaluate the results, is what the present research aims to provide in the following section.

## **6. The results of the project**

Moving on to the above-mentioned feedback, I sought to determine the success of the activity by conducting targeted searches in corpora. If the neologisms appear in a context independent of the programme, their dissemination – and thus the language planning or managing activity – can be considered successful.

### **6.1. The corpora and methodology**

I aimed to cover as many genres, styles and sources of material as possible, so first I examined the *Main corpus of literary Udmurt* (MCLU) part of the *Udmurt Corpora*, that reflects standard, official language usage. More than 90% of the contents are contemporary press materials, such as articles from the newspaper *Udmurt Dunne* ([Удмурт Дунне] ‘Udmurt World’) or the news portal *Minam Udmurtie* ([Мынам Удмуртие] ‘My Udmurtia’). It also includes Udmurt translations of the New Testament, blog posts and texts from Wikipedia pages. The material consists of 9.57 million words and was collected up to January 2018 (Arkhangelsky & Medvedeva, 2014).

The second reviewed corpus is the *Corpus of Udmurt-language social media* (CULSM), which contains publicly available social media posts and comments from *Vkontakte* users. Here, language use is closer to live speech, dialectal phenomena and code-switching appear more commonly. The texts are not exclusively in Udmurt, as in addition to the 2.66 million words in the target language, there are also 9.83 million words of Russian content. Texts were added to the corpus until February 2018 (Arkhangelsky, 2018).

Finally, the *National corpus of the Udmurt language* [Национальный корпус удмуртского языка] (NCUL) includes fine literature – both poetry and prose – scientific texts and articles published in various journals. The corpus contains 6.5 million words of texts published until 2020 (Bezenova, 2019). All three corpora are available online and have their own search engines, which were employed to conduct targeted searches.

When doing so, particular attention had to be paid to the context of each item, since the corpora contains materials from those newspapers in which they also reported on the competition – more importantly on the outcome, including some examples as well. Consequently, in order not to obtain false results, I excluded those from the final summary. The date of origin of the text that produced a hit

was also important, as if it was published before 2013, the appearance of the searched term could not be attributed to the success of the project. A third aspect to consider was that whether the words are used in their intended meaning. If not, they also had to be disqualified.

It should also be noted that both the list selected based on the experts' opinions and on the voting contains more than 45 words, with 2-3 suggestions being accepted in some cases. Thus, 51 items from the experts and 50 from the community voting were examined in this research. When I was unsure about the meaning of some of the items, I sought the help of Ekaterina Suntcova, the Udmurt language lecturer at the University of Szeged, who is a native speaker.

As for dictionaries, they were deliberately excluded from the current research. They can indeed represent the lexicon of a language, however, as the focus is on the usage of the items created in the scope of the project, a cross-check in corpora could provide more realistic data on the occurrence of the words.

## **6.2. Results of the corpus-based analysis, feedback**

The following section presents an analysis of the results, supported by tables, where *MCLU* refers to the *Main corpus of literary Udmurt*, *CULSM* is the *Corpus of Udmurt-language social media* and *NCUL* is the *National corpus of the Udmurt language*.

As it can be seen in *Table 1* and *Table 2* below, considering all the hits, it did not reach even half the amount of all searched items and often almost all of the hits appear already before 2013 (cf. *Table 1* *MCLU* line). Even less are used in their intended meaning. As I am focusing in the overlap of those categories, the last columns of both tables are of interest (*After 2013, in intended meaning*), because only those hits can be truly attributed to the success of the project. To address false hits that came up in context of the project – in reports, articles or with the *#малнавылькыл*<sup>6</sup> tag in social media – I already excluded those from *All hits*, so they do not appear in this account.

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<sup>6</sup> *мална выль кыл* 'come up with a new word' the name of the project as it was used in search tags

**Table 1.** Results of the list chosen by the expert committee

Corpus	All items	All hits	Appears before 2013	Appears in intended meaning	After 2013, in intended meaning
MCLU	51	10	10	6	0
CULSM	51	9	5	5	2
NCUL	51	10	10	6	0

**Table 2.** Results of the list chosen by the community

Corpus	All items	All hits	Appears before 2013	Appears in intended meaning	After 2013, in intended meaning
MCLU	50	15	13	7	0
CULSM	50	13	10	8	2
NCUL	50	14	12	8	0

Only in two cases, as shown in *Table 1* and *2* above (with bold framing), I found items that occur both after 2013, i.e. after the project has ended and appear in the meaning that was assigned to them during the project. Among the words chosen by the committee of experts and the community, the same two were found in the corpus of *Udmurt-language social media*, these are *вӧлмытыны* [vʒlmitini] ‘to share, to distribute’ and *пунэмам* [punemam] ‘loan’. However, a cross-check was necessary to make sure that these two hits are truly fitting the set criteria.

Taking into account the results of the other two corpora, I found that *вӧлмытыны* [vʒlmitini] ‘to spread, to distribute’ appears in texts predating 2013 in the Udmurt *Corpora Main corpus of literary Udmurt*, as shown in bold in example one (1). In addition, *пунэмам* [punemam] ‘loan’ too – also in bold – appears in a text from already 1984 in *The National Corpus of the Udmurt Language* (2).

- (1) туалә вакыт-э зэм-зэ вера-са удмурт  
current age-ILL true-3SG.ACC say-CVB udmurt  
терминь-ёс-ты **вӧлмы-ты-ны** секыт-гес лу-о-з  
term-PL-ACC.PL **spread-CAUS-INF** difficult-COMP be-FUT-3SG  
‘To be honest, in this day and age, it will be harder to **spread** Udmurt terminology.’  
(MCLU: *Удмурт дунне* [Udmurt Dunne] 2011.12.06.)

- (2) со      пӧл-ысь      1 миллион манет-сэ  
 that   among-ABL 1 million    rouble-3SG.ACC  
 пунӧмам-зэс      тыр-ыны сёт-йллям  
 loan- 3PL.ACC      pay-INF    give-3PL-EVID  
 ‘From that, 1 million roubles were given to pay their **loans**.’  
 (NCUL: *Атай музъем вылын: Очеркъёс* [On the homeland: Excerpts]  
 1984.)

Based on the findings stated above, it can be concluded that no neologism or other item that was suggested to be used in extended or restricted meaning has spread and become part of the lexicon of the Udmurt language, thus the activity cannot be considered a success in this respect.

There are factors going far beyond to the scope of this project that explain why the activity could not fully accomplish its goals. Negative attitudes, the lack of prestige and feelings of shame connected to the use of the Udmurt language (Edygarova 2024) all point to problems rooting deeper than the current article has the room to discuss. At the same time, some possible reasons in closer connection to the programme can be mentioned. One being that in most cases two or more options were accepted for each word – note that only 10 identical items can be found on the list from the public voting and the list of the committee. This, however is not a problem unique to this project, as for example regarding the terminology of public life and politics we face the same issue. For the meaning ‘nation’, there are five different versions listed: *йӧс* [jəs]; *йӧскалык* [jəskalɨk]; *калыквыжы* [kalɨkvʲɪʒi]; *меркалык* [merkəlɨk] and *нация* [naitɕja] (Stepanova, 2018: 447).

The second factor to be considered is the reach and publicity of the project. As described in section 4.2. in detail, even though the activity mainly ran online, so it had the potential to reach more people, the lack of the status planning part of LP and later dissemination caused the activity to diffuse amongst only a small part of the speaker community. This could of course be attested to the lack of resources or credible public figures whom the organisers could have employed.

### 6.3. The original list as borrowings

The third aspect which requires a somewhat more detailed examination is whether there are even opportunities for the usage of the suggested terminology, as they are mainly concerning the topics of the modern workplace, business and digital space. In order to gain an overview of such domains of language use, I searched for the items of the original list in the same three corpora, this time including both of the synonyms as separate entries (cf. 4.2).

Here again I already excluded those hits from the results that came up solely in the context of the examined project. As *Table 3* indicates, the original items indeed appear, although in varying proportions regarding the three different corpora.



What is to be addressed here is that I included in the number of *All* those adjectives as well, that have been *Udmurtified* in the borrowing process, but their origin is still transparent (marked as *ADJ* in the table). To explain, Udmurt usually borrows adjectives from Russian by modifying only their ending. In Russian the ending determines the grammatical gender of the adjectives and as in Udmurt there is no such category, they replace it with a unified *-ой* [oj] suffix. For example, the Russian *актуальный* [ɐktu'əlʲnɨj] ‘actual’ (from the list, but same for *актуальная* [ɐktu'əlʲnəjə] for feminine and *актуальное* [ɐktu'əlʲnəjə] for neuter) is borrowed as *актуальной* [aktuaʎnoʲ].

The number of occasional borrowings is also marked separately (under *Appears only once* in the table), as it shows that certainly not all of the items that got a hit can be identified as part of the Udmurt vocabulary.

**Table 3.** Items from the original list appearing in corpora

Corpus	MCLU			CULSM			NCUL		
	All	ADJ	Appears only once	All	ADJ	Appears only once	All	ADJ	Appears only once
Hits (/46)	32	4	10	26	1	4	13	3	5

Returning to the original sub-problem of domains of language use, considering the data in *Table 3*, theoretically the speakers – had they known of their existence – would have had the opportunity to incorporate the new words into their vocabulary and use them in various situations to some extent.

## 7. Conclusions

To summarise the results of the present study, I would like to provide answers to my original research questions: The ‘*Come up with a new word*’ project can be identified as a language planning and/or language managing activity. As for LP, the activity covers parts of corpus planning, namely it introduces new elements to an already existing standard to broaden the vocabulary. Regarding LM, the project can serve as a good example for the process, since it covers all the steps of the base model from monitoring the language and noting deviations, through designing adjustments, to implementing said adjustments.

Moving on to the supporting questions in describing the activity, the project came to be as a community-based activity, where the organisers wanted to include the speakers of the Udmurt language as the main actor in the language development process. They aimed to offer alternatives, neologisms for 45 potential Russian and Russian-transmitted English borrowings through an online word creating competition, which ran from April to October in 2013. The initial

words, then the suggested items were published in several waves on the project's social media site, at the same time a committee of four experts also examined the submitted variants. Both the recommendation and the selection phases were successful, as there are published results, however, as the cross-check showed, the words created during the programme did not become part of the vocabulary of the Udmurt language between 2013-2018 and in 2020 – those years being the dates of origin of the most recent texts in the corpora.

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## Abbreviations

- ABL = ablative  
 ACC = accusative  
 CAUS = causative  
 COMP = comparative  
 CVB = converb  
 EVID = evidential  
 FUT = future tense  
 ILL = illative  
 INF = infinitive  
 PL = plural  
 SG = singular

## Appendix

The following table contains all the examined items. First, I present the original Russian variants, then I give their English translations followed by the Udmurt ones chosen by the committee and the community. Ten items are marked with bold; those are identical on both of the lists. The order of the items is kept as they were published on the website of the MUSH working group (2013).

Original Russian	English	Udmurt, chosen by the committee	Udmurt, chosen by the community
Паблик	public page (on social media)	калык кусып бам	огин
Агентство	agency	ужьюрт	ужбӧлет
Стартап	startup	мытэт	вырӑес
Драфт	draft	оскалтэт	сьӧдкагаз
Креативность	creativity	вильбур	йӧсмалпан
Нейтральность	neutrality	<b>шорэсеп</b>	<b>шорэсеп</b>
Нормально	normally	эсэпо	ярамон
			шоро-куспо
			огшоры
Эффективно	effectively	<b>пайдаё</b>	<b>пайдаё</b>
Ритейл	retail	оглыквуз	эрказвузан
Мониторинг	monitoring	пырӑскерон	эскерос
Инновационный	innovational	вильдйнё	вильлык
Челлендж	challenge	асӧтён	асвормонлык
Ассортимент	assortment	<b>вузпӧртэмлык</b>	<b>вузпӧртэмлык</b>
Троллить	to troll	вотэсын ченгешытыны	керетпоттыны
троллинг	trolling	вотэсын ченгешытон	керетпоттон
Потребитель	customer, user	<b>кулӑясъкисъ</b>	<b>кулӑясъкисъ</b>
Клиент	client	кулӑясъ	
Очередной	next, successive	<b>матӑктійсь</b>	<b>матӑктійсь</b>
			черодьясь
Краудсорсинг	crowdsourcing	огинуж	вотэсвазён
Общественное мнение	public opinion	мермылыкд	калыкмалпан
Публичный	public	меразё	калыказь
			отырлык
Приватный	private	лушкемо	асвисъям
			эрказватэто
Персональный	personal	нимаз муртлы	аспаллык
Общественность	public, society	меркалык	мерлык
Штуковина	thing	быртык	арбери
Гаджет	gadget	<b>гердӑжет</b>	<b>гердӑжет</b>
		юрттійсь чектон	
Корпоратив	company party	уждорюмшан	ужьюмшан



Тимбилдинг	teambuilding	котырлюкан	ужвалчетон
Расшарить	to spread, to share	<b>вӧлмытыны</b>	<b>вӧлмытыны</b>
Скидка	discount	дункулэстон	куштэт
Распродажа	clearance sale	вузбыдтон	вузаськон
		дунтэматыса вузан	
Открытка	postcard	ӱечсӱзён	ӱексульдэр
		кагаз кузьым	
Розница	retail	пичилыдэнвузан	огенвузэт
Аванс	prepaid expense	азьуждун	азьсётэт
Фактический	factual, real	<b>зэмос</b>	<b>зэмос</b>
Актуальный	actual	алидыро	туннэлыко
Вакансия	vacancy	буш интыуж	бушинты
		буш уж инты	
		бушужинты	
Шоурум	showroom	кильтыр сэрег	эрказвузэт
Презентовать	to present	тодматскытыны	выльадзӱтос
Издержки	costs	коньдон быдтосъёс	кылёс
Вклад (банковский)	bank deposit	уксё понон	уксёпонэт
Займ	loan	<b>пунэмам</b>	<b>пунэмам</b>
Пиар	PR	данлыян	ушъет
Приоритет	priority	<b>азьужпум</b>	<b>азьужпум</b>
Собеседование	job interview	юанвераськон	вачевераськон
Бриф	brief	тупанкыл	тупангож