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# Features Of Polylingual Education Development In The Republic Of Kazakhstan

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## Abstract

The aim of the study is to investigate features of polylingual education development in the Republic of Kazakhstan via comparative qualitative research methods. As a result, the preparation of English-speaking teachers for secondary, technical and vocational education, higher education has become possible within the framework of the international scholarship of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bolashak. In conclusion, along with the content of university training it is necessary to review the organization of the

development of professional and pedagogical competencies of students.

**Keywords:** Polylingual Space, Language Situation, Environment.

## Características del desarrollo de la educación polilingüe en la República de Kazajstán

### Resumen

El objetivo del estudio es investigar las características del desarrollo de la educación polilingüe en la República de Kazajstán a través de métodos de investigación cualitativa comparativa. Como resultado, gracias a la preparación de profesores de habla inglesa para la educación secundaria, técnica y profesional, la educación superior ha sido posible en el marco de la beca internacional del presidente de la República de Kazajstán, Bolashak. En conclusión, junto con el contenido de la formación universitaria, es necesario revisar la organización del desarrollo de las competencias profesionales y pedagógicas de los estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** espacio polilingüe, situación lingüística, medio ambiente.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important aspects of economic and social modernization of Kazakhstan's society is the language policy. In this regard, the relevance of polylingual education, which is the result of the introduction of the President's idea about the trinity of languages, is beyond any doubts. We will consider the main stages of the implementation of polylingual education in the Republic. At the first

stage (2011-2013) a set of measures aimed at improving statutory, legal and methodological basis for further functioning and development of languages was carried out. At the second stage (2014-2016) – implementation of a set of practical measures on the introduction of new technologies and methods in the field of studying and use of the state language as well as the preservation of linguistic diversity. At the third stage (2017-2020) - systematic monitoring of the degree of relevance of the state language in all spheres of public life, the quality of its proper application and the level of proficiency with further preservation of the position of other languages.

It should be noted that significant work on language policy in Kazakhstan society has been done in the Republic for the past few years. The results of the work can be seen in many areas of state development. It follows from the analysis of scientific literature and Internet sources that polylingual education in the country is conditioned by the state national and language educational policy, which is reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Article 6 of the Law about languages states that: Each citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan has the right to the free choice of language of education and training. Article 8 of the Law About Education emphasizes the importance of education of citizenship and patriotism, love for their native country - the Republic of Kazakhstan, respect to the state symbols, veneration of national traditions...; inclusion to the achievements of world and domestic culture, study of history, customs and traditions of Kazakh and other peoples of the republic. The main tendencies of the development of polylingual education come down to the following provisions:

1. Improvement of quality of training of foreign languages specialists;
2. Development of innovative foreign-language education;
3. Integration of training with intensive scientific and research activity in the field of linguistics, foreign language teaching method and cross-cultural communication;
4. The connection of university studies in foreign languages with the needs of society;
5. Improvement of education and information technologies in the field of foreign language teaching (early teaching, distance teaching, teaching the language for special purposes, etc.) (Eshimbetova & Demeuova, 2012; Koskenoja, 2019 ).

Thus, according to this Concept, the content of foreign-language education in the Republic is given according to the international standards - the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which can be used to describe any certification system, and, therefore, any teaching program, starting from setting tasks - purposes of teaching and ending with the competences achieved as a result of teaching. According to the cultural program Trinity of Languages, it is necessary to develop three languages: Kazakh - as the state language, Russian - as the language of international communication and English - as the language for a successful integration into the global economy Nurgaliyev & Kumargaliyeva (2017): Kazakhstan must be accepted around the world as a highly developed country where the population speaks three languages. Therefore, in accordance with the target indicators of the country's cultural project Trinity of languages, by 2020, 100% of the population

of Kazakhstan should speak Kazakh, 95% - Russian and 25% - English. Trilingualism as a strategically important issue of the development of education is also reflected in the State program of functioning and development of languages for 2011-2020 where trilingualism, Eurasian multiculturalism, communicativeness and technocracy are among the basic competencies. However, there are some objective risks of polylingual education in RK which need to be operated:

- Language folklorisation is when a native language is not integrated into all spheres of life, turning into a language of informal conversation, short phrases, proverbs and sayings;

- Language confusion - people who speak two or more languages, sometimes mix them unwittingly. Then it becomes a usual thing;

- Language inhospitality. For example, according to Russian polyglot, translator and teacher Dmitry Yuryevich Petrov, people in Kazakhstan are not really hospitable in respect of studying the Kazakh language. Having the experience in studying more than 30 languages, he has studied a certain set of Kazakh words. Then on the street, he tried to speak with passers-by in Kazakh. Seeing his difficulties, the majority of people switched to Russian: Come on, speak Russian then.

- The predominance of economic feasibility over the desire to preserve and develop the state language.

Despite a wide range of publications Nurgaliyeva & Zeynolla (2016) and other relevant works on a subject of our research Mazhitayeva et al. (2012) many issues concerning purposeful, system research of the phenomenon of polylingual education have begun

relatively recently, except for the search of effective methods of foreign language teaching. Indeed, the efforts of researchers have so far been focused mainly on problems of bilingual education (studying a native and a foreign language) as on the most common form of polylingual education. The processes connected with studying the third language and, especially, the greater number of languages, are least studied and have become a research object only recently - in connection with plans of the European Commission to legalize trilingual education. In order to make the contribution to the line of the researchers studying issues of polylingual education, the authors of this work based on the system analysis of major strategies of the state policy in the field of the polylinguistic space, the analysis and generalization of scientific literature, government documents, practice of work at the higher school have generalized theoretical regulations on formation of polylingual education in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The results received during the analysis of the materials collected by the authors of the research make a contribution not only to national science, but also are of great interest to foreign researchers because of the:

- Will increase awareness on the efficiency of formation of polylingual education among the academic community of far and near abroad countries,

- Can serve as a basis for the further theoretical researches devoted to studying international in the field of studying issues of polylingual education (Kahaki & Jenaabadi, 2014).

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology of polylingual education in modern conditions is primarily defined by historical and social-pedagogical prerequisites and by linguo-didactic concepts. The first of them is due to the fact that:

1) The language situation of Soviet Kazakhstan has historically defined Russian-Kazakh (not Kazakh-Russian) bilingualism therefore the scientific and methodical base of the Russian language teaching as a native and as a nonnative language has a high level of development (Adilbayeva & Tleuzhanova, 2012).

2) Prior to its independence in Kazakhstan the share of schools with studying in Russian where Kazakh was not studied considerably prevailed, such peripheral position of Kazakh became a limiting factor of development of its functional activity and has provoked deficiency of pedagogical experience in issues related to the Kazakh language teaching including as to a non-native language;

3) Declaring the state status of the Kazakh language and the actual level of its functional use gave the possibility to increase the volume of academic hours in standard curricula, however, the lack of theoretical and applied researches of linguo-didactic aspects of the Kazakh language still does not allow to enhance its scientific and methodical base;

4) Modern linguistic situation is complicated by the fact that the linguo-communicative space of the Kazakh community with the dominance of Russian-language actively includes English, which requires studying to the extent necessary for integration into the world

economy (Zhetpisbayeva, 2014; Safdari & Asadi, 2013; Abdulrahman et al., 2018).

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

All positions stated above on an equal basis with other ideas of development of language policy became prerequisites on the way of integration of Kazakhstan into the world community. Polylingual education in the Republic is also inseparably connected with performance of key parameters of Bologna Process, correlation and standardization of curricula with the European standards of education. Trilingualism is being implemented in higher educational institutions:

- In 2016, the center of development of trilingual education in National Academy of Education named after Altynsarin was opened;

- Regional program of development of trilingual education is developed and is being implemented;

- In 42 higher educational institutions the plans of measures for development of trilingual education are developed;

- From 2012-2013 academic year, polylingual groups have been opened in 32 higher educational institutions; the schedule of transition to English language of study in high school and higher educational institutions is developed;

- Since 2017-2020 admission by the state order to a profile magistracy (500 places) is carried out,

- A bachelor degree (900 places) for studying in English.

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As an implementation of the Concept of 12-year education, it is proposed as one of the solutions, to implement the foundation program (a real 12th form) with an increased focus on polylinguistic space and studying basis of fundamental sciences, which will be mastered during the first year of study at the university. In this case, the full bachelor's course of study will be 5 years (1 year of the foundation program + 4 years of bachelor's degree program). Starting from the second year, studying specialized disciplines are offered. Specialized disciplines should be studied in the following proportions:  $\frac{1}{2}$  in the state language,  $\frac{1}{4}$  in Russian and  $\frac{1}{4}$  in English for groups with the Kazakh form of study. For Russian-speaking groups  $\frac{1}{4}$  in the state language,  $\frac{1}{2}$  in Russian,  $\frac{1}{4}$  in English. In this case, students can undergo a general

education unit and enhanced language training. Thus, one of the priority tasks in education and in life is the preparation of a polylingual personality as a competitive basis of our state. In this regard, higher educational institutions expanded the amount of credits for learning languages in the State Standards in the area of Education, which allowed the students of the third year to study such disciplines as Professional Kazakh/Russian and Professionally-oriented foreign language in the amount of 2 credits, which corresponds to the Law on Languages of the Republic of Kazakhstan and, undoubtedly, will increase the competitiveness of specialists.

There is a certain experience in the implementation of polylingual education in Nazarbayev (2007) Intellectual Schools, in which, taking into account the analysis of modern international experience, a model of trilingual education based on a layered system of learning languages is being developed and implemented. This model is based on the fact that students can fully understand the oral and written language in Kazakh, Russian and English. At the same time, not only the rules of introducing the second and third languages into the educational process should be taken into account, but also the possibility of interactive methods of immersion in a foreign language environment. Since one of the essential directions of modernization of the system of training innovative personnel is the training of polylingual personnel for our state. For these purposes, the preparation of English-speaking teachers for secondary, technical and vocational education, higher education has become possible within the framework of the international scholarship of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bolashak. At the present stage of the implementation of

the scholarship, the emphasis is made on the master's and doctoral training programs, as well as the training of technical and medical specialists, who are the most popular for our country. In addition, today scholarship holders have the opportunity to study in 630 leading universities in 32 countries of the world. It should be emphasized that in world practice, Kazakhstan is the only state that provides funding for academic mobility, due to this international scholarship (Abraham & Amanuel, 2018).

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan also provides great support in attracting well-known foreign scientists and teachers. Moreover, the number of scientific publications of the faculty of higher educational institutions in foreign rating journals, indexed in the databases of Thomson Reuters and Scopus, has increased several times, which indicates the intensification of the polylingual activity of the university teaching staff. Guided by the developments and experience of domestic and international scientists, in accordance with the instructions of the Head of State, since 2019 a phased transition to teaching some subjects in English in 10-11 forms begins. In classes with a socially humanitarian direction 2 subjects - STEM (integrated learning) and ICT, with a natural-mathematical direction 4 - physics, chemistry and biology and computer science. This solution contains elements of polylingual education, since we are not talking about the transition to English as the language of instruction of a significant part of subjects, but only of a few of them. However, even this partial introduction of polylingual education, according to the authors' idea and as empirical experience shows is much more effective in learning English than the existing

model. This practice will allow school graduates to be more prepared to continue their studies in English at a university. In addition, this approach should also facilitate the admission of young people regardless of the language of instruction and location of their school (city or village) to the leading universities in the country where the main language of instruction is English. In general, the study of the readiness of universities and secondary schools to implement teaching in three languages allowed to draw the following conclusions:

- Training in three languages is supported by the public, school and universities personnel;

- However, preparatory measures are mainly aimed at retraining and advanced training of existing teachers, and re-equipping schools, pedagogical training requires more attention;

- Insufficient quality of language teaching is the main reason for the low level of readiness of schools and universities for learning in three languages;

- Outdated reproductive grammatical approach to language teaching still prevails in schools and universities;

- There is a regional imbalance in the level of Kazakh and Russian languages, the teachers have a wrong understanding of the essence of teaching in three languages;

- Stage-by-stage introduction of studying in three languages requires the performance of both specific tasks (personnel, methodological, etc.) and the solution of system-wide educational problems (low status of a teacher, bureaucratic burden, etc.).

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Thus, due to versatility and multidimensionality, the attention of scientists of various scientific schools is focused on the problem of polylingual education. In different countries, a certain experience in the area of polylingual education is accumulated. The strategic objective of polylingual education in Kazakhstan is in creating necessary conditions for simultaneous learning three languages in accordance with international standards, namely:

- Kazakh as the state language, speaking which promotes successful civil integration;
- Russian which is used officially on an equal basis with Kazakh;
- English as a tool of integration into the world economy.

According to the state program for the development of education, since 2017-2018 academic year, 15 basic universities that provide training for teachers in four specialties of natural and mathematical direction will switch to English-language teaching with the development of educational programs and textbooks in English for the universities. The urgent need for pedagogical personnel in teaching schoolchildren four subjects of the natural-mathematical cycle (computer science, physics, chemistry and biology) in English and the introduction of polylinguism will be addressed by Bolashak graduates, targeted training of university teachers and advanced training for schoolteachers. The teacher training institutions will provide mechanisms for introducing NIS experience to enhance the quality of teacher's training and requirements for students to take IELTS - an

International English Language Testing System (Simamora et al., 2019). One of the important directions of the content of training teachers in this context is the formation of a polylingual specialist. Isolation from school and preschool institutions, the use of inefficient teaching methods in high school will not shape future teachers' readiness for the modern realities of professional activity. In this regard, along with the content of university training, it is necessary to review the organization of the development of professional and pedagogical competencies of students.

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