



DOI 10.22363/2618-897X-2018-15-3-445-460

## MULTILINGUALISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN: VIEWPOINT FROM THE OUTSIDE

V.P. Sinyachkin, N.L. Sinyachkina

Peoples' Friendship University (RUDN University)  
6, Miklukho-Maklaya str., Moscow, 117198, Russian Federation

The paper deals with a complex of problems connected to language policy in Republic of Kazakhstan. The research accent is given to the state trilingual trajectory, as well as to the conflicts between languages and cultures and possible ways to overcome them. Authors try to illustrate their point of view using different arguments from cultural studies in language, education. Language policy. Method of description is combined with historical comments and cultural analysis. The paper may be useful for specialists in philology, who's area of scientific interest is Language planning.

**Key words:** Language Planning, Language Policy, Conflicts, Trilingual Practice, Kazakhstan

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking about the role of language as a social factor in the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK), researchers will inevitably mention the role of two major languages in this country: Kazakh and Russian. Given the modern language policy of the RK, it is necessarily to analyse an increasing linguistic imperative of English language (policy of trilingualism).

National Programme (hereafter — Programme) of functioning of languages in Kazakhstan for 2011—2020 developed in the country, in accordance with articles 7 and 93 of the Constitution of the RK, with Law of the RK Concerning languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan of 11 July, 1997, with the Concept of the language policy of the RK, with the President's address to the Kazakh people "New decade — new economic growth — new opportunities for Kazakhstan..."

Programme of functioning and development of languages, with estimated completion up to 2020, developed in accordance with the requirements of the strategic goals and objectives to ensure proper functioning of the State language. It takes into account the realities of prevailing linguistic situation, that subjected to significant influence by the ongoing of language engineering in the country and by the tangible changes in the ethno-lingual structure of people.

The program is an organizational base for dealing with the problems of functioning and development of languages, creation of conditions for the implementation of the principles, based on an understanding of the State language as an essential consolidating element in political, economic and cultural life of the country and for protection of the national integrity and national security of the RK.

The Programme formulated new tasks of providing single language policy and optimization of the activities of the language engineering, improvement of the effectiveness of functioning of the national language in all spheres of public life, the creation of the necessary conditions for the preservation of the functions of the Russian language and development of other languages.

Outlined in this document, goals and objectives are realized through specific plan of actions developing by the authorized state body for every three steps, and approved by resolutions of the Government of the RK.

All the activities provided by the Programme in accordance with the priorities of language policy should be directed to the full satisfaction of the ethno-lingual and cultural demands and needs of citizens and should contribute strengthening of interethnic civil accord in the country.

The success of the Programme is ensured by necessary legal and regulatory framework and the efficiency of organizational activities.

### **Changes in Language Landscape**

Kazakhstan is a multi-ethnic country, where more than 125 representatives of different ethnos and ethnic groups live. The largest number of them are Kazakhs (65%), and Russians (25%). Kazakh is the national language, which is closely linked to the Turkic languages, such as the Uigur, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Turkmen and Turkish. Kazakh and Russian (which are official according to the Constitution of the RK) languages are used equally in all state body and local offices.

An important strategic goal of the language policy of the RK is the necessity of Kazakhstanis to master three languages. Language development Programme envisaged a fairly ambitious goal: 100% of the population will speak Kazakh language, 95% in Russian and 25% in English by 2020. (One of the measures aimed at realizing of this goal is the prescription to represent companies' names in the RK in Kazakh, Russian and English languages).

Functioning of the language/languages in social and communicative space of any society is the process, which is quite complex and multi-faceted, including the whole complex interaction of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. Changes of ethno-linguistic situation in the concrete country is directly reflected both on the status and condition of all languages functioning on its territory. (A striking example of this are the changes in the functioning and in the condition of languages in the post-Soviet countries, which are characterized by a common logic and typical consequences.) Speaking about the situation in the RK, first and foremost, it should be noted that the country's linguistic landscape in this respect is of the utmost interest because of polylingualism, multiculturalism, polyethnicity and polyconfessionality of the country, where different ethnic groups use genetically and structurally different languages in the practice of everyday life.

Since Kazakhstan started to gain independence (1991), a new system of values began to form. The revival of national consciousness and national ideas become accompanied by increased attention of state to the matter of the prestige of the titular nation's culture and language. While executing the language policies, the state set the objective of creating the conditions for implementation by the Kazakh language of assigned duties of the

national language in all spheres of public life against the backdrop of the increasing number of titular nation and process of state self-determination.

The Russian language became the official language of interethnic communication on a par with the Kazakh language used in public organizations and self-governing authorities (the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan 1997, article 5). Shift of emphasis in the learning and using of English in the professional sphere and daily living took place, an increase in the number of students studying Chinese, Arabic and Turkish languages was noticed, the number of schools with Uzbek, Tajik and Uigur languages of instruction is increased. Noticeable changes have occurred in functioning of the Russian language in the RK. These changes undoubtedly impact on the status and development of languages: the process of redistribution of spheres of communicative practices happens, where we can see the expansion of the areas of activity of one language and crowding out of another.

Bi-, polylingual situation in the RK and the ongoing reforms in the linguistic education is actively studied by modern linguists. Accumulated over 25 years by Kazakhstani scientists' extensive factual material, results of the performed mass sociolinguistic studies provide an opportunity to identify trends that characterize the process of language change in the country today, to obtain objective information to help you determine the status and prospects of development and languages interaction on the territory of the country, to trace the process of implementation of the language planning programmes in the RK.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### Language engineering in Kazakhstan

Experimental and statistics data of survey results of various ethnic groups, social strata and age-group populations are presented in detail in the works of Kazakhstani scientists. (Altynbekova O.B. "Ethno-lingual processes in Kazakhstan" (2006); multi-authored monograph "Dynamics of language situation in Kazakhstan" (2010); Suleymenova E.D. "Macrosociolinguistics" (2011), multi-authored monograph "Cooperation of languages in polycultural space in Kazakhstan" (2012), etc). Kazakh linguists' active learning of the language situation is a separate issue (a huge amount of works!).

Leading sociolinguists analyze the linguistic situation in the country and processes ongoing in the Kazakh and Russian languages and give their recommendations [1–3]. It is noted that its own scientific school was formed in the Republic, having definite prescriptions for various ways of philological science. National identity manifests itself, inter alia, an in-depth study of the Turkic and Slavic language contacts throughout history [4].

These and other writings allow to evaluate the role of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages in its interaction. A large amount of material was accumulated, in particular on *linguistic competence*, that testifies on the dynamics of the linguistic identification processes taking place in RK and efficiency of activities to promote the national language.

According to research of known sociolinguist E.D. Suleymenova, for the first time was recorded the highest proportion of Kazakh respondents (97,0%) and Russian respondents (69,8%), who reported about the fluency in Kazakh or with difficulties, that is seen as a clear demonstration of the formation of Kazakh-Russian (not Russian-Kazakh,

as in XX century) bilingualism in society. It was noted the general tendency to leveling correlation of ethnic and linguistic identity in the five years for two groups of respondents: Kazakh respondents have an increased indicator of Kazakh language identity by 6,8%, and Russian respondents — on 4,8% [5].

One way to solve the problem of the development of the functions of the state and regional (national) languages, Kazakhstani sociolinguist B. Hasanuly [6; 7] sees in the development of this issue from the perspective of regional development of languages.

By studying the problems of mono-, bi- and polylingual space on the example of the northern region of the RK, the Kazakh scientist B. Hasanuly proves that the development of the state and regional languages in the age of globalization is advisable to consider in the context of specific regions of Kazakhstan's society- the southern, western, northern, eastern, central. Regionalization would solve the problem throughout Kazakhstan society, taking into account the prevailing linguistic situation in the region and factors affecting its change. Analysis of considered phenomena separately in different regions and in comparison with the general republican index enabled scholar to identify the following pattern: the part of monolingualism is directly proportional to the part of the Russian population in the ethnic composition of the region, and vice versa, with the decrease in the part of Russians in ethnic composition bilingualism and multilingualism are increased. With the author's position, this pattern manifests itself in all the marked characteristics of the language situation, that provides an opportunity to consider the area of the region in a specific order (with a decrease of Russian population part, monolingualistic indicators decreased, multilingualism indicators and knowledge of their national language and the state language increased): North Kazakhstan, Kostanai, Karagandy, Akmola, Pavlodar areas and Astana. All the studies, developed by the Kazakhstani linguists, gives relevant information for timely adjustment of the language policy and language planning, it is useful for solving of management tasks in the field of language regulation.

### **Features of the functioning of the Russian language in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

If we talk about the status and features of the functioning of the Russian language in Kazakhstan, then the official use of the Russian language by all categories of citizens on an equal footing with the state language is legally regulated. Nevertheless, according to Kazakhstani sociolinguists, the issues, related to the status of Russian as the language of interethnic and international communication, issues of legal relations between Russian and state Kazakh language, and issues on legal regulation of functions of the Russian language and preserving its general cultural features need to be solved. This fact, according to the researchers, is connected not only with the internal features of language policy of Kazakhstan, but also with the fact that many issues related to the legal regulation of the functioning of the Russian language as the language of inter-ethnic communication, are not solved neither in Russia, nor in CIS, nor in the EurAsEC [8].

In modern conditions the language practice is increasingly determined by the influence of globalization processes. Social, political and economic changes in the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union changed the demographic structure of the Republic of Kazakhstan. So, from 1999 to 2009, the number of Russians decreased on 15,3%,

Ukrainians on 39,1%, the number of Germans decreased almost in 3 times, on 62,7% (49,5%), the number of Belarusians decreased on 40,6%, Poles on 28%. Increased number of Turkic-speaking people of the country [9]. Such changes are typical for almost all post-Soviet countries. These processes could not affect the status of the Russian language.

So, Y.E. Prokhorov notes the following typical changes in the functioning of the Russian language in the world:

- It ceased to be studied as an inevitable element of school and university education system in a number of countries;

- Significantly reduced learning Russian as the language of “enemy” or as a “superpower” language;

- It continues to be studied as one of the basic cultural phenomena of the world civilization in the extent of the situation due to historical and cultural contacts and real needs of professionals;

- It began to study (as required) taking into account the new economic, cultural and social ties between Russia and many foreign countries (the European Union needs the interaction with the Russian authorities, the use of the Russian market, the creation of joint ventures, expanding of cultural and tourist exchanges, etc);

- It began to be studied due to the fact of the emergence of significant number of Russian-speaking diasporas in many countries where due to the respective laws in public authorities can be used minorities languages [10].

**Today positions of the Russian language in Kazakh society are set apart from in a number of post-Soviet States.** Proficiency in Russian language by all ethnic groups and ethnic groups: bilinguals Kazakhs with the dominating Kazakh and Russian language, Russian monolinguals and bilinguals and Russians mostly with dominant Russian language, representatives of other ethnic groups with a wide range of proficiency in Russian from complete change of ethnic language to Russian (Koreans, Ukrainians, Belarusians, and others) to a low degree of proficiency (Uzbeks, Tajiks, Uigurs, Kurds, etc.).

Analysis of the usage of languages in the Kazakhstan Internet space revealed the following: 1) Among the 700 examined the most frequently visited sites, 76% of websites use only one language, 14,14% are bilingual, 9,28% are trilingual and 0,58% use more than 3 languages; 2) Among analyzed unilingual sites, 17% use Kazakh language, 83% — Russian; 3) Among bilingual sites — 87,9% presented in Kazakh and Russian, 11,1% in English, 1% in Kazakh and Chinese; 4) Among the analyzed trilingual sites, 97% used Kazakh, Russian and English, 1,5% used Kazakh, Russian and Uigur, 1,5% — Russian, English and Kyrgyz languages; 5) Number of sites, that represented more than on 3 languages — 4: 1 — in Kazakh, Russian, English, Chinese (25%); 1 — in Kazakh, Russian, English, Turkish (25%); 1 — Kazakh, Russian, English, Turkish, Chinese, Arabic (25%); 1 — Kazakh, Russian, English, Uzbek, Turkmen, Kyrgyz (25%). As shown by the results of the analysis, the Russian language is used as one of the working languages on the 610 (of 700) sites, which amounted to 87,14%. Kazakh language used in 245 (35%) electronic resources, English — in 79 (11,28%), Chinese — in 3 (0,42%), Turkish — in 2 (0,28%), Kyrgyz — in 2 (0,28%), Arabic — in 1 (0,14%), Uzbek — in 1 (0,14%), Turkmen — in 1 (0,14%), Uigur — in 1 (0,14%) [National Programme for the development and functioning of languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011–2020 [11].

The communicative function of the Russian language in Kazakh society is enough powerful. A part of information in the state and ethnic languages, compared with the deal of information in Russian and English in Kaznet is still very small (36% of the content in the Kazakh language on bilingual sites). Visual texts show the real picture of the functioning of languages. Study of city names (multiplexes, state and municipal properties, businesses and industrial firms) in Astana has shown that:

- Of the 398 analyzed names of multiplexes, 61 names available just in the Kazakh language, 70 — in Russian, 38 — in English. 72 names of multiplexes are presented in 2 languages: Kazakh and Russian, 88 — in Russian and Kazakh, 31 — in English and Russian languages. In three languages: Kazakh, Russian, English you can see 22 names;
- From 133 names of state and municipal properties, 30 are presented in Kazakh, 35 — in Russian, 24 — in Kazakh and Russian languages, 28 — in Russian and Kazakh;
- From 117 titles of businesses, 20 are represented in the Kazakh language, 27 — in Russian, 24 — in English, 32 — in English and Russian languages. From 166 of industrial firms, you can see 17 in Kazakh, 30 in Russian, 28 in English and 41 in English and Russian languages. As multiplexes, businesses and industrial firms are closely linked with foreign companies, in their titles are increasingly appears names in English. The names of state and municipal objects are written mostly in Kazakh and Russian languages.

Currently, there are 934 streets, avenues and quarters in Astana (<http://astana.gov.kz/>), more than 100 of them received new names by the process of toponimization. Appellative vocabulary becomes nominative and acquires the value of the symbol. About 70% of names that have passed from the category of common nouns to the category of proper nouns have Turkic roots.

The onomastic map of names appeared, formed from the linguistic units, with Turkic basis: *Aқzhelken, Arna, Атақоныс, Bazarлық, Balausa, Bastau, Bolashak, Bostandyқ, Botalov, Birlik, Достық, Zhajsaң, Zhalyn, Zhasyl, Кеңdala, Кеңshalзун, Orken, Өрnek, Saryn, Sonar, Ulken, etc.* (street names), *Alash* (Highway), *Aydın, Gыldala, Zhazyқ, Margen, Kөkoraj, Keruen, Sылama, Ulan, Shattyk, Yrys, Oзylandy, Shabyt, etc.* (quarters) *Azat, Arman, Gылдер, Zhastar, Kaynar, Kөrkem, Keremet, Sәtti, Senim* (names of residences) and etc. Of course, these lexical strata are actively used in language in appellative meaning. Some of them are used only in professional life and under the rules of common language is not very productive. But some language units are revived and begin to re-enter the linguistic turn. For example, such as *Alash, Ogylandy*.

As a result of the process of toponimization, the national titles' fund has been updated by the language resources of pre-Soviet era and of the Soviet period. In Soviet times, there were hodonyms in Astana (the names of streets and avenues), using nominal vocabulary in symbolic meaning as the basis: *Tsvetochynaya — Balausa, Ozernaya — Ozen, Naberezhnaya — Zhazazhaj, Mira — Bejbitshilik, Druzhby — Dostyk, Trudovaya — Еңbekshiler, Shakhterskaya — Kenshiler, Neftyannikov — Mұnajshylar*. All titles are translated into Kazakh language, acquired a national identity and got a new sound.

Names that cause the stereotypical association of the Soviet period in the life of Kazakh people, were replaced by memorative onyms, related to the history and culture of Kazakhstan.

The results of the study of language preferences, attitudes of different categories of citizens to the reforms and changes, taking place in society are of interest. It turned out

that part of the Kazakhstan people is ambivalent about the popularization and expansion of communication areas of English language. Some people from the beginning saw in the idea of the project as a threat to the development of other languages, primarily state, the other people saw an attempt to oust Russian in strengthening the position of the English language in the Kazakh society. Still others believe that the developing of English may negatively affect the development of minority languages.

Survey results with representatives of immigrants and ethnic minorities, conducted to determine the relationship to the Kazakh and Russian languages, to the policy of promoting the English language in Kazakhstan and linguistic preferences of the respondents, are noteworthy. In the survey, carried out during the number of years by the team of Eurasian National University scientists, was attended the representatives of the Slavic (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Poles) and Turkic (Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Tajiks) groups, separate group comprised respondents, representing the Korean diaspora. As immigrants were selected Kazakh repatriates, immigrated from China, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other countries. For many of them, Russian language skills is an important part of the adaptation and integration processes in the Kazakh society. Within this framework, it is especially difficult for returnees from China, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, living in the northern regions of the Republic, where Russian language is dominant in interethnic communication of population.

The result of such contradictions is quite predictable: the returnees, instead of actively interact with the population for the initiation of the new standards, lead an alienated life, form localized community with isolated world view. On the question of whether they find it difficult due to ignorance of the Russian language, almost half of the interviewed returnees from Uzbekistan (53,5%), China (45,7%), about one-third of returnees from Mongolia (29,8%), Tajikistan (32,8%) gave a positive response. According to respondents-returnees, the ignorance of the Russian language creates difficulties while their employment (56%), while obtaining reliable and up-to-date information (34%), while receiving benefits (32%), education (23%) etc. In the responses to the questionnaires they note parameters, such as development, modernity and the prevalence of the Russian language. So, 44,5% of the returnees from China, 26,9% from Mongolia, 22,2% from Uzbekistan, 32,4% from Tajikistan and 39,8% of the respondents from Turkmenistan believe that knowledge of the Russian language promotes good jobs and quality education. As Suleymenova E.D. notes [12], "... Neither functioning of Kazakh, nor functioning of Russian can't get an adequate description, if we consider these languages out of its joint functioning within a single communicative space, which, as a constant, 'sets' a sociolinguistic parameters of functional health for Russian and Kazakh languages".

It is clear, that in the present existence conditions, the inclusion of language in the development of new living spaces is accompanied by a process of redistribution of spheres of communicative practices where happens the displacement of one form of language by choosing other, more comfortable for the communicant means of communication. There is a collision choose of the language of communication, which can lead to preferential functioning of one languages and lesser activity of others. The results of the implementation of the State program of functioning and development of languages for 2001—2010 have shown the following changes in the language situation:

— There is an obvious restoration of the status of the Kazakh language in all socially important spheres;

- The infrastructure of teaching the State language has been significantly expanded;
- The process of transferring paperwork to the State language (the percentage of documents in Kazakh language in State agencies is about 67%) is being actively implemented;
- The communicative function of the State language in media and Internet is being strengthened. This process is evident in the educational sphere as well. For example, in 2006 the share of school graduates with Kazakh language of instruction was 58,5% students, and school graduates with Russian language of instruction — 41,5%, whereas in 2016 year out of 121091 graduates 83330 (68%) graduated from school with Kazakh language and 37672 (31,1%) with Russian language of instruction. As you can see, there is a trend towards strengthening of Kazakh language. The results of these researches allowed to identify the range of problems existing today in the new language policy of the state, to trace the processes of language development in this communication environment in the present moment and to predict the trends of spread, strengthening, cooperation, coexistence or conflict of languages in the future.

### **Russian as a polynational language**

Variability of Russian language lexical system, depending from territory of spread and language environment, is of a particular significance for a clearer definition of its polynational nature, because historically it turned out to be dispersed in several states. Russian language functioning in the foreign language environment, is prone to the penetration of a large number of new cultural components to the lexical system. Diversity of verbal communication in Russian language of different countries is reflected in the availability of specific features, which reflect both the linguistic (especially lexico-semantic), and non-linguistic (social, cultural, historical, psychological, ethnic) facts.

National-cultural characteristics in linguistic units appear with varying degrees of frequency and intensity, and forms of their expression are not similar as well. Most clearly the lexical peculiarity is expressed in the following areas of communication: socio-political, socio-cultural, gastronomic and onomastic. The peculiarity of the lexical system of national variants of the Russian language is that regionalisms operate in it, naturally, as native units, included in the Russian oral and written texts. The question of the relationship of the Russian language and the languages of other peoples is of great interest and particular significance due to the fact that the national Russian language, created on the basis of a conscious selection and regulation of forms, may not be universal, its formation involves a number of language systems. The problem of “regional variation” or, otherwise, the functioning of the language in the foreign language environment has long attracted the attention of linguists and is the most controversial issue of modern linguistics. The results of researches indicate that such variation depends from geographic, ethnic, social and other factors. “Socially conscious” language standards have different content depending on the historic stage, social position, the specifics of the linguistic situation in general. The increasing penetration of elements of other languages to the lexical system of the Russian language, functioning out of Russia, leads to the development of linguistic parallelism and variation. At the same time, the interaction and mutual influence of national language versions lead not to a blurring of differential traits, and to



a better understanding and preservation of its own linguistic identity, which is not less important for the Russian language of Russia and which is evident in the possibility of earmarking of the so-called Russisms at the level of lexical system.

With an areal-linguistic point of view, the vocabulary of the national versions of the Russian language consists of the following components: 1) All-Russian vocabulary background, constituting the main base of the language use (the so-called common core). The components of such common core cannot be used as conditional standard (invariant) for the detection of variant indicated national units; 2) Regionalisms, i. e. lexical units borrowed from other language, of literary standard, uncommon in Russia; 3) Regional lexical units related to the literary norm and built by the models of Russian language, but reflecting the realias of a different reality, not used in Russia. There is an opinion that the words of other nationalities “are characteristic for the Russian language in this territory, but not for the Russian language, to which they have no relation... not mastered by Russian consciousness...” [13].

It is hardly possible to argue with this statement, especially in the first part of it. Regionalisms, common in spoken Russian speech and recorded in written (publicistic and fiction) texts in a specific region of the spread of Russian language, indeed, do not alter or affect the lexical system of Russian literary language in general. They complement it, and a specific layer of Russian language vocabulary becomes variative. The process of enlargement of the lexical composition extend not to the territory of the original operation of the Russian language (territory of Russia), but to a limited territory of a specific region (mostly they are the territory of former Soviet republics of the USSR), and the inclusion in each region will be different, depending on the language, with which the Russian language contacts. As a rule, vocabulary, coming from a closely contacting language, is mastered by Russian speakers, does not require semantization in any form, does not cause discomfort to the understanding of the text, therefore, must be differentiated in terms of the variation of the language system. Considering the national variants as private systems (“microsystems”, in the terminology of A.D. Schweitzer), modern linguistics reviews the polynational language as a single macrosystem that exists in a number of practical implementations. Each variant microsystem contains both common with others, and specific symptoms. A.D. Schweitzer claims [14] that by mutual crossing the particular variant systems form a “common core” of a macrosystem. Those parts of the microsystem, which do not coincide with any parts (elements) of other private systems are differential, or distinctive features.

The idea of “common core” was borrowed by Schweitzer from Ch. Hockett, who tried to use it to explain the correlation of idiolects and dialects within a single linguistic system. Defining common core as “a set of identical elements of two Microsystems” A.D. Schweitzer attached great importance to this part of microsystems. “The concept of the common core, he writes- is extremely important and essential for the comparative analysis of such overlapping language systems, as dialects and variants of the same language. Comparisons of language variants, which are carried out without taking into account common core tend to distort the real picture of the relation of their common and distinctive elements” and “distinctive elements often represent certain inclusions to a single language system” [15].

One of the main requirements when comparing national variants is not only in identifying *what* works, but also *how it works*. Lexical system, or macrosystem of the

national version of the Russian language, in particular, Kazakhstan version, we can present in the form of expanding circles, where the core part — is the basic body of words and expressions of the Russian language, without which the language cannot exist and cannot be called national. Variative elements are applied on each other so that their main area forms identity zone and outer areas (segments) correspond to zones of divergence between them. The differences can be recognized as equal elements, due to which Russian literary language forms national version of the Russian language, included in the all-Russian lexical macrosystem, which is thus the correlation hierarchy. First, center, circle- a common core of lexical system of Russian national language, is that foundation which exists for centuries and keeps itself as the language of the Russian ethnos.

Second circle — expanding- is variative, body of units in it depends directly in what state, on what territory it develops and the language it is in contact with. It includes lexical units of different spheres of communication, which have no analogues in other national versions and Russia.

The third circle is characterized by internal variability, which manifests itself in the actualization of various units of the general structure of language, showing the features of the language imagery and identification of specific connotative meanings manifested in abbreviated formations and precedent texts. All components of the second and third circles of the lexical macrosystem form a special sphere of concepts. Lexical system of the Russian language in general appears before us as correlation hierarchy on the periphery representing a set of private systems. Inclusion to the Russian text of a large number of words from different languages, reflecting the realias of surrounding reality, changes the overall lexical structure of the Russian language, let's talk about a bit other lexical system with a different fullness, additional composition of words and expressions, having no matches in the lexical system of the Russian language, developing on the original territory of spread.

This problem is typical for many republics of the former Soviet Union, which still actively use the Russian language. According to the ideas of Humboldt and the hypothesis of Sapir-Whorf, language and way of thinking are interrelated. Language is not only a means of communication but also a tool of thoughts and feelings, and its consideration from the position of these categories is the “foundation of true linguistic research” [16]. Connection of anthropocentric approach in looking at the language with anthropocentric setting in text analysis allows to deepen the study of the problem of the human factor in the linguistics of the text, because the text is always a creation of an author, also representing an aspect of the human factor. Russian language in all CIS countries, experiencing the impact of closely contacting language and socio-cultural conditions, is in the process of expansion of the lexical system. All this is due to the fact that basic knowledge, originally embedded in the lexical system and designed for communication in Russia, is not sufficient for adequate communication in situations of bi- and multilingualism. When viewed from the position of the Russian language in the countries where it is used actively, regardless of its official status then, for example, in the Russian language in Ukraine a large layer of adapted Ukrainian lexis can be seen, in Lithuania — Lithuanian, in Uzbekistan — Uzbek, etc. In a multiethnic state Russian language is in contact with other languages and, accordingly, assigns new knowledge, reflecting the socio-cultural environment in which it develops.

Russian language in Russia some way confronts the linguistic peculiarities of other national versions. On the one hand, it always has a massive impact on them through various technical means, radio, television, print, while pretending to be the legislator of the language. On the other hand, it unconsciously cultivates its own distinctive features, detected by correlation, in particular, with the Russian language in Kazakhstan. As a result of variety of processes of inter-layer, intra-regional and inter-ethnic interaction between each of the national versions of the Russian language has a certain inventory of lexical units, fragments of which can be common. Discrepancies between the vocabulary of the national versions of the Russian language are of both inventory, and distribution nature and can affect the quantitative parameters — by the existence of parallel doublet definitions — quality indicators, which is reflected in the unusual lexical-semantic and stylistic interpretation of lexical items and structural properties with a special use of word-building tools.

The vocabulary of the Russian language national variations is inherent in high degree of regional variation, vertical and horizontal segmentation in close cooperation of units of different layers of social and functional paradigm, to a greater or lesser extent expressed readiness to equalize differences and a tendency to spread nationally marked lexical units outside the Russian Federation. At present, we can assert the existence of variation relationships between national variants of lexical systems of the Russian language and language of metropolitan within a single macrosystem of the language.

### **Languages: Conflict of Interests**

One of the most topical issues of the use of the Russian language in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states today- is a decision on whether the language has its own sphere of consumption and, if so, what is it. Is it possible to consider Russian language as a special kind of Russian language or is it the same Russian language as in Russia? Unity of opinion on this issue does not exist in Kazakhstan itself and beyond. Some believe that the rules that exist in Kazakhstan, form a special code, adapted to the needs of use of the language in this country, others insist that all the differences of the Russian language in Kazakhstan from its use in the metropolis can be described as exoticisms [17; 18].

Persistent doubts concern the names of localities: Aktobe / Aktyubinsk, Almaty / Alma-Ata, Baikonur / Baikonur, Karagandy / Karaganda, Kokshetau / Kokchetav, Kostanai / Kustanay, Oral / Uralsk, Oskemen / Ust-Kamenogorsk, Taldykorgan / Taldy-Kurgan, Shymkent / Chimkent. These renamings have different nature and character: the return of historical Turkic names, inventing analogues, phonetic adaptation, graphics replacement. For example, in the case of renaming Semipalatinsk to Semey the head of the republic explained that the former name of the city is connected with the nuclear testing ground, and so is not very attractive to investors and tourists.

There are still some traces of not always considerate disputes on Wikipedia [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia: K\\_pereimenovaniyu/22\\_ilyulya\\_2007](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:K_pereimenovaniyu/22_ilyulya_2007) (quote them selectively to the original spelling, except for the most politically incorrect statements):

“not everything that is in the Cyrillic alphabet is in Russian. Semey is in Kazakh. Suppose there are two languages, but one city cannot be called differently in one same country. For us, the city is still Semipalatinsk, so far. // Do not invent, Semey is not

Kazakh word and in Kazakh it means nothing (unlike all other Kazakh toponyms, such as Aktau, Karkaraly, Astana, Almaty, etc.). But in Kazakh language the city was called exactly this way before. XXX is not an attempt to kazahificate, it is a normal renaming of the city. // If the Kazakhs cannot pronounce Semipalatinsk or Uralsk, it does not mean that the Russians should be forced to pronounce all kinds of Oskemens... // Abstain from racist outbursts to the address of Kazakh people. And if you find it difficult to pronounce the words Semey, Almaty or Oskemen, I sincerely, humanly feel sorry for you. Perhaps a speech therapist can help. // Why do Kazakhs cannot say Semey and Russians-Semipalatinsk? What is the problem here? Why Kazakhs say Orynbor about Russian city of Orenburg? // It's actually quite logical to kazahificate what in its time was no less insidiously Russified, but this is not the matter. Rename background can be any but the very fact of renaming is in the jurisdiction of the Government of the country, it is its full right, someone likes it or not. and so on". Similar discussions are found in print today as well. True and invented arguments are given, facts and interpretations are mixed, the parties wish to avoid offense, but at the same time hurt each other intentionally. Historical retrospective serves to both parties as proof of its rightness.

Control of websites is an important thing; depending on who writes and edits a website there can be different variants of interpretation, but in the case of the Russian language it occurs that a lot depends on whether the site is Kazakh or Russian. You can see that the discussions on Russian websites have more moderate nature than in the Russian-speaking Kazakh websites. Kazakh-language websites are usually somewhat different point of view.

All scientists talk about the Internet space and telecommunications of Kazakhstan and Russia as communicating vessels; their interaction leads to a constant renewal of the Russian language in the Kazakh Republic, but not so much affect the functioning of the Kazakh language, which is under the influence of not only Russian, but also, for example, Turkish and other Turkic languages.

Let's see how the languages are combined on marking on dairy products. By law, the inscriptions in both languages are compulsory. In Kazakh language milk, kumis, shubat, ayran, etc. are called with the word *ak-* 'white'. Like everything associated with the white color, it is given the value of purity, fidelity, special sacred power. Each nation has its own dairy products, but in the case of a long coexistence of cultures peoples share recipes of dishes. So, today, all these products are sold in Moscow, and fermented baked milk, varenets, kefir, etc — in Kazakhstan. Let us give descriptions of some dairy products. The contents in Kazakh and in Russian is the same, but the font used on the packaging is different in shape and size; some symbols may be absent in one of the languages. Characteristically, that in the normal Kazakh language text must come before the Russian-speaking, but in reality the languages alternate randomly, and this can be seen as a specific language game as well. It is noticeable that the influence of Russian language on the Kazakh has a long history (can be seen on borrowings): it was not only a source of innovation, but also as an intermediary between the world and other languages, i. e. language-mediator. In many ways it retains this feature today.

The Kazakh language, however, persistently try to overcome existing for many years' functional asymmetry. The use of the Russian language is gradually reduced, including such functionally important areas as judicial procedures and education.

Interesting results provided the monitoring of work with students of the Kazakh departments of leading University of Kazakhstan- Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. For several years (from 2012 to 2016) students of the 3rd course of non-humanitarian profile (specialties “Chemistry”, “Electroenergetics”, “Information technology”, “General Physics”, “Mathematics”) had the educational course “Professional Russian language”. The first lesson of the course in all groups was aimed at awareness of the students of the relevance, the functional need to study the Russian language for future successful integration in the professional environment. Russian language teacher offered students to compose the strategy of development of the professional language of communication, which includes several tactics. Despite the fact that the Russian language was meant (at least from the title of the course and its goals), most students were developed strategies for the acquisition **of the English language**. Exactly English regularly was called by students as *language of the specialty*. Moreover, 90% of students did not consider it efficient to study the Russian language in the future, considering that the English *can replace* or *supplant* Russian during entrance of Kazakhstan into the world educational and professional context. There is a significant caveat here: most of the students of the Kazakh department come from families of repatriates, i. e. they are not sufficiently fluent in Russian language. In their view, a three-part structure of the *Kazakh-Russian-English* can be reduced to two-part *Kazakh-English*. Such “proposals” in the process of educational course came from students in the form of essays, results of surveys and independent works, as well as projects (the characteristic name of one of them — “Let’s speak kazaksha!”, i. e. “Let’s speak Kazakh!”). It is impossible not to conclude that *the prestige of education* is increasingly English than Russian. Moreover, when switching codes during classroom *in Russian language (!)* lessons “Kazakh-English” language pair is functionally activated: English is used by students as an intermediary language for expressing their own opinions and clarifying of misunderstood material.

In the government project “Trinity of languages” English language is assigned the status of “the language of integration into the world economy”. In the educational process of Kazakhstan, it occupies an increasingly stable position. In the “State program for functioning and development of languages in 2011–2020”, one of the target indicators is to increase the share of the Republic’s population being proficient in English language (by 2014 — 10%, by 2017 — 15%, by 2020 — 20%); the percentage of the population speaking three languages (State, Russian and English) (by 2014 — 10%, by 2017 — 12%, by 2020 — up to 15%) [4]. It should be noted that in his speech at the XIX session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed “the importance and role of the English language, opening a window to Kazakhs into the world of innovation, technology and business”. [20]

### 3. CONCLUSION

The language situation in Kazakhstan is evolving in the light of several forces:

- Active vernacularization with the return of functional authority of the indigenous Kazakh language;
- Functional “inertia” of Russian language;
- Enhanced promotion and the introduction of English as the language of international communication.

Linguistic construction relies on all three language components, however the influence of “natural” factors is not excluded: so, the repatriation of Kazakhs to their ethnic homeland strengthens, on the one hand, the ethnic composition of the nation, and on the other- eliminates the need for the Russian language, as quantitative dominant of the State gradually become people who do not speak Russian. Not to mention the process of strengthening of national identity, coupled with the collective aspiration of Kazakhs to go out of “the shadows” of Russia and the Russian language. The result can be a gradual displacement of the Russian language to the functional periphery, but it is a trend so far, not a forecast.

Kazakhstan today remains one of the most consistent states with ethnic and linguistic tolerance positions.

© Sinyachkin V.P., Sinyachkina N.L., 2018

### REFERENCES

1. Suleymenova, E.D., and Zh.S. Smagulova. 2005. *Yazykovaya situaciya i yazykovoe planirovanie v Kazahstane* [Linguistic Situation and Language Planning in Kazakhstan]. Almaty: Kazakh universiteti. Print. (in Russ.)
2. Suleymenova, E.D. 2010. “Sociolingvisticheckie peremennye yazykovogo sdviga i povorota yazykovogo sdviga” [Sociolinguistic Variables of Language Shift and Rotation of Language Shift]. «Yazyk — Obshchestvo — Vremya» Proceedings. May 2010. Almaty: Kazakh University. Print. (in Russ.)
3. Suleymenova, E.D. 2006. «Arhetip “gadkogo utyonka” i yazykovaya identichnost’» [Archetype of the “Ugly Duckling” and Language Identity]. Language and Ethnic Identity: International Conference “Akhanovskie readings”. Almaty: Kazakh University. Print. (in Russ.)
4. Madieva, G.B. 2010. *Imya sobstvennoe v kontekste poznaniya* [Proper Name in the Context of Knowledge]. Almaty; Moscow. Print. (in Russ.)
5. Suleymenova, E.D. 2010. *Dynamics of Linguistic Situation in Kazakhstan*. Print.
6. Khasanov, B.Kh. 1992. *Social’no-lingvisticheckie problemy funkcionirovaniya kazahskogo yazyka v Respublike Kazahstan* [Socio-linguistic Problems of the Functioning of Kazakh Language in the Republic of Kazakhstan]. Dr. thesis. Almaty. Print. (in Russ.)
7. Khasanov, B.Kh. 2001. “Russkij yazyk v Kazahstane: na platforme yazykovogo suvereniteta” [Russian Language in Kazakhstan: on the Platform of Language Sovereignty]. Reports of the International Conference “Russian Language in Socio-Cultural space of XXI Century”. Almaty. Print. (in Russ.)
8. Akanova, D.Kh., E.D. Suleimenova, and Shajmerdenova N.Zh. 2010. “Yazykovaya situaciya i opyt yazykovogo planirovaniya v Kazahstane” [Linguistic Situation and Experience of Language Planning Experience in Kazakhstan]. *Reshenie nacional’no-yazykovyh voprosov v sovremennom mire: Strany SNG i Baltii*. Moscow. Print. (in Russ.)
- 9.
10. Prokhorov, Y.E. 2009. “Russkij yazyk i russkaya kul’tura v novoj geopoliticheskoj kommunikacii” [The Russian Language and Russian Culture in the New Geopolitical Communication]. Reports of the international research-to-practice Conference “Innovative Technologies in the Theory and Practice of Teaching Language and Literature: Problems and Solutions”. Astana, 24—26 November 2009. Part one. Plenary report. Print. (in Russ.)
11. Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan № 110 of June 2011. Electronic resource. Access mode: <http://www.geokz.tv/article.php?aid=11278>
12. Suleimenova, E.D. 2007. “By Understanding the Probability Version of the Russian language in Kazakhstan”. *Slavica Helsingiensia* 1: 254. Print.
13. Mamedli, A.M. 2000. “Otnoshenie ekzotizmov k semanticheskoj sisteme yazyka-receptora (Biblejskaya ekspressiya i russkij literaturnyj yazyk)” [The Relation of Exoticism to the Semantic

- System of the Receptor Language (Biblical Expression and Russian Literary Language)]. Velikiy Novgorod. Print. (in Russ.)
14. Schweitzer, A.D. 1971. Literaturnyj anglijskij yazyk v SShA i Anglii [Literary English in the United States and England]. Moscow. Print. (in Russ.)
  15. Schweitzer, A.D. 1976. Sovremennaya sociolingvistika: Teoriya. Problemy. Metody. [Contemporary Sociolinguistics: Theory. Problems. Methods]. Moscow. Print. (in Russ.)
  16. Humboldt, W. 1985. Yazyk i filosofiya kul'tury [Language and Philosophy of Culture]. Moscow. Print. (in Russ.)
  17. Loschikhina, A. 2015. “Y i Almaty” [Y and Almaty]. *Russkiy Mir* 6: 30—33. Print. (in Russ.)
  18. Sabitova, Z.K. 2013. Lingvokul'turologiya [Cultural Linguistics]. Moscow. Print. (in Russ.)
  19. State Program of Development and Functioning of Languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011—2020. [Presidential Decree of June 29, 2011 № 110]. Web: [geokz.tv/article.php?aid=11278](http://geokz.tv/article.php?aid=11278)
  20. Address of the participants of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan to the Country's Citizens. Web: [akorda.kz/ru/speeches/addresses\\_congratulations/obraschenie\\_uchastnikov\\_xix\\_sessii\\_assamblei\\_naroda](http://akorda.kz/ru/speeches/addresses_congratulations/obraschenie_uchastnikov_xix_sessii_assamblei_naroda)

**Article history:**

Received: 13.04.2018

Accepted: 25.06.2018

Moderator: S.V. Dmitryuk

**Conflict of interests:** none

**For citation:**

Sinyachkin, V.P., and N.L. Sinyachkina. 2018. “Multilingualism in the Republic of Kazakhstan: Viewpoint from the Outside”. *Polylinguality and Transcultural Practices*, 15 (3), 445—460. DOI 10.22363/2618-897X-2018-15-3-445-460

**Bio Notes:**

*Vladimir Pavlovich Sinyachkin* is a Doctor in Philology, Professor, Head of the Department of Russian Language and Intercultural Communication, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Russian Peoples' Friendship University. E-mail: [word@list.ru](mailto:word@list.ru)

*Natalia Leonidovna Sinyachkina* is a Candidate in Philology, Associate Professor at the Department of Russian Language and Intercultural Communication, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Russian Peoples Friendship University.

## **МНОГОЯЗЫЧИЕ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ КАЗАХСТАН: ВЗГЛЯД СО СТОРОНЫ**

**В.П. Синячкин, Н.Л. Синячкина**

Российский университет дружбы народов (РУДН)  
Российская Федерация, 117198, Москва, ул. Миклухо-Маклая, 6

В статье подробно раскрывается комплекс проблем, связанный с языковой политикой в Республике Казахстан. Особое внимание уделено осмыслению магистральной для языкового планирования траектории триязычия и возникающим в подобной обстановке конфликтам

между языками и культурами, а также решений их преодоления. Авторы аргументируют свои наблюдения многочисленными примерами из сфер лингвокультурологии, политической лингвистики, образования. Deskриптивный метод скомбинирован в работе с историческим комментированием и лингвокультурологическим анализом. Полученные данные могут быть полезны специалистам-филологам, интересующимся проблемами языкового планирования.

**Ключевые слова:** языковое планирование, языковая политика, языковой конфликт, практика триязычия, Казахстан

**История статьи:**

Поступила в редакцию: 13.04.2018

Принята к публикации: 25.06.2018

Модератор: С.В. Дмитрюк

**Конфликт интересов:** отсутствует

**Для цитирования:**

*Синячкин В.П., Синячкина Н.Л.* Многоязычие в Республике Казахстан: взгляд со стороны // Полилингвильность и транскультурные практики. 2018. Т. 15. № 3. С. 445—460. DOI 10.22363/2618-897X-2018-15-3-445-460

**Сведения об авторах:**

*Синячкин Владимир Павлович* — доктор филологических наук, профессор, заведующий кафедрой русского языка и межкультурной коммуникации факультета гуманитарных и социальных наук Российского университета дружбы народов. E-mail: word@list.ru

*Синячкина Наталия Леонидовна* — кандидат филологических наук, доцент кафедры русского языка и межкультурной коммуникации факультета гуманитарных и социальных наук Российского университета дружбы народов.