



**Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Halil KÜÇÜKLER**

Balıkesir Üniversitesi  
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu  
Balıkesir/TÜRKİYE  
hkucukler2@gmail.com

ORCID

**CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING  
IMPACTS OF TRILINGUALISM IN  
KAZAKHSTAN**

KAZAKİSTANDA ÜÇ DİLLİK ETKİLERİ  
VE YABANCI DİL EĞİTİMİNDEKİ  
ZORLUKLAR VE ÇÖZÜM YOLLARI

Makale Türü: Araştırma Makalesi	Article Information: Research Article
Yükleme Tarihi: 04.01.2020	Received Date: 04.01.2020
Kabul Tarihi: 06.02.2020	Accepted Date: 06.02.2020
Yayımlanma Tarihi: 01.04.2020	Date Published: 01.04.2020

**İntihal / Plagiarism**

Bu makale **turnitin** programında taranmıştır.  
This article was checked by **turnitin**.



**Atıf/Citation**

Küçükler, Halil. "Challenges and Solutions in Foreign Language Teaching and Impacts of Trilingualism in Kazakhstan", *Hikmet-Akademik Edebiyat Dergisi [Journal Of Academic Literature]*, Yıl 6, Sayı 12, Bahar 2020, s. 49-60.

Küçükler, Halil. "Kazakistanda Üç Dillik Etkileri ve Yabancı Dil Eğitimindeki Zorluklar ve Çözüm Yolları", *Hikmet-Journal Of Academic Literature*, Year 6, Volume 12, Spring 2020, p. 49-60.



**hikmet.670357**



**Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Halil KÜÇÜKLER**

**CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IMPACTS  
OF TRILINGUALISM IN KAZAKHSTAN**

**KAZAKİSTANDA ÜÇ DİLLİK ETKİLERİ VE YABANCI DİL EĞİTİMİNDEKİ  
ZORLUKLAR VE ÇÖZÜM YOLLARI**

**ÖZ**

Kazakistan aşamalı olarak üç dilli bir sisteme geçme kararı vermiş ve bu bağlamda yeni eğitim reformları yapmaktadır. Araştırmalar, çok dilliliğin politika, ekonomi, eğitim ve kültür alanında değişikliklere bağlı olarak küresel çapta doğal bir süreç olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışma konusu kavramsal çerçeve olarak Kazakistandaki yabancı dil öğretiminde karşılaşılan zorluklar ve çözüm yollarını içerir. Çalışmanın nedeni, yabancı dil öğretimi ve öğrenimindeki mevcut zorlukları göstermek ve üç dilli sisteme geçmeye katkı sunmaktır. Yabancı dil öğretimi, çevre ortam açısından desteklenen ikinci dil kullanımını gibi değildir. Bu çalışma bir derleme araştırması olarak veriler ve analizler yapılmıştır. Toplanan veriler mevcut yabancı dil öğretimine öğreniminin devlet okulları üzerindeki etkisine ilişkindir. Bu durumlar ışığında üç dilli sistemin Kazakistan da başarılı olması açısından konu önemle irdelenmesi gerekmektedir. Bu çalışma bu alanda daha fazla çalışma yapılmasının önemini ortaya çıkartmaktadır. Genel olarak, tümünden ve tüme varım olarak iki dil sunum modu uygulanmıştır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Kazakistan, Yabancı Dil Eğitimi, Üçdillilik.

**ABSTRACT**

Kazakhstan is slowly making education reforms, and this republic is struggling towards the implementation of the trilingual education system. Studies show that the spread of multilingualism globally is a natural process due to basic changes in politics, economy, education, and culture. The conceptual framework related to the study subject is mainly challenges and solutions in foreign language teaching in Kazakhstan. The challenges and solutions faced by teachers and students in foreign language education are presented. The reason of the study is to indicate present challenges in foreign language teaching and learning and introduce the solutions. The foreign language teaching is not the same as the second language teaching as the point of the supply of language practice from environmental support. The present study embraced a compilation research, gather data and analyse it. The data that was collected regards the influence present educational learning on state schools. With these factors in play, much need to be undertaken if trilingualism will gain success in Kazakhstan and thus the article further confirms that more research is required to fit the country education system. Generally, there are two main types of language presentation methods mode applied namely deductive and inductive presentation.

**Keywords:** Kazakhstan, Foreign Language Teaching, Trilingualism

## Introduction

As the popular quote goes, “*the borders of my language are the borders of my world*” by Ludwig Wittgenstein remains relevant up to date. A language is a tool for communication as well as bridging gaps between cultures. It plays a great role in the development of scientific, cultural and economic relations and it is also an obligatory item in progressing of these relations (Tosuncuoğlu, 2018). Thus knowledge of languages extends the integration capability of people and countries. Globally, multilingualism is spread in various multi-ethnic geographical spaces. According to Trent et al. (2013), 20% of the US population speaks a language at home other than English, 56% of Europe are language while Tatar, Tajik, Azerbaijani, Turkish, Dungan, Uzbek, Uighur, and other bilingual while half the world population is also bilingual. Kazakhstan is no different, and with 130 nationalities inhabitants, the majority of Kazakhs are bilingual. Baitaliyeva (n.d) notes that Slavic speaks in a single ethnic groups are multilingual. Kazakhstan President, Nazarbayev (2007) in his address to the nation “New Kazakhstan in a New World” said Kazakhstan is to be regarded as a country with high levels of literacy; and a populace that speaks three languages: Kazakh, Russian and English.

Kazakhstan language policy on development and functioning of languages in the state suggests the use of three languages: Kazakh (State language), Russian (International communication) and English (the language of successful integration into global economics). The country has over 130 nationalities with the majority of the population being bilingual speaking Kazakh and Russian. Government programs in education development stages motivate Kazakhstan's people interest in the English language. Trilingualism has been introduced at Kazakhstan Universities and has overseen the opening of English departments, translating and publishing regular text-books into English and implementing the international standard of studying English.

Since the government program of development in the education system is behind the motivation and success of the English language, changes have been introduced to the education curriculum of state compulsory education. As such, the government is undertaking the training of teaching staff speaking in Trilingualism with the number of credits for foreign languages in basic classes increasing. There are also schools with Trilingual Education and other specialized Nazarbayev Intellectual schools all over the country where the Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) and mathematics are taught in English. Well as expected, the transition from bilingualism to Trilingualism has remained challenging, and though the government has been trying to overcome this challenge, state solution has not been adequate (Trent et al., 2013). Thus, this paper seeks to identify the challenges affecting the teaching of the second language as well as the impact of Trilingualism.

## 1. Language/Foreign Language Teaching in Kazakhstan

Though trilingualism is often met with challenges, people of Kazakhstan have adopted strategies that are meant to put them in the forefront regarding multilingual communication. This follows the realization of the integration process taking place globally. People are now interested in mastering English and the notion is reflected in public documents like State Development Programme for Education and Science (2016-2019). This incorporates the key trend in of developing trilingual education and the adopted roadmap of trilingual education from 2015/2019. The overall aim is introducing Trilingualism at all levels of education in Kazakhstan. Regarding this, the Ministry of Education has developed a common strategy for teaching trilingual teachers and administration staff (Nabi et al., 2016).

Studies show that the spread of multilingualism globally is a natural process due to basic changes in politics, economy, education, and culture. Indeed, multilingualism is a dominant character of modern societies by virtue. Subsequently, a multilingual economy is developed in a globalized world. All this is however dependent on the increased migration processes around the globe (Nabi et al., 2016). Such said one cannot imagine a monolingual model of economic and cultural development of countries striving for dialogue and openness with the world. Thus, the spoken many languages are a steady demand of the modern society.

The UNESCO (1999) adopted the 12<sup>th</sup> resolution that authorizes multilingual education. Multilingual education refers to the concept of using at least three languages in all education levels. The languages identified by UNESCO are the mother tongue, a regional language, and international language. As of 2017, trilingual training was conducted in 110 schools representing 63,000 or 2.3% students. Through the pilot programs, the government aims at identifying the problem of special teaching of educators with the Ministry of Education (2008) implementing the first mandating certain universities to develop a basic strategy for training trilingual educators (Savankova, 2018).

Data presented by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) shows that these specialized language centers are functioning as the number of graduates trained since 2008 in the framework of trilingual education are 7907 (6677 undergraduates, 1230 at masters, and 76 at doctorate level).58.5% or 4624 people of the graduates have been employed with bachelor's degree graduates is 3522 people, master 1102 and Ph.D. 72 people. Within the program, between 2012 to 2015, 3900 educators have been trained in 38 universities of Kazakhstan.933 educators have been trained in abroad in partnership with international universities of UK, Japan, Spain, Portugal, and Germany. For the MoES has identified three priority areas: updating the educational program, improve the regulatory and methodological framework and creating a unified

system of training professional of educators and administrative personnel (Kurmanov et al, 2015).

### Definitions of terms

- Mother language refers to the native language that inhabitants of a given community speak. In Kazakhstan, there are several mother tongue languages that are spoken including; the Azerbaijani, Turkish, Dungan, Uzbek, and Uighur among others.
- The second language refers to the other language used in a given country other than the native language.
- Bilingualism is the ability of an individual to use two languages effectively. In Kazakhstan, the natives are fluent in both Kazakh and Russian as their mode of communication.
- Trilingualism is the tendency to use three languages with near equal fluency in the languages. Trilingualism is a common phenomenon, and in Kazakhstan, some people are fluent in Kazakh, Russian and English or German especially those in tourism sectors.

## 2. Impacts of Trilingualism in Kazakhstan

With 27 years since independence, Kazakhstan continues to integrate into the global amid fierce competition of the economy, education, technology economy and so forth. This has necessitated educational reforms that align to the global mainstream. Currently, there are two popular trends among global education system as identified by Smith & Sandvik (2012): Firstly, the integration of technology in education (Smart learning and e-learning) and improving the education level; of populations by expanding the access to education. Closer analyses of Kazakhstan's educational policies within the States program of development (2010) indicate five changes to the education system: implement the trilingual educational in schools, E-learning, Expanding of pre-school provision, extending secondary schools to 12 years of school and develop pedagogics through centers of excellence program. To understand the impacts of Trilingualism, the paper analysis relevant stakeholders: Government or policymaker perspective, educator's perspectives, student's perspective, and parent's perspective.

### 2.1. Policy Maker's Perspective

The overall task of MoES is to control the education systems through making policy and legislative decisions to improve the quality. Though the main government focus is the country's education. The government is aware of education as part of the economic structure of Kazakhstan. It is important for education to be viewed through his perspective as the main objective of any education system is to safeguard the economy of a country; not the other way round of paying more importance to money than intellectual

progress (Tikly& Barret,2011). One professor B. Berturganova notes that the English language on a global scale is greater than China, German, Spanish or any other language. For students to be able to keep abreast with latest development and innovations, students should be proficient in English.

## 2.2.The educator's perspective

Adopting the bottom-up approach works best when introducing new reforms, policies and making changes. Teachers should be given an opportunity to express their opinion and ideas as this leads to a shared model for effective change. Majority teachers are willing to impact the design of the quality system to bring about meaningful change to their learners and their selves (Jones, Potter & Ebrahim, 2011). While understanding three languages are important, Trilingualism should not be done at the expense of other critical subjects. For instance, the low number of rural areas teachers who are already overworked, the introduction of Trilingualism might be problematic.

First, with the implementation of educational reforms, educators leave schools especially if they taught in the same language. Doubts persist if the universities will have enough time to prepare sufficient professionals to replace the 'old cadres' within the limited timeframe. There is absolutely no guarantee that the younger generation will be willing to teach upcountry and rural areas are given that there is a shortage of teachers even in urban areas. Another issue is that many teachers leave state schools to work for private schools due to huge salaries. Evidently, the level of education will deteriorate (Jones, Potter & Ebrahim, 2011). Trilingualism seems hurried, and it should be implemented over a longer period, and the current reforms seem miscalculated for the sake of short term political and economic interests. MoES need to implement the education changes on a step by step basis: First train the teachers and secondly, sort the material base.

## 2.3. The Student's Perspective

In a survey where 1055 pupils of 9 to 11 grade (66% from Kazakh instructed schools) and 34% (Russian instructed schools) showed that only 15% of the learners were fluent in English.66% of students were opposed to learning STEM subjects in English citing low quality of education which they deemed useless for their future (Jones, Potter and Ebrahim, 2011). Given that learners at universities, colleges, and schools are already learning in trilingualism environment, it is not a problem for students learning English. Fears of learning the English language are instigated by parents who hinder students development as an official from MoES noted.

It is a choice for the student to decide on whether to study using foreign languages and this should not be compulsory for everybody. It is the parent

choice of whether their children learn in a trilingual school. Subjects in English should be taught at advanced level (senior students) and this should be an optional too since the current level of English language of secondary school learners is not enough to understand the teaching materials. Finally, it is the right of students to be taught by qualified teachers since this would mean they completed the given course. A qualified teacher should have an appropriate certificate in Certificate in English Language Teaching to Young Learners (Shara et al., 2016).

#### **2.4. The Parent's Perspective**

Most teachers today support the introduction of trilingual education in schools. 66% of parents were keen on their children learning English. A survey by Public opinion Research Institute sought to understand the perspectives of a new model of education. 1000 parents were involved in the research; urban 53.5% and rural 46.5% inhabitants. The survey found that more than half of participants were fully satisfied with the current status of education, and other partially satisfied. Only 6% expressed negative perception. The main concern expressed by the parents was insufficient teaching personnel weak educational methodological base (Jones, Potter & Ebrahim, 2011).

### **3. Problems in Foreign Language Teaching in Kazakhstan**

There are several challenges facing the education system in Kazakhstan especially when it comes to the teaching of foreign language Education. However, the country is working hard in changing its educational system to correspond to the global trends. Implementing Educational reforms in Kazakhstan will be significant as it will aid in improving student's knowledge hence making them become competitive in modern realities of the world. The teaching of foreign language Education in Kazakhstan is faced with numerous challenges including; lack of adequate teachers, who can teach in English language, insufficient high-quality language materials for learning a foreign language and inadequate knowledge of both students and teachers in rural areas among many other challenges (Jones, Potter & Ebrahim, 2011)

#### **3.1. Problems of Pre-Service Training of Foreign Language Teachers**

One of the issues here is the difference in teaching by the teachers within the same school. For instance in native schools, the teachers apply traditional techniques while in the foreign schools teacher apply modern techniques. Further, there is the issue of prospective teacher graduating without real language environments. This means such teachers do not have the expertise to teaching in foreign language. Again, there is the issue of lack of native speakers which leads to a language barrier and gap. There is also the problem of lack of mainstream disciplines such as English literature.

### **3.2. Problems with the employment of foreign language teachers**

The first challenge here is that the Kazakhstan are not able to provide enough job opportunities to the teacher candidates and insufficient salaries of teachers. Additionally, there is the problem of basing their education on test exams rather than the four skills. These four skills are listening, writing, reading as well as speaking. Tests exams only make students cram and not learn to understand.

### **3.3. Problems related to physical conditions in foreign language teaching**

Conditions of crowded classes are one of the major challenges. This problem presents a situation where there is lack of talk time in the crowded classrooms as well as inadequate technological substructure. The latter are important in assisting better teaching of foreign languages in classrooms. There is also the problem of many classes lacking physical facilities such as computers, projectors, interactive boards, white boards and different colored markers to aid in teaching the foreign languages. These facilities make learning easy and more efficient for the foreign language teachers and therefore their inadequacy.

### **3.4. Foreign language Problems with educational materials**

In most Kazakhstan schools there are not enough English resources and therefore English teacher will be faced with the challenge of working without the required resources to teach English professionally. Further, non-auxiliary material makes the foreign language teachers depend on one coursebook for teaching.

### **3.5. Foreign language Problems related to teaching methods**

In most scenarios, the teachers are not able to apply the methods they learned in undergraduate education in the classrooms. This can be attributed to the lack of facilitating resources to make some of the methods effective and efficient. Again it can be attributed to the system of the schools in which they teach in. Again, the conditions in classes direct the teachers to use the traditional teaching methods. This is mostly due to the lack of technological sub-structures in the schools.

### **3.6. Problem with foreign language teaching management and control**

This includes lacking supporting teacher's guidance which is important on guiding teacher on what to teach and the appropriate methods to be used. This problem is largely related to the teaching techniques used in the classrooms.



## **4. Results and Suggestions**

### **4.1. Foreign language Solutions for teaching materials Exam**

It is highly recommended that the native speaker of Kazakhstan language be in the English and Literature departments. Again, the prospective teachers teaching foreign languages should seek target countries with the target language. Such programs like the Erasmus are vital in improving their foreign language programs.

### **4.2. Suggestions for Foreign Language Teachers' Solution to Pre-Service Training Problems**

To select the appropriate teacher for the foreign language it is important to use efficient methods such as interviews and lectures instead of using traditional methods like tests exams. This creates an interactive session with real-life situations that can be used to evaluate the teachers as opposed to test exams. There should be prep classes in the universities or state schools where a placement tests should be issued at the beginning of every year to establish new classes. The results of these tests should be used to give the students new positions.

### **4.3. Suggestions for the employment of foreign language teachers**

Here, the crowded classes should be decongested. This will make it easy for the foreign teachers to teach the students without many challenges. Further, the classrooms should be equipped with technical equipment such as computers, projectors and smart boards. Such will make the teaching of these foreign languages much efficient and effective. Hence, teacher will have less workload as they will rely on the traditional methods of teaching but rather use the modern ones. There should also be individual instruction in learning which is a useful approach in teaching since it enables teachers teach according to the needs of the students. This is so because different students understand English differently and this requires having tasks at different levels for different students.

### **4.4. Suggestions for physical conditions in foreign language teaching**

The textbooks ought to be selected from easy to difficult or simple to difficult, and the dialects and texts should be authentic. This will make teaching of the foreign languages quite easy and with fewer challenges. Again, there should be open language libraries in the schools as well as exposure of the students of the students both in and outside the school. The classrooms should be well equipped with facilities such as projectors, whiteboards, interactive boards and different colored markers which are important to use when explaining grammar.

#### **4.5. Suggestions for teaching management and supervision**

Notably, guidance should be provided to the newly appointed mentors to ensure they are familiar with the teaching methods of the schools. Such guidance will ensure the teachers are able to share the challenges they face in the schools and thereby finding solutions to them will be much easier. Again, there should be the creation of foreign language level qualifications.

#### **4.6. Suggestion for Foreign language Problems with educational materials**

The lessons or courses should depend on four skills and not depend on only one-course book. There should be native speakers in accordance with the number of classes.

#### **4.7. Other issues**

Besides the aforementioned problems, there are other challenges that exist such as students having difficulties in English pronunciation, writings compositions, poor handwriting and failure to understand dialogue or even read a passage. Further, the teachers are not well trained, and therefore they need to learn not only the language but also the methodology of teaching the subject in English.

Additionally, a second language teacher, one must learn to adapt to the students' needs. Since there are many problems in learning EFL, a good teacher recognizes these problems and work towards their solution. Some of the common problems of EFL and their solutions include the below subtitles.

##### **4.7.1. Student overdependence on teacher**

Students often look after their teacher to correct answers instead of them trying. Given an answer for every question, it is a detrimental problem. Students should focus on positive encouragement to make them interactive even if incorrectly.

##### **4.7.2. Persistence use of first language**

Students usually fall to their mother tongue language. The teacher should encourage student to use English. This begins with the teacher conversing with students. The teacher can also implement some penalty when students use their first language.

##### **4.7.3. Learners are rowdy and distracts other learners**

A teacher should portray dominance in a class given that the learners are natives. In Kazakhstan students are used to Russian and Kazakh languages.

#### 4.7.4. Students have varying personalities, bored inattentive and unmotivated

Foreign teacher appears boring. Teacher should select a juicy theme so that their students may enjoy. This provides motivation and interest.

#### 4.7.5. Unprepared students

Teachers should concentrate on a shared learning experience. Ensure the students are on the same learning page before introducing a new topic. The teacher should deal with individual learners.

### 5. Conclusion

Kazakhstan is slowly making education reforms, and this republic is struggling towards the implementation of the trilingual education system. When successfully implemented, the reforms will, without doubt, leave the younger Kazakhstan generation at a competitive advantage in the globalized new world. Potential problems are arising and threatening to halt the country dreams as there are inadequate teachers to effectively teach in English, foreign language, unfit teachers for trilingual system mostly in the rural area, in access to high-quality language learning materials among other issues. That said, parents are interested that their kids learn in the English language. The fears arising from this notion is that both Russian and English language will decrease the use of Kazakh language. Thus, a holistic approach is important to ensure that all stakeholders are onboard and steer toward successful implementation of trilingual education system since the desire is already evident in the national policy documents. Further research is required in this field while not rushing the program because it needs to be implemented through step by step.

### References

- Jismulatif, J. (2018), Language Attitudes and Motivation in Learning English of Students of Physical Education of FKIP of Universitas Riau. In *Proceedings of the UR International Conference on Educational Sciences* (pp. 471-479).
- Jones, Potter, Ebrahim (2001), Managing Curriculum Change in Schools, *ERIC* p20
- Kurmanov, N., Yeleussov, A., Aliyev, U., Tolysbayev, B. (2015), Developing effective educational strategies in Kazakhstan. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(5), 54.
- Nabi, Y., Zhaxylykova, N. E., Kenbaeva, G. K., Tolbayev, A., Bekbaeva, Z. N. (2016), Education Quality in Kazakhstan in the Context of Competence-Based

Approach. *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, 11(10), 3423-3435.

Nazarbayev, N. (2007), Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to the People of Kazakhstan. [online] Available at: [http://www.akorda.kz/ru/addresses/addresses\\_of\\_president/posl-anie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazahstan-nnazarbaeva-narodu-kazahstana-28-fevralya-2007-g](http://www.akorda.kz/ru/addresses/addresses_of_president/posl-anie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazahstan-nnazarbaeva-narodu-kazahstana-28-fevralya-2007-g)

Savankova, M. V., Dobayev, K. D. (2018), The role of portfolio in promoting multilingual education in the republic of Kazakhstan. *International E-Journal of Advances in Education*, 4(12), 318-324.

Smith and Sandvik (2012), 'Four Global Trends in Education (And Why They Matter)' in MetaMetrics.

Shara, M., Akbota, A., Altnai, Z., Saltanat, A. (2016), Development of languages in Kazakhstan. *Bulletin of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. Series: Educational Issues: Languages and Specialties*, (4).

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2010), State Program of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020.

Tikly, L., Barrett, A. M. (2011), Social justice, capabilities and the quality of education in low income countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 31(1), 3-14.

Tosuncuoğlu, İ. (2018), Analyzing English Teacher Candidates' Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Pedagogical Formation Education, *International Journal of Eurasia Social Sciences*, 9(34), 2239-2253.

Trent, L. R., Buchanan, E., Ebesutani, C., Ale, C. M., Heiden, L., Hight, T. L., Young, J. (2013), A measurement invariance examination of the Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale in a southern sample: Differential item functioning between African American and Caucasian youth. *Assessment*, 20 (2), 175-187.