

# **Trilingual Education: An Effective Way of Providing Inclusion**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this article is to study the problem of multilingual communication and the equal access to information which is relevant especially today due to the integration processes taking place in the world. Our society, just like other parts of the world, is interested in learning English. This is traceable to the fact that most people are now seeking to master the language. They have the highest communication value which is reflected in public documents such as SDPES (State Development Programme for Education and Science) for 2016-2019. These include the main trends of the development of trilingual education and the adopted Roadmap of trilingual education from years 2015-2020. Their aim is to ensure the gradual introduction of the trilingual education at all levels of education in Kazakhstan. In this regard, the MES developed a common strategy for training trilingual teachers. For example, from the perspectives of pedagogical university (Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University), authors present the stages of implementation of the process based on the following priority areas: improving the legal and methodological framework; update of educational programs; the creation of a unified system of training; and professional development of teaching and administration staff.

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**Keywords:** Education, multilingualism, inclusion, globalisation

## **Introduction**

Ideas are acceptable as they explicitly or implicitly meet the society requirements and its social development. Therefore, the idea of three languages – cultural and linguistic strategy – announced by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev in 2004 shows a high

degree of understanding from the citizens. Also, it blends harmoniously into the agenda today. Nursultan Nazarbayev highlighted that a proper implementation of the language strategy will enable Kazakhstan to be well-known around the world as a country whose population is highly educated. Furthermore, the Kazakh language can also be used as the state language; Russian language as a language of international and regional communication; and English as the language that promotes successful integration into the global economy.

Current studies show that the spread of multilingualism in the world is a natural process due to fundamental changes in the economy, politics, culture, and education. Multilingualism has continued to be the dominant characteristic of modern countries by virtue and not only by simple pragmatism. Consequently, it develops a multilingual economy in the globalized world. However, this occurs due to the growing integration and migration processes on a global scale. Multilingualism becomes the leading factor which determines to a large extent the success of the business and professional spheres. It is difficult to imagine monolingual model of cultural and economic development of nations, striving for openness and dialogue with the world. Therefore, the known several languages is a steady demand of the modern society.

As it is known, UNESCO, in accordance with its mandate, has the responsibility to address issues related to language. UNESCO in 1999 by the General Conference adopted the 12th resolution which is authorizing the term "multilingual education". According to UNESCO, the term "multilingual education" concept involves the use of at least three languages in education. These languages are namely; the mother tongue (the first language of the learned), regional language, and an international language. This trilingual standard as was described in the installation document UNESCO (2002) is "Education in a multilingual world".

Subsequently, the solution of multilingual communication and equal access to information problem has become particularly relevant due to the integration processes taking place in the world as was already mentioned above. For instance, language policy and multilingualism have become priority issues in creating European Union and its further expansion. Thus, this has resulted in an inevitable extension of linguistic geography. In Europe today, in addition to the 24 official languages of the EU member states, it uses about 60 languages of nationalities living in there, as well as a number of languages spoken in Europe, labor and non-labor migrants. In 1995, the European Commission published an official report on the issues of education, in which the goal for trilingualism of all European citizens has been set. (EU Research, 2003). As we all know, the EU countries have

introduced legislation in 2008 from the experience of trilingual education. This is in a bid to promote languages as a tool for social integration.

The purposeful development of our country is characterized by a pronounced desire to build an open society which is ready for dialogue in the world. This intention is reflected in the foreign policy of Kazakhstan - pragmatic, multi-vector and balanced - focused on equal partnership. Our society, however, as the whole world, is primarily interested in learning English. Thus, this is because most people are seeking to learn the languages as it has the highest communication value. Having reckoned with the pragmatic-market nature of modern relationships, communication can be referred to as a cash value of languages and "career" expression.

Business, travel, science, and new technologies have chosen English as the negotiator. No one would dispute the fact that the most popular language among businessmen is English, followed by French and German. Many companies publish their documents and press releases only in these languages. Since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we have witnessed the "triumphant march" of English language globally. There are approximately 500 million (according to some estimates - up to one billion) people who speak this language. 2 billion people are learning English worldwide and 87 nations have formally recognized it as a State language. As a result, this has defined the objective leading role of English language in the modern world today. According to the concept of the Dutch researcher, Alexander de Schwan, English "takes a hyper central place in the global constellation of languages", and its position is supported by the "self-development and self-expansion mechanisms".

The Higher Education World Declaration in the twenty-first century (UNESCO, 1998) emphasizes the importance of multilingualism in higher education under the following key; "the practice of multilingualism, teaching staff and students exchange program should be an integral part of all higher education systems" (Article 15). Independent Kazakhstan is rapidly bursting into the international community and has set ambitious goals towards not only the development of the economic sphere, but also education. The Republic of Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian country that has been recognized as a full member of the European Higher Education Area (2010). Currently, 49 countries are involved in a voluntary process of creating the European Higher Education Area, including Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

One of the main objectives of the Bologna process is the promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement. For mobility whether academic, labor, etc., besides all the institutional changes that are already under way in our country, one needs a good knowledge of a foreign language, in particular, English language. Therefore, a question of language learning, qualitative knowledge of which

is today is not an end in itself, and the requirement of time should be considered under the foreshortening of the commitments of the Bologna process. Also, a great desire for Kazakhstan to get into the “elite club” of the OECD countries should be added.

Consequently, it is of significant importance to view multilingual education from the perspective of sustainability and inclusion. The first involves a sustainable development which is focused on development, and it takes into account the planetary boundaries. The second is an inclusion. Some of the citizens related to the education system are connected to the world through their involvement with people with disabilities. However, this is not the complete picture of the inclusion in general. In addition, another meaning of the term “inclusion” is the need to involve the general population, without exception, in any development program. Simply put, the inclusion refers to equal opportunities and relationships without oblique views and comments. For example, inclusion in education seeks to develop a methodology aimed at the individual. Also, it recognizes the fact that all children are individuals with different learning needs. Inclusive education seeks to develop an approach to teaching and learning. However, this will be more flexible to meet the different training needs. Consequently, the word "inclusion" in politics means the ability of a particular political system to meet as much as possible the interests of all members of the society. This is in order to avoid destructive conflicts. However, multilingual education can also be considered to be an effective means of ensuring the inclusion of both education and through education.

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On languages”, the Law “On education” (LERK, 2007), and the State Program for Development of Education and Science in 2016-2019 constitute the legal basis for multilingual education in the country (SPDES, 2016). Not so long ago, it was approved by the Road Map of the trilingual education for 2015-2020. Furthermore, the adoption of the road map is certainly an important step, but much more important is its implementation. With the advent of innovations, we expect the objective to experience difficulties.

On behalf of the Head of State and in accordance with the State Program for Development of Education and Science, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan since the 2007-2008 academic year have introduced training in three languages in 33 schools of Kazakhstan in a pilot mode.

Today, trilingual training is conducted in 110 schools. It covers 63 thousand (2.3%) students. In these schools, an in-depth study of the Kazakh / Russian and English languages, as well as the teaching of school STEM subjects in English was presented.

The implementation of these pilot programs aims to identify the problem of special training of teachers. In this regard, in 2008, the Ministry of Education has defined the basic institutions of higher education which is aimed at developing a common strategy for training trilingual teachers. From that moment, it began the first phase of targeted implementation of the trilingual education in Kazakhstan.

Therefore, with the 2012-2013 academic year, 32 universities opened special sections with instruction in English. In 2015-2016, a special compartment in English language training, as part of the trilingual education, was functioning in 42 universities. Furthermore, this was divided as follows: National universities 6, State 26, International 1, corporatized 7, and private 2. In 2015-2016, 2393 special groups were set up in which 18 006 people were trained. These people comprises of undergraduate 16 121, a master's degree 1662, and a doctorate degree 223.

Additionally, there were grouped teaching staff who knows and understand Russian, Kazakh, and English languages. At the bachelor's level, courses in English have been taught by 2121 teachers, 386 teachers who own a master's degree, and 145 teachers who own a doctorate degree.

Therefore, specialized language centers are functioning for the analysis of the language situation, and it provides methodological assistance to 30 universities.

The number of graduates that was trained in the framework of the trilingual education since 2008 has been by far 7907 people. Among them are undergraduate (6677 people), master degree (1230 people), and a doctorate degree (76 people).

The number of employed graduates, trained in the framework of the trilingual education, amounted to 4624 people (58.5%): bachelor's degree graduates (3522 people), master (1 102 people), and PhD (72 people).

In 17 universities, the training of students in the framework of the trilingual education in 2012 began. Thus, the first release was in the summer of 2016.

Since 2011, the Ministry of Education and Science initiated the Program of the improvement of the qualification. This is on the basis of pedagogical specialties of higher education institutions within JSC NCE Orleu.

According to the program for 2012-2015, 3,900 teachers have been trained in 38 universities of Kazakhstan, including 933 teachers abroad in partner universities (University of Newcastle, UK; University of Tsukuba, Japan; Valencia Polytechnic University, Spain; the Higher Technical Institute of Porto, Portugal; and the International Academy of Management and Technology, Germany) (Orleu, 2012/2015).

One of the main directions of the program, along with the study of new educational strategies, is trilingualism. It also includes the increasing pedagogical skills of teachers on the basis of global trends in education.

In order to promote trilingual education, the Ministry identified three priority areas:

1. Improving the regulatory and methodological framework;
2. The update of educational programs;
3. The creation of a unified system of training and professional development of teaching and administrative personnel.

Also, SDPES (State Development Programme for Education and Science) for 2016-2019 includes the main trends of the development of trilingual education and the adopted Roadmap of trilingual education for 2015-2020. Therefore, the aim is to ensure the gradual introduction of the trilingual education at all levels of education in Kazakhstan (MES, 2015).

The new SCSE (State Compulsory Standard of Education) at the level of higher education within the framework of the Road Map provides measures on amendments and additions to the curriculum and standards of higher education. This is based on the introduction of the first year of teaching high schools at least 20% of study subjects in the second language (for Russian offices - in the Kazakh language for the Kazakh branch - in Russian). Subsequently, the third course involves the teaching of at least 30% of the training cycles of the basic and majors in English. Thus, it can be stated that all levels of the education system of Kazakhstan today has accumulated some experience in trilingual education.

In Kazakhstan in the context of the trilingual education, there are no issues with a regional language which is the Russian language. Due to historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors, the Kazakh society is mainly dominated by the Kazakh-Russian bilingualism. This is really the same real competence in the two languages on a daily basis where a non-native language is used in everyday communication as actively as their mother tongue.

The difficulties were associated with the lack of the capacity of teachers with English-language competence. The world of education has become a famous phrase of Michael Barber, the author of education reform in the UK: "The school could not be better teachers working in it," because "the teacher cannot give the children something that does not own himself." Majority of our teachers speak English well enough to start on teaching STEM subjects. It is no secret that many of the qualified teachers are operating out of the "Soviet overcoat". The Soviet Union kept a completely closed and isolated life which is why foreign languages were simply not needed for people.

Nevertheless, we will need to start somewhere! If we want a teacher who will be able to cope with the task of trilingualism, we need to seriously reconsider the content of training and increase the sheer quality of the training of future teachers, as well as strengthen the training of teachers already working using OLIL-approach (object-language integrated learning). In addition, if we want to have pupils and students who will have the ability to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge throughout their lives, we need to introduce a culture of permanent self-education teachers.

Understanding the pros and cons of a globalizing world, the Kazakh people in their quest not to lose their roots, their culture, however, accepts the challenge of time. After all, the national revival in our turbulent times requires no circuit to itself. It also requires the disclosure of the communicative potential of its culture. Native languages in the context of UNESCO's standard of multilingualism are the main components of a quality education. In the message on the occasion of International Mother Language Day on February 22, 2016, UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, stated that the importance of the mother tongue in the promotion of education helps in improving the quality of education and in ensuring access to education for all. Irina Bokova stated: “In a multilingual approach, native languages are a key component of the quality education, which in itself provides a framework for the empowerment of women and men and the successful development of modern societies” (UNESCO, 2016).

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