ALIKHANOV University
1962

ADVANCES IN MULTILINGUAL and MULTICULTURAL RESEARCH

ISSN 3135-5501
№1
2026

ISSN (Print) 3135-5501

https://doi.org/10.59102/ammr/2026/iss1

Advances in Multilingual and Multicultural Research Journal

№1 / 2026

Founded in 2025

Published 2 times a year

Kokshetau, 2026

Advances in Multilingual and Multicultural Research Journal

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Aigul Zhakupova – Dr. of Sciences in Linguistics, Professor of Shokan Ualikhanov Kokshetau University
DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Juldyz Smagulova – PhD, Candidate of Philological Sciences, KIMEP, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2179-9152
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Bella Gazdiyeva – PhD in Linguistics, Associate Professor, Shokan Ualikhanov Kokshetau University
Zhailagul Sagyndykova – PhD in Linguistics, Associate Professor, Shokan Ualikhanov Kokshetau University
TECHNICAL SECRETARY
Viktoriya Barybina - Shokan Ualikhanov Kokshetau University, v.barybina@shokan.edu.kz

EDITORIAL BOARD

1. Stephen Bahry – Researcher, Lecturer, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Dept, OISE, University of Toronto, Canada
2. Samuel Barclay – PhD, Senior Lecturer, Nottingham Trent University, the UK, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6112-382X
3. Bridget Goodman – PhD, Associate Professor, Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0225-4015
4. Sham Haidar – PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Education, College of Human Sciences and Education, KIMEP University, Kazakhstan, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6024-4846
5. Zhanar Ibrayeva – Dr. of Sciences in Linguistics, Acting Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9094-3034
6. Sviatlana Karpava – Assistant Professor, Department of English Studies, University of Cyprus, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8416-1431
7. Hadrian Lankiewicz – Dr. Hab, Professor, Head of Department for Specific Purposes and Translation, University of Gdansk, Poland, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5124-7861
8. Ekaterina Protasssova – Associate Professor Emerita, Professor at the Department of Languages of the University of Helsinki, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8271-4909
9. Natalia Ringblom – PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Language Studies, UMEA University, Sweden, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1761-5971
10. Piotr Romanowski – PhD, DLitt (Habil.), Institute of Specialized and Intercultural Communication, Faculty of Applied Linguistics, University of Warsaw, Poland, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0520-1250
11. Asel Shayakhmet – PhD, Associate Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9621-5177
12. Eleonora Suleimenova – Dr. of Sciences in Linguistics, Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan
13. Anastassia Zabrodskaja – Professor of Intercultural Communication, Baltic Film, Media and Arts School, Tallinn University, Estonia, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8082-3549
14. Hua Zhu – Professor of Language Learning and Intercultural Communication, UCL, the UK, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1500-3047

Editorial address: 020000, 75 Abay St., Kokshetau, Kazakhstan
Shokan Ualikhanov Kokshetau University
Tel.: +7 (7162) 44-20-97, (ext.: 314)
E-mail: nauka@shokan.edu.kz

Advances in Multilingual and Multicultural Research Journal
Owner: NPLC «Kokshetau University named after Sh. Ualikhanov» (Ualikhanov University)
Periodicity: 2 times a year
Address of printing house: Kazakhstan, Akmola region, Kokshetau, Temirbekov str. 30a, entrance from M. Auezov str., EPD Sh.Ualikhanov KU, +7 (7162) 25-55-97

© Shokan Ualikhanov Kokshetau University, 2026

AMMR Journal

CONTENTS

Articles

The consequences of “New World” colonization on linguistic diversity
A. Fedorinchyk 5

Functional Multilingualism in the Northern Kazakhstan: A Comparative Study (2017–2022)
Zh. Sagyndykova, A. Svinarchuk, A. Sharipova, Brian Baer, B.Gazdiyeva 28

Professional agency and emotional climate in bilingual preschool
E. Protassova, S. Silkin 46

Ethnocultural Components in Academic Discourse: Cognitive Activation of Personal Consciousness
A.E. Agmanova, A.A. Rubas 64

An Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Study of Bilingualism in Kazakhstan: Research Traditions and New Directions
Zh.K. Ibrayeva 79

Lexical Motivation and Metalinguistic Awareness in Children’s Speech: A Cross-Linguistic Study of Bilingual and Monolingual Minds
A. Zhakupova, O. Anichshenko, Zh. Temirova, I. Abisheva 93

Advances in Multilingual and Multicultural Research Journal

DOI: https://doi.org/10.59102/ammr/2026/iss1/art02

ARTICLE Open Access

Functional Multilingualism in the Northern Kazakhstan: A Comparative Study (2017–2022)

*Zh. Sagyndykova**[1], *A. Svinarchuk*[2], *A. Sharipova*[1], *Brian Baer*[3], *B.Gazdiyeva*[1]

[1] Shoqan Ualikhanov University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan
[2] Abay Myrzakhmetov University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan
[3] Kent State University, Ohio, USA

Correspondence: Zh. Sagyndykova (zhailagul@shokan.edu.kz)

Keywords: multilingualism, trilingualism, self-reported language assessment, comparative analysis, language use.

Received: 25 February 2025

Accepted: 21 May 2026

Online access: 01 June 2026

Published: 30 June 2026

Abstract

This study examines language use, language preferences and self-reported multilingual practices among young residents of the Aqmola region between 2017 and 2022. The questionnaire was conducted among 60 residents of the Aqmola region aged from 15 to 25 years to see how they use Kazakh, Russian and English languages. The data were collected through a questionnaire survey, analyzed using SPSS and interpreted through quantitative comparative analysis. The findings suggest multilingual tendencies among the respondents, where Kazakh, Russian and English are used in different communicative and educational contexts, while some participants additionally reported the use of the other heritage or ethnic languages. Moreover, the study indicates that multilingualism in Kazakhstan has not been researched in relation to specific regions, especially in linguistically diverse areas like the Aqmola region.

Funding: no funding

Conflict of interest: The author declare no conflict of interest.

For citation: Zh. Sagyndykova, A. Svinarchuk, A. Sharipova, Brian Baer, B.Gazdiyeva (2026). Functional Multilingualism in the Northern Kazakhstan: A Comparative Study (2017–2022) // *Advances in Multilingual and Multicultural Research Journal*. Volume 1. Issues 1. 2026. Pp. 28–45. https://doi.org/10.59102/ammr/2026/iss1/art02.

Zhailagul Sagyndykova - Candidate of Philological Sciences. Shoqan Ualikhanov University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan. E-mail: zhailagul@shokan.edu.kz. Scopus ID: 57223099360. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1427-7417

Anna Svinarchuk - Master of Pedagogical Sciences, Abay Myrzakhmetov University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan. E-mail: anna.svinarchuk.78@mail.ru. Scopus ID: 56127336900. https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4868-6059

Aizhan Sharipova - Master of Pedagogical Sciences, Shoqan Ualikhanov University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan. E-mail: aizhansharipova080@gmail.com. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1291-2253

Distribution: Materials are distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0

Copyright: © Authors, 2026

Brian Baer - Professor of Russian and Translation Studies, Graduate Coordinator, Kent State University, Ohio, USA. E-mail: bbaer@kent.edu. Scopus ID: 13406049700. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5238-0258

Bella Gazdiyeva - Candidate of Philological Sciences, Shoqan Ualikhanov University, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan. E-mail: bella.gazdiyeva@shokan.edu.kz. Scopus ID: 57203712263. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1727-7631

Introduction

Multilingualism is a prevalent and dynamic phenomenon that shapes societies in profound ways. The Aqmola region in northern Kazakhstan represents a linguistically diverse sociolinguistic environment shaped by historical bilingualism and contemporary multilingual policies. According to the 2021 census data from the Bureau of National Statistics, the region had a population of 723 289, comprising various ethnic groups: Kazakhs (436 984), Russians (210 769), Uzbeks (1 457), Ukrainians (40 563), Uighurs (346), Tatars (13 707), and Germans (30 121). The 2021 annual People Census revealed that only 459 730 respondents (63.5%) out of 723 289 reported using the Kazakh language in their daily lives, while 263,559 people (36.4%) stated that they do not use the state language (Bureau of National Statistics, 2022). The Aqmola region is home to a diverse array of ethnic groups, including Kazakhs, Russians, Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Uighurs, Tatars, and Germans. This diversity is reflected in the variety of languages spoken, showcasing the multicultural structure of the Aqmola region.

Historically, Kazakhstan's ties to the Soviet Union shaped its language policy, with Russian mandated as the official language. Even post-independence, Russian has retained its prominence in academia, science, business, politics, mass media, and education. Nevertheless, Kazakhstan endeavored to reinstate Kazakh as the state language while preserving the use of Russian. This bilingual approach reflected the country's evolving linguistic landscape. Recognizing the imperative of global integration, Kazakhstan's educational system now promotes English proficiency across all institutions to enhance adaptability and competitiveness internationally. Legally, Kazakh is designated as the official language in public administration, yet the use of Russian is accommodated, ensuring equitable language implementation. Data from the Bureau of National Statistics (2022) underscores the widespread use of Kazakh among the population, alongside Russian.

Additionally, various ethnic groups in Kazakhstan continue to speak their native languages, contributing to the country's linguistic diversity. The law on languages, 1997 supports the languages of other ethnicities. With one official language— Kazakh and the Russian language that is equally used in the government and official bodies (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan 1995)—and English as the dominant foreign language (Trilingual education in Kazakhstan 2017), Kazakhstan presents an intriguing context for exploring how multiple languages coexist, interact, and influence social, cultural, and political life.

This study aims to fill this gap by providing analysis of the linguistic situation in the Aqmola region in the northern part of Kazakhstan. Specifically, it seeks to

understand the dynamics in language preferences of the young residents, language policy awareness and their self-reported language preferences in Kazakh, Russian and English, which will assist researchers in understanding how language policy developed in the Aqmola region between 2017 and 2022 based on speakers' reports on their language proficiency in three languages. By examining these aspects, the study will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the practical and ideological dimensions of trilingualism in a multilingual Aqmola region.

The scope of this study is confined to the three mainly languages of Kazakhstan, Kazakh as the state language, Russian as officially used language and English as a foreign language. While the focus is on Kazakhstan, particularly the Aqmola region, the findings have broader implications for other multilingual contexts and contribute to the global discourse on language policy issues and sociolinguistics too.

Research questions guiding this study include: (1) What changes occurred in the language preferences of the residents in the Aqmola region between 2017 and 2022? (2) What languages do respondents identified as their "native" or first language? (3) What is the resident's attitude toward learning foreign languages? (4) What is the level of awareness of the young residents regarding the trilingual language policy in the country? (5) How do the residents evaluate their language proficiencies in three main languages, Kazakh, Russian and English, as well as other languages? By addressing these questions, the study aims to provide insights into the language situation in the Aqmola region.

The findings contribute to the current discussion on multilingualism across the country that will be of the interest to the scholars and will promote research on multilingualism in various regions of the country, which is an underresearched field of study. Moreover, this research may possibly offer practical implications for policymakers, educators, and community leaders in fostering a more inclusive and multilingual environment.

Conceptualizing multilingualism

It is now understood that bilingual speakers use different languages for various purposes, in different contexts, and with varying levels of proficiency to interact with others, according to Wei (2020). This functional perspective is relevant in the context of Kazakhstan, where Kazakh, Russian and English have different communicative and social roles. In the Aqmola region, Kazakh primarily functions as the state and identity language, Russian remains widely used in everyday and professional communication, while English is mainly associated with education, academic mobility and global integration.

Based on Hoffmann (2001), trilingualism can be seen as an extension of bilingualism. It shares several features with both multilingualism and bilingualism, while also maintaining its own distinct characteristic. In Kazakhstan, trilingualism is formed by language policy and by historical and sociocultural factors rooted in the post-Soviet linguistic environment. Rather than equal proficiency across three languages, multilingual practices in Kazakhstan show functional language distribution

depending on social context and communicative situations. This pattern is especially evident in the Aqmola region, where bilingualism is the norm and the vast majority of the population comfortably use both Kazakh and Russian. The introduction of English as a third language in schools and universities adds another layer to this multilingual environment and reflects sociolinguistic changes in contemporary Kazakhstan.

Grosjean (2010) defines multilingual individuals as people who use two or more languages in everyday life. Auer&Wei (2007) further emphasize that multilingual competence involves flexible language use across different communicative contexts and domains. They are supported by studying at school in their native language or learning it freely at the Assemblies of People of Kazakhstan in each city of the country (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1995).

One more important issue that relates to the current research is the study of multilingualism from a sociolinguistic perspective focusing on language use, language attitudes, and language practices within a specific social and regional context. Sociolinguistics aims to explore how language changes in different social contexts and seeks to provide explanations for these variations (Tagliamonte, 2006). Since multilingualism in Kazakhstan reflects both language policy and everyday communication practices, a quantitative sociolinguistic approach was employed to explore self-reported language use and proficiency among young residents of the Aqmola region.

Language Policy and Functional Multilingualism in Kazakhstan

The Language Policy Program (LPP) supports Kazakh and Russian languages and is embedded in Kazakhstan's Constitution via the Language Law. This law establishes the legal framework for language use in the Republic, designating Kazakh as the state language and Russian as a language equally used in government and state departments (Article 8, 16; Language Law, 1997).

In 2006, state policy began focusing on trilingualism (Kazakh, Russian, and English), first mentioned by Former President Nazarbayev. His 2007 address proposed phased implementation of this initiative. Educational reforms, including the “State Program of Functioning and Development of Languages for 2011–2020”, aimed to harmonize language policy, strengthening national unity while preserving ethnic languages (Nazarbayev, 2007).

President Tokayev has emphasized cultural and linguistic diversity, educational equality, and quality. His addresses in 2019 and 2020 highlighted the importance of supporting all ethnic groups’ cultural and linguistic development, systematic measures for educational equality, and the need for new approaches in science and education, including internships for Kazakh scholars. (Tokayev, 2019; Tokayev, 2020) In 2021, Tokayev reiterated the trilingual policy, emphasizing the distinct roles of Kazakh and Russian. He portrayed mastery of Kazakh as a patriotic duty and highlighted the advantages of Russian proficiency, as it is one of the six official UN languages (Tokayev, 2021). In 2022, he stressed the importance of the English language in education for global progress in science and technology (Tokayev, 2022).

Previous research has shown that multilingual education in Kazakhstan expanded significantly through state educational reform and trilingual education initiatives. Aubakirova et al. (2019) highlight significant progress in multilingualism through the "State Program of Functioning and Development of Languages for 2011–2020", executed in three stages. The first stage (2011–2013) focused on strengthening the legal and methodological framework. The second stage (2014–2016) introduced new technologies and methods to promote the state language while preserving linguistic diversity. The final stage (2017–2020) maintained other languages and enhanced monitoring of the state language's demand and quality. The program aimed for 95% proficiency in Kazakh, 90% in Russian, and 20% in English. This initiative boosted Kazakh language usage, transforming the educational system with a multilingual curriculum in schools and universities. Experimental schools like Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and Bilim Innovation Lyceums pioneered this model since 2007–2008, integrating STEM subjects into immersive instruction in Kazakh, Russian, and English. Sagyndykova et al. (2017) further revealed the expansion of multilingual education in Higher Education Institutions, with 42 institutions offering classes in Kazakh, Russian, and English between 2012 and 2016. The number of multilingual students increased notably during this period. Additionally, 17 universities began training practitioners in English for teaching STEM subjects, reflecting the growing importance of English proficiency and its role in fostering global citizenship among the population.

Smagulova (2008) in her research about the LP influence on language situation found out that the Kazakh language was gaining social prestige. A growing number of people saw the state language as an essential language for the future. This was most evident in reports about the preferred language of education for children, with most respondents expressing a desire to educate their children (or grandchildren) in Kazakh. They believed that proficiency in Kazakh could enhance their children's (or grandchildren's) economic prospects. However, despite their interest in Kazakh, respondents did not wish to abandon Russian, which offers access to broader social, educational, economic, and informational resources. Additionally, there was a rising interest in English, viewed as a highly valuable skill. The demand for English was high, and proficiency and usage were increasing. Thus, the results of the research claim that the dominant public ideology in Kazakhstan is multilingualism, with the majority of respondents recognizing the need for proficiency in Kazakh, Russian, and English. A recent research done by Koptleuova et al. (2023) also made a good contribution in the field of multilingualism of Kazakhstan. The study of the language dynamics in the Republic of Kazakhstan indicates that trilingualism, composed of Kazakh, Russian, and English, is the most theoretically and practically viable functional model. The development and establishment of this trilingualism, involving these three languages, represents a new and emerging form of multilingualism in Kazakhstan. This phenomenon is becoming increasingly prevalent and warrants an investigation into the societal demand for such multilingualism. Trilingualism entails the simultaneous (parallel or mixed) use of three languages across various domains, serving as an

integrated mode of communication. The utilization of Kazakh, Russian, and English by Kazakhs in different aspects of life is referred to as Kazakh-Russian-English trilingualism. Another study by Koptleuova et al. (2023) examined the language situation in the healthcare and oil sectors of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The findings revealed that respondents were interested in expanding the use of the Kazakh language due to the low number of employees proficient in it. Additionally, there was a noted shortage of professional medical literature in Kazakh, as most specialists are trained in Russian. When it comes to the English language, there was a low figure of English users in the healthcare system of Kazakhstan. As for the oil sector the study indicated that the dominance of either Kazakh or Russian languages varies according to the communicative context. English is seldom used in the spontaneous interactions of oil workers; however, it assumes a primary role in the composition of business documents of international significance (Koptleuova et al., 2023). Both Smagulova (2008) and Koptleuova et al. (2023) conducted evidence-based research results that significantly contribute to the understanding of multilingualism in the context of Kazakhstan. Their findings reflect the LP impact on language situation and its future prospects and offer insights into the emergence of multilingual language practices in a country.

Despite the growing body of research on multilingualism in Kazakhstan, regional sociolinguistic studies examining everyday language use and self-reported multilingual practices remain limited. In particular, the Aqmola region represents an important case for understanding how multilingualism develops within a historically bilingual and ethnically diverse environment.

Methodology

Research Design

This work employs a quantitative, cross-sectional research design within the sociolinguistic research tradition. The design shows language preferences, language policy awareness, and self-reports on language proficiency among the Aqmola residents over a five-year period (2017–2022).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire survey**,** administered in two independent phases: in 2017 and in 2022. The total sample consists of 60 respondents**,** with 30 participants surveyed in each year**.** The respondents in 2017 and 2022 were not the same individuals, allowing us to conduct a comparative analysis of regional language developments during a 5-year period in one region.

The research design is descriptive and comparative**.** It is descriptive in documenting language choices, native language identification, foreign language learning, language policy awareness, and language proficiency. It is comparative in examining differences between the two data collection points (2017 and 2022) across age category - 15–25 years.

The study is grounded in quantitative sociolinguistics and draws conceptually on Auer &Wei's (2007) model of the multilingual individual**,** which allows multilingual competence to be examined through functional language use and self-reported proficiency. Language proficiency was operationalized through self-assessment across

four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in Kazakh, Russian, and English, aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)**.**

The quantitative design enables systematic comparison across age groups, languages, and time periods, providing a reliable overview of emerging trends in multilingualism in the Aqmola region

Procedure, participants selection and data analysis

The first stage of the procedure of the research was the data collection by conducting the paper-based questionnaires in two phases: in 2017 and again in 2022. In total, 60 participants residents of the Aqmola region completed the questionnaire on paper, 30 respondents in 2017 and 30 respondents in 2022, with the option to choose the questionnaire in their preferred language. The respondents in 2017 were different from respondents in 2022. Participants were provided with printed questionnaires, which they completed manually. The completed surveys were then collected by the researchers and manually entered into a digital spreadsheet/database for analysis (Table 1).

The survey consisted of 20 questions in total. It included open-ended questions to gather information about respondents' gender, age and social status, one closed-ended question to assess their awareness of the language policy, and 12 Likert-scale questions aimed at evaluating their self-reported proficiency in Kazakh, Russian, and English. In order to establish validity and reliability, a pilot test was conducted with a small sample of participants in 2017.

Most of the respondents are schoolchildren and students. We consider that the data received can give answers to the research questions since it is a 5-year period during which Kazakhstan experienced the changes in the education sphere and language legislation and as for the global world it has experienced the COVID 19 and the rapid technological changes.

The next stage was the data analysis through IBM SPSS Statistics software. Due to the relatively small size, the study employed descriptive statistical analysis rather than inferential statistical testing.

Table 1 - Percentage of respondents by age category

Age group	**percentage of respondents**	
	2017	**2022**
from 15 to 25 years old	30/100%	30/100%

Results and findings

Language preferences of the residents in the Aqmola region in 2017 and 2022

The respondents were offered questionnaires in Kazakh, Russian, and English. From 2017 to 2022, the preference for the Kazakh and Russian languages increased (see Table 2). The selection of English questionnaires showed a decline from 27 % in 2017 to 15% in 2022. Overall, the preference for Kazakh questionnaires rose from 40%

(2017) to 46% (2022).

Table 2 - Language Choice of the Questionnaire

Language choice of the questionnaire	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	2022
The survey in Kazakh	40%	46%
The survey in Russian	33%	39%
The survey in English	27%	15%
Total:	100%	100%

Native language

As for the native language for respondents, in 2022, 79% of the respondents noted that the Kazakh language is their mother tongue in comparison with 2017, where 73% pointed out the Kazakh language as their native one. The Russian language is native for 9 % native in 2022, compared to 21% in 2017. The Tatar language was mentioned as native by 3 % in 2022. Uzbek was indicated as a native language only in 2017 by 3% of respondents. In 2022, 3% of respondents indicated the Ingush language as their native language.

According to the results of the survey in 2022, there appeared a new category of respondents, those who indicated two native languages - Kazakh and Russian (3% of respondents), Russian and Karachay (3% of respondents). Accordingly, 3% of respondents identify themselves as bilingual. In 2017, this phenomenon was not found (see Table 3).

Table 3 - Respondents' native language

Native language	**Age group 15 - 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
Kazakh	73%	79%
Russian	21%	9%
Tatar	3%	3%
Uzbek	3%	-
Ingush	-	3%
Russian, Karachay languages	-	3%
Kazakh, Russian	-	3%
Total:	100%	100%

Foreign language learning

Another aspect confirming the trend of trilingualism is the factor of learning foreign languages. There is an increasing number of foreign languages learnt. In 2017, the respondents indicated they were learning English, Arabic, Greek, Kazakh, Chinese, Latin, German, Russian, and French. In 2022, respondents additionally indicated Turkish and Finnish. There was an increase in learning only English and no other foreign languages from 41% to 43%. The dominance of English as a foreign language,

among other languages, is also clearly traced. In 2017, 64% of respondents reported studying English, compared to 72% in 2022. (Table 4).

Table 4 - Studying foreign languages

Participants' responses	**Age group 15 - 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
No, I do not study	3%	3%
Yes, I study English	64%	72%
Yes , I study English and German	9%	-
Yes, I study Kazakh, English, French	3%	-
Yes, I study English and Arabic	6%	-
Yes, I study English and Chinese	3%	-
Yes, I study Latin, French and English	3%	-
Yes, I study English and Russian	3%	9%
Yes, I study Chinese	3%	-
Yes, I study English and Greek	3%	-
Yes, I study Chinese	-	3%
Yes, I study English and Turkish	-	3%
Yes, I study Finnish and Ukrainian	-	3%
Yes, I study English, French, German, Turkish and Chinese	-	3%

Awareness of Trilingual Language Policy

In order to define participants' awareness of LP programs in the country, the respondents were asked if they were aware of or familiar with the Trilingual Language Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The data comparison revealed that in 2017, 97% of respondents were aware of the concept, as well as in 2022. **Comparative data analysis is presented in Table 5.**

Table 5 - Trilingual Concept Awareness of the Republic of Kazakhstan by respondents

The level of knowledge of the Concept	**Age group 15 - 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
Yes, they know the concept of trilingualism of the Republic of Kazakhstan	97%	97%
No, they don't know the concept of trilingualism of the Republic of Kazakhstan	3%	-
Didn't give any response	-	3%
Total:	100%	100%

Self- reported language proficiency of the residents in Kazakh, Russian and English languages

Kazakh Language Proficiency

Respondents reported on their proficiency in Kazakh, Russian, and English for

speaking, reading, listening, and writing based on CEFR levels: 'not proficient', 'very poor', 'low', 'satisfactory', 'good', and 'excellent'. There were not those who do not speak Kazakh either in 2017 or in 2022. Those with 'hardly speaking' proficiency decreased from 9% (2017) to 6% (2022), and 'poor' proficiency indicated no one in 2017 and 3 % in 2022. Respondents rating their speaking as 'very well' increased from 27% and 43% in 2022 (Table A1). An increase is observed in reading, with 'well' and 'satisfactory' proficiency rising from 36% to 43% and from 6% to 15%. By the same criterion, the total number for all levels of self-assessment 'well' proficiency level has grown in all language categories (A1-A4).

Russian language proficiency

For Russian, the first three levels of proficiency ('not proficient', 'very poor', and 'poor') were not noted by the respondents in either year. In 2022, 6% of respondents rated their speaking as 'satisfactory'. Those rating their speaking as 'excellent' decreased from 82% in 2017 to 76% in 2022 (Table A5). Reading proficiency showed a slight increase in 'good' proficiency from 12% to 15% and a decrease in 'excellent' from 88% to 85% (Table A6). Writing proficiency in Russian displayed a decline, with 'well' proficiency dropping from 30% to 24% and increase in 'excellent' from 67% to 73% (Table A7). Listening proficiency showed an increase in 'well' from 12% to 15% and a decrease in 'excellent' from 88% to 85% (Table A8).

English language proficiency

The English-speaking skills of respondents showed changes from 2017 to 2022 (Table A9). 'Well' decreased from 46% to 30%, while 'excellent proficiency' is stable 15% for both years. Positive changes were notable with 'satisfactory' increasing from 30% to 49%. For reading proficiency 'well' and 'excellent', which increased from 24% in 2017 to 43% in 2022 (Table A10). Regarding writing proficiency, in the first age category, 'well' proficiency increased from 37% in 2017 to 55% in 2022, while 'excellent writing skills' decreased from 33% to 6% (Table A11). In listening skills in English, positive changes were noted in the first age category, with 'well' proficiency rising from 37% in 2017 to 46% in 2022 (see Table A12).

Discussion

The study examined changes in language use, language preferences, and self-reported multilingual practices among young residents of the Aqmola region between 2017 and 2022. Drawing on Auer&Wei's (2007) concept of multilingual competence and a sociolinguistic approach to functional language use, the findings suggest shifts in the multilingual landscape of the region.

The first research question was to identify respondents' language preferences and native language. The results show an increase in the use of the Kazakh language. Additionally, the preference for English questionnaires declined among respondents aged 15-25. The second research question indicates the proportion of respondents identifying Kazakh as their native language has risen relative to Russian, with a small

but notable number identifying as bilinguals, indicating two native languages (e.g., Russian-Karachai and Kazakh-Russian).

Among foreign languages, English remains the most popular among the respondents. The next research question was related to studying foreign languages. It may reflect some tendencies for trilingualism in the region, is that the popularity of the English language is increasing among the residents. The concept of trilingualism is well-known among the residents of the Aqmola region. However, our data indicate a slight decline in awareness regarding the promotion of multilingualism and the Trilingual Concept from 2017 to 2022. This suggests a need for continued and perhaps enhanced efforts to promote the policy and its benefits to the public.

Participants' self-reports regarding their proficiency in the Kazakh language have grown in all language modes (speaking, reading, writing, and listening). In contrast, the reported proficiency in Russian remains high, with zero or near-zero percentages for lower proficiency levels in all linguistic aspects. Self-reported English proficiency data show variability with no clear trajectory of growth or decline across the years. Young respondents predominantly rate their proficiency as 'satisfactory', 'good', or 'excellent' in both 2017 and 2022, with minimal percentages indicating lower proficiency levels. An increase in Kazakh literacy was observed, with improved correct spelling of words. Russian literacy decreased while, English spelling literacy improved.

A comparative analysis of respondents' self-reports highlights the widespread use of Kazakh and Russian, while English is predominantly associated with learning. The Aqmola region is becoming multilingual, evidenced by the appearance of bilinguals who identify with two native languages. The findings also align with previous studies on multilingualism conducted by Smagulova (2008) and Koptleuova et al. (2023) indicating that the trend of trilingualism has been taking place in Kazakhstan. However, as we see, the trilingualism continues to expand within educational contexts. The trilingualism as numerous authors cited, exists due to studying the third language (Anastassiou et al., 2017). The case of trilingualism in the Aqmola region is more inclined to be either bilingual, growing up speaking two languages or even multilingual depending on their mother tongue and start learning English at school (Cenoz, 2005; Jessner, 2006).

In conclusion, the findings suggest that multilingualism in the Aqmola region is characterized by the coexistence of functional Kazakh-Russian bilingualism alongside emerging educational and symbolic roles of English.

Both cohorts of respondents belong to the same age category; however, minor differences in educational background between the surveyed groups should be considered when interpreting the comparative results. In addition, the study relied on self-reported language proficiency rather than objective language testing, which may influence the interpretation of participants' language abilities.

Abbreviations

LPP – Language Planning Policy

CEFR - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

References

1. Agency of Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2022). *Bureau of National Statistics.* Derived from: Population Census 2021. https://stat.gov.kz/ru/instuments/dashboards/28478/
2. Anastassiou, Fotini, Georgia Andreou, and Maria Liakou. (2017). Third language learning, trilingualism and multilingualism: A review. *European Journal of English Language, Linguistics and Literature* 4.(1): 61-73. idpublications.org
3. Aubakirova, B., Mandel,K. & Benkei-Kovacs, B.(2019). European experience of multilingualism and the development of multilingual education in Kazakhstan. *Hungarian Educational Research Journal* 9(4): 689–707. https://akademiai.com/loi/063. DOI:10.1556/063.9.2019.4.56
4. Auer, P., & Wei, L. (2007). *Handbook of Multilingualism and Multilingual Communication*. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton.
5. Cenoz, Jasone. (2005). English in bilingual programs in the Basque country. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language.* 171: 41–56. https://www.degruyterbrill.com/document/doi/10.1515/ijsl.2005.2005.171.41/html
6. Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (1995). https://www.akorda.kz/en/constitution-of-the-republic-of-kazakhstan-50912
7. Grosjean, François. (2010). *Bilingual: Life and reality.* Harvard University Press. https://books.google.com
8. Hoffmann, Charlotte. (1985). Language acquisition in two trilingual children. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.* 6(6):479-495. doi:10.1080/01434632.1985.9994222
9. Hoffmann, Charlotte. (2001). Towards a description of trilingual competence. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 5(1): 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069010050010101
10. Jessner, Ulrike.(2006). *Linguistic awareness in multilinguals: English as a third language*. Edinburgh University Press. https://books.google.com
11. Koptleuova, Kulpash (Balgenzhe Karagulova, Bagila Muratbek, Mairagul Kushtayeva, and Kulshat Kondybay). (2022). "Sociolinguistic and Extralinguistic Aspects of the Functioning of Trilingualism in the Oil Industry of Kazakhstan". *PSYCHOLINGUISTICS* 31 (2), 57-77. https://psycholing-journal.com/index.php/journal/article/view/1233.
12. Koptleuova Kulpash (Balgenzhe Karagulova, Anargul Zhumakhanova, Kulshat Kondybay and Aiymgul Salikhova).Multilingualism and the Current Language Situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language* 11 3 (2023): 242-257. doi: 10.22034/ijscl.2023.2007080.3099
13. Koptleuova, Kulpash (Akhmaral Khairzhanova, Abdizhalil Akkuzov, Ulbolsyn Kaiyrbekova, Ainur Akkuzova. (2023). The Language Situation in the Healthcare Sector of the Republic of Kazakhstan. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 118-131. https://ejal.info
14. Nazarbayev, N. (2007). *President's Address to the Nation: New Kazakhstan in a New World.* https://www.akorda.kz/ru
15. Sagyndykova, Z., Svinarchuk A., & KubrinaT., (2017) *Polylingvalnaya kommunikaciya v Kazakhstane: Rechevoe I Tekstvoepredstavlenie* [Polylingual communication in Kazakhstan: Speech and text production]. Kokshetau, Kazakhstan: Mirpechati.
16. Smagulova, Z. (2008). Language Policies of Kazakhization and Their Influence on Language Attitudes and Use. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 11(3-4): 440-475, doi: 10.1080/13670050802148798
17. Tagliamonte, S. (2006). *Analysing sociolinguistic variation*. Cambridge University Press. https://books.google.com
18. The Law on languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan.151-I Kazakhstan. Part 1, 2. (1997).

https://online.zakon.kz/

19. Tokayev, K. (2019). *President's Address to the Nation: Constructive Public Dialogue - The Basis of Stability and Prosperity of Kazakhstan.* https://www.akorda.kz/ru
20. Tokayev, K. (2020). *President's Address to the Nation: Kazakhstan in a New Reality: Time for Action. Accessible and Quality Education*. https://www.akorda.kz/ru
21. Tokayev, K. (2021). *President's Address to the Nation: Unity of the People and Systemic Reforms are a Solid Foundation for the Nation's Prosperity.* https://www.akorda.kz/ru
22. Tokayev, K. (2022). *President's Address to the Nation: A Fair State. One Nation. Prosperous Society Strategic Investment in the Country's Future.* https://www.akorda.kz/ru
23. Trilingual education in Kazakhstan. (2017) https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=37744692&pos=4;-98#pos=4;-98
24. Wei, L. (2020). "Dimensions of bilingualism." In *The Bilingualism reader* edited by L.Wei. London: Routledge. https://vulms.vu.edu.pk/Courses/ENG512/Downloads/%5BLi_Wei%5D_The_Bilingualism_Reader(BookFi).pdf

Appendix A

Table A1 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of speaking skills in the Kazakh language

Level of proficiency I am able to speak Kazakh…	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in speaking Kazakh	-	-
I am hardly proficient in speaking Kazakh	9%	6%
My proficiency in speaking Kazakh is poor	-	3%
My speaking proficiency in Kazakh is satisfactory	27%	24%
I can speak very well	27%	43%
My proficiency in speaking Kazakh is excellent	37%	24%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A2 - Respondents' self- reports on level of reading skills in the Kazakh language.

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 - 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in reading Kazakh	-	-
My reading skills in Kazakh are very poor	-	-
My reading skills in Kazakh are poor	6%	3%
My reading skills in Kazakh are satisfactory	6%	15%
I can read in Kazakh well	36%	43%
My reading skill in Kazakh is excellent	52%	39%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A3 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of writing skills in the Kazakh language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in writing Kazakh	-	-
My writing skills in Kazakh are very poor	3%	6%
My writing skills in Kazakh are poor	-	6%
My writing skills in Kazakh are satisfactory	9%	9%
I can write in Kazakh well	46%	55%
My writing skills in Kazakh are excellent	42%	24%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A4 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their listening skills in the Kazakh language.

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in listening Kazakh	-	-
My listening skills in Kazakh are very poor	3%	3%
My listening skills in Kazakh are poor	-	6%
My listening skills in Kazakh are satisfactory	12%	3%
I can listen in Kazakh well	24%	39%
My listening skills in Kazakh are excellent	61%	49%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A5 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their speaking skills in the Russian language.

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in speaking Russian	-	-
My speaking skills in Russian are very poor	-	-
My speaking skills in Russian are poor	-	-
My speaking skills in Russian are satisfactory	-	6%
I can speak Russian well	18%	18%
My speaking skills in Russian are excellent	82%	76%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A6 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their reading skills in the Russian language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in reading Russian	-	-
My reading skills in Russian are very poor	-	-
My reading skills in Russian are poor	-	-
My reading skills in Russian are satisfactory	-	-
I can read in Russian well	12%	15%
My reading skills in Russian are excellent	88%	85%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A7 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their writing skills in the Russian language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in writing Russian	-	-
My writing skills in Russian are very poor	-	-
My writing skills in Russian are poor	-	-
My writing skills in Russian are satisfactory	3%	3%
I can write in Russian well	30%	24%
My writing skills in Russian are excellent	67%	73%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A8 - Respondents' self- reports of the level of their listening skills in the Russian language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in listening Russian	-	-
My listening skills in Russian are very poor	-	-
My listening skills in Russian are poor	-	-
My listening skills in Russian are satisfactory	-	-
I can listen in Russian well	12%	15%
My listening skills in Russian are excellent	88%	85%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A9 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their speaking skills in the English language.

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in speaking English	-	3%
My speaking skills in English are very poor	-	-
My speaking skills in English are poor	9%	3%
My speaking skills in English are satisfactory	30%	49%
I can speak English well	46%	30%
My speaking skills in English are excellent	15%	15%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A10 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their reading skills in the English language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in reading English	-	-
My reading skills in English are very poor	-	3%
My reading skills in English are poor	3%	-
My reading skills in English are satisfactory	33%	12%
I can read in English well	24%	43%
My reading skills in English are excellent	40%	42%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A11 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their writing skills in the English language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in writing English	-	-
My writing skills in English are very poor	6%	-
My writing skills in English are poor	3%	3%
My writing skills in English are satisfactory	21%	36%
I can write in English well	37%	55%
My writing skills in English are excellent	33%	6%
Total:	100%	100%

Table A12 - Respondents' self- reports on the level of their listening skills in the English language

Level of proficiency	**Age group 15 – 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
I am not proficient in listening English	-	-
My listening skills in English are very poor	3%	3%
My listening skills in English are poor	-	3%
My listening skills in English are satisfactory	33%	24%
I can listen in English well	37%	46%
My listening skills in English are excellent	27%	24%
Total:	100%	100%

Appendix B

Table B - Gender distribution of respondents

Gender	**Age group 15 - 25 years**	
	2017	**2022**
Male	48%	50%
Female	52%	50%
Total:	***100%***	***100%***