Functional Rating of English Language in Multilingual Education in Kazakhstan

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The implementation of multilingualism in modern Kazakhstan is characterised by the spread of the English language along with the possession of Kazakh (the native language) and Russian. A trilingual policy promotes the prestige of the English language. The purpose of the study was to determine the functional rating and status of the English language in the conditions of Kazakhstan trilingualism using the example of high school students. The research monitored the spread of English in schools along with methods of collecting, processing, evaluating the reliability of data, statistical analysis, questionnaire, percentages and rankings. Monitoring was carried out in grades 10-11. The functional rating of the English language in the microsocial group of high school students is due to individual-personal motivation and age characteristics of the respondents. High school students demonstrate a high degree of adaptation of the English language in their linguistic-communicative environment (62.15%). The level of language proficiency varies from A2 to C2 according to the CEFR scale, the prevailing level being B2: A1 is 12.95%, A2 is 22.5%, B1 is 24.2%, B2 is 21.3%, C1 is 11.55% and C2 is 5.15%. The linguistic policy of trilingualism in the republic is supported by the overwhelming majority of respondents of the student microsocium (83.6%). Language policy in
Kazakhstan is supported by schoolchildren learning English and typically possessing level B1. Further growth on the spread of the English language, both in school and outside of school, is projected. In everyday communication, English has not yet acquired the role of lingua franca, that is due to the language situation in Kazakhstan: English cannot compete with the dominant languages traditionally spoken in Kazakhstan. Respondents recognised the relevance of learning English as a factor of personal and future professional growth.

**Keywords:** Language Policy, Language Situation, Multilingual Education, Trilingualism, High School Student, English.

**Introduction**

Modern Kazakhstani society has taken a new refreshing perspective due to globalisation and internationalisation, which is characterised by a real strengthening of the status of the state language (Kazakh) along with underlying the importance of Russian and English. Increasing the prestige of the latter greatly contributes to the official policy, one of societal trilingualism (Kazakh-Russian-English). The ‘three language policy’ focuses on the essential role of the English language in inter-state commerce, communication, interdisciplinary research and career making. Language proficiency has a positive effect on employment probabilities in the labour market (Alishariyeva, 2014). By 2020, it was expected that 20 percent of Kazakhstani population would be English speaking (Amanbaeva, 2016). The evolving nature of English in the different fields of science in the context of globalisation and determining the role of two communicative powerful languages (Kazakh and Russian) has stipulated the current language situation (Byram, 2012).

Historically, the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan has been specified by a shift from sustainable bilingualism (Russian-Kazakh/ Kazakh-Russian/ national - Russian/ national - Kazakh) to the multilingualism. In this regard, to reveal the nature of the current linguistic situation, it is necessary to analyse its own specific features that reflect the history of the country. Multilingualism is ‘the use of two or more languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers, each of which is chosen in accordance with a specific intercultural communication’ (Canagarajah, 2011). The natural social phenomenon in the country is expected to be Kazakhstani multilingualism, or to be precise, trilingualism: using, speaking or involving three languages (Kazakh, Russian and English).

Therefore, the study of modern culture-bound items of communication and functional rating of the English language within the ‘three language policy’ has become relevant. Firstly, in the educational environment, as an objective factor in transforming the linguistic situation and its dynamics. Under the functional rating of the English language in our study, we understand the
degree of functional relevance of the English language in everyday communication, including for high school students for educational purposes. In other words, the functional rating is designed to determine 1) the level of English proficiency, 2) communicative functions of the English language in a given small-community, 3) the role and place of the English language in the top-down hierarchy of complementary languages of communicants.

The analysis of the problems has shown that the implementation of multilingualism and its effect in terms of the distribution and functioning of certain languages (in our case, English) is a longitudinal, complex, individualised process (in relation to the experience of other countries), which requires a thorough study. Thus, the aim of the study is to determine the language acquisition, functional rating and status of the English language in Kazakhstan’s three language policy amid high school students.

**Review and Reference Analysis**

In order to reveal the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan, the peculiarities of the functioning of English in the conditions of Kazakhstani multilingualism, we have analysed the works of Kazakh scientists on its functioning in the given ethno-linguistic environment (Coyle, 2007). Thus, from the standpoint of socio-cultural competence, teaching three languages, including English, should be based on the principles of co-learning of language and culture (Dearden, 2014). At the same time, it is of a paramount importance to take into account the linguistic and didactic features of teaching foreign languages in the conditions of Kazakhstani trilingualism (Derbisheva, 2015; Dmitrichenkova et al., 2017; Suresh and Suman Rajest, 2019; Gabdulchakov, 2014).

Many foreign scholars in their works have considered the issues relating to bilingual, multilingual and multicultural education from different angles and perspectives. The conceptual basis of multilingual education is sufficiently developed by Coyle (Gaipov et al., 2013). Our justification of the problems in the field of multilingual education was also earned on the scientific works of foreign researchers, defining the foundations of bilingualism, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century, strategies of bilingual education, revealing the concepts of language and cultural awareness (García, 2009; Hadumod, 2008; Kaspers, 2017; Koh, 2015).

Of great interest in the framework of our study were the works on personification of multicultural linguistic education in Russia, including multi-paradigmatic, reflexive, strategic, spiritual and moral, learner-oriented and subjective components (Krashen and Mcefield, 2005); multilingualism in the educational environment and bilingual education as a model of transcultural learning in German-speaking countries (Marsh, 2006; Mosin et al., 2017; Norbert, 1997); the experience of multilingual and bilingual education in the context of the linguistic
situation in Kyrgyzstan (Oberdorfer, 2016) and; the role of the concept of technological pedagogical content of knowledge (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge – TPACK) of foreign language teachers at primary school in Taiwan (Reimann, 2015; Shaikhyzada et al., 2016), etc.

The Bologna Declaration is a key document, which has marked a turning point in the development of higher education in non-English-speaking countries and resulted in the rise of English language programs for foreign students. According to the Institute of international education, the number of master's programs taught in English increased from 560 in 2008 to 3701 in 2015 (Shchukin 2006). Although foreign researchers Krashen and Mcfield (2005) argue that multilingual education does not work effectively, the study of problems gave evidence to the contrary. A survey of studies has shown that students in bilingual programs are usually ahead of their peers in academic performance or have a similar result. Teaching English is a growing trend in countries where English is a foreign language. Bilingualism is another source of knowledge for students in the learning process. Mark, David Claman called English "the language of higher education in Europe" (Nazarbayev, 2018; Suman Rajest and Suresh, 2018).

Materials and Approaches

Norbert Dittmar, a German philologist and linguist, refers to 'an integrated theory of sociolinguistic description, whose scope should incorporate primarily the function and secondarily the structure of language: Who speaks? What does one speak about? and How does one speak? With who and in what language, under what social circumstances, what kind of intentions and consequences? (Syrymbetova et al., 2017); While H. Bussmann distinguishes another three research areas of sociolinguistics: 1) socially-oriented (who speaks, when does s/he speak and what is the purpose of a conversation? What language does s/he speak and Who with?); 2) linguistically-oriented description and explanation of heterogeneity and variability of language systems; 3) ethnomethodologically oriented description of language interaction to display and explain social reality (The State programme, 2016). Based on our research objectives three research questions were formulated 1) to what extent the target-social group has mastered the English language?; 2) What communicative functions English performs in the given small-community; 3) What is the role and place of English in the top-down hierarchy of interacting languages of communicants. At the same time, we focused on the first of the three designated areas of H. Bussmann.

As a part of the study, we have monitored the English language spread and functioning at senior high schools set up its functional rating in the educational environment of Kazakhstan. Data collection and processing, evaluation of the data reliability, questionnaire (empirical method of knowledge of pedagogical and sociological research) and interpretative research
have been used during the study. Questionnaires are most widely used tools, especially in social science and linguistic research. Most questionnaire’s objective in research is to obtain relevant information in the most reliable and valid manner. Therefore, the validation of questionnaire forms an important aspect of research methodology and validity of the outcomes. We found it effective to use rating-scale questions at the stage of determining the functional rating of the English language in the small social group of high school students. The principles of anonymity and voluntary participation, scientific objectivity and topic-ranging questions. Open questions and mixed type questions served as a part of our questionnaire design. It consisted of 4 sections: the English learning motivation; the English language proficiency level; the perspectives of the three language policy development; information about the respondents. The questionnaire was carried out both via a paper-and-pencil and via a log-on to the Internet.

Interpretive research was used in analysing the questionnaire results, i.e. the actual data obtained in the course of questioning the senior high students. It is obvious that quantitative methods emphasise objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical or numerical analysis of data was collected through questionnaires. It focuses on gathering numerical data and generalising it across groups of people or explaining a particular phenomenon.

We calculated the arithmetic mean for analysing open questions of the questionnaire, namely setting up gender rating, educational institutions, grades, types of senior high schools and regions. The level of education and qualifications of the respondents were not part of the agenda. Meanwhile, to calculate the percentage of responses to yes-no styled questions, we applied the percentage of date and rank distribution.

The study took a sample of senior high school students as the most reliable indicator of the real social linguistic situation and their future perspectives in career making. That is why educational institutions (schools, universities) have a great impact on implementing the language policy and educational institutions serve as a platform for implementing the national language policy. Based on this provision, the object of the study was chosen students of a small social group: a group of senior high students aged 15 – 17. This age group is characterised by age uniformity that guarantees the provision of common interests and relative psychological compatibility, socially orientated young people with one learning goal. At the same time, senior high students are characterised by the need for self-determination; their teaching is focused on gaining good results; educational activity is subject to future professional activity; in relation to the English language is students’ awareness of its importance for a future career and; the importance of the English language in obtaining certain information (Tleuzhanova et al., 2016).

A small-scale study was conducted over the period from February to June 2018, in which 426 respondents from 13 senior-high schools (linguistic gymnasiums, multilingual schools,
traditional schools) participated from different regions of Kazakhstan: Nur-Sultan, Almaty, Temirtau, Semey, Shymkent, Ust-Kamenogorsk).

The Results of the Study

The statistical results taken on Section 1 ‘the English learning motivation’ gave the overwhelming majority of respondents demonstrating a strong motivation in learning English (91.6%). Only a mere 8.4% percentage of students reluctantly learn the language, those who are more interested in studying natural sciences and engineering, mostly male-students, suffer from the lack of natural predisposition to learn languages.

Figure 1. The percentage of students who enjoys and do not enjoy learning English (%)

The students expressed their personal attitudes towards the methodologies in the English classrooms. For collecting accurate statistical data the leading questions were designed with a variety of choices from positive, neutral or negative responses, as well as the opportunity to add their own opinions (see Figure 2). The statistical data reports that the students in the study generally experience a positive attitude, both to the English classroom and to the language itself. A greater number of respondents (70.9%) show a certain interest in learning English. 225 students (53.2%) underline the benefits of the English classroom in improving cognitive skills by learning new and interesting things in the language learning process. 204 students (48.2%) showed a positive attitude to the teacher of English, noting his/her high level of language proficiency and adequate methodology. This shows that the government can ensure with well-trained and qualified English teachers. Another important factor in learning English for students is both external and internal motivation: 192 students (45.4%) get internal satisfaction when they accomplish the task well in the classroom; the other 129 students (30.5%) like to get good grades; 105 respondents (24.8%) admit that they like it when the English teacher offer praise.
It should be noted that 17.5% of students look forward to the English classes. However, not everyone is positive about the English language and English classrooms. 33 students (7.8%) are happy when a lesson is cancelled for some reason; 24 students (5.7%) admit that English is difficult for them and so they reluctantly attend English classes; 6 students (1.4%) find English lessons boring. When the respondents took the chance to express their attitude by putting their own words in the comments, they mainly exhibited a positive outlook, such as "I love English" and "I like everything"; such statements as "English gives us a lot of opportunities" draws attention. This demonstrates that students’ have an awareness of how language can lead to a better life.

The next diagram given below illustrates a wide range of reasons to learn English (see Figure 3).

**Figure 2.** Students’ attitude towards the English classroom

**Figure 3.** The students’ reasons to learn English
The majority of students study English for personal and pragmatic purposes and less for academic or vocational purposes due to their age characteristics and personal motivations. A greater number of students are motivated by desire to travel (282 students: 66.7%). Just under two-thirds of the respondents study English for personal development (64.5%). For 189 students (44.7%), language acquisition is the key to provide the opportunity to watch movies in the target language. Just above two-fifths of the students (150 students: 35.5 %) find the language helpful to surf the internet. The majority of students think about their future careers. This is one of the common reasons to learn the language. 219 students (51.8%) indicate that English proficiency will help them with a successful career. For 177 students (41.8%), English is associated with studying abroad at a tertiary level. Almost one-fourth of students (144 students: 26.95%) were encouraged with the opportunity to participate in international student exchange programs. However, there is a share of those who learn English to meet their parents demands (63 students -14.9%). We made an attempt to reveal another list of reasons to learn the language, such as the ability to read books in English and the ability to play computer games in English. According to the statistical data, there is a positive outlook towards the role of English, students are happy to learn the target language, willing to attend classes, aware of the need to learn English and set certain goals in acquiring it. However, there is a contrast, which is clearly seen in students’ responses to question 4, whether students study English out of the classroom.

**Figure 4.** The percentage of students who study and fail to study English out of the classroom

![Figure 4](image)

Almost a half of the respondents answered positively to this question and 54.2% of students exhibited a negative outlook, i.e., more than a half of all respondents. One can assume that for most students possess necessary language materials ensured in schools. The quality of teaching English is also at a high methodological and linguistic level, and thus the students no longer need additional classes in English. It is impossible to exclude the financial factor, since language clubs require certain expenses, which is unaffordable for many families (see Figure 4).

The next question was addressed to those students who indicated that they were studying English out of classroom. We polled what language clubs they joined and what additional sources they used to improve their language skills. The results of the survey showed that for a greater number of respondents (46.4%), the most effective and affordable ways of extra-
learning English is autonomous work at home; joining English clubs is relevant for 81 respondents (41.75%); 54 respondents prefer to study with a personal tutor (27.8%); 21 students (10.8%) study via on-line courses and the least number (9 students: 4.6%) of students have extra-curricular activities at school. Some students learn English with the help of English films, with the help of friends in a friendly atmosphere.

**Figure 5.** Ways to study English out of classroom

The last question from the section relates to the students’ personal learning motivations and whether they find it necessary to acquire and use English in the future

**Figure 6.** The students’ opinion on how English is useful (%)

The analysis of the answers showed that the majority of students, 73.35% of all respondents, associate English with a successful career life and bright future; some students (24.55%) admit the possibility that English will be useful for them someday in life. The least number of students (0.95 %) fail to admit the thought that the English language they will be ever of must-have. Another small number of students (1.15%) found it difficult to answer this question (see Figure 6).
The results of the survey on the section ‘Learning English motivations’ demonstrate a high degree of interest among students to learn English, which is directly related to their awareness of the role and importance of the English language, both for personal development and for their future career.

The statistical data of the survey on section 2 "Level of English language proficiency” showed that students assessed their level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). As a result, the following data has been collected.

**Figure 7.** The respondents’ levels of the English language proficiency (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 - Survival Level - Beginner</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 - Waystage - Pre-Intermediate</td>
<td>1.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1 - Threshold - Intermediate</td>
<td>13.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 - Vantage - Upper-Intermediate</td>
<td>25.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 - Effective Operational Proficiency - Advanced</td>
<td>27.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 - Mastery - Proficiency</td>
<td>19.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You didn't have the answer</td>
<td>5.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The internship demonstrates a high level of English. A large group of students (27.7%) speak English at B1 level and another group at B2 level (25.2%). 19.4% of students are at beginners level (A2 level) and 13.85% are absolute beginners. 7.5% of students speak English on a professional level and only 1.15% of them are fluent in English. The index of those who could not determine their level of English proficiency according to the proposed level system was high, which accounts for 15%. This is because students are not fully familiar with the Common European Framework of Reference, a way of standardising the levels of language exams in different regions. Meanwhile, it can be noted that more than half of the students (61.55% demonstrated B1 level) successfully accomplished the English program. One of the objectives of foreign language teaching is to ensure a pre-professional threshold level of language proficiency (a speaker can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.; can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken; can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest; can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans (Tleuzhanova et al., 2016).

The highest rates are demonstrated by students of specialised schools, namely regional specialised N. Nurmakov boarding school for gifted children, Karaganda; Gymnasium № 93,
Karaganda; School-Lyceum №20, Temirtau and Nazarbayev Intellectual school of physics and mathematics, Semey; Gymnasium № 37, Semey.

The students in the study were expected to determine their language skills. Thus, we planned to identify the level of English proficiency, expressed in descriptors by the acquisition of practical skills, as well as to identify the degree of use of English in real communication. As a result, we obtained the following data (see Figure 8):

**Figure 8.** The students’ level of English proficiency determined according to descriptors (%)

![Figure 8](image)

Despite the fact that the majority of students already have a good level of English proficiency, the overwhelming majority indicated that they would like to improve language skills (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9.** The students’ opinion on the need to improve their English language proficiency (%)

![Figure 9](image)

Despite the fact that the majority of students already have a good level of English proficiency, the overwhelming majority indicated that they would like to improve language skills (see Figure 9).

The diagram illustrates a limited number of students who do not want to improve their language proficiency and 2.3% of students found it difficult to answer. Perhaps in these categories those students’ language level corresponds to C1 (advanced English) and C2 (proficiency English); or students who are not willing to learn English because they fail to associate their future with it.

In the last question of section 2 students showed how they develop their English language skills out of the classroom. At the same time, they were offered a list of ready-made answers, as well
as the opportunity to enter their answers in the line "other". The results on this issue are shown in the diagram below (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10.** The students’ use of English in everyday life

![Diagram showing the students' use of English in everyday life](image)

The most common way to develop language skills and knowledge of the English language for 330 students is by listening to English songs. In second place in popularity among students to develop necessary skills is through watching English movies. 261 respondents are in favour of that approach. One of the distinctive qualities of the younger generation is that they read a lot, including in English, which greatly helps to master the language. 26.95% of respondents develop their language skills by writing letters to their friends or relatives from other countries in English, or by communicating with them via Skype. Writing and speaking as productive types of speech activity contribute most to developing and improving language skills. The acquisition of these types of language skills gives good results. Only 33 students offered their own answer to this question. They emphasised the role of computer games in developing their language skills; being an active member of English-speaking groups and communities via the internet in different social language communities; participation in international conferences; joining summer English courses, including abroad; going to language clubs; translating different discourses, learning words, etc. Some students improve their skills in rather creative ways. For example, one of the female students from Temirtau has her own blog on YouTube. Another student from the same city writes stories in English and publishes them in her blog on the internet.

Summarising the results of the survey on section 2, we can conclude that students of Kazakistani schools demonstrate a high level of English and can apply their skills in practice. The survey on section 3 ‘The perspectives of the three language policy development’ reports the attitude of students to the national policy of trilingualism. Students were asked to express their attitude to the 10 statements formulated. Students could express their attitude on a scale ranging from "strongly agree", "somewhat agree", "uncertain" to "somewhat disagree" and...
"strongly disagree". The analysis of the responses showed that the students 69.1% of the students fully recognise the necessity of learning English and agree that English language skills contribute to the development of general vision and intellect. 22.3% of the respondents somewhat agree with the competitiveness of the specialist on the labour market (64.0% and 27.1%).

Traveling also broadens students’ horizons and enriches their knowledge, they tend to acquire knowledge of the English language to "feel comfortable anywhere in the world". 73.4% of students fully agree with this judgment and 17.4% somewhat agree. Students also recognise that knowledge of English is necessary for educational and professional purposes, 64.2% of respondents fully agree and 24.5% somewhat agree that knowledge of English enables them to join the global academic community, helps in working on the internet, in finding the necessary information on English sites (66.7% and 19.1%, respectively) and helps to acquire language material better (53.2% and 23.4%).

The survey showed that the majority supports the policy of promoting English in Kazakhstan and agree that the citizens, along with the Kazakh and Russian languages, should know English. 54.9% of students fully agree, 28.7% somewhat agree, which in total it accounts for 83.6% of all respondents. The same number of students (83.6%) expressed their support for the policy of trilingualism in the country, saying that they want to be fluent in three languages and to become multilingual specialists (62.7% of students fully agree, 20.9% somewhat agree), which in turn contributes to the prestige of the individual and the formation of self-confidence (53.7% and 28.2%). Knowledge of English helps students to communicate with foreigners, of which the number of people has increased in recent years in Kazakhstan (63.1% and 19.1%). A small number of the internship exhibit a negative outlook towards the language policy. Some students reject the fact that knowledge of English helps in learning and contributes to better acquisition. They account for 7.8% of students (5.7% and 2.1%, relatively); 5.0% of them rather disagree with the fact that knowledge of English helps in working on the internet, in finding information on English sites. Most likely, these are those students who reluctantly learn English or find it difficult.

In general, the results of the survey clearly show a tendency of students to support the policy of trilingualism, which determines the relevance of English in the educational environment. We also aimed to find what languages students speak, in fact, how their views materialised within the language policy. The survey reports on a variety of languages that senior high students speak. Firstly, the most common – Kazakh and Russian; among foreign languages they are English, German, French, Spanish, Polish, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew and languages of ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan – German, Korean, Turkish, Chechen and Uzbek. It also demonstrates the number of students who speak one language, two languages and more. It is an interesting fact that a number of students speaking
Russian represent monolingualism. Russian monolingualism is typical, not only for representatives of Russian nationality, but also ethnic groups, including the titular ethnic group of the Republic – Kazakhs.

Moreover, the study of a foreign language (namely English) by bilingual students has its own specific characteristics. In the process of the third foreign language acquisition, the three language systems come into interaction. According to the statistical data, we have not identified that there are no Kazakhs, which represent a number of monolinguists. The sociolinguistic monitoring was conducted mainly in Central, Northern and Eastern Kazakhstan, in one senior high school in Almaty (southern Kazakhstan), which is characterised dominantly by a Russian speaking population. Russian-Kazakh and Russian-English bilingualism are represented in proportion to the knowledge of two languages. There is only one sample for a Russian-German language set presented in the survey. Almost half of all students (43.3%) who took part in the survey are trilingual. Trilinguism is represented by a number of students speaking Kazakh, Russian and English in variations with the first being either Kazakh or Russian, depending on the nationality of the students. In addition, there are other variations of languages.

The survey showed that there are only few students who can speak multiple languages. The most common combinations of languages the respondents speak are: Russian – Kazakh – English – German; Kazakh – Russian – English – Korean; Russian – Kazakh – English – French, etc. A limited number (2.1%) of students speak more than four languages and demonstrate a unique variety of languages such as Russian – Kazakh – English – Chinese – Arabic; Russian – Kazakh – Japanese – English – Hebrew; Russian – Kazakh – English – Korean (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11. Language proficiency (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Combinations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian – Kazakh</td>
<td>14.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian – English</td>
<td>10.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian – German</td>
<td>19.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakh – Russian – English – Korean</td>
<td>12.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakh – Russian – English – Japanese</td>
<td>43.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian – Kazakh – English – French</td>
<td>14.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian – Kazakh – Japanese – English – Hebrew</td>
<td>10.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian – Kazakh – English – Korean</td>
<td>19.85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the data presented in the diagram, there is another group of students, to be precise 14.2% of students, who have not specified the languages they speak. We believe that they did it intentionally, as they answered other questions in the questionnaire. We can only assume the reasons and motivations they have to act like that. Perhaps they speak only one foreign language or their level of language proficiency is low, which predetermined their choice to hide such information. We believe that the majority of students indicated the languages that they learn either at school or out of school, although the initial level or the basics of these languages
they have gained, which gives us the right to say that they acquire these languages, as we did not intend to determine the required level of language proficiency.

The next designed questions were set to reveal students’ attitudes towards polyglots who use several languages in their speech at the same time. The results of the survey are shown in the diagram below (see Figure 12).

**Figure 12.** Students’ attitude towards a multilingual personality (%)  

From the diagram it is clearly seen, that a greater number (33.8%) of students show respect to polyglots; 23.3% of them also find it fine to deal with polyglots because there are many such people who are brilliant with languages in their inner circles. 18.55% of students show indifference to the polylingual personalities; a small number (15.0%) of students have never met such people. 8.15% of students feel anger. Overall, the internship is neutral towards polylingual personalities and there is almost equal distribution of both positive and moderately negative attitudes to them. There were the students whose outlooks were different. For example, six female students admitted that they consider themselves such persons ("I am one of them"). Others believe that the ability to speak several languages simultaneously in speech, shifting from one language to another, indicates a high level of intelligence.

Generally, the results of the survey on section 3, can be summarised that older students greatly support the three language policy that is aimed at promoting the acquisition and practice of various languages, by adding a wide palette of other languages into the most common ones, including the languages of the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan (Figure 13).

Section 4 "Information about the respondents" included questions about places the student lives, their senior high school, grades and nationality. The survey at schools with the information about locations given above. We also previously mentioned that only senior high school students participated in the study. The questionnaire shows the ethnic diversity of schools and the population of Kazakhstan in general. Thus, representatives of 8 ethnic groups took part in the survey. The majority of respondents were represented by the titular ethnic group – Kazakhs (61.7%); the rest of the respondents were Russians, Germans, Koreans, Turks, Ukrainians, Jews, Uighurs.
Thus, we can summarise that the ethnolinguistic students environment has been created and it is specified by the usage of the variety of different language codes.

Conclusion

The study showed: (i) a high level of the English language proficiency of the respondents; (ii) their attitude towards the national three language policy and the positive attitude towards the English language; (iii) the level of language proficiency corresponds to B1 level on the CEFR scale and; (iv) the functioning of languages in small social groups, as well as the social characteristics of the respondents. When analysing the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan, we took into account its sociolinguistic components, such as the ethno-demographic parameters of the social base of languages, the language purpose, and the social conditions of its functioning. This kind of research was carried out for the first time in the conditions of the Kazakhstani three language policy. Thus, we can make the following conclusions:

- the national language policy pursued regarding the status of the English language and the ways the language is taught in the country is rather effective, it finds support among the majority of senior high students. The language policy has primarily facilitated the development of and the English language spread in Kazakhstan.
- English is actively penetrating into the communicative-linguistic environment of senior high school children. It is widely used for practical purposes: to establish relations in everyday life and as the key to acquire other knowledge for educational needs. Students continue to graduate with adequate language proficiency and are ready to start at a tertiary level study, which varies from A2 to C2, the predominant being B1 level. We may predict a further increase in the language acquisition both for educational/vocational purposes, and for daily use as well;
- in the hierarchy of interacting languages in the everyday communication of senior high school students in general educational institutions, English has greater vitality as a language with a
smaller number of users on a daily basis and mostly preferred as a global lingua franca. Due to the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan that is characterised by co-functioning of the Kazakh and Russian languages in a single communicative environment, in the targeted small social-group in particular. In this regard, the English language cannot yet compete with the two dominant languages.

- the overwhelming majority of students in a small social community recognise the relevance of learning and acquiring English, and also assume it as an integral part of their personal and future professional growth, which indicates a high functional rating of the English language in the educational environment. This explains the rapid English spread into the linguistic and communicative environment at senior high school. Moreover, the English language is serving as a means of communication in small social groups and being realised mainly in the classroom less often in every day.

- the language policy pursued at the state level, in particular, the policy of multilingualism, which is primarily implemented in the education system, has positive results. The analysis of a linguistic situation among senior high school students proved that.

- supporting the views of the majority of experts in multilingualism about the complexity and heterogeneity of this process, we also note the uniqueness of the process of implementing multilingual education in Kazakhstan (the three language policy), due to the historical, social and political characteristics of the country.

The results obtained allow us to identify the scientific relevance of the study, which are ensured with the analysis of the dynamics of the contemporary linguistic situation in Kazakhstan during implementing the national language education at senior high schools at the state level, and monitoring local sociolinguistic situation in accordance with the priorities and guidelines of language policy. In summary, our sociolinguistic monitoring has a certain practical value. The results of the study can further be used both for educational and vocational purposes such as to make recommendations on establishing the language policy in the Republic regarding a global language, English; on fostering tolerance in developing interethnic friendships and; shaping public opinion on this issue. The toolkit of the designed questionnaire is helpful for determining the functional rating of the English language in the context of various small social groups of the Kazakhstani community.
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