

*Жолдабаева А. С., магистр гуманитарных наук в области прикладной лингвистики, старший преподаватель, Павлодарский государственный педагогический институт, Республика Казахстан, [batrachina.aliya@mail.ru](mailto:batrachina.aliya@mail.ru);*

*Кенжетоева Г.К., кандидат филологических наук, Павлодарский государственный педагогический институт, Республика Казахстан, [gulken\\_kz@mail.ru](mailto:gulken_kz@mail.ru);*

*Байгожина Ж. М. кандидат педагогических наук, профессор, Павлодарский государственный педагогический институт, Республика Казахстан, [bzhm@mail.ru](mailto:bzhm@mail.ru)*

## К ВОПРОСУ О ПОЛИЯЗЫЧНОМ ОБРАЗОВАНИИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН

*Аннотация: Данная статья посвящена вопросу развития полиязычного образования. На основе авторских исследований рассматриваются преимущества и недостатки этого явления в поликультурном и полиэтническом пространстве Республики Казахстан.*

*Ключевые слова: полиязычное образование, язык, поликультурные отношения, преимущества, недостатки.*

It must be stated that multilingualism may have advantages and disadvantages in a society. On the one hand, societal multilingualism may negatively affect nationalism, because it causes tension in establishing a national language. As Baker [1, 87-88] claims, it is very important to keep balance and avoid tensions between different languages in the community, because it may cause problems and troubles leading to discrimination of a particular language. The most difficult issue for multilingual countries in comparison with monolingual states is the development of a sense of common group identity, because language is very significant for nationalism [5, 112-113]. Developing group identity on a ground of a language may be problematic because of the choice of the national language, especially for those citizens who are not the native speakers of the selected language.

On the other hand, multilingualism may also play a positive role in the process of transition to a new official language, when both former, for instance, colonial language and new national language may be used simultaneously. As Edwards [4, 45-

47] claims, in the educational system the conflict between languages of instruction may be solved by using the ethnic languages at initial level and the national language for more advanced level. Furthermore, individual multilingualism positively influences the society enriching its social and cultural facets. Additionally societal multilingualism can also contribute to the enrichment of the cultural diversity of society.

Taking negative and positive sides suggested by multilingualism, it can be concluded that a perfect multilingual society is "a multiethnic nation where sociocultural groups are aware of their cultural and linguistic identity at the local level, but still consider themselves as a part of the nation as a whole".

Multilingual education means academic instruction based on more than two languages. For a long time, bilingual education has held leading positions providing multilingual communities with different programmes such as immersion education, sub-immersion programme, dual language education and mainstream bilingual education [2, 78-79]. In recent years, many students in different countries feel a real need in acquisition proficiency in more than two languages in order to be competitive in the society. There are many countries in the world with effective multilingual approach to education, for instance, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Canada, Malaysia and Singapore. Some case studies concerning multilingual education in some mentioned countries will be considered later.

Multilingualism may benefit people of different nationalities in a globalised society. The educational system plays an important role in promoting language diversity and maintenance. Children spend much time in schools where they get, not only knowledge and various academic skills, but also acquire social and communicative skills. The social interaction and communication with peers and teachers may affect children's beliefs and attitudes towards different languages.

Teachers and, especially, parents play the most significant part in shaping children's attitudes towards the maintenance of their native language or mother tongue and acquisition of the supplementary language or languages [2, 45]. Maintenance of a child's native language is vital for his/her future success in school

and out of school. As noticed by Edwards [4, 90-95], approximately 150 research studies were conducted over the past 35 years on investigating advantages of bilingual/multilingual education. As Baker [1] claims, bilingualism/multilingualism have positive impact in the development of children's linguistic and educational skills. Children beginning the study on two or more languages from primary school level may achieve a better and deeper understanding of the language(s), they develop their literate skills in two or more languages, comparing and contrasting the way of organization of these languages. However, bilingual/multilingual education may be problematic and cause the failure of the whole educational process. As noticed by Baker [1, 88] if there are no suitable conditions for implementing bilingual/multilingual education, in particular high-qualified teachers, well-developed curriculum, appropriate curricular materials both for pupils and for teachers and community involvement, the success of the whole process may be questionable. Some case studies on attitudes towards multilingual education.

With respect to studies concerning attitudes, in particular parents' attitudes, towards multilingual education, the relevant are those of Ting [7, 77]. The study of language attitudes in the Malaysian state of Sarawak carried out by Ting [7] is relevant for my study in terms of methodology and results. The main and the most important reason was the investigating language attitudes towards English and Bahasa Malaysia in various domains. 142 multi-ethnic employees took part in the study. The linguistic background of the participants varies from Bahasa Malay, Chinese to English [7, 77-93]. A questionnaire and interviews were used as main instruments of this research. The questionnaire was adapted from Baker [1, 50-52], who investigated participants' feelings towards the use of English and Welsh in Wales. The findings of this study are quite expected in some domains. For instance, in employment domain the majority of participants indicated the most importance of English, because it gives more opportunity to get a good job in the private sector. However, in government administration the necessity of English is not so high, because English is the official language in business sector in Malaysia, while Bahasa Malay is the official language for the governmental administration [7].

An interesting finding was in family domain. More than 65% of the participants emphasize the importance of usage of English at home because they want their children to be proficient in English, as they believe that it opens up opportunities for their children to get good higher education [7, 90-91]. One of the most interesting findings of this study has the relation to the language as a medium of instruction. 71.13% of the respondents had the preference to English used as a tool of instruction at schools and 73.94% of the participants wished English to be a medium of instruction at higher education institutions. For Malaysian Government these findings were not favourable, because much time, effort and finance were spent for implementation Bahasa Malay as a main language of instruction in education.

To sum up it should be stated that the majority of the people who took part in this study demonstrated the supportive behavior towards dual usage of both English and Bahasa Malaysia. This research indicated that people in Sarawak were interested in competence and proficiency of both languages.

One of the major roles in implementation of bilingual/multilingual education belongs to parents. Parental attitudes affect the success or failure of multilingual education's implementation to a significant degree. Thus, it is very important to have a supportive attitude from parents in this issue. As Edwards [4, 90-91] claims, "parents' support is crucial in both initiating and implementing a bilingual education programme".

The study known as The Shanghai Project was carried out by Wei in four schools in Shanghai, China. The main goal of this study was to investigate "the strength of parental support for Chinese-English bilingual education in Shanghai" [5, 175-177]. The participants of the study were 199 parents who had children in four Shanghai primary and secondary schools. The main instruments of the study were two questionnaires consisted of opened and closed-questions. The aim of the questionnaires was to elicit information about parents' attitudes, feelings and demands for English language competence and proficiency, and their support for bilingual education. The most significant finding of this study was that 78% monolingual and 85% bilingual parents demonstrated their strong support for bilingual education. They

indicated the importance of their children's English learning as the major factor in getting higher education and a good paid job in future. However, some mettlesome parents felt hesitation concerning teachers' proficiency in English, it means that these parents are concerned about teachers' professionalism. 9% of monolingual and 5% of bilingual parents demonstrated negative attitude towards the bilingual education. This study may be beneficial in investigating parents' perception towards multilingual education, for instance, for a country such as Kazakhstan which is going to implement the multilingual approach to education beginning from the primary school level.

With respect to attitudes towards bilingual/multilingual education, the study of Griva and Chouvarda, which was carried out in Greece as a part of a larger research project, can be considered. The main aim of the study was providing an account of parents' beliefs on issues of multilingual learning of their children in the Greek educational context. 50 parents of primary school children took part in the survey. The main instruments of the study were semi-structured interviews. As mentioned above, the study was a part of a research project conducted in Greece, which also investigated students' and teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of multilingual policy and the role of English as a lingua franca in the Greek context. Results showed a positive attitude towards multilingual education, because parents agreed upon the demanding needs of the modern world, that it was of vital importance to possess the knowledge of more than one language. Parents declared, that multilingualism is a tool to communicate and an opportunity to find a job in future. Moreover, the participants of this study strongly believed that multilingual education beneficially affected on children's personality and their future possibilities. Finally, the study of Jang [6, 195-196] which was conducted in South Korea is also relevant to my study. The main purpose of the study was to examine Korean parents' attitudes towards their children's participation in bilingual education, in Korean and in English. The methodology used was similar to my study, because data were collected with a questionnaire, which was comprised of four-part Likert-scale statements. 218 parents of elementary school children participated in the survey.

Results indicated that the majority of participants had highly favourable attitudes towards bilingualism and multilingualism [6, 199-201]. However, the attitudes of some parents were negative, because they believed that other academic subjects, math or science for instance, were more significant for their children than their foreign language competence [6, 195].

In concluding words of this section, it should be noticed, that parents' positive attitudes and support play a significant role in bilingual/multilingual education's implementation.

#### References

1. Baker, C. Attitudes and language. - Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1992.
2. Clyne, M. G. Dynamics of language contact: English and immigrant languages. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
3. Crystal, D. English as a Global Language. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
4. Edwards, J. Multilingualism. - London: Routledge, 1994.
5. Fierman, W. Language and Identity in Kazakhstan: Formulations in policy documents 1987-1997 // Communist and Post-Soviet Studies. - 1998. - №31(2). - Pp.171-186.
6. Jang S. Impact of Language Planning on Language Attitudes: A case study in Sarawak // Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development. - 2003. - № 24(3). - Pp. 195-210.
7. Ting, S.-H., & Ling, T.-Y. Language use and sustainability status of indigenous languages in Sarawak, Malaysia // Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development. - 2013. - № 34(1). - Pp. 77-93.

---

*Zholdabayeva A. S., master of Arts in Applied Linguistics (UK), senior lecturer, Pavlodar State Pedagogical Institute, department of Foreign Languages, Kazakhstan Republic [batrachina.aliya@mail.ru](mailto:batrachina.aliya@mail.ru)*

*Kenzetaeva G.K., candidate of philological sciences, Pavlodar State Pedagogical Institute, department of Foreign Languages, Kazakhstan Republic*  
[gulken\\_kz@mail.ru](mailto:gulken_kz@mail.ru)

*Baigozhina Zh. M., candidate of pedagogical sciences, professor, Pavlodar State Pedagogical Institute, department of Foreign Languages, Kazakhstan Republic*  
[bzhm@mail.ru](mailto:bzhm@mail.ru)

## TO THE ISSUE OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

*Abstract: The present article deals with the issue of multilingual education. It considers the advantages and disadvantages of this phenomenon. Some case studies on attitudes towards multilingual education are presented in this article.*

*Key words: multilingual education, language, attitudes, advantages, disadvantages.*