

***Damira D. Jantassova,***

*PhD, Associate Professor;*

***Aigerim S. Izotova,***

*Master of Humanities;*

***Meruyert K. Makhmetova,***

*Master of Humanities,*

*Foreign Languages Department,*

*Karaganda State Technical University,*

*Karaganda, Republic of Kazakhstan*

## **MULTILINGUALISM AS ONE OF THE MODERN EDUCATION PRIORITIES IN KAZAKHSTAN**

The article shows the tendencies of multilingualism development in Kazakhstan and at Karaganda State Technical University in general, problems and solutions, effective ways of multilingual staff training, active measures to create conditions for students along to actively learn English, also organization of language courses for students studying in multilingual groups, for postgraduates and PhD students Foreign Languages Department of KSTU. Today our teachers work with students who attend the courses, focused on improving the role that English plays in the development and implementation of multilingual education.

**Keywords:** multilingualism, development, training, implementation, education, methodology, teaching, non-linguistic, disciplines, curriculum, improvement, foreign language.

***Джантасова Дамира Дулатовна,***

*канд. пед. наук, доцент,*

***Изотова Айгерим Сериковна,***

*магистр пед. наук;*

***Махметова Меруерт Калганбергеновна,***

*магистр пед. наук,*

*кафедра иностранных языков,*

*Карагандинский государственный технический университет,*

*г. Караганда, Республика Казахстан*

## **МНОГОЯЗЫЧИЕ КАК ОДИН ИЗ СОВРЕМЕННЫХ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫХ ПРИОРИТЕТОВ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ**

В статье представлены тенденции развития многоязычия в Казахстане и в Карагандинском государственном техническом университете в целом, проблемы и решения, эффективные способы многоязычной подготовки кадров, активные мероприятия для создания условий студентам, активно изучающим английский язык, также организация языковых курсов для студентов и студентов полиязычных групп, для магистрантов и докторантов кафедры иностранных языков. Сегодня наши преподаватели работают со студентами, посещающими курсы, сосредоточенными на улучшении английского языка, что играет огромную роль в развитии и внедрении многоязычного образования.

**Ключевые слова:** многоязычие, развитие, обучение, внедрение, образование, методология, обучение, нелингвистическое, дисциплины, учебный план, улучшение, иностранный язык

In the last decade, during the period of international cooperation, the growth of professional, scientific and cultural exchanges, there is a necessity to intensify the process of searching for effective conditions and mechanisms for upbringing the youth, capable of dialogue with other cultures. The solution of the task will contribute the formation of a very competitive person capable to live with dignity in active and effective ways in multinational and multicultural environment with a developed sense of respect and understanding other cultures in the domestic and international labor market.

It follows that the effective instrument of training the youth in an interconnected and interdependent world and one of the components of a common system of republican education that cannot be considered outside is the multilingualism. The industrial and innovative development of Kazakhstan stimulated an ongoing process in the development and implementation of multilingual education in educational activities. It should be noted that learning foreign languages is one of the significant criteria of ensuring practical and professional activities of a person in the modern globalized world. Thus, to achieve this aim, differentiated and specialized training courses for the teachers working in multilingual groups has been initiated.

The higher education institutions of Kazakhstan, conducting their activities in the direction of the development of multilingual education have an increasing number of professional disciplines that are taught in multilingual academic groups in English.

It is necessary to consider some negative phenomena, which can arise in the course of the organization of multilingual education for purposeful and successful development of a multilingualism in higher education institution. These include the absence or weakness of material and technical resources incapable to provide full educational and methodical activity of the centers; lack of the accurate program, concepts and rules of development of the centers and a clear idea of the planned results of activity of trainees and criteria of their assessment; growth of spontaneous innovative experiments. Besides, we should not forget also about the problems connected with language, culture and structure of programs.

The initial stage of introduction the multilingualism in higher education institutions gets challenges such as the different level of students' knowledge of language, their insecurity while studying special disciplines in a foreign language, teachers' lack of knowledge of English etc.

The application of new methods and technologies in training non-linguistic disciplines will contribute the development of such qualities of the personality which are demanded by modern multicultural and multilingual society. Therefore, the problem of using an effective methodology for teaching non-linguistic disciplines in universities is very important.

Moreover, on the basis of the experience of countries where multilingual education has been tested, it is worth to note that phased transition into the studying in several language is necessary rather than the sharp transition, which can negatively affect not only on the quality of comprehensibility of material, but also on the loss of desire to study anything. In this regard the paramount introduction into multilingual training in separate fragments with application of new methods of training is offered.

In fact, modern researches show that distribution of multilingualism in the world is a natural process caused by basic changes in economy, policy, culture and education [1, p. 3].

According to the concept of UNESCO, the term of «multilingual education» implies to use at least three languages: native, regional or national and international languages. The application of these languages is «an important factor of inclusivity and quality of education» [2, p. 7].

N. Nazarbayev announced the idea of the trinity of languages for the first time in 2004. In October 2006 at XII sessions of Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, the President has noted again that the knowledge of three languages is important for the future of youth. And in 2007 in the annual message to the people of Kazakhstan called «New Kazakhstan in the new world» N. Nazarbayev suggested to begin a phased implementation of the cultural project named «Trinity of Languages», which says that the development of three languages in the country is necessary [3, p. 9]. «Kazakhstan should be seen around the world as the highly educated country and its population should know three languages» [4, p. 2].

There is a certain experience of implementation of multilingual education at Nazarbayev Intellectual schools where they take into account the analysis of modern international experience model of trilingual training based on the level system of studying languages. This model is based on the fact that students can fully master oral and written speech in Kazakh, Russian and English languages. At the same time we should take into account not only the rules for introducing the second and third languages into the educational process, but also the possibilities of interactive methods of immersion in a foreign environment.

Kazakhstan due to its geographical location hasn't got the conditions for the natural development of the massive multilingualism in comparison with European countries. Therefore, in the terms of secondary education training process it is necessary that graduates have the sufficient level of multilingual competence for the subsequent improvement in speech and communicative competence in three

languages. It requires a special design of the learning process for non-linguistic disciplines, which would facilitate without increasing the hours in the curriculum, the pursuit of both standards for mastering the content of the academic discipline and mastering the usage of three languages within the chosen discipline. This problem has not been solved yet in the educational institutions of Kazakhstan.

However, there are also successful solutions to the above-mentioned problems in the implementation of a multilingual education, as evidenced by the diagnosis of future graduates. The issue of the language development occurs in conditions of qualitative strengthening of the process of both linguistic and cultural interaction. In addition, introduction of such model of training in Kazakhstan schools allows forming comprehensively harmoniously developed personality, knowing Kazakh, English and Russian languages.

Practice shows that the majority of applicants opt the choice of their future occupation with the knowledge of the English language, consider that the knowledge of a foreign language is necessary to get a prestigious job and believe that the knowledge of several languages could help them to strengthen the social status and take a worthy position in the modern multilingual society, in other words, all them to be communicative and adaptable to any environment. On the other hand, there are such difficulties as psychological and pedagogical characters connected to the specific features of the students' identity, their ability to switch from one language to another, the level of proficiency and the amount of knowledge in the field of languages.

As one of the important directions of modernization of innovative training system is the preparation of multilingual staff, Karaganda State Technical University has set itself the key challenges to the modernization of higher education with subsequent integration into the world of economics and education. One of the occurrence stages in this way is the organization of a phased introduction into the multilingual education, such as the creation of the Concept of multilingual education at the Karaganda State Technical University for 2017-2020. Besides of the facts

given above it should be noted that multilingual groups on the specified specialties were created, the number of students was defined, the qualified staff of teachers with academic degrees and experience of training and working abroad, their language competences in basic and profile disciplines were defined. Tutorials in three languages are regularly published, English language courses for teachers are conducted, foreign scientists are invited to work and exchange experience at the university.

As implementation of the Concept of foreign language education, fundamental sciences are mastered on the first year of training in higher education institution. The educational process in KSTU is organized in accordance with the requirements of the roadmap and multilingual education: a level methodology for teaching foreign languages has been introduced; a methodological base for multilingual learning has been developed (educational methodological complex of disciplines in Kazakh-Russian-English languages, modules, syllabuses etc.).

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan gives a great support in involvement foreign scientists and teachers. It is necessary to mark that international cooperation gives opportunities for multilingual staff preparation. The leading professors from Canada, China, Switzerland, France, Turkey, Germany and Russia held a cycle of the presentations, lectures and scientific seminars for the staff of the university. Extension of such interactions allows increasing competitiveness of specialists and improves the quality of multilingual teachers.

Another form of the international cooperation is the «Bolashak International Scholarship». So, for example, in Karaganda State Technical University there are the numbers of the teachers who have improved their skills at the foreign universities for the last year due to the program. More than 50 teachers passed international internships in the top universities of the world for the period from 2010 through 2014. Moreover, the number of scientific publications of KSTU teachers in the foreign rating journals has been grown several times that demonstrates activation of multilingual activities of the teaching staff of the university.

The higher the interest in new professional, personal, cultural, scientific contact skills with native speakers with the achievements in science, technology, the higher the status of multilingualism as a tool for establishing professional communication for effective exchange of experience [5, p. 8].

One of the effective ways of multilingual staff training is the inclusion in the list of basic disciplines of standard curricula such disciplines as «ESP» or «Professionally Oriented Kazakh / Russian Languages».

The conditional studies of the multilingual education in KSTU and the analysis show that there is an acute problem of insufficient language training of non-linguistic disciplines teachers, the absence of locally published textbooks in English on profiling subjects; the lack of a permanent system of professional development abroad for teachers teaching classes in a foreign language.

Therefore, the Foreign Languages Department of KSTU had developed a course of interactive classes on learning English with using innovative methods and teaching aids for the teachers and university staff members.

Every year the Foreign Languages Department engages foreign experts from the United States, in the framework of the international program «English Language Fellow». Through the English Language Fellow Program, highly qualified U.S. educators in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages or Teaching English as a Foreign Language participate in 10-month-long fellowships at academic institutions throughout the world. The English Language Fellow Program fosters mutual understanding, promotes English language learning and enhances English teaching capacity abroad. English Language Fellows model and demonstrate up-to-date Teaching English as a Foreign Language classroom practices that help foster thoughtful and responsible behavior in students and teachers of English.

The first half-year of successful implementation of the program for the preparation and improvement the qualification of English language skills for KSTU teachers showed the versatility and uniqueness of the organized courses. During the first semester, 24 full-time teachers of the university were able to continuously attend

the full course and received certificates. As it can be seen in the given chart below 15% (31%) already had the practice of teaching profile subjects in English in multilingual groups. It is also worth noting that 6 teachers (13%) of the course were listed as scheduled teachers for the preparation of students of multilingual groups in English from the next semester (Fig. 1).

A recent study clearly demonstrates that the leadership of the university creates all the conditions for learning English for teachers. However, the university staff does not attend the courses, referring to the workload or wrong time for their schedule.

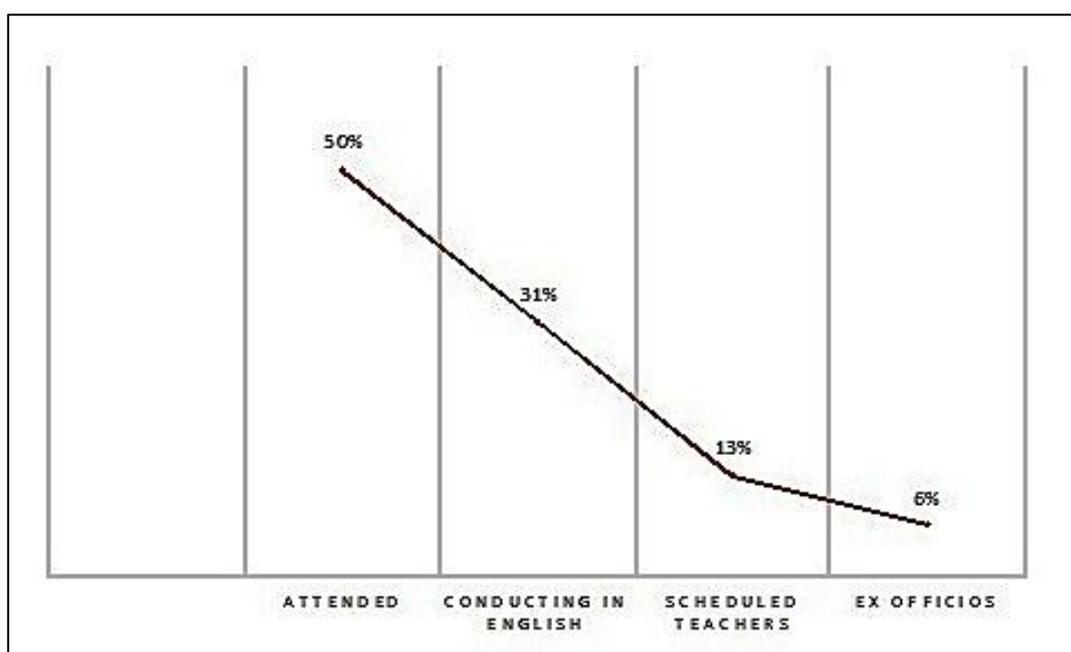


Figure 1 – The attendance ratio of the training courses with KSTU teaching staff

In early 2018, the Foreign Languages Department of KSTU in identifying teachers' specific knowledge in English had organized a surveying among the teachers working in multilingual groups. This monitoring was devoted to determine the level of speaking and understanding skills of a foreign language. An oral interview among teachers conducting laboratory work, lecturing in English, was carried out in order to identify the vulnerable areas of KSTU teaching staff for the subsequent elimination of current difficulties arising from the usage of a foreign language by attending free courses.

The result of the experiment was as follows: the form of the interview consisted of the oral topics given to the lecturers, each of which contained control questions that should have been answered in descending order. This method is widely used to pass the oral part of the IELTS exam.

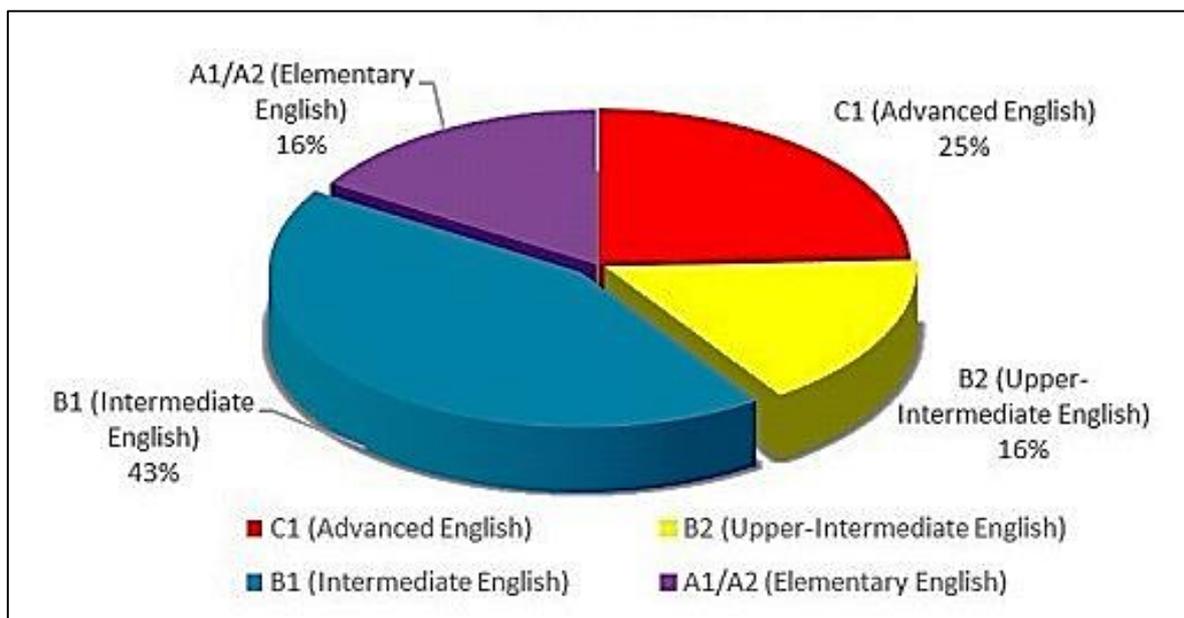


Figure 2 – The relative proportions of the knowledge of a foreign language among KSTU teaching staff

Our university takes active measures to create conditions for students along to actively learn English. It should be noted that the Foreign Languages Department of KSTU organized language courses for students studying in multilingual groups, for postgraduates and PhD students. Today our teachers work with students who attend the courses, focused on improving the role that English plays in the development and implementation of multilingual education. The courses are aimed at teaching translation of scientific and technical literature, as well as studying general English through oral and written ways.

Every year Karaganda State Technical University increases the disciplines studied in three languages, it is also the same with the qualitative and quantitative composition of teachers conducting classes in multilingual groups. Proficiency in Kazakh, Russian and foreign languages becomes an integral component of personal and professional activity of a person in modern society. One of the main tasks of the

multilingual education in the country is to involve young people in universal, global values, to build the students' ability to communicate and interact with representatives of other cultures in the world community. In this regard, understanding the role of languages at this stage raises the issue of teaching languages and improving the level of language training for students and university professors who need to know the official language, the Russian language as a language of interethnic communication and English as the language of international communication.

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