

## POSITIVE EFFECTS OF BILINGUALISM ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Tuimebayev Zh.K.<sup>1</sup>, \*Ualikhanuly A.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, al-Farabi Kazakh National University

Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: [info@kaznu.kz](mailto:info@kaznu.kz)

\*<sup>2</sup>PhD student, al-Farabi Kazakh National University

Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: [abylai.ualikhanuly@mail.ru](mailto:abylai.ualikhanuly@mail.ru)

**Abstract.** In this article we will examine the psychological aspects of bilingualism on children, analyze advantages of this phenomenon. The purpose of the article is to give a clear explanation of how bilingualism positively affects the development of a child.

In the condition of stable mass bilingualism in the Republic of Kazakhstan, including the Kazakh state language and Russian as the language of international communication, the issue of children's bilingualism is of particular importance. Children's age is especially significant in human development. In a short period of time, the child learns a huge amount of information, masters a variety of skills and abilities that are necessary for further socialization in society. The practical and scientific significance of the work lies in the observations, conclusions and types of experiments that were carried out during the research.

The authors used theoretical methods, survey, observation, audio and video recordings. The article presents the results of a questionnaire of parents of preschoolers who attend kindergarten No. 6 located in the city of Almaty. A total of 79 parents of preschoolers took part in the experiment. Each question of the questionnaire was selected in order to find out how parents communicate with their children in certain situations. The results of the study indicates that Kazakh language prevails among preschool children, while Russian was a little difficult for them in comparison with their native language.

Having received the questionnaire results, it goes without saying that bilingualism has a positive effect on children's mental abilities, activates their general language and translation abilities. The obtained results expand knowledge about child bilingualism, can be used as a basis for further linguistic research in the field of child bilingualism.

**Keywords:** child bilingualism, preschool age, speech development, Kazakh language, Russian language, language socialization, speech activity, code switching

### Basic provisions

Child bilingualism is considered to be a phenomenon in which a child speaks two languages, while the use of languages does not interfere with each other. At the present time, bilingualism in children is becoming more prevalent. More than 70% of children worldwide are bilinguals. This is due to the prevalence of intercultural marriages, and another reason for this phenomenon is the migration processes taking place in the present time. In addition, a significant factor in the development of child bilingualism is the awareness by parents of the need for their child to master another communicative code as a necessary attribute of his/her personal, social and professional development, taking into account the trends in the development of modern society.

Speaking about child bilingualism, we adhere to the definition given by G. N. Chirsheva, “child bilingualism is the mastery of two languages by a child to such an extent that it ensures the successful communication in accordance with his age characteristics” [7, p. 59].

The basics of child speech is laid at the age of up to three years. At that point, you should begin communicating with him/her in a foreign language so that he/she becomes a native speaker. It is recommended to start such communication with him/her right from the first days. In this case, the baby will not have a predominance of one language in the future. Additionally, it's crucial to avoid giving the impression that he talks entirely distinct languages to the youngster.

### **Introduction**

Bilingualism has an undeniable positive effect on the psychological, social, professional and creative spheres. It all starts with training and strengthening intellectual abilities. The formation of speech and speech apparatus is directly related to thinking. Neurolinguistic researchers show that at the age of up to 3 years, the brain is in a flexible stage and is uniquely adapted for learning a second language. The child takes the first steps to language acquisition immediately after birth, he imitates how parents interact with each other [1, p. 25]. Mastering language opens up a new picture of the world for youngsters. Furthermore, mastering of more than one language expands the vision of this picture. Every normally developed child can learn the languages of their environment. In addition, if he does not develop a voice apparatus, he cannot create all the sounds and his speech may suffer from this. In case a child has memory or brain disorders, this negatively affects the understanding and formation of speech.

Bilingual children have the advantage of being able to easily make new friendship. They can also establish good friendship using their second language because they can speak more than one language. This is an important skill for creating new networks in this global world. E.Y. Protassova gave detailed information that they can also learn a new culture through language. People say that learning a language means that we also study culture. It is easier for bilingual children to make friends from other linguistic and cultural groups, both within the framework of their language school programs. This will result in a positive attitude and respect for other cultures and groups as well [2, p.11].

As it was already mentioned previously, bilingualism in children often develops from an early age, practically from the first days of life. In most cases, bilinguals are children raised in mixed, bi-ethnic families, or migrant families. In the first case, two different languages are present in the family itself, in the second – the language of the family differs from the language of the external social environment. Another reason for being bilingual is mixed marriages. In this case, the child is brought up in a family where parents use different languages while communicating.

According to G.D. Aldabergenova there is an opinion that if children are spoken to in different languages from birth, they may start speaking later [3, p.16]. Recent research in the field of linguistics refutes this hypothesis. Usually, bilingual children pronounce the first words at about the same age as toddlers developing in

monolingual conditions. At the same time, coherent speech in bilingual children may indeed appear somewhat later than in their ordinary peers, since it is important for bilinguals to accumulate certain baggage, differentiate various language systems. In the future, the vocabulary of bilingual children within each of the languages studied at certain stages of development may be somewhat less than that of their peers, but the sum of the language units that bilingual children have mastered is usually much larger than the vocabulary of their peers.

In her research, L.I. Starceva emphasized the importance of mastering a second language in the following situations: early bilingualism, which develops from childhood as a result of growing up in a bilingual society; late bilingualism, which develops after mastering one language; and parallel bilingualism, which is bilingualism that takes place concurrently with the first language in order to master a second language. In our country, parallel bilingualism is a common phenomena [4, p.38].

The first works in the field of children's bilingualism were characterized by the description of the speech of one or more children in various aspects, mainly based on the longitudinal method of collecting material, using diary entries. The very first of the famous works according to child bilingualism belongs to the French linguist J.Ronjat (Ronjat 1913). In 1908 when his wife, a German by nationality, was expecting a child, J. Ronjat decided to follow the advice of his colleague M. Grammon: in order for a child to start speaking two languages, he doesn't need to be specially trained at all, it was enough just to talk to him in these languages. However, there was one rule which had to be taken into consideration: one of the parents had to speak with the child only in French, and the second – only in German. As a result, the child, without any effort and without even noticing it, will begin to speak two languages [5, p.156].

It is widely known that bilingualism has the following advantages:

- being able to speak in two languages widens your horizons;
- bilingual children have a richer vocabulary, both active and passive;
- communication skills are much better developed (communication);
- bilingual children are more susceptible to learning other languages;
- by switching from one language to another, bilinguals are able to focus better, perform several tasks at the same time;
- speaking several languages can make people more tolerant towards other cultures [6, p.102].

There are large amount of bilinguals in Kazakhstan (with varying degrees of proficiency in Kazakh and Russian). The active usage of practicing bilingual education will create favorable conditions for improving language competence in both languages. It will also remove the problem of mastering the state language of the Russian-speaking population. To fulfill this goal, children are sent to Kazakh kindergartens.

In comparison with monolingual children, bilinguals have more developed self-control, flexibility of thinking, a high amount of verbal memory and a quick ability to switch in multitasking conditions. They have more developed logical and abstract thinking, mathematical abilities [7, p.102]. In addition, it is easier for them to master

reading and writing. Bilinguals feel more comfortable in the modern multilingual world, have greater tolerance for people with a different culture and religion [8, p.38].

According to J. Piaget simultaneous mastering of two languages requires a lot of attention and effort on the part of parents. However, extensive positive experience in the works of scientists around the world testifies to the success of the formation and development of children's bilingualism. Many bilingual children from immigrant families, bi-ethnic and mono-ethnic families are vivid examples of simultaneous learning of two languages in childhood [9, p. 117]. Conscious planning, a systematic and consistent approach, patience and creative overcoming of emerging difficulties will help parents to raise children of a new generation, a new level of consciousness, in which a person develops flexibility of thinking, the ability to language creativity, the development of analytical thinking, cognitive and communication skills [10, p. 126]. The advantages of children who can speak several languages overlap the problems and difficulties of the stage of formation of bilingualism.

### **Material and methods**

The main method of collecting data in our research is a questionnaire of respondents - parents. The overwhelming majority of parents belong to Kazakhstani people, whereas minor quantity of nationalities included such nations like Russians, Uighurs and Uzbek representatives.

Parents of children who attend Kindergarten No. 6 in Almaty were asked to complete the questionnaire. Before beginning our data collection, we sought approval from the kindergarten's administration. 79 parents provided their responses to the given questions in order to characterize the process of bilingualism in each case. The questionnaire consists of 10 questions and it was carried out online, using Google docs platform.

The reason why this particular age group was chosen is due to the fact that children usually begin speaking at the age of 3 or 4 years. Children's vocabulary start expanding rapidly at this age and they might even learn new words every day. Generally speaking, your child can use more words than they can understand.

At this period of time your child will frequently start using nouns like "baby", "friend", "toy" and etc. Various alternative word types will also be used by toddlers. As an illustration there are some words such as:

verbs – eat, drink, play;

adjectives – cold, hot, cool;

pronouns – I, you, they;

prepositions – in, on and etc.

Eventually, your youngster will commence using the pronouns **me**, **my** and **you**. The young person will be able to understand the difference between **mine** and **yours** by the age of three.

Table 1. Questionnaire prepared for parents of children who attend kindergarten №6 in Almaty.

Age of parents at the time of the questionnaire: father, mother, older relatives.
Age of the child at the time of the questionnaire.
How long has it been since a child went to a preschool educational institution?
What's your native language?
Which language do you use while communicating with your child at home?
How well does your child understand cartoons or Tv programs in Kazakh/Russian languages?
What language does the father /mother/ older relatives speak with the child?..? How consistently the principle of" one family member – one language of communication " is observed.
What language do you speak with other family members when the child is with you? Whose of the parents are most frequently next to the child (what language does he/she speak)
What difficulties does a child face when communicating with other children and adults?
What language do you speak with your child on the street, in the car, on the playground, in the store?
Do you feel responsible for teaching your child the Kazakh language?

## Results and discussion

Having processed the data, we received the following results:

Table 2. Difficulties in speaking Kazakh and Russian

What difficulties does a child face while communicating in Kazakh and Russian with other children and adults?	Number of respondents	Percentage
	79	
No difficulties	47	59 %
Have difficulties in speaking Kazakh and Russian	14	18 %
Mixing Kazakh and Russian languages while speaking	12	15 %
Don't speak at all	6	8 %

As we already mentioned previously, there were 79 parents in the entire sample of respondents. Table 2 indicates the results of the question №8. This question is related to the difficulties of speaking Kazakh and Russian languages. From the table we can witness that 47 (59%) parents reported that their kids have no trouble talking to other kids or adults.

In addition, 14 (18%) people said they had trouble speaking Kazakh and Russian languages. Another 12 respondents (15%) reported having some difficulty speaking in both Kazakh and Russian. Significantly lower scores were observed for the children who do not speak at all 6 (8%).

Table 3. Language of communication outside of the house

What language do you speak with your child on the street, in the car, on the playground, in the store?	Number of respondents	Percentage
	79	

Only Kazakh	45	57%
Kazakh and Russian	21	27%
Only Russian	12	14%
Uzbek and Russian	1	1%
Kazakh and Kyrgyz	1	1%

Table 3 shows results of respondents who answered to the question of parent-child communication in different places such as street, playground, car and store. From the total of 79 parents 45 (57%) individuals have claimed that the only language they use in communicating with their children is Kazakh. According to 21 (27%) respondents, they converse to toddlers in Kazakh or Russian. Additionally, 12 (14%) parents replied by choosing Russian as only language they use in speaking with their kids on a daily basis. Finally, inconsiderable number of parents chose Uzbek and Russian (1%), Kazakh and Kyrgyz (1%) as languages to speak with their kindergarten-aged children. These are the individuals who are categorized as Oralmans, meaning that while they acquired Kazakh citizenship and started speaking it, they nonetheless retained their foreign identity. The national identity of these children, who were born in immigrant families (from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan), is extremely complicated. They do not recognize that Kazakh has become their mother tongue; it is still “foreign” to them. At the same time, these preschoolers do not speak their mother tongue at all.

Table 4. The level of children’s understanding while watching TV

<b>How well does your child understand cartoons and Tv programs in Kazakh/Russian languages?</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Understands very well	28	35%
Has some difficulties to catch the meaning of the program	30	38%
Doesn’t understand one of the languages	15	19%
Doesn’t understand at all	6	8%

According to the table 4 parents were asked the question: "how well does your child understand what has been said while watching a cartoon or programs in Kazakh/Russian?". The result of the parent’s answers to the question above: understands very well - 28 parents (35%), has some difficulties when viewing the program - 30 parents (38%), does not understand when viewing in one of the two languages - 15 parents (19%) and does not understand at all - 6 parents (8%).

To find out more about the importance of learning Kazakh, parents of young children were given the question "Do you feel responsible for teaching your child the Kazakh language?". The findings are as follows: totally agree – 45 (57%), partially agree – 26 (33) and disagree – 8 (10%). We can confidently state from the

questionnaire results that most parents feel responsible for their children's acquisition of the Kazakh language. At the same time, 26 parents partially agree with the given question, while 8 parents disagree about the importance of Kazakh language.

Having received the results of the questionnaire we can state the fact that majority of children communicate in Kazakh, whereas toddlers who speak Kazakh and Russian equally is half as much. At the same time, Russian is spoken by 14 % of kindergarten-aged kids. The number of parents who use Uzbek and Kyrgyz languages in communicating with children were the least (1%). We have considered issues that create prerequisites for the development of bilingualism such as language policy and language education in Kazakhstan. It was extremely interesting to find out how parents understand the phenomenon of bilingualism, by which way they can influence the process of language acquisition, and what obligations lie on the educational institution and on the parents in developing speaking skills of their children.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, we realized how and on what occasion bilingualism positively impacts to children of preschool age. To make it clear there were prepared questionnaires for parents. The results of the study indicates that Kazakh language prevails among preschool children, while Russian was a little difficult for them in comparison with their native language. Apart from that, there have been instances of children mixing Kazakh and Russian phrases. You should constantly correct them and repeat what they should say in the language you expect them to use with you in order to cope with this issue. By carrying this out, you can help them to learn how to pronounce words correctly and improve their language skills.

Giving a child's bilingualism a good evaluation is crucial if you want them to view their bilingualism as a valuable trait. It's important to recognize and support the young person's efforts. Studies show that all children subsequently highly appreciate the efforts of their parents to develop their bilingualism. It should be remembered that a solid foundation of bilingualism is laid in the first three years of life, but it's never too late to start, you should only monitor the development of each of the languages and provide support. We believe that parents play a crucial role in the development of children. Besides that, due to the special relevance additional research and observations will be necessary for further analysis of this topic. This can be accomplished with the use of audio and video recordings, which will provide the chance to observe certain preschool-aged children and obtain more detailed information.

The development of a child bilingualism is currently being shown to be influenced by cognitive information in social networks via the Internet and mass media. Additionally, specific programs are required for the development of the young children's language in school textbooks and the media in order to preserve the Kazakh existence and cognition.

The results of the questionnaire led us to the conclusion that bilingualism accelerates a child's cognitive and emotional development. The flexibility of

thinking, the ability to linguistic creativity, the development of metalinguistic abilities, the development of analytical skills, the variety of cognitive and communicative strategies used in bilingual children testifies in favor of early bilingualism. It is also necessary to take into account that in the modern world mastering several foreign languages gives a great advantage in professional, educational and social activities. The advantages of bilingualism clearly prevail over its disadvantages and this problem needs further comprehensive research.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Vajnrakh U. Odnoyazychie i mnogoyazychie (Monolingualism and multilingualism) // *Novoe v lingvistike*. – M.: Progress, 1972. – ed. 6. – P.25 – 60. [in Rus.]
- [2] Protassova E.Y. Stanovlenie i funkcionirovanie dvuyazychiya (Formation and functioning of bilingualism) // *Materialy po issledovaniyu biilingvizma*. – M: Centr “Doshkol'noe detstvo” im A.V. Zaporozhca, 1999. – P.11-15. [in Rus.]
- [3] Aldabergenova G.D. Issledovanie vliyaniya bilingvizma na razvitie lichnosti detej (Study of the influence of bilingualism on the development of children's personality formation): disser.. kand. filol.nauk. – Almaty, 1999. – P. 16-18. [in Rus.]
- [4] Starceva L.I. Znachenie bilingval'nosti v razviti rebenka (The importance of bilinguality in children's development) // *Molodoj uchenyj*. – 2018. – № 48.1 (234.1). – P.38-39. [in Rus.]
- [5] Ronjat J. Le developpement du langage observe chez un enfant bilingue. – Paris: Champion, 1913. – 155 p.
- [6] Protassova E.Y. (2018). Multilingual Education and Family Language Policy // *International Journal of Multilingual Education* no. 11, – P.102–111. [in Rus.]
- [7] Chirsheva G.N. Detskij bilingvizm: Odnovremennoe usvoenie yazykov (Children's bilingualism. Simultaneous language acquisition). Monografiya. – SPb: Zlatoust, 2012. – 488 p. [in Rus.]
- [8] Shayahmet A. K. Detskoe dvuyazychie v Kazakhstane: Psikholingvisticheskiy aspekt (Children's bilingualism in Kazakhstan: Psychological aspect) // *Naukovij zhurnal «Psikholingvistika*. 2009. – P. 172-179. [in Rus.]
- [9] Piaget J. *Science of Education and the Psychology of the child*. – The Viking Press, 1970. – 192 p.
- [10] Beck A. Maximize your child's bilingual ability. – *Bilingual Adventures*, 2016. – 317 p.

#### БИЛИНГВИЗМНІН БАЛА ДАМУЫНДАҒЫ ОҢ ӘСЕРІ

Түймебаев Ж.Қ.<sup>1</sup>, \*Уалиханұлы А.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>филология ғылымдарының докторы, профессор, әл-Фараби атындағы  
Қазақ Ұлттық Университеті

Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: [info@kaznu.kz](mailto:info@kaznu.kz)

<sup>\*2</sup>докторант, әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ Ұлттық Университеті  
Алматы, Қазақстан, \*e-mail: [abylai.ualikhanuly@mail.ru](mailto:abylai.ualikhanuly@mail.ru)

**Аңдатпа.** Бұл мақалада біз балалардағы билингвизмнің психологиялық аспектілерін қарастырып, билингвизмнің артықшылықтарын талдаймыз. Мақаланың мақсаты – билингвизмнің баланың дамуына қалайша оң әсер ететіндігі туралы анықтама беру.

Мемлекеттік қазақ тілі мен орыс тілі ұлтаралық қарым-қатынас тілі ретінде саналатын Қазақстан Республикасында жаппай тұрақты қостілділік жағдайында балалардың билингвизм мәселелері ерекше өзектілікке ие болатыны айқын. Балалық шақ адамның дамуында ерекше маңызды уақыттың бірі болып қарастырылады. Қысқа уақыт ішінде бала



үлкен көлемде ақпарат алып, қоғамда одан әрі әлеуметтену үшін әртүрлі қажетті дағдыларды игереді. Жұмыстың практикалық маңыздылығы - зерттеу барысында жүргізілген бақылауларда, қорытындыларда және эксперименттердің түрлерін қамтиды.

Авторлар теориялық әдістерді, сауалнама, бақылау, аудио және видеожазба әдістерін қолданды. Сонымен қатар, мақалада Алматы қаласында орналасқан № 6 балабақшаға баратын мектеп жасына дейінгі балалардың ата-аналарының сауалнамаға жауап берген нәтижелері көрсетілген. Эксперимент барысында мектеп жасына дейінгі 79 балалардың ата-аналары қатысты. Әрбір сауалнама сұрағы ата-аналардың белгілі бір жағдайларда балаларымен қандай жолмен қарым-қатынас жасайтынын анықтау үшін таңдалған. Зерттеу нәтижелері мектеп жасына дейінгі балаларда қазақ тілі басым екенін, ал орыс тілі оларға ана тілімен салыстырғанда біршама қиын болғандығын көрсетті.

Билингвизм балалардың ақыл-ой қабілеттерінің дамуына оң әсер етіп қана қоймай, олардың жалпы тілдік және аударма қабілеттерін белсендіретіндігі айтпаса да түсінікті. Алынған нәтижелер бала билингвизмі туралы білімді кеңейтіп қана қоймай, сонымен қатар аталған саланың болашақ лингвистикалық зерттеулердің негізі ретінде пайдалануға болады.

**Тірек сөздер:** бала көстілділігі, мектепке дейінгі жас, сөйлеуді дамыту, қазақ тілі, орыс тілі, тілдік әлеуметтену, сөйлеу әрекеті, кодтардың ауысуы

## ПОЛОЖИТЕЛЬНОЕ ВЛИЯНИЕ БИЛИНГВИЗМА НА РАЗВИТИЕ РЕБЕНКА

Туймебаев Ж.К.<sup>1</sup>, \*Уалиханұлы А.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>доктор филологических наук, профессор, КазНУ им. аль-Фараби, Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: [info@kaznu.kz](mailto:info@kaznu.kz)

<sup>2</sup>докторант, КазНУ им. аль-Фараби, Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: [abylai.ualikhanuly@mail.ru](mailto:abylai.ualikhanuly@mail.ru)

**Аннотация.** В этой статье мы рассмотрим психологические аспекты двуязычия у детей, проанализируем преимущества этого явления. Цель статьи - дать четкое объяснение того, как двуязычие положительно влияет на развитие ребенка.

В условиях массового стабильного двуязычия в Республике Казахстан, состоящего из государственного казахского языка и русского как языка межнационального общения, вопросы детского двуязычия приобретают особую актуальность. Детский возраст особенно важен в развитии человека. За короткий промежуток времени ребенок усваивает огромное количество информации, овладевает разнообразными навыками и умениями, которые необходимы для дальнейшей социализации в обществе. Практическая значимость работы заключается в наблюдениях, выводах и типах экспериментов, которые были проведены в ходе исследования.

Авторами применялись теоретические методы, методы анкетирования, наблюдения, аудио и видеозаписи. Также, в статье представлены результаты анкетирования родителей дошкольников, посещающих детский сад № 6, расположенный в городе Алматы. Всего в эксперименте приняли участие 79 родителей дошкольников. Каждый вопрос анкеты был выбран для того, чтобы выяснить, как родители общаются со своими детьми в определенных ситуациях. Результаты исследования показали что у детей дошкольного возраста преобладает казахский язык, в то время как русский язык давался им немного трудновато по сравнению с их родным языком.

Само собой разумеется, что двуязычие положительно влияет на умственные способности детей, активизирует их общие языковые и переводческие способности. Полученные результаты расширяют знания о детском двуязычии, также могут быть использованы в качестве основы для дальнейших лингвистических исследований в области детского двуязычия.

**Ключевые слова:** детское двуязычие, дошкольный возраст, речевое развитие, казахский язык, русский язык, языковая социализация, речевая деятельность, переключение кодов

*Статья поступила 11.08.2023*