



Студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың
«ҒЫЛЫМ ЖӘНЕ БІЛІМ - 2018»
XIII Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясы

СБОРНИК МАТЕРИАЛОВ

XIII Международная научная конференция
студентов и молодых ученых
«НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ - 2018»

The XIII International Scientific Conference
for Students and Young Scientists
«SCIENCE AND EDUCATION - 2018»



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TRILINGUALISM IN DIGITAL KAZAKHSTAN: FOCUS ON THE INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS**Youngmin Chu**youngminchu@gmail.com

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Introduction

These days, 'The Fourth Industrial Revolution' is considered as a hot topic all over the world. This term was introduced at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2016 by Klaus Schwab, who is a German engineer, economist, and the founder and executive chairman of this forum. According to the many experts, we are in the process of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which will bring great changes in our lives. Then what is the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution'? According to the Schwab, it is a fusion of technologies which is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres. Also he explains that 'emerging technology breakthroughs' such as artificial intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, 3D printing, quantum computing and nanotechnology are the part of this revolution. [1] In this regard, Kazakhstan presented new state program along with this revolutionary movement. In December 2017, 'Digital Kazakhstan' State Program was approved with Resolution by Government of Republic of Kazakhstan No. 827. [2] According to the Dauren Abayev, who is a Minister of Information and Communication, "Oil and gas resources will no longer ensure success in global competition. Developing human capital and modern technologies will take their place." It seems that the program 'Digital Kazakhstan' was initiated in line with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, in accordance with the world trend.

In this situation, trilingual language policy of Kazakhstan can be connected with this new movement. This is because the movement can give effect on every part of our lives and also language use, which is a main source of communicating with other people in our society. Therefore, this article will examine the two governmental policies - 'trilingual language policy of Kazakhstan' and the 'Digital Kazakhstan State program'. And then tries to analyze how these two policies can give an influence on the Kazakhstani society, especially on the inter-ethnic relations. Kazakhstan's language policy will be analyzed by a theory of language policy in multiethnic countries.

The Theoretical Background

According to researches of Skutnabb-Kangas & Philippon (1994), Stavenhagen (1996), Inglis (1996), language policy related to minority languages can be divided into three models: assimilationism, differentialism or exclusionism, and multiculturalism. First model- assimilationism seeks monolingual situation. In this model, the individuals of minority ethnic groups give up the specialty of their own language, culture and social characteristics in order to be assimilated into main society with homogeneity in language use. This model compels citizens to get education by an official state language, and restrain them from using and keeping minority languages. The second model is differentialism or exclusionism. It allows minority ethnic groups to establish ethnic institutions or communities, such as schools, media and civic organizations, with their own languages, but differentiate them from majority groups and confines participation of minority ethnic groups to main society. The last model is multiculturalism. The goal of the model is equal participation of the minority languages in the public sector. This model acknowledges the identity of ethnic or cultural groups in their society and promotes inter-cultural communication. Only this model accepts legitimacy and necessity of equality between various ethnic groups. [3, 265-266]

1. The Language Policy of Kazakhstan and its Trilingualism

'Language' itself has a strong symbolism, so choosing a language means to choose an identity. [4, 169] Therefore, the language policy might be a crucial sector in terms of formation of new identity in a new country. Also, choosing an official language is the issue of communication between titular and non-titular nations, further this issue can be expanded to unification of the

country. Therefore, the language issue should be considered carefully and deliberately. In case of Kazakhstan, the unusual demographic situation, inherited from the Soviet Union, was unfavorable situation them to make a bold decision in language policy. According to the census in 1989, when it was right before their independence, the ratio of the Kazakh-titular nation in Kazakhstan was 39.7% and Russians-one of the strong non-titular nations was 37.4%. It shows that no big difference between the population of titular and non-titular nation. The rest 22.9% was also other ethnic minority groups such as Korean, Uzbek, and Uygur, who were strongly Sovietized based on Russian language and culture. Most of the former Soviet republics emphasized their titular nation's languages and cultures with a tool of nationalism in the nation-building process when they got independence from Soviet Union. Kazakhstan also, at first, seemed to follow this trend. In the Declaration of Independence of Kazakhstan in 1991 specifies that 'one of the most important duties of the country is to rebirth and to develop Kazakh's culture, traditions and language. [5, 176] In 1997, the law about official language was announced officially. According to the law, Kazakh is a state language of the Kazakhstan and all people in this country have a duty of learning the state language. Kazakhstan government showed diverse activities to form a new language identity on the basis of Kazakh from 1991 to 1999. The law for changing the name of various institutions and roads to Kazakh or Kazakh figure, and the law for encouraging nation to use Kazakh in certain fields such as media and education was actively introduced in 1996 and 1999 respectively. In addition, Kazakhstan government expanded education for Kazakh language by enacting a law to start compulsory education of Kazakh language for 11 years of school system. However, the people of Kazakhstan still preferred using Russian to Kazakh and the speaking and using Kazakh was too low especially in the big cities during that days. According to the Pavlenko, difficult situations in language policy among former Soviet republics are due to these four factors. First, there is more population who know only Russian language, including Russian people, among their nations. Second, even titular nation, such as Kazakh in Kazakhstan, was already strongly Russianized. Third, the dependence on Russian language among minority ethnic groups, who consist of the country, is high. Fourth, the state language has only limited functions and it cannot be used in general enough in their society. [6, 278] The situation of Kazakhstan also corresponds with this argument. Because of these kinds of situations, Kazakhstan has experienced slow-paced process in implementing their language policy and confronted difficulties to reduce the impact of Russian language and to upgrade status of Kazakh language.

While, in 2000s, the government started to focus more on socio-economic function of their language policy. The government established 10 years plan on language policy. It contained improvement of communication capacity of Kazakh language, preservation of Russian language in cultural aspects, development of minority languages and etc., from 2000 to 2010. As a result of this plan, the educational infrastructure was established in learning Kazakh. The number of Kazakh kindergartens and schools were increased. In addition, various kinds of Kazakh publications such as books and dictionaries were published, and about 100 national language institutes were built. The both Kazakh and Russian started to be provided at official homepages of the government. After that, the new second language plan from 2011 to 2020 'The State Program for the Development and Functioning of Languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan' was introduced in 2011 as a next step. The main goal of the program is wider use of Kazakh in public institutions and the development of Kazakh language. Also, another thing to note in this plan is that the government introduced trilingual education system- Kazakh as a state language, Russian as the language of interethnic communication, and English as the language of international communication. The government expects that the population of speaking these 3 languages will be over 15% of the entire nation until 2020. [7, 174] The president Nazarbayev asserted that "Kazakhstan has to know its official language – the Kazakh language. The Russian language is the language of our big neighbor and one of the six UN languages. This language enabled us to access the great Literature:, the great culture. That is why we should not forget it, or put it aside, every language is wealth for a person," Also he mentioned that "We need the English language to enter the global arena. Out of 10 million books published in the world 85% are in English. The science, all the new developments and information -

they are all in English nowadays.” [8] Consequentially, this statement and their trilingual policy reflect that the Kazakhstan government recognizes ‘languages’ not only as a political instrument but also as practical assets in socio-economical aspects, and one of the survival instruments in the international society. That is why their language policy cannot be categorized just on one model of the theory above I mentioned. If anything, the government is using rational and practical way in language policy which is suitable for their unusual situation. So, if we should apply their language policy in the context of the theory, they seemed to combine two models- differentialism and multicultural model at the same time or they are in the middle of them.

2. ‘Digital Kazakhstan’ State Program

In December 2017, ‘Digital Kazakhstan’ State Program was approved with Resolution by Government of Republic of Kazakhstan No. 827 [2] in line with the world trend ‘The Fourth Industrial Revolution’. The main goal of the program is the improvement of the competitiveness of Kazakhstan's economy and quality of life through the progressive development of the digital ecosystem. [9] It means the program is closely related to the development of socio-economic area of the country and we can check it with following detailed information of the Program introduced by official announcement.

The project is planned on five key areas in the period from 2018 to 2022. First one is ‘Digitalization of the economy’. This is for increasing the level of labor productivity in various fields. Digital Mine can be an example of the area. Second area is ‘Transition to a digital state’. This part is for reducing paperwork, digitalizing the activities of state agencies, increasing the participation of citizen in governance, and introducing Smart City technology. Utilizing of monitoring system in observance of traffic rules can be an example of it. Third one is ‘Implementation of the digital Silk Road’, which is for not only the strengthening of cyber security, but also expansion coverage of communication networks and ICT infrastructure. Through this project, the program shows that more than 1200 rural settlements will be provided with broadband access to the Internet. Fourth one is ‘Development of human capital’, which has a goal to update education system in accordance with the best world practices. It contains to implement a project to update secondary education programs. Learning process of elements of robotics, virtual reality, 3D printing can be examples of this area. The last one is ‘Creation of an innovative ecosystem’. This is for promoting technological entrepreneurship and start-up culture, attracting venture financing and forming demand for innovation. One of the examples of it is Astana Hub, which is the creation of an international techno-park of IT startups. Furthermore, these five key plans include 17 specific tasks and 120 projects.

Conclusion

As we see above, trilingual language policy is implementing with several goals and directions in Kazakhstan: for formation of new Kazakhstani identity with Kazakh, for acquisition of knowledge and social interaction and communication with Russian, and for integration into the world economy and keeping pace with globalization with English. Therefore, we can confirm that Kazakhstan’s language policy is very pragmatic focusing on development of the country especially in socio-economic aspects. Meanwhile, the main goal of Digital Kazakhstan State Program, which is in process with the stream of times, is to raise competitiveness of Kazakhstan in the field of economy and people’s lives by developing technologies and making digital ecosystem. This policy is also expected bring great changes in socio-economic development of Kazakhstan.

As a result, the common goal of these two policies is to achieve development of Kazakhstan in socio-economic fields. And there must be contact points that can affect each other. Actually, it is not too much to say that these two policies are directly connected each other. Furthermore, they also can give significant influence on inter-ethnic relations in their society. The reason is that the language use will be keep changing in the digitalized society of Kazakhstan and it is directly connected with the way of communication among nations. For instance, the first main area of Digital Kazakhstan Program- the ‘transition to a digital state explains that state agencies’ activities will be digitalized and participation of citizen in governance will be increased. It means that this part is directly related to entire life of Kazakhstani people. Therefore, many people will use

digitalized governmental systems for their better lives or exercising their rights as a citizen. Naturally, frequently used language in the newly digitalized system will make nations to feel necessity of acquisition of the language and use it more and more in their society. In addition, the fourth area of the Program the ‘implementation of the digital Silk Road’ maintains that 1,200 rural settlements of the republic will access to the Internet in the period from 2018 to 2020. This section is directly related to decrease interregional disparity. So, it is possible that the language use in digital television and radio broadcasting network is able to make changes in the way of communication among various ethnic groups, who is living in Kazakhstan. In other words, Kazakhstani people will use the language which is more exposed in their lives and communicate with other people by using this language. Lastly, the fifth area of the Program- ‘the development of human capital’ contains that development of education system and conducting training courses for digital skills will be implemented. This part also implies that certain language, which is more used in educational programs, can change their children’s and young technics’ language use patterns. In turn, it will cause differences in language use from generation to generation or depends on their working fields.

In sum, it is quite obvious that the existing language environment will be changed in digitalized Kazakhstan. It means that there is a possibility that the status of three languages- Kazakh, Russian, and English can undergo changes over time during this digitalized process. And it will give influence on establishment of inter-ethnic relations directly or indirectly under unusual social structure of multiethnic Kazakhstan. So, it is evident that effects from the global trend- the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the government policy- Digital Kazakhstan will be reflected gradually in the Kazakhstan society. Therefore, this is quite delicate part that the government should have clearer guidelines in language policy and it should be designed to apply into the new policies as the government has intended.

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