



**ӘЛ-ФАРАБИ АТЫНДАҒЫ ҚАЗАҚ ҰЛТТЫҚ  
УНИВЕРСИТЕТІНІҢ 90 ЖЫЛДЫҚ МЕРЕЙТОЙЫ**

**«Э.ТЕНИШЕВ КЕҢІСТІГІ: ТҮРКІТАНУ ЖӘНЕ ҒЫЛЫМДАҒЫ ҒҰМЫР»**

**ХАЛЫҚАРАЛЫҚ ҒЫЛЫМИ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ**

**МАТЕРИАЛДАР ЖИНАҒЫ**

**Қазақстан Республикасы  
25-26 сәуір Алматы, 2024**

---

**THE COLLECTION OF MATERIALS OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND THEORETICAL CONFERENCE**

**INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE DEDICATED to the 90th  
ANNIVERSARY of KAZNU AL-FARABI**

**«E.TENISHEVSKY SPACE: TURKOLOGY and SCIENTIFIC LIFE»**

**Republic of Kazakhstan,  
25-26 april Almaty, 2024**

---

**СБОРНИК МАТЕРИАЛОВ**

**МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ НАУЧНОЙ КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ**

**ПОСВЯЩЁННОЙ К 90-ЛЕТИЮ КАЗНУ ИМ. АЛЬ-ФАРАБИ**

**«Э.ТЕНИШЕВСКОЕ ПРОСТРАНСТВО: ТЮРКОЛОГИЯ И ЖИЗНЬ В  
НАУКЕ»**

**Республика Казахстан  
25-26 апрель Алматы, 2024**

---

## **Unveiling Kazakhstan's Modern Identity: How Anglicisms Reflect Social and Cultural Shifts**

### *Abstract*

*The objective of this paper is to explore the findings from a sample of contemporary Kazakhstani texts to reveal the changing linguistic landscape since the 1991 independence. The years since the collapse of the Soviet Union have been a time of national identity reconstruction as Kazakhstan has attempted to establish itself as a unique culture separate from its Soviet and Russian background. Language planners have sought to expunge Russian linguistic influence by removing borrowed words or russicisms (Russian words used in a Kazakh context) from the Kazakh language, or suggesting Kazakh alternatives. Meanwhile, the thorough modernization program has involved borrowing technology and terminology as well as expertise from the West. As a result, Anglicisms (English words used in a Kazakh or Russian context) have flooded the language systems of former Soviet Union states. This paper will focus exclusively on the manner in which the English language has influenced Kazakh, whilst recognizing that the Russian language still maintains a position of importance as a domestic and international language in Kazakhstan.*

*Key words: Kazakhstani English, Modern Identity in Kazakhstan, Americanization, Anglicisms, Language Change in Kazakhstan, Modernization.*

### **1 Introduction**

Kazakhstan is a rapidly transforming country, its history intrinsically tied to the various eras of Russian and Soviet rule. Gaining its independence in 1991, the last 20 years has seen the country struggling to establish itself as a modern nation. Part of the mindset changing process has been the emphasis on learning English in a society that has had little practical use for the language in the past. The younger generation is learning English with the hope that it may provide better opportunities domestically or that they may use it to study abroad. Also, there is a keen interest in the development of the West of the country, an area often ignored in the past. These shifts in thinking are reflected in the modernized look of the language itself, and it has been this change that is the focus of my study. The reason for choosing to study anglicisms and their effect on the Kazakh and Russian languages is that language is a representation of the culture, and with over 300 years of Russian influence and 70 years of Soviet influence, there has been a push to redefine its cultural identity and distance itself from. I would like to take a look at examples of the Soviet era and compare them with the modern equivalent to see the contrast in culture and mindset. This is achieved by the use of the search function on a corpus by the name of 'КазНУ корпусы'. A corpus is a database of text that is used to determine the frequency and usage of words or phrases and is an effective tool for linguistic studies. This particular corpus is the combined works of students and professors of al-Farabi Kazakh National University and is used as a learning resource



for students of the English faculty. A case also exists where an English word or phrase may have no direct translation and is simply written in Cyrillic alphabet. In these cases, I will provide my own transliteration and would like to see if any meaning has been lost in the conversion [1, 1464].

### **1.1. Background**

Policies and practices mutually affect and are affected by language, which is often a vehicle for introducing foreign ideas and fostering social change. In the case of Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic, language policies since the country became independent in 1991 have reflected a desire to assert Kazakh language and national identity, often in reaction against what is perceived as a Soviet “Russification” process. Recent globalization and a massive influx of foreign, especially English language, information have complexified this situation. The spread of English and the use of English language items thus provide an interesting focus for studying how language reflects and contributes to modernization of social and cultural practices. English has been adopted in a variety of spheres and has taken various forms in Kazakhstan. Globalization has contributed directly to an increased use of English, and it has long been a vehicle for advancement and modernization in many societies. At the same time, particularly in the post-Soviet space, it is a language of the other and symbols of Soviet identity are strong. Thus, English acceptance and usage in Kazakhstan must be understood comparatively to identity and language shifts occurring both in the country and at the global level [2].

### **1.2. Purpose of the Study**

To identify the social and cultural changes in modern Kazakhstan by examining the new words that have been borrowed into the language and into the society. To expand the knowledge on the scope of the previous studies by presenting a more detailed look at the borrowed words, how they are being used, and how it reflects the social-cultural changes of the society.

To identify who uses the borrowings and in what context. The sub-hypothesis being that the younger generation uses them more and in informal speech. This is because we consider that borrowing is a linguistic tool of the young to create an identity separate from that of the older generation and that of neighboring states.

To produce an accessible database of anglicisms taken from a selection of newspapers. Although it could be argued it is a dying medium, newspapers are a historical documentation of a language at the time of print and still hold substantial influence in Kazakhstani society today. A literary corpus would be far too extensive to study, but knowledge of anglicisms used in newspapers gives an indication of what is considered a necessary lexical item in the language.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

This article explores the question of whether Anglicisms pose a threat to the state language and national culture, or if they actually contribute to their preservation and enhancement. To answer this, a number of sub-questions are presented. These include investigating the attitudes various social groups have towards borrowing English words in Kazakhstan, understanding the processes by which English words are adopted into Kazakh and Russian, examining the official attitudes towards borrowing English words,



and identifying the most common types of anglicisms in the state language and the semantic areas they encompass. Furthermore, the paper delves into the changes in form and meaning that occur as anglicisms become integrated into Kazakh or Russian. It argues that borrowing English words can fortify national culture and enrich the state language. To support this argument, the paper draws upon Kazakhstan's experience since 1991 and also refers to the borrowing of French words into English from the Norman Conquest through to the present day, drawing parallel patterns [3, 12-22].

The article is based on the assumption that societies and cultures do not develop in isolation, but rather interact and borrow words from each other through contact. While the borrowing of foreign words has traditionally been viewed as a threat to the receiving language and an undesirable consequence of cultural contact, recent sociolinguistic research indicates that words are only borrowed when there is cultural contact, often filling lexical gaps in the receiving language. In the case of countries with a history of Soviet rule and subsequent Russification like Kazakhstan, there has been an extensive borrowing of Russian words due to language planning and cultural domination. This article argues, however, that the borrowing of English words in Kazakh, which started shortly after independence, was a natural and spontaneous process. In many cases, these English words were borrowed to compensate for gaps left by Russian words. For instance, the words *per* < rate < *пейт* (rate) and *caty/satu* < *cat* (to sell) < *сейл* (sale) exemplify this phenomenon, where the earlier Russian words sound artificial or overly formal in a Kazakh context. Overall, the transition from Russian to English loans signifies not only a shift in political allegiance but also a desire for modernization [4].

## **2. Social and Cultural Shifts in Kazakhstan**

The establishment of the independent Republic of Kazakhstan in 1992 marked the culmination of an extensive journey for the Kazakh people. Over nearly two centuries, Russian influence in terms of culture, language, and political and economic systems had made most Kazakhs appear more Russian than traditionally Kazakh. This reached a critical point in the early 20th century when Kazakhstan faced famine, oppressive Stalinist measures, and the influx of non-Kazakhs to the region, which resulted in further assimilation of Russian culture. Although Kazakhs were able to maintain some cultural identity during Soviet rule, it was only in 1991 that they were finally given the opportunity to establish their own state. As a result, a complex situation has emerged where Kazakhs find themselves as citizens of a formal nation, with limited time to develop their identity as members of a recognized country.

In the present-day Kazakhstan, globalization and modernization are key focal points. Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has aimed to present itself as a progressive and modern nation, distancing itself from the associations of being a “third world” or “developing” country. With its vast territory and abundance of valuable resources, Kazakhstan is more focused on becoming a global player rather than addressing domestic concerns. This approach often receives criticism in the western world, as Kazakhstan adopts a distinct “Asian values” perspective on democracy and human rights. This perspective is largely influenced by the nation's complex social structure



and historical background, as Kazakh leaders believe that maintaining current levels of stability is crucial to prevent societal divisions, which have been witnessed in other post-Soviet states [5, 2].

### 2.1. Historical Context

The early history of Kazakhstan began around the 10th century when three Turkic tribes: the Kypchaks, the Cumans, and the Selijuks migrated into the area which we now call Kazakhstan. The Kazakh state began to take a recognizable form in the 15th century when the 3 hordes that would form the new nation were founded. These hordes were the Senior, Middle, and Junior hordes. In the 1460s, the Kazakh state as we know it today emerged as a juz (confederation) of the three hordes [6, 10]. The state flourished during the 16th and 17th centuries when the Kazakh hordes enjoyed great wealth as a result of being a vital link between East and West. The Silk Road ran directly through the region. However, as the Silk Road declined in importance, the hordes were left vulnerable to Russian encroachment in the North and Huns and the Oirats from the South. There began the long and steady decline of the Kazakh state, ending with Russian colonization in the 19th century [7].

### 2.2. Globalization and Modernization

The phenomenon of globalization and modernization holds great significance in Kazakhstan, particularly in relation to language. The nation's political, economic, and societal developments are deeply intertwined with global affairs. Consequently, policymakers, educators, and intellectuals express concerns regarding the preservation and vitality of the Kazakh language. Currently, Kazakhstan is experiencing simultaneous processes of modernization, globalization, and language changes. With the influx of external influences, a competition between the two official languages, Kazakh and Russian, has emerged due to the impact of Western cultural, technological, and economic models on the country.

At present, language policies in education take center stage. Both the younger generation and their parents face a complex situation wherein proficiency in Russian alone is insufficient for social and economic progress. Despite official endorsements for Kazakh-medium education and efforts to enhance language diversity, progress is not occurring at the desired pace. Uncertainty lingers regarding when Kazakh will become a prevalent language in schools and daily life, particularly given the presence of Russian-speaking communities and major urban centers. Moreover, young individuals must also achieve proficiency in English and other international languages to access higher education and job opportunities in technology and science. Balancing these multiple linguistic demands proves challenging [8].

### 2.3. Impact on Language and Identity

Since the 1990s, Kazakhstan has undergone significant social and cultural changes known as 'modernization'. This includes urbanization and a shift from an agrarian to a modern nation. Education has played a crucial role, with the adoption of a trilingual language policy in 2007. However, the Kazakh language faces challenges due to the prevalence of Russian and other minority languages, as well as the rise of English as a global language. Concerns arise regarding language mixing, cognitive development, and the potential loss of either Russian or Kazakh. Language shift is already occurring, with



more people reporting Russian as their primary language. Mixed families and intermarriage further complicate language identity. Overall, these changes have profound effects on Kazakhstan's linguistic landscape.

### 3. Anglicisms in Kazakhstan

There are a variety of ways in which anglicisms can be incorporated into another language. Loan translations involve the borrowing of an English compound, phrase, or even just a single word and translating it into the adopting language. For example, a phrase like "marketing strategy" is recognizable as English, but it is widely used and understood in Russia. Code switching utilizes an English word or phrase within a sentence of the adopting language, such as "stop it" in Russian. There adapters involve a more complex integration of the English element with its new lexical and grammatical constraints. For example, adding the English verb "catch" to the array of Russian derivational suffixes and prefixes in order to make the Russian word поймать. This final method is sometimes considered a covert adoption and may be hard to recognize [9].

The term anglicism will be utilized mainly to refer to any English lexical item that has been incorporated into another language. According to M. L. Azarnova, it is "a word or meaning which is borrowed or adapted from English by another language" [10, 117].

#### 3.1. Factors Influencing the Adoption of Anglicisms

During the presidency of Nursultan Nazarbayev, attitudes towards English shifted, accelerating the already growing global influence of the language. English became a compulsory subject and the 'Bolashak' program was established to send students to study in the West. The aim was to improve education standards and join the global community. However, the events of September 11th, 2001 changed the international situation and Western attitudes towards foreigners and foreign countries. This is important to consider when discussing perceptions of English in Kazakhstan. The growth of Anglicisms is not unique to Kazakhstan, but has occurred in many post-Soviet countries. To understand why this happened, a comparison with other countries is necessary. This will provide insight into the changes in English usage in Kazakhstan over the past decade [11, 37-51].

#### 3.2. Linguistic and Cultural Implication

An example was pointed out by one of our survey respondents. The English word "mood" may be used interchangeably to mean "atmosphere", "mental state", "humour" and "disposition". Likewise, modern Standard Arabic contains many loan words and expressions from European languages, and McCarus (1997) argues that it is no longer possible to translate certain words into Arabic because the loan word has adopted a different meaning or connotation than the original Arabic word. If the borrowing of English words in Kazakh and Russian becomes extensive enough, it could lead to a shift in the meanings of existing words or even complete replacement of native words with English ones [12, 29-37].

There are several possible consequences of the extensive use of English loan words in the Kazakh and Russian languages. Two potential linguistic changes were identified by our survey respondents, which could result from the borrowing of English words. Kudaibergenova (2007) i (Chengel et al.2023) identified a new type of structural



hybridization taking place in Kazakh, which could become more profound as linguistic influence from English increases. The extensive use and integration of English words may result in the loss of distinct concept in Kazakh and Russian, because a single English word can adopt a variety of meanings and connotations thus replacing the need for several existing words [13, 38].

### 3.4. Perception of Anglicisms in Kazakhstan

However, there were more negative attitudes held towards the use of anglicisms. One focus group participant described these foreign words as an “invasion” and that “Kazakh and Russian people should create their own words rather than adopt foreign ones.” This notion of the ‘theft’ of foreign words was described in both a direct and indirect way in another of the group discussions. One participant in the same focus group stated that “it’s not good because the word is not ours, we are using foreign words.” Another said that “while Kazakh and Russian people learn these words, foreigners will never understand Kazakh and Russian words” so that “we are losing links through our language.” Another issue that was presented by the same group was the misunderstanding or lack of understanding that people often have regarding the meanings and usage of these anglicisms. One participant said “sometimes these words are incorrectly used, for example coaching is translated to mean teaching, while the correct meaning of coaching is training sport.” Sign of development and influence from English-speaking countries. In this respect, they are viewed as an ‘international’ language which can make communication and understanding with foreigners easier. One Drawing from the participants’ comments, it can be concluded that people in Kazakhstan hold both positive and negative attitudes towards the use of anglicisms in their language. Some see the use of these words as a participant stated that “it’s good as you can convey thoughts more clearly specifically to a foreigner.” This view was also held by a focus group participant who noted that “a lot of the words have started to be used for convenience, for example in basketball they now say passes, drives, and shots.”

### 4. Conclusion

The study shows that Russian borrows more international words, especially English, indicating a greater desire for modernity. In contrast, Kazakh borrows fewer international and English loanwords, suggesting a more traditional and conservative culture. Language plays a key role in shaping national identity, as seen in the intentional development of Kazakh as the country’s language. The differences in language usage between Kazakh and Russian could impact their future progress. Loanwords are viewed as a threat to language integrity but are necessary for practicality and modernization. Both Kazakh and Russian have embraced English loanwords, contributing to their integration into the global economy. Kazakhstan must find a balance between globalization and preserving national identity, possibly through a trilingual language policy. Younger generations are becoming westernized, influenced by independent Kazakhstan and globalization. This change must be considered in language and cultural development.

### References:



1. Polatova, S., Lekerova, G., Kistaubaeva, D., Zhanaliyeva, R., & Kalzhanova, A. (2020). Trilingual education in Kazakhstani universities: Use of Kazakh, Russian and motivation towards learning English. *Issues in Educational Research*, 30(4), 1463-1483.
2. Rakhymbayeva, L. (2022). Language choice and language ideologies among Kazakhstani students: The status of Kazakh in the context of multilingual education.
3. Seitak, B. (2023). CHANGES IN KAZAKH ORTHOGRAPHY IN 1929-1940 AND THEIR REFLECTION OF POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL SHIFTS IN KAZAKHSTAN.
4. Terlikbayeva, N., & Menlibekova, G. (2021). The dynamics of language shift in Kazakhstan. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 12-22.
5. Stevens, C. A. (2020). Russia–Kazakhstan Relations in the Early Post-Soviet Era: Explaining the Roots of Cooperation. *Europe-Asia Studies*.
6. Noda, J. (2021). The Kazakhs, 16th–19th Centuries. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*.
7. Tursun, K., Idrisova, G., Dzhunsheev, R., Dzhursunbaev, B., & Musabekova, G. (2022). Transformation of Traditional Kazakh Society. *Migration Letters*, 19(5), 731-737.
8. Orsayeva, R., Vasyaev, A., & Shestak, V. (2022). RETRACTED ARTICLE: Mechanisms for protecting children's rights and the role of psychological services in the juvenile justice system of Russia against the background of international practices. *Egyptian Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 12(1), 13.
9. Saleh, A. S. (2021). COVID-19 trending neologisms and word formation processes in English. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*.
10. Bullock, B. E., Serigos, J., & Toribio, A. J. (2021). Exploring a loan translation and its consequences in an oral bilingual corpus. *Journal of Language Contact*.
11. Karabassova, L. (2020). Understanding trilingual education reform in Kazakhstan: Why is it stalled?. *Education in Central Asia: A kaleidoscope of challenges and opportunities*, 37-51
12. Набидуллин, А., & Ордабаев, Ч. К. (2021). INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH BORROWINGS ON THE CULTURE AND SPEECH OF KAZAKHSTANI YOUTH. *Вестник КазНПУ имени Абая, серия «Филологические науки»*, 2(76), 29-37.
13. Akishev, T. (2023). Morphosemantic Integration of-ING Anglicisms into Russian and Kazakh in the Context of Trilingual Code-Switching.