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## ABSTRACTS

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Bilingual+Kazakh+Children's+Code+Switching

Kazakhstan is a post-Soviet country comprising more than 100 cultural and language groups, where Kazakh-Russian bilingualism is widespread across its whole territory. The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan designated the Russian language as an 'international' language. It functions in the society simultaneously with the official Kazakh language and serves as a lingua franca. Social factors require Kazakh children to grow up bilingually, switching between the two most important languages for the population. We recorded the oral speech of bilingual Kazakh children who were from nine to ten years old at the time of data collection. Children were asked

to describe a picture book, i.e. a story without words, about a little boy (the famous children's picture book *Frog, Where Are You?* by Mercer Mayer). The bilingual children were attending the fourth grade of a school-lyceum in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which has both Kazakh and Russian classes. Based on the language of their education, we instructed children either in Kazakh (if a student was from the class taught in Kazakh) or Russian (if a student was enrolled in a Russian-speaking class) to describe the pictures and narrate a coherent story using the language which was more convenient for them. During the child's description of the pictures, the researcher tried not to interfere in his/her story, giving him/her a free choice of the linguistic means of both languages possessed by the young bilingual narrator. In a system of bilingual competence, obviously, the languages do impact each other. During the experiment, some children used code switching between and even within sentences, alternating Russian and Kazakh phrases and words, and sometimes even parts of words. This type of speech is also used by many adult speakers in our society, so it might be a reflection of social factors. These bilingual children used their language skills and knowledge in Russian and Kazakh languages with varying degrees of success. Code switching was used by many bilingual children as a language tool in the implementation of their communication strategy, while code mixing was characteristic of spontaneous decisions to replace certain linguistic units of one language with appropriate ones from the different language. We have categorized the main types of mixing, they were: using words from different languages in the same utterance, combining a stem from one language with an affix from another, using word order of one language with the vocabulary of another. We also found children responding in a language which was different from the language addressed to them. Some children, however, did not mix the languages. Based on the use of switching and mixing of language codes by the bilingual children, it was possible to determine the dominant language of a child at the current stage of language development. For children who managed to refrain from mixing linguistic resources within the framework of the single story, a conscious attitude toward language and the ability to manage a targeted choice of linguistic means were the main characteristics.