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The Impact of Native and Foreign Languages on the Linguistic Identity Formation of Kazakhstani Youth

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ABSTRACT

This article delves into the influence of native and foreign languages on the linguistic identity of Kazakhstani youth. The primary focus is on analyzing the perception and utilization of languages among young people in Kazakhstan, exploring how these factors impact their self-identification and cultural affiliation. To gather comprehensive empirical data, an extensive experiment was conducted involving both survey and semi-structured interviews. The results of the study revealed that the knowledge and use of foreign languages, alongside the native language, significantly shape the linguistic identity of the youth. The findings underscore the dual importance of preserving the native language while simultaneously embracing foreign languages, which collectively contribute to the development of a rich, multicultural, and multilingual identity. This balance is crucial for fostering a well-rounded and inclusive linguistic environment in Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Linguistic Identity; Identity Formation; Sociolinguistics; Bilingualism; Multilingualism

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1. Introduction

The formation of the linguistic identity of youth in Kazakhstan represents an important aspect of their cultural and social integration. In the conditions of bilingualism and multilingualism characteristic of Kazakhstan, the study of the influence of native and foreign languages on the formation of linguistic identity becomes especially relevant.

Today it is difficult to find a country with a mono-ethnic population speaking one language: the world is changing rapidly, and its ethno-linguistic panorama is undergoing constant and significant shifts. Kazakhstan is no exception in this regard, and the main trends of such shifts in different periods of the country's development were multidirectional. By the time of gaining independence, Kazakhstan turned out to be a country with an ethnically exotic composition: in addition to the autochthonous Kazakh ethnic group, as well as large diasporas of Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, and Belarusians, there are representatives of peoples who, by their nature, were not inclined to change their original territories and traditional way of life for the steppe life. By the will of fate, among them were Abazins, Abkhazians, Avars, Aguls, Adyghe, Albanians, Aleuts, Baluchis, Vepsians, Dargins, Dolgans, Izhorians, Ingush, Itelmens, Karelians, Kets, Komi-Zyryans, Komi-Permyaks, Koryaks, Mansi, Mari, Nanai, Nganasans, Negidals, Nenets, Nivkhs, Oroks, Orochi, Sami, Selkups, Tabasarans, Udege, Ulchi, Finns, Khanty or Ostyaks, Chechens, Chuvans, Chukchi, Evenks or Tungus, Evens or Lamuts, Enets, Eskimos, Yukaghirs, Yakuts/Sakha and others. Kazakhstan has become almost ethnically and linguistically similar to Russia: all 126 languages of Kazakhstan can be found in Russia^[1].

Until recently, the ethnolinguistic portrait of Kazakhstan remained noticeably variegated, but the rapid demographic processes of the last twenty years have led to significant shifts and turned it into a country with a predominantly Kazakh and a declining Russian population. In modern Kazakhstan, a regrouping of languages is taking place, primarily in the change of their specific weight in functioning and study. The state Kazakh language, undoubtedly, has come to the forefront, receiving every possible support from both the state and the Kazakh society. There has been a shift in emphasis in the study and use of English in the professional sphere and everyday life, a noticeable increase in the number of people studying Chinese, Arabic, and Turkish, and an

increase in the number of schools with Uzbek, Tajik, and Uighur as the languages of instruction. Obvious shifts have also occurred in the features of the functioning of the Russian language in Kazakhstan^[1].

The exoglossicity of the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan is created not only by the number of languages but also by the diversity of genetics (the languages of the Altaic, Uralic, Indo-European, Iberian-Caucasian, Sino-Tibetan, Semito-Hamitic, Paleo-Asiatic, Austro-Asiatic families are represented) and typological characteristics (agglutinative, inflectional, isolating, incorporating type; analytical, synthetic and polysynthetic type; nominative, ergative structure). To understand the peculiarities of the exoglossicity of the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan, it is important that, firstly, the largest genetic group of related languages is the 24 Turkic languages; secondly, the most widely represented type of languages is agglutinative (63%); thirdly, in terms of the number of reference peoples, the Turkic and Slavic languages in comparison with the languages of other genetic classes make up the following proportion: Turkic languages 60.5%, Slavic languages 34.6%, other languages—4.9%. The exoglossicity of the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan, as we see, is created by 126 languages of various genetic typological classes. This allows us to consider today's Kazakhstan a multilingual, multiethnic, multicultural, and multi-confessional state^[2].

In recent years, the concept of linguistic identity has gained prominence in social research. This concept initially emerged as a psychological phenomenon before acquiring political and social dimensions. The Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud was the first to introduce and develop the term identification within the field of psychology^[3].

Subsequently, the term has been extensively utilized across various disciplines and has broadened in meaning. In Freud's research, identification was understood as an unconscious process in which an individual aligns themselves with another based on shared interests. According to the "Dictionary of Sociolinguistic Terms," identity is defined as an individual's sense of belonging to a state, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, personality, gender, profession, or group, also referred to as self-identification^[4].

Identity is not a fixed construct; it evolves influenced by a person's abilities, innate traits, genetic predispositions, personal interests, and historical and political events—phenomena sometimes termed "marginal identity"^[5]. Exam-

ples include a former USSR citizen who became a citizen of Kazakhstan after the Soviet Union's collapse or a Christian who converted to Islam. Given its unconscious nature, individuals may sometimes struggle to articulate their identity. As the fundamental component of society, individuals can form associations with others both emotionally and abstractly, such as through friendship, kinship, and love, as well as through specific attributes like nationality, language, profession, and culture.

From these definitions, it is possible to discern the interrelation between language and identity and their mutual influence on each other. Language serves as one of the criteria for determining an individual's identity. In general linguistics, this concept, referred to as linguistic identity, is defined in dictionaries as "the feeling of an individual in terms of belonging to a particular language (self-identification, identification)"^[4].

Identity is an intrinsic quality of an individual. When people communicate, questions inevitably arise about the identity of the interlocutor, including their occupation, nationality, social group, thoughts, and attitudes. This underscores the significance of social connections in society. When individuals ask themselves these questions, they confront the issue of conformity. Identity is an element that is constantly present in the human mind, yet it is not always stable, as it changes over time. The formation of linguistic identity is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include a person's ethnic identity and national culture, while external factors encompass their linguocultural environment.

In addition to its communicative functions, language also serves as an identifier in a purely social context. Foreign scholars regard this function in terms of its roles as a separator, unifier, injector, and more. Nazarova elucidates the distinguishing and unifying functions of language, stating: "Language as a means of communication can perform two social functions—integrating and differentiating. The integrating function of a language is realized when it is used as a medium for international and inclusive communication. Conversely, a language that is not employed for communication between different peoples performs a differentiating function"^[6].

In this study, we intend to reveal the influence of native and foreign languages on the linguistic identity of Kaza-

khstani youth. The primary focus is on analyzing the perception and utilization of languages among young people in Kazakhstan, exploring how these factors impact their self-identification and cultural affiliation.

2. Literature Review

"Linguistic identification is an ongoing process of inculturation and societal integration^[7]. In a multilingual society, this process becomes more complex due to the necessity of selecting among the coexisting languages and continually assessing one's attitude toward these languages, alongside a dynamic self-evaluation of language use". Therefore, language serves as the most crucial tool for identifying an individual within society. Linguistic identity is defined as the collective linguistic characteristics of both the individual and the group.

The possibility of choosing one's identity predetermines an identity crisis^[8]. Such situations arise, for example, in cases of conflict between ethnic and linguistic identities: when an individual transitions from one linguistic identity to another that is more relevant at a given time and place; when an individual is unable to accurately assess the radical changes occurring in society and make an appropriate identity choice, such as when an ethnic group changes its language; and when established stereotypes and entrenched communicative habits persist within a community^[9].

Therefore, sociolinguistic studies on the influence of foreign languages on linguistic identity are of paramount importance. The results of such studies can help explore potential developments in the linguistic identity of youth who study multiple foreign languages and are fluent in English and Russian, in addition to the state language, Kazakh.

The Kazakh language is actively functioning within youth environments and youth discourse^[10]. Configurative relationships consolidate the younger generation, clearly distinguishing it from the older generation. The older generation, which is slower and more conservative in accepting linguistic innovations, increasingly separates itself from the youth through its distinct informational capabilities.

Another important point is the distinction between the concepts of multiple linguistic identity and multilingual identity. About it, Siebenhütter argues, that multilingual language use of individuals is not well described with multilingual

identity: “The term multilingual identity does not bring further insights into the phenomenon of multilingualism. It would be therefore enough to speak of the multilingual profile of an individual. Identity in the sense of self-concept includes more than only language competencies and language use. Consequently, identity is not to be equated with a social role – only a part of the entire identity is required or shown in the respective role”^[11].

Language learners can have more than one identity and their linguistic identities are fluid^[12]. And when a multilingual’s linguistic repertoire expands, the formation of one’s linguistic identity becomes more complex and dynamic.

It is also perceived that the identity is closely interwoven with language, describing it as “social, discursive, and narrative options offered by a particular society in a specific time and place”^[13]. Both individuals and groups utilize these options in their social lives to identify, characterize, and secure social privileges for themselves. However, they note that identity choices are not universally available in all situations. They argue that individuals cannot freely express their identities in the presence of established common identity interpretations supported by higher powers. Such identities should be understood as conditioned by socio-political and economic circumstances, for instance. Therefore, it is more insightful to investigate identities in situations where individuals experience concurrence or crises in their lives, as their identities become most apparent at those times. Language and identity mutually shape each other, with language providing the linguistic tools that construct and negotiate identities, and identity ideologies guiding the linguistic tools individuals use to express their own identities and recognize those of others^[14].

All the scientists mentioned above recognize language as a tool for identifying both oneself and others. The authors also share the view that language helps individuals understand and express their own identity as well as understand and describe the identity of others.

An individual’s linguistic identity may be related to one or more languages, evolving throughout their life in tandem with their personal development. When choosing a language match, individuals inevitably encounter both their mother tongue and other languages. The linguistic identity of a person born in a monolingual environment or state changes upon moving to another country. Attitudes toward the mother

tongue are formed during childhood. In a monolingual environment, the mother tongue is the sole language through which a child learns cultural customs and norms, receives information and communicates with others. Conversely, individuals raised in bilingual environments may experience difficulty in choosing a language match.

The formation of an individual’s linguistic identity is influenced by the choices he makes in different situations^[15]. Language goals, the individual’s idea of himself as a language learner, and proficient language are an essential part of identity. Linguistic identity is inextricably linked with the sociocultural and historical context: the individual is not alone in society, but the meaning invested in actions, thoughts, and intentions is his own.

In Kazakhstan, mainly Kazakh and Russian languages serve as the language of communication, English is used in some spheres of society (science, tourism, public administration, business, etc.). Accordingly, there are citizens in the country who speak only Kazakh, only Russian, only two languages, and three languages. Therefore, the authors took young people who are fluent in three languages as the object of this study and tried to study how and to what extent their learning of foreign languages affects their linguistic identities.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sampling

The sample included 250 students of the Department of Philology and World Languages of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. Of that total, 39.2% were men and 60.8% of women. 60.8% identifying as Kazakhs; as Russian, 35.2%; as other nationalities, 4%. The age of respondents ranged from 18 to 24 years. Students with knowledge of three languages (Kazakh, Russian, English) and studying other languages (Chinese, Japanese, French, German, etc.) were selected for interviews. To obtain qualitative results, only ten participants were selected for interviews. Also, when selecting participants, they needed to speak or study a fourth language, in addition to Kazakh, Russian, and English.

3.2. Data Collection

The data was collected through a mass survey and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire (see **Appendix A**)

used in the current study was paper-based to include a good number of youth and thus enhance the reliability and generalizability of the findings^[16]. A questionnaire facilitated an overarching understanding, while a semi-structured interview enabled us to interpret the underlying reasons for the observed language situation during the study.

3.3. Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaire was processed and analyzed on the latest version of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), which unified the results obtained for integration into a common database. For the data from the interview, the authors used content analysis.

4. Results

4.1. The Questionnaire Results

For the sociolinguistic study, several key variables are utilized in SPSS to analyze the data effectively. These variables fall into several categories, including demographic information, language proficiency, language usage and perception, language learning and academic preferences, and attitudes toward native language preservation (see **Appendix A**). The demographic variables are essential for understanding the sample population's characteristics: The demographic variables are essential for understanding the sample population's characteristics: 1) Gender is a nominal variable that categorizes respondents as either male, female, or other. The values could be coded as 1 for Male, 2 for Female, and 3 for Other. 2) Age is typically an ordinal variable (though it can be treated as scale data for more precise analysis). It categorizes respondents by age, with values ranging from 1 (18 years old) to 7 (24 years old). 3) Ethnicity/Nationality is a nominal variable that classifies respondents based on their ethnic or national identity. The values could be coded as 1 for Kazakh, 2 for Russian, and 3 for Other. Language proficiency is a critical aspect of this study and involves several ordinal variables: 4) Proficiency in Kazakh measures respondents' ability in the Kazakh language on a scale from 1 (No Proficiency) to 5 (Native). 5) Proficiency in Russian is similarly measured on the same scale from 1 (No Proficiency) to 5 (Native). 6) Proficiency in English follows the same ordinal scale, allowing the measurement of English

language skills among respondents. Additional language proficiency variables include Proficiency in Chinese, Proficiency in Japanese, Proficiency in French, and Proficiency in German. Each of these languages is also measured on an ordinal scale from 1 to 5, corresponding to No Proficiency, Basic, Intermediate, High, and Native levels. Language Usage and Perception Variables assess how languages are used and perceived by the respondents: 7) Primary Language for Communication is a nominal variable that determines which language respondents primarily use for everyday communication. The values might include 1 for Kazakh, 2 for Russian, 3 for English, and 4 for Other. 8) Perception of Cultural Identity Influenced by Foreign Languages is a nominal variable with values such as 1 for Yes and 2 for No, indicating whether respondents believe that foreign languages influence their cultural identity. 9) Language Influencing Linguistic Identity is another nominal variable, asking respondents to identify which language most strongly influences their linguistic identity. The options include 1 for Kazakh, 2 for Russian, 3 for English, and 4 for Other. Language Learning and Academic Preferences Variables explore respondents' attitudes toward language learning and preferences in academic settings: 10) The Importance of Learning Foreign Languages is an ordinal variable measuring how important respondents consider learning foreign languages. The values could range from 1 (Very Important) to 4 (Not Important). 11) Future Language Learning Plans is a nominal variable with multiple responses allowed, where respondents indicate which foreign languages they plan to continue studying. Possible values include 1 for English, 2 for Chinese, 3 for Japanese, 4 for French, 5 for German, and 6 for Other. 12) Preferred Language in Academic Settings is a nominal variable that identifies which language respondents prefer to use in academic environments. The options could be coded as 1 for Kazakh, 2 for Russian, 3 for English, and 4 for Other. Attitudes Toward Native Language Preservation assesses the importance of preserving the native language in a globalized context: 13) The Importance of Native Language Preservation is an ordinal variable that categorizes respondents' views on the preservation of their native language. The scale might include values from 1 (Very Important) to 5 (Not Important at All). Finally, the open-ended response is collected and analyzed qualitatively: 14) Comments on Language Learning and Linguistic Identity is a text/qualitative variable that al-

lows respondents to provide additional thoughts or comments about language learning and their linguistic identity.

The survey results indicated that all respondents are proficient in Kazakh and Russian, with 85.6% also knowing English. Among other foreign languages, students are proficient in Chinese (12.8%), Japanese (7.6%), French (9.2%), and German (10.8%). Most respondents possess a high or native level of proficiency in Kazakh (82.8%) and Russian (78%) languages. English is spoken at a high level by 33.6% of respondents.

When asked which language they consider primary for everyday communication, 52.8% chose Kazakh, 39.2% chose Russian, and 6.8% chose English. Additionally, 78.4% of respondents indicated that knowledge of foreign languages influences their perception of cultural identity.

Regarding which language most strongly influences their linguistic identity, 60.4% indicated Kazakh, 32.4% Russian, and 5.6% English. The majority of respondents (64.4%) consider learning foreign languages very important, and 28.8% consider it important.

Looking to the future, 48.8% of respondents plan to continue studying English, 22.8% Chinese, 14.8% Japanese, 17.6% French, and 19.2% German. In academic settings, 44.4% of students prefer using Kazakh, 38.8% Russian, and 15.6% English.

The preservation of the native language in the context of globalization is very important for 70% of respondents, important for 20.4%, not important for 6.4%, and not important at all for 3.2%.

In their comments, respondents emphasized the importance of continuing to study their native language and culture, noted the significance of English for career and personal development, expressed a desire to improve access to resources for learning foreign languages, and suggested increasing the number of practical language classes.

4.2. The Interview Results

The interview was conducted with 10 respondents who speak Kazakh, Russian, and English, as well as studying an additional foreign language.

The majority of respondents began to study Kazakh and Russian languages from early childhood. For example, respondent 1 (Aliya) said: “I grew up in a Kazakh-speaking family, and Kazakh was my first language, but at school

I started learning Russian and English.” The respondents began studying English at school from grades 1-3, continuing their studies at a more advanced level at the university. Some respondents also noted that they had improved their English language skills through participation in international exchange programs or courses abroad. Respondent 2 (Bakhyt) said: “My family spoke Kazakh, but I started learning Russian in kindergarten and English in third grade at school. At university, I improved my English skills through international programs”.

Respondents used Kazakh at home, Russian for academic and professional purposes, and English for international communications. Respondent 3 (Madina) noted: “At home, I speak Kazakh, at university and work I use Russian, and for reading scientific articles and communicating with foreign colleagues I use English”.

Respondents defined their primary language differently. Half of them considered Kazakh their main language, emphasizing its importance for cultural identity. The other half chose Russian because of its everyday use. Respondent 4 (Yerzhan) said: “Kazakh is the language of my family and culture, but I use Russian more in everyday life and at work”.

Most respondents felt more connected to Kazakh culture through knowledge of the Kazakh language. Some felt they belonged to a Russian-speaking cultural community. Knowledge of English was associated with global culture and professional opportunities. Respondent 5 (Ainur) shared: “Knowledge of the Kazakh language helps me stay connected to my roots, and English opens doors to international opportunities”.

Respondents studied Chinese, Japanese, French, German, and Spanish. The main reasons for choice were professional prospects and personal interest. Daniyar explained: “I chose Chinese because it is important for business. There are many Chinese companies in Kazakhstan, and knowing the language can give me a competitive advantage”.

Respondents encountered various difficulties in learning languages, including grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. Respondent 6 (Zaure) noted: “For me, the biggest difficulty is pronunciation in English. Sometimes it is difficult for me to understand native speakers”.

Most respondents considered knowing multiple languages an advantage that expands career opportunities and improves cognitive abilities. Respondent 7 (Asel) said: “Knowing English helped me get a scholarship to study

abroad. It opened up many opportunities for me”.

Respondents noted that knowledge of several languages improves understanding of educational material and access to a variety of sources of information. Respondent 8 (Ruslan) emphasized: “Knowledge of English helps me read scientific articles and understand materials that are not available in Russian or Kazakh”.

Learning a new language broadens respondents’ cultural horizons and adds a new layer to their linguistic identity. Respondent 9 (Alia) said: “Studying French has given me a new perspective on the world and helped me understand European culture more deeply”.

Respondents suggested increasing the number of practical classes and conversation clubs, improving access to modern learning materials and online resources, and organizing more cultural events and exchange programs. Respondent 3 (Madina) suggested: “It would be great if the university organized more speaking clubs and cultural events to practice languages”.

5. Discussion

Our findings, along with the results of longstanding sociolinguistic studies by Kazakhstani scientists, indicate that the linguistic identities of the youth in Kazakhstan are primarily shaped by Kazakh-Russian bilingualism and, secondarily, by multilingualism. The new generation strives to preserve its linguistic identity, but also to expand it without an identity crisis in the form of loss of its native language. Here we must indicate that a person’s native language can be determined at least by the following criteria: 1) age of language acquisition—what languages were learned by a person in early childhood; 2) what languages were learned by a person from parents; 3) language competence—what languages a person speaks with maximum freedom and depth; 4) ethnic identity—what language group a person identifies with^[17].

Fortunately, not all Kazakhs found themselves in a situation of language shift, multiple identities, identity diffusion, and identity crisis, in which the functions of intergenerational and intragenerational communication were taken over by the functionally dominant Russian language. These phenomena were noted in the adult generation^[7].

The results of the questionnaire demonstrate that most students are multilingual and consider knowledge of foreign

languages an important aspect of their linguistic and cultural identity. The native language plays a crucial role in their daily lives and studies, but knowledge of English and other foreign languages is perceived as essential for future professional and personal growth.

Thus, it can be concluded that the linguistic identity of students is shaped by both their native language and the foreign languages they study as part of their educational program. It is important to continue supporting and developing multilingualism among students for their successful integration into the global community.

The interview results showed that knowledge of several languages significantly influences the linguistic and cultural identity of students. Their native language (Kazakh or Russian) remains key to their cultural identity, while knowledge of English and other foreign languages plays an important role in their professional and personal development. Supporting and developing multilingualism among students is important for their successful integration into the global community and for improving academic performance.

We note that identity is considered both from the point of view of an individual and society. On the one hand, identity determines how similar we are to others, and on the other hand, how we differ from others. Consequently, with the help of the identity, the concept of «my» is defined, and our special group is defined^[18]. In other words, identity is a definition of oneself or others in who I am or who we are, and it is defined through choice. From the answers we can tell, the youth of Kazakhstan are free to choose their language identity and do not feel any restrictions.

As Protasova notes, different identities can differ from each other, mix, and intersect; they are either mobile or stable^[19, 20]. The interview results confirm this theory: the linguistic identity of the youth of Kazakhstan is mixed due to the study of foreign languages.

6. Conclusions

Our case studies aimed to investigate the influence of native and foreign languages on linguistic identity formation among Kazakhstani youth. Based on data obtained through a questionnaire and interview, we concluded that the use of a foreign language serves as a substitute for the mother tongue in the construction of linguistic identity only to a certain

extent. The importance of changing linguistic identity arises when it is necessary to demonstrate a high level of knowledge of a foreign language, most often in the professional sphere. Also, respondents note that by linguistic identity they define their own and others, people close or distant in values.

The authors do not propose that individuals' formation of their language identity is based solely on their language proficiency. However, we emphasize that, for our respondents, the ability to use their native language and their level of foreign language proficiency play a significant role in how they express and perceive identity.

Additionally, our findings further indicate that the correlation between ethnic and linguistic identity and the attitude of young respondents to their native language is characterized by a high degree of general awareness of the belonging of Kazakh respondents and Russian respondents to their people and language. This also confirms the results of previous studies^[7, 15].

Language is not only a social phenomenon but also an ethnic and national symbol. Any national language (mother tongue) reflects all the spiritual values of its people, including their mentality, worldview, moral ideals, customs, and beliefs, thereby demonstrating a rich cultural experience. The native language is closely connected with the ethnopsychology, ethnophilosophy, ethno-didactics, national identity, and culture of the people. Each national language is unique and distinctive, regardless of the number of its speakers.

It is scientifically, methodologically, and socially thought-provoking that individuals may change or forget their native language when choosing a different language. This issue arises primarily from the bilingual situation in the country. Bilingualism is a social phenomenon that meets the various needs of society's members. When developed based on the native language, bilingualism and multilingualism offer significant benefits to both the individual and the entire ethnic group. However, bilingualism that leads to the loss or forgetfulness of the mother tongue is detrimental.

A multinational state like Kazakhstan requires a form of bilingualism that supports the preservation and development of the native language, thereby protecting the national values of each ethnic group. In such a linguistic context, an individual's ability to maintain their native language should be seen as a contribution not only to their survival but also to the survival of their entire nation, ensuring that they do not disappear from the stage of history.

Author Contributions

A.B. is the corresponding author and initiator of this study, she wrote the methodology of the study. A.A. did the introduction and literary review. U.K. came up with the design of the study. A.K. and A.S. did a statistical analysis of the SPSS, and they also worked on discussing the article, editing and correcting the primary material also belongs to them.

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Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data was collected through a mass survey. It queried the linguistic characteristics of participants in three areas: knowledge of languages, use of languages, and attitude toward languages. The questionnaire used in the current study was paper-based to include a good number of youth and thus enhance the reliability and generalizability of the findings^[16]. The questionnaire consisted of the following parts: the passport part contains questions about age, gender, nationality, and place of residence; attitude toward the native and/or state languages; language selection; and knowledge of language/languages. Of these, five were open and six were closed questions.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors stated that there are no conflicts of interest.

Appendix A

Sociolinguistic Survey: The Impact of Native and Foreign Languages on the Linguistic Identity Formation of Kazakhstani Youth

This questionnaire is designed to collect data on the linguistic proficiency, language usage, and cultural perceptions of respondents, with a particular focus on the influence of both native and foreign languages on linguistic identity. The survey aims to understand the language dynamics among Kazakhstani youth, exploring their language preferences, the importance they place on learning foreign languages, and their attitudes towards the preservation of their native language in the context of globalization.

Thank you for participating in the survey. All your answers will be used for scientific purposes only.

Passport part of the questionnaire:

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other (please specify): _____

Age:

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24

Ethnicity/Nationality:

- Kazakh
- Russian
- Other (please specify): _____

Section 1: Language Proficiency

1. Which languages are you proficient in? (Select all that apply)

- Kazakh
- Russian
- English
- Chinese
- Japanese
- French
- German
- Other (please specify): _____

2. Please indicate your level of proficiency in the following languages:

(Note: 1 = No Proficiency, 2 = Basic, 3 = Intermediate, 4 = High, 5 = Native)

- Kazakh: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- Russian: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- English: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- Chinese: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- Japanese: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- French: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

- German: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Section 2: Language Usage and Perception

3. Which language do you consider primary for everyday communication?
- Kazakh
 - Russian
 - English
 - Other (please specify): _____
4. Do you believe that knowledge of foreign languages influences your perception of cultural identity?
- Yes
 - No
5. Which language do you think most strongly influences your linguistic identity?
- Kazakh
 - Russian
 - English
 - Other (please specify): _____

Section 3: Language Learning and Academic Preferences

6. How important is learning foreign languages to you?
- Very important
 - Important
 - Somewhat important
 - Not important
7. Which foreign languages do you plan to continue studying in the future? (Select all that apply)
- English
 - Chinese
 - Japanese
 - French
 - German
 - Other (please specify): _____
8. In academic settings, which language do you prefer to use?
- Kazakh
 - Russian
 - English
 - Other (please specify): _____

Section 4: Attitudes Toward Native Language Preservation

9. How important is the preservation of the native language in the context of globalization?
- Very important
 - Important
 - Somewhat important
 - Not important
 - Not important at all

Section 5: Additional Comments

10. Please share any additional thoughts or comments about language learning and linguistic identity. (Optional)

Thank you for the participation!

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