

**Exploring Family Language Policy and Sociolinguistic Challenges among
Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan**

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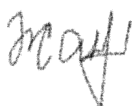
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has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Syed Abdul Manan.

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Abstract

Exploring Family Language Policy and Sociolinguistic Challenges among Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan

Located in the heart of Eurasia, Kazakhstan has been affected by powerful migration and demographic changes for over centuries. In the early 2000s Kazakhstan started to implement ethnic immigration policies to solve demographic problems and promote nation building. As a result, more than 1,860, 000 ethnic Kazakhs known as “qandas” have moved to their historical homeland (Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of Kazakhstan, 2021). Despite all the state efforts aimed at encouraging qandas to return to their ethnic homeland, issues rooted in social, economic, cultural integration and low socio-linguistic adaptation remain a significant challenge (UNDP, 2006). The study aims to explore family language policy among repatriate families and the socio-linguistic challenges they face integrating into the Kazakhstani society using Spolsky’s (2004) amended tripartite model. This is a qualitative study which uses semi-structured interviews as the main research instruments to gather data from three repatriate families from Uzbekistan, China, and Mongolia. The main findings suggest that all families prioritize Kazakh language as a symbol of national and cultural identity. The findings also illustrate that this ideological orientation was a primary motivator for repatriation, underscoring a desire to reestablish cultural belonging through language. The second priority language was found to be English due to its perceived global value, while Russian is widely rejected or deprioritized, often due to past experiences of linguistic discrimination. Such findings call for more equitable and consistent implementation of national language policies, particularly in urban areas where Russian dominance continues to marginalize Kazakh speakers.

Аңдатпа

Еуразияның қақ ортасында орналасқан Қазақстанда ғасырлар бойы демографиялық өзгерістер орын алды. 2000 жылдардың басында Қазақстан Республикасы демографиялық мәселелерді шешу және мемлекет құрылысын ілгерілету үшін иммиграциялық саясатты жүзеге асыра бастады. Соның нәтижесінде «қандас» атанған 1 860 000-нан астам отбасылар тарихи отанына қоныс аударды (ҚР Еңбек және халықты әлеуметтік қорғау министрлігі, 2021 ж.). Қандастардың этникалық отанына оралуын ынталандыруға бағытталған мемлекеттің барлық күш-жігеріне қарамастан, әлеуметтік, экономикалық, мәдени интеграцияға және әлеуметтік-тілдік бейімделудің төмен деңгейіне негізделген мәселелер әлі де өзекті (БҰҰДБ, 2006). Бұл ғылыми жоба қандас отбасыларының тіл саясаты мен қоғамға интеграциялануында кездесетін әлеуметтік-тілдік қиындықтарды зерттеуге бағытталған. Бұл сапалы зерттеу Спольскийдің (2004) үшжақты моделін пайдалана отырып, Өзбекстан, Қытай және Моңғолиядан көшіп келген отбасылармен жартылай құрылымдық сұхбаттар арқылы деректер жинады. Негізгі тұжырымдар барлық отбасылардың ұлттық-мәдени бірегейліктің символы ретінде қазақ тіліне басымдық беретінін көрсетеді. Сондай-ақ қорытындылар осы идеологиялық бағыттың қайта көшіп келудің негізгі мотиві болғанын көрсетеді. Бұл қазақ тілі арқылы мәдени тиесілілікті қалпына келтіруге деген ұмтылысты көрсетеді. Екінші басымдықта ғаламдық құндылығына байланысты ағылшын тілі болып табылды, ал орыс тілі идеологиялық себептерге байланысты басымдылыққа ие емес екендігі анықталды.

Аннотация

Казахстан, расположенный в самом центре Евразии, на протяжении веков переживал мощные миграционные и демографические изменения. В начале 2000-х годов страна начала реализовывать политику этнической иммиграции с целью решения демографических проблем и укрепления нации. В результате этих мер более 1 860 000 этнических казахов, известных как "кандасы", вернулись на свою историческую родину (Министерство труда и социальной защиты населения РК, 2021). Несмотря на усилия государства по содействию возвращению кандасов, по-прежнему сохраняются серьезные проблемы, связанные с социальной, экономической и культурной интеграцией, а также низкой социолингвистической адаптацией (ПРООН, 2006).

Данное исследование направлено на изучение семейной языковой политики среди репатриантов и социолингвистических трудностей, с которыми они сталкиваются при интеграции в казахстанское общество. Теоретической основой служит модифицированная трехкомпонентная модель Сполски (2004). Это качественное исследование, основанное на полуструктурированных интервью с тремя репатриантскими семьями из Узбекистана, Китая и Монголии. Основные результаты показывают, что все семьи придают первостепенное значение казахскому языку как символу национальной и культурной идентичности. Идеологическая ориентация на казахский язык стала главным мотивом для репатриации, поскольку семьи стремились восстановить культурную принадлежность через язык. Вторым по значимости языком был назван английский, благодаря его глобальной ценности, тогда как русский язык часто отвергался или отодвигался на второй план из-за прошлого опыта языковой дискриминации. Полученные данные подчеркивают необходимость более справедливой и последовательной реализации национальной языковой политики,

особенно в городах, где доминирование русского языка продолжает вытеснять казахоязычных граждан.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Located in the heart of Eurasia, Kazakhstan has been affected by powerful migration and demographic changes for over centuries. After the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, Kazakhstan saw a considerable decline in its population due to the large-scale emigration of ethnic Russians and Germans. It is estimated that the population of Kazakhstan decreased from 16.5 million to less than 15 million between 1989 and 1999. Kazakhstan started to implement ethnic immigration policies to solve demographic problems and promote nation building. The first Resolution on the Procedures and Conditions of the Relocation to Kazakh SSR for Persons of Kazakh Ethnicity from Other Republic and Abroad willing to work in rural areas was passed on November 18, 1991. This was followed by the Law on Immigration in June 1992, which established a special immigration quota for repatriates (UNDP, 2006). As a result, more than 1,860, 000 ethnic Kazakhs known as “oralmans” have moved to their historical homeland (Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of Kazakhstan, 2021).

In 2020 the term “oralman,” translated as “returnee,” was officially replaced by the term “qandas,” translated as “people of the same blood” by president Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Tengrinews, 2020). The majority of these oralman families are descendents of those who were forced out of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s or who escaped political turmoil, repression, forced collectivization, and hunger crises (UNDP, 2006). The source countries of oralmans extend from East Asia to the Middle East and Western Europe. During the period from 1991 to 2005, the main countries of origin for qandas families were Uzbekistan (285,409), Mongolia (71,507), Turkmenistan (41,787), China (22,117), and Russia (18,632) (UNDP, 2006).

Cerny (2010) claims that the main motives behind oralman's decision to return to homeland stem from a desire to maintain and strengthen Kazakh national identity. In particular, those repatriates who previously had a higher socioeconomic status in their country of origin, return to their ancestral homeland to immerse themselves in Kazakh culture, language, and traditions to integrate into Kazakh society. Socio-linguistic integration relies heavily on the knowledge of language since it is essential for any human interaction. (UNDP, 2006).

Today there are two dominant languages in Kazakhstan, Kazakh as a state language and Russian as an administrative language. A 2013 survey of 1000 permanent residents in Almaty aged 17 to 65 showed that 42.3 percent of respondents claimed to speak only Kazakh, and 57.7 percent reported speaking both Kazakh and Russian (Galat, 2013). Russian is predominantly used in both official and unofficial settings. Thus, successful repatriates' socio-linguistic integration in Kazakhstan requires comprehensive knowledge of at least Kazakh or Russian language. This current study explores the socio-linguistic challenges faced by oralman families settled in urban areas and their family language policy (FLP), where FLP is defined as a set of deliberate literacy practices within home domains and among family members (Spolsky, 2009).

Problem Statement

Despite all the state efforts aimed at encouraging oralman's to return to their ethnic homeland, issues rooted in social, economic, cultural integration and low socio-linguistic adaptation remain a significant challenge (UNDP, 2006). In fact, oralman's belong to one of the most vulnerable groups with high unemployment rates and absenteeism from school.

Statistics gathered by the Committee on Migration report that only 61.5% of oralmans of working age are actively employed, and nearly 23% of oralman children report absences from secondary school (UNDP, 2006). The main reason is that oralmans arriving from countries outside of the Commonwealth of Independent State (CIS) regions face problems related to widespread use of Russian in public life. This is especially noticeable in the northern regions of Kazakhstan. In the southern regions, where Kazakh language is more widely spoken, linguistic barriers may be less visible. However, in these areas linguistic differences still arise. For instance, oralman families from China, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan write in Ancient Kazakh using Arabic alphabet, and in Turkey Kazakh is written using Latin alphabet. Thus, lack of knowledge of Cyrillic letters causes an inability to write and read in either Kazakh or Russian, which makes it difficult for the elderly to enter the labor market and discourages children from attending school (UNDP, 2006)

Taldybaeva et al. (2021) reported that most of the ethnic Kazakh repatriates, fueled by a longing for motherhood, immigrated to Kazakhstan with the intention to return to the land of their ancestors “the country of Kazakhs”. However, after arrival, many find themselves not in the Kazakh, but the Kazakhstani environment, in which Russian language, which is a foreign language for them, plays a dominant role in public life. Thus, most oralmans feel socially alienated by the dominance of the Russian language in urban areas and official settings (Amitov et al., 2016). They might perceive this as a continuation of cultural suppression, leading to frustration and resentment towards Russian language and Russian-speaking people. Negative feelings may contribute to negative beliefs and ideologies towards Russian language.

In addition to these socio-linguistic challenges, another problem is the formation of closed communities due to the big inflow of oralman families. Based on Brubaker's (2013) model of immigration, there is the influence of the host country's politics in the integration process. For instance, all Kazakh schools in China have been closed since 2015, which led to the new wave of young returnees from China who do not understand or speak Kazakh at all (Aubakirova et al., 2023). As a result, oralman families are restricted to communicate only among each other using the language of their origin country. Although the state funds language support programs for oralmans, neither a school nor a program exists in Kazakhstan. This stands as the main obstacle to the full exercise of their rights as citizens (UNDP, 2006).

Another crucial research gap in the study of oralmans in Kazakhstan is the lack of comprehensive studies that specifically examine how these families implement FLP to maintain linguistic and cultural identity in the face of strong societal pressures to assimilate. While there is some research on the challenges repatriates face in general, such as integration difficulties and social adaptation, the specific strategies they use to manage language within the family, and how these strategies impact their children's linguistic development and cultural identity, remain underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap in the literature by exploring the FLPs of these families, with focus on their language ideologies, language practices, and their language challenges.

Research Purpose and Questions

The study will explore family language policy among repatriate families and the socio-linguistic challenges they face integrating into the Kazakhstani society, and will be guided by the following research questions:

1. How do family language ideologies influence the formation and implementation of family language policies (FLP) among repatriate families in Kazakhstan?
2. How do FLP decisions impact daily language practices among children in repatriate families in Kazakhstan?
3. How do repatriate families manage competing linguistic demands within their FLP to foster linguistic and cultural integration in Kazakhstan?
4. What are the socio-linguistic challenges faced by the repatriate families with regard to Kazakh and Russian?

Significance of the Study

Studying FLP among oralman contributes to a broader understanding of how national language policies are interpreted and implemented at the family level. This can identify gaps or inconsistencies between official policies and everyday linguistic practices. The findings can be compared with other contexts of diaspora returnees and linguistic minorities, contributing to global discussions on language maintenance, identity, and integration in multilingual societies.

FLP among oralman plays a crucial role in the preservation and revitalization of the Kazakh language and cultural identity. Many oralman return from countries where other languages (e.g., Russian, Chinese, Uzbek) have been dominant, so the strategies they adopt to reconnect with their Kazakh heritage are vital for cultural continuity.

Understanding FLP can also shed light on how oralman reintegrate linguistically into Kazakh society, which is important for social cohesion and the successful blending of returnees with the broader population.

In terms of intergenerational language transmission, studying FLP can reveal how oralman manage the transmission of the Kazakh language to younger generations. This is particularly important in families where children may have been born in or exposed to non-Kazakh-speaking environments. Moreover, research on FLP can help understand how oralman balance Kazakh with other host country's languages. This balance is crucial for maintaining linguistic diversity while promoting the use of Kazakh.

FLP significantly influences the educational experiences of oralman children. Research can identify how family language practices impact academic performance, particularly in Kazakh-language schools, and how these children adapt to the educational system in Kazakhstan. Insights from FLP studies can guide the development of educational policies and curricula that are sensitive to the linguistic backgrounds of oralman students, ensuring they receive appropriate support to succeed academically.

Outline of the Study

Overall, this study has begun with an introduction chapter, which provided background information about repatriate families and the main research problems. Next,

the literature review summarizes existing studies and research related to family language policy among repatriate families. It also presents the theoretical framework to guide this research. This is followed by the methodology section, which specifies the research design, data collection tools, sampling, and data analysis. Next are the results and discussion sections, which present the findings and contribution the study. Finally, the study ends with the conclusion, which summarizes key points and offers recommendations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review examines the interplay between family language policy (FLP) and the sociolinguistic challenges faced by repatriate families in Kazakhstan. Utilizing a theoretical framework that encompasses family language ideology, management, and practices, the review highlights how these families navigate the complexities of cultural identity and linguistic integration in a rapidly changing sociopolitical landscape. Family language ideology reflects the beliefs and values that shape language use within families, while family language management pertains to the deliberate strategies employed by parents to influence their children's language acquisition. Additionally, the actual language practices of these families reveal the dynamics of their daily interactions amidst sociolinguistic challenges such as language proficiency gaps and societal pressures. Through this synthesis, the review aims to provide insights into how repatriate families negotiate their linguistic identities and cultural belonging, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of their experiences in Kazakhstan.

Theoretical Framework

In researching how parental ideology, management, practices, and sociolinguistic challenges shape Family Language Policy (FLP) among repatriate families in Kazakhstan, an integrated theoretical framework is essential. This study draws upon Spolsky's (2004) Family Language Policy model and integrates it with Ward's (2001) bidimensional adaptation model to better capture the complexity of language adaptation in a sociolinguistically dynamic environment.

Spolsky's (2004) FLP model provides a structured way to examine family language management, ideological beliefs, and language practices within the home environment.

According to this model, FLP is shaped by three primary components:

1. Language Ideology
2. Language Management
3. Language Practices

In the context of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, these components interact in unique ways as families navigate the state's promotion of Kazakh language revitalization, the continued use of Russian, and the growing importance of English in global contexts. Spolsky's model is particularly useful for understanding how parents' ideological commitments to different languages inform their management and practice decisions within the family.

However, Spolsky's model focuses primarily on language use in the home domain and may not fully account for the broader sociocultural factors that influence FLP, particularly in the case of repatriate families adapting to a new linguistic environment. This is where Ward's bidimensional adaptation model complements the FLP model.

Ward's (2001) bidimensional adaptation model focuses on how immigrants and repatriates adapt to new sociocultural environments along two dimensions:

1. Psychological adaptation: Emotional well-being and coping mechanisms in a new environment.
2. Sociocultural adaptation: The degree to which individuals adjust to the norms and behaviors of the host society.

In the context of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, psychological adaptation relates to how well parents and children cope with the pressures of reintegration into Kazakhstani society, which often involves adjusting to new linguistic and cultural expectations. For example, parents who experienced linguistic shifts during their time abroad may face emotional challenges when trying to reintegrate into a society where Kazakh has gained prominence since their departure.

Sociocultural adaptation, on the other hand, is crucial for understanding how families adjust to the language norms of the broader society, namely, the state's promotion of trilingualism (Kazakh, Russian, and English). Ward's model highlights how external societal pressures such as school language policies or public discourse influence language practices in the home, a crucial factor for understanding FLP in a repatriate context.

By integrating Ward's bidimensional adaptation model into Spolsky's FLP framework as seen in Figure 1, this research captures not only the internal dynamics of family language management but also how these are shaped by external adaptation pressures in the sociocultural environment.

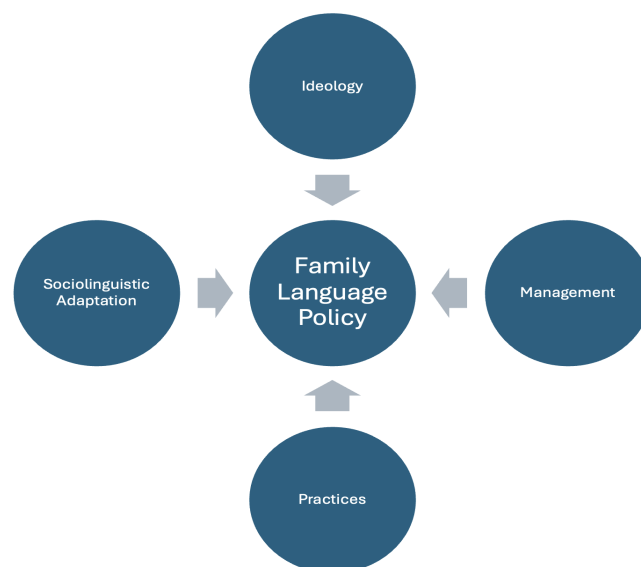
For example, a family that ideologically values Kazakh for cultural identity may still adopt more Russian or English in daily practices if those languages dominate the sociocultural landscape of the community or schools where their children are enrolled. The integration of these two models allows for a more holistic understanding of how repatriate families adapt their FLP in response to both internal family dynamics and external sociocultural pressures.

The combined framework is especially relevant for understanding how repatriate families in Kazakhstan handle the complexities of multilingualism. Repatriates often return with diverse linguistic backgrounds, having lived in countries where they may have

adopted new languages. Upon returning, they face the task of re-establishing FLP in an environment where the Kazakh language is undergoing revitalization, but where Russian and English maintain strong functional roles.

This integrated framework will help identify the sociolinguistic challenges repatriate families face as they adapt to Kazakhstan's evolving language landscape, including conflicts between parental ideologies supporting Kazakh language revitalization and practical sociocultural adaptation to Russian or English in school and work environments, and the emotional challenges families experience as they re-adapt to using Kazakh after years abroad, potentially influencing both language practices and the management strategies employed at home.

Figure 1.



Ideology

The concept of language ideology plays a central role in shaping FLP as it reflects the beliefs and values that parents hold about language use, identity, and education.

Various studies have explored how these ideologies impact family decisions regarding language transmission, especially among immigrant and multilingual families.

Curdt-Christiansen's (2009) study of Chinese immigrant families in Montreal offers a detailed exploration of how parents' ideologies toward multilingualism are influenced by political, socioeconomic, and cultural factors. Their research reveals that these families support English for global integration, French for socio-political reasons in Quebec, and Chinese for cultural identity and heritage. The parents' ideological commitment to multilingualism is driven by high educational expectations, as they believe that fostering language diversity will enhance their children's future opportunities. This study highlights the intersection between language ideology and practical concerns like social mobility, cultural preservation, and educational success. However, its limitation is its focus on highly educated parents from Mainland China, which may not fully represent other immigrant experiences.

Similarly, Gu et al. (2021) examined family language ideologies among South Asian immigrant mothers in Hong Kong. The findings suggest that FLP is deeply intertwined with social contexts such as school and community, where mothers who emphasize heritage language teaching often envision future career opportunities for their children in their home countries. This "imagined identity" shapes their language decisions, reflecting broader societal influences in Hong Kong. Gu et al.'s study also points to the dominant role that social immersion and external environments play in shaping family ideologies about language. However, the exclusion of fathers and children in this study leaves out potentially different perspectives on language policy within the family.

Kopeliovich's (2010) study on a Hebrew-Russian bilingual family reveals how language ideology differs between parents in their approach to preserving their heritage

language. The mother's strong ideological attachment to Russian stems from a desire to maintain a deep emotional connection with her children and transmit cultural and literary heritage. In contrast, the father does not hold the same ideological commitment to Russian but encourages openness to other languages. This case highlights how ideological differences between parents can shape language practices and choices within the family. However, as this study focuses on a single family, it may not capture the broader diversity of experiences in bilingual households.

In the Kazakhstani context, language ideology often revolves around the revitalization of the Kazakh language, reflecting broader national efforts to reinforce cultural identity. Amantay et al. (2017) explored this phenomenon by studying Kazakh families in urban areas. The findings suggest that parents support Kazakh language revitalization for reasons tied to culture, history, and identity, and employ various management practices such as exposing their children to Kazakh media and literature. Code-switching between Kazakh and Russian is also common, indicating that parents pragmatically balance cultural and linguistic preservation with everyday communication needs. However, the small sample size and focus on only ethnically Kazakh families limit the study's ability to represent the diversity of family language ideologies in Kazakhstan.

Further insights into language ideology in Kazakhstan come from Kambatyrova's (2023) research on trilingual education policy. This study reveals that parents across Kazakhstan hold generally positive attitudes toward the policy due to its political, cultural, and economic benefits. However, they express concerns about the educational implications, particularly the potential risks of simultaneously teaching children in Kazakh, Russian, and English. Regional differences also influence language ideologies: parents in South Kazakhstan are more supportive of Kazakh due to cultural values, while

those in the North and Centre tend to prioritize Russian. This variation illustrates how political, cultural, and regional factors shape family language ideologies and influence FLP decisions in different parts of Kazakhstan.

Romaine (2006) provides a broader theoretical framework, positioning families as micro-agents of language policy crucial for the survival of minority languages. This perspective is particularly relevant in Kazakhstan, where state policies promote Kazakh revitalization. However, Romaine's analysis does not fully account for the specific socio-political pressures faced by repatriate families, limiting the applicability of her framework to these unique contexts.

Building on these themes, Piller (2017) discussed how language and identity intersect in intercultural communication, arguing that language is not merely a communication tool but a marker of social belonging. In the context of Kazakhstan, the prominence of Russian as a lingua franca poses challenges for repatriates who primarily speak Kazakh. While Piller's work underscores the significance of language in shaping identity, it does not explicitly address the familial strategies employed by repatriates in response to these challenges.

Additionally, the work by Arends-Toth and van de Vijver (2006) on acculturation emphasizes the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of adapting to new linguistic environments. They highlight the role of language proficiency in both sociocultural adaptation and psychological well-being. However, their framework does not explore how family dynamics and language policies interact to influence repatriates' experiences in Kazakhstan.

These studies collectively highlight the significance of familial language management in shaping cultural identity among repatriate families. However, they also

reveal gaps in understanding the nuanced interactions between state language policies and individual family language practices. Specifically, existing research often relies on self-reported data or focuses on specific ethnic groups, limiting insights into the broader dynamics affecting repatriate families in Kazakhstan. Furthermore, while some studies acknowledge the influence of sociopolitical contexts, few provide an in-depth exploration of how these factors interact with family values and decision-making processes regarding language use.

My research aims to address these gaps by examining the FLP practices of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, focusing on how they navigate the challenges posed by language proficiency, cultural identity, and state policies. By employing a qualitative approach that includes interviews and observational data, I will provide a more comprehensive understanding of how families manage their linguistic resources in response to sociolinguistic pressures. This study will contribute to the existing literature by illuminating the lived experiences of repatriate families, offering insights into the complex interplay between cultural preservation and adaptation in a multilingual context.

Family Language Management

Family language management, a key aspect of FLP, involves the deliberate efforts of parents to influence the language use and acquisition of their children. In the context of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, this component becomes particularly significant, as families navigate complex sociolinguistic landscapes shaped by cultural identity, state language policies, and sociocultural pressures.

Bokayev et al. (2012) conducted a study on ethnolinguistic identification among 1000 repatriates who returned to Kazakhstan from diverse countries such as China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan. The study found that while a high percentage of repatriates

identify Kazakh as their mother tongue (96%), language proficiency varied, with 84.5% speaking the language fluently and 9.8% unable to speak it at all. This gap between language proficiency and ethnic identification highlights a critical aspect of family language management: for many repatriates, Kazakh holds significant cultural and symbolic value, irrespective of their fluency.

This finding emphasizes that repatriates' language management strategies are often driven by ethnic belonging, as families manage the symbolic significance of the Kazakh language as part of their identity. Parents may prioritize the use of Kazakh at home, even if proficiency levels are uneven among family members, underscoring the importance of cultural preservation over practical language fluency. However, the study focuses on self-reported data, which may not accurately reflect language practices in different social contexts, and it does not account for individual variation in language management practices across families.

Similarly, in a study of Korean-Chinese bilingual families in Shanghai, Cui et al. (2014) explored how ethnic identity and language ideologies shape family language management. The study revealed that despite strong ethnic ties, parents chose to invest in their children's Chinese and English learning while deprioritizing Korean. This decision was influenced by the perception of English as a marketable commodity and Chinese as necessary for integration into the local context.

This study highlights the tension between ethnic identity and language ideology that families face when managing language use. While families may ideologically value the heritage language, the pragmatic demands of the broader sociocultural context (e.g., the economic and social utility of Chinese and English) often influence their management decisions. This reflects how family language management is mediated by broader societal

forces and the value assigned to different languages, leading families to prioritize economic and social goals over heritage language maintenance. However, the findings are specific to Korean-Chinese families in Shanghai, and their investment choices may not be generalizable to other bilingual families or repatriate contexts, where different sociolinguistic and economic factors apply.

Moin et al. (2013), in their study on Finnish-Russian bilingual families, also underscore the role of parental motivations in shaping family language management. The study found that parents overwhelmingly supported early bilingual education and viewed it as an effective way to promote bilingual competence. Their decisions were motivated by several factors, including language-related reasons (e.g., preserving Russian), the quality of the educational staff, and convenience for both the children and parents.

This research suggests that family language management is often driven by parents' aspirations for their children's bilingual development, particularly in the early stages of education. Parents' active decision-making—such as enrolling children in bilingual schools or providing language resources—reflects their commitment to fostering bilingualism, whether for cultural preservation or future social mobility. The main limitation of the study is that it focuses on early bilingual education but does not explore how language management evolves as children grow older or face new educational or social contexts.

Romaine's (2006) work provides a broader perspective on family language management by positioning families as micro-agents of language policy. Romaine argues that grassroots efforts at the family level are crucial for the survival of minority languages and should be recognized alongside state-driven language policies. Families, through their daily language practices and decisions, play a central role in preserving linguistic diversity.

In the context of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, this view is particularly relevant. While state policies promote Kazakh language revitalization, individual families manage their linguistic resources based on personal values, cultural identity, and practical considerations. Families' ability to adapt their language management strategies to balance cultural preservation and sociolinguistic challenges illustrates their critical role in the broader language policy landscape. While Romaine provides a useful theoretical lens, the focus on grassroots efforts in language policy does not fully address the unique socio-political pressures repatriate families may experience in Kazakhstan, where state language policies play a strong role in shaping FLP.

Family Language Practices

The role of language practices within FLP is a central focus of research on bilingual and multilingual families, revealing the complexities of minority language transmission and maintenance. Several studies highlight how families negotiate their language practices based on ideologies, family structures, and external factors like schooling.

The studies by Smith-Christmas (2014), Slavkov (2017), Schwartz (2010), and O'Brien et al. (2014) provide valuable insights into the dynamics of FLP and language practices, which can be directly connected to my research on how parental ideology, management, practices, and sociolinguistic challenges shape FLP among repatriate families in Kazakhstan. These studies collectively explore how families navigate language choices and transmission within multilingual and bilingual contexts, offering frameworks to examine similar processes within Kazakh repatriate families.

Smith-Christmas's (2014) qualitative study on Gaelic-English bilingualism in an extended family on the island of Skye, Scotland, highlights the role of family members' habitual language preferences, practices, and ideologies in shaping FLP. In particular, the

concept of dual-lingualism, where family members consistently use different languages within the same interaction, is a significant finding. This notion is highly relevant to my research as repatriate families in Kazakhstan may similarly navigate language use between Kazakh, Russian, and potentially other languages. Just as Gaelic was actively used in child-centered contexts in the study, it is essential to explore how Kazakh or Russian is employed in family interactions among repatriates, and whether there are specific contexts where one language dominates. Moreover, the finding that Gaelic was primarily used for disciplinary purposes suggests that language choice may carry social and emotional connotations, a factor that could be relevant to how Kazakh families manage language practices.

Slavkov's (2017) exploration of minority language transmission in multilingual Canadian families offers another useful perspective, particularly regarding the role of schooling in supporting bilingualism and multilingualism. His finding that school choice is a strong predictor of multilingualism connects to the sociolinguistic challenges faced by repatriate families in Kazakhstan. The choices made by these families regarding language of education may have significant implications for children's fluency in Kazakh, especially given the presence of Russian-dominant schools in urban areas. By comparing Slavkov's insights with the educational context in Kazakhstan, my research can assess the impact of schooling policies on FLP and how families manage these external factors to maintain Kazakh as a heritage language.

Building on this, Curdt-Christiansen (2016) provides crucial insights into how ideologies shape FLP, especially in multicultural environments. Her study on Chinese-English bilingual families in Singapore highlights the way parental beliefs about language utility and identity influence FLP. This is relevant for Kazakh repatriate families, where

parental ideologies about Kazakh as a marker of national identity may drive language management decisions, even in the face of dominant Russian usage in urban areas. Curdt-Christiansen's model of language as cultural capital can provide a lens through which to analyze the symbolic and functional value of Kazakh within these families.

Schwartz's (2010) literature review on FLP emphasizes the role of intra-family factors, such as family structure and parental education, in determining the success of language transmission. Her findings that older siblings and emotional ties to the heritage culture play a crucial role in language retention can be directly applied to the intergenerational dynamics within Kazakh repatriate families. My research can build on this by investigating whether similar patterns occur in Kazakhstan, where older siblings or extended family members may act as language role models or enforce language ideologies that prioritize Kazakh. Additionally, Schwartz's findings on the emotional burden of maintaining a minority language resonate with the potential challenges faced by repatriate families in balancing Kazakh language retention with integration into Russian-speaking urban environments.

Further, De Houwer (2007) contributes to understanding how early language exposure and parental consistency in language use can lead to successful bilingualism. Her study on bilingual first language acquisition found that children's language output is heavily influenced by parental language input consistency. In the context of Kazakh repatriate families, examining how parents balance the use of Kazakh and Russian at home, and whether they consistently promote Kazakh in daily interactions, will be critical to understanding FLP success.

Luykx (2005) offers another perspective through her work on language socialization in Quechua-Spanish bilingual families in Bolivia. Her study revealed how

children's agency in language use—especially as they navigate between different linguistic environments—can lead to shifting family language practices. This has implications for Kazakh repatriate families, where children may negotiate between Kazakh and Russian both at home and in wider social settings, potentially influencing family language dynamics in ways that differ from parental intentions.

O'Brien et al. (2014) provide further insights into the role of family literacy programs in promoting minority language development. Their quasi-experimental study demonstrated that participation in FLP-based literacy programs led to significant gains in language proficiency among children from low-income immigrant families. This finding can inform my research on how repatriate families in Kazakhstan may utilize literacy practices or engage in formal language programs to support Kazakh language acquisition. Just as O'Brien's study showed that literacy programs could bridge vocabulary gaps, Kazakh repatriate families might engage in similar proactive strategies to enhance their children's fluency in Kazakh, particularly in environments where Russian or other languages are dominant.

Fogle and King (2013) extend these discussions by exploring how parent-child interactions shape language transmission. Their research on heritage language maintenance in immigrant families found that children's resistance to using the heritage language often results in parents adopting different management strategies, such as enforcing language rules or negotiating a mixed-language environment. This directly connects to Kazakh repatriate families who may face similar challenges when children resist using Kazakh due to the dominance of Russian in social settings.

Finally, Fishman's (1991) concept of language shift and maintenance within minority language communities highlights the broader sociolinguistic challenges repatriate

families face in Kazakhstan. Fishman's work suggests that social pressures and language prestige play a crucial role in either fostering or hindering language maintenance.

Applying this to my research will allow an examination of how Kazakh language prestige and sociolinguistic environments in Kazakhstan influence families' ability to retain their heritage language.

Despite the wealth of research on FLP, including studies by Smith-Christmas (2014), Slavkov (2017), and others, several gaps persist in understanding how parental ideologies, management, and sociolinguistic challenges influence FLP in specific cultural and migration contexts. Most studies, such as those by Schwartz (2010) and Curdt-Christiansen (2016), focus on bilingual or multilingual families in predominantly Western contexts (e.g., Canada, the UK, Singapore), where the dynamics of language shift and retention often revolve around majority and minority languages in well-established settings. Few studies thoroughly examine the FLP of repatriate families, particularly in post-Soviet contexts like Kazakhstan, where the linguistic landscape is shaped by historical, cultural, and political factors unique to the region.

For instance, while Smith-Christmas (2014) offers valuable insights into the negotiation of Gaelic-based FLP, her study is limited to a single family and does not address the broader sociopolitical factors that might influence language choices in repatriate families. Similarly, Slavkov (2017) highlights the importance of schooling in minority language retention, but the study is confined to the Canadian educational system and does not consider how national policies and linguistic hierarchies in different regions, like Kazakhstan, might affect family language decisions.

One significant gap in the literature concerns the impact of repatriation on FLP in families returning to their ancestral homeland. In Kazakhstan, where Kazakh is both a

national language and a symbol of ethnic identity, the sociolinguistic dynamics of repatriate families present a unique case. Bokayev et al. (2012) reveal the complex relationship between ethnolinguistic identity and language proficiency among repatriates, but their study does not examine how these dynamics are negotiated within the family unit. Additionally, existing research tends to emphasize the language management practices of families, yet less attention is given to how repatriate families navigate sociolinguistic challenges, such as language hierarchies and integration pressures, in shaping their FLP.

My research aims to address these gaps by focusing on how parental ideologies, management strategies, and the broader sociolinguistic environment influence FLP among repatriate families in Kazakhstan. By examining both the internal (family structure, language practices) and external (sociolinguistic challenges, state language policies) factors shaping FLP, this study will provide a more nuanced understanding of language maintenance and shift in a unique migratory and cultural context. Furthermore, this research will contribute to expanding the geographical and cultural scope of FLP studies, offering insights into how families in post-Soviet, multilingual contexts negotiate their linguistic identities and practices.

Sociolinguistic Challenges

The expanded body of literature on sociolinguistic challenges faced by repatriates and immigrant families highlights the multifaceted nature of adaptation processes in multicultural societies. In particular, Kadyskyzy et al. (2018) identified significant cultural discrepancies, linguistic barriers, and social-psychological obstacles impacting qandas students in Kazakhstan. Their findings underscore the importance of addressing language proficiency and cultural integration to foster better academic and social outcomes.

Berry et al. (2006) expanded on these themes by exploring the acculturation strategies employed by immigrant youth, illustrating how a balanced bicultural identity can enhance well-being. This finding resonates with Tannenbaum's (2012) reconceptualization of family language policy (FLP) as a coping mechanism, which emphasizes the emotional dynamics underlying language decisions within immigrant families.

Trevisani (2022) and Piller (2017) further contextualized these challenges by examining the sociolinguistic adaptation of repatriates in Kazakhstan, particularly the impact of Russian as a dominant language. Arends-Toth and van de Vijver (2006) contributed valuable insights into the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of acculturation, reinforcing the critical role of language proficiency in successful adaptation.

Moreover, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) and Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco (2001) provided foundational perspectives on the second-generation immigrant experience, emphasizing how linguistic challenges can hinder social integration and identity formation. Schmid (2013) and Karaoglu & Oncu (2018) offered additional frameworks for understanding language maintenance and identity dynamics in multilingual contexts, while Friedrich (2016) underscored the role of educational institutions in shaping language policies that support bilingual development.

Existing studies on sociolinguistic challenges faced by repatriates and immigrant families reveal several gaps. Many researchers, such as Tannenbaum (2012) and Piller (2017), emphasize sociocultural adaptation but overlook the formulation of FLP in response to these challenges. Moreover, while studies like those by Arends-Toth and van de Vijver (2006) touch on psychological adaptation, they often neglect the emotional dimensions that influence language use and familial communication strategies.

Additionally, most research focuses on immigrant populations in Western contexts,

leaving a gap in understanding the unique sociolinguistic landscape of Kazakhstan, particularly concerning the interplay between local languages like Kazakh and dominant languages such as Russian.

This research can fill these gaps by providing a comprehensive examination of how repatriate families in Kazakhstan formulate FLP amid sociolinguistic challenges. By integrating psychological frameworks, I will explore the emotional and identity-related factors affecting language choices. Furthermore, my focus on the intergenerational dynamics of language use will reveal how these families navigate their linguistic environments, shedding light on the transmission of language practices across generations. Addressing societal attitudes and stereotypes in relation to language adaptation will also enhance understanding of the broader social integration process for repatriates in Kazakhstan. This approach will contribute valuable insights to the literature on migration and adaptation, particularly in Central Asian contexts.

Summary

This literature review explores the interaction between FLP and the sociolinguistic challenges encountered by repatriate families in Kazakhstan. Using a framework that includes family language ideology, management, and practices, it highlights how these families navigate cultural identity and linguistic integration in a shifting sociopolitical environment. The review examines how beliefs about language influence family communication, the strategies parents use to shape their children's language learning, and the actual language practices within daily interactions. It sheds light on the challenges such as language proficiency gaps and societal pressures, offering insights into how repatriate families negotiate their linguistic and cultural identities in Kazakhstan.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The chapter starts with the research purpose and research questions. Then it proceeds to the description of the research method and design. Then, information about participants, sampling strategy, research site, and data collection instruments are presented. Finally, the data analysis process and ethical considerations along with potential benefits to the participants are described.

Research Purpose and Research Questions

The study will explore FLP among repatriate families and the socio-linguistic challenges they face integrating into the Kazakhstani society, and will be guided by the following research questions:

1. How do family language ideologies influence the formation and implementation of family language policies (FLP) among repatriate families in Kazakhstan?
2. How do FLP decisions impact daily language practices among children in repatriate families in Kazakhstan?
3. How do repatriate families manage competing linguistic demands within their FLP to foster linguistic and cultural integration in Kazakhstan?
4. What are the socio-linguistic challenges faced by the repatriate families with regard to Kazakh and Russian?

Research Method

A qualitative research approach has been chosen to explore repatriate families' language policies and the socio-linguistic challenges they encounter in the process of adaptation. This method has been chosen primarily because it allows for rich, descriptive

accounts, taking into consideration the content-specific nature of participant families' experiences (Creswell, 2013). These descriptions can reveal not only families' actions, but also the motivations, emotions, and meanings underlying these actions, providing a holistic view of their socio-linguistic adaptation. Additionally, qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observations enable researchers to capture the dynamic interplay between individual agency and structural influences, including state language policies, educational systems, and community norms (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This approach is particularly effective in understanding the complexities of language ideologies, family dynamics, and the intergenerational transmission of linguistic practices, which are often embedded in deeply personal and culturally nuanced experiences (King & Fogle, 2006). Furthermore, qualitative research facilitates the identification of emergent themes and patterns, offering insights into both shared challenges and unique strategies employed by repatriate families to navigate multilingual environments. By adopting this approach, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how families negotiate language use in ways that reflect and reshape their identities, social relationships, and integration trajectories (Baldassar et al., 2017).

Within the qualitative inquiry, a case study design has been chosen for several reasons. Firstly, a case study allows for an in-depth, focused exploration of FLP and sociolinguistic challenges among repatriate families in Kazakhstan, taking into consideration the intricate social, cultural, and linguistic factors influencing these policies (Merriam, 1998). Secondly, a case study can accommodate a comparative approach, allowing for FLP comparisons with repatriate families from different countries such as Mongolia and China. By working with two separate repatriate families, each with distinct linguistic and cultural histories, cross-case analysis becomes possible, shedding light on the similarities and differences in their language policies and sociolinguistic challenges

(Yin, 2018). Such a comparative framework not only highlights patterns but also reveals culturally specific strategies families employ to maintain linguistic heritage while adapting to new environments.

Given the exploratory nature of this study, non-probability purposeful sampling will be used to recruit repatriate families because it allows to intentionally select families based on their status, language practices, and family structures. This sampling strategy allows in-depth exploration by recruiting families who are likely to provide comprehensive, nuanced, and insightful data (Creswell, 2013). The participant pool will potentially consist of two repatriate families from Mongolia and China, where the average number of family members is 4-5 people. The main criteria for choosing these families are the following: 1) participant families must have 2-3 children, 2) participant families have lived in Kazakhstan for at least 3-5 years, 3) participant families' children attend or have attended local school in Kazakhstan. Participants will be recruited among Nazarbayev University alumni via telegram chats.

Research Site

The data for this qualitative case study will be collected in the home domains because it is the primary context where family members interact and negotiate language use. This setting allows researchers to observe the natural and habitual language practices of repatriate families in an environment where decisions about language use are made organically and often reflect deeper cultural and emotional ties (Spolsky, 2009). Moreover, within home domains, it is possible to capture not just language choices but also the emotional, cultural, and relational dimensions of language use within the family, such as how language serves as a means of transmitting values, cultural heritage, and identity across generations (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). For repatriate families in Kazakhstan, the

home often becomes a critical site where the interplay between the state-promoted Kazakh language, Russian as a lingua franca, and other heritage languages unfolds, illustrating the unique sociolinguistic dynamics of multilingual adaptation.

The home as a private and intimate space also provides a context where family members are more likely to use their preferred languages without external pressures, such as those imposed by schools or society at large (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This is especially important for repatriate families, who may face conflicting demands to integrate into the local linguistic landscape while preserving their linguistic heritage. Data collection in the home can provide insights into how parents establish and enforce language policies, how children negotiate or resist these policies, and how external factors, such as schooling or community interactions, influence these dynamics (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008). Observing and documenting language practices in this domain can reveal not only the linguistic patterns but also the ideological and affective underpinnings that shape family language policies, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of the sociolinguistic challenges faced by repatriate families.

Data Collection Instruments

Within this study there are three research instruments to collect data: 1) a written narrative, 2) semi-structured interviews, and 3) non-participant observation.

Written narratives allow for a collection of data through personal stories, offering insights into how repatriate families interpret their experiences and realities (Earthly et al., 2008). The prompts for written narratives include general background information including age, education level, occupation, and family structure. Additionally, the prompts will also focus on motivations behind moving to Kazakhstan. The last prompt probes into the linguistic background and how it has changed since moving to Kazakhstan.

The second research instrument is a semi-structured interview, which allows to gather in-depth responses to identify participant families' perspectives, feelings, and motivations about family language policy (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). While there is a predetermined set of questions, the semi-structured nature allows for follow-up questions, clarifications, and probing, enabling deeper exploration of the family language policy and the socio-linguistic challenges faced by repatriate families (Kvale, 2007). There are in total 16 questions and the interview will last for 60-90 minutes. The individual interview with participant parents will take place in the home domain. The conversation between the researcher and the participant families will be audio recorded only with parents' permission.

Lastly, non-participant observation allows collecting data on actual behavior in real-time, without relying on self-reports that may be biased or inaccurate (Cohen et al., 2011). This method is particularly valuable in the context of studying FLPs among repatriate families, as it enables to capture authentic interactions, routines, and language choices as they occur naturally within the home environment. Observing real-life settings provides a unique opportunity to document how linguistic decisions are negotiated in spontaneous contexts, such as mealtime conversations, interactions during family activities, or parent-child discussions about homework. These naturally occurring moments reveal not only the overt language practices but also the subtle, implicit dynamics of power, authority, and affection that influence family language policy (Luykx, 2005). Therefore, observation is used to study repatriate families' family language policy in real-life settings.

Data Analysis Process

Data analysis for this study will go through several key stages such as data preparation, coding, thematic analysis, contextualizing, narrative construction, and, finally, reporting findings (Braun et al., 2006). Firstly, written narratives will be coded to identify key themes. Then, responses from the semi-structured interviews will be transcribed into a written form to find common patterns. Notes from the observation will also be transcribed and coded. Once themes are identified, the findings are interpreted within the broader social, cultural, and linguistic context, and included in the thesis.

Data analysis for this study will go through several key stages, including data preparation, coding, thematic analysis, contextualizing, narrative construction, and, finally, reporting findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These stages ensure a systematic approach to extracting meaning from qualitative data while maintaining rigor and reliability. Firstly, written narratives from participants will be coded to identify recurring themes and patterns that reflect their family language practices and sociolinguistic challenges. This process will involve both inductive and deductive coding, allowing the researcher to uncover new insights while remaining guided by the study's theoretical framework (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Responses from the semi-structured interviews will then be transcribed into written form, ensuring verbatim accuracy to preserve the richness of participants' expressions. These transcriptions will be analyzed to find commonalities, contradictions, and unique insights across participants' experiences, enabling a comparative perspective. Observational notes taken during non-participant observation sessions will also be transcribed and coded, focusing on non-verbal cues, contextual factors, and implicit language practices that might not emerge in interviews or narratives. These multiple data

sources will undergo triangulation to validate findings and ensure the credibility of interpretations (Patton, 2015).

Once the key themes are identified, they will be contextualized within the broader social, cultural, and linguistic landscape of Kazakhstan, taking into account the unique dynamics of repatriate families. This contextualization will illuminate how national language policies intersect with individual family practices and ideologies. Finally, the findings will be synthesized into a cohesive narrative, highlighting the lived experiences of repatriate families while addressing the study's research questions. These results will contribute to the broader discourse on family language policy and sociolinguistic adaptation, forming the basis for the thesis and potential future publications.

Ethical Considerations

To follow ethical considerations within the study, all data will be collected once the ethics application has been approved from GSE IREC. Given the qualitative nature of this research and its focus on repatriate families' language policies and sociolinguistic challenges, several ethical safeguards will be implemented to uphold research integrity and maintain participants' trust.

First, all participants will receive detailed information about the study, including its objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. This will be provided through an informed consent form written in clear, accessible language. Participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions before voluntarily agreeing to participate. Special care will be taken to ensure participants understand that they can withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

During the data collection process all research sites and participant information will be assigned pseudonyms or codes to ensure confidentiality. This measure ensures the protection of individual identities (Creswell, 2013). While data is being analyzed, observation notes, interview recordings and transcriptions will be securely stored in a password-protected cloud repository, with restricted access limited to the researcher and the supervisor. Upon receiving approval from the GSE IREC, all the data and findings will be published strictly using pseudonyms. After the research is complete and the results are reported, all the data including interview audios, transcriptions along with observation notes will be erased once the research work, including the publication, is complete.

Although the study is designed to be minimally intrusive and respectful of participants' rights and well-being, certain minor risks associated with the research should be acknowledged. One potential risk relates to the confidentiality of participants. Although strict precautions will be taken to safeguard participants' identities, it is important to acknowledge that full anonymity cannot be entirely ensured due to the nature of the study. Participants might unintentionally share information during interviews that could reveal their identities. Pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants in the final report and no identifying information will be disclosed to minimize this risk. While asking about the socio-linguistic challenges and beliefs, participants may feel vulnerable or uncomfortable during interviews. The researcher will foster a supportive, non-judgmental atmosphere during the interviews to reduce emotional risks. Participants will be informed that they have the right to skip any questions they find upsetting. Additionally, they will be reminded that their participation is entirely voluntary, emphasizing their freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any repercussions.

Given the intimate nature of home observations and interviews, it is important to minimize any perceived power imbalances between the researcher and participants. The researcher will emphasize their role as a neutral observer and active listener rather than an authority figure. This approach aims to reduce any discomfort participants may feel and encourage authentic, uninhibited responses.

Benefits of the Research

The study does not directly benefit the participants but can contribute to the sense making of their family language policy and language beliefs. For instance, participation might provide them with the unique opportunity for self-reflection and increased self-awareness regarding their language management practices and ideologies. Most importantly, the findings from the study will contribute to a wider understanding about FLP among repatriate families and it will inform policymakers and other relevant stakeholders about the challenges faced by repatriate families. Considering that FLP is a relatively under-researched topic in the context of Kazakhstan, the findings of this study could also contribute to theory-building in the scholarship.

Summary

To sum up, this chapter outlined the methodological framework used to explore FLP and the sociolinguistic challenges faced by repatriate families in Kazakhstan. The chapter began by restating the research purpose and questions guiding the inquiry. A qualitative case study approach was employed to allow for in-depth exploration of participants' lived experiences, particularly through written narratives, semi-structured interviews, and non-participant observations conducted in home settings. The upcoming chapter will explore how FLP is shaped by family ideologies, language practices, and

external influences, and will illuminate the sociolinguistic challenges repatriate families encounter as they navigate integration into Kazakhstani society.

Chapter 4: Findings

The study explores family language policy among repatriate families and the socio-linguistic challenges they face integrating into the Kazakhstani society based on three participant families residing in Astana and Shymkent who immigrated from China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan. The participant mothers' names have been substituted with pseudonyms such as Aisha, who comes from Mongolia, Dana from China, and Fatima from Uzbekistan. There are four main research questions addressed in the study, which are the following:

- 1) How do family language ideologies influence the formation and implementation of family language policies (FLP) among repatriate families in Kazakhstan?
- 2) How do repatriate families manage competing linguistic demands within their FLP to foster linguistic and cultural integration in Kazakhstan?
- 3) How do FLP decisions impact daily language practices among children in repatriate families in Kazakhstan?
- 4) What are the socio-linguistic challenges faced by the repatriate families with regard to Kazakh and Russian?

This chapter elaborates on seven main themes which appeared as a result of the analysis of interview data. The chapter concludes with a summary.

RQ1: How do family language ideologies influence the formation and implementation of Family Language Policies (FLP) among repatriate families in Kazakhstan?

Family Language Policies (FLP) among repatriate families in Kazakhstan are shaped by the interplay of language ideology, language management, and language practices, as outlined in Spolsky's (2004) tripartite model. Language ideology refers to deeply held beliefs and attitudes about language status, use, and function, which influence

family decisions regarding linguistic transmission and maintenance. For repatriate families, these ideologies are often rooted in a strong attachment to Kazakh as a heritage language and a symbol of national and cultural identity (Fishman, 1991). Language management involves explicit efforts to regulate language use within the family, such as setting rules for speaking Kazakh at home or enrolling children in Kazakh-medium education (Spolsky, 2009). These management strategies, however, may be challenged by external sociolinguistic pressures. Language practices, the actual patterns of language use in daily life, may not always align with ideological beliefs or management efforts. In urban Kazakhstan, where Russian remains dominant in education, employment, and public discourse, repatriate families often encounter difficulties in maintaining exclusive Kazakh language use, leading to complex bilingual or diglossic practices (Smagulova, 2021). The tension between ideological commitment, managerial strategies, and actual language practices underscores the fluid and adaptive nature of FLP in Kazakhstan.

Kazakh as a Sign of National Identity

For all three repatriate families, the Kazakh language is a central pillar of their national identity, serving as the primary motivation for their immigration to Kazakhstan. Their deep emotional and cultural attachment to the language is evident in their personal narratives.

Participant Aisha, who was born and raised in Mongolia, moved to Kazakhstan to pursue higher education. Reflecting on her linguistic and cultural identity, she states:

I believe that a person cannot be wholesome and self-fulfilled without proper knowledge of the mother tongue. Deep inner feelings can be touched only by the mother tongue. The feelings of belonging, longing, love, respect, grief ... all these feelings can be best expressed in the

mother tongue. So, I feel proud to return to an independent country of mine, where my Kazakh is the state language. My children also share our love towards the Kazakh language and respect their mother tongue.

This statement underscores her strong emotional connection to the Kazakh language, viewing it as an essential part of her identity and sense of belonging. Furthermore, she emphasizes her pride in returning to an independent Kazakhstan, where Kazakh holds official status, and her desire to pass this linguistic heritage on to her children.

A similar sentiment is expressed by Participant Dana, who was born in a Kazakh speaking village in China near the Kazakhstani border. She and her repatriate husband from China relocated to Kazakhstan with their two children for employment and educational opportunities. She recalls the formative role of her family in shaping her attachment to the Kazakh language:

Back in my childhood, my grandparents used to read me poems and fairy tales in Kazakh. They also taught me to love and respect the Kazakh language and culture. So, I had been longing to live in an independent Kazakhstan, where people speak only Kazakh. My husband and I had also been longing for the rich Kazakh culture.

Her response highlights the influence of her grandparents in fostering a deep appreciation for Kazakh language and culture. This early exposure instilled in her a lifelong desire to settle in Kazakhstan, where she could fully embrace her linguistic and cultural heritage.

Similarly, Participant Fatima, who was born and raised in Bostandyk village in Uzbekistan near Kazakhstan's southern border, reinforces the strong link between language and national identity. She describes her long-standing aspiration to return to Kazakhstan:

Although I was born and raised in a Kazakh-speaking village in Uzbekistan, since childhood, I had longed to move to Kazakhstan and speak Kazakh freely with my peers. Having an opportunity to communicate in a mother tongue in a home country is priceless. This is the land where my grandparents had lived and fought for its independence. So, I was always emotionally attached to Kazakhstan and the Kazakh language. Actually, my husband and children communicate only in Kazakh without translanguaging.

Like the previous two participants, Fatima perceives Kazakh as more than just a means of communication, it is a crucial aspect of her identity and a bridge to her ancestors. She values the opportunity to use her mother tongue freely in her homeland and emphasizes her family's commitment to preserving the language through exclusive use in daily communication.

Overall, these three accounts illustrate how Kazakh serves as a powerful symbol of national identity for repatriate families. Their deep-rooted connection to the language, shaped by personal, familial, and cultural influences, ultimately drove their decision to return to Kazakhstan.

English Language Second in Priority after Kazakh

Among the repatriate families interviewed, two reported that they prioritize English as a second language after Kazakh, largely due to its global applicability and the educational opportunities it offers. Their perspectives highlight the significance of English in securing a bright academic and professional future for their children.

Participant Aisha strongly emphasizes the importance of English, positioning it as a crucial language for advancement. She explains:

As for English, my husband and I prioritize English after Kazakh. We believe that English is the language of educational opportunities and a bright future. All educational materials are provided in English. We dream about our children enrolling at the top universities abroad.

English is the language of international communication. Moreover, my work is directly related to teaching and learning English, so I prioritize this language for my children.

Her statement reflects a strategic approach to language acquisition, where English is seen not only as a tool for higher education but also as a gateway to international opportunities. Additionally, her professional background in teaching and learning English reinforces her commitment to ensuring that her children develop proficiency in the language. This is also observed in her children's active use of English for educational purposes. Her children are among the top of their class in terms of English knowledge and have won various international academic competitions. Aisha and her husband also actively use English for work purposes.

Similarly, Participant Dana also prioritizes English for its role in accessing global economic and academic opportunities. She states:

The second language widely spoken and taught to my children is English because it is an opportunity to enter global economies. I have a positive attitude towards English because it allowed us to quickly adapt during my master's studies at Nazarbayev University.

Her perspective underscores the instrumental value of English in higher education and professional mobility. Having personally benefited from English during her studies at Nazarbayev University, she recognizes its potential to provide her children with similar advantages in the future. Her children are fluent in English and use it well for educational purposes. Dana and her husband are both fluent in English and use it actively at work.

In contrast, Participant Fatima has had a different experience with English. Unlike the other two participants, she has never learned the language herself, which makes it challenging for her to support her children in learning it. Although she sincerely hopes that her children will become proficient in English and develop the skills necessary to become global leaders, she has faced barriers in providing them with formal instruction. Due to financial and logistical constraints, she has been unable to enroll them in extracurricular language classes or hire private tutors.

Overall, while English is widely acknowledged among repatriate families as a valuable second language, access to learning opportunities varies. Participants Aisha and Dana actively prioritize English, recognizing its role in securing academic and professional success for their children. However, Participant Fatima's experience highlights the challenges that some families face in acquiring English due to limited resources. These

contrasting experiences demonstrate how socioeconomic factors influence language acquisition and shape educational aspirations among repatriate families.

Common Negative Attitude towards Russian language

All three participants expressed negative attitudes toward the Russian language, although the intensity of their sentiments varied. Their perspectives were shaped by personal experiences, with some encountering linguistic discrimination and others being largely unaffected due to their geographic and social environments.

Aisha had the most negative perception of Russian, shaped by direct experiences of mistreatment after migrating to Kazakhstan. Initially, she viewed Russian as just another foreign language. However, after settling in Pavlodar and Karagandy, her feelings shifted to resentment. She recalls facing frequent discrimination due to her lack of Russian proficiency, making daily life and employment opportunities challenging.

We were often scolded and mistreated because we did not speak Russian. Finding a job was nearly impossible, as employers prioritized Russian over Kazakh or even English. In some cases, we couldn't even buy basic necessities because sellers refused to give us bread unless we pronounced the word correctly in Russian.

Over time, this exclusion led to deep frustration, particularly in the northern regions of Kazakhstan, where Russian remained dominant. She describes feeling as though she had not moved to Kazakhstan but rather to Russia. However, her experience in the southern and western parts of the country was markedly different—there, Kazakh was widely spoken, and people appeared more patriotic.

As a result, she developed a strong opposition to Russian, considering it a "language of colonizers" and refusing to support her children in learning it.

Similarly, Participant Dana developed a negative attitude toward Russian after moving to Kazakhstan, though her initial exposure to the language was minimal. She explains:

Before migration, Russian was not present in my surroundings, so I had no particular attitude toward it. However, after arriving in Kazakhstan, I was surprised to see how dominant it was. Many ethnic Kazakhs prioritize Russian over their native language, which I see as a sad reality and a form of mental colonization.

Her statement highlights a broader sociolinguistic issue in Kazakhstan, where Russian continues to hold significant influence, often at the expense of Kazakh.

In contrast, Participant Fatima remained largely indifferent toward the Russian language, as she had never encountered a situation that required its use. Growing up in a Kazakh-speaking village near Shymkent and later studying at a university in the same city, she had little exposure to Russian. Since Shymkent, located in southern Kazakhstan, is predominantly Kazakh-speaking, she never faced linguistic barriers and thus did not develop a strong opinion on Russian.

Overall, the participants' attitudes toward Russian were shaped by their personal experiences and regional contexts. Those who lived in Russian-dominant areas, like Pavlodar and Karagandy, experienced discrimination and exclusion, fostering resentment toward the language. Meanwhile, those from Kazakh-speaking regions, such as Shymkent, had limited interaction with Russian and, as a result, did not form strong opinions about it.

These differing perspectives highlight the ongoing linguistic and cultural tensions within Kazakhstan, reflecting broader discussions on language policy, national identity, and post-colonial influences.

RQ2: How do repatriate families manage competing linguistic demands within their FLP to foster linguistic and cultural integration in Kazakhstan?

Family language management, as a crucial component of Spolsky's (2004) Family Language Policy (FLP) framework, involves deliberate parental efforts to regulate language use within the household. Among repatriate families in Kazakhstan, language management is shaped by competing linguistic demands, as parents strive to maintain Kazakh as the dominant home language while navigating the necessity of Russian and English for broader social and educational integration.

Key Role of Parents in Language Learning

Mothers play a central role in shaping their children's language development, often taking on the primary responsibility for language management within the household. Across all three participants, a common theme emerges: a strong emphasis on Kazakh as the primary language, followed by varying degrees of exposure to English and, to a lesser extent, Russian. However, fathers also contribute significantly to language transmission, particularly through their reinforcement of linguistic values, engagement in family discussions, and influence over educational decisions.

Participant Aisha highlights the shared vision she and her husband have regarding language management in their family. Since her husband is the primary breadwinner, she spends more time at home with their children, assisting them with homework and fostering a reading habit from an early age. She explains:

I start with Kazakh books and incorporate interactive resources in English. However, due to time constraints, I have not yet integrated Mongolian, Turkish, or Russian into their learning. Since their curriculum is entirely in Kazakh, Russian remains an optional foreign language at school.

Her approach reflects a deliberate prioritization of Kazakh and English, aligning with her children's academic curriculum and future opportunities. While she is more actively involved in daily language learning activities, her husband reinforces the importance of Kazakh through cultural discussions and storytelling, emphasizing its role in national identity.

Similarly, Participant Dana actively encourages her children to use Kazakh as their primary language, both at home and in school. Since their formal education is conducted in Kazakh, maintaining fluency is relatively effortless. However, she also makes a conscious effort to integrate English into their daily routine:

I try to speak to my children in English for at least half an hour every day so they can practice at home. Additionally, they attend English classes to prepare for university admissions, particularly for institutions like Nazarbayev University or other foreign universities. When they have free time, they also try to read in Russian.

Her strategy demonstrates a balanced approach, ensuring that while Kazakh remains dominant, English receives adequate reinforcement to support future academic aspirations. Meanwhile, her husband plays a complementary role by modeling bilingual communication. For example, he frequently engages the children in discussions about current events in Kazakh and introduces professional vocabulary in English, particularly related to STEM and business, which he believes will benefit them in the future.

Participant Fatima follows a similar pattern, reinforcing Kazakh as the primary language in her household. She describes their daily routine:

I do homework with my children in Kazakh, and their grandparents also read to them in Kazakh. We prioritize Kazakh as the first language and English as the second. Living in Shymkent, where exposure to Russian is minimal, we rarely practice it at home. In reality, my children communicate exclusively in Kazakh both inside and outside the house.

Her experience underscores how geographical context influences language exposure, reinforcing Kazakh as the dominant language in her children's upbringing. Additionally, her husband plays an active role in shaping the children's linguistic environment. While he spends less time on direct instruction, he reinforces Kazakh through storytelling and historical narratives, emphasizing its role in cultural continuity. He also expresses strong opinions about the necessity of English, encouraging the children to develop proficiency for academic and career advancement.

Their responses collectively highlight the significant role both mothers and fathers play in shaping their children's language learning experiences. In all three cases, Kazakh is the primary language, reinforced through daily communication, school education, and reading practices. English is strategically integrated as a secondary language, particularly for future academic and career opportunities. While mothers are more engaged in structured learning activities, fathers contribute through cultural reinforcement, professional aspirations, and ideological support for multilingualism. Meanwhile, Russian exposure varies depending on regional factors, with some families engaging with it minimally. These insights reflect broader patterns in family language policy, where both parents act as key facilitators in ensuring language transmission and development within multilingual households.

RQ3: How do FLP decisions impact daily language practices among children in repatriate families in Kazakhstan?

FLP decisions play a crucial role in shaping the daily language practices of children in repatriate families in Kazakhstan. Spolsky (2004) emphasizes that FLP consists of language ideology, management, and practices, all of which influence how children engage with multiple languages in everyday interactions. Among repatriate families, parental decisions about home language use, school choice, and exposure to external linguistic environments determine the extent to which children maintain Kazakh as their dominant language while acquiring Russian and English for broader social integration (Curd-Christiansen, 2018).

Kazakh as a Primary Language of Communication among Children

Among the participants, a clear pattern emerges regarding children's language use: Kazakh remains the dominant language of communication both at home and in social settings. While some exposure to other languages exists, particularly English, Kazakh is overwhelmingly the preferred medium for interaction.

Participant Aisha emphasizes that her children use Kazakh exclusively in their daily lives. She explains: "At home, they speak Kazakh, and they also communicate with their friends at the playground and school solely in Kazakh, without mixing it with Russian."

Beyond her family, she extends this commitment to her professional life, maintaining an educational blog in Kazakh and using only Kazakh and English when interacting with her students. Her experience reflects a conscious effort to promote Kazakh as both a household language and a tool for professional communication.

Similarly, Participant Dana highlights that Kazakh remains the primary language spoken by her children at home and in social settings. However, she also notes that their exposure to English comes from digital platforms and extracurricular courses: "My children mostly speak Kazakh at home and in public, but they also engage with English through social media and additional language classes." This suggests a bilingual environment where Kazakh dominates daily interactions while English serves as an important supplementary language for educational and entertainment purposes.

Participant Fatima reinforces this trend, emphasizing the exclusive use of Kazakh within her household and extended family: "All four of my children, along with our extended family, speak only Kazakh in everyday conversations and in public spaces." Her statement underscores how Kazakh remains deeply embedded in family life and the broader community, maintaining its role as the central language of interaction.

The responses collectively illustrate that Kazakh is the predominant language of communication among children, used consistently in both home and public settings. While English is introduced through digital platforms and extracurricular activities, it remains secondary to Kazakh in daily conversations. Notably, Russian is either absent or intentionally excluded from children's linguistic practices, further reinforcing Kazakh as the primary means of communication. These insights highlight the strong role of family and community in maintaining Kazakh language use across generations.

Repatriate Families' Efforts in Preserving Kazakh while Living Abroad

Repatriate families have successfully maintained their Kazakh language despite growing up outside Kazakhstan, largely due to the influence of family, community, and educational opportunities. Each participant highlights different factors that contributed to their language preservation.

Participant Aisha attributes her and her siblings' ability to maintain Kazakh to both their parents and the surrounding Kazakh-speaking community in Mongolia. She explains, "My siblings and I have succeeded in preserving our heritage Kazakh language while living in Mongolia mainly because of our parents and community. Our school used Kazakh as a medium of instruction, and our parents put a lot of effort into teaching us Kazakh." Additionally, she notes that while she initially struggled with adapting to the Kazakh dialect upon moving to Kazakhstan, her children did not face the same challenges: "Although I struggled with adhering to the Kazakh dialect at first, my children have not encountered any such difficulties."

Similarly, Participant Dana grew up in a village near the East Kazakhstan border, where Kazakh was the dominant language in both home and educational settings. She recalls, "I had been raised in a purely Kazakh-speaking community in my village close to the East Kazakhstan border. There used to be a Kazakh-medium school where learning materials were available in Kazakh." However, she expresses concern over recent changes: "Over the last 5–10 years, these Kazakh-medium educational institutions have been closed due to political reasons." Growing up in a large extended family also played a significant role in her language retention. She explains, "I grew up in a big extended family with multiple siblings and grandparents. All of the family members usually spoke in Kazakh at home and switched to Chinese outside the home domain." While these factors enabled both Dana and her husband to maintain their Kazakh fluency, their dialect differs from the one commonly spoken in Kazakhstan. However, their children, who were raised in urban areas of China, faced more challenges in maintaining the language: "My children found it more difficult to preserve Kazakh because they used to live in the urban areas of China."

Participant Fatima also grew up in a Kazakh-speaking village near Kazakhstan's southern border. She describes her experience, saying, "I used to live in a Kazakh-speaking village close to the southern borders of Kazakhstan. Actually, Bostandyk village is located very close to Shymkent, so there were Kazakh-medium public schools and other educational projects in Kazakh." She highlights that these schools are still actively functioning in Uzbekistan. Additionally, her strong network of relatives and friends in the village helped reinforce her language skills: "I had plenty of relatives and friends residing in the village, which made it easy to continue speaking Kazakh in daily life."

The experiences of these repatriate families reveal that maintaining Kazakh outside of Kazakhstan depends on a combination of factors, including family commitment, access to Kazakh-medium education, and a strong Kazakh-speaking community. While individuals raised in rural Kazakh-speaking environments found it easier to preserve their linguistic heritage, those who later moved to urban settings often faced greater challenges. Nonetheless, the dedication of parents and cultural networks has played a crucial role in ensuring the continued use of Kazakh among repatriate families.

RQ4: What are the sociolinguistic challenges faced by the repatriate families with regard to Kazakh and Russian?

Socioeconomic and Linguistic Barriers in Initial Adaptation

Repatriate families encountered various sociolinguistic and economic challenges upon their arrival in Kazakhstan, with experiences differing based on location, language background, and socioeconomic factors. Participant Aisha recalls facing significant financial and legal struggles, stating, "At first, it was difficult to obtain citizenship and find employment." These difficulties were further exacerbated by linguistic barriers, especially in northern Kazakhstan, where Russian is widely spoken. She describes feeling socially

excluded due to speaking only Kazakh with a dialect: "There were moments when I could not even do grocery shopping without being scolded by people around me." This led to immense stress and alienation, at times making her consider leaving Kazakhstan altogether.

Similarly, Participant Fatima faced employment challenges, explaining, "Initially, it was difficult to obtain citizenship and secure a job, but over time, these problems were resolved." However, even after overcoming initial obstacles, she struggled with systemic corruption, which hindered her ability to find stable work: "I have continuously faced instances of corruption whenever I tried to get hired."

Role of Geographic Location in Adaptation

The location where families settled greatly influenced their adaptation. Aisha noted that moving to Astana significantly improved their situation, as the city's diverse migrant population led to fewer social challenges: "Astana is a megacity full of migrants from different regions, so there are fewer social problems here".

Conversely, families settling in Russian-speaking areas faced additional linguistic barriers. Dana, who immigrated from China, acknowledged some dialectal differences but did not face major adaptation challenges. In contrast, Aisha experienced discrimination in northern Kazakhstan, where Russian was dominant, which contributed to her difficulties in daily life.

Impact of Prior Preparation and Socioeconomic Status on Adaptation

Dana emphasized the importance of financial stability and education in easing her family's transition: "Both my husband and I received a high-quality education in China and saved up some money before moving to Kazakhstan. Probably, all these factors really contributed to our successful adaptation". While she and her husband adapted relatively

easily, their two older children, who were born and raised in China, initially struggled with language barriers: "At first, they were excluded because they spoke with an accent and did not know Russian. Unfortunately, most children communicate in Russian in informal settings." However, thanks to teacher support, they eventually integrated into the school community: "Thanks to the teachers' support, the most difficult moments are in the past".

Linguistic Integration and Children's Adaptation

While adults, particularly those speaking Kazakh with a dialect, often faced linguistic discrimination, their children generally adapted more easily, particularly in Kazakh-speaking environments. Fatima expressed relief that her children had not experienced similar struggles: "Luckily, my children have not faced any issues with integration because everyone around them speaks Kazakh". She also highlighted their social success: "My children are very socially open and actively take part in school life".

Dana, despite her initial worries about her children's adaptation, ultimately saw them integrate with the help of teachers. Her perspective reflects a common pattern where younger generations adjust more smoothly, provided they receive institutional support.

Political and Cultural Motivations for Repatriation

For some repatriates, the decision to move was driven not only by economic or linguistic considerations but also by political pressures in their countries of origin. Dana described the deteriorating situation in China, which made relocation increasingly necessary: "Over the last decade, it was becoming increasingly difficult to live in China because the state started closing all Kazakh educational institutions and depriving Kazakh people of their civic rights." Her sense of belonging and cultural identity also played a role in her satisfaction with life in Kazakhstan: "I have felt exhilarated and happy since moving

to Astana because it is so developed, and people are kind here. I also feel happy to be surrounded by ethnically Kazakh people instead of only Chinese."

Summary

This study explores the formation and implementation of FLP among repatriate families in Kazakhstan, focusing on how family language ideologies, management strategies, and sociolinguistic challenges shape children's linguistic practices. Findings reveal that while parents prioritize Kazakh as the primary home language, external pressures such as the dominance of Russian in education and public spaces complicate language maintenance. Mothers, as key language socialization agents, play a central role in FLP, but the absence of fathers' and children's perspectives limits the study's scope. Additionally, repatriate families face significant adaptation challenges, including discrimination and limited institutional support for Kazakh, particularly in Russian-dominant regions. Despite these obstacles, strategic language management practices, such as structured exposure to Kazakh in educational settings and social networks, help foster linguistic integration. Future research should adopt a more inclusive approach by incorporating diverse family members' perspectives to gain a more comprehensive understanding of FLP dynamics in Kazakhstan.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter discusses the key findings of this study on family language policies (FLPs) and sociolinguistic challenges among repatriate families in Kazakhstan. The analysis is guided by Spolsky's (2004) tripartite model of FLP, which examines the dynamic interplay between language ideologies, practices, and management within the family domain. By comparing empirical findings with existing literature, this chapter aims to interpret how repatriate families navigate the trilingual education and the sociolinguistic challenges they faced after moving to Kazakhstan.

Key Findings

The first research question focused on how family language ideologies influence the formation and implementation of FLPs. One of the strongest patterns across all cases was the deep ideological commitment to the Kazakh language. Repatriate families viewed Kazakh as more than a means of communication—it was seen as a cultural anchor and an emblem of national identity. This aligns with previous studies (Smagulova, 2008; Pavlenko, 2011) that situate Kazakh language as a cornerstone of post-Soviet nation-building and identity reconstruction in Kazakhstan.

The findings also illustrate that this ideological orientation was a primary motivator for repatriation, underscoring a desire to reestablish cultural belonging through language. Such views resonate with Curdt-Christiansen's (2009) idea of language ideology as the driving force behind FLP decisions. In line with Spolsky's model, these beliefs are shaped by both daily practices and long-term goals, such as schooling preferences and peer socialization.

The second research question addressed how families manage linguistic demands within their FLP to foster integration. A clear pattern emerged: Kazakh is the dominant and preferred language, followed by English due to its perceived global value. Russian was widely rejected or deprioritized, often due to past experiences of linguistic discrimination.

This hierarchy of languages reflects a complex negotiation between ideology (Kazakh as heritage), instrumentality (English for education), and resistance (Russian as a remnant of colonial legacy). Parents' prioritization of English aligns with broader global trends (e.g., King et al., 2008; Park & Wee, 2012), where English is pursued for upward mobility while the heritage language remains emotionally salient.

Interestingly, while rejecting Russian might appear impractical given its continued dominance in many public domains—particularly in urban centers, education, and media—the families in this study framed their stance as a conscious act of linguistic resistance and cultural self-protection. This finding stands in contrast to earlier studies such as Smagulova (2017), who emphasized the instrumental rationality behind choosing Russian, often portraying it as a “language of upward mobility” and a necessary tool for navigating professional and bureaucratic life in Kazakhstan. However, participants in this study emphasized emotional and ideological dimensions that at times outweighed pragmatic considerations. For instance, Aisha explained, “I know Russian helps with jobs, but I don't want my children to feel that Kazakh is not enough. If we switch at home, they'll lose it.” Dana stated, “We've already lost too much of our identity. At least at home, we keep Kazakh alive.” These perspectives refute the utilitarian framing presented in previous literature, revealing a deeper affective commitment to language as a marker of identity and belonging. In resisting Russian in their home domains, families were not merely rejecting a language, but also making a symbolic statement about cultural

continuity and linguistic sovereignty. Thus, these findings support the argument that language ideologies, particularly those grounded in affect and identity, play a crucial role in shaping family language policy, often in tension with the dominant societal hierarchies.

Repatriate families appear to have effectively maintained Kazakh even while living abroad, largely due to a combination of consistent family efforts, support from Kazakh-speaking community networks, and access to cultural education such as weekend language schools and cultural gatherings. This challenges widespread assumptions that living in non-Kazakh speaking countries necessarily leads to language attrition or loss. Instead, these families demonstrate that heritage language preservation is possible through intentional planning and deep emotional investment, aligning with Tannenbaum and Berkovich's (2005) emphasis on family resilience as a key factor in maintaining linguistic continuity across migration contexts. Dana reflected:

Even while living in China, we always spoke Kazakh at home. Our ethnically Kazakh neighbors and family friends all communicated in Kazakh. Moreover, my two older sons learned Chinese language at kindergarten, but at home, they knew Kazakh was our root.

Similarly, Aisha reported that her grandparents used to retell fairytales in Kazakh. Moreover, in their Kazakh community there was a library with an access to Kazakh books and learning resources. So, this background let her preserve her Kazakh language and cultural belonging. These narratives underscore how deliberate language planning and culturally meaningful routines can act as protective mechanisms against language loss, even in overwhelmingly dominant-language environments. As Tannenbaum and Berkovich (2005) argue, the family unit can serve as a stabilizing force, transmitting not

just linguistic knowledge but also cultural identity and emotional belonging across generations and borders.

Parents also functioned as language managers, with both mothers and fathers taking active roles in promoting Kazakh use and encouraging English in educational contexts. Their conscious decisions to limit Russian exposure and promote Kazakh demonstrate the active and strategic nature of FLP (Spolsky, 2009).

The final research question addressed the sociolinguistic challenges repatriate families face. Several families reported linguistic discrimination, particularly related to their accent or use of non-standard Kazakh or Russian. These challenges were more pronounced in urban environments, where Russian dominance is often stronger. This supports Shohamy's (2006) argument that language policies, although officially inclusive, are often enforced through implicit norms and informal practices that marginalize minority speakers. This pattern is explicit in Aisha's case, where her family struggled a lot at the beginning after immigrating from Mongolia. She explained that she had experienced social exclusion due to speaking Kazakh with a Mongolian accent.

In addition to sociolinguistic struggles, families also reported economic and educational challenges, particularly during the initial resettlement period. Access to Kazakh-medium schools and qualified teachers was inconsistent across regions, highlighting the uneven implementation of national language policy. This finding aligns with Fierman's (2006) critique of the Kazakh language revival, which, despite its symbolic and political prominence, often lacks the institutional infrastructure and material support necessary to guarantee equitable access to quality Kazakh-language education. Aisha shared, "When we came back from Mongolia and settled in the north of Kazakhstan, we wanted our daughter to attend a Kazakh school. But in our district, the teachers were not

fluent themselves, and they mixed Russian in every subject.” She also commented, “We had to move to another city just to find a proper Kazakh school. It wasn’t easy, but we didn’t want our children to lose the language.” These accounts highlight a disconnect between policy-level ambitions and on-the-ground realities, revealing how language planning without adequate systemic support can inadvertently exacerbate inequality, particularly for repatriated families seeking linguistic reintegration. Thus, while families are ideologically committed to Kazakh, structural constraints sometimes impede their goals of integration, leading to frustration and a sense of exclusion.

Across all findings, one thread appears to be consistent: parental agency is central in shaping family language outcomes. Parents act not just as caregivers, but also as policymakers within their homes, prioritizing certain languages, rejecting others, and making deliberate educational choices. Both mothers and fathers contributed to language transmission, though often in different ways. While mothers engaged in everyday scaffolding and correction, fathers frequently emphasized ideological alignment and long-term goals. This distribution of roles reflects Curdt-Christiansen’s (2013) notion of “collaborative language management” (21) and adds nuance to Spolsky’s model by illustrating how gendered responsibilities influence FLP. It also shows that FLP is not static; it is continually negotiated in response to new educational demands, peer interactions, and shifts in family circumstances.

Findings related to the Literature Review

This research explores the FLP of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, examining the ways in which families navigate sociolinguistic challenges arising from their migration experiences. The findings highlight the importance of language proficiency, emotional dynamics, and acculturation strategies in shaping FLPs. To understand these findings, it is

essential to situate them within Spolsky's (2004) theoretical framework of Family Language Policy, which is amended here to include elements of family language ideology, management, practices, and sociolinguistic challenges. By incorporating these dimensions, the discussion below draws upon Spolsky's framework while extending it to address the unique dynamics at play within the repatriate families in Kazakhstan.

Family Language Ideology: Emotional and Identity-Driven Language Decisions

Spolsky's (2004) concept of family language ideology offers a useful conceptual frame to understanding how repatriate families in Kazakhstan manage their language choices. Family language ideologies refer to the beliefs and values that families hold about language use, which are often influenced by broader societal attitudes, educational policies, and personal experiences. In this research, the emotional and identity-driven nature of language decisions emerged as a significant finding, highlighting that language is not just a tool for communication but also a means for cultural preservation and identity formation.

This perspective is supported by Turgaleyeva (2017), who examined Armenian families in Kazakhstan and found that their language ideologies and practices are deeply intertwined with ethnic identity construction. The study emphasizes the influence of both macro-level factors, such as official language policies, and micro-level factors, like individual family beliefs, on language maintenance and shift.

Further, Pawliszko (2021) explored the emotional dimensions of language choice among Kazakh-Russian bilinguals, revealing that many individuals perceive their first language as more emotionally resonant. Participants reported that expressing affection and intimate emotions felt more authentic in their native language, suggesting that emotional connections significantly influence language preferences within families.

Similarly, a study by Shen and Jiang (2023) on Chinese and African immigrant families in Australia highlighted that family language policies are often driven by emotional bonds and identity considerations. Parents viewed heritage language maintenance as essential for preserving cultural identity and fostering emotional closeness, indicating that language choices are not solely pragmatic but also deeply affective.

These studies collectively underscore that family language ideologies are not merely about communication efficiency but are profoundly connected to emotional expression and identity preservation. In the context of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, acknowledging the emotional and identity-related motivations behind language choices provides a more comprehensive understanding of their linguistic practices.

Parents in repatriate families often view the Kazakh language as a means of preserving cultural identity and maintaining ties with their heritage. However, as Kazakh is less frequently used in urban settings and often perceived as less advantageous in terms of social mobility, the emotional weight of these language choices becomes apparent. The struggle to balance Kazakh and Russian in a multilingual context reflects the complexities inherent in family language ideologies. These ideologies are deeply intertwined with identity formation and integration strategies, reinforcing the emotional and social dimensions of language use that Spolsky (2004) argues are crucial in understanding FLPs.

The findings of this study align with Tannenbaum's (2012) conceptualization of FLP as a coping mechanism, emphasizing that families use language policies to navigate the tensions between identity maintenance and the desire for social integration. This process of ideological negotiation allows families to reflect on their values and aspirations, deciding which language(s) to prioritize within the family unit.

Family Language Management: Negotiating Linguistic Space Within the Family

Spolsky (2004) defines family language management as the deliberate decisions and practices families employ to maintain or alter language use within the household. This aspect of FLP is particularly relevant in the context of repatriate families, where the influence of both Kazakh and Russian creates a space for negotiation. In this study repatriate families in Kazakhstan were found to engage in active management of language use, often adopting specific strategies to balance the linguistic demands of both the home environment and the broader social context. As Curdt-Christiansen (2009) suggests, family language management is rarely neutral. It is a reflection of ideological investments and desired cultural capital, shaped by socioeconomic status, educational goals, and parental beliefs about language value.

Furthermore, the study's findings highlight the bicultural approach adopted by families who encourage the development of both Kazakh and English language skills in their children. This aligns with Spolsky's (2004) emphasis on the importance of family language management as a dynamic process, one that adapts to the evolving needs of the family members as they negotiate their position within the sociocultural landscape of Kazakhstan. For instance, Dana and her husband reported integrating English language into their children's daily education by reading books in English, enrolling in extracurricular language clubs and speaking to children in English. Their elder boys are fluent in Kazakh, English, and Chinese, while their youngest daughter is fully bilingual in Kazakh and English. Dana and her husband associate English with better future opportunities and global literacy, thus, they adopt a bicultural approach in educating their children. A similar pattern was observed in Aisha's family, where she takes in an active role in teaching her children communicative and academic English. As she is an online

English instructor, she has prepared her children for a TeenEagle Competition among middle school students. Her daughter won the first place among her peers. She also reported speaking to her children both in Kazakh and English so that they become multilinguals in the future. This clearly shows the bicultural approach adopted by Aisha's family. Fatima's family is also positive about bicultural approach, however, due to certain constraints, they are unable to enroll their children in foreign language classes. Also due to not being exposed to any languages other than Kazakh, Fatima cannot practice bicultural approach.

These varied family experiences point to the importance of viewing FLP as a socially situated and ideologically charged process. The bicultural approaches adopted by Dana and Aisha's families reflect a form of *agentive bilingualism*, wherein parents actively orchestrate home language practices to prepare children for success in multiple linguistic and cultural spheres. Their strategies resonate with the model of *critical language awareness* (Fairclough, 1992), as they demonstrate a conscious understanding of how language shapes access to power and opportunity. In contrast, Fatima's constrained context illustrates the limitations of agency when not supported by structural resources, reminding us that FLP operates within and is often constrained by broader sociopolitical and economic conditions.

Family Language Practices: Impact of Sociolinguistic Challenges on Language Use

Spolsky (2004) highlights that family language practices, the routine language choices and interactional patterns within the home, serve as the observable outcome of underlying language ideologies and management decisions that form a family's broader language policy. In the context of this study, these practices are intricately shaped by the sociolinguistic challenges repatriate families face in Kazakhstan, particularly in navigating

the dominance of Russian in public life. Notably, despite the widespread utility and prestige associated with Russian in urban Kazakhstan, where it functions as a lingua franca in many educational and professional domains, the families in this study consistently resisted the encroachment of Russian in the home domain. Instead, they prioritized Kazakh as the primary language of intra-family communication, reflecting a deliberate strategy of cultural preservation and identity affirmation.

This resistance is also ideologically informed by the national discourse of Kazakhization, wherein Kazakh language revitalization has become a core component of post-Soviet nation-building (Smagulova, 2008; Fierman, 2006). The alignment of family language practices with state-promoted ideologies of Kazakh cultural identity reinforces the idea that language is more than a communicative tool, it is a symbol of belonging, nationhood, and historical continuity. The prioritization of Kazakh within the household, even in urban environments where Russian prevails, reflects a deliberate and value-laden decision by repatriate families to reclaim cultural heritage and assert a distinct linguistic identity.

At the same time, the study revealed a complementary emphasis on English language use in the families of Aisha and Dana, reflecting what Piller (2015) describes as globalization-oriented language practices. In these households, English is not perceived as a threat to Kazakh but rather as a valuable linguistic resource aligned with future academic and economic opportunities. Dana's husband regularly read English-language bedtime stories to their children, and Dana used English in daily conversations with her daughter. Similarly, Aisha—drawing on her professional expertise as an English teacher, actively fostered her children's English language development, both in educational contexts and daily routines. These bilingual or even trilingual practices illustrate a form

of additive bilingualism (Lambert, 1975), where English is introduced not to replace Kazakh, but to expand linguistic repertoires and equip children with skills necessary for global participation.

Fatima's case, while marked by more limited English-language resources, further illustrates the aspirational dimension of English within these families' FLP. Despite structural constraints, both Fatima and her husband expressed a strong interest in providing their children with access to English, viewing it as instrumental to educational and professional success. This aligns with the findings of De Costa (2010) and Tollefson (2013), who argue that family language practices are often influenced by perceived language capital and the desire to align children with global socioeconomic networks.

In sum, the family language practices observed in this study reflect a nuanced negotiation of local and global linguistic ideologies. On one hand, families resist Russian to assert Kazakh cultural identity and maintain heritage ties; on the other, they embrace English as a strategic investment in their children's future. This dual orientation underscores the complexity of FLP in repatriate families and affirms that language choices in the home are not merely practical decisions but are deeply embedded in sociopolitical, cultural, and economic frameworks.

Sociolinguistic Challenges: The Interplay of Ideology, Management, and Practices

Sociolinguistic challenges, including the dominance of Russian and the linguistic division between Kazakh and Russian, emerged as significant obstacles in repatriate families' efforts to maintain a family language policy. These challenges include issues of linguistic discrimination, social exclusion, and the lack of institutional support for Kazakh language education. Spolsky's (2004) framework emphasizes the contextual nature of

FLPs, where sociolinguistic conditions such as societal attitudes toward language, governmental policies, and the economic utility of languages play a central role in shaping family decisions.

The findings of this study suggest that repatriate families face a complex sociolinguistic environment, while Russian often dominates in educational and professional spheres, Kazakh remains tied to cultural identity and heritage. This reflects the challenges identified by Trevisani (2022) and Piller (2017) regarding the sociolinguistic adaptation of repatriates in Kazakhstan. Families must navigate a landscape where language proficiency is tied to social mobility, and where the dominant language, Russian, often prevails over the heritage language in everyday life.

Moreover, as seen in the findings, the sociolinguistic challenges associated with language use are not only external (such as societal attitudes toward Kazakh) but also internal, as families confront the emotional dynamics of language choice within the home. The findings emphasize that family language practices are not solely determined by the sociolinguistic environment but are also shaped by the emotional and identity-related factors that families attach to language use.

This perspective is supported by Pawliszko (2016), who explored the emotional dimensions of language choice among Kazakh-Russian bilinguals. The study revealed that many individuals perceive their first language, Kazakh, as more emotionally resonant, especially in family interactions. Participants reported that expressing affection and intimate emotions felt more authentic in their native language, suggesting that emotional connections significantly influence language preferences within families.

Further, Donbayeva et al. (2024) examined the psychological impacts of language choice in postcolonial Kazakhstan, highlighting how bilingual individuals navigate

complex identities. The study found that language choice between Kazakh and Russian influences self-concept and mental health, providing insight into the psychological impacts of linguistic identity in a postcolonial context.

Additionally, Smagulova (2017) investigated the role of family interactions in the re-acquisition of Kazakh as a native language. The study demonstrated that everyday family interactions play a crucial role in language revitalization, with parental ideologies and broader social and cultural contexts influencing language policies and identity choices within families. These studies collectively underscore that family language practices are deeply intertwined with emotional and identity-related factors, reinforcing the notion that internal dynamics within families significantly shape language use and maintenance.

Summary

By employing Spolsky's (2004) theoretical framework on FLP with insights into family language ideology, management, practices, and sociolinguistic challenges, this research highlights the complex ways in which repatriate families in Kazakhstan navigate their linguistic environments. The findings emphasize the central role of family language ideology in shaping language choices, family language management in responding to sociolinguistic challenges, and family language practices as both a reflection of and a response to these challenges. This study contributes to the growing literature on FLP, providing valuable insights into the experiences of repatriate families in Kazakhstan, where the interplay of Kazakh and Russian creates unique sociolinguistic dynamics that shape language policies within the home.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Summary of the Findings

This study significantly contributes to Family Language Policy (FLP) research by focusing on repatriate families in Kazakhstan, a multilingual, post-Soviet context. It extends Spolsky's tripartite FLP model by introducing *sociolinguistic challenges* as a fourth dimension, highlighting how external societal pressures shape and constrain family language planning. The findings underscore the ideological commitment to the Kazakh language as a central motivator for both migration and daily linguistic choices, reinforcing FLP's emotional and symbolic dimensions.

The study documents successful heritage language maintenance among repatriate families, challenging deficit-based narratives of language loss. It emphasizes the importance of emotional attachment, community support, and strategic language management in intergenerational transmission. A key insight is the use of *language resistance*, specifically, rejecting Russian as an act of political and identity assertion, complicating assumptions of Russian as a neutral lingua franca.

Despite alignment with state language ideologies, families face structural barriers, such as a lack of qualified Kazakh-medium educators and institutional preference for Russian, revealing a gap between policy rhetoric and practice. Gendered dynamics also emerge, with mothers and fathers playing distinct roles in language management, highlighting the collaborative and affective nature of FLP.

Overall, the study deepens our understanding of how language, identity, power, and policy intersect in multilingual family contexts and offers practical implications for more inclusive and effective language and education policies.

Significance of the Findings

The findings of this study carry significant theoretical and practical implications for the field of FLP, especially within post-Soviet, multilingual contexts like Kazakhstan. By focusing on repatriate families, the study sheds light on a unique sociolinguistic group whose experiences enrich and complicate existing frameworks in language policy, migration studies, and heritage language maintenance.

Extending Spolsky's Model with Sociocultural Specificity

One major contribution lies in the way this study builds upon and refines Spolsky's (2004, 2009) tripartite model of language ideology, language management, and language practices. By incorporating sociolinguistic challenges as a fourth, interacting component, the study demonstrates that language planning at the family level is not only shaped by internal ideologies and practices but also constrained and enabled by external social pressures. This adaptation strengthens the explanatory power of Spolsky's framework, especially in contexts where state policies and societal attitudes may diverge from family goals.

Moreover, the finding that ideological commitment to Kazakh language and culture was a key motivator for both migration and daily language choices underscores the centrality of language to national identity reconstruction in postcolonial contexts. It reinforces Curdt-Christiansen's (2009, 2013) proposition that FLP is not merely about utility but is deeply tied to affective and symbolic investments. In this regard, repatriate families serve as active agents in the bottom-up enactment of national language policies.

Reconceptualizing Heritage Language Maintenance

Another significant contribution is the documentation of successful intergenerational transmission of Kazakh in transnational contexts. While much of the FLP literature highlights heritage language loss among diaspora populations (De Houwer, 2007), this study reveals that with strong ideological motivation, emotional attachment, and strategic language management, families can sustain linguistic continuity—even in the face of migration and minority status abroad.

These findings challenge deficit perspectives on language maintenance and calls for a more asset-based understanding of family resilience and resourcefulness. The role of community support and access to cultural education emerged as essential facilitators of this process, pointing to the need for policies and programs that leverage such community-based resources to support heritage language education more broadly.

Resistance as a Language Strategy

Perhaps most strikingly, the study reveals how repatriate families use language resistance—specifically the rejection of Russian—as a conscious act of identity formation and political expression. This finding complicates assumptions that language choice is always governed by pragmatic concerns. Instead, it suggests that emotional and historical dimensions of language can override instrumental logic, especially when linked to past experiences of discrimination or exclusion.

This insight provides a valuable counterpoint to prevailing models that frame Russian as a "default" or "neutral" lingua franca in Kazakhstan (e.g., Smagulova, 2017), instead positioning it as a contested and ideologically charged symbol within repatriate narratives.

Implications for Educational and Language Policy

The reported sociolinguistic and educational challenges highlight gaps in the implementation of Kazakhstan's language revival policies. Although repatriate families are ideologically aligned with state goals, they face structural limitations—such as lack of qualified Kazakh-medium teachers or institutional biases favoring Russian—that undermine their integration efforts. This finding underlines the disconnect between policy rhetoric and everyday reality, echoing Shohamy's (2006) critique of covert language policy enforcement through informal norms.

Such findings call for more equitable and consistent implementation of national language policies, particularly in urban areas where Russian dominance continues to marginalize Kazakh speakers. They also emphasize the need for inclusive teacher training programs, curriculum development, and regional investment to ensure that families who align with national ideologies are not disadvantaged by structural constraints.

Gendered Contributions to Language Management

Finally, the study brings attention to the gendered dynamics of FLP, with mothers and fathers contributing in distinct but complementary ways. While mothers tend to focus on immediate language correction and nurturing emotional bonds through language, fathers often emphasize long-term ideological goals. This division of labor supports Curdt-Christiansen's (2013) idea of collaborative language management and opens further questions about how gender roles influence language outcomes within households.

By surfacing these nuanced patterns, the study offers a more holistic view of family language policy—one that accounts for affect, ideology, identity, power, and structure. These insights have relevance not only for scholars but also for educators, policy-makers,

and community organizations seeking to support heritage language maintenance and social integration in multilingual societies.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the data collection process involved interviews and observations with only the mothers in each of the three repatriate families. Although the mothers provided rich and detailed accounts, often reporting on behalf of both themselves and the fathers, this reliance on a single parental perspective may have influenced the findings. Fathers' direct participation could have offered additional viewpoints and possibly revealed different experiences, ideologies, or practices regarding language use within the family. The absence of fathers' voices represents a limitation in capturing the full dynamics of family language management.

Second, the small sample size of this study presents another limitation. With only three families participating, the findings cannot be generalized to the broader population of repatriates in Kazakhstan, which numbers approximately two million individuals. While the study aimed to provide an in-depth, qualitative understanding of language ideologies and practices within these specific families, the limited number of participants may not fully represent the diversity of experiences, backgrounds, or strategies among repatriate families across different regions, socioeconomic statuses, or educational levels. Future research involving a larger and more varied sample would be necessary to strengthen the generalizability of the findings and to capture a broader range of family language policy experiences within the repatriate community.

Recommendation for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several directions for future research are recommended. First, future studies should aim to include the perspectives of

both parents, and where possible, children themselves. Gathering data from multiple family members would offer a more holistic understanding of how language ideologies and practices are negotiated within the household, and could reveal potential divergences between mothers' and fathers' approaches to language maintenance.

Second, expanding the sample size and diversity of participants would be valuable. Research involving a broader range of repatriate families across different regions of Kazakhstan, varying socioeconomic backgrounds, and levels of urbanization could provide a more comprehensive picture of Family Language Policies (FLPs) among repatriates. Comparative studies between urban and rural repatriate families, for example, could shed light on how differing sociolinguistic environments influence language choices and identity formation.

Third, longitudinal research would greatly enhance understanding of language maintenance and shift processes over time. Tracking families across several years could illuminate how family language practices evolve as children grow older, enter new educational stages, and engage more fully with the wider society.

Finally, future research could also explore the role of institutional and community support in aiding or hindering heritage language maintenance among repatriate families. Investigating how schools, media, and community organizations contribute to or challenge family language ideologies and practices would provide a richer understanding of the broader ecosystem in which FLPs are embedded.

Self Reflection

Throughout the process of conducting this research, I have experienced significant personal and academic growth. One of the most valuable skills I developed was the ability to locate, evaluate, and integrate relevant scholarly sources into my work. Learning how to

navigate complex academic databases, critically assess the relevance of literature, and synthesize diverse theoretical perspectives has strengthened my ability to build a solid academic foundation for my arguments. In particular, working with theoretical frameworks such as Spolsky's (2004) family language policy model helped me better understand how to apply theories thoughtfully to real-world contexts, rather than treating them as abstract ideas.

Additionally, designing and carrying out a qualitative study taught me important methodological skills, from formulating research questions to conducting interviews and analyzing data thematically. I learned how crucial it is to remain flexible and responsive during fieldwork, especially when working with participants who generously shared personal aspects of their family life. Through this experience, I gained a deeper appreciation for ethical considerations in research, including the responsibility to represent participants' voices with care and integrity.

Beyond technical skills, this project had a profound impact on my personal perspective. Researching family language policies and sociolinguistic challenges among repatriate families in Kazakhstan made me far more sensitive to the experiences of minority groups and the often invisible struggles associated with language barriers. It opened my eyes to how language can serve as both a bridge and a barrier to identity, belonging, and opportunity. Listening to the stories of repatriate families taught me that language is not merely a tool for communication, but a deeply emotional and political marker of history, pride, and survival.

This research also pushed me to grow in patience, critical thinking, and resilience. There were moments when the complexity of the topic felt overwhelming or when data analysis revealed nuances that challenged my initial assumptions. Learning to embrace

these complexities, rather than seeking overly simplistic conclusions, has made me a more thoughtful and responsible researcher.

Overall, this journey has strengthened my commitment to conducting research that is both academically rigorous and socially meaningful. It has inspired me to continue exploring issues of language, identity, and social justice in future academic and professional work.

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Appendix A: AI Declaration Form



Thesis Title: Exploring Family Language Policy and Sociolinguistic Challenges among Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan.

Declaration of the Use of Generative AI

I hereby declare that I have read and understood NUGSE's policy concerning appropriate use of generative AI tools and composed this work independently (please check one):

- with the use of generative artificial intelligence tools, or
- without the use of generative artificial intelligence tools.

(If you have used generative AI tools, please complete the rest of this form.)

During the preparation of this proposal/thesis, I used ChatGPT for proofreading and paraphrasing purposes.

I also declare that I

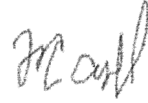
- am aware of the capabilities and limitations of generative AI tool(s),
- have verified that the content generated by AI systems and adopted by me is factually correct,
- am aware that as the author of this thesis I bear full responsibility for the statements and assertions made in it,
- have submitted complete and accurate information about my use of generative AI tools in this work, and

acknowledge that there may be disciplinary consequences if I have breached NU Student Code of Conduct or not followed NUGSE's guidelines regarding appropriate AI use.

Name: Zhansaya Raimova

Date: 12.05.2025

Signature:



Appendix C: Consent Letters

Exploring Family Language Policy among Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan

Description: You are invited to participate in a study focusing Family Language Policies among repatriate families in Kazakhstan and the socio-linguistic challenges they face. The purpose of the research is to study repatriate families' language ideologies and practices to successfully integrate into the Kazakhstani society, along with the socio-linguistic challenges they face.

You will be asked to complete a written narrative and to participate in a semi-structured interview with your consent to audio record it. You always have the option to decline to answer any of the questions that you believe are improper.

Time involvement: Your participation will take approximately 60-90 minutes.

Risks and benefits: Due to the confidential nature of the research, there are no potential risks to your personal or professional life related to participation in this study. However, I will ensure that:

- Your identity will remain confidential and anonymous throughout the study. Your name, position, affiliated institution, and any other information that could reveal your identity will be replaced with pseudonyms or codes in this master's dissertation and any subsequent research reports. Moreover, if specific names or institutions are mentioned during the interview, they will not be disclosed in the research.

- All questionnaire entries, text and voice recordings, and transcriptions will be stored on the researcher's password-protected personal computer to ensure your data's security, and all the data will be destroyed once the research work, including article publication, is complete. During the analysis stage, the data obtained will only be accessible to the researcher and thesis supervisor.

Finally, there are no direct benefits from participating in the study. However, the collected data will help grow literature related to family language policies among repatriate families residing in Kazakhstan.

Participants' rights: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this research, please keep in mind that your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

Contact information:

Researcher: Zhansaya Raimova, 2nd year Master's student in M.A. in Multilingual Education. Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan.

Email: zhansaya.raimova@nu.edu.kz

Telephone: +7 (705) 986 5996

Questions: If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks, and benefits contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, Associate Professor Syed Manan, syed.manan@nu.edu.kz

Independent Contact: If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz.

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Зерттеу жұмысы келісімінің ақпараттық формасы

Қазақстандағы оралман отбасылар арасындағы отбасылық тіл саясатын зерттеу

Сипаттама: Сізді Қазақстандағы оралман отбасылар арасындағы отбасылық тіл саясаты және олардың әлеуметтік-тілдік қиындықтары туралы зерттеуге қатысуға шақырамыз. Зерттеудің мақсаты – оралмандар отбасыларының тілдік идеологиясы мен тәжірибесін қазақстандық қоғамға сәтті кірігуі, сонымен қатар олардың әлеуметтік-лингвистикалық қиындықтарын зерттеу болып табылады.

Сізден баяндауды толтыру және жартылай құрылымдық сұхбатқа қатысу, сонымен қатар оны аудио жазуға келісіміңіз сұралады. Сіз әрқашан дұрыс емес деп санайтын кез келген сұрақтарға жауап беруден бас тартуға мүмкіндігіңіз бар.

Қатысу уақыты: Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен 60-90 минут уақытыңызды алады.

Зерттеуге қатысудың қауіп пен пайдасы: Зерттеудің құпия сипатына байланысты сіздің зерттеуге қатысуыңыз жеке немесе кәсіби өміріңізге қауіп төндірмейді.

Дегенмен, келесі қауіпсіздік шаралары қарастырылды:

- Зерттеу барысында сізге қатысты ақпарат толығымен құпия және жасырын болады. Сіздің атыңыз, лауазымыңыз, үлестес мекемеңіз және сіздің тұлғаңызды жария ететін кез келген басқа да ақпарат осы магистрлік диссертациядағы және кез келген кейінгі зерттеу есептеріндегі бүркеншік атпен немесе кодпен ауыстырылады. Сонымен қатар, егер сұхбат барысында нақты есімдер немесе мекемелер туралы айтылса, олар зерттеуде ашылмайды.

- Барлық сауалнамалар, мәтіндік, дауыстық жазбалар және транскрипциялар сіздің деректеріңіздің қауіпсіздігін қамтамасыз ету үшін зерттеушінің құпия сөзінде-қорғалған дербес компьютерінде сақталады және барлық жиналған деректер зерттеу жұмысы аяқталғаннан кейін, мақаланы жариялау кезінде жойылады. Талдау кезеңінде деректер тек зерттеушіге және диссертацияның ғылыми жетекшісіне қол жетімді болады.

Сіз бұл зерттеуге қатысудан тікелей пайда алмайсыз. Алайда жиналған ақпарат Қазақстандағы оралман отбасыларының тілдік саясаты мен әлеуметтік-тілдік қиындықтары туралы зерттеуге қатысты ғылыми әдебиеттер тізімін кеңейтуге көмектеседі.

Қатысушының құқықтары: Егер сіз берілген формамен танысып, осы зерттеуге қатысуға шешім қабылдаған болсаңыз, сіздің қатысуыңыз ерікті екенін ескергеніңіз жөн. Сонымен қатар, кез-келген уақытта, жағымсыз салдарсыз зерттеуге қатысу туралы келісіміңізді кері қайтаруға немесе тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Зерттеуге мүлдем қатыспауыңызға да толық құқығыңыз бар. Сондай-ақ кез келген сұраққа жауап беруден бас тартуға құқығыңыз бар. Бұл зерттеудің нәтижелері ғылыми, кәсіби іс-шараларда ұсынылуы мүмкін немесе ғылыми журналдарда жариялануы мүмкін.

Байланыс ақпараты:

Зерттеуші: Жансая Раимова, көптілді білім беру магистратурасының екінші курс студенті. Жоғары Білім Беру Мектебі, Назарбаев Университеті, Астана, Қазақстан.

Email: zhansaya.raimova@nu.edu.kz^[1] Телефон: +77059865996

Сұрақтар: Егер сізде осы зерттеуге, оның процедураларына, қауіпі мен пайдасына қатысты сұрақтарыңыз, алаңдауыңыз немесе шағымдарыңыз болса, магистрлік диссертацияның ғылыми жетекшісімен хабарласуыңызға болады: Доцент, Саид Манан, syed.manan@nu.edu.kz.

Тәуелсіз байланыс: Егер сіз осы зерттеудің қалай жүргізілетініне қанағаттанбасаңыз немесе зерттеу немесе қатысушы ретіндегі құқықтарыңыз туралы сұрақтарыңыз, шағымдарыңыз немесе жалпы сұрақтарыңыз болса, зерттеу тобына қатысы жоқ тәуелсіз адаммен байланысу үшін Назарбаев Университетінің Жоғары Білім Беру Мектебінің Зерттеу Комитетіне хабарласыңыз: +7 7172 709359. Сіз сондай-ақ электрондық хатты мына мекен-жайға жаза аласыз gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz. Егер сіз осы зерттеуге қатысуға келіссеңіз, осы ақпараттандырылған келісім формаға қол қойыңыз.

- Мен берілген ақпаратты мұқият оқып шықтым;
- Маған зерттеудің мақсаттары мен процедуралары туралы толық ақпарат берілді;
- Мен жиналған ақпараттың қалай пайдаланылатынын және кез келген құпия ақпарат тек зерттеушілерге қолжетімді болатынын және басқаларға жария болмайтынын түсінемін;
- Мен кез келген уақытта себебін түсіндірмей зерттеуге қатысудан бас тарта алатынымды түсінемін;

Мен жоғарыда аталып өткен ақпаратты саналы түрде қабылдап, осы зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға өз келісімімді беремін.

Қолы: _____ Күні: _____

Форма информированного согласия

Изучение семейной языковой политики среди семей репатриантов в Казахстане

Описание: Приглашаем вас принять участие в исследовании, посвященном семейной языковой политике среди семей репатриантов в Казахстане и социально-лингвистическим проблемам, с которыми они сталкиваются. Целью исследования является изучение языковых идеологий и практик семей репатриантов для успешной интеграции в казахстанское общество, а также социолингвистических проблем, с которыми они сталкиваются.

Вам будет предложено заполнить повествование и принять участие в полу структурированном интервью с вашего согласия на аудиозапись. У вас всегда есть возможность отказаться отвечать на любой вопрос, который вы считаете некорректным.

Время участия: Ваше участие займет приблизительно 60-90 минут.

Риски и выгоды: Из-за конфиденциального характера исследования нет потенциальных рисков для вашей личной или профессиональной жизни, связанных с участием в этом исследовании. Однако были предусмотрены следующие меры безопасности:

- Ваша личность будет полностью конфиденциальной и анонимной в течение всего исследования. Ваши имя, должность, аффилированное учреждение и любая другая информация, которая могла бы раскрывать вашу личность, будут заменены псевдонимами или кодами в данной магистерской диссертации и в любых последующих исследовательских отчетах. Более того, если в ходе интервью будут упомянуты конкретные имена или учреждения, они не будут раскрываться в исследовании.

- Все анкеты, текстовые и голосовые записи и транскрипции будут храниться на пароль-защищенном персональном компьютере исследователя для обеспечения безопасности ваших данных, и все собранные данные будут уничтожены по завершении исследовательской работы, включая публикацию статьи. На этапе анализа данные будут доступны только исследователю и научному руководителю диссертации.

Наконец, участие в исследовании не предполагает получение непосредственных преимуществ и выгод. Тем не менее, собранные данные помогут расширить научную литературу по преподаванию казахского языка, изучению казахского языка и убеждениям преподавателей в свете изменений в языковой политике и реформах в Казахстане.

Права участника: Если вы ознакомились с данной формой и решили принять участие в данном исследовании, пожалуйста, примите во внимание, что ваше участие является добровольным, и у вас есть право в любое время отозвать свое согласие или завершить участие без каких-либо негативных последствий или утраты привилегий, которые вам, в противном случае, предоставляются. Альтернативой может быть ваш отказ от участия в исследовании. Вы также имеете право отказаться отвечать на любые конкретные вопросы. Результаты данного исследования могут быть представлены на научных или профессиональных мероприятиях или опубликованы в научных журналах.

Контактная информация:

Исследователь: Жансая Раимова, студентка второго курса магистратуры по мультиязычному образованию. Высшая Школа Образования, Назарбаев Университет, Астана, Казахстан. ^[11]_{SEP} Email: zhansaya.raimova@nu.edu.kz

Телефон: +77059865996

Вопросы: Если у вас есть какие-либо вопросы, заботы или жалобы относительно этого исследования, его процедур, рисков и выгод, вы можете обратиться к научному руководителю магистерской диссертации, Доцент, Саид Манан, syed.manan@nu.edu.kz

Независимый контакт: Если вы не удовлетворены тем, как проводится это исследование, или у вас есть какие-либо вопросы, жалобы или общие вопросы о исследовании или ваших правах как участника, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета для общения с независимым лицом, не связанным с исследовательской группой, по номеру +7 7172 709359. Вы также можете написать электронное письмо по адресу gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz.

Пожалуйста, подпишите эту форму информированного согласия, если вы соглашаетесь участвовать в этом исследовании.

- Я внимательно прочел предоставленную информацию;
- Мне предоставлена полная информация о целях и процедурах исследования;
- Я понимаю, как будет использована собранная информация и что любая конфиденциальная информация будет доступна только исследователям и не будет раскрываться другим лицам;
- Я понимаю, что в любое время могу отказаться от участия в исследовании без объяснения причин;

Полностью осознавая все вышеизложенное, я соглашаюсь участвовать в данном исследовании.

Подпись: _____ Дата: _____

Appendix E: Data Collection Instruments

Appendix A

Written Narrative Guiding Questions

Exploring Family Language Policy among Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan

1. Please briefly provide background information about yourself and your family (age, education level, profession, number of children, ethnicity, and number of children, how many years you have lived in Kazakhstan).
2. Please describe your main motivations behind moving to Kazakhstan.
3. Please describe your linguistic background before moving to Kazakhstan and how it has changed since moving to Kazakhstan?
4. What factors influenced your family's decisions about which languages to prioritize? Can you recount any specific discussions or events that shaped these decisions?
5. How do you think your family's language policy has influenced your identity and that of your family members? Can you share any personal experiences that highlight this?
6. How has your family's language policy impacted your educational experiences? Can you describe any particular instances related to language learning at school?
7. Have you encountered any socio-linguistic challenges since moving to Kazakhstan? If yes, can you briefly describe them?

Қосымша А

Жазбаша баяндау бойынша бағыттаушы сұрақтар

Қазақстандағы оралман отбасылар арасындағы отбасылық тіл саясатын зерттеу

1. Өзіңіз және отбасыңыз туралы қысқаша мәлімет беріңіз (жасыңыз, білім деңгейіңіз, мамандығыңыз, балаларыңыздың саны, ұлтыңыз, балаларыңыздың саны, Қазақстанда қанша жыл тұрасыз).
2. Қазақстанға көшу себебін сипаттаңыз.
3. Қазақстанға көшкенге дейінгі тілдік ортаңызды және Қазақстанға көшкеннен кейін оның қалай өзгергенін сипаттаңыз?
4. Отбасыңыздың қай тілге басымдылық беру туралы шешіміне қандай факторлар әсер етті? Осы шешімдерді қалыптастырған нақты талқылауларды немесе оқиғалар туралы жаза аласыз ба?
5. Сіздің отбасыңыздың тіл саясаты сіздің және отбасы мүшелеріңіздің тұлғасына қалай әсер етті деп ойлайсыз? Жеке тәжірбиеңізбен бөлісе аласыз ба?
6. Сіздің отбасыңыздың тіл саясаты білім алу тәжірбиеңізге қалай әсер етті? Мектепте тіл үйренуге қатысты нақты мысалдарды сипаттай аласыз ба?
7. Қазақстанға көшкеннен кейін әлеуметтік-лингвистикалық қиындықтарға тап болдыңыз ба? Егер иә болса, оларды қысқаша сипаттай аласыз ба?

Приложение А

Письменные повествовательные наводящие вопросы Изучение семейной языковой политики среди семей репатриантов в Казахстане

1. Пожалуйста, кратко предоставьте справочную информацию о себе и своей семье (возраст, уровень образования, профессия, количество детей, этническая принадлежность, количество детей, сколько лет вы живете в Казахстане).
2. Опишите, пожалуйста, основные мотивы вашего переезда в Казахстан.
3. Опишите, пожалуйста, ваш языковой опыт до переезда в Казахстан и как он изменился после переезда в Казахстан?
4. Какие факторы повлияли на решение вашей семьи о том, каким языком отдать приоритет? Можете ли вы рассказать о каких-либо конкретных дискуссиях или событиях, которые повлияли на это решение?
5. Как, по вашему мнению, языковая политика вашей семьи повлияла на вашу личность или личность членов вашей семьи? Можете ли вы поделиться личным опытом?
6. Как языковая политика вашей семьи повлияла на ваш образовательный опыт? Можете ли вы описать конкретные случаи, связанные с изучением языка в школе?
7. Сталкивались ли вы с социолингвистическими проблемами после переезда в Казахстан? Если да, можете ли вы их кратко описать?

Appendix B

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Exploring Family Language Policy among Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan

General Background Information:

1. What was your main motivation behind moving to Kazakhstan?
2. What are the main languages spoken in your family?

Questions related to family language ideology:

1. Can you describe the languages that are important to your family and why?
2. How did you decide which language(s) to speak at home? What factors influenced this decision?
3. How do you see the role of each language in maintaining your family's culture and identity?
4. Have your views on the importance of languages changed since moving to Kazakhstan? If so, how?

Questions related to family language management:

1. How do you negotiate different perspectives on language use within your family (e.g. between parents, between parents and children)?
2. To what extent does your family consciously plan which languages will be spoken in different settings (e.g. at home, in public)?
3. How do your children use different languages in their daily lives (e.g. at home, school, with friends)?
4. In what context do you encourage your children to use specific languages (Kazakh, Russian)?

Questions related to family language practices:

1. Do your children follow the language choices you have made for the family, or do they make their own decisions about which language to use?
2. Have you noticed any changes in your children's language preferences since moving to Kazakhstan? If so, what might have caused these changes?
3. What challenges do you face in balancing the use of multiple languages?
4. How do you prioritize which languages your children should learn or use?
5. How do external factors, like interactions with neighbors, teachers, or local communities, shape your family's language practices?

Questions related to socio-linguistic challenges:

1. What challenges have you or family faced in learning or using Kazakh and Russian since moving to Kazakhstan?
2. What difficulties, if any, do your children face in school regarding the use of Kazakh or Russian? How do these affect their language development?
3. Have you encountered any barriers in integrating linguistically with the local community? If so, how have you addressed them?

Б қосымшасы

Жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбат сұрақтары

Қазақстандағы оралман отбасылар арасындағы отбасылық тіл саясатын зерттеу

Жалпы мәліметтер:

1. Отбасыңыз үшін маңызды тілдерді сипаттай аласыз ба және неліктен?
2. Отбасыңызда қандай тілдер басым?

Отбасы тілі идеологиясына қатысты сұрақтар:

1. Үйде қай тілде сөйлеу керектігін қалай шештіңіз? Бұл шешімге қандай факторлар әсер етті?
2. Отбасыңыздың мәдениеті мен болмысын сақтаудағы әрбір тілдің рөлін қалай көресіз?
3. Қазақстанға көшкеннен кейін тілдің маңыздылығына деген көзқарасыңыз өзгерді ме? Егер солай болса, қалай?
4. Отбасыңызда (мысалы, ата-аналар, ата-аналар мен балалар арасында) тілді қолданудың әртүрлі көзқарастарын қалай келіссөздер жүргізесіз?

Отбасы тіл саясатын басқаруға қатысты сұрақтар:

1. Сіздің жанұяңыз қай тілде әртүрлі ортада (мысалы, үйде, қоғамдық орындарда) сөйлейтінін қаншалықты саналы түрде жоспарлайды?
2. Сіздің балаларыңыз күнделікті өмірде әртүрлі тілдерді қалай пайдаланады (мысалы, үйде, мектепте, достарымен бірге)?
3. Сіз қандай жағдайда балаларыңызды белгілі бір тілдерді (қазақ, орыс) қолдануға шақырасыз?

4. Сіздің отбасыңыз үшін таңдаған тіл таңдауыңызды балаларыңыз орындай ма, әлде қай тілді қолдану керектігін өздері шешеді ме?

Отбасылық тіл тәжірибесіне қатысты сұрақтар:

1. Қазақстанға көшкеннен кейін балаларыңыздың тіл қалауларында қандай да бір өзгерістер байқадыңыз ба? Олай болса, бұл өзгерістерге не себеп болуы мүмкін?
2. Бірнеше тілді қолдануды теңестіруде қандай қиындықтарға кезігесіз?
3. Балаларыңыздың қай тілдерді үйренуі немесе пайдалануы керектігін қалай бірінші орынға қоясыз?
4. Көршілермен, мұғалімдермен немесе жергілікті қауымдастықтармен қарым-қатынас сияқты сыртқы факторлар сіздің отбасыңыздың тіл тәжірибесін қалай қалыптастырады?

Әлеуметтік-лингвистикалық қиындықтарға қатысты сұрақтар:

1. Қазақстанға көшкеннен кейін сіз немесе отбасыңыз қазақ және орыс тілдерін үйренуде немесе пайдалануда қандай қиындықтарға тап болдыңыз?
2. Сіздің балаларыңыз мектепте қазақ немесе орыс тілін қолдануда қандай қиындықтарға кезігеді? Бұл олардың тіл дамуына қалай әсер етеді?
3. Жергілікті қауымдастықпен лингвистикалық интеграцияда қандай да бір кедергілерге тап болдыңыз ба? Егер солай болса, сіз оларға қалай қарадыңыз?

Приложение Б

Полу структурированные вопросы для интервью

Изучение семейной языковой политики среди семей репатриантов в Казахстане

Общая информация:

1. Можете ли вы описать языки, которые важны для вашей семьи и почему?
2. Какие языки наиболее популярны среди членов семьи?

Вопросы, связанные с идеологией семейного языка:

1. Как вы решили, на каком языке(ах) говорить дома? Какие факторы повлияли на это решение?
2. Как вы видите роль каждого языка в сохранении культуры и самобытности вашей семьи?
3. Изменились ли ваши взгляды на важность языков после переезда в Казахстан? Если да, то как?
4. Как вы согласовываете различные точки зрения на использование языка в вашей семье (например, между родителями, между родителями и детьми)?

Вопросы, связанные с управлением семейного языка:

1. В какой степени ваша семья сознательно планирует, на каких языках будут говорить в различных ситуациях (например, дома, в общественных местах)?
2. Как ваши дети используют разные языки в повседневной жизни (например, дома, в школе, с друзьями)?
3. В каком контексте вы поощряете своих детей использовать определенные языки (казахский, русский)?

Вопросы, связанные с практикой семейного языка:

1. Ваши дети следуют тому языковому выбору, который вы выбрали для семьи, или они сами принимают решение о том, какой язык использовать?
2. Заметили ли вы какие-либо изменения в языковых предпочтениях ваших детей после переезда в Казахстан? Если да, то что могло вызвать эти изменения?
3. С какими проблемами вы сталкиваетесь, пытаясь сбалансировать использование нескольких языков?
4. Как вы расставляете приоритеты, какие языки должны изучать или использовать ваши дети?
5. Как внешние факторы, такие как взаимодействие с соседями, учителями или местным сообществом, формируют языковую практику вашей семьи?

Вопросы, связанные с социолингвистическими проблемами:

1. С какими трудностями вы или члены вашей семьи столкнулись при изучении или использовании казахского и русского языков после переезда в Казахстан?
2. С какими трудностями (если таковые имеются) ваши дети сталкиваются в школе при использовании казахского или русского языка? Как это влияет на развитие их речи?
3. Сталкивались ли вы с какими-либо препятствиями в языковой интеграции с местным сообществом? Если да, то как вы с ними обращались?

Appendix C

Non-Participant Observation Field Notes

Exploring Family Language Policy among Repatriate Families in Kazakhstan

Observer: Zhansaya Raimova

Date: _____

Participants: _____

Location: _____

Activity: _____

Languages: _____

Other contextual information: _____

Comments: _____

С қосымшасы

Зерттеуші-қатыспайтын бақылау жазба формасы

Қазақстандағы оралман отбасылар арасындағы отбасылық тіл саясатын

зерттеу

Бақылаушы: Жансая Раимова

Күні: _____

Қатысушылар: _____

Орналасқан жері/Орны: _____

Іс-әрекеті: _____

Тіл(дер): _____

Басқа контекстік ақпарат: _____

Бақылаушының пікірлері: _____

Приложение С

Форма для наблюдения без участия исследователя

Изучение семейной языковой политики среди семей репатриантов в

Казахстане

Наблюдатель: Жансая Раимова

Дата: _____

Участники: _____

Место: _____

Действия: _____

Язык(и): _____

Другая контекстная информация: _____

Комментарии наблюдателя: _____

Appendix F: Data Analysis – Transcript and Coding Samples

Coding Samples

Language Ideologies	Language Management	Language Practices	Sociolinguistic Challenges
Kazakh as Identity Language	Parents' language enforcement	Language Use at Home	Accent-based Exclusion
Negative Attitudes towards Russian	Use of Literacy Materials	Language Use in Community	Limited Russian Proficiency
Strong Emphasis on English	Language Education Plans	Intergenerational Language Transmission	Limited Access to Employment

Interview Transcript with Aisha

Zhansaya: Good afternoon, Miss Aisha. I hope you are doing well. First of all, I want to thank you for taking the time to participate in the interview. This interview is within my thesis research at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, which is aimed at studying family language policies and socioeconomic challenges among repatriate families in Kazakhstan. So, the interview will take about 60 minutes and it is totally voluntary. There is narrative writing as well. Is everything clear right now?

Aisha: Yes, I understand everything.

Zhansaya: All right! Could you please tell me about your background, where you were born, your family status, education and the reason for moving to Kazakhstan.

Aisha: Yes, sure. I was born and raised in Mongolia to an ethnically kazakh family. My parents had always lived in Mongolia and my father passed away a few years ago. I moved to Kazakhstan for higher education purposes when I received a scholarship for oralman students. So, I enrolled at Eurasian National University named after L.N. Gumilyov for foundation year program. Afterwards, I had to pass an English test in order to proceed to undergraduate studies, which was quite difficult for me because the education system in Kazakhstan demands advanced knowledge of English. In Mongolia the education system does not mandate English and overall there are less resources available. But I studied hard and passed the entrance exam to the faculty of 'Two Foreign Languages'. Since then I have worked as an English teacher both offline at schools and education centers and online. At the moment I lead an educational blog and teach English lessons online. Then I

met my husband, who was born and raised in Kazakhstan. We married back then and now have four children. They were all born and raised in Kazakhstan. My husband and I worked in different regions of Kazakhstan, namely north, south, west, and the eastern regions before finally settling down in Astana.

Zhansaya: Great! I am so happy for you! Could you now tell me about your family language ideologies? In general, what languages does your family speak in everyday life?

Aisha: Personally, I know Mongolian, Kazakh, English, Turkish at an advanced level, and Russian at a pre-intermediate level. Back in Mongolia we learned Kazakh using Cyrillic script and my whole family of origin communicates in Kazakh. However, our pronunciation and dialect of Kazakh is unlike local Kazakh in Kazakhstan. Actually, I have noticed that Kazakh dialect in each region is unique as well as the mentality. As for our family language ideology, my husband and I prioritize Kazakh as the first and the most important language. This mainly stems from my strong attachment and longing for my mother tongue. I believe that a person cannot be wholesome and self-fulfilled without proper knowledge of the mother tongue. Deep inner feelings can be touched only by the mother tongue language. The feelings of belonging, longing, love, respect, grief ... all these feelings can be best expressed in mother tongue. So, I feel proud to return to an independent country of mine, where my Kazakh is the state language. My children also share our love towards Kazakh language and respect their mother tongue.

As for Russian, it used to be a simple foreign language before moving to Kazakhstan, but after migrating to Kazakhstan and living in Pavlodar and Karagandy, I started to feel resentment towards Russian. This is mainly because we were often scolded and mistreated

due to lack of Russian language. It was difficult for us to get employed because of our lack of Russian. Interestingly, employers did not even test our knowledge of Kazakh or English, but they were obsessed with Russian. It was even difficult for us to buy bread in the shopping markets. The sellers would not even give us bread until we pronounced it correctly in Russian. Over time we started to hate the Russian language and the system in the Northern parts of Kazakhstan. We had a feeling that we did not move to Kazakhstan, but rather Russia. The situation was as a complete opposite in Southern and Western parts of Kazakhstan. People from these regions did not mix Kazakh with Russian and often spoke in Kazakh fluently. They were more patriotic and we felt safe there. All in all, I have a negative attitude towards Russian and do not support my children in learning Russian. I deem Russian as the language of colonizers.

As for English, my husband and I prioritize English after Kazakh. We believe that English is the language of educational opportunities and a bright future. All educational materials are provided in English. We dream about our children enrolling at the top universities abroad. English is the language of international communication. Moreover, my work is directly related to teaching and learning English, so I prioritize this language for my children.

Zhansaya: All right, thank you for your answer. Now, could you please tell me about family language management in your family?

Aisha: Yes. My husband and I have similar ideas about language management in our family. As my husband is the main breadwinner, I mostly spend time with children at

home. I help them with homework and read books to them. I try to immerse them in reading from an early age. I start with Kazakh books, and also use interactive resources in English. As for now I have not had enough time to integrate Mongolian, Turkish, or Russian. Their curriculum is fully in Kazakh, so, Russian is an optional foreign language at school.

Zhansaya: Great, could you please talk about family language practices among your children.

Aisha: Well, as I have already mentioned, my children primarily use Kazakh both at home and outside. At home they speak Kazakh and they also communicate with their friends at the playground and at school only in Kazakh without mixing with Russian. My children also actively use English at school and other English courses online. They also participate in different international competitions in English. Regarding myself and my husband, we both use Kazakh for daily communication at home and outside. I lead my educational blog in Kazakh language and communicate with my students in Kazakh and English. My siblings and I have succeeded in preserving our heritage Kazakh language while living in Mongolia mainly because of our parents and community. Our school used Kazakh as a medium of instruction and our parents put lots of effort into teaching us Kazakh. Although I struggled with adhering to the Kazakh dialect at first, my children have not encountered any such difficulties.

Zhansaya: All right, could you please now elaborate on the sociolinguistic challenges faced by you and your family after moving to Kazakhstan?

Aisha: Actually, I have experienced huge socioeconomic challenges since moving to Kazakhstan. At first it was difficult to get citizenship and also unemployment issues. When we lived in the northern region, we faced huge discrimination in everyday life due to speaking only in Kazakh and with a dialect, not Russian. There were moments when I could not do grocery shopping and got scolded by society. We faced huge stress and social alienation. There were times when I thought of moving to another country. Over time we got used to these, however, it is still somehow present in my life. Thankfully, my children do not face such problems. Moreover, Astana is a megapolis city full of migrants from other regions, so, there are fewer social problems here.

Zhansaya: Excellent, thank you so much, Aisha. You have made great contribution to research about repatriates in Kazakhstan.

Interview Transcript with Dana

Zhansaya: Hello, Dana! How are you? Thank you for participating in the interview! The topic of my research is connected to the family language policies among repatriate families in Kazakhstan. Could you please share your background?

Dana: I come from China and I am Kazakh by ethnicity. I grew up in a village close to Tarbagatai region to the East of Kazakhstan. The residents of the village are predominantly ethnically Kazakh people. I grew up in a big family composed of my parents, grandparents, and siblings. I had a happy childhood full of love and support. After high school I was admitted to undergraduate studies in China to the faculty of chemistry. There I met my husband and married him. Later on, we had two boys. After about five years living in China we moved to Astana, Kazakhstan. In Astana I gave birth to my daughter. Since then, we have been living and working in Astana.

Zhansaya: Great! Could you please elaborate on your languages?

Dana: I have known Kazakh since childhood because I was raised in a Kazakh speaking environment. Back in my childhood my grandparents used to read to me poems and fairy tales in Kazakh. They also taught me to love and respect Kazakh language and culture. So, I had been longing to live in an independent Kazakhstan, where people speak only Kazakh. My husband and I had also been longing for the rich Kazakh culture. I know little bit of Russian, Chinese and English at an advanced level.

Zhansaya: Could you please speak about language ideologies at home?

Dana: Like I mentioned earlier, I love and respect Kazakh language because it is my national identity. As for Russian, I did not use to have any attitude to Russian because it was not present in my surrounding. However, after moving to Kazakhstan, I realized that it is very popular in society and most ethnically Kazakh people prioritize Russian over Kazakh. Personally, I think it is sad reality and I am against this colonization. The second language widely spoken and taught to my children is English because it is an opportunity to enter global economies. I have a positive attitude towards English because it allowed us to quickly adapt at NU.

Zhansaya: Could you mention family language management?

Dana: Yes, I mostly encourage my children to speak and read in Kazakh because it is our mother tongue. The school education is in Kazakh, so it is quite easy for me. Then I try to speak to my children in English at least for half an hour everyday so that they receive practice at home. They also attend English classes because they want to apply to top universities such as Nazarbayev University or some other foreign universities. My children also try to read Russian when they have time.

Zhansaya: Excellent! Could you now mention family language practices and any socioeconomic challenges you have faced since moving to Kazakhstan?

Dana: My children mostly speak in Kazakh both at home and outside home domains.

Then, they are exposed to English through social media and some extracurricular English courses.

I have felt exhilarated and happy since moving to Astana because it is so developed and people are kind here. I also feel happy to see ethnically Kazakh people surrounding me instead of only Chinese. Moreover, over the last decade it was getting more and more challenging to live in China because the state started to close all Kazakh education institution and deprive Kazakh people of their civic rights. When I first moved to Kazakhstan, I felt relief and I believe I made the best decision in my life. We were also lucky to move to Astana because it is the most economically developed city in Kazakhstan. Moreover, both my husband and I received high quality education in China and saved up some money before moving to Kazakhstan. Probably, all these factors really contributed to our successful adaptation to Kazakhstan.

As for two older children, they went through sociolinguistic challenges because they were excluded at first due to speaking with an accent and not knowing Russian. Unfortunately, most children communicate in Russian at all informal settings. But I frequently approached their teachers to give some support to my children and help them integrate to the school community. Thanks to teachers' support, the most difficult moments are in the past.

Overall, it took us lots of time and care towards older children for them to adapt and get accepted by the local community.

Interview Transcript with Fatima

Zhansaya: Hello, Fatime! Thank you for participating in the interview, you are making great contribution to research about repatriates in Kazakhstan. Could you first provide information about your background?

Fatima: Yes, I was born and raised in a village called Bostandyq, which is located in Uzbekistan close to the borders with Kazakhstan. I was born to an ethnically Kazakh family and most of our relatives also lived in Bostandyq village. Then I received a state grant for higher education after finishing high school and moved to Shymkent. There I met my husband and we married. I successfully received citizenship after having the first baby. So, I have been living in Shymkent for the last 10 years now.

Zhansaya: Great! Now I would like to ask about your family language policies?

Fatima: Personally, I know Kazakh and Uzbek at an advanced level and my husband speaks only Kazakh. Our four children speak and read mainly in Kazakh, they are also taught Russian and English at school. However, their levels are not competitive because they are not frequently exposed to L2 environment. As we live with my husband's parents within an extended family, at home we have a purist stance towards Kazakh. This is the language of our national identity and we try to pass on these values to the next generation.

Zhansaya: Could you also speak about language management in your family?

Fatima: Yes, I do homework with my children in Kazakh and grandparents read to children in Kazakh as well. We try to prioritize Kazakh as the first language, and English as the second language. In Shymkent we are rarely exposed to Russian, so we rarely practice Russian at home. In practice, my children only communicate in Kazakh both in home settings and outside.

Zhansaya: Awesome, could you please mention sociolinguistic challenges you have faced if there are any?

Fatima: Personally, I have faced some challenges at first it was difficult to attain citizenship and get employment. Over time, these problems were resolved. However, I have continuously faced instances of corruption whenever I wanted to get hired. I have

been on maternity for the last 8 years and right now I am a housewife. So, I have never been officially employed in Kazakhstan.

Luckily, my children have not faced any challenges with integration because everyone speaks Kazakh. My children are very socially open and actively take part in school life.