

New Trends in the Educational Policy of Kazakhstan

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Abstract. Being historically a multilingual, multiethnic, multicultural, and multiconfessional country, modern Kazakhstan tends to establish an optimal balance between the rights of ethnic minority groups (and each citizen) to know, maintain and develop their own native culture and language as well as to provide the integration of their representatives into the Kazakhstani society as the equal state (Kazakh) language-speaking members. In this respect, the new approaches to the formation of the Kazakhstani identity have been developed to improve the citizens' social, economic and cultural life in the country. In the meantime, along with the maintenance of national values and the development of spiritual culture of different ethnic groups, today Kazakhstan pays a special attention to the implementation of multilingual education as one of strategic steps in the formation of the state identity. In this paper the role of multilingual education in the context of Kazakhstani identity formation is considered. Features of the developing language situation and its influence on the processes of language modernization in the sphere of education are described. How successful will this process be for multinational and multicultural Kazakhstan? Is it possible to develop a complete language educational policy strengthening the state language and maintaining a language variety at the same time? On the basis of results of sociological and sociolinguistic research, the attitudes of Kazakhstani citizens towards conducted reforms in the country are revealed. The research findings contribute to better understanding of the language identification process, which is closely connected with ethnic and state (national) ones.