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Multilingual Practices in the Students' Microcommunity

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Abstract

The study was based on a qualitative analysis of 125 minutes of audio recordings of multilingual speech in students' natural conversations in two towns in the Western region of Kazakhstan and was supplemented by 30 semi-structured interviews with representatives of the students' microcommunity. It focused on particular ways in which youths creatively mix Kazakh, Russian, and English in their everyday conversations. We explored specific translanguaging practices involving grammatical fusion that allows language alternation for a variety of reasons, including referential and expressive use, as well as structural parallelism. We identified three main types of translanguaging practices in our corpus: combinations of Russian stems and Kazakh affixes, English stems and Kazakh affixes, and Kazakh stems and Russian affixes. We also showed the meaning-making potential of Russian and English as languages of prestige and familiarity. Overall, we provided an account of the current language situation that enabled a better understanding of multilingualism and multilingual practices in an economically significant region of Kazakhstan.

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1. Introduction

In the modern world, the processes of integration and globalization have affected not only the socioeconomic and socio-political but also the sociocultural spheres of human activity. The globalization of the world in the sphere of culture and education is currently characterized by an intense rapprochement of countries and peoples, an intensification of their interaction, and mutual influence. In these conditions, the current state of the linguistic and ethnolinguistic situation needs careful investigation. A multilateral and comprehensive study of the language situation makes it possible to understand the complexity and versatility of the real language life of a multi-ethnic society, where languages do not function in isolation from each other but are always interconnected into complex and multidimensional macrosystems.

Currently, Kazakhstan is implementing the state program "Trinity of Languages", which is based on a system of activities carried out by the authorities and public institutions in the field of the country's language policy, to help its people master three languages - Kazakh, Russian and English (Delovarova & Gaipov, 2019). The implementation of the trilingual policy in Kazakhstan meets the requirements of the present time since globalization processes give rise to the need to integrate the state into the world community. The importance and timeliness of the language policy pursued by the state are seen in the fact that in the era of modern world globalization, it is important for future generations to acquire the skills of adaptation in a multilingual environment.

A number of recent studies of the current language situation in Kazakhstan have explored the features of bilingualism and multilingualism, as well as the possibilities of language construction and stabilization of the language situation in the country. Thus, scholars have described an ambiguous linguistic situation in today's Kazakhstan, where the state language is not yet fully functioning as a state language (Azimbayeva, 2016), while the zone of active use of the English language is rapidly expanding (Djuraeva, 2022). Of significance are also the conclusions of sociolinguistic studies about the dominant use of the Russian language in various communicative situations (Nurtazina

et al., 2019; Terlikbayeva & Menlibekova, 2021).

However, despite numerous investigations into the nature of multilingualism in Kazakhstan, little is known about the language situation in the Western region of the country. Being the largest oil and gas-producing region of the country, the Western region of Kazakhstan is an important object of study in terms of the functioning of trilingualism. The specificity of the region is due to the fact that it borders the Russian Federation in the north and Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the south, which leads to the active use of the Russian language as an intermediary of international communication in the post-Soviet space. Of no less importance is the role of the English language, which is now extremely necessary for establishing and maintaining business relations at the global level.

The present study examines the features of the functioning of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages in the Western region of Kazakhstan, focusing on the use of multilingualism by a socially active group of its residents - youth, and primarily students' youth. The focus on students' language practices is determined by the fact that students represent a quite numerous and significant social and demographic group (Shunkeyeva et al., 2020), regarded as "a pressure cooker of high-speed renewal" (Groff et al., 2022), which allows for a broader comprehension of language change in society. Based on the observation of spontaneous speech behavior and semi-structured ethnographic interviews, our study looks at the communicative roles and functions of the three languages, thus enabling a deeper understanding of language situations and language attitudes shared by the local youth in an economically significant region of Kazakhstan.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Language Contact in Dynamics

Theoretically, our research is based on the concept of *translanguaging*, which is used to describe the dynamic and creative use of multilingual resources in social and cognitive spaces (Li, 2016; Li, 2018) alongside the notions of code-switching, code-mixing, and code-meshing (Sugiharto, 2022). In general,

translingual practices support and expand dynamic multilingualism (Karpava et al., 2021) and presuppose code fluidity (García & Li, 2014), which is situation-dependent (Canagarajah, 2015). Translanguaging allows for the treatment of diverse languages as an integrated system (Canagarajah, 2011), enabling communicants to select and combine meaningful elements from their semiotic repertoires, notwithstanding social and political borders between languages (Otheguy et al., 2018). Schneider (2016) regards translanguaging as "bilingual speakers' performance which builds on a single repertoire drawn from multiple languages - traditionally considered separate but increasingly blending into each other" (p. 340). In contrast to code-switching or code-mixing research, which normally focuses on how syntactic and morphological features are employed in the mixing of languages (Dahmen, 2022), analyses of translingual practices address the functional or pragmatic aspects of the language-mixing process (Munirah et al., 2021). In the framework of translanguaging, Global English is viewed as "a globally available resource for speakers, including speakers with limited access to formal education, employing it for their own communicative purposes in creative ways" (Schneider, 2016, p. 340).

2.2. Youth Language Practices

Recent research on youth languages deals with multilingual practices affected by new technologies and popular culture (Groff et al., 2022; Syahrin et al., 2022). The development of mobility and the networked space facilitates multilingual interaction in a global online community (Cutler & Røyneland, 2018). Multilingual practices are frequent in social networks as the most dynamic youth multicultural environment (Damanhour, 2018; Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022). Digital communication and social media are playing a crucial role in language use by the youth, resulting, in particular, in the emergence and innovations of jargon and slang (Gulnazir & Salehuddin, 2022). Social media have also led to relocalization when resources borrowed from Global English are re-adapted into local language systems in ways that are not comprehensible by original speakers (Tankosić & Dovchin, 2021). In the domain of

popular culture, recent studies have explored the indexical potential of global and local languages in multilingual song lyrics and other musical contexts (Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2017; Villadarez, 2021). Particular attention is given to the functions of Global English and local languages in interaction, including those of attention getters (Berliana & Anjarningsih, 2022), social and cultural identity markers, and rhyme facilitators (Metrouh & Nedjai, 2022).

Some studies address ways of employing multilingual resources in the sphere of education, which seems to be a significant domain of revealing youth language practices. In modern education, the English language is shown to perform a key role, being a vehicle for internationalization, although its level among teachers and students is often far from perfect (Català-Oltra et al., 2022). In communication among university students, translingual practices are shown as an effective strategy to maintain privacy, avoid misunderstanding and make their meanings explicit (Muthusamy et al., 2020). Moreover, students' language practices reflect their socialization in a multilingual and multicultural context, leading to the integration of global and local resources and the construction of multilingual hybrid identities (Shah et al., 2020). Unlike previous research on students' multilingual practices in educational contexts, our investigation will address the specificity of language contact of youths in spontaneous out-of-class, everyday situations.

2.3. Language Situation in Kazakhstan

Recently, research interest in the language situation in the conditions of trilingual education in different regions of Kazakhstan has been growing. The language situation in Kazakhstan is largely determined by historical and geographical factors. Compared to its periphery position during the Soviet Union, the status of Kazakh as the state language has greatly increased, being a symbolic capital that provides access to political and social resources (Ahn & Smagulova, 2022). Since Kazakhstan has state borders with Russian-speaking countries, the Russian language is a powerful means of international communication. The Russian language is also widely used as a means of interethnic communication between ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan. Therefore, at the moment, the language situation in the

country is often described by researchers as a situation of bilingualism, where Kazakh and Russian are the main "operating" languages (Abildayeva, 2015; Polatova et al., 2020), which cooperatively function in a single communicative space (Shunkeyeva et al., 2020).

One should note the ambiguous nature of the bilingual situation in Kazakhstan. Thus, both the Russian and Kazakh languages can act as dominant languages, which are used in bilingualism with the maximum functional load in most areas of communication, professional activity, and education. For example, the dominance of the Russian language is observed among ethnic Kazakhs living in regions with a predominance of Russian-speaking population. On the other hand, in the south and west of Kazakhstan, bilingualism is observed with the dominance of the Kazakh language (Mirzoyeva & Akhmetzhanova, 2019). Due to the language policy of the state in the last two decades, subordinate bilingualism is beginning to form with the dominant Kazakh language as the state language; moreover, the tendency to study the Kazakh language as a non-native language is also increasing (Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022).

An outstanding feature of the language policy in Kazakhstan is the government's support for the multilingual language regime promoting economic planning. In this respect, English has been favored as a suitable language for human development in the country (Terlikbayeva & Menlibekova, 2021). In the professional domain, particular attention is given to the development of multilingual resources to enable industry-specific interaction and systematization of professional terminology in a multilingual way (Bayekeyeva et al., 2022). However, learning English as a foreign language still presents difficulties, largely due to the lack of a language environment (Kakar & Sarvari, 2022; Zhilbayev et al., 2019) and the use of outdated language teaching methods (Yeskeldiyeva & Tazhibayeva, 2015). According to Ahn and Smagulova (2022), English in Kazakhstan is still out of reach for the majority of the population, while only a relatively small segment of the wealthy middle class has the opportunity to gain greater access to English-language resources. At the same time, there is

a high level of motivation to learn English as a prestigious language that opens up many economic (Djuraeva, 2022) and educational opportunities (Zhilbayev et al., 2019).

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants and Setting

The study was conducted among residents of the Western region of Kazakhstan on two sites in two major towns of the region - Uralsk and Aktobe. First, in February - June 2022, we collected excerpts of spontaneous speech of young passengers on the Uralsk shuttle bus No. 5, who were students of the M. Utemisov West Kazakhstan University in Uralsk. The route was chosen due to its high popularity among students of this university. Afterward, in September - October 2022, we conducted 30 semi-structured interviews among students of the K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University in Aktobe. Prior to the interview, all the respondents were asked about their age, ethnicity, and place of residence. All the participants in the study were residents of the Western region (four districts: Aktobe, West Kazakhstan, Atyrau, and Mangystau). In our interviews, we aimed to involve students from various educational backgrounds (specializations) and sought more or less equal distribution on a gender basis. Thus, among the students of the K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University, there were 12 first-year students of the Bachelor's degree, majoring in Biology (1 male), Design (2 female and 1 male), Kazakh Language and Literature (1 female and 1 male), Mathematics (1 female and 2 male), Russian Language and Literature (2 female and 1 male); 8 second-year students of the Bachelor's degree, specializing in Chemistry (1 female and 1 male), Design (1 female), Kazakh Language and Literature (1 female and 2 male), Physics (1 female), Russian Language and Literature (1 female); 10 third-year students of the Bachelor's degree, majoring in Two Foreign Languages (2 female and 3 male), Informatics (2 male), Physical Training (2 male), Russian Language and Literature (1 female). In total, 16 male and 14 female students took part in the interviews. In terms of age, the sample was distributed in the following manner: 9 students were 17 years old; 6 students were 18 years old; 10 students were 19 years old; 4 students were 20 years old, and 1 student was 21 years old. By

ethnicity, the sample was represented by 3 Uzbeks, 3 Russians, 4 Kazakhs who used to live in Russia, and 20 native Kazakhs who were born and live in the Western region of the country.

3.2. Instruments

For data collection, two instruments of qualitative research were used: observation and interview. We observed the speech behavior of students on the shuttle bus and recorded their conversations using the voice recording application on Samsung S22. For the interviews, we prepared an interview guide containing a list of questions that we intended to cover. In the interviews, the participants were asked to reflect on their own interactive practices and provide their own explanations.

3.3. Procedure

3.3.1. Data Collection

Research data were collected in two stages, through recordings of students' interactions supplemented with semi-structured interviews. In the first stage of data collection, the method of observing the speech behavior and spontaneous natural reaction of communicants in Kazakh, Russian, and English was used. In the considered speech situations, the form of communication was oral, and the nature of communication in most cases was informal. The conversations were recorded on the voice recording application and were subsequently transcribed. In total, the recordings of conversations amounted to 125 minutes. In the second stage, the recordings of the interactions on the shuttle bus were followed by 30 interviews with university students. We chose to collect our data through ethnographic interviews in order to present the insider perspective on language choice and language attitudes to the Kazakh, Russian and English languages and forms of their integration in youth speech. The interviews with university students were audio-recorded with their consent. The semi-structured interviews were guided by five main groups of questions. The first group was related to the frequency of using Kazakh, Russian, and English in the respondents' speech. The second was aimed at obtaining the participants' comments on the situations when they combined (any of) these languages in conversation. The third set of questions asked them about their motivations

and reasons for using Kazakh, Russian, and English in speech. The fourth was intended to find out the forms of switches between the languages and whether these switches were made consciously or unconsciously. The fifth group of questions sought to elicit the respondents' perceptions about language alternations and whether they helped them and their interlocutors to better understand each other.

3.3.2. Data Analysis

To analyze the obtained data and to structure the research, we used Luk's (2013) framework for examining multilingual texts, which involves three dimensions: textual properties, semantic features, and socio-pragmatic use. This analytical framework was modified to comply with our study purpose and research material. First, we analyzed how Russian and English are embedded in Kazakh texts, with a focus on such formal features as morphology and word patterning. After that, we examined the meaning of Russian and English insertions, supplementing semantic analysis with the overview of the respondents' comments. And in the end, we looked at the social context and pragmatic use of Russian and English elements, as well as explored their indexical potential.

4. Results

4.1. Textual Properties

The corpus of the study contains 496 excerpts in Kazakh comprising elements from the Russian and English languages. The results of the study at the textual level demonstrate that Kazakh-language excerpts consist of 11784 words, of which 4692 words (40%) are in Russian or contain elements from the Russian language, and 235 words (2%) are in English or contain elements from English. Spontaneous students' conversations are abundant in borrowings from Russian (*староста* /starosta/ 'monitor', *литература* /literatura/ 'literature', *классика* /klassika/ 'classics', *день студентов* /den' studentov/ 'students' day', *вечеринка* /vecherinka/ 'party', *фотосессия* /fotosessiya/ 'photosession', *неделя* /nedelya/ 'week', *понедельник* /ponedel'nik/ 'Monday', *чай* /chai/ 'tea', *слякоть* /slyakot'/ 'mud', *пальто* /pal'to/ 'coat'), and to a smaller degree, they contain loanwords from English (*fashion*

girl, quiz, PlayStation, please, look, trend, like, ok, vine).

Of utmost interest are instances of hybrid words that combine elements from several languages, e.g., when words are derived from Russian or English roots with the help of native Kazakh affixes or when words are derived from Kazakh roots with the help of Russian suffixes and inflections. This type of cross-culturally blended word patterning can be related to the concept of translanguaging, which reflects the dynamics of language contact in students' spontaneous speech. The structural analysis of insertions from Russian and English shows that the majority (81%) of embeddings represent instances of such grammatical fusion.

In terms of grammatical meaning, hybrid Russian-Kazakh or English-Kazakh words are

represented by different parts of speech: nouns (*диетада* /dietada/ 'on a diet', *остановкадан* /ostanovkadan/ 'from the bus stop', *квартиранттарың* /kvartiranttaryñ/ 'your tenants', *комуслугаларын* /komuslugalaryñ/ 'their utilities', *вайндар* /vaindar/ 'vines', *темадан* /temadan/ 'from the theme', *лайктарын* /laiktaryñ/ 'his/her likes', *доктордан* /doktordan/ 'from the doctor'), numerals (*шестойда* /shestoida/ 'from the sixth [microdistrict]'), adjectives (*худенькаясың* /huden'kayasıñ/ 'you're so skinny'), verbs (*звондаңдары* /zvondandarsh/ 'call'). Nouns constitute the largest group of words (51%) containing embedded elements from Russian and English. Table 1 shows the main grammatical meanings of Kazakh suffixes added to Russian or English stems in our corpus of spontaneous students' conversations.

Table 1
Grammatical Meanings of Kazakh Suffixes in Hybrid Words

Kazakh suffix	Grammatical meaning	Example(s)
-ter	Nominative case, plural	<i>конспекттер</i> /konspekter/ 'notes'
-dar	Nominative case, plural	<i>вайндар</i> /vaindar/ 'vines'
-tariñ/-tarin	Nominative case, plural + Possessive case, 2nd person singular	<i>квартиранттарың</i> /kvartiranttariñ/ 'your tenants', <i>лайктарын</i> /laiktaryñ/ 'your likes'
-si	Nominative case, singular + Possessive case, 3rd person singular	<i>напасы</i> /papası/ 'his/her father'
-lari	Nominative case, singular + Possessive case, 3rd person plural	<i>просмотрлары</i> /prosmotrlari/ 'their views'
-larin	Nominative case, plural + Possessive case, 3rd person plural	<i>комуслугаларын</i> /komuslugalarin/ 'their communal services'
-dan	Genitive case, singular	<i>остановкадан</i> /ostanovkadan/ 'from the bus stop', <i>доктордан</i> /doktordan/ 'from the doctor', <i>темадан</i> /temadan/ 'from the topic'
-lardi	Genitive case, plural	<i>старосталарды</i> /starostalardi/ 'from the monitors'
-mniñ	Genitive case, singular + Possessive case, 1st person singular	<i>сестрамның</i> /sestramniñ/ 'of my sister', <i>домымның</i> /domimniñ/ 'of my house'
-tarimdi	Genitive case, plural + Possessive case, 1st person singular	<i>СРСтарымды</i> /srestarimdi/ 'of my student's independent work' (СРС - Russian abbreviation)
-ti	Accusative case, singular	<i>текстті</i> /tekstti/ 'text'
-ni	Accusative case, singular	<i>погоданы</i> /pogodani/ 'weather', <i>группаны</i> /gruppani/ 'group'
-ka/-ga	Accusative case, singular	<i>детсадқа</i> /detsadka/ 'to the kindergarten', <i>годқа</i> /godka/ 'to the year', <i>статусқа</i> /statuska/ 'to the status', <i>банкоматқа</i> /bankomatka/ 'to the ATM machine', <i>парадқа</i> /paradka/ 'to the parade', <i>кураторға</i> /kuratorga/ 'to the curator', <i>больницаға</i> /bol'nitsaga/ 'to the hospital', <i>драмтеатрға</i> /dramteatrga/ 'to the drama theatre', <i>общағаға</i> /obschagaga/ 'to the dorm [dormitory]'
-terimdi	Accusative case, plural	<i>конспекттерімді</i> /konspektterimdi/ 'notes'

-pen	Instrumental case, singular	<i>Google translatenен</i> /gugl transleitpen/ 'with the help of Google Translate'
-simen	Instrumental case, singular + Possessive case, 3rd person singular	<i>мамасымен</i> /mamasimen/ 'with his/her mother'
-de	Prepositional case, singular	<i>центрде</i> /tsentrde/ 'in the center', <i>декабрьде</i> /dekabr'de/ 'in December'
-ta/-da	Prepositional case, singular	<i>What'supta</i> /vatsapta/ 'in WhatsApp', <i>грантта</i> /grantta/ 'on the grant', <i>январьда</i> /yanvar'da/ 'in January', <i>диетада</i> /dietada/ 'on a diet', <i>аудиторияда</i> /auditoriyada/ 'in the classroom', <i>остановкада</i> /ostanovkada/ 'at the bus stop', <i>районда</i> /rayonda/ 'in the region', <i>микрорайонда</i> /mikrorayonda/ 'in the microregion'
-sine	Prepositional case, singular + Possessive case, 3rd person singular	<i>кафесине</i> /kafesine/ 'in his/her cafe'
-dandarsh	imperative, 2nd person, plural	<i>звондаңдарш</i> /zvondandarsh/ 'call'

And as a result of students' translanguaging creativity, non-native Russian or English words become "localized" and, having acquired Kazakh affixes, look like Kazakh words. Another interesting trend in translanguaging word patterning is based on uniting Kazakh roots and Russian suffixes and endings: *шаршағанский* /sharshaganski/ 'tired', *жатқанский* /zhatyrganski/ 'lying', *отырғанский* /otyrganski/ 'sitting', *қуырғанский* /kuyrghanski/ 'frying', *шыққанский* /shykkanski/ 'released', *өкігенский* /okingenski/ 'regretting', *қаңғығанский* /kangyganski/ 'roaming', *алжығанский* /alzhyganski/ 'being crazy'. These examples illustrate the only Kazakh-Russian trend of word patterning found in our corpus.

4.2. Semantic Features

The results of the semantic analysis of students' multilingual practices reveal that Russian and English insertions in Kazakh sentences represent the following groups of lexical units: education-related topics (*quiz*, *универге* /univerge/ 'to the university', *старосталарына* /starostalaryna/ 'to their monitors', *собрание* /sobraniye/ 'meeting', *СРСтарымды* /srestarymdy/ 'my individual works of students', *конспектерімді* /konspekterimdi/ 'my abstracts', *темадан* /temadan/ 'from the theme', *группаны* /gruppyany/ 'groups', *старосталарды* /starostalardy/ 'monitors', *день студентов* /den' studentov/ 'students' day', *аудиторияда* /auditoriyada/ 'in the audience', *практика* /praktika/ 'practice', etc.), spatial categories (*центрде* /centerde/ 'in the centre', *остановкадан* /ostanovkadan/ 'from the bus stop'), names of enterprises and

city administration units (*драмтеатрға* /dramteatrğa/ 'to the drama theatre', *облсполкомнан* /oblspolkomnan/ 'from the regional executive committee'), names of professions (*доктордан* /doktordan/ 'from the doctor'), names of objects (*банкоматқа* /bankomatka/ 'to the ATM', *конспектер* /konspekter/ 'notes'), value characteristics (*ты такая простая* /ty takaya prostaya/ 'you are so simple'), expressions related to computer and mobile communication (*звондаңдарш* /zvondandarsh/ 'call her', *недоступен* /nedostupen/ 'is not available', *Google translatenen* /google translatepen/ 'with Google translate', *What'supta* /whatsupta/ 'in WhatsApp'), requests (*игнорировать етпендерсейши* /ignorirovat' etpenderseishi/ 'don't ignore'), wishes (*удачи* /udachi/ 'good luck'). In most of these cases, 'kazakhization' or appropriation by Kazakhs of Russian and English lexemes is observed, which affects mainly morphology. To put it differently, Kazakh suffixes change the part-of-speech reference; however, the mixed words continue to be perceived by local speakers as foreign ones.

In the Russian language, the suffix *-sk-* and the ending *-i/-iy* normally form relative adjectives capable of developing qualitative meanings with the meaning of relation, peculiarity or typical belonging to what is called the motivating word. When combined with Kazakh roots in students' spontaneous speech, they change the grammatical meaning to those of participles. In this case, they sound more Russian-like and are perceived as foreign words.

Russian or English loanwords fill in gaps in the Kazakh language due to their semantic precision (*vine*, *Google translate* /gugl translaitpen/ 'with the help of Google Translate', *диетада* /dietada/ 'on a diet', *погоданы* /pogodany/ 'weather', *сестрамның* /sestramnyn/ 'my sister's'). According to 26 (87%) of our respondents, they switch to Russian or English words in spontaneous conversation when they cannot find alternative words in the Kazakh language due to the exact meanings expressed by well-known loanwords. Moreover, although some borrowings from Russian or English have full or partial counterparts in the Kazakh language, they still can be preferred by Kazakh students: *please*, *look*, *trend*, *like*, *ok*, *еще стройнее* /eschyo stroinee/ 'skinnier', *очень* /ochen/ 'very', *лучше* /luchshe/ 'better', *не переживай* /ne perezhivai/ 'don't worry', *не говори* /ne govori/ 'don't say', *кстати* /kstati/ 'by the way', *пряма* /pryam/ 'really', *давайте* /davaite/ 'let's', *удачи* /udachi/ 'good luck'. The majority of the interviewees (60%) explained this by the habit of hearing such variants in their friends' speech and in the mass media. Interestingly, seven respondents (23,3%) mentioned the prestige of both Russian and English-language

borrowings as a reason for their frequent use in spontaneous speech.

4.3. Socio-pragmatic Use

In their interviews, all the respondents confirmed that they combined the three languages under consideration in informal situations when communicating with their friends and peers inside and outside of the university. Based on the analysis of excerpts in our corpus, we were able to identify the main functions of switching between languages in youths' translanguaging practices. The most common of them is to refer to a particular concept when one of the communicants fails to recall the name of this object in the language of interaction or has to use a certain word to express their idea easier, i.e., referential function. Table 2 provides examples of the Russian and English elements that are employed to refer to and easily express the concepts related to time and forms of study and communication. The words or parts of words borrowed from Russian or English are given in bold. The third column (Translation) also shows the origin of words: Kazakh (K), Russian (R), or English (E).

Table 2
Excerpts 1-2

Excerpt	Transcription	Translation
(1) - Келесі неделя quiz жазамыз. Дайындадыңдар. - Қай темадан ? Письменно ма?	- Kelesi nedelya quiz zhazamiz. Dayindalindar. - Qay temadan ? Pis'menno ma?	- Next (K) week (R) a quiz (E) we are going to write (K). Be ready (K). - On what (K) topic (R+K)? In writing (R), yes(K)?
(2) - Қыздар, кураторға звондаңдарш . Бүгін кураторский час бола ма екен? - Недоступен дөлып тұр.	- Qyzdar (K), kuratorğa (R+K) zvondaңdarsh (R+K). Byugin (K) kuratorskiy chas bola ma eken? - Nedostupen dolip tur.	- Girls, the curator call . Today (K) a curatorial hour (R) will there be (K)? - Not available (R) she is (K).

It is of interest that some words are used in the forms borrowed directly from the language of origin without any changeable inflections being added: for instance, *неделя* /nedelya/ 'week' from Russian and *quiz* from English are preserved in their original form. At the same time, the Russian words *тема* /tema/ 'topic' and *куратор* /kurator/ 'curator' acquire Kazakh suffixes (*темадан* /temadan/ 'on the topic' and *кураторға* /kuratorğa/ 'to the

curator', respectively). On the contrary, the adjective *недоступен* /nedostupen/ 'not available' retains the original Russian suffix and zero ending in masculine singular, which does not agree in gender with the subject of the sentence, which is feminine *she*. The respondents could not give explicit answers explaining these controversial cases, however, one of them supposed this was due to the different levels of appropriation of these words

by native speakers. This issue needs to be looked at in more detail in further studies.

Another function of combining several languages in students' spontaneous speech is to switch to the interlocutor's native tongue (Russian or Kazakh) to enable better understanding and facilitate their speech behavior when communicating with bilingual peers. According to some of the interviewees,

they normally watch the interlocutor's reaction and if he/she does not seem to understand something, they consciously start alternating languages to insert words and phrases from the interlocutor's language. The following excerpts in Table 3 illustrate situations when native Kazakhs were adjusting to the speech behavior of their Russian-speaking partners through language choice.

Table 3

Excerpts 3-4

Excerpt	Transcription	Translation
(3) - <i>Срочно кафедраға шақырып жатыр старосталарды.</i>	- Srochno kafedrağa shaqyryp zhatyr starostalardy.	- Urgently (R) to the department (R+K) are called (K) monitors (R+K).
(4) - <i>Диетада жүрм. Обед ишпейм.</i> - <i>Сен и так худенькаясың ғо. Зачем худеть етіп?</i> - <i>Стройнее болғым келеді.</i>	- Dietada zhurmin. Obed ishpeim. - Sen i tak huden'kayasyng ғо. Zachem hudet' etip? - Stroineye bolgym keledi.	- On a diet (R+K) I am (K). Lunch (R) I'll skip (K). - You are (K) anyway (R) so skinny (R+K). Why to lose weight (R) you need (K)? - Skinnier (R) I want to be.

In some cases, translanguaging is used to express emotions (expressive function), especially when there is a change in the emotional state of the communicants. In what follows below (Table 4), the Russian phrase *О, давай* /o davay/ 'oh, let's' is inserted in the Kazakh context to express joy and excitement in reaction to the interlocutor's offer (Excerpt 5). Another function of translanguaging identified in our corpus is to express structural parallelism. As a reflection of the structural

parallelism of lexical units, both Russian and Kazakh lexemes can be used in the rejoinders, depending on the language of the stimulus lines. Such structural parallelism is shown by inserting the English-language adjective *new* before a Kazakh phrase in both speakers' utterances in Excerpt 6, as well as switching to the Russian language to name the item of clothing under discussion *пальто* /pal'to/ 'overcoat' in Excerpt 7.

Table 4

Excerpts 5-8

Excerpt	Transcription	Translation
(5) - <i>Ол салон прям менің домымның қасында. Записать тебя?</i> - <i>О, давай. Сөйтші.</i>	- Ol salon pryam menin domimnin qasynda. Zapizat' tebya? - O, davay. Seytshi.	- That (K) beauty salon (R) right (R) near my (K) house (R+K) is located (K). Shall I make you an appointment (R)? - Oh, let's (R). Put me down (K).
(6) - <i>Рас шығар new әкімнің келетіні.</i> - <i>Да, естідім new әкімнің келетінін.</i>	- Ras shygar nyu akimnin keletini. - Da , estidim nyu akimnin keletin.	- I guess it's true that (K) a new (E) mayor is coming (K). - Yes (R), I've heard (K) a new (E) mayor is coming soon (K).
(7) - <i>Осындай пальто хочу. С вырезом.</i> - <i>Да, сондай пальтолар эффектно смотрятся.</i>	- Osyndai pal'to hochu. S vyrezom. - Da , sonдай pal'tolar effektno smotryatsya	- The same (K) overcoat (R) I want (R). With a slit up (R). - Yes (R), such (K) overcoats (R+K) look spectacular (R).

(8) - <i>За мной держитесь.</i> <i>Меннен кейін нікто не занимал.</i>	- <i>Za mnoi derzhites'</i> . Mennen keyin <i>nikto ne zanimal.</i>	- Stay behind me (R). After me (K) nobody has held (E).
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A variety of structural parallelism can be observed in conversations containing parallel insertions from two different languages, like in Excerpt 8, where the Russian phrase *за мной /za mnoi/* 'behind me' is repeated in the Kazakh phrase *меннен кейін /mennen keyin/* 'after/behind me':

5. Discussion

The present study was devoted to the specificity of language contact in students' interactions in out-of-class situations. In general, the present study attempted to provide an account of the current language situation in an economically essential area of Kazakhstan. The results of the study show that Kazakh youths actively combine three languages in their spontaneous speech: Kazakh as the official language of the country, Russian as an international language used in the post-Soviet space, and English as a global lingua franca. However, it should be noted that the proportions of the Russian and English languages are different, especially in comparison with other Central Asian countries. In different post-Soviet and Asian countries, the role of the Russian language is normally described as that of a lingua franca (Pavlenko, 2006; Protassova et al., 2021); however, its power and prestige have been considerably weakened after the collapse of the USSR (Hasanova, 2022). At the same time, English as a global lingua franca provides greater opportunities and is more highly valued in the global market, and its use is connected with high quality and modernity (Bezborodova & Radjabzade, 2022; Ramsey-Tyson & Abdysheva, 2022). Yet, in the Western area of Kazakhstan, which borders Russian-speaking countries, Russian is seen as a major language of international communication. Although the English language is not as actively used as Russian in Kazakh speech, our study reveals the tendency of its penetration into the communicative and language space of the Western region of Kazakhstan. Unlike the results of previous research on the communicative function of the English language in Kazakhstan, which is

reported to be generally realized in the academic sphere (Shunkeyeva et al., 2020), our findings demonstrate that English is starting to be used more in the daily sphere of communication.

The paper reveals special ways in which youths creatively combine the Kazakh, Russian and English languages in their everyday conversations and focuses on particular word patterns based on grammatical fusion that can be linked to translanguaging. In the context of Kazakhstan, the most widely discussed hybrid word patterns are based on the combination of Kazakh and Russian elements, and the proportions of these two languages are reported to depend on the social components of a particular situation (Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022). Among these components are the age, education, and ethnic background of bilingual speakers. According to Mirzoyeva et al. (2020), residents of Kazakhstan are mainly bilingual speakers, and in their bilingual practices, the Kazakh language tends to dominate, while the Russian language is most likely to fulfill an expressive and stylistic function. In our corpus, we identified three major types of mixtures: hybrid words combining (1) Russian stems and Kazakh affixes, (2) English stems and Kazakh affixes, and (3) Kazakh stems and Russian suffixes and inflections. The results of the study show that the first type of hybrid words is most widely used in the spontaneous speech of multilinguals in the Western region of Kazakhstan. This contradicts previous studies, which have described hybrid words combining Kazakh roots and Russian affixes and inflections as most characteristic of bilingual practices in Kazakhstan (Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022; Mirzoyeva et al., 2020). In our corpus, we found only one pattern of this type when *-ski(y)* is added to a Kazakh root.

To the best of our knowledge, no previous studies have considered word patterning based on English-Kazakh alterations where Kazakh acts as a structural "frame" for English-

language borrowings. As the analysis of our corpus shows, youths in the Western region of Kazakhstan are trilingual and creatively integrate English in their spontaneous speech, as well as Kazakh and Russian. Similar patterns involving the English language have been identified in Russian-based communication practices containing instances of the fusion of English roots with Russian suffixes. Thus, Gritsenko and Aleshinskaya (2020) claim that in Russian musical reviews, such English-Russian blends lead to a semantic "exotization" creating connotations of relaxed and friendly familiarity that are highly appreciated by local speakers. We believe that we can also speak of such a semantic "exotization" in relation to our research material, especially due to the overall informality of situations when students spontaneously discuss everyday issues.

The excerpts of spontaneous speech analyzed in this study are indicative of multilingual practices characteristic of the students' microcommunity in the Western region of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Translingual practices can be used as a dynamic resource for expressing mutual understanding and harmonizing communication in ethnic multilingualism. In spontaneous conversations of young Kazakh trilinguals, language alteration is explained not as a deviant practice and speech errors (Mirzoyeva & Akhmetzhanova, 2019) but as a special meaning-making resource. Thus, translingual practices can reveal the semiotic power of English and Russian as languages of prestige and high status (Foster & Welsh, 2021) or as expressive devices and markers of friendly familiarity. Moreover, the semantics of Russian-Kazakh, Kazakh-Russian, and English-Kazakh hybrids help members of the local students' microcommunity to "maximize the efficiency and minimize the efforts of communication" (Rivlina, 2017, p. 120).

In relation to the findings of our study, of interest are the concepts of emotioncy, meaning the sense-induced emotions that can relativize cognition (Pishghadam et al., 2016), and metapathy, referring to the ability to understand other's feelings taking into consideration their future affective state (Pishghadam et al., 2022). The former suggests making emotional connections with

the lexical and/or grammatical units of a particular language, thus determining the choice of one language or its elements to be incorporated in another language's frame. The higher the emotioncy, the higher chance of choosing a particular language or a mixture of particular languages to fulfill the speaker's intentions. Regarding the latter, Pishghadam et al. (2019) refer to the state of emotioncy to the level of metavolvement, which is a profound pragmatically-oriented state when the communicant is so concerned about his/her interlocutor that he/she opts "for a more thoughtful reaction having long-term benefits for their future life" (p. 36). This notion seems to be closely connected with the strategy of multilingual students to adjust to their interlocutor's linguistic behavior and switch to their partners' native tongue to reach their communicative goals and achieve mutual understanding in the future.

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