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Linguistic identity: essence and originality in the modern socio-cultural context

The article examines the nature of the linguistic identity of the Kazakh and Indian youth. The survey of respondents aged 18-21 shows the features of the linguistic self-determination of an individual. Nevertheless, a significant part of respondents identify themselves with their father's linguistic correlation due to the traditional dominant role of the father in the Kazakh family, a slightly smaller number of respondents choose the mother's nationality. A significant sociolinguistic characteristic of young people is the availability of ethnolinguistic resources for the reproduction of their native language. In this article, our goal is to discuss the extent to which the choice of the native language, knowledge of Russian or a foreign language, language attitudes and external social factors determine the nature of the student's linguistic identity. Anthropological characteristics and language are important factors in the choice of ethnic identity. In the course of the research, the characteristic features of the linguistic identity of a bilingual personality of a student are distinguished.

Keywords: identity, identification, linguistic identity, ethnic identity, ethno-differentiating factor, bilingual personality, socio-cultural context, ethnos.

Introduction

The language captures the entire cognitive experience of the people, their moral-ethical, socio-aesthetic, artistic and educational ideals.

Today, it is the concept of identity that turns out to be more relevant than ever in all areas of the humanitarian sphere in view of the anthropocentric vector in science, the desire of society and society for “transparency, predictability and constancy of the image of a person” [1; 5].

This is due to the desire for understanding, managing communication with the subject. But, unfortunately, the fulfillment of this desire is not always possible, since even the subject himself is not always in an adequate state of understanding himself and his intentions. The personality of the subject is put at the forefront, because it is through his self-presentation, through the impression of others about him, through his image that we can observe the identity of a person. This point of view belongs to the American sociologist I. Hoffmann and his supporters. There is another point of view, according to which identity is something internal and inexpressible [1; 6].

Proponents of the latter believe that human life is a constant process of identity formation. And in this sense, the concept of self-identification as a process of creating an identity becomes the key one. In contrast, the first approach demonstrates a person who controls impressions, plays certain roles, adapts to certain circumstances, while the supporters of the second approach conceive of an independent, continuously forming identity.

Ethnic language creates the basis of intra-ethnic normative unity, serves the communication of the ethnos as a whole.

It was E. Erickson who introduced the concept of “identity” into the interdisciplinary field of research. The scientist emphasized the interdependence of the processes of formation and transformation of identity with the processes of social and cultural development of society [2; 53]. According to researchers, linguistic, ethnic and civic identities are in a complex dialectical interaction. So, back in 1806, I.G. Fichte argued that language is the defining feature of a nation [3; 103]. In Russian psychology, ethnic identity is understood as an integral part of a person's social identity — a person's idea of himself as a member of a certain ethnic group. As for L.M. Drobizheva, ethnic identity is based on ideas about one's nationality, language, culture, history, territory, interests, emotional attitude towards them and, under certain conditions, readiness to act in the name of these ideas [2; 49]. Ethnic identity is more clearly realized if a person lives in a multi-ethnic en-

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vironment. At the same time, an individual can, with varying degrees of intensity, identify himself with one, two, or even several ethnic groups. Multiple identity is the most beneficial for a person, it allows him to use the experience of one group to adapt to another, to master the wealth of another culture without compromising the values of his own [4; 38].

The relationship between ethnic identity and language is one of the problems in the study of social consciousness. This is explained by the special place of a language among the main components of the ethnos and, above all, by the fact that language has long been considered as one of the important factors of ethnic identity.

In addition to language, the criteria characterizing ethnic identity can be a historical community of people, symbols and codes of culture, customs and traditions, religious beliefs and a common geographical area. And accordingly, we can conclude that, although linguistic identity and ethnic identity for some researchers are identical concepts, we still adhere to a different point of view, and we believe that linguistic and ethnic identity are not equivalent concepts.

Researchers also refer to linguistic identity as representations and assessments that relate to the native language and the “foreign” language (the language of the metropolis), as well as linguistic identification, which is based not only on knowledge of the language, but also on communication skills in various speech situations.

Professor of Yale University W. Foltz considered linguistic features to be fundamental for the formation of an ethnos, nation, nationality, the result of ethnogenesis, a symbol of ethnicity [5; 16].

The formation of linguistic, ethnic and civic identity is relevant for modern multi-ethnic educational institutions in Kazakhstan, which determined the problems of our study.

Currently, migration processes, both external and internal, are characteristic of most European countries. Migration flows in Kazakhstan are also increasing every year. The Karaganda region is not an exception. The data on migration flows are presented in Figure (taken from the open source “Taldau” of the information analytical system of the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan [6])

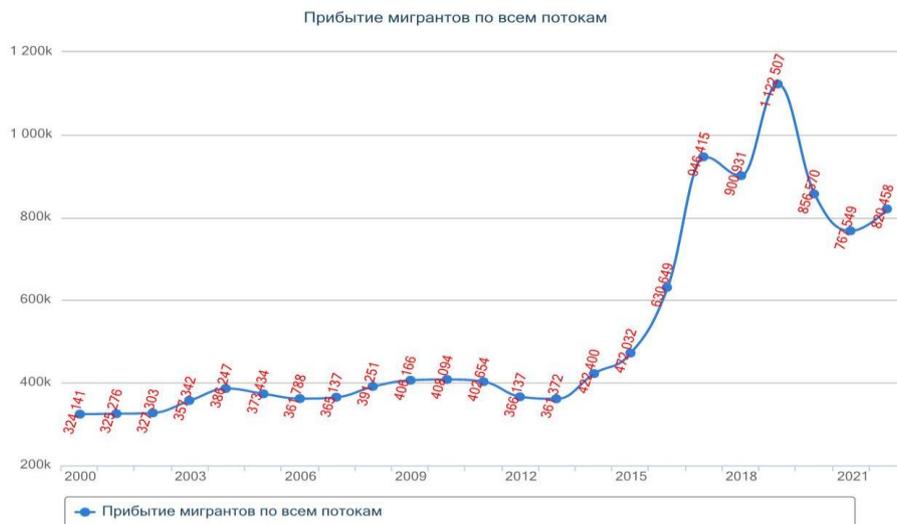


Figure.

Methods and material

The main method of data collection in our study is a survey of respondents — students. The survey was conducted among 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students of the Karaganda University named after E.A. Buketov, the Karaganda Medical Academy, Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University, who study in Russian and the state languages. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that as part of our study, we also conducted a survey among students from India studying at universities in the city of Karaganda.

India is a huge country with a rich cultural heritage and thousands of languages. Due to its long history, it has been a “melting pot” of cultures, religions and ethnic groups. In addition to this, India has a long history in the field of language. There is an old saying in India that languages change every 60-80 kilometers. In a

multilingual society like India, many languages are used in everyday life. One language may be preferred for household and social groups, another for administration and work, and a third for religious discourse, and all this is quite normal and enters into everyday practice.

For better understanding, the age of the respondents ranges from 18 to 21 years. The number of respondents was 230 people studying in Russian and the state language and 136 students from India. It should be noted that the study was conducted in groups with both state and Russian as the language of instruction. The survey was conducted on a voluntary basis using the Google platform and a live interview.

The choice of this age group — 18-21 years old — is due to the fact that the process of ethnic identification in cognitive and emotional terms is completed by this age.

It is at this age that a person reaches a realized ethnic identity. Thus, young people aged 18–21 have completed the process of ethnic identification, they have certain ideas about themselves as part of some ethnic group.

The questionnaire prepared for the survey contained 42 questions, which offered answers from two to five. The received questionnaires were first subjected to statistical processing. Then the quantitative data were analyzed and generalized in order to identify patterns and trends that show the role of language as an ethno-differentiating parameter in the ethnic identification of a young person.

Results and discussion

As we mentioned above, the survey was conducted among students of 3 educational institutions in Karaganda. The survey involved 230 people who study in Russian and the state languages and 136 students from India who study in English.

The age of the participants was from 17–19 years. The survey involved 58 people (25.2 %) aged 17, 161 students (70 %) and 11 (4.8 %) people aged 19.

The gender affiliation of the interviewed students from Kazakhstan is presented in Diagram 1.

As we can see, 149 female respondents took part in the survey of students from Kazakhstan, which made up the majority and 81 male respondents.

Whereas, in the survey of Indian students, the majority of respondents were males (Diagram 2.)

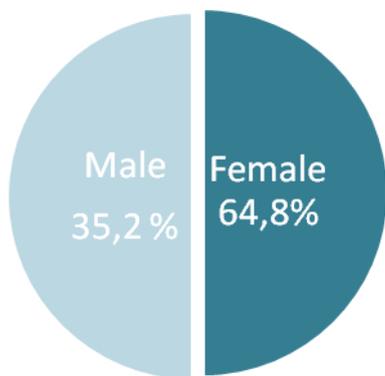


Diagram 1. Gender of respondents from Kazakhstan

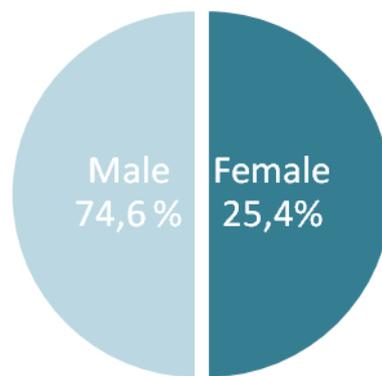


Diagram 2. Gender of respondents from India

Such indicators are associated with the traditions and gender policies of Indian society.

In India, there are still very few educated women: parents do not consider it to be necessary to spend money on the education of their daughters.

In modern India, a woman formally has the right to education, but few can take advantage of it. Educated women in India are almost always the daughters of wealthy parents. The rest do not consider it to be necessary to give money for the education of their daughters. It is believed that for a girl this is superfluous.

Even with equal education and diploma, gender inequality in India is also manifested in the fact that employers in most cases give preference to male applicants. As the respondents themselves noted, most of the women among skilled workers are doctors and teachers.

Let us pay attention to the fact that according to the Indian media (electronic version of the Indianexpress newspaper dated May 13, 2023) “According to the data published by the Government of India, Kazakhstan attracted 3,500 Indian students in 2022.” (<https://indianexpress.com/article/education/study-abroad/studying-mbbs-from-kazakhstan-scholarship-universities-study-abroad-neet-ug-8450942/>)

When determining their native language, the answers of Kazakh students were distributed as follows (Diagram 3):

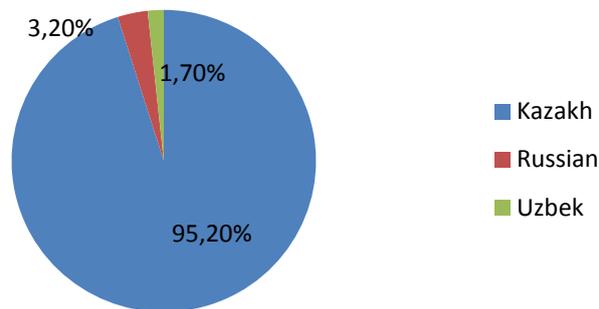


Diagram 3. Native language of students from Kazakhstan

As we can see, the majority of 230 respondents recognized Kazakh as their native language (219/95.2 %), Russian — 7/3 %, Uzbek — 4/1.7 %.

A larger number of Kazakhstani students in our survey determined their linguistic identity depending on the ownership of the language by the father — 98 % and the ownership of the mother's language — 2 %.

Consider the responses of foreign students from India.

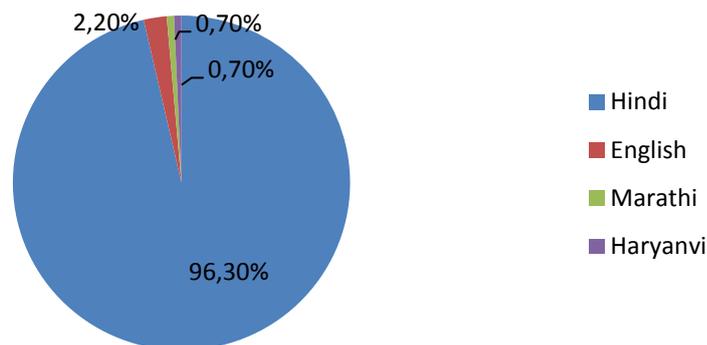


Diagram 4. Native language students from India

According to the survey (Diagram 4), the majority of Indian respondents recognized Hindi as their mother tongue — 96.3 % (131), the second most popular answer was English, which was considered their mother tongue — 2.2 % (3) of respondents, 0.7 % (1) Indian students chose the Marathi language. Marathi is one of the Indo-Aryan languages, the language of the Marathas. It is one of the 22 official languages of India and is ranked among the 20 most widely used languages in the world. In addition, the Marathi language is mostly actively used by emigrants living outside of India.

Also, 0.7 % (1) of respondents from India chose the Haryanvi language. This language is also known as the Bangru language. This language is often used in Indian films and television. Today it is the “native” language of millions of Muslims in Pakistan muli, jat and rangar. Haryanvi is also considered an Indo-Aryan language.

In general, speaking of the native language, we can say that this term is a sociolinguistic concept. Speaking about the native language, we can also say that the linguistic ideas about the term native language and our everyday ideas about it are quite different.

We have already mentioned that the ideas about the native language and the linguistic science itself are also different, some identify the native and maternal, others consider the native synonymous with the main language, there are opinions that the native language is the first language, there is a point of view about that the native language is an ethnic language.

In the course of our dissertation research, we consider the essence of the concept of native language. We interpret information about what language is native, used in everyday life, maternal, ethnic, and so on.

It should be noted that in the framework of our study, in the survey, respondents were asked to answer the question of what the phrase NATIVE LANGUAGE means for them.

Answering this question, Kazakh students noted that they correlate this phrase with the concepts of motherland, nation, mother tongue, love.

The answers of respondents from India are not much different, they also correlate their native language with such concepts as motherland, India, family, love.

The respondents' answers clearly show the idea that the native language is not only communication, a source of knowledge, but also a tool for self-knowledge, it is the spiritual and cultural component of the family, ethnic group. Young people subtly feel all the shades of meaning and this concept and its great significance.

Undoubtedly, it is impossible not to note the dominant role of the native language in the formation of the personality, the formation of primary skills of speech communication, in addition, the native language as a visiting card of any nation, ethnic group. The disappearance of the native language leads to the disappearance of the nation itself, the ethnos.

The modern educational environment is multicultural in its essence, because it is the unity of diverse cultures.

The modern language situation in Kazakhstan in the light of the development of ethnic and national cultures reflects the peculiarity of the multicultural development of the Karaganda region.

In this sense, the multicultural educational space of Karaganda is a unique reflection of the process of formation of life and value orientations of modern Kazakhstani youth, and global trends in youth culture in general, as foreign students and migrants study in the region.

The picture of the choice of ethnic identity of students from Kazakhstan is presented in Diagram 5.

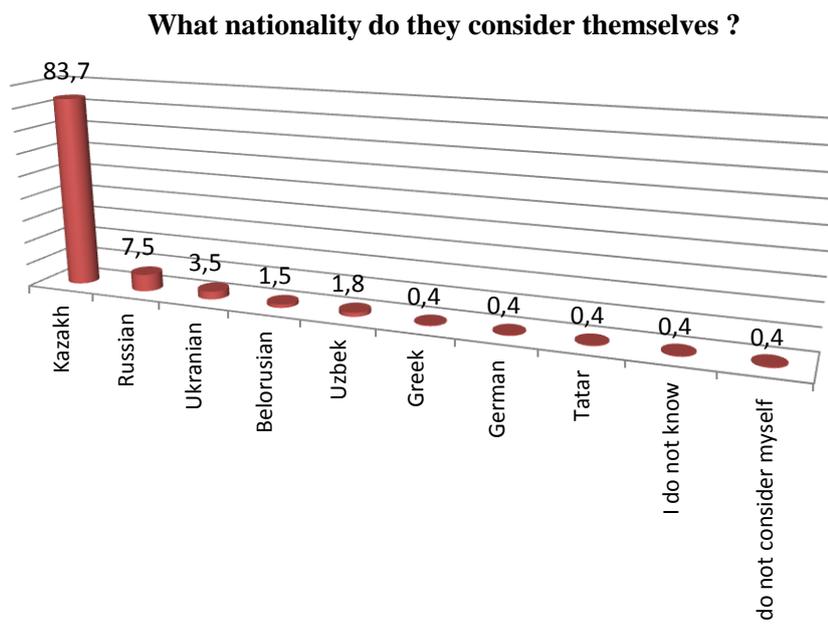


Diagram 5. Ethnic identity of Kazakh students

The choice of the nationality of the mother or father is due, according to the answers of respondents from Kazakhstan, for several reasons (we will name the most popular answers):

- because my father (mother) is Kazakh/Russian/Uzbek, etc.;
- because my parents are Kazakh/Russian/Uzbek etc. (parents — purebred....);
- because I was born in Kazakhstan;
- because I am Kazakh by blood (Kazakh blood flows in me);
- because my ancestors are Kazakhs;

There were also unique and very interesting answers:

- Kazakh by place of birth and ethnic origin;

– I consider myself primarily a globulist and a person (the respondent apparently meant the word glob-
alist).

However, many respondents found it difficult to answer about the motives for choosing a nationality.

If we analyze the answers of the Indian audience of respondents, then the picture is as follows, despite the existing difference in the nationalities of the father or mother, students from India completely, all 100 % indicated their nationality as Hindu or Indian.

The choice of the nationality of the mother or father is due, according to the answers of respondents from India, for several reasons (we will name the most popular answers):

- because my father (mother) is Indian;
- because I was born in India.

Unlike Kazakh students, students from India did not have any difficulties with answers about the motives for choosing a nationality.

According to the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the nationality entry in the passport and identity card is made in accordance with the nationality of the parents. With different nationalities of parents, a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan voluntarily chooses the nationality of his father or mother;

Subsequently, upon application, the nationality changes only to the nationality of the other parent.

As an exception, it is allowed to change the entry about nationality in passports, identity cards of citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan, forcibly relocated to the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan during the period of repression. The change of nationality is made on the basis of certificates of rehabilitation issued in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated April 14, 1993 “About the rehabilitation of victims of mass political repressions” (https://egov.kz/cms/ru/articles/faqs_passport_id).

The respondents from the number of Kazakhstani students interviewed by us chose the nationality of the father in the majority when documenting (Diagram 6).

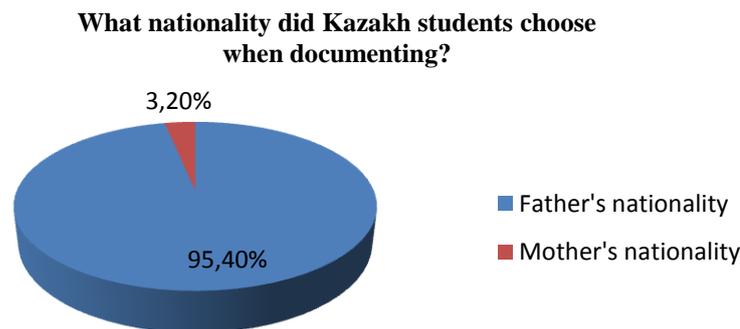


Diagram 6. Choice of nationality of Kazakh students when documenting

Diagram 7 shows the choice of nationality among students from India. As we can see, the answers of the respondents do not differ much.

Both Kazakh and Indian students choose the father's nationality.

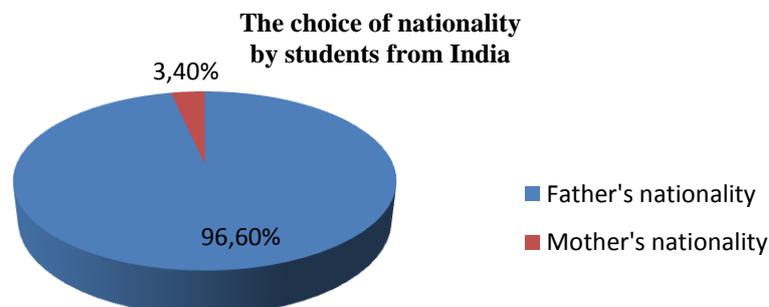


Diagram 7. Selecting the nationality of students from India

In general, nationality is a biological feature, i.e. nationality is not connected either with the country of residence or with a specific territory, we receive nationality from our parents. As we can see, parents can be of different nationalities, but a person can choose one based on self-consciousness.

Conclusion

In the higher educational institutions of the Karaganda region, which were chosen by us for sociolinguistic research, students of various nationalities and gender study, this is natural, because the Republic of Kazakhstan is a secular, unitary state, where the principles of gender equality and tolerance are observed. Each student of a higher educational institution of the Karaganda region had the right to choose the language of instruction that is the Russian and Kazakh languages. Foreign students from India study in English, but the curriculum includes such disciplines as “Russian language”, “Kazakh language”, “History of Kazakhstan”.

The sociolinguistic study showed that the majority of the surveyed Kazakh students studying in our region are female, while the vast majority of students from India, on the contrary, are male. This is explained by the gender policy of this country.

The analysis of the survey of Kazakhstani students showed that a significant part of the surveyed students from Kazakhstan live in rural areas, and students from India studying in Karaganda, on the contrary, are urban residents.

Based on the survey data, students aged 17–19 years old took part in our study, the vast majority of them are the students aged 17 years old.

Based on the data of our sociolinguistic survey, the linguistic identity of Kazakhstani youth does not coincide with ethnic identification. So, during the survey, three dominant languages were identified, which the students called native: Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek. Whereas, the picture of ethnic identification is represented by 8 nationalities: Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Greek, German, Tatar. This allows us to say that the linguistic identity of Kazakh students in their self-consciousness does not correlate with the main criterion for ethnic identification. The main criterion and marker of ethnic identification for them is the nationality of the parents, namely, due to traditional patriarchal ideas, the nationality of the father.

The choice of the nationality of the mother or father is determined by the respondents' ideas about heritage, heredity and family values, which coincides with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which regulates the choice of nationality when documenting.

However, as we have already noted, a large number of respondents from Kazakhstan experienced difficulty in publicity of the motivation for choosing a nationality. And some even could not or did not want to determine it.

Indian students, on the contrary, did not experience any difficulties in choosing motives for choosing their nationality.

The linguistic identity of students from India was also more widely represented than the national one. The nationality of foreign students was 100 % represented by Indians, while the language is represented by 5 languages.

At the same time, it can be noted that the answers to the choice of nationality are similar among both Kazakhstani and Indian students, namely: both groups of respondents choose the father's nationality in the majority when documenting. This is due to the fact that both the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of India are countries with traditional patriarchal ideas and values.

All these facts confirm the idea that the ethnic and linguistic identity of the phenomenon of the concept is not equivalent.

Exploring the speech portraits of modern Kazakh and Indian students, we can conclude that ethnic and linguistic identities as factors in the formation of the linguistic personality of a modern student are not always correlated. At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of ethnic and native languages.

When choosing a linguistic identity, the respondents are guided by rational motives, linguistic prestige, as well as their self-awareness.

Both groups of respondents include the concepts of family, motherland, love, mother into the concept sphere of “mother tongue”.

The linguistic identity of students of the Karaganda region is a specific world, which is influenced by both extralinguistic and intralinguistic factors. At the same time, it is gratifying to note that in the multi-ethnic Karaganda region ethnolinguistic and cultural dialogue is formed in an atmosphere of tolerance, cooperation, adequate assimilation and acculturation. It has no place for harassment based on gender, nationality

or political principles. This confirms the fact that every year the number of foreign students from India who want to study in Karaganda is growing.

The results obtained by us can form the basis for the development of an effective and harmonious model of bilingual education, taking into account migration processes and modern educational needs.

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Тілдік бірегейлік: қазіргі әлеуметтік-мәдени контекстегі мәні мен өзіндік ерекшелігі

Мақалада қазақ және үнді жастарының тілдік болмысының табиғаты қарастырылған. 18-21 жас аралығындағы респонденттердің сауалнамасы жеке тұлғаның тілдік өзін-өзі анықтау ерекшеліктерін көрсетеді. Дегенмен, респонденттердің едәуір бөлігі қазақ отбасындағы әкенің дәстүрлі үстем рөліне байланысты өздерін әкесінің тілдік қатыстылығымен сәйкестендіреді, респонденттердің біршама аз саны анасының ұлтын таңдайды. Жастардың маңызды әлеуметтік-лингвистикалық сипаттамасы — олардың ана тілін жаңғырту үшін этнолингвистикалық ресурстардың болуы. Мақаланың мақсаты — ана тілін таңдау, орыс тілін немесе шетел тілін жетік білу, тілдік қатынас және сыртқы әлеуметтік факторлар студенттің тілдік тұлғасының сипатын қаншалықты анықтайтынын талқылау. Этникалық сәйкестікті таңдаудағы маңызды факторларға антропологиялық сипаттамалар мен тіл жатады. Зерттеу барысында екі тілді студенттің тілдік тұлғасының өзіне тән белгілері анықталды.

Кілт сөздер: сәйкестілік, сәйкестендіру, тілдік сәйкестілік, этникалық сәйкестілік, этнодифференциалдаушы фактор, екі тілді тұлға, әлеуметтік-мәдени контекст, этнос.

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Языковая идентичность: ее значение в современном социокультурном контексте и оригинальность

В статье рассмотрена природа языковой идентичности казахской и индийской молодежи. Опрос респондентов в возрасте 18–21 года показывает особенности языкового самоопределения личности. Тем не менее, значительная часть респондентов идентифицирует себя с языковой принадлежностью своего отца в связи с традиционной доминирующей ролью отца в казахской семье, несколько меньшее число респондентов выбирает национальность матери. Важной социолингвистической характеристикой молодежи является наличие этнолингвистических ресурсов для воспроизведения их родного языка. Цель настоящей статьи — обсудить, в какой степени выбор родного языка, знание русского или иностранного языка, языковые установки и внешние социальные факторы определяют природу языковой идентичности студента. Антропологические характеристики и язык являются важными факторами при выборе этнической идентичности. В ходе исследования выделены характерные черты языковой идентичности двуязычной личности студента.

Ключевые слова: идентичность, языковая идентичность, этническая идентичность, этнодифференцирующий фактор, билингв, социально-культурный контекст, этнос.

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