



ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫ БІЛІМ ЖӘНЕ ҒЫЛЫМ МИНИСТРЛІГІ  
Л.Н. ГУМИЛЕВ АТЫНДАҒЫ ЕУРАЗИЯ ҰЛТТЫҚ УНИВЕРСИТЕТІ



Студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың  
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студентов и молодых ученых  
«НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ - 2014»

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«SCIENCE AND EDUCATION-2014»

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## **THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN CULTURE EXCHANGE BETWEEN WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA**

**Ramazanov Alikhan**

*alexramazanoff@gmail.com*

Student of Faculty of International Relations, L.N.Gumilyov Eurasian National University

Supervisor: R.E.Kussainova

Knowing a foreign language is not an extraordinary phenomenon in present days. Moreover, the number of learners grows up increasingly year by year. It is not a supernormal thing, which could seem to be thirty or forty years ago, anymore, but the social need in order to be considered as a well-educated modern man. Also it is not a surprising fact that nowadays English became globally important and so called “bridge” for people belonging to different cultures to meet each other.

If we have a look to the history of Central Asian countries, after the countries took their independence in 1991, the need to establish international relations appeared. For young Central Asian countries it was important to strengthen connection with more developed states. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan started new epoch of independent sovereignty. However, any beginning has many difficulties, especially for a new country it was challenging to introduce itself to the whole world. As well, it was important to save relationship with fraternal states.

It can be seen, that people got to know English in Soviet Union times. Despite this fact, the role of English in society was not significant. Language politics at the time differed from modern world. Turning to this term, it is relatively new concept that is important not only in linguistics, but in politics in general. Thus, language politics is the way language and linguistic differences between peoples are dealt with in the political arena [1]. For new independent countries English language would be the right way to establish relationship with other areas. The first time English language had a political importance. Then it gave the chance all the citizens to meet the new world. People of that times and now can be divided into two groups: Soviet times people like our parents and young generation. For the first group with more conservative thinking changes after independence were challenging, not likely for youth who belonged to completely new country. It is a fact that young people are more open to new and that they are more willingly ready to explore new cultures. Governments of Central Asian countries made the right decision, I think, when they made significant changes in language politics that let people learn foreign languages. English language became a part of educational material. It gave students the opportunity to learn new cultures.

As one of the official languages of United Nations English language plays very important role in international relations. For more than 300 billion English is a native language. Thus, this language is the opportunity to explore the whole world. First of all, education is the main field for both West and Central Asia to exchange cultures. Therefore, English is important not only as one of the most spoken languages, but also as a tool that builds a strong bridge between two areas. First,

for young Central Asian countries it is important to have good specialists who will contribute to the development of the country, but some disciplines are not well taught in native universities. Thus, English language helps students to learn from more developed countries, and use this experience home country. Second, people of West countries, thanks to English, learn about Central Asian cultures from international students. Both sides do all the possible things to give the students such opportunity. Nowadays there are a lot of scholarships given for perspective students from governments.

The USA gives a big importance to culture exchange and helps developing countries with financial support. One of the most successful exchange programs is “Fulbright”. This program was founded in 1946 by J. William Fulbright. This program gives US citizens the opportunity to study, conduct research abroad, and citizens from other countries do the same in the States. Special emphasis is given to Central Asian countries. The Fulbright Foreign Student Program enables graduate students, young professionals and artists from Central Asia to conduct research and study in the United States. This program is considered to be as the most prestigious awards programs worldwide, as fifty-three Fulbright alumni have won Nobel Prizes; seventy-eight have won Pulitzer Prizes [2]. Therefore, through learning English, students have priceless opportunity to take part in this exchange program.

Another prestigious exchange program is GLOBAL UGRAD, which sponsors students from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan to study during one or two semesters in one of American universities. One hundred per cent scholarship lets students to experience American culture and education in its real life. Every year about forty lucky and perspective undergraduate students are chosen to be participants of this program. Of course, one of the criteria is eligibility in English.

As for Central Asian countries, many scholarship exchange programs are also founded. Namely, Kazakhstan’s “Bolashak” program is considered to be one of the most prestigious programs. “Bolashak” was initiated by Nursultan Nazarbaev in 1993, and more than 6,000 students have been awarded the scholarship [3]. This program also gives future specialists to have experience of studying abroad. It is obligatory to students to return to home country after graduating from the university abroad, and work in a state organization for four-five years.

On the university level there are some exchange programs sponsored by Ministry of Science and Education that gives students the chance to study in foreign state during one or two semesters. For example, “Academic mobility program” in L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian national university. Thanks to this program every year fifty students get knowledge in one of American, European, and East Asian universities. In my personal experience, I was a participant of this exchange program and have studied for one semester in Pittsburg State University, Kansas, US. That was a priceless experience because I had had not been abroad before, and my outlook completely changed, as I met new culture, and English was my tool in exploring that.

To sum up, in general language is the key that helps people to open the doors of other countries. Nowadays there are more than five thousand such keys. No doubt, English is the unique key that can open the whole world.

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