

# Culture and traditions of Language

overview

# Roots

- Turkic, Mongol, and borrowings from Arabic, Persian, Slavic, western (Russian, soviet, and modern influences and trends).
- Was formed as the language of the tribes in the Kazakh khanate in mid XV century, origin- political and social, turned into ethnic factor.

## Kazakh language specifics

- is a Turkic of Altaic family, early version of Kipshak.
- Kazakh is an agglutinative, and it employs vowel harmony.

- Today, Kazakh is written in the Cyrillic alphabet in Kazakhstan and Mongolia, while the more than one million Kazakh-speakers in China use an Arabic-derived script (tote-zhazu) similar to that used to write Uigur.
- The oldest known written records of languages closely related to Kazakh were written in the Orphon script. However, it is not believed that any of these varieties were direct predecessors of Kazakh.
- Modern Kazakh has historically been written using versions of the Latin, Cyrillic, and Arabic scripts.

## Kazakh language studies

- Until Russian reforms of late 19 century, Kazakh language was oral, and writing was in Arabic. Literary language was formed by Abay since late XIX century. Before-Chagatai (koine turki).

## Text of 1902

بورونقى اوتكان دامانده بىر دانشمند كىشى بغداد شەرى نىك بىر  
اولكان قاضى سى نىك اويونە كىلەوب قونوبتى قاضى بىرلان  
سويلاسيب قاضى نى سوزكا جىنكا بروبتى صونده قاضى قورقوب بول  
مغان كىلكان بىر پله ايكان مىننىك قاضى لىغومنى تارتوب آلصه كىراك  
نە دە بولسە بوغان جالەنوب مى بىروب اورنومدە قلابوندىب  
خاتونىنە آقىلداسوبتى .

Бурунбу өткөн заманда бір даныспан кісі Бағдат сәрі-  
нің бір үлкөн казысының үжүнө келіп конупту. Казы—мінән  
сөйлөсүп, казыны сөзгө ңеңә-беріпті. Сонда казы коркуп, „бул  
маған келгән бір бәлә: менің казылығымны тартыб—алса,  
керәк! не-дә болса, буған ңалынып, сый беріп, орнумда кала-  
јын!“ деп, катынына акылдасыпты.

# Complexity

- Kazakh has a system of nine phonemic vowels, three of which are diphthongs.
- Kazakh has 7 cases. Case endings are applied only to the last element of a noun phrase—e.g., a noun, an adjective, or a nominalised verb phrase.
- Kazakh has eight personal pronouns:
- Kazakh may express different combinations of tense, aspect, and mood through the use of various verbal morphology or through a system of auxiliary verbs, many of which might better be considered light verbs.

- Kazakh exhibits an evidentiality system which does not neatly align with morphological paradigms.
- тазалап тастапты – he cleaned it and I saw the result
- тазалап тастаған – he cleaned it, I saw the result and verified it with him
- тазалап тастаған екен – he cleaned it and told me, but I probably didn't see the results
- тазалап тастады – he cleaned it and I saw him clean it
- тазалап тастағанға ұқсайды – he cleaned it, or so I infer from a result I saw which suggests this
- тазалап тастаған шығар – he cleaned it, or so I infer from a result I saw which suggests this



# **Mankurtism: policy, process, participants and effects**

- Kazakhstan has been part of the USSR, whose state language was Russian, and it dominated and then replaced the usage of Kazakh in public, culture and social spheres. By 1991 majority of population could not speak Kazakh. That's why the Russian language kept its status as the official language in Kazakhstan even after its independence, which makes Kazakhstan a bilingual country.
- Loss of connections with the ethnic group (memory, culture and traditions, history, language) was defined as **mankurtism**.





- 1) concept that predicted people without ethnic memory and identity could commit crimes against its people
- 2) deliberate policy against ethnicities and their cultures

# Russian/soviet influence

- 1. Lexicon
- 2. Written form and script (until 1929- Arabic, 1929-1940 Latin, 1940- Cyrillic). the 42-letter alphabet based on Cyrillic, while maintaining all of 33 letters of the Russian alphabet and adding 9 letters for the sounds of the Kazakh language.

All language reforms were political-ideological to transform the mental map and civilizational path of nomads, disconnect with the Islamic world, prevent unity of Turkic groups in the USSR (fears of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism).



- Russian was the language of interethnic communication throughout the Soviet Union. As the data from the censuses show, the share of the population speaking Russian constantly rose. Thus, for example, in Kazakhstan, the percentage of the non-Russian population that spoke Russian fluently in 1989 was 72.9 percent. For Kazakhs, the percentage was 64.1 percent.

- русскоязычный поэт Б.Канапьянов:
- Позабытый мной с детства язык,
- Пресловутое двуязычие,
- При котором теряю свой лик
- И приобретаю двуличие.
- Я пойму неизвестного мне
- Уходящего аборигена,
- Но когда я среди ночи во сне
- Перед предком склоняю колено,
- Сознаю, что не верит он мне,
- Как пришельцу из тяжкого плена.
- Усмехнётся он в той стороне:
- Ты меня недостойная смена.

## Nomadic legacy

- Was dominant in Kazakh lexicon before the soviet modernization. Nomadic terminology is the richest in the world languages- over 3000 words. Among them only 300 refer to camel.



## Borrowings (cases)- went through lexical and phonetic changes

- From Greek- sciences, linguistics, philosophy- theorem, axiom, dinosaur, telephone, mixes - tele-didar
- From Latin- in sciences, politics and medicine -autobus, accord, velosiped, Indii, lens.
- From Arabic- religion, philosophy, politics, culture and arts, personal names.
- From Persian – arts, literature, culture, personal names

## Modern day borrowings- language globalization

- Off-shore zone - оффшорлық аймақ, barter zhasau, videozhazba or beineclip, sponsor– демеуші, businessman– кәсіпкер, president, parliament, etc.

## Legal basis

- ***Law on languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan (11 July, 1997, #151)- state language- Kazakh, Russian- for communication***

## Changes happened

- Geographical names (toponames):  
Semipalatinsk- Semei, Aktubinsk- Aktobe,  
Kokchatev- Kokshetau, Borovoye- Burabai,  
Issyk- Esil, Alma-Ata- Almaty, etc.

## Changes to come

- October 2006, N.Nazarbayev, the President of Kazakhstan, brought up the topic of using the Latin alphabet instead of the Cyrillic alphabet as the official script for Kazakh in Kazakhstan. A Kazakh government study released in September 2007 said that Kazakhstan could feasibly switch to a Latin script over a 10- to 12-year period, for a cost of \$300 million.<sup>9</sup> On December 13, 2007, however, President Nazarbayev announced a decision not to advance the transformation to a Latin alphabet: “For 70 years the Kazakhstanis read and wrote in Cyrillic. More than 100 nationalities live in our state. Thus we need stability and peace. We should be in no hurry in the issue of alphabet