

# Multilingual Education in the Teacher Training Master Course “Multilingual Technologies of Early Childhood Development” (Kazan Federal University)

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**Abstract.** *This article represents a description of the teacher-training Master course “Multilingual Technologies of Early Childhood Development” (Kazan Federal University), aimed at guiding specialists in the field of multilingual preschool education. The focus is to emphasize the importance of multilingual education in the bilingual background of Tatarstan (Russian and Tatar languages), to outline the main directions of these master course, the specialities of its post-graduates and the skills they master during their course. To be specific, the description of one course is provided to give the clear idea of this academic programme and the opportunities students get, having opted for it. The article raises several significant problems: teaching ESL (English as a second language) in the bilingual environment, teaching English to young children, teaching English to children with developmental disorders using computer applications in teaching, introducing corresponding online course in university education.*

**Keywords** – *Master course, academic programme multilingual, preschool education, early development<sup>1</sup>.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to A.N. Puzatykh, “multilingual education is an effective tool for teaching the younger generation in an interconnected and interdependent world” [6]. Multilingual education is also known “as a process of studying several languages within a defined model” [3, p. 20]. It is hard not to agree with them. In the modern world, specialists who speak two or more foreign languages are called multilinguals and “are characterized by multiculturalism based on tolerance, empathy, and reassessment of their own culture” [1, p. 6], which they are able to teach in preschool. Taking into account the conditions of bilingualism of Tatarstan, such qualities are utterly demanded and their lack is acute in our region. One way to get professional training or retraining in the teaching of foreign languages is to enroll into the Master study academic programme. Thus, our research addresses the issue of teaching ESL in preschools and primary schools in Tatarstan and in particular to

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children with developmental disorders (Down syndrome, ASD (autism spectrum disorder), ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), Rett syndrome, etc.). The aim of our research is to outline the teacher training Master course “Multilingual Technologies of Early Childhood Development” carried out at Kazan Federal University, which seems significant in university education in Kazan and Tatarstan as it is aimed at gaining multilingual education and specific skills in pedagogics and methodology.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The academic programme “Multilingual Technologies of Early Childhood Development” was established at the Kazan Federal University in 2015. It operates in the direction of teacher-training 44.04.01 “Pedagogical education” on the basis of the Department of Romance and Germanic Philology at the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication. Its graduates receive the Master’s degree on its completion. They acquire competences in the field of children psychology, pedagogy, methods of teaching foreign languages to young children. They receive pedagogical education on the basis of philological education, and are capable of communicating in the national (Russian and Tatar) and foreign languages. Master students at KFU practice in kindergartens and the Bala City Elementary School in Kazan, which is a matter of particular pride for these institutions. The peculiarity of these educational institutions is that their students simultaneously master several languages: English, Tatar, Chinese and Spanish. Thus, Master students study the methods of teaching these languages and apply them in practice of teaching children.

Master students study the following disciplines:

- Modern problems and innovations in education
- Methodology and methods of pedagogical research
- Philosophy of education
- Information technology in educational activities
- Management in education
- Literature for preschool children
- Methods of teaching a foreign language to young children
- Theory of child development

- Maternal and children's folklore
- Philological component of the methods of early childhood development
  - German
  - Chinese
  - Academic communication
- Designing a psychologically safe multicultural educational environment
  - Literature for preschool children
  - Linguistic studies of bilingualism and multilingualism
  - Sociolinguistics: bilingual and multilingual
  - Business English
  - Formation of the culture of speech of the Russian language in the process of reading fiction and leisure activities
    - Philological component of art pedagogy and art therapy
      - Tatar language as native
      - Tatar language as non-native
      - Children's creativity as an educational environment
      - Reading fiction as a means of psychological and speech therapy correction
        - The use of multilingual technologies in teaching children with psychological characteristics
        - Early literacy development
        - Cognitive, emotional and aesthetic development of a preschooler in the process of learning a language [4].

### III. METHOD

The study was aimed to outline the Master academic course and to underline the importance of multilingual education in the bilingual environment of the Republic of Tatarstan. The method of complex analysis was used in order to solve the problems raised in the article. Based on the data obtained we outlined some key points of studying in the academic Master course "Multilingual Technologies of Early Childhood Development" carried out at Kazan Federal University. As an example we described a special education course called "Multilingual development of children with psychological disorders" where we gave the main theoretical information about the methods of teaching foreign languages children with ASD. During the analysis of the theoretical information, we pointed out the main competences of multilinguals [2].

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As can be seen from the list of disciplines stated above, the training of Master students includes a multilingual aspect (the study of several languages and the methods of teaching them); a module dedicated to the early development of children (folklore, children's creativity, the development of early grammarians), as well as special education (speech therapy correction, art pedagogy, teaching English to children with developmental disorders).

As an example of a special education class, consider the course "Multilingual development of children with psychological disorders" (author O.Y. Amurskaya). The

course is 72 hours (including 12 hours of classroom work: 6 lectures and 6 practical classes), and during the course, Master students learn about the features of interaction with children with psychological developmental features (ASD, Down syndrome, ADHD), Rett syndrome) and acquire the competences of teaching children English taking into account their abilities, possibilities and needs. Due to its specific nature, the course touches upon issues of correctional pedagogy (for example, problematic behavior) and current methods of solving problems. In practical classes students study the computer and mobile applications for ESL teaching to preschoolers (Russian-speaking and English-speaking) and develop the ability of critical thinking, discussing how these applications are suitable for educating children with special needs. As a test assignment Master students design a computer application project for teaching the English language to children with ASD and defend it, justifying the merits of their project.

The core of the academic programme is the principle of creative cooperation between teachers and students. Lectures and practical classes are conducted by highly qualified professors and associate professors of the department. The distance learning form of the programme also implies much time for independent work of students, within the framework of which they study the recommended literature, do assignments, perform the practical tasks and research additional online resources in order to study the material in-depth [5].

As a part of the Master course, students write a Master's thesis, scientific articles (both independently and in collaboration with a supervisor), present the results of their work at prestigious international Russian and foreign conferences.

Additional education is also offered to students: a qualified translator in the field of professional communication, a possibility to pass certified exams in English, German, French, Spanish and Business English.

### V. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, during training in this academic programme students master the following competences:

- implementation of professional communication in the state (Russian and Tatar) and foreign languages;
- interaction with the participants of the educational process and social partners;
- team management;
- tolerant perception of social, ethnic and cultural differences;
- organization of educational activities, diagnostics and assessment of the quality of the educational process for various educational programmes;
- formation of the educational environment and the use of professional knowledge and skills in the implementation of the objectives of innovative educational policies;
- readiness to use methods, technologies and methods of training in the conditions of general educational organizations;

- implementation of pedagogical design of educational programs and individual educational routes;
- strategy development of cultural and educational activities.

Master graduates can work in institutions of pre-school and primary education (educator, teacher, methodologist, group leader), in various children's organizations, as well as continue their education in postgraduate school. According to the data of 2016-2017, the share of graduates' employment is 94%.

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