



Education of Bilingual Children in Russian-speaking communities



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My research aimed to explore the variety of factors which may explain the differences in the performance of bilingual children from the Russian speaking community in nursery and primary schools. In particular it examined whether these differences became barriers to social integration and access to the labour market.

Some of my key questions:

- Is bilingualism a factor in explaining poor inter personal relationships with other children?
- What are the main obstacles in full social integration of bilingual children?
- How does the economic, social and cultural background of immigrant parents impact upon the educational performance of their children?
- What role do teachers play in the development and assimilation of bilingual children?
- What can be done to improve the academic performance of bilingual children, their social integration and interpersonal relations with peers?

I would recommend the collaborative masters model to others in future. It is a great opportunity for Masters' students to be involved in original research. I hope it will help in my career development due to practical experience to conduct an original study.

Key findings:

- Bilingual children distinguish between languages depending upon the context
- The ability to speak a language in a social situation does not necessarily mean that the child has a deep conceptual understanding of the language
- Russian language continues to be an important aspect of identity at home
- In mono-lingual Russian speaking families the decision to raise the child bilingually depends on the interest and effort of both parents
- In mixed families the decision to raise the child bilingually depends on practical considerations and the personal engagement of the parent with Russian at home
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that the language in which a child is raised should be decided before the child is born.