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Linguistic capital in Kazakhstan: Educational and economic outcomes of attending the Kazakh language school vs multilingual school

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Abstract: Kazakh is the state language in Kazakhstan. However, after 30 years of independence, there is still a considerable proportion of Russian speaking population in the country. During the Soviet era, the proficiency in Russian was important for educational and professional success in labour markets of socialist republics. This paper aims to understand the linguistic shifts that have occurred in Kazakhstan between 2010 and 2020, and how has the role of the languages as part of human capital changed over the last decade in the country in terms of educational and socio-economic indicators. The descriptive analysis are based on the official educational statistics and online survey. The findings indicate that people who speak only Kazakh and attended the Kazakh language schools are more likely to be in disadvantage both educationally and economically. These people generally have lower educational levels compared to attendees of Russian or trilingual schools; they earn less and have lower knowledge of the languages of wider communication such as English. Such people tend to be more inclined to raise and educate their children in the local language, whereas, multilingual people seem to prefer to give multilingual upbringing and education to their children.

Key words: linguistic capital in Kazakhstan, Kazakh language, Russian language, human capital, labour market, post-Soviet

Contextual background

Kazakhstan had a tumultuous history as part of the Soviet Union, which laid the foundations of the current tension and sensitivity around linguistic issues. During the Soviet era, use of Russian was strongly encouraged in almost all the spheres of society in the Soviet Republics. Consequently, "a whole Russian monolingual generation" has appeared, and even if people knew Kazakh they were more likely "passive bilinguals" (Smagulova, 2016: 94). In addition, Kazakhstan had a high proportion of Slavic and European population before independence. Consequently, when the 'iron curtain' was lifted, Kazakhstan experienced en masse emigration of

those non-Kazakh ethnic groups; at the same time, the local government started the 'revitalisation' of the Kazakh language, culture and nation.

However, the 'revitalisation of the Kazakh nationalism' was strongly opposed by the Russian-speaking urban elite who were against restoring the Kazakh language and culture (Surucu, 2002:389). The situation represented "a struggle between progressive, modern, secular urban-based multi-ethnic opposition and the backward, Islamic, rural Kazakh nationalists" (Surucu, 2002:391). This association of progressiveness and modernity with Russian-speaking culture stems from the pre-Soviet history, when the "traditional patriarchal socio-political structures" (Surucu, 2002, p. 392) of Kazakhstan of that time were challenged and modernised with active, oftentimes brutal interference of the Soviet Union. Hence the sensitivity of the language issue in the country, which is further exacerbated with the considerable proportion of non-titular ethnic population.

Previous research shows that the shift to wider use of the Kazakh language is taking place in the country since independence (Smagulova, 2016). However, it is not clear if individuals who speak mostly Kazakh are still in considerable disadvantage in the local labour market, and what is the role of proficiency in Russian for educational opportunities and professional development. Besides, due to globalisation the importance of languages of wider communication seems to be growing for career success in Kazakhstan. Therefore, this study intends to contribute to better understanding of the educational and economic outcomes of speaking mostly local language versus being multilingual in Kazakhstan.

Despite the growing number of studies on the language situation in Kazakhstan, there are very few studies that make use of official education statistics and online survey data and offer fresh perspectives to understanding the choice of school question in the country. This study contributes to the literature on educational and economic outcomes to speaking only local language vs knowing several languages in developing countries. It contributes to the even smaller literature on the linguistic issues in the post-Soviet transition countries and focuses on differences in the quality of human capital at Kazakh vs. Russian/trilingual language schools.

The practical implications of this research relate to assisting parents to gain reliable knowledge for making informed decisions about the future of their children. The findings of his study might help to better understand the major differences between Kazakh and Russian language

schools in Kazakhstan and the implications of these differences on the quality and further educational and economic consequences for monolingual and multilingual individuals.

Conceptual framework

When it comes to the "economics of language," the term introduced by Marschak (1965), human capital theory supports it through the idea that acquiring language skills is part of investment in human capital, and the linguistic skills, as any other training have costs, value, utility and benefits (Zhang & Grenier, 2013: 205). The language skills became especially important with increased communication between nations, which leads to growing exchange of information, goods, trading and travelling. Having well-developed language skills became part of being a competent adult member of the society (Broadfoot, 1994). Hence, governments are interested in educating a skilled and competitive labour force through their language and education related policy measures (Garrouste, 2008, p. 188).

There are two main theoretical approaches to understanding the linguistic situation: the 'free-market 'theorists and the 'green 'theorists (Garrouste, 2008). According to the 'free-market ' theory, the linguistic geostrategy is "a race for 'market share 'run by the governments representing the major international languages," while, the 'green 'theorists claim that small, endangered languages should be protected and preserved (Garrouste, 2008, p. 188). Often, the promotion of a single state language is considered a crucial political step in nation building in some countries (Coulmas, 1984; Spolsky, 2004).

After gaining independence, Kazakh was proclaimed as the state language, while Russian was defined as the language of inter-ethnic communication. Through the language reforms and policies, English was introduced to all levels of the Kazakhstani education system. Generally, foreign language skills are viewed as a form of human capital that can allow individuals to expect higher earnings (Chiswick & Miller, 2014) through gaining a 'competitive edge '(Reynolds et al., 1998). High linguistic competence is often associated with increased productivity by employers that signals about unobserved abilities of individuals (Stohr, 2015). Better-developed analytic, interpretive capacities as well as improved communicative and cognitive abilities have been connected to the knowledge of a second language (Stohr, 2015). Additionally, individuals proficient in several languages can facilitate collaboration with foreign partners and help to

establish trade links that may be valued by the organisation (Melitz, 2008). As a result, foreign language skills, especially English language skills, especially in countries where it is not the first language, became one of the basic skills required from the majority of the labour force (Clark, 2012).

The concept of a ‘competitive edge ’to a language (Reynolds et al., 1998) explains the choice of a school with certain language of instruction. Such choice is primarily guided by the prospective benefits of studying in that language, in other words, by the “instrumental reasons” that would allow individuals in the future to become competitive in the job market (Fierman, 2005, p. 419). During the Soviet era, the Russian language was necessary in order to be successful in the labour market (Matuszkiewicz, 2010) therefore, especially in cities, it was popular, at the same time necessary, to start learning Russian from kindergartens, followed by schools, and universities, which made Russian a “primary communication tool” (Burkhanov, 2017, p. 5). In this study, I would like to find out if it is still true about the Russian language or are the economic returns of knowing Kazakh on the rise.

Previous research

The situation with languages remains one of the most sensitive issues since independence in Kazakhstan (Burkhanov, 2017). After 30 years of independence, Russians make up 18.5% of total population (Stat.gov, 2021), which means that Russian-speaking minority will continue being a considerable part of the country’s population. Kazakhstan, as many other post-Soviet countries, is going to remain socioeconomically involved with Russia as the chief economic and strategic partner, thus Russian language will continue to have a significant economic value in the Republic (Duncan & Mavisakalyan, 2015; Pavlenko, 2008).

Smagulova (2016) explored the process of the re-acquisition of the Kazakh language and suggests that the Kazakh language revival could be indeed observed. The youngest generation reported more positive attitudes to Kazakhisation and believed more in the potential economic returns to Kazakh language proficiency. They showed the highest drop in proficiency in Russian; at the same time, urban Kazakhs with greater access to wealth and social capital preferred to educate their children in Russian, spoke less in Kazakh or used it at work and put less economic value to proficiency in Kazakh (Smagulova, 2016). It seems the latter group saw less “competitive

edge" to speaking Kazakh compared to Russian or English, which indicates their higher ambiguity towards the Kazakhisation ideology and related language policies (Smagulova, 2016: 103). Such attitudes demonstrate that people are more interested in the economic aspect of commitment to languages, which is a form of human capital that enables access to wider career choices and better life chances (Smagulova, 2016).

Kuzhabekova (2019) compared the patterns of language use among children from classes with Russian and Kazakh language of instruction in the capital of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan. She found that Russian remains actively used by the urban school students in mixed-language schools in Kazakhstan (Kuzhabekova, 2019). Only a small proportion of students reported using Kazakh, and mostly with their immediate family and grandparents, which is probably due to a strict mono-lingual language policy at home, while the majority of families preferred to use both Kazakh and Russian (Kuzhabekova, 2019). Young people preferred Russian and English when engaged with modern social media and surfing the Internet, probably due to the little presence of Kazakh language information on the web and dominance of Russian and Western popular culture in the country (Kuzhabekova, 2019; Mingisheva, 2013). When there is not enough content in Kazakh across different contextual situations, people become less engaged in the target language and less motivated to learn and use it (Kuzhabekova, 2019). Within the school context, due to the shortage of teachers proficient in both Kazakh and English, students in Kazakh schools could be in disadvantage compared to students in Russian language schools, thus Kuzhabekova (2019) highlights the importance of training such teachers.

Such "differences in schooling quality can lead to differences in acquired human capital and, hence, different rewards in the labour market" even for individuals with relatively similar education background (Aldashev & Danzer, 2020: 11). Indeed, the study of the economic returns to language skills and bilingualism showed that the highest earnings were reported by the monolinguals and Russian speakers, whereas the bilingual individuals, despite active political promotion of Kazakh in many spheres of life, reported lower earnings, while people speaking only Kazakh language actually experienced a negative wage premium (Aldashev & Danzer, 2020). According to the authors, the low economic value of the Kazakh language could be explained by the low schooling quality in Kazakh and poorer resources (Aldashev & Danzer, 2020). Despite the growing number of studies on linguistic capital in developing countries, very little research is being done on the current role of the colonial language vs local language and other foreign languages in

the FSU county in terms of educational and employment opportunities for titular nation as well as minority groups.

Data and Methods

This research is based on the analysis of the quantitative data from the official educational statistics and the online survey. The educational statistics were used to understand the changes taking place in Kazakhstan in relation to the quantity and quality at the secondary education level. Due to the processes of population development and migration trends the share of the various ethnics groups have been shifting. I was interested to learn how people's choices of the language of schooling for their children have been evolving over time.

The online survey was used to generate data on self-reported language levels, average monthly income, occupation sector and status, and use of languages in different contexts and with different people. The survey was developed based on the review of the previous research on language issues in Kazakhstan. The Google Forms software was used to distribute the online survey with 25 questions through the different social media. The online questionnaire included an informed consent form where I described my research purpose and explained the aim. The anonymity and confidentiality of the research participants were guaranteed.

Survey participants

The online survey was distributed via social media platforms and through snowballing of acquaintances. According to the age structure of participants 16% were aged 14-17, 32% were aged between 18 and 22, 12% were aged 23-29, 19% were aged 30-39, 12% were aged 40-49, 7% belonged to 50-59 age group, 2% were aged 60+. The minimum age of participants was 14 and maximum 74. The gender distribution of participants was relatively equal with 56% of women. Slightly more than 83% of respondents claimed Kazakh as their mother tongue, thus will be considered Kazakh, in similar lines, 15% are Russians, 1,4% are Uzbeks, Tatars and Uighurs were less than one percent. Almost 36% of participants were married, 12% were in a relationship or dating, while 50% reported their single state, around 3% were divorced.

From 436 participants 47% were from the capital city Astana, 6% from Almaty and 3% from Shymkent. South Kazakhstan region was represented by 28% of respondents, the share of the participants from all other regions varied from 1 to 3%. All the southern and south-west regions have a high share of Kazakh speaking population compared to the central, eastern and northern

regions of the country where the population predominantly speaks in Russian due to the six regions bordering with Russia, which also resulted in higher shares of Slavic population. The combination of Atyrau, Mangystau, Kyzylorda, Turkestan, Zhambyl and Almaty region, including cities Shymkent and Almaty would make up the general south part of the country with 42% of respondents. The sum of participants (58%) from Kostanay, Aktobe, Karagandy, East Kazakhstan and Pavlodar regions including Astana would make up the general north.

Almost 60% of participants had bachelor degrees, 11% master's degrees and only 3% PhDs. More than 25% were graduates of high school and around 7% had vocational education and training. Close to half of the participants (44%) had full-time employment at the time of this study, 40% were students and 5% were part-time workers, 4% freelances, 3% were on maternity leave, 1% were pensioners, and 3% unemployed (see Figure 2).

Results

School statistics

According to the official education statistics during the last ten years the total number of schools decreased from 7907 in 2010 to 7440 in 2020 (Stat.gov, 2021) despite growing number of school goers from 2 537 275 in 2010 to 3 481 347 in 2020. The number of Kazakh language schools experienced the lowest decline from 3894 in 2010 to 3809 in 2020. In 2020 the Kazakh language schools made up 51% of total schools in Kazakhstan, mixed schools – 31%, Russian schools 17%, and other language schools less than 1%. The change in the proportion of Kazakh schools was not much during the last decade, only around 2%. The number of Russian language schools declined from around 21% in 2010 to 17% in 2020.

During the last decade, the change in the proportions of schoolchildren by languages of instruction was small for all the languages. The share of school goers studying in the Kazakh language increased for around 3% between 2010 and 2020 from 62% to slightly more than 65% respectively, while the proportion of children studying in Russian decreased for about 2%, from almost 34% in 2010 to 31,5% in 2020.

The ethnic composition of school goers also changed little between 2010 and 2020. All the minority ethnic groups 'proportions experienced slight decrease, most notably Russian's fell from 14% in 2010 to 11.6% in 2020. The proportion of Kazakhs increased from 72% in 2010 to 76% in 2020, mostly probably from the higher birth rates among Kazakhs compared to other ethnicities.

Language proficiency and use

The highest level of self-reported language proficiency mean score with max 4 and min 1 was not surprisingly in Russian (2.29) equal for all four skills: speaking, listening, writing and reading. Interestingly, next was proficiency in English (1.59), while the mean for Kazakh was a bit less (1.51).

Around 45% of participants used mostly Kazakh at home; Russian was used by approximately 20%, while less than 28% mixed Kazakh and Russian. Around 9% of participants reported mixing three languages at home, English in addition to Kazakh and Russian. Almost half of the respondents studied at school in Kazakh and 20% in Russian. More than 20% used all three languages at school. Interesting to note that, from 83% of survey participants only 45% reported using Kazakh at home and 51% going to the Kazakh language school (see Table 1).

Table 1– Ethnicity, languages used at home and school of survey participants

Ethnicity		Language used at home		School Language	
Kazakh	83	Kazakh	45	Mostly Kazakh	51
Russian	15	Russian	19	Mostly Russian	20
Uzbeks	1	Mix Kazakh and Russian	28	Mostly English	3
Others	1	Mix Kazakh, Russian and English	9	I had lessons in Kazakh, Russian and English	25

Source: online survey

At the regional level, the participants from the southern and western regions reported mostly speaking Kazakh at home, almost 85% in Turkesten region, 100% in Atyrau region, 75% in Mangystau region. Not surprisingly, very high share of participants from the northern and northeastern regions spoke mostly in Russian at home or mixed it with a bit of Kazakh. In three major cities, 24% in Astana, 33% in Almaty and 54% in Shymkent spoke Kazakh at home.The highest level of mixing Kazakh, Russian and English was reported in Karagandy 23%, 18% in East Kazakhstan and 14% in Astana.

In work places and schools as well as banks and various offices/services 32% of participants reported using only Kazakh. Slightly less percentage (28%) used Kazakh for reading academic and non-academic texts, and 27% in social media. Almost 23% reported watching different videos/youtube in Kazakh only. Russian was used most often when using social media

(29%), in banks/offices (28%), less so for reading non-academic (24%) and academic (20%) texts. Kazakh and Russian were mixed in banks/offices (36%), considerably less when watching videos/YouTube (17%), at work/school (16%), in social media (15%), for reading non-academic (14%) and academic (11%) texts. The use of English, in combination with Russian or all three languages mixed is considerable for watching videos/YouTube (39%), reading academic texts (38%) and at work/school (37%), it is used slightly less for reading non-academic texts (31%) and for using social media (28%).

Economic benefits of languages

Regarding the potential economic benefits of the proficiency in Kazakh language, not surprisingly 57% Kazakhs agreed with the statement. The minority ethnic groups believed less in economic benefits of speaking Kazakh. When it came to the beneficial effect of fluency in Kazakh on earnings only 28% of participants agreed with it, 33% of participants thought that it had a neutral impact on their earnings, and 39% disagreed.

Since almost half (48%) of the participants are young people below the age of 22, then not surprisingly 31% reported income below $100 per month which would probably be a VET student or undergraduate degree stipend. Slightly less than 13% of participants have income of $100-200, almost 16% earn between $200-350, around 18% earn between $350-600, 11% have average monthly income between $600-800, almost 7% earn $800-1000, monthly income of $1000-1500 and $1500 and more have less than 6% of participants. There are more Russians among the top three highest earning groups of participants compared to any other ethnicity.

Partial correlation was used to explore the relationship between the self-reported proficiency in Kazakh and English while controlling for the self-reported level of the Russian language and vice versa. There was a negative partial correlation between the self-reported proficiency in Kazakh and English, controlling for fluency in Russian, $r = -.11$, $n = 434$, $p = .01$, with high levels of self-reported proficiency in the Kazakh language being associated with lower levels of self-reported level of the English language. And not surprisingly, there was a strong, positive partial correlation between the self-reported proficiency in Russian and English, controlling for fluency in Kazakh, $r = -.34$, $n = 434$, $p < .001$, with high levels of self-reported proficiency in the Russian language being associated with high levels of self-reported level of the English language.

When it comes to the linguistic skills of the future generations, more than 37% raise or plan to raise their children in three languages, slightly more than 35% of participants raise or plan to raise their children only in Kazakh, 7% in Russian and 10% mix Kazakh and Russian. Interestingly, at the time of the study almost 41% of participants reported that their children were going to the Kazakh school, 9% to the Russian school, and almost 10% to schools with the English language of instruction. Almost 29% of respondents ʾchildren were attending schools were all three languages were used.

Discussion

The findings illustrate that the Russian language is still used actively at home, at work and at school along with Kazakh not only by minority groups but also by ethnic Kazakhs, at the same time the use of English is on the rise. The highest level of self-reported language proficiency among the online survey participants was in Russian, to a lesser extent in Kazakh and English. More than the third of Kazakhs and the majority of non-titular ethnic groups either mixed Kazakh and Russian or used only Russian at home. Regarding the necessity of knowing the local language at work/study, very few non-Kazakh participants reported that it was so. This confirms the previous research (Kuzhabekova, 2019; Mavisakalyanʻs, 2017) that the Russian language did not lose its importance in the post-Soviet region despite the active promotion of the national languages.

Respondents who attended multiple language schools reported higher proficiency in English compared to people who graduated from the Kazakh language schools. It seems attendees of the Russian language and trilingual schools tend to attain postgraduate degrees more often, earn better and have higher level of English. In line with Smagulovaʾs (2016) observations, higher educated and higher earning participants used themselves and preferred to educate their children in several languages, including Russian and English. The Russian-speaking respondents saw less career and wage boosting value of fluency in Kazakh. These findings illustrate that the Russian language skills are still important in human capital development in Kazakhstan, that during the last decade it has not diminished markedly even though the younger generations reported speaking Kazakh much better according to Smagulova (2016).

These observations partially correspond with Aldashev and Danzerʾs (2020) study. They attribute the lower earnings and negative wage premium of monolingual Kazakhs to their lower

schooling quality in Kazakh and poorer resources in Kazakh language (Aldashev & Danzer, 2020). The same explanation was offered by Smagulova (2016) earlier on why most of the parents are more interested with the economic aspect of commitment to languages rather than ideological ones. This brings back the issue of schooling quality in the Kazakh vs Russian language schools that needs to be addressed in the country and human capital development that would inevitably influence the availability of opportunities and rewards in the labour market (Aldashev & Danzer, 2020; Kuzhabekova, 2019).

Conclusion

This research descriptively explored the educational and economic differences between attendees of Kazakh and Russian language schools during the last decade and found that they are considerable. The monolingual people are in disadvantage both educationally and economically, especially people who speak only Kazakh and attended the Kazakh language schools, where other languages were not used much. These people generally have lower educational levels compared to attendees of schools where several languages were used and developed; they earn less and have lower knowledge of the languages of wider communication such as English. Such people tend to be more inclined to raise and educate their children in the local language, whereas, multilingual individuals better understand the ‘competitive edge’(Reynolds et al., 1998) to languages of wider communication. They are guided by the prospective benefits of studying in different languages starting from school that would allow their children in the future to become more competitive in the job market and have wider choices and opportunities. Further research is necessary with more representative sample population considering the urban/rural dimension.

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Linguistic Discrimination toward Kazakh repatriates from China

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Introduction

Kazakh repatriates (Qandas) have been a significant part of Kazakhstan's population and workforce, having been officially invited since 1991. Those Kazakhs who migrated to Kazakhstan are all called oralman, meaning 'repatriates' in Kazakh; this term was officially replaced in 2020 by the term ‘qandas’ in Kazakh legal texts. The word ‘qandas’ means ‘blood relative’ or ‘fellow tribesman’ in Kazakh. By 2021, a total of 1.862 million Kazakhs had immigrated to Kazakhstan, accounting for 9.6% of the total population (Kazinform, 2021), with 41% of them being children (Mahmudova, 2009). Many researchers have focused on immigration policy, or the challenges in adaptation for repatriates (Terlikbayeva 2017). However, there are few discussions about the reasons for these challenges and the effect these challenges produce. Language challenges are an important issue for repatriates from China who have no knowledge of Russian. Although Kazakh repatriates are able to communicate with locals in the Kazakh language, their ignorance of the Russian language brings discrimination. Because of the absence of educational policies for migrant children, or an effective scheme for utilizing labor and satisfying the needs of Kazakh immigrants, many repatriates feel abandoned (Terlikbayeva, 2017; Oka, 2013). Drawing on interview data collected from repatriated students and adults, and the issues surrounding the linguistic discrimination from society, the purpose of this study is to investigate the lack of linguistic support and its effects.

Literature review

1. Kazakhs from China

China is home to nearly 1.5 million ethnic Kazakhs (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Jacobs (2016) states that Kazakhs first arrived in the Xinjiang region in the 17th century, as one of two migration waves. The first migrations were due to threats from the Kalmyk (Oirat) and Russian empires. The second migration wave happened in the 20th century. It was reported that after the

collapse of the Russian Empire, “Around 300,000 Kazakh and Kyrgyz fled Russia and ventured up into the Pamir Mountains of western Xinjiang (Amantai, 2017).

Kazakhstan is one of the few post-Soviet states eager to communicate with its diaspora (Oka, 2013). In 1991, the newly independent Republic of Kazakhstan invited all ethnic Kazakhs around the world to 'come back to their homeland'. The aim was to raise the proportion of ethnic Kazakhs, who barely constituted the largest population category in the Republic's population at the time (Bonnenfant, 2012). Ever since, Kazakhstan has represented itself as the homeland of all Kazakhs in the world, drawing on the concept of an ethnically defined nation-state rather than a civic state. In 1992, First President Nursultan Nazarbayev proclaimed: 'We have only one homeland in this world and it is this independent Kazakhstan. For those who had to leave their homeland once and now wish to come back, the arms of independent Kazakhstan are wide open for you' (Nazarbayev, 1992).

According to Article 1 of the Law on Immigration, adopted in June 1992, there was a special immigration quota for Kazakh repatriates to provide benefits to ensure the social and economic absorption of repatriates, such as housing assistance in the form of a lump-sum grant, employment assistance and assistance in learning Kazakh and Russian. However, the quota system also seeks to shape the geographical distribution of repatriates, and limits individual choice of residence; most of the repatriates who were under the quota were sent to Northern Kazakhstan in the early 1990s (Shoji, 2006). Therefore, this has caused Qandas to encounter several social and economic issues in Kazakhstan since the start of the migration strategy. As a result, they have acquired a different, and frequently unfavorable, perception of their historic homeland (Dubuisson and Genina, 2011).

2. Survey of repatriates

Responses to a questionnaire showed that one of the main reasons Kazakhs chose to repatriate to Kazakhstan was that they were Kazakhs (38%). For them, language was inseparably connected with the ethnos/nation (Bokayev et al., 2014).

The main factor of Mongolian Kazakhs’ repatriation was the strong desire to keep national identity and traditional culture, a dream evidently that should be easier to realize in their historical homeland. An implication of that is the provision of a better future for the younger generation, that

is, education and development of the native language, etc. (Wiley, 2019). So we can also consider that most repatriates are interested in education.

The latest reason why there are more and more ethnic Kazakhs from China returning to Kazakhstan recently is there are no more Kazakh-medium schools in China and parents are concerned their children would get assimilated. Therefore, it can be assumed most Kazakh repatriates (with children particularly) from China are interested in a Kazakh or Kazakhstan education. Disappointingly, there are many issues with education in Kazakhstan.

3. Cultural and linguistic cleavage

The Kazakhs in the diaspora, particularly those in the "far abroad," were unaffected by the strong tendency toward Russification and hence had a greater chance of preserving their ethno-cultural traits. Repatriating Kazakhs from abroad isn't always seen as a sign that they've lost their ethnic purity. Many repatriates believe that the local Kazakhs, many of whom are linguistically and culturally russified to varied degrees, have lost touch with their ethnic and cultural roots. As a result, for Qandas who do not speak Russian well, cultural differences create barriers to social integration with local Kazakhs and adaptation to the local society (Oka, 2013).

4. The mother tongue and language issues

Oka (2013) claims that unlike in the cases of other states that have promoted the homecoming of the diaspora, repatriated Kazakhs from abroad are not necessarily viewed as having lost their ethnic purity, although some repatriates went to Chinese language schools. Indeed, it is the local Kazakhs, many of whom are linguistically and culturally russified to varying degrees, who are considered by repatriates as having lost contact with their ethnic and cultural past.

According to the data, 96% of returnees regard Kazakh to be their mother tongue. Sixty-six percent of Chinese Kazakhs responded that they did not face any difficulties because of the lack of knowledge of the Kazakh language. However, the Russian language has a dominant position in Kazakhstan and is used more widely than the Kazakh language throughout the country. As a result a lot of ethnic local Kazakh people can't speak the Kazakh language. Therefore, for many repatriates, proficiency in Russian is a critical part of the adjustment and integration processes. This is extremely difficult for repatriates from China, who were outside of CIS, and

sent, under the quota system to the northern part of the Republic, where Russian is the dominant language (Bokayev, 2014).

5. Experience

Second language learners in the world

When people migrate from one geographical space to another, their 'ways of being with words' can be perceived as different, wrong or even become censured in their new place of living (Rosén & Bagga-Gupta, 2013). According to the statistics from OECD (2006), integration is a major concern for immigrant-receiving host countries all over the world. However, international comparative analysis of integration policies related to schooling is rare. There are language tests for new immigrants in Canada and Australia. In both countries, the governments provide language courses for immigrants who are limited in the host countries' official languages. In Norway immigrants have to attend a minimum of three-hundred lessons of forty-five minutes to obtain residency or citizenship permission (OECD, 2006). In the Canadian province of British Columbia, there is a special assessment for immigrant children before they enter pre-school education. Few nations provide linguistic help to immigrant children in pre-primary school based on an explicit national or regional curriculum. As a result, countries that anticipate pre-primary education programs to increase the language abilities of immigrant children appear to rely mostly on implicit language acquisition. The sole exceptions are British Columbia, Canada, and the Netherlands, both of which have a defined curriculum in place. In British Columbia, these programs comprise five to eight hours of systematic language help each week, and one and a half hours in the Netherlands. Similarly, a guideline for kindergarten teachers in the Swiss canton of Zurich allocates one to two hours per week for language help for immigrant children who have poor competency in the language of instruction. This kind of support is not limited in the preschool period, it also continues during the primary and secondary education time.

Common challenges in Kazakhstan education

There is not too much training for school teachers in Kazakhstan. Shegebayev and Burkhalter (2012) proclaimed that Kazakhstan teachers tend to keep old methods from the Soviet educational system and create a classroom environment which includes fear-based behaviors, engendering competitiveness. In addition, the lack of access to quality education for specific categories of

children, such as migrants, rural people, impoverished, and disabled children, is one of the issues facing Kazakhstan's education system (Terlikbayeva, 2017). As a result, education support is not enough for Qandas integration.

Education for repatriated students

Although the children were fluent in Kazakh, they found it difficult to understand the local people's dialect of Kazakh, which dramatically differed from the Kazakh they spoke (Terlikbayeva, 2017).

Repatriate students from Chinese-medium schools have language barriers in both Kazakh and Russian languages. Differences in written Kazakh can also be a major obstacle for students. As a result, repatriates from China cannot read or write Kazakh once in Kazakhstan. Besides, support from schools is not enough to solve this problem. If students hope to catch up with the school curriculum, they have to attend additional language classes, and it is hard to find such language centers in rural areas.

Negative attitudes from teachers also worsen repatriate students` situation. When it comes to the importance of teachers' attitude, Makhmudayeva (2016) claims both teachers and academics have favorable and negative sentiments regarding inclusive education, just like any other philosophy or program. An attitude is a person's own viewpoint that has an impact on the quality of the outcome. The majority of Kazakhstan instructors treat repatriated students as backward Kazakhs from China instead of accessing background information on Chinese returnees. In terms of coping strategies in academic contexts, students largely depended on the assistance of their peers rather than teachers and parents (Terlikbayeva, 2017).

Finally, the result of linguistic barrier might cause linguistic discrimination. Dossanova et al. (2021) asserted ignorance of Russian language would lead discrimination toward repatriated Kazakh children, not only from students but also from teachers and society. Repatriated students come to schools with a bad emotional backdrop as a result of seeing and experiencing these difficulties at home, which impairs their studying (Valieva et al., 2019). Previous studies back up these findings, suggesting that when migrants face prejudice, their self-esteem plummets and their stress levels rise (Brenick et al. 2012:106).

It is hard to access quality education in rural areas. To attract more repatriates to Kazakhstan, since 1997, the government has guaranteed special benefits for certain repatriated Kazakhs. However, in comparison to Germany and Israel, Kazakhstan provides relatively little

financial aid to repatriates (Oka, 2013). This amount is not sufficient to acquire housing in rural areas, let alone in cities. So most of the repatriates have to stay in rural areas and send their kids to school near their house (Bonnenfant, 2012). Kazakhstan has been initiating reforms that address education access and quality with commendable results. However, a major factor influencing education access and opportunity today is still existing. Huang (2005) claims that the growing disparities between and within rural and urban populations are of special concern. In terms of access to knowledge and basic social services, rural communities have significantly less ability for human capital development. Even within rural regions, herders and inhabitants of soum or aimag communities have vastly different economic opportunities and access to services. Thus, compared to urban areas, thanks to less support from schools, the difficulties repatriated Kazakhs faced had to be solved by themselves. For instance, if students hope to catch up with the school curriculum, they have to attend additional language classes, and it is hard to find such language centers in rural areas.

Learning the Russian language allows the Kazakh repatriates to better not only their scholastic level, but also their personality as a full-fledged part of modern Kazakhstani society. As a result, teaching staff must continue to process the educational adaptation of immigrant children in schools. Of course, this priority has to include students from pre-university departments of higher educational institutions (Zhapakov et al., 2020).

6. Working-age repatriates

Participation in the labor market is a crucial measure of overall integration into the new society. However, the data from Shoji (2006) reveal that repatriates' economic integration in Kazakhstan remains poor. According to data as of May 1, 2022, 63.1% of all repatriates are of working age, 23% are minors, and 1.9% are retired. Over the age of 18, 10.9% had a higher degree, 40.7% had a college degree, 46.6% had a high school degree, and 1.7% had no degree (Kazinform, 2022). The employment rate of repatriates was 32%, in the year 2000. Even though it had doubled by 2004, it was still lower than the general population's employment rate (91.6%). Hence, the repatriates are significantly unemployed. There are some other possible reasons other than language and literacy barriers, which have caused this situation.

Primarily, differences in education systems between the host country and immigrants` previous county may affect employability. A Qandas who possesses a diploma from a foreign

institute of higher education may have difficulties gaining employment if his previous credentials are not recognized. Besides, in some cases, repatriates are unable to find employment in their field of proficiency, which bothers both repatriates and local people.

Although the government guaranteed that they would provide employment assistance, vocational training and language support, in fact they have rarely progressed. Unfortunately, there are no language course programs (Shoji, 2006). If vocational training takes place, most of them are conducted only in Russian in unpopular fields. Therefore, these programs have not brought any changes for the immigrants.

Finally, barriers to employment are explained by the complexity of the citizenship program. There are two different types of workers in Kazakhstan: resident workers and non-resident workers. Qandas belong to the latter one. If they want to be employed, they have to receive a special license from the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. However, it is famous for being complex and time-consuming. Besides, if they wish to get citizenship or residence, Qandas are asked to have permanent or temporary accommodation in Kazakhstan. Thus Qandas have to find someone who accepts them to register under their accommodations.

So from the above reasons, it is easy to find, there are gaps between Qandas's status and citizenship. Although the government promised to create convenient conditions for repatriates, there are still many significant challenges for repatriates when they are searching for jobs and trying to adapt to Kazakhstani society. For example, although the Law on Population Migration grants Qandas status, repatriates are excluded from relevant rights and responsibilities, because the Law on Population Migration does not define specific items about Qandas.

Terlikbayeva (2017) claimed that repatriate issues had not been investigated before 2005, and after 2013 although the migration flow started from early 1990. A substantial number of scholarly papers on the repatriates were published between 2005 and 2013 (Mahmudova, 2009; Bokayev, 2014). However, many issues remain to be solved.

Furthermore, scholars have focused on immigration policy, the challenges in adaptation of returners, instead of the reasons for these challenges and the effect these challenges have produced. At the same time, there is a lack of qualitative study on returning children and adults. So, situations of returning children and adults are in need of research. Being a member of this returnee population, I wish to investigate, support, and bring attention to those groups who are feeling abandoned by their historical homeland.

Research questions

Does the language barrier create challenges for Kazakhs' repatriation?

Does the Kazakhstan government provide language support for repatriated Kazakhs?

Does ignorance of Russian language lead to linguistic discrimination against Chinese Kazakhs?

Do all Kazakh repatriated students in Kazakhstan get equal educational opportunities?

Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the lack of linguistic support and its effects.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to ask open-ended questions to converse with respondents and elicit data about challenges that Kazakh repatriates (Qandas) face, and thereby investigate the lack of linguistic support and its effects.

The analysis of repatriates' language barrier and linguistic support situations are based on interviews and sociological surveys conducted in Almaty oblasts and Jarkent city of Kazakhstan, which represent different geographic regions of the country.

I will conduct the survey in 2022, from mid-June to mid-August. There will be 10 Kazakh repatriates (Qandas) from China enrolled in this interview: five of them are students who are studying in Kazakhstan schools in Almaty province and Jarkent city, and all of them have a Chinese education background. Also, there will be 5 adults, who are working in Kazakhstan, and immigrated here less than 10 years ago.

The survey will include:

- Participants' general profile (see table 1).
- Language proficiency

To determine the language proficiency in Kazakh and other languages, I will use 5-point scales for rating participants` language abilities in each skill: speaking - rate 1-5, listening 1-5, writing 1-5, reading 1-5.

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Maintenance of French as the language of instruction in Vietnam's education system

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Abstract: This research paper is related to education and language policy matters. It studies more about the impact and maintenance of the French language as the official language of instruction after Vietnamese in the education of old and modern Vietnam through a variety of language ways and approaches. It includes five main parts. First is a brief background of current languages in Vietnam, French language development, and French education. Second is the language education policy in Vietnam. Third is an analysis of the policy by two essential indicators such as sufficient and adaptable pedagogical resources and teaching services, training quality of French-speaking teachers, and teaching quality. The fourth describes formal and informal types of education and other career opportunities in Vietnam and in other countries for the current Vietnamese citizens offered by the Francophonie organization under the government of France. The conclusion is written in the final part, which represents changes and perspectives of the fast development for the maintenance of French in Vietnam's education system.

Based on the description above, I show the French language implementation throughout the last two centuries in Vietnam and the changes and attitude in how the Vietnamese government adopts it now.

Keywords: status of French, preservation, French bilingual education, Francophonie, promotion.

1. Current languages

Besides Vietnamese as the official language of Vietnam, the citizens speak different languages. Vietnam has also got other ethnic groups who speak Thai, Khmer, Kadai, and Austro-Polynesian. Chinese is a minority language spoken in Vietnam by Chinese-Vietnamese citizens. English is used in many companies that either do business with foreign businesses or are managed by foreigners. French could not become the official language, but it is a foreign language learned by Vietnamese people now. French is also a language subject in some schools' curriculum.

For 2000 years, the Vietnamese have long endured the invasion of foreigners. Of these, 1000 years was the influence of the Chinese language. Then another 100 years - the influence of the French. These factors could not but upset the poor and ordinary population. Therefore, finding strength, the Vietnamese decide to revive their culture and language, their traditions, and customs. They realized that the strength of the country lies in the preservation of the national language for the continuation of the nation. However, the situation was somewhat different with the French language, which remained and remains for Vietnam a cultural language, a language of international communication. This language is also spoken by the elderly. Many words in Vietnamese are borrowed from French. They are present in areas such as administration, education, culture, and art. The statistics for 2019 indicate that about 675,000 Vietnamese are fluent in French. Many of whom are older people who were educated during the colonial era. Its use in everyday life has dropped significantly since 1975, but the number of people using French regularly ranges from 5,000 to 6,000. Currently, the Vietnamese government has not yet decided to renew the status of French as an official language due to the preservation and promotion of the national Vietnamese language. But at the same time, the Vietnamese government is carrying out projects to promote or reintegrate the French language into education systems, especially at the secondary and higher education levels. Many university programs in engineering, science, medicine, and law are still taught in French and an increasing number of schools in urban areas such as Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, using the language as their main medium or alongside Vietnamese. Teacher training programs to improve the quality of the French language have been agreed upon with France, Belgium, Canada, and other French-speaking Asian countries in Laos and Cambodia. Vietnam has also become a destination for students from other parts of Asia to study French. The nation remains a member of Francophonie. In addition, the French language occupies a diplomatic position in Vietnam.

2. The French language development in education before and now

France made the territory of Vietnam its colonial possession in the late 19th-early 20th century. Many Vietnamese began to learn French, which replaced the native Vietnamese language and the Chinese language of the royal court. The French language became the official language throughout colonial rule until independence under the 1954 Geneva Agreements and retained de facto official status in South Vietnam until its collapse in 1975. Moreover, this language became the language of the elite by the end of the 19th century. “The French language influenced Vietnamese, enriching it with a whole layer of Gallicisms” (Baker & Jones, 1998). The construction of missionary and public schools spread French among the educated Vietnamese. By the early twentieth century, French began to spread among the urban masses and became the main language of instruction. However, there were also those leaders of the Vietnamese nationalist liberation movement and revolutionaries who refused to use the "language of the colonialists" (Vu, 1985). Although, ironically, the documents written in support of independence were written in French. After the 1945 revolution, the new communist government completely transformed education into Vietnamese, leaving French and English as foreign languages. Since 1964, due to extensive contact with the United States of America, English has quickly taken the place of the French in South Vietnam. The number of Vietnamese enrolled in French dropped to 40% in the 1980s. As a result, the French language was removed from the curriculum. “The Vietnamese citizens who used French could be punished or suspended to stay in the country” (Wright, 2002: 115). After the fall of Saigon and the reunification of Vietnam, the status of the French language significantly declined.

The Vietnamese French bilingual education began in Vietnam in 1994 following the signing of international agreements between the governments of the former Indochina (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam), France, and the OIF [Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie], (Sénat, 1997). These bilingual classes, taught in Vietnamese and French, require students to complete both 12-year curricula simultaneously (Cordella & Normand-Marconnet, 2011). Hence, to graduate from the bilingual program, students must sit two different examinations at the end of Grade 12: the Vietnamese National Baccalaureate and the French Bilingual Baccalaureate, which is recognized and accepted by the Francophone community. And according to the policy of the Vietnamese government in the 21st century, the study of such foreign languages as English, French, Chinese, and Russian should be strongly implemented.

The Vietnamese school curriculum assumes that students study one foreign language and one additional language of their choice without fail. The first foreign language is a compulsory subject from 3rd to 12th grade, and the second foreign language is included in the curriculum from 6th to 12th grade. This is one of the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam.

The educational system in Vietnam has been changing throughout the times. In 1917 it consisted of 13 years of education: 3 years of an elementary school in Vietnamese in the Romanized Quoc Ngu script, 3 years of primary education in French, 4 years of vocationally oriented primary superior education in French, and 3 years of French-language secondary education leading to an Indochinese Baccalaureate. French education divided learners into different age groups and organized students into individual grades from primary to high school levels. Primary, secondary, and tertiary education systems were all well-organized. However, the French school system was only for French children and Vietnamese children from rich families. “The Vietnamese school system is known as the French-Vietnamese school system because of providing an education for Vietnamese children only but under the French curriculum and mainly in the French language was different in form from the French school system. It was categorized into different socio-economic classes” (Vu, 1985). The curriculum was mostly focused on teaching French. Except for Math, Physics, and Chemistry, the subjects of science education were various with the mixed French language. It provided Zoology, Botany, Geology, Kinematics, and Cosmology. The curriculum of these studies was designed to match the high school curriculum in France. To study in Primary Level 2, students had to be proficient in French because the Vietnamese language was only an auxiliary discipline.

At the present, there is a formal and informal education offered by the Francophonie organization under the government of France. For instance, French is taught in 33 provinces and cities in Vietnam. At the same time, in 13 provinces of the country, education in many schools is carried out according to the program of bilingual Vietnamese - French education. This promotion includes teacher training and the expansion of Vietnamese - French bilingual education. The evidence of such schools contains the formal learning process. They use content language and integrated learning strategies that help their students acquire the language and other subjects in French and provide an opportunity for Vietnamese students to study abroad in the universities of other French-speaking countries: France, Canada, Switzerland, and Belgium. However, not all

schools in Vietnam face the French medium of instruction approach. Many parents send their children to different language centers, where the educational system is mostly informal learning. In these centers, the young learners do not study other subjects in the French language. They learn French only. This tactic gives more perspectives for Vietnamese pupils to stay in Vietnam and have a successful career here. The French government expects to receive continuous support from education policymakers and wants to continue to be taught in the formal school system of Vietnam soon. Anyway, the current situation shows that Vietnamese parental stakeholders mostly rely on English language learning considering that English gives good educational background and more professional career opportunities and other privileges all over the world. Though, France hopes to achieve the strategic goals in Vietnam slowly by spreading the Francophonic association's impact.

3. French-language education policy

The declining status of the French language has appeared with the advent of power of the new Vietnamese Communist Government after the Second World War through the educational system and other environments. Although, in 2008, French was taught as a foreign language to just 4.5 percent of all students in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. In the 2010s, the French language was the second most popular language. Vietnam had an estimated 600,000 fluent French speakers in 2018, accounting for just under 1% of the population. From 1995 to 2005 the French language was not used in Vietnam and was banned for political reasons. However, in 1995 the contemporary Vietnamese government decided to develop a language policy, which would reflect the teaching and learning of foreign languages spoken in the country, primarily English and secondly French. The French language was in second place. Although, there was no concrete language policy for the French language. The Vietnamese government designed the strategic practices for this language through the development of the Francophonic movement that demonstrated the formal and informal education aspects and the maintenance of the French language in the country. The new wave of motivation for learning French by Vietnamese people and its future strategic implementation by the Ministry of Education and Training on the governmental level allowed examining what contemporary Vietnamese citizens learned from the French language in the past of their history. Such interest in the French language by Vietnamese nationals had support and promotion not only in educational but firstly political,

economic, and cultural connections with the French-speaking countries. “The French government did not dissemble its clear ambitions to consolidate a global political and economic network and the importance of Francophonie in “the high level at which the government was closely involved” [Adamson, 2007: 74]. The Vietnamese government has initiated plans in collaboration with the French government to promote and revitalize the French language in the XXI century. The Francophones funded education in and through French to cement relations and provide access to knowledge and know-how in Vietnam. One such example was a French course for cadres developed by Besancon University that was used with managers and officials from 1995.

4. Analysis of the French language education policy by indicators

International Organization of Francophonie (OIF) annually discusses and develops different educational strategic practices together with the Vietnamese government. Some of them have been already successfully implemented. One of their indicators is to provide and keep the number of French-speaking schools and universities based on sufficient and adaptable pedagogical resources and teaching services. Currently, there are 15 best official international schools and language centers and 7 universities in Vietnam, where French is the main language of instruction and bilingual French-Vietnamese learning and teaching takes place. For instance, there are three such French-speaking schools in the capital of Vietnam, Hanoi. The biggest French-speaking public university is the University of Science and Technology, which was founded in 2009 under the Vietnam-France Intergovernmental Agreement with the aim of becoming one of the most advanced research-oriented universities and international standards in Vietnam. All these institutions prove that interest among Vietnamese people increases with great power to learn the French language, to study subjects in French. However, the most asset is obtaining a new certificate of French secondary education. It has become more comprehensible and fits better with local secondary and university education systems. It combines the virtues of the French traditional high-quality model with those of other systems to provide students with ample opportunity for an initiative in their educational choices. From now on, graduates of French educational institutions will be better prepared to study at universities in France or other countries. In addition, all the old and new educational institutions in Vietnam will have access to high-quality digital pedagogical resources in French, assembled on the new France Education

platform. The French education certification of the schools and universities confirms that this or that institution operates in accordance with the principles, programs, and pedagogical organizational structure of the French national education. The opening of classes at new educational levels and new educational institutions will be simplified. However, the requirements for a high level and quality of teaching will remain unchanged. By 2030 the network of new schools and universities will be doubled in Vietnam. All this will contribute to increasing the international prestige of France and testify to the high level of French pedagogical excellence.

The second indicator is the training quality of French-speaking teachers and teaching quality. Teaching French is a strength of French educational institutions not only in Vietnam but also in other French-speaking countries. The training of qualified teachers, whether staff members from the French Ministry of National Education or from local staff, guarantees a high level of teaching. The plan for the development of French education in Vietnam provides for new learning mechanisms, in particular courses for obtaining a certificate of preparation for work in the system of French education abroad (CAPEFE) and in Vietnam, or regional centers for the training of teachers in French-speaking countries or in Vietnam. The French Embassy together with the Vietnamese government has developed a plan for the development of French education in Vietnam, applicable to local conditions. Diplomatic institutions annually conduct a supply and demand analysis of the quality of French teaching and teacher training. Together they take measures to ensure that the development of educational institutions is smooth and controlled while maintaining the high quality of teaching. The annual meeting of the Supervisory Board of French Education in Vietnam is attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of National Education and Youth of France, and the leaders of French education abroad. Another successful practice for training and quality and teaching is based on the systematic monitoring of the strengths and weaknesses of each French language teacher in the teaching process. The French language and other subject teachers are also expected to design and implement an annual personal professional development plan for the year based on feedback from the performance management system. Every language teacher has an opportunity to enhance his/her professionalism in the summer institutes provided by the Vietnamese government and the French embassy in Vietnam. There is different pedagogical coaching for teachers and forums organized for professional development based on French language teaching, classroom-level peer monitoring, and coaching. Moreover, the government of Vietnam has initiated a national project

for five years, which is called the Enhancing Teaching Education Programme (ETEP). ETEP is based on the view that formal professional development of teachers has typically been weak in the past and there is a need for a new emphasis on school-based professional development in line with international best practices. About seven thousand Vietnamese students study at French universities in Vietnam and abroad. Learning French in bilingual schools now allows students not only to achieve outstanding academic results and a high linguistic level but also to open career prospects for them in many areas. It is a fact that the French language is taught in 33 provinces and big cities of Vietnam. For example, two schools in Hanoi have been recognized as members of the Label Franc-Education network, a global network of educational institutions that teach French bilingual programs. This is a high school named after Thu Van Ana and the Hanoi-Amsterdam Special School. LabelFrancEducation is a quality seal awarded by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs to bilingual schools with the best quality of intensive French language instruction or at least one non-lingual subject taught in French [Sénat un site au service des citoyens, 1997]. And the Label Franc-Education requires a very high level of teaching, and two schools in Hanoi have achieved this. This proves the high quality of the teaching staff of these schools and teachers' training preparedness.

5. Conclusion

The French government realizes that to do all these indicators effectively, there should be a good investment in education in Vietnam and other French-speaking countries. Each year funds and resources are allocated to ensure the optimal development of the network of educational institutions, the high level of teaching, and the quality of classrooms. It is mostly focused on training, pedagogy, teaching, French language certification, and assessment. Summarizing these indicators and their brief explanation, they are defined as popular and significant for French-language maintenance in Vietnam. To maintain the French language there should be different support materials/resources/conditions provided for all Vietnamese learners irrespective of their socioeconomic status or background (not only for elite Vietnamese). There also should be Vietnamese national traditions, customs, and country values adapted to French teaching and learning. The Francophonie realizes that an annual external analysis can become a better-quality teaching and tools and resources measurement for the French language. There should be one strong innovative and continuous education platform for Primary and Secondary schools based

on the best French and Vietnamese language practices with annual variations and recognized in Vietnam and both French and English-speaking countries.

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Some Benefits of the Reading Club as a Tool for Professional Development

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Professional development of teachers has always been a hot issue. In the period of pandemic its importance has increased incredibly because of a lack of social interaction and tremendous challenges connected with the necessity to move quickly to a new teaching context. Numerous online webinars, conferences, discussions have been offered by the Ministry of Science and Education, universities and other educational institutions, non-profit educational organizations, as well as international educational community with a view to coping with the emerging problems and creating the professional development opportunities. Most of these activities are traditional or conventional, that is they are top-down planned and provide standardized instruction. As a rule, they involve limited teacher engagement, lack sufficient depth of content and critical thinking about how the content should be taught (Borko, 2014), are provided by experts outside the school setting and thus create a disconnect with a teacher classroom work (Garet et al., 2001). Moreover, the effect of these activities can hardly be evaluated because there are no reliable tools that can determine to what extent the teachers apply the knowledge they gain to their classroom practice or whether they do that at all. As Kennedy puts it, "attendance is mandatory, but learning is not" (Kennedy, 2016: 29).

Alongside with traditional there are a lot of alternative forms of teacher professional growth. They are on-the-job coaching, mentoring or tutoring, teacher research, technology-mediated learning, personal reflection (Craft, 2000), peer observation, teaching portfolios, team teaching, journal writing, case analysis, analysis of critical incidents, self-monitoring (Richards

& Farrell, 2005), reading or writing for professional journals, joining professional organizations, virtual networking (Sadeghi & Richards, 2021), professional book clubs (Bulbank et al, 2010). These activities are self-directed, give the opportunity for teachers to exercise their agency to plan, design, implement and evaluate their own professional learning (Van Eekelen, 2006), involve active teacher engagement, help to reinforce their critical thinking skills and make it possible for teachers to apply the ideas gained to the classroom.

After a detailed review of the relevant literature B. Porter and M. Freeman have identified the four basic characteristics of high-quality professional development. According to them, it should be "intensive, on-going and sustained in time", "job-embedded or connected to educators' practice", focused on "improving educators' content knowledge and understanding of how to help students learn it", involve collaboration and hands-on learning (Porter & Freeman, 2020: 37). Most of the alternative forms of professional development meet all these requirements.

The aim of this article is to explore the benefits of the Reading Club organized at Satbayev University as a professional development activity. It is at minimum a year-long project involving teachers who have a similar experience and face the same challenges.

The Reading Club was created at the English Language Department in 2018. The rationale behind it was to provide the novice teachers with the opportunity to get some pleasure from their work and to save them from burning out in the situation when they were stressed with their teaching load, the necessity to compile numerous job-related papers, the obligation to attend meetings, professional workshops and webinars, and to participate in different extracurricular activities. It was a small voluntary discussion group, its members getting together once a month to discuss short stories of English-speaking authors that they read at home.

The monthly Reading Club sessions consist of two stages: content-based, at which a piece of literature is viewed as a product of a particular writer, a coherent literary text with its thematic and structural organization; and language-based, when teachers look at a story as a material for classroom instruction. These classroom stages are preceded by a planning stage, which is the responsibility of the session facilitator.

The content-based stage begins with the facilitator presenting some background data about the author with a focus on the facts that might clarify the writer's beliefs and attitudes. It is followed by a brief discussion of the plot, after which each participant provides some relevant

from his/her point of view details that might help to understand the development of events or characters' behavior. After that they define the problems raised in the story and make judgments. The discussion finishes with identifying the theme and the idea of the story. In most cases the participants have their own understanding of the writer's message that is influenced by their personal experience.

During the language-based stage the facilitator, who is expected to critically analyze the language of the literary work at the session planning stage, shares with the group some lexical and/or grammatical points that are repeatedly presented in the story. For example, the story 'Laughter' by W. Saroyan is replete with the words denoting feelings and emotions. The words "shame/ashamed" are repeated 6 times, the words "sick/sickness/sicken/sickening," "lonely/loneliness/alone," "empty/emptiness," "sad/sadness," "false," "fake," "disgusting/disgusted," are repeated 4 times each. The verb "laugh" and its derivative "laughter" are used more than 50 times, and the words "to cry, to weep, to sob" - 12 times (Smirnova, 2014). Consequently, it makes sense to teach and revise the vocabulary related to this topic. In addition to lexical variety, the story provides a good language material for revising word-formation. In the story 'Charlie' by Shirley Jackson readers come across the construction "to make somebody do something" seven times. So it is expedient to design some activities aimed at analyzing this construction from the point of view of its form, meaning and function. The members of the Reading Club are encouraged to come up with different instruction strategies that can be used in the classroom. This exchange of ideas is extremely beneficial. On the one hand, the teachers share their teaching experience and practical knowledge, and on the other hand, they come to know some new instruction practices that can be effectively applied to their classrooms.

At the end of the academic year the Reading Club participants were offered a questionnaire that consists of 10 questions clarifying their reading experiences in general and their attitude to the Reading Club activity. Interestingly, it turned out that half of the participants did not have the course of British or American Literature in their University curriculum as pre-service teachers. They were familiar with some of the books by British or American authors that they used to read and discuss during their home reading classes. Unfortunately they did not know much about the main literary trends, genres, styles and modern authors. As one of the teachers noted, the Reading Club was a way "to get acquainted with some authors that deserve

readers' attention". It also turned out that 50% of respondents were not in the habit of reading in English, and the remaining half seldom read something in English. Therefore, it was really rewarding to know that the participation in the Reading Club sessions stimulated their interest in reading, and they were unanimous in their wish to recommend the Reading Club to their colleagues.

The feedback provided by the teachers, as well as the observations of the author of this paper, has made it possible to identify the main benefits of the Reading Club. The teachers' ideas are italicized and quoted verbatim.

Firstly, the Reading Club enhances general knowledge (*I realized reading is the best tool to profound your knowledge and thinking*; *The Reading Club gives me an opportunity to learn something new about the world; I have discovered new authors).*

Secondly, it further develops language and pedagogical competences *(I have learned some word collocations, new vocabulary, grammar activities, cultural knowledge though stories and even some history elements; The knowledge we gained from the Reading club will help us to organize our classes productively, making our lessons more effective and entertaining as well).*

Thirdly, the Reading Club fosters interpretative and critical thinking skills. Throughout the whole session the teachers have to analyze and evaluate facts and opinions, compare and contrast judgments, express and justify their views, make connections and predictions, etc.

And finally, it provides an environment that allows knowing colleagues much better and collaborating with them effectively (*I like that I discover my colleagues from a new perspective and in a new* light*; I like the Reading Club because it has friendly atmosphere; … discussing stories with others enabled us to state our opinions clearly and got immediate feedback from others).*

To sum up, the Reading Club has demonstrated the unlimited opportunities a literary text provides for professional growth and personal development. In addition to enriching the vocabulary, the arsenal of grammatical structures and the repertoire of instruction practices the teachers learn to reflect on and interpret what they read, and to work collaboratively in the atmosphere of respect and appreciation.

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Code-switching in German and English Language Classrooms of AGU University in Almaty

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Abstract: In the past several decades, there has been a growing interest in studying code-switching in the classroom. This causes a great debate about whether code-switching is advantageous in language learning. Despite the considerable amount of research that has been conducted on this phenomenon, not much attention has been paid to code-switching cases in German language classes. This study aims to investigate the reasons for DKU teachers' code-switching in the language classroom, explore teachers' perceptions towards code-switching, and examine the impact code-switching has on language learning. The study involves two teachers of English and German languages at DKU University, one of the few German language higher education institutions in Kazakhstan. Data collection tools include audio recordings, classroom observations, interviews with teachers, and questionnaires for students. The data findings reveal that teachers employ L1 to explain complex grammar aspects, for classroom management, clarification, or highlighting important information and that both teachers and students are positive towards code-switching. The results also indicate that the German teacher regularly resorts to English, which reportedly leads to better language acquisition. This phenomenon is comparable to what is also known as "transversion" (Bullock & Toribio, 2009) or "parallelism" (Wigglesworth, 2003) when the FL serves as an additional language resource in the clarification and transmission of the meaning and provides to bypass the learners 'limited language proficiency.

The current research study demonstrates the benefits of classroom code-switching and its potential as a valuable communication strategy.

Keywords: code-switching, L1, FL classroom

Incidents of code-switching are frequently observed in the classrooms where students are learning or mastering a foreign or a second language. The use of the learners' mother tongue has long been a concern in science. There has been plentiful research conducted in the field of code-switching in foreign language classrooms. Classroom code-switching is defined as language alternation of more than one linguistic code (Lin, 2013) or the use of two or more languages of instruction (Creese & Blackledge, 2010) by classroom participants, particularly teachers and students. Code-switching as an approach that is widely used in a foreign language (FL) teaching received attention in the 1980s. Researchers claim that code-switching assists in teaching and learning foreign languages and contributes to smooth language interaction in and out of the classroom (Ellis, 1994; Levine, 2003; Sampson, 2010). Gardner-Chloros (2009) reports that CS in the classroom is mainly affected by four main factors:

- official school policy;
- cognitive issues;
- classroom management issues; and
- perceptions and behaviour regarding the appropriate use of languages.

Despite its widespread pragmatic use, code switching is “rarely institutionally or pedagogically endorsed” (Creese and Blackledge, 2010). In that respect, there has been a growing interest in the studies on whether the use of code-switching in the classrooms is helpful or impedes learning of the target language.

Kazakhstan is a multinational country with over 120 ethnicities, and therefore code-switching is a typical and everyday practice in the country. According to language policy in Kazakhstan, the Kazakh language is established as the official state language, while Russian is recognized as a lingua franca for interethnic communication. It is important to note that despite the fact that Kazakh is the state language in the country, both Russian and Kazakh are official and widely spread as the first language of the learners. The language of instruction in most of secondary schools and higher institutions is Russian as a result of the post-Soviet regime’s influence. The global role of English has been expanded by globalization and advances in technology that have made English a critical factor for the development of all nations in terms of economy, education, politics, information technology, and culture (Jantassova, 2015). So, English as a Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) has received significant attention in Kazakhstan's education system

since the country's independence in 1991. The idea of trilingualism was first introduced in the 2000s by Kazakhstan's First President, Nazarbayev. Kazakhstan's new language reform emphasizes using three languages simultaneously and reflects an immersion-style of education. Higher education institutions that provide trilingual education develop and organize classroom instruction in three languages. As a result, the debate is whether teachers employ all available languages or focus on the dominant language of instruction in their teaching practice and whether code-switching in the classroom is generally acceptable and effective for the learners in their language learning.

The research takes place at AGU University[1], one of the few German language higher education institutions in Kazakhstan. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the extent of code-switching influence on the learners' language acquisition. It also aims to reveal the key motives for teachers' code-switching use in the FL classrooms. The participants in this research are two teachers of English and German languages. The level of the students in the German course is elementary (A1), and the level of the students in the English class is pre-intermediate (A2). There are 15 students in both classes of English and German languages. The data collection tools include classroom observations provided with audio recordings, interviews with teachers, and questionnaires for students. For the study an ethnographic approach was chosen because it is one of the most feasible ways to gain rich, holistic insights into people's interactions, behaviors, and perceptions that occur within various groups and communities through the collection of detailed observations and interviews. Ethnographic research method commonly utilizes triangulation technique, therefore the data from teacher interviews, classroom observations, and questionnaires were triangulated.

Class observations indicate that teachers regularly use the code-switching devices in teaching students and they employ them for clear and reasonable purposes. The findings of this study illustrate that the teachers commonly employ code-switching in the classroom to accomplish various functions such as explaining complex grammar concepts, translation, and clarification, to monitor students' understanding, which all contribute to stronger teacher-student classroom interactions. According to the teachers, adopting L1 helps students avoid the pressure for accuracy and fluency that is normally anticipated in the language classroom.

[1] This is a pseudonym used instead of the real name of the university

The most striking result to emerge from the data was to find out that the German teacher used English in German classes as an auxiliary language to facilitate the learners' understanding of some grammar points of German language. According to the findings, students assimilate German grammar and vocabulary through English which is not originally their second or native language. This phenomenon is comparable to what is also known as "transversion" (Bullock & Toribio, 2009) or "parallelism" (Wigglesworth, 2003) when the FL serves as an additional language resource in the clarification and transmission of the meaning and provides to bypass the learners 'limited language proficiency. However, these findings should not be taken for granted and need a further thorough exploration. Further work needs to be done to establish the validity of this teaching approach in learning foreign languages. This considered as an important issue for future research.

On the whole, both the teachers and students have positive views about the practice of code switching in the FL classroom. The results of this research indicate that the German and the English teachers use code-switching devices to develop the learners' ability to use the language effectively for the purposes of practical communication in the target language. In language classrooms, code-switching is a strategy that helps to facilitate the target language communication and keep the interaction in progress (Copland and Neokleous, 2010).

Given the small sample size, the outcome of this study cannot be generalized. Therefore, more empirical research with a larger number of participants is required to investigate the teachers' code-switching incidents in the context of AGU University in Kazakhstan. It is recommended that future studies on the current topic should focus on comprehensive analysis of teaching practices of local teachers.

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Formation of students' lexical skills through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at primary school

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Abstract: The given article deals with the implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach which aims to construct and develop lexical skills and background of primary school students in the realia of Kazakhstani comprehensive schools. A teacher, who is considered as a mediator of learning process, tends to seek certain methods and techniques to foster the efficiency of the lesson which will encourage students' communicative skills in a foreign language (English). Implementation of Content Integrated Learning approach not only facilitates the learning process but also increases students' motivation during the lesson. The article highlights the realization of Content and Language Integrated Learning approach in the textbooks of the updated curriculum at primary comprehensive schools. Moreover, the given article has studied different subject areas where English language could be integrated as well as challenges which are connected with the difficulties in activation of passive vocabulary of primary school students. According to the analysis of Information and communications technology *(*ICT*)* teaching methodology for the 3rd grade, some lexical units, which are presented in three languages (Russian, Kazakh, Russian) for active lexical background, are not revised and used in the following units. This tendency promotes passive vocabulary rather than active one which negatively influences on learning process. In the light of this fact, authors have considered and worked out the set of effective teaching techniques and means through the implementation of CLIL approach during the lesson in order to revise prior vocabulary with integration of new lexical units for young learners.

Keywords: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, primary school, lexical units, updated curriculum, communicative skill, mediator, students' motivation.

Discussion of the main concepts

Based on Coyle (2010), CLIL is regarded as an approach of teaching that enables additional language learning at the same time as content learning. CLIL also allows languages other than the first language to be used as a medium of instruction (Coyle, 2007; Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Lorenzo et al., 2010; Nikula et al., 2013). It is significant to consider the student's language proficiency to enable them to understand the content. It should be noted that it is impossible to teach the L2 students by using a foreign language without the help of their language. However, using students' first language might lead to the code-switching or trans-languaging. According to Lin (2015), CLIL implementation allows the use of the first and second language in the different stages of classroom activities. Taking into consideration the above given interpretation of the concept "CLIL", an updated curriculum in Kazakhstan has been gradually incorporating the CLIL approach, mainly targeting the secondary and high school program through disciplines such as computer science, biology or chemistry. However, less attention is given to the primary school students and their linguistic competence. This paper aims to discuss the integration of CLIL approach to assist young learners' lexical background relying on various teaching strategies.

Implementation of CLIL

The implementation of CLIL within primary school curriculum has concerned four main issues such as the chosen topic, the stages of learning process, the language use and assessment. Having studied the given stages, assessment is found as a challenging part to impose CLIL for young learners. In this regard, assessment is the strategy to know the improvement of our students after specific learning programs that could be challenging especially in CLIL Strategy. As CLIL is the integration of teaching language and content, it has also to assess both language and content (Bentley, 2010). Doing assessment is a part of the whole teaching activities that might be challenging for the teacher, especially in the CLIL Strategy. In our chosen context, the issues of assessments are dealing with how to access and when is the right time to do the assessments. Also, the limited sources of guidance regarding CLIL become the obstacles in assessing CLIL implementation. Based on the observation of primary school, the teacher needs to support the students to be familiar with CLIL assessment as there are two items that will be assessed, which are language and content. Hence, in doing the assessment, it is significant for the teacher to explain to the students the type of answer that is expected in the assessment (Dervin, 2010). For example,

the students must know that the given questions should be answered in the form of open or closed, in short, or extended, etc. (Bentley, 2015). Therefore, the teacher needs to carefully consider every aspect of assessing the CLIL Strategy (Nurshamsi, 2020). Furthermore, CLIL assessment criteria coincides with the assessment descriptors within updated curriculum. Moreover, assessment can be divided into two parts which are **formative assessment** and **summative assessment** respectively (Banegas, 2012; Bentley, 2015). On the one hand, formative assessment is the assessment for learning that can be done during the learning activity such as asking a question and giving feedback in group work. (Baker, 2011; Bell & Muhidin, 2009; Black et al., 2004; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Furthermore, formative assessment is usually conducted in the informal situation which also called performance assessment (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Meanwhile, summative assessment is done to know students' achievement that is conducted at the end of the program (Baker, 2011; Nurshamsi, 2020). Another aspect is the interaction in the classroom. Based on the observations in the classroom the implementation of CLIL can be divided into several interactions including students' interaction with the teacher, student's interaction with the topics, particularly learning materials, and students' interaction with their friends. It also found that CLIL improved the students' language and content knowledge and their critical thinking skill because they should connect their concept of knowledge to the context of real life. The feedback given by their English teacher becomes important factor to develop their language skill and content of knowledge. In this context, CLIL will lay down teachers' feedback. It also will promote and scaffold students in learning English language (Nurshamsi, 2020).

Challenges while integrating CLIL at primary school

Understanding the content in English, they might find difficulties, so it is necessary to consider their understanding of the lessons. To address this issue, the classroom language use would be English and foreign language based in a 50:50 ratio (Czura & Papaja, 2013). Furthermore, the students have various learning styles and strategies to understand the lessons. Therefore, the teaching strategy should also accommodate the student's needs. Various activities such as group discussion, teacher's presentation, and questions and answers would be done in the classrooms. Also, the materials would be delivered in several forms such as pictures, videos, power points, and students' books. Those strategies are chosen to support CLIL effectively in teaching and learning. Another issue is a language use in the classroom: the potential that the students are multilingual

sometimes becomes a hindrance (Lie, 2017). The students often use different language to express their feeling and mind with peers in the classroom. Although they are encouraged to use English and foreign or second language, they might use local language or Arabic for their purposes. Thus, it is sometimes not clear about the difference between the CLIL classroom and the regular classroom. Last but not least, the balance of using first and second language is also significant to consider. According to Thomas-Sunesson et al. (2018), code-switching or trans-language can benefit the teacher to make the problematic content to be more understandable for the students (Nurshamsi, 2020).

Recommendation for CLIL teaching strategies

According to Coonan (2007), CLIL teachers explain four teaching strategies they use in CLIL classrooms:

- Teachers use *non-verbal strategies*, such as diagrams, flowcharts, concept maps, and summaries.
- Since teachers are competent in the native language of their students, they *use the students' L1* when they feel they need to explain important definitions and notions.
- The active participation in the group work, peer discussions and peer learning are practiced by teachers, demonstrating an *interpersonal dimension*.
- Recalling the information, brainstorming, filling out flowcharts, presenting everyday examples, adjusting assignments to student levels, vocabulary teaching and working with texts are among *teaching strategies* that teachers utilize in their CLIL classrooms.

According to Pihko (as cited in Bovellan, 2014), *the cognitive competence* includes the teacher's subject knowledge and adequate proficiency in both the native language of students and the language of instruction. *Pedagogical competence* is about adaptation of lesson materials according to the cognitive and language abilities of students by applying the CLIL approach. *Work community competences* include dynamic teacher collaboration with colleagues at and outside school. It is suggested that the English teacher should implement the CLIL strategy in teaching English well. The teacher must improve students' skills in English. Not to implement the principles of CLIL in teaching English means ignoring the goal of language teaching. Thus, CLIL is the

solution to the current problem faced by the teacher. CLIL is not only good theoretically, but it also has been proved from the previous studies such as (Hapsari, 2012; Lee & Chang, 2008; Lin, 2015). It is suggested that the English teacher could catch the students' attention, create a student-centred activity and motivate them to be more active (Nurshamsi, 2020).

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Cultural Journalism and Dialogue as an Element of Course Design

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The co-authors are equally responsible for the dialogue through which this paper was produced and have equal authorship of the paper itself. However, professor Emrich has exclusive responsibility for any errors in the paper.

In Spring 2022, we collaborated in re-designing an undergraduate course in the Department of Media and Communications at KIMEP University. The course, "Special Topics in Journalism and Communication: Cultural Journalism" (hereafter "Cultural Journalism"), had been offered once before, in Spring 2021. That initial course was designed and led by Frederick as professor, while Assiya participated in that first offering of the course as a student in the final semester of her undergraduate studies. This initial case study outlines the Spring 2022 collaborative course design experience.

Cultural journalism is generally considered the genre of news that covers arts and culture, but extends more broadly into the growing practice of journalism to cover 'the cultural' in other journalism genres (Kristensen, 2019). Lines of demarcation are not clearly drawn here and may be defined by varied professional practices. While many news organizations have sections with titles such as Arts covering film, television, books, and other cultural products, the placement of coverage on the people and industries producing those products varies, and other cultural industries (technology, for example) may be covered almost exclusively in their own sections.

The primary objective of "Cultural Journalism" is not to investigate the professional practices of journalism or even specifically to build the skills required to produce the kinds of reviews and other pieces characteristic of the genre. Instead, the course is designed to get students thinking, talking, and writing about questions such as, *What is culture? How is culture expressed and experienced? And how does culture change?,* and to help them gain perspective on those questions and how they may be relevant to journalism and related fields. The goal of the course is not specifically the 'doing' of cultural journalism, but the reflection on the meaning of the cultural practices addressed through cultural journalism.

The understanding of culture that is built into the course design draws on Frederick's academic background in cultural theory, which has roots in cultural studies, in anthropology, and in media studies. The pedagogical approach to the course is informed by his belief in the importance of dialogue as fundamental to learning (Freire, 1970). The professional orientation of the course draws on his observation that good journalists are not made primarily through skills instruction, but rather they are people who develop curiosity and who learn to think critically about the world in which they work.

Students begin the course by looking at examples of cultural journalism from various news sources, followed by a discussion on the question, "What is culture?" and on other related questions. This is generally a productive conversation, as students often have things to contribute on what culture can be and on how it connects to their lives already before starting the course. Later they are introduced to Raymond Williams as a guide to thinking deeply about culture (1978, 1988, 2014). His historical approach to discussing the meaning of the word culture, and his embrace of the range of meanings of culture, from tending and cultivating; to the best of what is expressed, to lived experience contributes to an environment in which culture in all its complexity can be explored. There are course modules focusing: on a multi-episode podcast exploration of the cultural impact of the novel, *Lolita*, conducted by a woman troubled by its effects on her life and culture as a whole (Loftus, 2020–2021); on the view of travel by philosophers from the West (Thomas, 2020; Wendland, 2021) and East (Mustafa, 2020) , and on the practice of cultural gleaning (Varda, 2000). The objectives of the course are to familiarize students with some of the breadth of culture as a concept and cultural journalism in practice, and to develop their ability to write about and discuss culture and related concepts in ways that would enhance journalistic practice.

Our collaboration on the design of "Cultural Journalism" began in February 2022, shortly after KIMEP University's return from pandemic-driven online instruction in the Spring semester. Frederick had already done the initial re-design of the course and classes were in progress. The collaboration began on Assiya's initiative—several months after her Spring 2021 graduation, she asked Frederick for advice about graduate degree programs and for opportunities for work tasks that would help reconnect her to the academic environment.

As her final work in the 2021 session of Cultural Journalism, Assiya had created an audio podcast in which she explored bilingualism and emotions associated with her experience of

learning and living in different languages. In the piece she explored her experience with her native language, Kazakh; her memory of speaking Kazakh as a child, and the emotional impact of feeling she has lost that language—despite ongoing efforts to use it—after she began studying in Russian and it became her dominant language. When she presented her work to the class, the issue resonated with other course participants and led to a lively discussion. And in our conversations in 2022, it was clear this issue continued to hold her attention and is a factor in her ongoing educational decisions. As a result, we conceived a task for Assiya: with support from Frederick, she would develop a module for "Cultural Journalism" on bilingualism and multilingualism and the impact these have on students' sense of self.

The work process we devised was consistent but not rigid. We met to discuss ideas for the module, we each had tasks that came out of those discussions, and we continued the discussion online between meetings. We shared audio, video, and text materials we found; we talked about how each might work in the module; about how to present material to students, and about how to engage students in the exploration we were engaged in together ourselves. Our key purpose was to learn about the students themselves: What were their experiences and perspectives on bilingualism or multilingualism in their own lives? And how did their experiences compare to Assiya's experience (or to Frederick's experience, for that matter)? Our implicit understanding of the course materials we sought was that they were not needed in order to teach students something—they were needed in order to give the students some common bases for discussion—for exploration—of experiences that involve them. And our goal for the module became to conduct a focus group on bilingualism among our course group. (We expect to produce a separate paper on the results of the focus group.)

Given the nature of our discourse and collaboration, it is impossible to differentiate our contributions to the process. Yes, we can recall some specific things that Assiya initiated and some that Frederick initiated, but every individual element went into our collaborative vat where it was discussed, adjusted, and changed through our common engagement. What's more, the impact of this process was not limited to the module on bilingualism—it affected other elements of the overall course, other courses Frederick was teaching, and us. That is in the nature of discourse.

Frederick is currently exploring ways to apply theories on discourse to this process, starting with examining how people have applied the work of Mikhail Bakhtin to pedagogy. Logically, the initial investigation suggests that those applications have focused on discourse in the classroom.

Our experience suggests it may be fruitful to consider discourse beyond the classroom and its impact on the learning process.

Among the impacts of our collaboration on "Cultural Journalism" are:

- Assiya's position as a recent graduate meant she has more in common with students in the course than does Frederick, which helped improve course discussion;
- Frederick observed that the module Assiya developed generated the most interest and energy among students in the course, and he enjoyed it most as well;
- We discovered thinkers we had not known before, particularly Siri Hustvedt (Bailey, 2021; 1998, 2011, 2013), whose work we integrated into the course material;
- Frederick renewed his acquaintance with Mikhail Bakhtin, whose work he had used years previously;
- Language emerged as the common thread of culture and provided a lens through which other modules of the course could be better understood;
- Through the survey, focus group, and written reflections extending from the module, we have some initial materials that will inform further course design and continuing research;
- The experience suggests that learning institutions may do well to promote discursive interactions, for example by creating opportunities for collaborative teaching; by creating opportunities for professor/student interactions in course design, whether as assistantships or credit-bearing courses, and to focus professional development on collaborative discourse rather than on skills instruction.

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Problematic Segmentals to Achieve Comprehensible Pronunciation for Kazakh L1 Learners of English (proposal)

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Introduction

One of the most important parts of learning English as a Foreign Language rests on pronunciation. As we are well aware, good pronunciation is important in order to maximize communication. While learners can benefit from instruction, research has suggested that pronunciation instruction does not comprise a major proportion of class time (e.g., Foote et al., 2011). What's worse, teachers tend to rely on their own intuitions and anecdotal evidence due to a lack of training and proper materials. Consequently, pronunciation scholars have argued for prioritizing instruction goals for comprehensibility and intelligibility over accentedness (e.g., Derwing & Munro, 1995).

Notably, researchers have examined which segmental substitutions impaired comprehensibility via the Functional Load principle (Brown, 1988; Catford, 1987). According to the FL theory, some segmental errors are more likely to affect listeners' comprehension. Pronunciation specialists have recommended that language teachers use functional load rankings as a basis for their pronunciation instruction (e.g., Brown, 1991). However, the usefulness of such rankings to predict comprehensibility has not been tested empirically. Furthermore, very little, if any, data has been produced regarding specific and exclusive pronunciation instruction for Kazakh L1 learners of English. The purpose of this paper is to explore which segmental features are relatively crucial to attaining successful comprehensibility for Kazakh L1 learners of English, and to compare the results with the list of ranked segmental pairs of the Functional Load principle to see whether they are identical so as to confirm whether we can generalize the pedagogical value of the functional load principle for Kazakh learners of English, in the hope that teachers can prioritize them in classroom instruction for the purpose of comprehensibility.

Literature review

The contradictory facts are that teachers seem to want to include pronunciation in their classes but don't know how and don't have the proper materials to do so. Teachers are underprepared or uneasy about teaching pronunciation all around the world. Such is the case with Kazakhstan.

Despite English learners 'desire to speak like native speakers, second language acquisition researchers have reported that it is challenging and rare for L2 learners to achieve native-like accents. Instead, Derwing and Munro (1995) claimed that L2 pronunciation needs to be assessed at three different levels: accentedness ('a listener's perception of how different a speaker's accent is from that of the L1 community'), comprehensibility (refers to the listeners' perception of the ease or difficulty with which they can make out a speaker's meaning, often measured by a rating on a 9-point Likert scale), and intelligibility (refers to the extent to which listeners can correctly identify the words they hear, often as measured by correct transcription). In particular, they emphasized the importance of comprehensible pronunciation, rather than accentedness, for the purpose of successful L2 communication. Since the ultimate goal of language learning is to communicate, in the current study, I focus on comprehensibility instead of intelligibility.

Furthermore, recent accent studies have begun to investigate which pronunciation features are particularly crucial for acquiring comprehensible pronunciation and what pronunciation features teachers should prioritize regarding pronunciation instruction.

In the context of pronunciation instruction, according to Wang (2020), the identification of pronunciation features that influence a speaker's comprehensibility are mainly categorized as either segmental or suprasegmental. Segmentals are individual sounds, e.g. vowels, consonants. For example, the pronunciation of the English words *pie* and *buy* differ only in their initial segmental i.e., /p/ vs. /b/. Suprasegmentals extend beyond syllables, words, or phrases, e.g. stress, rhythm, intonation. For example, when stress is placed on the first syllable *protest*, it is a noun meaning *the act of saying or showing publicly that you object to something.* When stress is placed on the second syllable *protest*, it becomes a verb and means *say or show publicly that you object to something.*

A longstanding debate has been about whether it is more important to teach segmental or suprasegmental features as a priority to achieve comprehensible pronunciation. In the case of this study, a choice needed to be made about whether to focus on segmentals or suprasegmentals. I

chose to focus on segmentals since they seem more basic to me, and I believe learners tend to start with segmental features when learning a new language.

Notably, researchers have examined which segmental substitutions impaired comprehensibility via the Functional Load principle (FL). Applied linguists have extended the notion of functional load so as to rank segmental contrasts according to their importance in English pronunciation. Brown (1988) and Catford (1987) further divided the segmental contrasts into high and low FL categories by simply dividing the ranked numbers in two, Brown used a percent-based ranking scale, 100% to 51% as high FL, and 50% to 1% as low FL; Catford used a 10-point scale ,10 to 6 as high FL, and 5 to 1 as low FL, and each offers a list of ranked segmental pairs. For example, both voiced and voiceless *th* has a relatively low functional load. Therefore, if L2 speakers pronounce *mouth* as *mouf*, comprehensibility should not be affected. In contrast, the substitution of /p/ for /b/ has a higher functional load, meaning that the pronunciation of *bit* as *pit* is likely to be more problematic for the listener.

Pronunciation specialists have recommended that language teachers use functional load rankings as a basis for their pronunciation instruction (e.g., Brown, 1991). In particular, high functional load errors are predicted to have the greatest impact on listeners ʾcomprehension. However, the usefulness of such rankings to predict comprehensibility has not been tested empirically. Furthermore, very little data has been produced regarding specific and exclusive pronunciation instruction for Kazakh L1 learners of English.

Therefore, the research question of this study is which segmental features impair comprehensible pronunciation for Kazakh L1 learners of English. The purpose of this paper is to identity which segmentals are relatively crucial to attain successful comprehensibility, and to compare the results with the the list of ranked segmental pairs of the FL principle to see whether they are identical and whether we can generalize the pedagogical value of the functional load principle for Kazakh learners of English, in the hope that teachers can prioritize them in classroom instruction for the purpose of comprehensibility so that the pronunciation instruction can be more efficient and effective.

Method

Participants

a. *Kazakh L1 speakers.* Ten participants (five male, five female) were found from an Almaty university and before the recording session, they were given a questionnaire which enquired about their language background. All the participants reported they were native speakers of the Kazakh language aged from 18-23. They had begun learning English in puberty and had received at least 3 years of English courses in secondary school, which was typically grammar-based with limited attention to pronunciation. They had no prior study abroad or living abroad experience, and had limited exposure to English outside of the classroom. This group of young adults was chosen because the younger they are, the more likely they are able to and motivated to speak English. The sample for this study is 10 people because this is sufficient for a Master's thesis under the time constraints.

b. *Raters.* Two English native speaking raters (Two males) were invited from KIMEP University. Both of them were native speakers of North American English and reported having normal hearing and had professional knowledge of phonetics.

Data-gathering

Kazakh L1 learners of English. Immediately before the recording session, each participant is given the list of the sentences from one of the research studies by Munro & Derwing (1995: 305-306) (see Appendix). According to them, these statements are suitable for sentence-level comprehensibility judgments. All the sentences consist of a single clause and all contained high-frequency lexical items and some of them are "false" to avoid the predictability (e.g., Spaghetti grows on tall trees). The list of sentences each student got is organized in random order. I record the students reading the sentences aloud.

Raters. The raters listened to the audio through a pair of earphones connected to my laptop computer in a classroom. Scripts of the 20 statements for each respondent were given out. Each of the 20 statements could be verified only twice by each listener. During the fist time, without looking at the sentence list, the raters used a response sheet to rate each utterance on a scale of 1 to 9 for comprehensibility. A rating of "1" was to be used for talkers who were "not difficult to understand at all," while "9" was to be used for respondents who were"very difficult to understand". During the second time, the raters, having the sentence list, wrote down any

substitutional segmentals when they heard on the recording, compared to the sentence list, in other words, segmental errors. Every time the speech sample differed from that of a typical native speaker of standard American English, the actual sound produced was noted as well as the target sound. The contrast was then recorded using the International Phonetic Alphabet. For example, if the target word was *that* and the actual sound produced was *zat*, the consonant substitution would be transcribed as /ð/ → /z/.

The limitations of the present study were only segmentals were focused on and they were tested only through the sentence reading task. What's more, this was not a comprehensible pronunciation study.

Analysis

I will check whether segmental errors of the hard-to-understand sentences, according to Brown's percentage raking, are identical with high functional load segmentals, and whether segmental errors of the easy-to-understand sentences are identical with low functional load segmentals. If they are identical, then we can generalize the pedagogical value of the functional load principle for Kazakh learners of English, in the hope that teachers can prioritize them in classroom instruction for the purpose of comprehensibility so that the pronunciation instruction can be more efficient and effective.

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APPENDIX - List of Stimulus Sentences for Verification Task

List of Stimulus Sentences for Verification Task

These sentences were presented in a different random order for each listener.

1. Elephants are big animals.
2. Hot and cold are opposites.
3. Gasoline is an excellent drink.
4. Japan is a wealthy country.
5. Spaghetti grows on tall trees.
6. Most teenagers like rock and roll.
7. Some people love to eat chocolate.
8. Some people keep dogs as pets.
9. Young children can be very noisy.
10. Some roses have a beautiful smell.
11. Hungry cats like to chase mice.
12. The inside of an egg is blue.
13. Red and green are colors.
14. Many houses are made of bricks.
15. There are many cities on the moon.
16. Many people drink coffee for breakfast.
17. All dogs have fifteen legs.
18. Wednesday is the first day of the week.
19. Ships travel on the water.
20. Most people wear hats on their feet.

Navigation of L2 students speaking competence through interplay between task design and feedback specification

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Abstract: This study investigates to what extent TSLT- and TBLT - based tasks affected L2 learners 'speaking performance and how these effects were mediated by teachers 'feedback. Seven task-supported activities and one task-based project were designed for use in a digital classroom via Flipgrid and Google Classroom where 30 high school students generated a spontaneous speech followed by a final project at the end of the 4-week study. The data comprised 106 students 'videos as well as audio clips and 73 feedback from the teacher. The results suggest that TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks improved L2 learners' speaking skills in terms of complexity and fluency of their speech, whereas accuracy was less affected. Task design of TSLT and TBLT resulted in creating meaningful content, ensuring the quality of task-performance. However, the students 'spontaneous speech was less mediated by teacher's feedback. The study therefore gives insights into the interplay between task design based on TSLT and TBLT, learners 'speaking skills, and feedback.
Key words: TSLT, TBLT, speaking competence, English medium instruction, feedback.

Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore how L2 learners generate spontaneous speech based on a specific task design in the digital environment and whether the teacher's feedback fosters learners ' speaking performance or not. In this sense, task-supported (TSLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT) approaches have been selected as main concepts for a task design.

According to Van den Branden (2016), the task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach has been widely introduced into curriculum and gained a major boost in TESOL over the last decades. TBLT promotes an idea that L2 learners should be provided with an exposure of meaningful input in target language and encouraged to communicate despite their limited linguistic

resources (Van den Branden, 2016, p. 239). Van den Branden highlights (2016) that the focus of the TBLT approach is directed on meaning not on linguistic accuracy and it takes into consideration learners ʾinterests and their personal aims while performing the tasks.

However, the integration of a fully-fledged TBLT in actual classroom was found challenging (Carless, 2003; Shehadeh and Coombe, 2012) because TBLT-based tasks are simple workplans, and therefore they have been reshaped by the teacherʾs educational beliefs and established classroom practices accordingly. It is worth mentioning that TBLT does not require only production and there are so much room for possibilities to integrate linguistic aspects as grammar and vocabulary via input-providing and output prompting tasks (Ellis, 2009). However, Long (2015), for example, denies explicit instruction in TBLT. In this respect, task-supported language teaching (TSLT) might serve as a bridge between traditional teaching which is more grammar-based and "genuine" task-based approach (Long, 2015).

TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks could be integrated into a classroom setting through a hybrid syllabus where there is a balanced transition from a focus on form (TSLT) to focus on meaning (TBLT) via scaffolding the task complexity (Ellis, 2017). However, if the learners focus on generating accurate utterances via TSLT tasks, do these tasks still provide a condition for "a meaningful communication"? Since the focus of this study is directed on speaking skills, there are two major theoretical frameworks which address the improvements in language skills via measuring "the complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) of the speech" (Skehan & Foster, 1999, pp. 96-97). Skehan (2014) claims that the learners tend to prioritise one of the CAF measures because of the rise in task complexity. Meanwhile, Robinson (2011) suggests that by scaffolding the task complexity learners ʾspeaking output might be pushed and they are expected to generate more accurate and complex sentences at the expense of fluency. Questions arise as whether there are other factors other than CAF measures that might influence learners ʾspeaking skills while performing TSLT or TBLT. Drawing on above-mentioned theories, this study aims to address the following research questions:

- How do TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks affect L2 learners' speaking performance including CAF measures?
- To what extent does teacher's feedback mediate these effects?

In the following sections, I will provide a literature review which covers the definition of a "task" in TSLT and TBLT, the role of teacher's feedback on productive skills, and integration of TSLT- and TBLT- based tasks in hybrid syllabus (Ellis, 2017). I also provide insights about trade-off (Skehan, 2014) and cognition hypothesis (Robinson, 2011) in measuring CAF dimensions. This is followed by the methodology part which shows how this study was designed based on classroom-based research, conducted in a digital format, and gathered data from online platforms such as Flipgrid and Google Classroom. Finally, I discuss my findings in accordance with my research questions followed by the conclusion.

Focus on form (FoF) versus focus on meaning (FoM)

Another interesting view is proposed by Littlewood (2004) who suggests considering the task, focus on meaning, and focus on form in a continuum rather than as distinct features. According to Littlewood (2004), focus on form is situated at one end of the continuum while focus on meaning is placed at the other end. In this context, task is in the middle of the continuum where inclination towards the right part of the continuum focuses on more authentic communication (FoM) while tendency towards the left part shows the learner's personal active involvement with the task (FoF) (Littlewood, 2004; Ellis & Shintani, 2013, as cited in Erlam, 2016, p. 281).

It should be taken into consideration that the teacher plays a crucial role within Littlewood's continuum because "task" might be considered either as a workplan or a process. In the hand of the teachers, "task" is simply "a workplan" which might be reinterpreted and in order to conform with the teacher's educational beliefs, attitudes, predispositions and established classroom practices (Van den Branden, 2016). In this sense, Erlam (2016) states that teachers tend to design more output-prompting than input-providing tasks (Ellis, 2013). It is important to mention that TBLT is always studied and implemented from the perspective of output-based tasks, whereas input-based tasks also have a role to play (Ellis, 2017, p. 510) because it helps to shape the content of the learners speaking via TSLT-based activities.

Discussion

This study examined the effects of TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks on learners 'speaking performance and concerned with how teacher's feedback mediated these effects. Overall, the

results support the claim that the learners were able to conceptualize, formulate and articulate their speaking by generating meaningful content while performing TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks. Some learners tended to show high order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation in their speech about "Mars Rover", whereas others performed descriptive speaking projects. For some learners, task instruction was clear framework for speaking, and therefore they generated well-structured speaking presentation with comparison. In addition, this study shows that learners 'speaking performance was shaped not only by CAF dimensions but also by pragmatics, pronunciation and L1 language influence respectively which would be discussed in further sections.

CAF measures. The current study revealed that TSLT- and TBLT- based tasks positively influenced complexity and fluency of learners 'speaking, whereas accuracy was not significantly improved. Notably, complexity of speaking was defined by density of grammatical and lexical units within a sentence which showed that the learners were able to practice Mixed Conditional or Passive Sentences and extend their lexical background related to specific authentic topics such as "Scientific Breakthroughs" or "Film review" in their spontaneous speech via TSLT-based tasks.The given method is well-established and widely used to measure the complexity and accuracy of the spoken output. However, discourse markers such as coherence and cohesion of the speech were found as another aspect to measure the complexity. In this regard, this finding mirrors the impact of integrated IELTS preparation course into the curriculum where the learners were adopted cohesive devices from that course to design logically coherent speech in their performance. Based on the learners 'feedback on the study, they also underpinned this assumption by stating that "task format as a spontaneous speech simulated IELTS exam conditions which helped learners to maintain their speaking skills for real life situations" (35b).

The results showed that Robinson's cognition hypothesis (2011) and Shehan's trade-off hypothesis were a leading condition for learners 'speaking performance in terms of CAF measures. "Here-and-now" condition proposed by Robinson (2011) positively affected fluency of learners ' speaking maintaining their confidence, whereas for complexity it was considered as pressure (Yuan & Ellis, 2003) and resulted in partially performed speaking. In contrast to "here-and-now", accuracy benefitted from "there-and-then" condition (Robinson, 2011) regarding the TBLT-based project leading to less lexical and grammatical errors. However, the result suggests that the learners

prioritized fluency and complexity at the expense of accuracy which showed the trade-off (Skehan, 2014). As shown in the results, task instruction for both TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks was one of the important factors which impacted learners ʾspeaking performance. For complexity, this element helped to reach task achievement because of the appealing presentation of the instruction through visual materials and mind maps (Appendix B-C) which increased learners ʾmotivation and engagement. In comparison with visualized instruction, a traditional way of delivering task instruction resulted in speaking performances where the learners tended to ignore some parts of the instructions and generated incomplete speeches. Learners ʾspeaking fluency, however, was affected negatively by explicit instruction but took advantage of an implicit instruction in performing TSLT-based tasks.

Feedback. Even though grammatical complexity of speaking was regulated by teacher's feedback via corrective recasts, the results showed that teacher feedback did not significantly affect learners ʾ speaking performance. The main reason was an inconsistent response of learners to corrective feedback in Flipgrid and types of feedback which mainly fell into two categories such as general suggestion and encouragement. It should be noted that detailed feedback in the framework of real digital classroom was time consuming and the teacher also highlighted this factor in her interview. Although this study did not find any significant contribution of the teacher's feedback in terms of the linguistic aspect, celebration of learners ʾsuccess in TSLT-based tasks maintained learners ʾ motivation while and after performing speaking which was shown in the survey.

Digital classroom. The results suggest that the medium of speaking via Flipgrid, Google Classroom and format of the tasks positively affected the learners ʾspeaking. These online platforms and task design improved learners ʾdigital skills via using 3D modelling for TBLT-based project and being able to navigate visual materials on the screen. In this regard, a digital classroom supported the concept "learning by doing" (Ziegler, 2016) which could be paraphrased "learning and speaking by doing" in our case. Specifically, in recording spontaneous speech in Flipgrid, the learners experienced some aspects of spontaneity such as self-correction and repetition in CAF dimensions of their speaking performance. Another finding which outlined the meaningful communication in digital environment was pragmatics (Kim & Taguchi, 2015) via non-verbal

communication means such as eye-contact and hand gestures using realia while the learners were speaking to the screen.

L1 Language influence other aspects

The results confirm the influence of L1 in every part of this research work starting from measuring fluency and accuracy to content of speaking performance where the elements of the local culture were integrated by learners themselves without prior instruction. In this sense, task design included authentic resources which helped to raise awareness of learners in their understanding of local culture along with the target culture (Gilmore, 2019) in their speaking performance. In addition, it showed a dominant "English only" approach within curriculum and classroom practice where learners 'mostly performed their speaking in the target language. Besides, L1 influence might be noticed in fluency when the learners mispronounced a specific sound or faced difficulties with word and sentence stress in their speaking. These aspects of pronunciation were not integrated into the curriculum which might have led to the problems that the learners experienced while speaking.

A challenging finding in the study is academic honesty. Few learners tended to read from the screen trying to imitate speaking activity while others used online materials without a reference to the original resource. In this regard, the teacher provided comments not to do so in her feedback and suggested paraphrasing or citation. I assume that task instruction should also cover issues related to plagiarism and academic honesty while implementing authentic or semi-authentic topics and resources.

Overall, L2 learners were able to foster their speaking skills while performing the tasks based on TSLT and TBLT. Task design, task condition under which learners generated their spontaneous speech, and task sequencing in a lesson played a crucial part in maintaining CAF measures of spoken discourse and helped learners to internalize and self-regulate their speech within TSLT-and TBLT-based project respectively. It was worth mentioning that task "here-and-now" versus "there-and-then" task conditions boosted learners 'involvement, whereas a specific task design affected their creative performance. Teacher's feedback did not directly affect the learners 'speaking skills in terms of the linguistic aspect. However, it did maintain learners ' interests and motivation while and after performing the TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks. Moreover, study found that digital medium of instruction positively affected L2 learners 'speaking drawn on

"learning by doing" concept (Ziegler, 2016) in most cases, whereas some drawbacks such as plagiarism and issue with academic honesty in a digital classroom are found in learners ' performance and needed further investigation. In addition, findings also showed that scaffolding task instruction showed that a teacher was able to apply TBLT project in classroom to foster learners 'speaking skills along with feedback which was found noticeably effective when the learners 'attention was primarily on language form (Oliver & Mackey, 2003).

Summing up, TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks were able develop learners 'speaking by extending their current linguistic competence (Nunan, 2010) which helped them to internalize the context, and activate their schema without prior instruction. In this case, TSLT- and TBLT-based tasks do not oppose each other rather reinforce each other leading to the productive language outcome which might be designed in a hybrid syllabus (Ellis, 2017). In this regard, teacher's feedback should be reconsidered and not be limited by correction.

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Quotations, reading- to- write and language socialisation[2]

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Introduction

Reading to write, as a descriptor, indicates that academic reading is an integral part of the writing process[3], with its own set of subskills and habits (Grabe, 2009), including the use of sources. In an English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) context, this implies that literacy tutors have a role in supporting the appropriation of reading and writing, such that students' main goal of content learning can be fostered, and shown through writing. The difficulty arises from the fact that tertiary English writing is a form of the language which is discipline-based and often shrouded in mystery. This makes it difficult for first-language (L1) English students, let alone second-language (L2) students to discover the rules of literacy survival (Macbeth, 2006). A number of the known methods of teaching literacy involve engaging with texts and developing critical thinking and voice. Before doing so, those who teach literacy need to have an understanding of the literacy background of students (L1 Russian and Kazakh, in this case), and use this to scaffold learning appropriately. Since the classroom is socially- and culturally-situated, with the written culture being foreign, literacy socialisation (Duff 2010, 2012) looks at the role of the tutor, and the students in this process. In order to introduce tertiary literacy to students, the tutor must make the tertiary language and culture gap as explicit as possible (Duff, 2010), in the hopes of helping students to engage. However, because this is a foreign culture, and students are agentive actors who can accept or reject what is taught, it would be useful to investigate whether, and how students are engaging with literacy exercises, what they understand about them, and whether the lessons have changed any of their writing habits. This is why the author conducted a small cross-sectional pilot study with his own classroom groups.

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[2] Partially funded by the CHE Research Committee of KIMEP.

[3] Note that my work does not fit within the existing (no longer current) R2W frameworks typically found in United States primary+ secondary school research.

Literature

Language socialisation theory (LST) historically grew out of studies in the (foreign/ second) language classroom, from research disciplines like sociolinguistics, education and linguistic anthropology. Duff (2010) claims that LST is very close to Academic Enculturation and Academic Literacies theories, but perhaps with a greater focus on the dynamics of learning in the classroom.

As LST is built upon Socio-cultural Theory (Vygotsky), it specializes in the study of learning situations as culturally- and socially-situated events where the discourse of the learning process takes precedence. The classroom tutor's identity affects his/her beliefs about learning and the teaching process in a classroom (in an iterative process) (Duff, 2016). Another important factor in need of particular focus is the students, including their agency and expectations of the course in question (Duff, 2016). The latter, being central to the students' processes, is the particular focus of this study.

Literacy tutors in the EMI sphere are professionals who have an interesting role to play in the culture of tertiary English. To a great degree, tutors are positioned by their institution and their work (Duff, 2016) as a kind of (foreign/second) language teacher, rather than as cultural intermediaries, though tertiary literacy is about much more than grammar. The goals of their work are set out by the relevant syllabus, while their teaching methods are relatively free of encumbrance. This is where experience, identity and beliefs make each tutor unique.

The L2- English EMI student, as agentive actor in the classroom, qualifies for admission to study based on their L2 language capabilities (and education) having met the standards of the institution. But what is their knowledge of the English- language tertiary culture? To answer this, their educational background plays a role in more subtle ways. The L1 education of students has been shown to be the basis of their metacognitive awareness and literacy (Sharp, 2010). However, problems arise when their schooling does not provide deep literacy work (Hayes & Introna, 2005), as is the case for a large portion of Kazakhstani public-school students (this being common in the post-Soviet space- Yakontova, 2001). That means that EMI tutors are often teaching advanced L2 tertiary literacy (and content) to students with weak L1 foundations.

This is important because a student's literacy and metacognition could be utilised in the process of mastering L2 academic writing (Cummins, 2016), and in the learning of content. However, weak literacy foundations can create problems and frustration for the student. It is for

this reason that literacy tutors need to understand the effect of literacy background on students' capabilities, beliefs and habits.

As a literacy tutor assists students' literacy socialisation process, s/he needs to recognize that the L2 process is different from that of L1 students (Hirvela, 2017), while this L2 process has not been investigated well, as of yet. While previous attempts, starting with contrastive rhetoric, have not focused on education per se (see Kaplan, 1966), later attempts that have focused on genres (Wingate, 2012), and plagiarism (Pecorari, 2010) have discovered that student cooperation should not be taken as a given (Shi, 2010). An LST approach to literacy teaching would be more than just asking students to repeat the superficial manifestations of a genre. It would be a whole reading-to-writing process that includes the habits of writing (Duff, Bourdieu) that encourage critical thinking and students' agency (Ouellette, 2008).

Commensurate with the socialisation process of students, that cannot but affect their identity, is the role of literacy tutors. For that reason, I will briefly recount my literacy beliefs. Since students have chosen to study in an EMI milieu, which has a complex, foreign and largely tacit culture (Macbeth, 2006), it is important to show them how literacy is actually a tool for a kind of emancipation that can occur if a student acquires a voice (Fox & O' Maley, 2018) in their writing. Voice can be acquired through dialogic teaching (and ample practice) that provides students with a deep understanding of the purpose, and forms, of academic writing, and the writer's contribution (including students) to a written text. In contrast, superficial literacy, including most paraphrasing instruction can, in fact, encourage plagiarism (Hirvela & Du, 2013), the policing of which seems to be indicative of a failure of teaching, or of a teacher's philosophy of teaching (Mott-Smith, 2017).

Further, the socialisation process requires understanding students' capabilities (Dingler, 2017), and their literacy background in order to scaffold learning appropriately. More specifically, a recent study did indicate that Kazakhstani secondary graduates from state schools had little textual literacy experience and received virtually no literacy teaching (Dimitriou, Omurzakova & Narymbetova, 2020). With this as the context, this study will investigate how L2-English students understand their own personal, and classroom literacy processes.

Methods

This cross-sectional pilot study included only the third stage of the planned semester-long study exploratory ethnographic investigation looking at the development of literacy and literacy

metacognition, and the effect on students' literacy beliefs and opinions of a particular set of dialogic literacy lessons, that occurred as part of a required literacy course. The rationale for this is that if L2- literacy lessons are to have any long-term effect on voice and metalanguage, signs of engagement and interest need to be present over the (relatively) longer term. This research was conducted by the author, with volunteers from two of his Level-2 academic writing classes (20 out of 29 students in total).

The full study looks at students' literacy processes over the longer term (i.e. a semester) which involved three particular stages, the first two of which are described here. Stage 1 would occur early in the semester, before any relevant literacy teaching had occurred. This would a baseline study, using anonymised questionnaires, seeking opinions regarding academic literacy, writing habits, voice and metacognition at entry. Stage 2 would occur just after the input phase, which typically transpires starting in the third week of the course. Questionnaires would enquire about the literacy lessons they had recently partaken in. Stage 3 of the study was the (longer-term) reflection stage. The longer-term effect of the literacy activity (described below) would be investigated using stimulated recall, looking for signs of long-term effects on students' beliefs about literacy, and on their writing habits. Below, the third stage will be described in more detail.

Data gathering

There were two methods of investigation at the third stage which were, sequentially, a set of multiple-choice questions (with qualitative answers possible) on a questionnaire and one-on-one interviews. The first page of the questionnaire enquired about students' opinions regarding (English) academic writing and the particular course they were registered on. On the second, there were stimulated recall questions, using a print of the dialogic literacy activity that the class had participated in (see below), 12 weeks previous to that point. The research interest was in discovering any opinions regarding the activity, its usefulness and its desirability.

Secondly, interviews were conducted with a sub-set of the cohort (3 respondents per class). The interview investigated respondents' writing habits, particularly the use of sources, the writing of paragraphs, and the inclusion of opinions in writing. The purpose of this technique was to better understand respondents' metacognition on aspects of their normal writing habits, and whether it was possible to discern if the literacy lesson (below) had had any effect on their writing habits.

Population

The study was situated at a Central Asian university that has been an EMI institution for over 25 years, with a good reputation in the marketplace. Its place as a private, fee-paying university indicates something about the typical student's economic and cultural background as being above middle-class, while the quality of their previous education should be better than the national average. The population for this study was undergraduate students (typically first-year) in two writing classes taught by the author, each with its own unique syllabus. One was for general academic purposes (N=13), and the other was for Law School students (N=7). These students have already passed a Level-1 writing course at the same University.

Process

The third stage was the sole part of the pilot study, conducted during April 2022. It included anonymised questionnaires and short interviews, the results of which will be presented below. The whole class, in both cases, was informed about the research process and rationale, and shown the Research Committee approval letter. They were informed of the ethical considerations (eg. that the study would have no effect on marks or progress). Willing volunteers were asked to fill in an ethics questionnaire to indicate that they wanted to participate.

With regards to the General class, the questionnaires were distributed during one classroom period, and the interviews occurred two days later, also in class. With the Law class, the questionnaires and interviews occurred on the same day, during classroom time.

Research Materials (teaching)

The first page enquired about students' opinions regarding (English) academic writing and the particular course they were registered on. For the stimulated recall (SR) portion of the questionnaire included a document showing the actual literacy lesson activity that had been introduced to the class, in the classroom (earlier in the semester). The lesson document (attached to the questionnaire) had at its center a quotation from a famous person with an accompanying visual (usually of that person). The reason for this type of activity was to engender verbal reactions from the class about the ideas presented in the quotation.

Students' individual interpretations, in sentence form (also found on the SR document) had been written down on the monitor, at the time of the lesson, and then shared with the class, for the

whole semester (on Moodle). Students had, then, been asked to comment on the importance of the quotation (also found on the SR).[4] This classroom discussion (at stage 2) had been designed as a form of dialogic lesson teaching holistic paraphrasing and the use of sources, including the requisite metalanguage.[5]

The factors affecting the representativeness of the data include the fact that the questionnaires were anonymous, and that some effort was expended in making the researcher's desired answers (on the multiple-choice questions) less obvious. Nevertheless, respondents may have still chosen to provide answers that they thought would make their tutor happy.

Results

The first page of the questionnaire (3 questions) showed the respondents' generally positive opinion regarding the course, and the necessity for writing skills. The respondents' choice of writing class was also investigated, with most indicating that they chose their classroom group due to their timetable.

The second page (about the literacy lesson) showed that the activity had been generally remembered well, as well as its purpose. When asked about their interpretations of the reasons for the lesson, the most common answers indicated the purpose as having been the improvement of students' writing confidence. Meanwhile, the importance of the activity was generally accepted by respondents. Furthermore, the respondents mostly agreed that there was a personal benefit derived from the lesson. They also indicated, by a slight majority, the desire for further such lessons.

The purpose of the interviews was to investigate the writing habits (and metadiscourse knowledge) of respondents, at that point in their course, with the expectation that the literacy lesson in question had had a noticeable effect. Firstly, the purpose of a paragraph was fairly strongly linked by respondents with the presentation of an idea, or topic.

The respondents' method of paraphrasing showed a variety of techniques, showing weak evidence for the literacy lesson's effect on their literacy habits. When respondents were asked

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[4] These quotations had, later, been used as the basis for writing paragraphs, together as a class.

[5] Metalanguage, examples – regarding sources: ideas, interpreting, meaning; regarding comments-commentary, your opinion, your voice, importance.

about the expression of opinions in writing, it was a surprise that they were generally against including their opinion because many claimed that this was not considered academic. The answers to these questions themselves indicated that respondents had considerable metacognitive awareness of issues in writing. That may indicate that respondents had been helped by the literacy lessons in question.

Discussion

As this study is looking at students' literacy processes, and the 'long-term' effect of a particular literacy lesson, the study has some answers to provide about beliefs and practices. Firstly, students' beliefs about paraphrasing have shown some effect of the literacy lesson, but nowhere near enough to call this a wholesale change. Further, the participants have shown that they understood the role of opinion in the literacy activity, but that they still don't tend to favour expressing opinions in their writing.

A second aspect of the study was respondents' understanding of issues around the literacy lesson, namely metacognition and the purpose of academic literacy lessons. The respondents' long-term understanding of literacy metacognition, taught along with the literacy lesson, indicates a positive effect. Respondents also generally understood the nature of L2-English EMI writing, and tended to be positive about literacy lessons. The lessons themselves also tended to be fairly much appreciated. The size of the study, and the narrow context, do limit the representativeness of the data.

Conclusion

Language socialisation into tertiary English written discourse, in the context of Central Asian EMI is just beginning as an area of research. The purpose of this pilot study was to attempt to understand whether and how students were engaging with particular literacy lessons that involved source interpretation, as well as students' own opinions of, and commentary upon those sources. We can generally note that engagement appears to have occurred, and a genuine interest, in some students, seems to have been kindled. It can therefore tentatively be claimed that the particular literacy and metacognition lessons could be engaged with by students, leaving some lasting impression. However, any conclusions about the long-term effect of these literacy lessons on students' approach to writing will need to wait until a full semester of research data can be studied.

This use of the LST framework, for studying agentive work in the classroom, seems to provide an appropriate lens for studying an important aspect of students' experiences in an EMI environment, in this case the learning of tertiary literacy in a foreign language. Investigating learners and learning processes is still an under-studied area in tertiary literacy, especially outside of the enculturation/ plagiarism paradigm (Pecorari, 2010). The ethnographic method for gathering data, for this type of study, seems to work well, though there are concerns about studying one's own classroom, and the *etic* nature of this type of literacy research (in that students might not have an explicit grasp of literacy or metacognition of their own volition, and are even less likely to express such ideas unprompted).

Later research, using all three stages, during the next teaching cycle, intends to investigate the degree to which the relevant literacy beliefs and habits already exist among students, before the lessons, and what students' impressions are in real time, around the time of teaching, about the lessons, and particularly the dialogic nature of the lessons.

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Approaches to Study Skills Acquisition

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Abstract: This paper is an overview of the approaches facilitating students 'study skills acquisition and promoting students' engagement in the academic routine through a one-semester-long group project aimed at encouraging students to investigate a particular study skill. The skills acquired by the student teams during the project complement the skills being researched. Project teams conduct their research in a stage-by-stage format, from identifying the problem to reporting the research results in class. Each of the stages is a combination of speaking and writing activities compiled in a group portfolio and finally presented in any creative way.

Keywords: Study skills, Acquisition, Self-study, Approaches, Group Project

Introduction

At a technical university where English is the language of instruction, the first-year students, while moving towards Academic English language proficiency, need to further develop academic skills. This is what poses a challenge to their efficient learning at university alongside their need for improvement of language skills. One of the approaches to overcome this challenge is the project work described in this paper. The Academic English Programme at Kazakh-British Technical University is a combination of diverse classroom activities and student independent study assignments (SIS). As a part of their SIS work, students of intermediate and higher levels of language competence are involved in the Study Skills Project which integrates several heterogeneous tasks.

Study skills are defined as "abilities, techniques, and strategies which are used when reading, writing or listening for study purposes" (Richards, J.C., and Schmidt, R.,2002, p.521). To date, study skills are also understood as "study strategies and academic skills and are considered as an effective approach to learning" (Bhasin, 2021, para 1).

All these skills are crucial to academic success, as they include a range of academic abilities, from getting organized, working with various sources of information, being an effective reader, taking notes, using mind maps, and applying revision skills, to referencing sources,

summarizing information, etc. Moreover, "study skills are transferable - you will take them with you beyond your education into new contexts" (SkillsYouNeed, 2011-2022), and thus, they should be emphasized at an early stage of students 'immersion in the academic life. Therefore, we find that for the AE course instructors the first year of studies is a perfect time to focus on students ' study skills development.

Study skills issues have actively been explored and the insights shared by Dr. Stella Cottrell (2013, p.14) one of the most prominent experts in Academic English teaching who singles out the study skill types as firstly, **interpersonal skills**, such as independent study, self-reflection, and teamwork, including negotiation/persuasion/problems-solving, criticism, etc.; then, **management skills**, i.e. managing time for meeting the deadlines, project portfolio compilation, etc.; and finally, **academic skills**, which include research skills, thinking skills, understanding academic conventions, note-taking, writing and reading skills, referencing, revision for exams, etc.

Our project has an overall focus on these three types of study skills.

Project description:

The goal of the project is to facilitate the study skills acquisition by way of involving students in different interactive tasks and to reinforce the specific focus areas of the Academic English Programme (AEP).

Students conduct mini research in a group of 3-4 people. The idea of the project is that each member of the group performs two roles: one is a researcher, who collects/analyses/presents information and the other one is that of either a team leader, a designer, or an editor.

For a start, the project groups choose a study skill they will investigate during the semester. They are offered study skills up to their needs as their project topics, for example, *Participating in online discussion boards, Studying for tests, Memory improvement, Stress management, Effective learning styles, Time management*, and others.

To make the project life more effective, and the acquisition of study skills more productive and fruitful, the authors of this paper compiled project guidelines with the instructions on how to perform each task and how to cooperate in a project group successfully.

The project is in four stages. In the first stage, the teams conduct secondary research, reading up on their research topic, and create a mind map of the skill under study. In the second stage, students move on to primary research, reflecting on their own experience with the given

skill, and write their true stories. In the third stage, they continue primary research through a survey, collecting data about the use of this skill from fellow students, and do relevant analysis to come up with their insights. Finally, they present the research results to the whole class, as either a poster session, a slide show, or a creative presentation of recommendations on how to study.

Doing the research, students both learn about academic study skills and implement them into practice living them through the whole project period.

The study skill acquisition project, piloted in 2018 with cohorts of students of AE Intermediate (B1) level, was further improved, adapted, and modified for students of higher language proficiency levels in terms of topic range and task performance complexity. Later in 2019, to learn how effective the project was a questionnaire was conducted among 77 students. The project proved to be successful, as 76 respondents confirmed that the project helped them learn more about study skills. This inspired the project to continue backed up with project supporting material such as templates, written report samples, and video-recorded presentations.

In order to facilitate students ’involvement in this project, we adhere to principles of:

- Transparency: students know what exactly is expected from them.
- Criticism: students are encouraged to be critical and analytical.
- Authenticity: students are encouraged to use evidence, i.e., examples and specific details.
- Personal involvement: students feel free to involve emotions and feelings – they ask themselves ‘How did I feel at that moment?
- Reflective learning: students always ask themselves - ‘What did I learn from this experience?’

The following parts of the article will elaborate on each stage implementation.

Stage one: mind mapping

The first stage starts with enquiry when students are to explore the chosen study skill. Students do secondary research to collect information and gather experts ’opinions on the topic, organizing it all in a mind map. As it is known, mind maps or non-linear graphical methods were initially devised for memorizing and reproducing large amounts of information. They promote comprehension, memorization, and the use of associative connections in a shorter time interval than traditionally laid out information. The difference between mind maps and other methods of visualization is that mind maps activate memory through the different thickness of lines, different

colors of branches, precise keywords, and the use of images and symbols. The mind maps (intelligence/mental maps) are based on the principles of nonlinear perception of information, radial thinking, and associative connections that promote effective memorization and reproduction. So, the scope of this technology is unlimited; therefore, it is used in the initial stage of the project, facilitating students brainstorming, self-study, and preparing concise presentations.

Against this backdrop, after brainstorming and choosing a study skill, students are supplied with the templates and supporting materials and are encouraged to do a web quest. Then they come up with a design that would fit in well with their project findings. With the study skill in mind, they can draw a diagram of any design; for example, a tree, balloons, or spidergram using their PC tools, or pick one of the online free templates. To accomplish the first stage of their project, the teams summarize the gathered information in 2-3 sentences and compile a list of references.

To sum it up, it is expected that through brainstorming and selecting the ideas, note-taking, and information storing, the skills fostered should be effective reading, note-taking, organizing, visualizing, summarizing, and referencing.

Stage two: true-story journal

In the second stage of this SIS, project students analyze their experience with the skill they are studying and learn to reflect on it. Reflection is a crucial academic skill that promotes learning. Some researchers argue that only by the way of reflection people can learn something new (UM RhetLab, n.d.). They probably mean that when people reflect, they create links between their previous and new knowledge, which helps to establish certain meaningful connections fostering comprehension. It is also stated that without observing students' reflection, we cannot confirm that the learning has occurred. Besides, reflection is more than merely introspective thinking, it involves critical thinking, and if people can reflect on their actions in novice situations and make decisions based on that, they can become more effective problem solvers. That is why reflection-based assessment is widely used in educational institutions in western universities. For instance, the Centre of Pedagogical Innovation at Brock University confirms that reflection assignments are mandatory for all their courses (Brock University, 2022). Although reflective writing is commonly used as the type of academic assignment to demonstrate the reflective process, experts from the University of Edinburgh recommend starting by doing it in an informal way: '… it is often

beneficial to first do a private reflection where you can be as informal and unstructured as you want, and then readapt that into a piece of academic writing" (The University of Edinburgh, 2020). So, in this stage of the project the teams are assigned to write personal stories of how they dealt with the given skill in the past, and afterwards compile a 'true-story journal'. This assignment also can be modified into a personal experience essay for higher levels.

During this process, it is very important that students not only recall the success stories from their experience but acknowledge the limitations they have had using the target skill as well. It is generally acknowledged that reflections become more meaningful if structured and guided. In this stage of the project, students follow the guidelines:

- Discuss your experience with the chosen study skill; reflect on the problems you used to have with studying/using this skill and share your story with your groupmates. Then, together, choose examples for your true story journal.
- Write a draft of your own story of how you dealt with your study difficulties regarding the chosen skill and what solutions you found to improve this study skill.

The following distribution of responsibilities by roles is suggested:

- The project editor and designer compile the journal.
- Project leader and project manager draft necessary amendments.
- All project members finalize the work.
- The project leader approves the final version and submits the journal to the teacher.

It is necessary to highlight that as students do the project in teams, they make one step forward from individual self-reflection to group reflection when they share their experiences with other people. This is an important moment of self-actualization when you can understand yourself better by observing that other people have come across the same obstacles and learning how they coped with them.

In our experience, freshmen who have just come from secondary schools tend to be unfamiliar with what reflection is and how it is done properly. We believe that the first year of their university studies is the right time to master this skill and start implementing it in their learning. That is why students are introduced to this important skill for their future studies and future professional development through this project work. Other important skills that students develop while going through this stage are critical thinking, giving and receiving criticism, meeting the requirements, etc.

Stage three: Mini survey

By this stage, students have already learned the expert opinions on the research topic (see the mind map stage), shared their reflections (see the true story journal) and now they are to do a mini survey in a form of a questionnaire to learn about their peers' experience. The survey is "a research method used for collecting data from a predefined group of respondents to gain information and insights into various topics of interest" (QuestionPro, 2022, para 1).

At this stage, the study skills to develop are data collection, analysis and synthesis, and graph description and interpretation.

The procedure includes three main steps. Students first brainstorm questions to compile a questionnaire for their target group, then pre-test it in their research group to see if the questions are clear and relevant to the investigation. The questionnaire may be in a form of Yes-No, multiple-choice, scale, or ranking questions. Open-ended questions are not recommended as technically their processing needs specific interpretation skills. Next, the group members distribute their questionnaire among a minimum of 10 respondents. The way the data is collected can be different, the survey can be conducted either online or face-to-face. After the data is collected, the project team decides which graphic design will better demonstrate their results, e.g., a pie/bar chart, graph, or table. Finally, they describe the diagrams and write the survey report with recommendations. For upper-intermediate and advanced levels the description can be followed by data analyses and interpretation, using analytical and supposition skills.

The following distribution of responsibilities by roles is suggested:

- the editor of the group corrects mistakes and makes any stylistic adjustments;
- the designer compiles the paper according to the requirements, in terms of proper margins, placing the graphs/pie charts in a pleasant view;
- the leader of the group checks that everything meets the task requirements and submits the assignment in due time.

The survey report may be presented in offline class using multimedia. In an online format, students can work in breakout rooms or subchannels.

As a result of this stage, students acquire another primary research skill, namely conducting a survey, and are ready for the final project presentation.

Stage four: project presentation

In the final stage, students present their project work in a creative way, such as a poster presentation or a performance.

To finalize the mini research in the form of a project poster, the next steps are taken: the teams brainstorm the ideas about the poster on the results of their project work with the focus on problem-solving recommendations. They then agree upon the poster's content and structure that integrates an introduction, a mind map, stories, a survey report and a list of recommendations on how to improve the study skill, a conclusion, and references if necessary. As for the role's distribution, the editor proofreads and polishes the content, the designer crafts the poster, and the project leader approves the work done. The team plans the speakers ʼorder at a poster presentation event, which can be conducted in a conference format. To enhance students talking time it is possible to individualize a group presentation. For instance, a representative of different project groups presents their poster within 5-10 minutes to a small group of listeners that every ten minutes moves clockwise to listen to other presentations, in the meantime the poster presenters of each group are changed so that every member of the project group can practice public speaking skills.

In case of the creative performance, they write the scenario, the roles script, and prepare the characters' clothing for the live show.

All in all, this stage reveals the following skills: revision, critical thinking, team building, time management, dealing with challenges, poster/PowerPoint presentation, writing skills (scenario/summary), and public speaking.

Conclusion

To conclude, the study skills acquisition approaches facilitate students ʼconscientious involvement in academic activities via the mini research undergone in the first year of their university life within the academic English language course. The project is an umbrella for team learning, active inquiry-based learning, reflective learning, and peer learning.

In the project students go through stages imitating the natural research process, starting from enquiry, proceeding with secondary and primary research, including reflection and data collection followed by interpreting this data and drawing conclusions with recommendations.

Throughout the project life, academic, management, and interpersonal study skills are reinforced at each stage. Academic skills developed are research, note-taking; critical thinking,

writing, problem-solving, planning, reflection, and public speaking. Management skills fostered are prioritizing, meeting requirements, delegating, and managing the project. Interpersonal skills strengthened are communicating, persuading, supporting and trusting others, giving and receiving criticism, dealing with challenges, self-motivating, self-managing, and studying independently.

All the above enable students' successful functioning in the academic environment.

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