L.S. Syrymbetova[1], M.T. Otynshiyeva[1], M.A. Uaikhanova[2]

[1]Karagandy University of the name of academician E.A. Buketov, Karaganda, Kazakhstan
[2]Toraighyrov University", Pavlodar, Kazakhstan
(Corresponding author's e-mail: tolgandievna_1982@mail.ru*)

Differentiated Instruction in Second Language Acquisition:
A Case Study in Kazakhstan

This research aims to state our findings in the approach to second language acquisition by examining ways in which language knowledge is transferred from one person to another through media that includes online learning, correlated to the field of differentiated instruction. The assumptions made for this study are as follows: first, study of foreign languages is closely related to the political decisions. Secondly, it is our assumption that one can determine new approaches to second language acquisition and differentiated instruction considering new cultural, linguistic and psychological theories, such as anthropology, functionalism and cognitive grammar. The third assumption states that although numerous methods for differentiated instruction have been created by Russian scholars and successfully applied to American and European systems of education, they have not been assimilated or are not being used in Kazakhstan. New approaches such as contrastive analysis as a way of transferring information from one language to another in second language acquisition and differentiated instruction — have been established. We discussed criteria for differentiated instruction based on control and experimental groups' observations and individuals' accomplishments in the process of language assimilation.

Keywords: differentiated instruction, second language acquisition, methods, languages, nationalism, foreign language, students, University.

Introduction

Following the governmental and presidential ideology which advocates for a trilingual program, different administration bodies, for example, public and private education institutions, local and multinational companies have started designing and implementing projects and programs that seek to develop or facilitate second language acquisition within the country [1]. Due to the political decisions made in the last decades of independence, the three main languages currently used in Kazakhstan are like runners that are competing at different levels of development:

- Russian remains the most popular language spoken by more than 95 % of the population, functioning as the lingua-franca used by more than 130 nationalities that inhabit the country.
- Kazakh, used by approximately 65 % of the people was declared a national language and it comes in at second position. It is being reinvented on different bases and is being used as a passage to the Latin script and derivation on Arabic, Persian, Indo-European and Russian roots.
- English, which has been continuously promoted as an official language is struggling to catch up in the other developed economies. However, Kazakhstan is still having very low score of proficiency in English (it is said to be at around 16 % (epi.com.2019). Overall, the foreign languages study has not been as successful as it should be. Many failures to progress, especially with English, maybe due to lack of clearly defined national policies and failure of candidates to reach intermediate level-type competency in the use of language which is relevant for administration work or business. In our opinion, this has happened mostly because of some of the following main reasons:

a) Although government policies are quite well articulated, there is no clear national or regional implementation strategy for large categories of people to follow.

b) Foreign languages teaching methods used in Kazakhstan are out dated and inefficient, because they rely on translation as the basis of learning; they put a lot of emphasis on the perfection of grammar, memorization of vocabulary, application of language rules, and a formalized testing system that is made of grids — with only one answer or multiple possible responses. As a result, they separate the experience of learning English from a real-life context and make it technical and daunting — all of which does not cultivate creativity or facilitate language practice. Therefore, although many people receive instruction in English, they still cannot speak and write effectively in this language.

c) Suffering from a real language trauma, children, adults and students have not yet decided to actively participate in this long, sometimes enjoyable, but also time-consuming journey of learning foreign languages.

This article aims at analyzing English language development in today Kazakhstan as well as suggesting some modalities for improving learning and teaching foreign languages by grasping the real problems in the field and displaying some teaching paths in second language acquisition and differentiated instruction. On the one hand, we have deepened our knowledge in the field through expo sure to previous articles and, on the other hand, we have done the same through experimental differentiated instruction research carried out together with some students and scholars in Karaganda region. This article has a theoretical part linked to the main domains of interest and an experimental one. The latter comprises an analysis of the context, interpretation of data elicited through interviews and quizzes applied to large target groups or by observation of learners' behaviour and linguistic performance in different contexts. It offers some suggestions for the improvement of second language acquisition and differentiated instruction alike in Kazakhstan.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework of Second Language Acquisition and Differentiated Instruction

Numerous research findings on differentiated instruction and second language acquisition have been published in the last decades using interdisciplinary approaches. Cultural anthropologists have relied on different data. They have used human capital to vary differentiated instruction and second language acquisition, to assess levels of proficiency and create new strategies of learning and teaching, thus adapting to a new and continuously globalized world.

Acquisition of a second language is largely seen as a function of accumulative experience in listening, learning and using a language in varying social contexts. Some seminal works on this topic either underline the importance of language for thinking, communication or grounding the direction of learning through physical response [2]. Philosophers and linguists have extended this view on languages as an ancient rhetorical art of persuasion and cultural identity [3]. Sociologists have considered the social context of second language in which differentiated instruction may be encouraged. Economists have begun to calculate the costs and benefits of learning a new language in a globalized economy where people move constantly forming a 'migratory audience'. Gender studies have highlighted distinguishing factors in education and second language acquisition because males and females express different attitudes towards language learning in different social environments.

Geopolitical changes after the 1990s, especially the collapse of the Soviet Union and the gain of sovereignty, have gradually reset language policies [4]. They have led to 'imagined communities' and the orientation of small languages as key players in 'ethnic asymmetry' [5] and 'ethnic nationalism' [6] there by foregrounding this three-fold schema: Firstly, language as 'a symbol of a nation and ethnicity' has become as important as religion and culture in Eurasia', and 'being a member of a given ethnic group requires onto be fluent in a language they have adopted as a badge of identity'. Since the1990s, in the political arena, there has been exponential growth of some languages (English, Spanish and Chinese) to the status of international languages under the conditions of increasing multilingualism, displacement, migration and globalization. In this context, the interest in English has constantly grown, while the national language in Kazakhstan, which has not been used much for more than half a century during the Soviet Union, is being redefined and reinvented as follows: adapting Indo-European and Russian words to Kazakh language derivative and morphological patterns (*burdiuk* 'leather sack', *pivolar* 'beers'); recovering old Turkic words (*balta* 'axe, hatchet'); receiving English and Italian words (*felicita* a broadcast on radio translated 'happy time'). Secondly, more important than having 'mental representations', 'cognitive grammar' or generating 'cognitive frames' is developing the ability to participate in conversations and to learn communicative strategies that will enable one to be accepted as a competent member of a community. In the last century, some milestones in language theories development such as *langue/*parole distinction and the projection from syntagmatic to paradigmatic axis principle, theoretical language models form schema, parts and functions in communication, to ethnographic-social models were achieved. By integrating all of them in the so called functional-cognitive grammar, other paths of language conceptualization have favoured the spectacular rise of discourse analysis and, consequently, their applications to second language acquisition [7]. With the new linguistics models' syntactic differences and their interpretative consequences are seen to be limited to those items that make up or control the functional categories. Not all the languages make use of all these features in the universal set: therefore, in the process of second language acquisition some features are acquired while the others are 'disregarded, disclaimed or forgotten'.

Other branches of cognitive linguistics took into consideration different links between language and mental structure as ways to conceptualize images and encode them into words or linguistic expressions. The differences between languages are due to those primitive features that make up the lexical items of every language such as phonological, formal and semantic features. The situation highlights other basic units for contextual analysis in terms of deictic semantics, discourse and sociolinguistics.

Thirdly, the motivation and the status of a teacher and a learner are particularly important in the context of second language acquisition. The instructor/teacher/professor of a foreign language needs to have certain qualities — the desire to work on linguistic subjects, a strong wish to improve their teaching skills, an endless determination and an intuitive understanding of language importance [8] [9]. A scholar who is teaching a foreign language assumes at the same time a triple position — that of e a proficient or native speaker, a skilled analyst of language in all its aspects and their human and linguistic capabilities to transpose in words, structures, and sentences [10]. At the highest level of each language usage, abstract meaning, discourse choices, proficiency and refinement depend on abilities reflected in that level. This allows correlations among different languages expressed in etymological evolutions, classification or typology, aiming at decoding the speaker's communicative intentions.

The learner should be able to understand the meaning and structure of the new language, to compare and transfer the frames of the mother tongue to the ones of the second language and later build specific knowledge in the target language, dream, live and think in the new language.

In terms of differentiated instruction, people's ability to learning languages depends on genetic dispositions. While acquiring 'communicative competences' and 'symbolic abilities' [11], the learner of a second language is able to understand different categories of 'texts' spanning from simple written samples to long subtle humoristic conversations and other genres [12].

Three fundamental concepts in second language acquisition that have become controversial in the last decades include the native speaker, the inter-language, and the language learner [13]. Scholars speak about some dichotomies such language learning versus learning language usage, individual mind versus social context and native speaker versus learner of that native language.

Since 1980, the role of social context was addressed in various ways by psychologists. The view of social context as an 'environment' for learning was predicted on three concepts: the native speaker is seen as an ideal speaker-hearer who lives in a speech community; learner (rather than student) denotes someone engaged in a psycholinguistic process of internalizing a body of knowledge; inter-language is a psycholinguistic concept meant to validate the learner's errors as positive evidences of learning by re-structuring, generalizing, analysing, inferencing and testing the hypothesis in the mind.

Discourse and conversational oriented scholars have investigated how oppositions arise out of mundane practical activities, how they can be sustained and how they can be downplayed and ended by participants in a conversation. Work on preference structures shows that dis-preferred actions, responsive turns that decline or oppose previous initiatives tend to be produced in a less straightforward way by means of pausing, post positioning, 'eloquent silence' [14] or other techniques. There are in these approach features of contextualization cues of a code switching and ways to conceptualize discourses as well [15].

The difference between learners of new languages and teachers and native speakers as ideal users remains a controversial topic. English and all other languages is complex, displaying a myriad of combinatory possibilities, a never-ending richness in phonetics, grammatical and vocabulary structures, and word formation patterns.

Methodology

To collect data, we created a quiz of 20 questions for each field of interest. It assessed students' motivation, suggesting methods which may promote language awareness and underlining criteria and experimental tools to express learners' differentiation.

The questionnaire was administered to mixed target groups comprising 215 students who are enrolled in majors other than foreign languages (but required to take their education in English) and to teach after graduation in these subjects in a foreign language. The main majors considered were Sciences and Humanities. The questions were carefully developed to address traditional abilities of language usage (listening, grammar, reading and writing) as well as to innovative skills like critical thinking, co-working and problem solving.

Three different quizzes were designed to assess motivation, evaluate inputs of the process (their level of English skills) as well as project career paths.

Because of the many frustrations and failures, the learners in our research group have experienced during foreign language study, learners have become reluctant to embrace new learning experiences and started avoiding learning foreign languages (and implicitly the cultures). In our opinion, the major reasons for failure of foreign language programs comprise learners' low motivation, scattered focus of academic regional and national programs and the methods used. To address the language learning problems, we needed to approach them from all sides and in a coordinated way, keeping all aspects and levels of language together — assessing the situation by investigating the causes and suggesting some methods of learning the languages gradually and naturally through a full immersion, which combines different modalities like listening, speaking, reading, watching, and writing.

Learning a second language at any age requires exposure to the language motivation and opportunities to practice receptive and active skills. Having a motivated and willing learner may constitute a modality of differentiating education as well. Considering individuals 'different intellectual abilities and learning dispositions is the first crucial step in the learning process. In addition, it is important to be willing to learn from mistakes without fear and taking them as opportunities of gaining gradual self-confidence and practicing language skills in different communicative contexts. A question in our quiz addressed the issue of students' attitude to foreign languages,' interests and motivation when learning them. A part of the scholars is willing to learn English so they can be published a requirement by the university administration and the Ministry of Education. Students are motivated to learn English to pass IELTS examinations so they can participate in academic mobility programs or develop their career globally. However, such scholars and students are not more than a thin layer of 5 % of the academic staff and students enrolled in all faculties.

In our previous study principles of differentiated instruction [16] and second language acquisition [17] our criteria for differentiation included motivation, foreign language background and learning predispositions, as well as levels of skills acquired and mastered at the beginning of the process as inputs.

In the learning context category, a conductive environment for successful learning for everyone is created. It takes into consideration areas of commonality for example predispositions and skills to learning realities thus promoting equal involvement of students.

Another category includes the content to be learned comprising skills that a student must acquire. Differentiation of content requires prior testing of students to determine their level of learning. Information collected by testing allows the teacher to plan and organize the learning process depending on the cognitive needs, opportunities, and trainees' interests. When using the technology of dividing a group into subgroups (permanent or mobile) or just separate individuals, depending on one parameter or the other, it is necessary to establish requirements for mastering the theoretical and practical material of each subgroup. The requirements are the volume of the material being studied, as well as the skills that students should master at the end of the course. In determining the effectiveness of differentiated instruction, the criteria are, on the one hand, the students' academic performance on a subject depending on the goal they set, and on the other hand, the individual's satisfaction with the educational process. Performance testing can be determined using direct and indirect methods.

Numerous modalities of differentiating content, namely English knowledge and performance may be designed and investigated including both didactics and the science of language. A crucial difference in the theory is the one between lexical versus functional categories, such as abstract morphemes. Acquiring a second language grammar essentially involves determining how to assemble the lexical items of the target language and how to use functional categories in decoding the meaning of collocations, phrases and metaphors.

To make the learners stop translating in their mind, a habit that will ruin every serious endeavour in mastering the language, we have collected, designed, and used methods meant to reset students' brain to *think* in the target language. All these decisions will allow any speaker to respond to questions asked during a conversation or in any other communicative contexts. The rule is to *live* in the target language, facing different communication situations and surrounding them with an English environment. Deciding to stay accountable is also a gradual process of practicing towards full immersion in the language. The idea is for learners to start small and adapt all other strategies to a full understanding of what they learn in English, either in choosing the material to listen to and reading that corresponds to their level of comprehension. It may become a first important step in assimilating vocabulary items, grammatical patterns as well as imitating and setting the phonetic aspects of the language (getting rid of mother tongue accent, mastering clear pronunciation, stress, and tone) as well as getting accustomed to various accents of the English language that is spoken all over the world.

Learners' talent can bring a lot in terms of creativity and innovation, thus individualizing and personalizing the process by making learning more effective and practical.

Listening first has become the main step towards comprehension and assimilation of language structure. Naturally practicing listening activities and acting as an active listener in a gradual attempt to understand the whole language implies training the inexperienced learner to listen from a few minutes of listening to /or watching a video-clip or a movie, to a longer process that can be used for advanced and/or proficient language users. Therefore, the right selection of audio and video multimodal texts and their organization in a gradual schema of practice can be highly effective for creating the right learning and teaching contexts. Listening may be a productive method of differentiated instruction in learning languages if certain methodologies are followed. For example, founding and boosting vocabulary, etymological excurses and syntax-semantic interface can bring a lot in both fields. After building and boosting the vocabulary from the foundation level, the teacher or instructor can move on to the most refined aspects like academic, business, and scientific-technical usage, organizing the language in gradual chunks and making differentiations in terms of intensity and style — to improve the learners' self-confidence in making the right combinations and appropriate choices in given communicative contexts.

While listening, etymological excurses are possible and they may be another mode of natural comprehension aiming at identifying the roots of the words, discovering etymological layers and derivative patterns as well as nuances of meaning within collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs. It reflects the learner's linguistic and more specifically, etymological, and cultural background and helps in differentiating meaning and noticing the level of natural assimilation of vocabulary which indicates increasing self-confidence with the usage of abstract words. Some examples collected from classes, lectures and tests confirm our assumption because for Kazakh and Russian learners and speakers, making differences in the field of etymology implies connecting the parts of a word to their meaning in the language of origin. For example, *stratum/strata* generated an Italian and Romanian word for *(la) strada* 'street', but it preserves reverberations of this Latin word. It can be found in Germanic or more specific, in Flemish *strata* 'furrow'. Second, selecting affixes, differentiating their meaning, and using them accurately and self-confidently is problematic for learners. For instance, forgetting the different origins of words with two prefixes like *multi-* from Latin and *poly-* from Greek, numerous scholars follow the Russian patterns and mix up these parts of the words in compounded terms so that instead of *multi-ethnic*, *multi-level*, we often found in speeches and writings artificially abstract compound words like *poly -ethnic*, *poly-level*, which mostly stay for more *polytechnical, polymers*. Such etymological divergences result in artificial language reflected in strange combinations and generated by folk etymology and imitation of the word formation patterns from the mother tongue or lingua franca. Thirdly, learners' etymological background plays an important role in differentiating comprehension and appropriate usage of etymological doublets. For instance, we noticed the difficulty of some learners of Kazakh and Russian to understand and self-confidently use words that belong to the Latin and Romance stock of English language. The number of Turkic words in English is quite limited and words of Arabic and Persian origins occur among these abstract but less used terms, which paradoxically have enlarged their meaning through collocations and derivation.

A significant category of lexical items with similar meaning but derive from different etymological roots implies some research is necessary to discover the origins of the words. Although they display a connection to the same semantic matrix meaning, pairs of words like *flower* and *florist* 'the owner of a flower farm and/or a seller', *worm* and *vermiculturalist* ' a worm farmer' allow an etymological history — they relate to such different languages as Germanic and Latin. A note on word formation process results from derivation or from being compounded.

Word formation as a language level is situated in between grammar and semantics and offers a multitude of possibilities for learning and differentiating methods for second language acquisition. The richness of negative prefixes span from a-(*atheist*), ab-(*abnormal*), anti- (*antibiotic*), i-(*illegal*), in- (*inaccurate*), im-(*impartial*), dis-(*disable*), non-(*nonfictional*), to un-(*unbelievable*). In our classes and experiments, we noticed on the one hand a prototype pressure of extensive use of the suffix *un-*probably due to the imitation of unique negative prefix in Russian *не-*On the other hand, we noticed a non-differentiated acceptance and a permanent misuse of various other prefixes originating in different ancient languages like *multi-* from Latin and *poly* from Greek or in the modern Romance one, such as French *anti-* 'against' was evident.

Listening and reading through syntax-semantic interface represents an even higher level of abstract meaning, language analysis, looking for structures and decoding meaning. On the one hand, meaning of metaphors and phrasal verbs may be decoded by a gradual backward process of restoring the comparison, core word's meaning and the cut off significance: for instance, beside very familiar collocations (*to drop by* 'to visit for a short time', *to be in charge of*'to be responsible for') there are a lot of phrasal verbs that take a very specific meaning. Decoding metaphors is not only a 'device of poetical imagination and rhetorical flourish' but rather

a hermeneutical exercise of meaningful interpretation and superior understanding of a language. The metaphors comprise and express abstract meaning encoded in short comparisons and cutting the link to the main referent of similes that oblige the readers to reconstruct an entire system of signification. At the end of the process, the learners of a new language who have reached the level of proficiency should be able to decode refined nuances like allusion, irony, humour, metaphor and symbolism — just by using their 'metaphorical competence' [18] — after acquiring 'conceptual fluency' and decoding 'conceptual metaphors'. Although useful for comprehension and consolidating structures in the target language, listening may remain less effective unless this exercise is performed professionally by motivating the listener to become an active listener unless the strategies of listening are not correlated to discourse-grammatical reading. Together with defining gradual strategies of listening by actively following simple texts we recommended that our students use an extended frame of vocabulary set, from basic- to advanced level: from words to phrasal verbs, idioms and metaphors as well as combining listening with taking notes, using mind maps as methods of brainstorming, representing ideas, and writing stories, the latter remaining the slowest and the most complex exercise of creative writing. Using sets of a thousand words organized in semantic fields, from 1000 basic words to 4000 essential words, and in the last stage, 4000 academic and or business words represented the first level of vocabulary and grammar foundation.

It is a known fact that after intermediate level, language becomes more abstract, and a professional speaker can choose the most adequate words for expressing his ideas clearly and making differences. An exercise we have used for a long time was to follow the listening by creative writing which developed skills to recall, organize and upgrade vocabulary in a mind map, building up sentences and generating texts spanning from quite simple to complex ones. At the basic level, the creative writing sessions were like modalities of wrapping up the classes' content and getting feedback for adult students or academic staff. They comprised essays, articles and even brochures and books. Comprehension would become more efficient and productive if the listener developed into an active participant who combined a multilevel approach of language assimilation while mastering deep usage of irony, idioms, humour, metaphors, and symbols. Considering comprehension as a seminal for language foundation, we have analysed some problems in the choice of vocabulary items, in preposition selection by following Russian collocation and misuses in the context of writing.

The number of lexical items is almost the same in all languages comprising parts of speech but in the last two decades a lot of scholars differentiated close word classes. There are still a lot of controversial opinions about articles, numerals, modal verbs, auxiliaries, semi-adverbs that have been seen more as open problematical classes of words than traditional parts of speech. Verbal messages usually carry content or a cognitive orientation, whereas nonverbal ones serve an affective, relational, or emotional function. Adverbs and semi-adverbs are fruitful parts of speech, to be analysed in the context of functional categories, having no meaning but expressing various pragmatic nuances. For example, English has degree adverbs such as *enough, too, so, how,* (for example, *rich enough, too rich, so rich, how rich* [19] that could not be coined as ordinary adverbs, but rather as functional categories, closer to auxiliaries or clitics, losing their autonomy, and needing a full word as a support.

In the verbal complex, short words like clitics and prepositions play an important role. First, clitics are small words that have lost their autonomy, their accent and cannot occur alone anymore but always need another word for support (for example articles, unstressed forms of the pronouns, sometimes particles as *-sja* in Russian express a lot of different lexical and functional categories at the interface of syntax and semantics). Secondly, when these grammatical and lexical categories express verbal inflectional meaning like aspect, tenses, voices, they create a new and rich field of comparison and making differences: if for some Romance and Slavic languages the passive reflexive (and sometimes the causative, factitive, impersonal, reciprocal) use reflexive pronouns or middles for expressing processive meaning (Russ. *открывается*), English provides a pattern made of a short pronoun, a verb in *–ing* form and the past participle of the main verb: *it is being opened* [20]. Collocations can drive into trouble the learner who is tempted to imitate the structures of the mother tongue. Numerous phrasal verbs (either literal or non-literal) are made of a verbal unit and a preposition and as lexical-grammatical classes differentiate the language and the speakers' abilities to comprehend, master and use them at an advanced level.

In the field of syntax, we have noticed multiple mistakes mostly caused by ignoring some minimal language principles. English and Russian are typologically different languages in some ways, for example: fixed/ free word order; requiring using a subject/pro-drop; extended and compulsory use of the verb *to be* in present tense or a possibility to avoid it and replace it with a verb ellipsis marked by a hyphen; different casual regime and preposition collocations and selection for framing cognitive categories like expressing the age, directions,

possession, and time. Some typical mistakes have been recorded in articles and books written by the students and professors: building sentences without a copular or predicative verb (*We here*); arranging the words within a complex or simple sentence randomly (*Often we solve a problem like this*); conceptualizing motion and time frame in a manner closer to Russian (*once in a week, see you after an hour, on Saturday*), all reflecting a close imitation of mother tongue patterns. Overall, the grammar displays the architecture of the language, creates a broad basis of creativity while performing an endless number of sentences and offers to the speaker the possibility to auto correct and check whether their enounces are properly formed.

Using *mind maps* for consolidating words' semantic matrix has become a highly effective method of meaning representation. It is very productive for visual learners and for integrating learning and teaching in the big picture of linguistic education. Presenting conceptual, semantic, or other connections between portions of information seen as parts of the puzzle in a radial, non-linear graphical method encourages a brainstorming approach to any given organizational task and consolidates vocabulary through a better representation and visualization. The elements are arranged according to the importance of the concepts, and they are organized into areas, branches or groups following a personal or subjective way of organization upon the importance of concepts and connections among each other. The graphic formulation of the information may aid recall of existing memories, imply a continuous re-organization and information restructuring and representation. As for the variety of fields that may be used, the mind maps have many applications in different aspects of life. They can be used as mnemonic techniques in boosting vocabulary, expanding, and explaining the meaning of head words to idioms, metaphors, and phrasal verbs or to sort out complicated ideas like artistic plots or scientific processes. As well as other methods, mind maps deliver the education process with terms of differentiation in at least three steps: the capacity of conceptualizing ideas, which implies an ability to abstract thinking; the complexity of drawing and representation, including main idea, branches, links, and details; and the effectiveness and speed in putting together all the parts of this piece of puzzle.

Sharpening critical thinking abilities from basic grades to advanced ones involves making connections and generating different categories of texts from the quite simple to the most sophisticated ones using various codes and modalities of expression (oral, multimodal, symbolical). It also depends on the level of students' comprehension and their ability to use or manipulate language in creative ways.

Associating listening with speaking, reading, and writing may help the students first in slowing down their learning pace, understanding and finally mastering the language, because the deeper process of acquiring proficiency goes together with numerous returns and a slow pace. If a student's masters the ability to comprehend fast by listening, they can train themselves by listening to English speakers naturally using the language, or by reading at a personal pace that denotes a higher level of language proficiency and, finally, formulating opinions and writing them down in an essay or a text, which takes more time.

Results

The experimental work contained two types of tasks that were mandatory for all students and included 10 tasks at the basic level of complexity. The aim of the first type of tasks was to ensure that students achieved basic training in a foreign language. The second type included 3 tasks of increased complexity whose purpose was to test the ability of learners or students to apply the knowledge gained to solve higher-level tasks.

After analysing the results of performing diagnostic tasks in the pedagogical and biological faculties, we found out the level of **formation** of subject skills on the topic as a whole in each group and in each of the students.

Here is a summary of the results collected at the ascertaining stage.

T a b l e 1

Results of diagnostic work 1 by first year students from the Faculty of Pedagogy

No of students who completed only basic level	No of who student completed only some advanced level tasks	No of students who were able to complete all the tasks
28	12	4

Results of diagnostic work 1 by first year students from the Faculty of Biology

No of students who completed only basic level	No of who student completed only some advanced level tasks	No of students who were able to complete all the tasks
28	14	5

From the analysis of the obtained data, three levels of formation of subject skills in first-year students were identified: high, medium, and low, with the high level characterized by 14-16 points, medium level, 11-13 points, and low level, less than 11 points. The distribution of students from the Faculty of Pedagogy (by level of subject skills proficiency formation) is as follows: low level 57 %; medium level 29 % and high level 14 %.

On the other hand, the distribution of students from the Faculty of Biology (by level of subject skills proficiency formation) is as follows: low level 48 %; medium level 38 % and high level 17 %. From the diagnostic work, we concluded that the students from the Faculty of Pedagogy have a lower level of proficiency than those from the Faculty of Biology.

The ascertaining stage of the experimental work convinced us of the need for differentiated foreign language teaching. To prove the effectiveness of differentiated tasks for achieving subject results in a foreign language, we analysed the formative stage and made changes to the process of teaching, by using differentiated tasks study different topics. Each student worked with tasks at all three levels. Before starting work, students were not given any instructions to do all the tasks, since the pace of each student's work and the speeds of learning were considered. It was important to ensure that the first and second level tasks should be done during the lesson. Thus, each of the students could choose to do a task that was at his/her level of mastery.

Further, differentiated tasks were performed by students in the classroom and at home. For each lesson, students were given cards with multi-level tasks, which were compiled considering the existing knowledge. In subsequent lessons, they were informed of the results of the work. The teacher supervised how students carried out the differentiated tasks they chose. During the formative stage, there was a tendency for students to choose higher-level tasks as they became more confident in their proficiency or language capability. During the lessons, their performance significantly improved. Based on the results of this work, we can conclude that at the beginning of the experiment, about 55 % of students chose level 1 tasks, and at the end 28 % chose level 1 task. The number of students who chose level 2 and 3 tasks increased. After the formation stage was completed, the composition of the student groups changed. The purpose of the control stage was to establish the level of formation of subject skills of students from both faculties. Students performed diagnostic work 2, like the work at the ascertaining stage.

The content of the diagnostic work corresponded to the standard curriculum for the discipline of a "foreign language". Subject skills that were tested in the first work and additional skills that were formed in the lessons during the learning process were put on the control. The newly formed skills of students included determining the number of nouns; determining the gender of nouns; highlighting words that are used only in the plural form and determining pronouns in case of nouns. The diagnostic work contained two groups of tasks that are mandatory for all students. The work included 10 tasks of the basic level of complexity (#1-10). The second group included 4 tasks of increased complexity (#11-14).

Based on the results on data collected on diagnostic work performed by 2 students from the Faculty of Pedagogy, we concluded that all students managed to complete this work except one. Three levels of formation of subject skills in first-year students in the Faculty of Biology were identified as high, medium, and low with characteristics for each level defined as follows: high level-16-18 points; medium level-13-15 points, and low level, less than 12 points.

From analysed data we concluded that 29 % of first year students from the Faculty of Pedagogy had a high level of subject formation of skills, and it was observed that 50 % were middle level and 21 % low level. An analysis of obtained data also established that 22 % of the students from the Faculty of Biology are in the high-level formation of subject skills, 37 % in the middle level and 41 % in the low level.
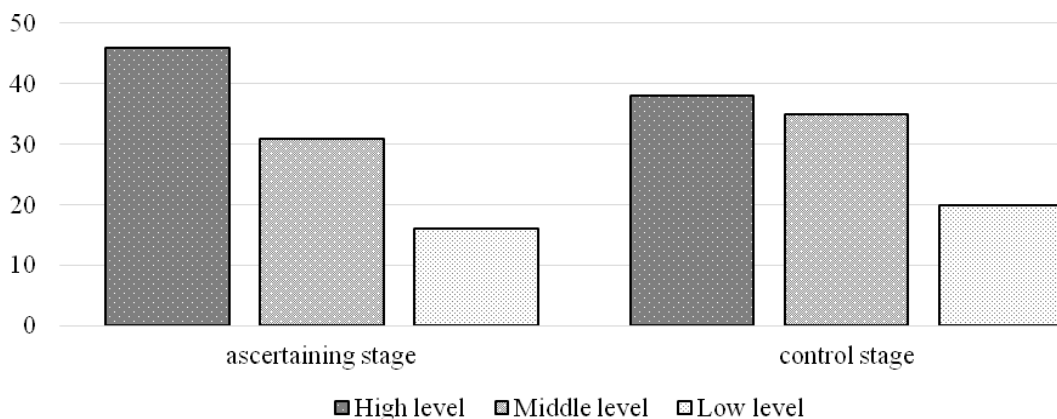
The level of formation of subject skills at the ascertaining and control stages for students from the Faculty of Biology (Figure 1).
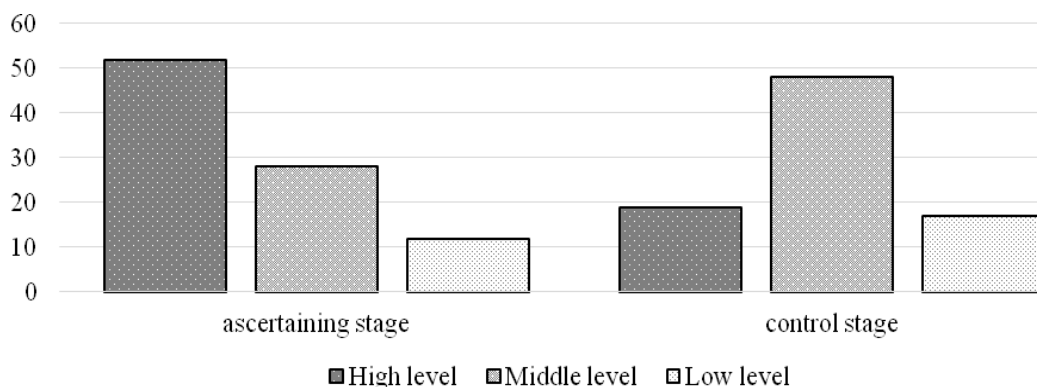
The level of formation of subject skills on the ascertaining and control stages for students from the Pedagogy Faculty (Figure 2).

Comparing the levels of formation of subject skills at the ascertaining and control stages we noted subtle changes for students from the Faculty of Biology. The number of students with a high level increased by 5 %, those at medium level by 4 %, and the ones with low level decreased by 8 %.

Comparing the levels of formation of subject skills on ascertaining and control stages in the teaching group, we noted that the number of students with high level increased by 15 %, while those with the middle level by 21 %, and the ones with low level decreased by 36 %.

Thus, we can conclude that the introduction of differentiated tasks in the process of teaching a foreign language to younger students contributes towards the level of formation of students' subject skills.

To sum up the results of the pedagogical experiment, we can say that by applying the different-levels approach, we have achieved positive dynamics in the development of subject skills, which indicates the effectiveness of delivering our lessons using level differentiation technology. We have achieved an increase in the knowledge of individual students. Another achievement was the ability of students to move from one group to another with better capacity (or knowledge).

Thus, we consider the use of differentiated tasks for foreign language lessons in university to be quite effective, since it allows us to achieve better results in accordance with the requirements of the state to secure or achieve a higher standard of education.

Discussion

New Approaches and Trends in Second Language Acquisition. Implications to Karaganda University Context of Differentiated Instruction.

Learning by doing and involving individual learners in teams organized for project goals has become one of the most productive methods of using complementarily pupils and students' abilities in collaborative that

promote peer learning and problem solving. It involves encouraging learners to activities brainstorm ideas and to assess each other's linguistic abilities. After setting the learning and teaching goals at the level of conceptualization, a teacher or a professor can assume the role of a project manager, defining the objectives, framing activities, and involving learners or students in the processes. The instructor, teacher or professor should begin with a realistic assessment of the context and facilitate or monitor participative activities that are scheduled in a feasible time span, with reasonable expectations of what learners can achieve. The well-coordinated involvement of all actors in both learning and teaching will determine success. Projects are great ways of gathering people together and making them use their complementary abilities in doing both a great job and speaking about it. They follow the gradual approach: beginning with formulating objectives, designing, and implementing activities and completing the task by writing reports. In our local context, to improve the level of students' involvement in English language learning, we have designed and implemented in the region some projects focused on the following target groups: academic staff involved in writing activities, businesspeople willing to play the international role in working for multinational companies and ordinary people who wanted to upgrade their English for travelling abroad or for migration purposes.

Stories have become an important tool in branding (company stories), leadership (success stories), but also in learning languages. Thinking of learning languages as an imagination process and creating short or complex stories can take the learners to great experiences and extend their knowledge and language exposure. As a minimal exercise in creative writing, stories can be used even from kindergarten for recalling words and simple structures. Generating a text of every kind implies performing multiple tasks of comprehension and confidently using a broad range of skills (pronunciation, spelling, speaking, writing). Stories should be designed using a gradual approach which includes having the lexical words, recalling the syntax structure, organizing a text in all its parts (introduction, body, conclusion), and finally wrapping up the details that can make a great story in terms of variety and persuading the audience. If learners want to remember a list of words, they will more readily remember the words in collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, and sentences used in a short story. Story writers should remember that readers will enjoy a story if it is easy visualize and best of all if readers can picture a story that is dramatic, or vulgar, or comic or in some way involves their emotions, or offers a subjective or an objective perspective on the topic. The more elaborate the story is the better because it links concepts and words to be remembered and it causes the learner to build up cognitive frames that have 'visual, aural, and sensory associations for you'. A story may vary in terms of complexity where it occurs at different learning levels while combining skills: reading for comprehension and giving feedback after brainstorming in a short exercise of creative writing; putting together a lot of details about a conversational topic as family or describing in a plot a day out or a film plot. The mini stories may be structured to help them with a deeper memory of new vocabulary and encourage them to speak out expressively their thoughts. The entire exercise of imagination and visualization aids memory. The questions used in comprehension exercise function as imagination starters and structure builders, providing repetition of the target vocabulary and consolidating the patterns of natural speaking.

Various research show that a non-native speaker or a new learner needs to hear and see a new word more than 30 times in a meaningful and understandable context, to remember it and be able to use it. This is a great exercise in language internalization and refinement, because it increases the exposure to these new words in various contexts thus making the learning process more interesting. Another purpose of the questions is to force the learner's brain to participate in the story and trigger their memory quicker than if they remained just a passive listener or reader. By working through all English language systems, the pupils and students will learn new words, phrases, and grammar forms more thoroughly.

A five-fold approach has been used in improving English abilities and exposing learners to a full language immersion: a) listening to an article several times to get the big picture of it, that is the main idea and general thoughts; b) reading short texts for gist and scanning them globally; c) making a list of unknown words by listening and reading the texts at the same time; d) thinking of a story structure and sketching a plan of the text; e) putting flesh on the bones by creating a first draft of a story. By following all these steps, the learner will learn the new material thoroughly and beyond surface level and get a chance to use what he/she has learned.

Communication language use, creating meaning, and collaborative behaviour are key features in contemporary theories of second language acquisition. More recently, the philosophy of language and linguistic anthropology have developed new concepts related to the identity of the speaker, the role of language in defining cultural identity and new trends in linguistic anthropology have revealed connections between language and culture, language and nationalism, language, and cultural identity. The situation became increasingly consequential when considering the affective dimension of language learning. Non-verbal communication tends to take precedence over the spoken word and transmitting emotions. In turn, language learners should slowly

understand that the communicative competence does not derive from information alone, but also a form of "symbolic power" that comes with the interpretation of signs and their links to other signs. In this view, grammar is not just a resource for meaning organized as a system of choices, but more a system of interactions that reveals meaning in context.

Humorous communication is extremely complex in both its forms and functions [21]. Humour implies development of language abilities or language proficiency. In analysing different ways to express humour we can look at subtle dimensions of languages cultural context. The famous theory of memes as culturally encoded language expressions points out the difficulties in understanding and interpreting memes when we transfer cultural knowledge from one language to another.

Multimedia resources play an especially important role in the methodology of second language acquisition, especially in the last decades when computers, internet sources and other visual "hot sources" have invaded our lives and presented us with representations such as mind maps.

Languages are highly effective and useful for building ethnic pride, creating mutual understanding, and fostering tolerance. The growth of trilingual education in Kazakhstan can help bring all this about. Language learning has become learning how to communicate as a member of a particular "socio-community group" [22].

Today, students need a much more sophisticated competence to manipulate symbolic systems, hence the renewed attention to discourse in a range of methods (spoken, written, visual, and electronic), the focus on semiotic choice, and the ability to interpret meanings from discourse features. Attention to form, genre, style, register, and a focus on social semiotics are back, as well as an interest in how linguistic form shapes mental representation (what word choices reveal about the minds of speakers). Language learners are not just communicators and problem solvers, but whole persons with hearts, bodies, and minds, with memories, fantasies, loyalties, and identities. Therefore, symbolic forms of language are not just items of lexis or communication strategies they embody experiences, emotional resonances, and moral imaginings. Symbolic competence must be nourished by literal imagination at all levels of language. Some scholars believe that there are three inseparable aspects of symbolic competence that should be linked to language and culture grammar and style, vocabulary and its cultural connotation, texts, and their points of view.

Grasping Linguistic Realities and Suggesting Modalities for Differentiation

In 2020-2021 academic year, Karaganda Buketov University's Faculty of Biology and Faculty of Pedagogy carried out experimental work to identify the effectiveness of differentiating tasks in the process of teaching a foreign language. The survey targeted 55 students enrolled in the first course of English for other specialties.

This experimental work revealed that students who strive to acquire new knowledge are attentive in the classroom, and they need additional help to obtain or master new knowledge and skills. Further, inattentive learners with no capacity to organize their work need creative instruction methods by the teacher.

To prove the effectiveness of using differentiating tasks in foreign language lessons, a three-stage experiment was conducted: ascertaining, formation and control. At the **ascertaining** stage, diagnostic work was done to assess the level of skills in grammar, spelling and vocabulary. The subject skills indicated in the foreign language program were put under **control,** for example applies knowledge about a specific topic (e.g., questions that are answered), distinguish between common and proper nouns, etc.

Conclusion

Shunned for years because of different political agendas, the process of learning foreign languages has been steadily showing signs of renaissance in recent years due to a competitive environment for language development in Kazakhstan. Although the linguistic policies are well designed, the implementation strategies and the use of out-dated methods have made it difficult for students to develop adequate foreign language skills that are necessary in a modern society that is getting more and more globalized. Soft skills like adaptability, critical thinking, clear communication focused on persuasion, creative entrepreneurship, leadership, and collaborative problem solving are more necessary than ever before. Inter-disciplinarily learning and teaching require integration of language abilities into a wider system.

A realistic assessment of the situation may become a source of inspiration for creating and implementing learning programs, which in Kazakhstan are currently left somewhere in between a great idealistic governmental vision and a struggling working society, where the methods of learning and teaching are old-fashioned, uninspiring, and unattractive for most learners. This disconnection between language policy and implementation strategies remains, in our opinion, the main reason for little progress in learning new languages in Kazakhstan. It reflects inadequate commitment to reforms in education, preferring a mass strategy that is undefined, rather than a much defined one that is focused on enhancing language proficiency in individuals and

setting realistic goals from a position where there is acknowledgment of the slow pace in language acquisition. Instead of apparently superficial solutions which have showed a negative impact, complementing other methods in second language acquisition may constitute an important step in building public language policies and involving the respective stakeholders.

All the methods analysed or suggested in this article are meant to help learners stop translating meaning in their head and begin to think in a foreign language. They represent great ways of creating a learning environment where learners can use a foreign language to express or communicate their everyday experiences and situations and can use said languages at the upper, intermediate, and advanced levels. If this is achieved, every language becomes more, differentiated, and nuanced. At the same time, there are modalities that can be used to motivate learners in language learning and making them aware of the importance of using numerous languages confidently. All these learning and teaching paths suggest the need for an innovative and processive approach to education and can work as modalities for differentiating students' abilities and help them achieve mastery of language.

Understanding the unsettling reality of language education in three-folder approach this article suggests a critical analysis of the cultural context and points towards methodologies that might lead to a realistic approach to language education, generating a shift in comprehending English Language as well as in learning and teaching it. Paradoxically, some of the methods were designed by Russian scholars living inland or overseas but they were neither assimilated at a large scale in Kazakhstan, nor largely used across the country in kindergartens, schools, and universities or in the business environment.

Endnotes

[1]We use the concept of text in the acceptation given by functional-cognitive grammar 'the process of making meaning in the context' [23].

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Л.С. Сырымбетова, М. Отыншиева, М.А. Уайханова

Дифференциалды оқыту арқылы екінші тілді үйрену: Қазақстандағы тақырыптық зерттеу

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты — дифференциалды оқыту саласымен байланысты онлайн оқытуды қоса алғанда, бұқаралық ақпарат құралдары арқылы тілдік білімді бір адамнан екінші адамға беру тәсілдерін үйрену арқылы екінші тілді меңгеруге деген көзқарасымыздағы нәтижелерімізді көрсету. Осы зерттеу үшін жасалған болжамдар келесідей: біріншіден, шет тілдерін үйрену саяси шешімдермен тығыз байланысты. Екіншіден, антропология, функционализм және танымдық грамматика сияқты жаңа мәдени, лингвистикалық және психологиялық теорияларды ескере отырып, екінші тілді меңгерудің және дифференциалды оқытудың жаңа тәсілдерін анықтауға болады деп болжаймыз. Үшіншіден, дифференциалды оқытудың көптеген әдістері америкалық және еуропалық білім беру жүйелерінде сәтті қолданылғанымен, олар Қазақстанда жеткілікті қолданылмаған. Екінші тілді үйрену және дифференциалды оқыту кезінде ақпаратты бір тілден екінші тілге беру әдісі ретінде салыстырмалы талдау сияқты жаңа тәсілдер жасалды. Біз бақылау және эксперименттік топтардың бақылауларына және жеке тұлғалардың тілді меңгеру үдерісіндегі жетістіктеріне негізделген сараланған оқыту критерийлерін талқыладық.

Кілт сөздер: дифференциалды оқыту, екінші тілді меңгеру, әдістер, тілдер, ұлтшылдық, шет тілі, студенттер, университет.

Л.С. Сырымбетова, М. Отыншиева, М.А.Уайханова

Дифференцированное обучение в изучении второго языка: Тематическое исследование в Казахстане

Целью данного исследования является: изложение наших результатов в подходе к овладению вторым языком путем изучения способов передачи языковых знаний от одного человека к другому с помощью средств массовой информации, включая онлайн-обучение, соотнесенное с областью дифференцированного обучения. Предположения, сделанные для этого исследования, заключаются в следующем: во-первых, изучение иностранных языков тесно связано с политическими решениями. Во-вторых, мы предполагаем, что можно определить новые подходы дифференцированного обучения в изучении второго языка с учетом новых культурных, лингвистических и психологических теорий, таких как антропология, функционализм и когнитивная грамматика. Третье предположение состоит в том, что, хотя многочисленные методы дифференцированного обучения были созданы российскими учеными и успешно применялись в американских и европейских системах образования, но они не были освоены или не используются в Казахстане. Были созданы новые подходы, такие как сравнительный анализ как способ передачи информации с одного языка на другой при изучении второго языка и дифференцированного обучения. Мы обсудили критерии дифференцированного обучения, основанные на

наблюдениях контрольной и экспериментальной групп и достижениях отдельных лиц в процессе изучения языка.

Ключевые слова: дифференцированное обучение, овладение вторым языком, методы, языки, национализм, иностранный язык, студенты, университет.

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