PRACTICE-ORIENTED LEARNING – A PLATFORM FOR THE FORMATION OF GLOBAL SKILLS

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Glocal people are needed in all fields of life-sustaining activity as business, industry, education, health, environment, technologies. To develop glocal people is the key aim the world higher education system is intending to achieve. What kind of people are glocal people? People, who think globally, act locally. People who act as masters of logical, critical, lateral, creative and systems thinking and who can think globally and consequently solve local problems. Value and demand for glocal people are increasing during the crisis (economic, political, etc.). Why do we need glocal people? How are glocal people developed or how should they be educated?

Glocal examples or examples of "think globally, act locally" are:

- higher education: well – known and highly – experienced educators, worked in the top list universities, may reform developing their home country's universities due to their needs;
- McDonald's: McDonald's strategy is to listen to local consumers more and then act on it. The Company strives to do this around the world;
- KFC: to increase visits from local residents, KFC has initiated a five-year plan to upgrade its UK restaurants with new contemporary designs. Designs will be based on the 'look and feel' of the area and in collaboration with local property developers (Business and Management Case Studies, 2010).

Taking into account an increasing global economic integration, any government wants its country to have high-skilled economies. Kazakhstan is an upper-middle-income country with rapid economic development and focuses all efforts on joining the rank of the top 30 most developed countries by 2050. Kazakhstan has focused on the creation of a market economy based on protecting the institution of private property and the full support of entrepreneurship initiative. In this regard, Kazakhstan works tenaciously at developing opportunities for small businesses, which are a vitally important platform for its economy.

There are many state programmes aimed at promoting economic diversification of economy and improving competitiveness among small and medium-sized businesses:

- the Kazakhstan Small Business Programme II (KSBP II) is the continuation of an already successful MSE finance facility in the amount of US$ 77.5 million that focuses on institution building in selected local commercial banks to deliver financial services to micro and small enterprises countrywide;
- the Damu Fund provides interest-rate subsidies on loans to entrepreneurs, and bank guarantees to entrepreneurs in obtaining credits;
- the "Business Road Map 2020" is focused on the maximum use of market institutions.

All measures of financial support are provided through commercial banks, thereby avoiding excessive state intervention in market relations. To date, over 450 contracts on subsidies and guarantees totaling KZT 178 billion, or $1.2 billion, were signed as a result of implementation of the "Business Road Map 2020".

Moreover, Kazakhstan is a country with global ambitions, and as many well – developed countries, takes necessary steps towards the aim of creating a well – educated, high-value, low-cost workforce to compete for global market share. The Programme "Strengthening Entrepreneurial Potential" began in 2011 and includes training programmes of new entrepreneurs, provision of service and consulting support for doing business, international training initiatives, improving the competence of top management of private enterprises, etc. The Damu Fund is represented by

sixteen branches in all the regional centres. The Damu Fund provides almost the entire Kazakhstan with courses, consulting programmes and workshops. In order to support entrepreneurship, 17 Entrepreneurs Service Centres were established in regional centres and cities of Astana, Almaty, Semey; 27 Business Support Centres in single-industry towns and 14 mobile Business Support Centres in 2012-2013.

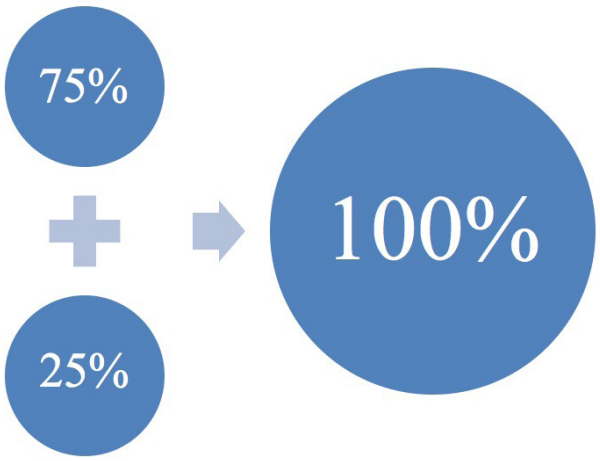
A well-educated, high-value, low-cost workforce – global thinkers – are educated through practice – oriented learning. Global thinking firstly starts with forming logical, critical, lateral, and creative and systems thinking during the whole learning process.

Kazakhstani universities try enhance students' academic and research skills as well as critical thinking skills. Due to the significance of such economic indexes as commercial value and content resource the universities have widen their range of skills:

- strategic management
- global thinking
- entrepreneur's skills

The range of the above – mentioned skills have an impact on graduate employability. 75% of graduates are employed within a year after they graduate and 25% are left unemployed.

Figure 1 – Percentage of student employment



Reasons for unemployment include low salary, failed expectations, lack of open positions; no strict compliance with labor legislation in case of employees' rights protection, no correspondence to skills required for the position, no opportunities of career progress, no advanced training or improvement courses.

In most cases, employers are not satisfied with the graduates' competences. As a rule, hirers have to retrain those who have just graduated from universities. As a result, employers do not want to pay high salaries to such employees and to provide their further career progress. Whereas excellent academic results are not the indicator of employability. There is an academic progress table of employed and unemployed graduates (100 people took part in the poll) which testifies that both of them have good academic progress.

Table 1 - Progress of employed and unemployed graduates

Academic progress	*Employed*	*Unemployed*
Excellent	*12 %*	*20 %*
Good	*14 %*	*39 %*
Satisfactory	*39 %*	*21 %*
Unsatisfactory	*35 %*	*20 %*

Unemployment based on employers' dissatisfaction is confirmed by staff that international companies hire. According to the data of the Agency of Statistics, the number of registered and active international companies in Kazakhstan has reached 32 680 (Russia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, China, Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and so on). Nowadays Kazakhstan is a promising reliable platform to invest in. Obviously, the key factor of investors' attraction is social and political stability, development of trade and economic integration processes. The appearance of new investors widens variety on the Kazakhstani market and creates new workplaces which require not only knowledge but also a great number of key competencies developed under the "think globally, act locally" principle that include: skill to distinguish differences in cultures; skill to understand and take into consideration different opinions; skill to think critically and compare facts; skill to find a decision to different tasks; skill to act in the conditions of uncertainty; understanding of global problems and challenges. As Sonja Stockton, Director, Talent, PricewaterhouseCoopers (Think Global and British Council, 2011:1) points out:

> *"What global companies look for are people who we think can take a global perspective. Students are well placed to do this if they have taken opportunities to widen their cultural perspective. The people that succeed can work in multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural and multi-locational teams. If students have demonstrated they can work with other cultures and teams, that's a big plus for us as we need students to be intellectually curious and culturally agile if they are going to work in a global context."*

Kazakhstani universities maintain the student-oriented approach when students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm. Moreover, students work in teams on problems and projects under conditions that assure both positive interdependence and personal responsibility.

Observations of the current provision of the teaching practice as part of education programmes highlight a number of difficulties. Recent studies conducted in some Western countries show that there is a gap between theory-based education of students and requirements for "new" skills in practice. Standard education curricula are directed to theoretical learning more than practical in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstani universities' academic programmes usually suggest first two years of studying to be more theoretical, in particular the Ministry of Education presupposes such courses as History, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology, Physical training, English that are compulsory for obtaining any qualification. Beginning with the third year of study, students start learning disciplines relevant to their future qualification though they have only three semesters for the major courses in general. Moreover, only a week of the third year of study and two months of the second semester of the fourth year of study focus practice-based learning where students just gain insights into details of their future work (only if they are lucky enough to enter the company or enterprise of their qualification as the connection between universities and business is not so tight as it should be). Consequently, many education programmes do not provide a coherent practice component.

The proportion of time spent specifically on professional training and the number of credits for practice varies not only across different countries, but also between departments and faculties within the same university. For students to have an integrated experience of practice, they need to connect understandings that they develop in practice situations with theories and understandings about practice that might be developed in a range of ways in their university courses (University of Technology Sydney, Practice Orientation, 2015). Students need explicit opportunities to engage in all parts of the experiential learning cycle: planning and preparing for practice experiences; engaging in practice; reflecting, interpreting and making connections during and after practice. These opportunities need to be made in the curriculum and supported by student engagement with others in both university and practice environments. Learning technologies, including blogs and e-portfolios, can be used to support students' reflection, with

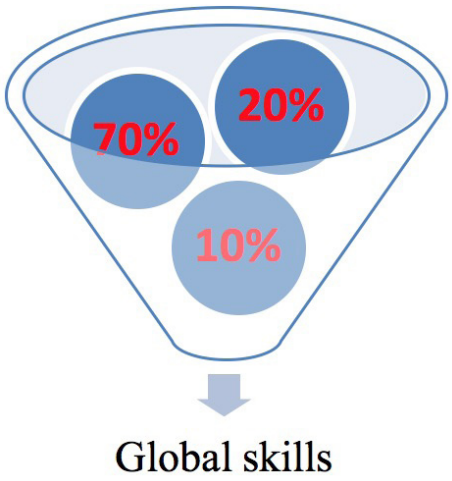
online discussions and web technologies used to support students in sharing and comparing experiences with those of their peers.

A curriculum-wide approach to practice-oriented education implies that students have opportunities to engage in a diversity of practice-related experiences. The following indicates a rough continuum of practice experiences, from more to less student immersion in practice:

- recognition of work-based learning (offered by the university)
- recognition and intellectual extension of learning in practice;
- a wide range of internships and practicums what presupposes a deep involvement of enterprises into the educational process in general;
- field trips and visits, real and virtual;
- simulations and role plays: high to low fidelity, face-to-face or online;
- problem-based, issues-based or practice case-based approaches to learning in subjects (popular case studies);
- student use of cutting-edge technologies in practice-based scenarios;
- student-created media resources that illustrate aspects of practice, including podcasts and vodcasts (higher immersion for the creators, lower for other users);
- guest lectures and vodcasts or podcasts from professional practitioners (again there is a reference to the link between business and university).

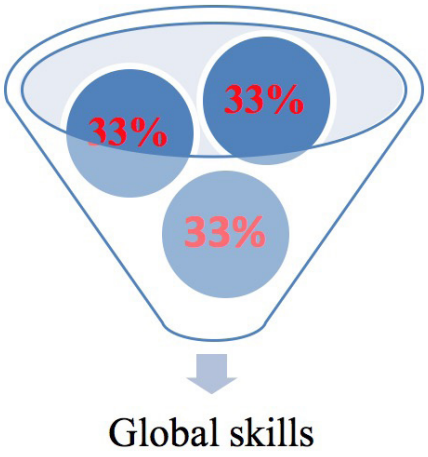
However, forming practice-oriented skills requires academic programmes build on the "70:20:10" model. The 70-20-10 model accredited to Lombardo & Eichinger (1996) suggests that lessons learned by successful and effective managers are roughly 70% from tough jobs, 20% from people (mostly the boss), and 10% from courses and reading.

Figure 2 - Lombardo & Eichinger's training model (1996)



Dan Pontefract (2013) suggests 3-33 model: the learning ratios of 3-33, which stands for 33% of the formal learning, 33% of informal, and 33% of social learning. 3-33 model - pervasive learning model is a collaborative, continuous, connected, and community-based growth mindset.

Figure 3 – Ponterfract's training model (2013)



Academic programmes in our country tend to have the following model: 10:10:80 where practical learning takes 10 %, feedback - 10% and theoretical learning - 80 %. Thus, there is some evidence of the lack of academic freedom in ways of changing academic programmes, insufficient consideration of students' and employers' interests, out-of-date approaches to research-based learning. In accordance with this evidence, there is a necessity to tackle the following issues:

1. developing willingness of the faculty to adhere to new job requirements;
2. developing an entrepreneurial and corporate environment;
3. increasing labor market sensitivity.

Project – based learning is a necessary part of practice-oriented learning and one of the major components of global skills education. Students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to a complex question, problem, or challenge.

Learning is a social activity and relevant teaching methods can scaffold students' prior experiences and take into account the role of community and culture. Furthermore, as we live in an increasingly more technological and global society, faculty members realiase that they must prepare students not only to think about new information but have them engaged with tasks that prepare them for this global citizenship and consequently for global skills. Although project-based learning can be done in combination with the national standardized testing model, it is often difficult for teachers to effectively interweave these two seemingly different types of instruction.

In order to create effective project-based learning units, professional development organisers suggest using the following guidelines:

- Begin with the end in mind and plan for this end-result.
- Craft the driving question; select and refine a central question.
- Plan the assessment and define outcomes and assessment criteria.
- Map the project: decide how to structure the project.
- Manage the process: find tools and strategies for successful projects.

Project-based learning can involve, but is not limited to: asking and refining questions; debating ideas; making predictions; designing plans and/or experiments; collecting and analyzing data; drawing conclusions; communicating ideas and findings to others; asking new questions; creating artifacts.

The content of the courses and workshops is usually based upon developing strategies and finding solutions to global and large-scale problems in a series of practical tasks. During individual and team work students explore the connections between environmental, social, economic and other aspects of life.

Globalization, economic competition, development of pilot technologies and innovations, a wide range of information dictate an increasing role of practice-oriented skills and individual professional qualities of a self-study process.

A knowledge-driven economy demands a larger proportion of qualified workforce with access to lifelong learning opportunities. This has had a major impact on participation rates in tertiary education. Whatever the merits of the economic case for expanding higher education, there has been major growth in all OECD countries. Canada was the first country to achieve the target of over 50 percent of people aged 25 and 34 to enter the job market with a tertiary level qualification, followed by Korea, which has engineered a massive growth in tertiary provision since 1991.

To tackle these tasks national legislation should become more flexible which will lead to the independent decision-making process and rise in civil responsibility of the universities.

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