

**Uzbek Minorities' Experiences in Majority Higher Education Institutions**

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**GSE Research committee <gse\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz>**

Dear Dilnoza,

The NUGSE Research Committee reviewed the project entitled "Linguist Minorities Experiences in Majority HEIs" and decided:

To grant approval for this study subject to minor changes, to be discussed with supervisor

**Approval subject to minor changes:** The study is approved subject to minor changes.

Reviewers' comments:

The rationale for purposive sampling is given and is sound, but can any more specific information be given about how "mutual acquaintances" will be used to make sure that you have the best possible participants for your study. For example, if a mutual acquaintance introduces you to 6 students who happen to be studying in the same university and all graduated from the same school, is that acceptable or not? Further details would be useful.

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Before starting your data collection, you need to discuss these changes with your supervisor, revise your proposal accordingly, and then ask your supervisor to check the revised proposal.

Sincerely,  
NUGSE Research Committee

### Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to the people who contributed to the process and progress of this thesis work. Firstly, I would like to thank my thesis supervisor and mentor Prof. Bridget Goodman for her guidance, endless patience and support during the development of my research. Apart from being a thesis supervisor, she was also a source of encouragement and the moral support.

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Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my family for their unconditional love and support throughout my studies and life. Further in my native language: *Меҳрибонларим Ойишон ва Адашон, ҳаётимда эришган ва эришадиган ҳар бир ютугим – сизларнинг машаққатли меҳнатингиз ва менга бўлган муҳаббатингиз меваси. Мени қўллаб-қувватлаганингиз учун чексиз ташаккур.*

### **Abstract**

#### **Uzbek Language Minorities' Experiences in Kazakhstani Majority Higher Education Institutions**

Kazakhstani higher education is quite diverse; there are representatives of 85 nations who are currently studying at higher education institutions. One of the representatives of these language minority groups are Uzbek students, who are taught in their native language in primary and secondary levels, learning majority languages as a subject at schools. However, the graduates of Uzbek medium schools have to continue their post-secondary education in the majority language medium HEIs, because there are no Uzbek medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs. As a result, students who used to learn the content in Uzbek at secondary level, switch to Kazakh or Russian, which are the mediums of instruction in post-secondary level. The purpose of this study was to explore Uzbek language minority students' experiences in majority universities. The study sought to answer the following research question: "What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?" The study used the qualitative phenomenological approach and the data was collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews. Seven students from Kazakh and Russian medium programs participated in the study. The study revealed that students' social integration was relatively easier than academic integration. The challenges faced during the integration period were mostly language-oriented. Students' language of instruction choice, either Kazakh or Russian, affected their preparation and integration. Moreover, the study pinpointed the importance of social support from teachers and administrative staff, which positively affected to students' persistence and motivation to study. The study findings suggest that university administrations should increase the level of social and academic support and raise teachers' awareness of approaching minority

students. Also, school-counselors are recommended to guide applicants when choosing a language of the test and language of instruction in HEIs.

### Аннотация

## **Опыт Узбекских Меньшинств в Казахстанских Вузах Казахским и Русским Языков Обучения**

Студенты высших учебных заведений Казахстана - представители 85 этнических и языковых групп. Одним из представителей этих групп являются представители узбекского этноса, которые обучаются на родном языке в начальной и средней школе, и изучают казахский и русский языки в качестве школьного предмета. Тем не менее, выпускники средних узбекских школ продолжают свое высшее образование на казахском и русском языках, так как Казахстанские ВУЗы не предоставляют программы с узбекским языком обучения. В результате, учащиеся, которые раньше обучались на узбекском языке, переходят на казахский или русский язык. Целью этого исследования было изучение опыта интеграции студентов из узбекских школ в ВУЗах Казахстана. Исследование отвечает на следующий исследовательский вопрос: «Каков опыт социальной и академической интеграции узбекских студентов в ВУЗах казахским и русским языками обучения?» В исследовании использовался качественный феноменологический метод, и сбор данных был осуществлен с помощью использования углубленных интервью. Семь студентов из казахских и русских программ приняли участие в исследовании. Исследование показало, что социальная интеграция студентов проходила относительно легче чем академическая интеграция. Проблемы, с которыми столкнулись студенты в период интеграции, касались в основном умения использования русского и казахского языков. Выбор языка тестирования и обучения повлиял на их подготовку к поступлению в университеты и интеграцию в университетскую среду. Кроме того, исследование выявило важность социальной поддержки со стороны учителей и администрации университета в настойчивости и мотивации студентов к учебе. Результаты

исследования предполагают, что администрации университетов следует повысить уровень социальной и академической поддержки и повысить осведомленность учителей в отношении учащихся из числа языковых меньшинств. Кроме того, школьным консультантам рекомендуется предоставлять помощь и поддержку абитуриентам при выборе языка тестирования и далее языка обучения в ВУЗе.

## Аңдатпа

### Өзбек Студенттерінің Қазақ және Орыс Тілдерінде Оқытатын

#### Қазақстандық ЖОО-дағы Тәжірибелері

Бүгінгі күнде Қазақстан ЖОО студенттері - 85 ұлт өкілдері. Олардың арасында өзбек ұлтынан болған, өзбек орта мектептерінің түлектері де бар. Осы студенттер орта мектепте өзбек тілінде білім алады, және де қазақ тілін мемлекеттік тіл, ал орыс тілін ұлтаралық қатынас тілі ретінде үйренеді. Бірақ ЖОО-дарына оқуға түсу үшін тапсырылатын емтихандарды қазақ немесе орыс тілдерінде, одан әрі ЖОО-дарында оқуды тек қана қазақ немесе орыс тілдерінде жалғастыра алады. Себебі, Қазақстан ЖОО-дары оқу бағдарламаларын қазақ және орыс тілдерінде ғана ұсынады. Осы ғылыми жұмыстың мақсаты өзбек студенттерінің қазақ және орыс тілінде білім беретін ЖОО-на интеграциялануы тәжірибелерін зерттеу болып табылды. Осы жұмыс мына зерттеу сұрағына жауап берді: «Өзбек студенттерінің ЖОО-на әлеуметтік және академиялық интеграция тәжірибелері қандай?». Ғылыми жұмыс барысында зерттеудің сапалық әдісі қолданылды және зерттеу деректері тереңдетілген сұхбат барысында жиналды. Бұл жұмыста ЖОО-нда білім алып жатқан жеті студент қатысты. Жұмыс нәтижелері бойынша студенттердің әлеуметтік интеграция кезеңі академиялық интеграциямен салыстырғанда оңай болғаны анықталды. Интеграция кезеңінде кездескен қиыншылықтардың басымы қазақ және орыс тілдерін қолдану және үйренуге байланысты болған. Сонымен қатар, емтихан тапсыру тілін және ЖОО-да оқу тілін таңдауы студенттердің дайындалу және университет ортасына калыптасуына өз әсерін тигізеді. Және де, жұмыс нәтижелері оқытушылар және университет әкімшіліктері тарабынан көрсетілетін әлеуметтік қолдаудың маңызы зор екенін анықтады. Соған орай, университет әкімшіліктеріне студенттерге әлеуметтік және академиялық қолдау көрсету деңгейін көтеруі

ўсынылады. Сонымен қатар, мектеп қабырғасында оқушы-талапкерлермен жұмыс жасайтын әкімшілік қызметкерлеріне емтихан тапсыру және ЖОО-нда білім алу тілдерін таңдау барысында толық информация беру ұсынылады.

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

Kazakhstani higher education is quite diverse; there are representatives of 85 nations who are currently studying at higher education institutions. 16,6 % of them are ethnic linguistic minorities, who are taught in majority languages in higher education institutions (Hereafter, HEIs) (“Iz pochti polumilliona,” 2015). By linguistic minority, I refer to someone who is “identified by a distinct linguistic characteristic, those who speak a non-dominant language at home” (Kanno and Harklau, 2012).

The field of educational research is rich with studies on linguistic minority students' secondary and primary education, particularly, their experience on language education: access, integration into majority society, language learning, challenges, success and failure. In comparison, there is a gap remaining on understanding what is happening in linguistic minorities' social and academic lives at university level. Kanno and Harklau (2012) state that persistence and future success of students mainly depend on how fast and well a student can integrate to the social and academic way of life at university. However, linguistic minorities' needs are often overlooked; this tendency causes inadequate facility and conditions of linguistic minorities' academic and social integration and lack of understanding their needs in general. Other studies also reveal that language minorities are underresearched and there is a need to understand what is happening in their lives in post-secondary level (Deil-Amen & Turley, 2007; Louie, 2007; as cited in Oropeza, Varghese and Kanno 2010).

The same as in many countries, in Kazakhstan access and success of linguistic minorities and their social and academic integration happen through the dominant/majority languages in higher education institutions (HEIs) — in this case Russian or Kazakh. However, international studies on minority groups in secondary education focused on minorities (migrants as minorities, marginalized minorities and regional minorities) show

that those minority students are taught in the majority languages of their countries in secondary level (Carter, Locks, Winkle-Wagner, 2013, Deil-Amen, 2011, Mannan, 2007, Rienties, Beausaert, Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet and Kommers, 2012, Swail, Cabrera, Lee and Williams, 2005). That means, they start getting education from their early years mainly in L2.

The case with Uzbek linguistic minorities in Kazakhstan, whom I am intending to study, differs quite from mentioned above minorities' cases. Uzbeks in Kazakhstan are one of the largest ethnicities in terms of the population and they are considered to be "indigenous minorities" here. They constitute 3% of the Kazakhstani population, and they are one of the ethnic groups who are taught in their native language in primary and secondary levels, learning majority languages as a subject at schools. There are 58 Uzbek medium schools in Kazakhstan at the moment (Bahry, Niyozov, Shamatov, Ahn & Smagulova, 2017). The graduates of these Uzbek medium schools have to continue their post-secondary education in the majority language medium HEIs, because there are no Uzbek medium programs in higher education in Kazakhstan. According to the news portal radiotochka.kz, the approximate number of Uzbek speaking minority students in Kazakhstani HEIs is almost 10,000 people in the 2014-2015 school year ("Iz pochti polumilliona," 2015). As a result, students who used to learn the content in Uzbek at secondary level, switch to Kazakh or Russian, which are the medium of instruction in post-secondary level. Obviously, such shift brings some particular experiences and consequences to minority students' lives. Therefore, this feature of Uzbek minorities' education gives us completely different context and focus for the research than abovementioned minorities who were studied so far.

Therefore, in this study I aim to investigate Uzbek speaking minority students' integration experiences into new linguistic, social and academic environment. I seek to answer the questions:

1. What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?
2. Is there any difference in integration experiences for Russian and Kazakh medium groups; and what is the role of a language of instruction choice in this process?

The findings of the study will contribute and add to existing literature in this field of research. University teachers teaching linguistic minorities in their classrooms may also see minorities' position from another angle. Besides, minority students themselves and younger language minorities entering universities may find the information about potential challenges they may face and the ways they may cope with them. Moreover, experiences of elder students' may be source of more successful integration and success in the future for minority newcomers to universities.

### **Introduction to the thesis content**

The study consists of six chapters including the introduction chapter, which introduces the study's problem statement, purpose and research questions and gives the background information about the study. The following chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the study, which will serve as a basis of the exploration and discussion of the study findings and reviews existing literature on language minorities' integration experiences in higher education. The third chapter gives the rationale of using qualitative phenomenological research, sample of the study and reports data collection procedures and ethical considerations. The next chapter of the study reports the findings drawn from analysis of collected data. The fifth, discussion chapter synthesizes and analyzes the findings of the study based on the theoretical framework and review of empirical studies

done on minorities' experiences. The last chapter, conclusion, summarizes the findings and recommendations based on the study findings, states limitations of the study and gives recommendations for further research.

Key terminology:

*Academic integration* – According to Baker and Siryk (1999) it “refers to the degree in a student’s success in coping with various educational demands...” (as cited in Rienties et. al., 2012, p.4). Tinto in his framework states that (1993) academic integration happens once a student is adjusted to college’s intellectual life (as cited in Mechur, Hughes and O’Gara, 2008).

*Social integration* – Baker and Siryk (1999) referred it to “how well students deal with the interpersonal-societal demands of a study, such as making friends, being part of social activities or being able to work in groups” (ac cited in Rienties, Beusaert, Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet and Kommers, 2012, p 4). Tinto’s framework (1993) puts it similarly by saying that it occurs once a student creates social relationships besides academic connections (as cited in Karp, Hughes and O’Gara, 2008).

*Preparation* – Academic preparation and preparedness is the readiness of the students to a new intellectual environment (Hoachlander, Sikora, and Horn, 2003)

*Persistence* – is a desire and ability to continue going towards an educational goal; a degree completion (Horn, Kojaku and Carrol, 2001).

*Social support* –is the “functional content of social relationships”, which is received in a result of friendship and any organizational membership (House, 1987, p.3).

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

To begin with, the purpose of the research is to explore social and academic experiences of Uzbek language minorities in majority higher education institutions. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?
2. Is there any difference in integration experiences for Russian and Kazakh medium groups; and what is the role of a language of instruction choice in this process?

This chapter depicts Tinto's student integration model (1975) as a theoretical framework of the study, so the first part of the chapter is organized around Tinto's theory, its history, criticism towards the theory and theory content improved in last four decades. The second part of the chapter reviews and discusses existing empirical literature on minority students' social and academic integration experiences in higher education. The last section discusses Tinto's framework application to the current study sample and context.

### **Vincent Tinto's Student Integration Model**

A theoretical interest in students' integration into academic and social systems, persistence, and dropout causes in tertiary education had increased in the beginning of the 1970s of the past century. One of the proposed theories on students' integration and persistence in a new education environment was Tinto's student integration model from 1975. Up to now, this model (1975) continues to be the most prominent and dominant model of exploring and explaining integration and persistence phenomenon in the field of higher education (McCubbin, 2003).

### **Historical Overview of the Model**

Tinto's intention to investigate and formulate his model started from studying dropout behavior in higher education. He defines dropout as the act of leaving an institution for some reasons (Tinto, 1975). As he explored the tendencies of that time, he came to conclusion that most studies on dropout failed to differentiate causes of dropouts, either forced or voluntary withdrawal, either temporary or permanent. As he put it, such failures led to inadequate conclusions on characters of dropout behaviors and misleading conceptualization of this phenomenon (Tinto, 1975). So, he intended to explore characters and causes of drop-out behavior of students as a result of life consequences in academic and social systems of education institutions, including all social factors and variables which influence this process. Therefore, based on Spady's (1970, 1971) suggestion, which was to apply Durkheim's suicide theory to dropout phenomenon, Tinto started his analysis (Mannan, 2007). "According to Durkheim (1961), suicide is more likely to occur when individuals are insufficiently integrated into the fabric of society" (as cited in Tinto, 1975.) Earlier, Spady (1970) stated that if higher education institution is seen as a small society with its own system and structures, so the manner a student drop out might be parallel to the manner a person commits suicide in a wide society (as cited in Mannan, 2007). So, Tinto (1975) also parallels the causes of suicide and dropout. Therefore, the causes such as unsuccessful social interactions, a lack of integration, and insufficient socio-environmental adaptation to conditions of a society might be analogue of dropout causes.

Despite of match between suicide and dropout behaviors, Tinto pinpoints the difference between environments in which these actions happen. If suicidal behavior is influenced and takes place in only social environment, dropout behavior is influenced by social and academic environment into which newcomers have to integrate. Further, Tinto

distinguishes between social and academic domains of institutions, then adds to and uses social and academic integration phenomenon while formulating his model.

Along with the core concept of Durkheim's theory, Tinto identified factors and variables, which may influence and explain the whole process of students' integration and dropouts. So, additional factors and variables such as students' individual attributes, interactions between university stakeholders and integration process to both academic and social systems, which can explain persistence (opposed to dropout) and dropout behaviors, personal expectations and motivations to succeed in academic life and future career were considered and analyzed altogether to build foundations of his model (Tinto, 1975).

Pascarella and Terenzini (1980), who also were interested in dropout phenomenon and checked the validation of Tinto's model later on by reviewing studies conducted at that time, pinpointed that in order to understand dynamics of dropout, different aspects, factors and variables, which take place in the whole process starting from transition to institution ending with either persistence or dropout have to be considered and analyzed.

As a result of early investigations for the theory formulation, Tinto (1993, as cited in Lyons, 2007) has expanded the central phenomenon of his model from only dropout behavior to academic and social integration, goal and institutional commitments, persistence as opposed to dropout. The next paragraph explains the revised version of the model.

### **Student Integration Model**

First of all, in order to understand the model, one has to bear in mind that the model explains "the longitudinal process" (Tinto, as cited in Lyons, 2007) which covers the time from which a student transfers to university to time when a student drop outs or persists and all experiences during this process are included to the model. Therefore, Tinto

intended to construct a theory, which delineates the interaction between a student and a new institution or academic and social systems.

Tinto's Student Integration Model includes "six dimensions such as pre-entry attributes, goals or commitments, institutional experiences, integration (social and academic), goals or commitments and outcome" in order to explain that longitudinal process. (as cited in Lyons, 2007, p.15) The first construct in his theoretical model is pre-entry attributes, which is explained by individual differences of students coming to the higher education. Those individual differences include the family or social background of students (race, ethnicity), the community they came from, individual expectations and career goals, parental education, social and academic skills and abilities, academic preparedness for higher education to achieve academic success (Tinto, 1975, 1993, as cited in Lyons, 2007).

The second dimension in the model is goals and/or commitments. Here, Tinto refers to the level of students' expectations and to what degree these expectations are kept over time (Tinto, 1975, 1993, as cited in Lyons, 2007). He divides this dimension into goal commitments and institutional commitments. In goal commitments, if a student has long-term goals which will be reached as a result of successful academic achievement, this student is more likely to try to integrate to the environment and persist. While in institutional commitments, if a student entered to the prestigious or high-cost university, or owns scholarship, he or she is more likely to keep up with studies and complete the degree.

Third dimension is institutional experiences of students. Here, Tinto argues that experiences in an institution, particularly, interactions between peers, faculty, an institution administration, non-academic activities, and the extent to which student is succeeding in academic life are all interrelated and lead to either successful integration and persistence or dropout. "Interactive experiences that further one's social and academic integration are

seen to enhance the likelihood that the individual will persist within the institution until degree completion” (Tinto, 1993, p. 116, as cited in Lyons, 2007). So, it leads us to the explanation of an integration dimension. It is an indicator to what extent a student academically and socially integrates to the environment of an institution. As Tinto explains, students’ social integration is mostly important in their first year, so they feel themselves belonged to the society and received support. Moreover, he pinpoints the importance of interaction between peers, staff, faculty and family in order for being integrated successfully both academically and socially. Moreover, he mentions that social relationships are the source of support and builds a social network, which is seen to be pivotal for integration and persistence. In his earliest work on student integration model (1975), he states that a student do not necessarily need to integrate into both (academic and social) environments of an institution in order to persist. However, later he reconsidered his point and stated that if a student is fully engaged in social life of the university without managing academic responsibilities, or conversely living only with academic life, a student may either drop out voluntarily or face dismissal. Moreover, it was mentioned that academic integration has less influence on persistence than social; however, having revised his theory in 1993 he concluded that academic integration has the same influence as social integration does (Tinto, as cited in Lyons, 2007).

Then, Tinto switches to the connection between the level of a student’s integration and goal and/or commitments. As integration plays a key role in a student’s success, Tinto says that the higher the integration level of a student, both academic and social, the higher the possibility of goals commitment completion and institution commitment also. The reason for that is successful integration into university society enhances a student’s motivation and desire to finish the program.

The last dimension is an outcome, which is a result of all above-mentioned experiences and process. Outcome is a student's decision to persist and stay at the program, or drop out voluntarily or being forced to leave (Tinto, ac cited in Lyons, 2007). According to Tinto's explanation when integration level is low, it influences students' goals and institutional commitments, which are also consequently, will be low; in turn it will cause drop-out behavior. Tinto admits that there might be external factors directly or indirectly influencing students' integration and persistence, which are not mentioned in his paper.

The dimensions that are the basis of the model and their interrelation are shown in Figure 1.

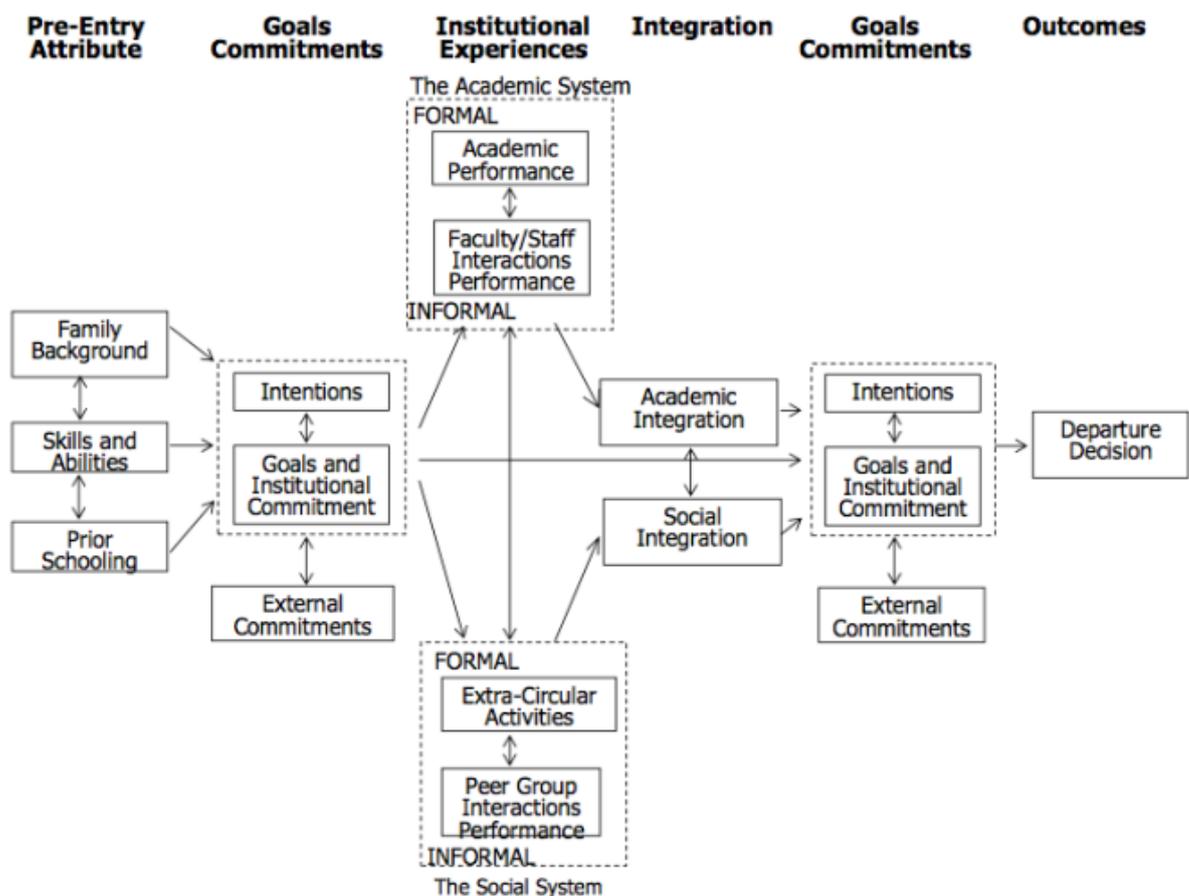


Figure 1 Tinto's (1993) Student Integration Model-his revised version from 1975. (as cited in McCubbin, 2003)

### **Criticisms towards the Student Integration Model**

Although Tinto's student integration model has been the prominent model during last four decades to explain students' integration and persistence in higher education, there have been some criticisms of his theory.

One of the criticisms made of the model was its applicability only to traditional students. Lyons (2007) says that Tinto based his theory on solely on White students and sample of minority students; non-traditional students (students-parents who are mature, students who are directly entered university after high school completion, students with special needs) was overlooked. As an example, Torres and Solberg (2001) intended to use Tinto's theory to understand a case of Latino students in the US universities. However, the results showed that social integration did not necessarily influence Latino students' persistence (as cited in Lyons, 2007). However, McCubbin (2003) in his analysis of the development of Tinto's model says that Tinto did not mean and claim that the theory was applicable to all type of students in higher education and mentioned that different contextual factors may influence the process of integration.

Another criticism of the theory was made by Brunsden, Davies, Shevlin and Bracken (2000). Their study on assessing student integration model on university students failed to explain their data and the criteria did not support Tinto's theory. So, they decided that it is inadequate in explaining students' integration and persistence behavior. However, they admitted that they might have had some discrepancies in their study and by the end of their study, assessing Tinto's model became not primary goal of the study. Moreover, they criticized the fact that Tinto's model has its roots from Durkheim's suicide theory. So, they questioned how dropout and suicide behaviors can be perceived or defined as analogs.

After being criticized for some points, Tinto reconsidered all issues, and developed his model over time. Although it is said that his model has to be adequately tested and the

model is quite old, it is still timely relevant (McCubbin, 2003). There are a number of studies which has applied the student integration model for explaining students' experiences in higher education (Beil, Reisen, Zea, Kaplan, 2000, Carter, Locks, Winkle-Wagner, 2013, Deil-Amen, 2011, Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2011, Karp, Hughes, O'Gara, 2008, Krause, 2001, Lyons, 2007, Mannan, 2007, McCubbin, 2003, Morris, 2002, Pascarella & Terenzini, 1979, 1980, Rienties, Beusaert, Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet, & Kommers, 2012, Swail, Cabrera, Lee & Williams, 2005, Tao, Dong, Pratt, Hunsberger & Pancer, 2000). Among these studies, below I discuss those, which particularly used Tinto's framework in language minorities' context.

Deil-Amen (2011) studied integration process of students with different ethnic and language background applying Tinto's (1975) framework. Along with the framework, she considered students' family and financial background, parental education. The findings showed that students integrated to academic environment more willingly, however, social integration was relatively less important for them. It is explained by students' high goal commitments to achieve academic success (Tinto, 1975), therefore, students actively integrated into an academic life, which was a key factor of persistence in their case. However, peers support in the classroom and family support, particularly financial support were significant (Tinto, 1975). Deil-Amen (2011) also says that "integrating the strength of such frameworks (Tinto's 1975) with current research on the experiences of marginalized and minority students in different types of postsecondary institutions can be of great value." p.32.

The researchers Swail, Cabrera, Lee, and Williams (2005) studied language minorities in the USA using documents from two databases of the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1998. The study analyzed four follow-up surveys carried out through regression analysis on Latino minority students' secondary and postsecondary

education involving 1988 students who attended some form of postsecondary education institutions in 1992-2000. The research found that there are certain factors, such as parental support, social status, pre-education planning, language level and use, and academic and social support from institutions, which significantly affect successful completion of postsecondary degree among Latino minorities in the U.S. It also found that Latino students prefer and tend to take 2-year academic programs rather than 4-year programs due to challenges with academic integration and persistence. In consistence with Tinto's framework (1975), study showed the importance of academic preparedness of students for successful academic integration, and consequently persistence

The research conducted in the Netherlands on overseas students as linguistic minorities by Rienties, Beusaert, Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet and Kommers (2012) found that students struggled with stress and "alienation". The researchers examined the impact of those factors on academic and social integration by measuring academic with SACQ - the Students' Adaptation to College Questionnaire and social integration with another questionnaire. Surprisingly, the results showed that the success in integration varied due to their geographical background, since students from western background outperformed even domestic students, because of the Dutch, western and mixed western students' academic integration was highly important in order to perform better.

As can be seen above, in some cases, overseas students whose language is other than a host-university majority language are identified in linguistic minorities list. Shapiro's (2012) studied recent immigrants' and oversea students' institutional integration, high anxiety level, dropout cases and academic performance of students. The study explored the effects of the institutional alienation in Northern Green University in the U.S. Linguistic difference is seen as a deficit than remarkable asset in this society. There are also two assigned identity ideologies as being resident for immigrants and oversea students

and “being citizen” for local students in university society. As a result, these ideologies affect university policies negatively, which aggravates student remediation; and language minorities alienation feelings are increasing. Connecting to Tinto’s framework (1975), Shapiro (2012) says that language minorities’ cultural, educational, linguistic background influence their institutional integration, and they go through different challenges than traditional students and therefore, their level of persistence is relatively low.

### **Application of the Model to this Study**

This study sees the dimension of integration both academic and social and persistence as the primary importance to its basis. Therefore, those dimensions will be the central focus of this study. Bearing in mind that the participants of this study are from minority group, their language background is different among the stakeholders at universities, external factors, which may arise during the data collection, and analysis will be taken an account. External factors, in the current Uzbek language minorities’ case, are their academic preparation, a language of instruction choice and cultural features.

Although Tinto’s theory may be applied to this sample, there is a theme so called ‘a language of instruction choice’, which is a contextual feature, belonged to this very sample, which cannot be covered by this theory. Therefore, the concept of a language of instruction choice is discussed further.

### **The Concept of a Language of Instruction Choice**

The studies on a language choice in education, particularly, a choice of the language of instruction, are relatively less common than studies of language choice in bilinguals and multilinguals speech and code-switching (Awal, Jaafar, Mis & Lateh, 2014, Paradis and Nicoladis, 2007, Pujolar and González, 2013). As a result of observations while summarizing and synthesizing the available literature on a language of instruction choice, the rationales of choosing a language was seen as a central focus of the studies.

Qorro (2004, as cited in Desai, Qorro & Brock-Utne, 2010) points out that people's choice of language education usually is based on the power and popularity of the language in modern social life. For instance, in Tanzanian education, the choice of language of instruction lies between Kiswahili that is a local language and English and the tendency to choose the English language for their children's education is becoming popular among parents, although neither they, nor children speak English. The study done by Babaci-Wilhite, (2010) showed that the choice of English is associated with its prestige as a *lingua franca* and future success of their children, whereas the choice Kiswahili is explained by understanding the language and content in this language and affordability for Tanzanian parents than education in English. However, in ex-France colonized African countries, parents are not much interested in a choice of language and the government usually makes a choice. The major language of instruction is French there; however, the government launched the pilot projects on teaching the content in several local languages. So, the rationales for choosing and proposing local languages as a language of instruction were that it is believed that children learn the second language – French easier when they start education in their native one, in order to cope with failing system of education, and finally to achieve unity. (Albaugh, 2007). However, Albaugh (2007) believes that the tendency of parents still preferring French medium instruction schools might be explained the same as Tanzanian parents' case – they want their children to succeed economically and socially.

In another case of parents' choice a language of instruction in Estonia, Russian parents there, for example, have quite different rationales and explanations of choosing languages, also they differ from parent to parent. As Estonia is a post-Soviet country, and Russian population is widely spread in Estonia, its education offers also the Russian medium instruction (Kemppainen , Ferrin , Ward & Hite, 2010). Kemppainen , Ferrin, Ward and Hite (2010) state that parents' rationale to choose Russian medium instruction

includes culture ties, ability to understand and use the language, to maintain the native language, while the factor influencing Russian parents choosing the Estonian medium of instruction is that it is a major language of the society.

Generally speaking, the rationales of choosing a language of instruction seem to differ from context to context. However, the key factor influencing a language of instruction choice in communities discussed above seems to be stakeholders' ability to understand and use the language. The prestige of the language seems to be relatively common factor of choosing a language. In the current research, these factors might be beneficial to understand the context of my study.

### **A Review of the Empirical Literature of Minorities' Experiences in HE**

International empirical studies on minority groups in higher education are mostly focused on immigrants as minorities, regional minorities and marginalized minorities such as African-Americans and Latinos. Moreover, studies show that research conducted in this field are mainly at primary and secondary education levels, and reveal that those minority students are underserved (Deil-Amen & Turley, 2007; Louie, 2007; as cited in Oropeza, Varghese and Kanno, 2010). This part of the literature review documents the review of previous empirical studies on linguistic minorities' experiences in higher education institutions. Apart from Tinto's (1975) framework, there are studies, which used different conceptual frameworks. Some of them are discussed below.

Majority of studies are conducted from the USA education context, where Latinos, African-Americans, immigrants and regional minorities' integration process has been observed in postsecondary education level. One of the researchers, Callahan (2009), studied social and linguistic integration of Latino minorities, who are native-borns and immigrants in the U.S, to understand the factors affecting postsecondary education of Latino boys and girls. In particular, the study explored boys' language use and girls' social

integration through analyzing Texas HE Opportunity Project (THEOP), which was based on two-longitudinal surveys. THEOP data revealed that there is a high dropout rate and low academic performance among Latino males in higher education; however, Latino girls' persistence and achievement level is higher, although social integration is a challenge for them. The study's findings showed that a role of language use is crucial to access and success for Latino minorities in higher education. Appreciating and maintaining a home language may serve as a tool for improving males' academic performance and participation. As for the girls' case, successful social integration is boosted through extracurricular or religious involvement, which are important key factors, which ensure their participation and success in higher education.

One more area, which is of interest of researchers, is transition that is the process of transition from secondary to higher education. The researchers document that linguistic minorities' transition from secondary to higher education is a complex process (Wilcox, Winn and Fyvie-Gauld, 2005; Shamim, Abdelhalim and Hamid, 2016). Oropeza, Varghese and Kanno (2010) explore four freshmen undergraduate minority women transitions to university and experiences in HEI carried out through interview-based qualitative approach. They analyzed the data looking at linguistic minorities' use and resistance to 'institutional labels' using community cultural wealth and race theory. 'The institutional labels' may refer to how one can be identified in educational setting, one of them is a label of a "limited English proficient" which might mean one 'is poorer, older and more likely to be from minority group'. This kind of stigmatization may affect minority students' social adjustment and performance in education institutions. However, there is another case when discriminated linguistic minorities were not ashamed to speak up their needs and shared their voice on their academic life. This finding came from the study conducted by Holmes, Fanning, Morales, Espinoza and Herrera, (2012) which explored the transition experiences

of cultural and linguistic minority students, particularly first-generation Latino immigrants in Midwestern University. Holmes, Fanning, Morales, Espinoza and Herrera, (2012) stated that an ability to speak up personal concerns and needs facilitated the process of integration into academic life.

Bunch and Endris (2012) investigated the reasons why linguistic minorities and immigrants usually end their education background after attending community colleges and why a number of applications and a level of persistence is low. They analyzed state policy documents, information available on 25 California community colleges' websites and interviewed over 50 faculty members, counselors, matriculation staff, and administrators at 10 colleges; and visited 5 of these colleges. The findings revealed many Californian colleges provide linguistic minorities with little or no information on how assessment and placement was applied to enter universities. In addition, linguistic minorities face challenges in developing English language proficiency; students were not even informed about the minimum score of English proficiency that they need to have in order to be accepted to HEI. The authors suggest other researchers and practitioners to help in providing information to those colleges.

Preece (2015) and Grant and Wong (2003) examined academic language issues of students of color which cause low literacy and low rate of persistence and academic success among language minorities, be they native-born minorities or immigrants. The low rate of persistence and academic performance are explained by challenges and failure in academic integration. Inability to keep up with the content knowledge and meeting deadlines of assignments caused low grades and low desire to stay in the programs.

### **Connections to Uzbeks Context in Kazakhstan**

Having analyzed the background of the population studied by other researchers previously, I came to the conclusion that the main focus was given to African-American,

Hispanic and Asian students in North America, European minority students with African background, regional minorities, and basically, migrants as minorities in both school and university levels. However, there has been little research done on linguistic minorities' education, both secondary and postsecondary education in Kazakhstan.

Furthermore, Orlov, Ting and Tyler (2009) states that tolerance by the majority monolinguals in the U.S education institutions often depend on minorities linguistic assimilation to the majority language environment; however, their tolerance is not always necessarily at the level of acceptance. As a matter of fact, most above-mentioned minorities are considered to be "marginalized" in their society. The case is different in the context of Kazakhstan. Firstly, Uzbeks in Kazakhstan are considered as indigenous people, Kazakhstan is their homeland. Further, a policy is in place that states, "if minority community is wide enough to open an educational setting in a particular region, this community has a right to be taught in its native language, through the textbooks which are published in their native language" may prove it (Law on languages, 1997; chapter 3, section 16).

## **Conclusion**

Overall, this chapter analyzed Tinto's framework as a basis of this study and discussion of uncovered contextually different concept 'a language of instruction choice' and reviewed previous empirical studies on linguistic minority students' experiences in higher education institutions. As a basis of this, Tinto's Student Integration Model will be used, particularly focusing on academic and social integration and persistence. The concept of a language of instruction choice uncovered by the model will be analyzed tied to the framework as Tinto (1975) mentioned that external factors might arise according to the individual features of the cases.

### **Chapter 3. Methodology**

In the previous chapter, I reviewed the existing literature on language minorities' experiences. In this chapter, I will explore the methodological foundations of this inquiry. The qualitative research design method was used to investigate Uzbek speaking minority students' integration experiences into new linguistic, social and academic environment and answer the following questions:

- 1 What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?
- 2 Is there any difference in integration experiences for Russian and Kazakh medium groups; and what is the role of a language of instruction choice in this process?

In the discussion below, I will describe and justify the choices I have made in developing a qualitative, interview-based study that helped me answer the research questions described above.

This chapter includes six sections. In the first section, the choice of the research design is justified. The following section explains the sampling strategy and describes the research participants. The third part depicts the methods and the instruments used in the research. The following two parts describe the data analysis process and ethical considerations of the inquiry. The last section discusses my positionality in the study.

#### **Research Design**

In this chapter, I describe and justify the choice of research design employed in this study. In order to explore the essence of linguistic minorities' experiences of social and academic integration, a qualitative interview-based research design was employed. Qualitative research “gives voices to participants, and probes issues that lie beneath the surface of presenting behaviors and actions” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p. 219).

Qualitative research is a strategy for systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of phenomena that are difficult to measure quantitatively. The rationale for choosing a qualitative approach in the study is to understand not only surface issues of language minorities' lives in HEI, but to explore their university life experiences for deep understanding of their perspective. To reach this aim, a qualitative approach suits best rather than quantitative approach. As Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholis and Ormston (2014) explain it, a qualitative approach aims at exploring participants' social world in-depth through studying their experiences, stories and perspectives. "The tradition" to explore one's issues, concerns through their experiences and stories is called a phenomenological approach, which is a variant of qualitative study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003). Therefore, this study uses the qualitative phenomenological research design (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003) to explore the essence of linguistic minorities' social and academic integration by studying the experiences of those minorities who have experienced this phenomenon.

### **Sample**

This section depicts the sample strategies in my study. This study conducted on language minority students' experiences had no specific research site for two reasons. The first is that the research site was not essential or required part in my study, which would not influence on the quality of the data or its interpretation. The second, the study participants are university students who study in different regions of Kazakhstan.

The purposive sampling strategy was used to select the study participants, because of specific type of population in my study. The participants were selected under several categories. The first, being ethnic Uzbek, because this population is the focus of my study. The second, being a graduate of Uzbek medium schools. The third, currently being a from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year student of Kazakh or Russian medium programs at universities. The rationale

of choosing a senior student is to access “information rich cases for study in depth” (Patton, 1990, p. 169). As I intended to study those students’ experiences, I needed students who are experienced and can share with them, both positive and negative; and senior students fit best in this case because they have the most experience. By ‘senior student’ in this research, I mean students who are in their upper-university years and experienced enough to be involved in this study. Therefore, in this research senior students refer to students from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year students in Kazakhstani universities. The rationale of choosing students from both Kazakh and Russian programs is to look at the students’ perspectives from different angles and to compare whether experiences different or similar and if there are any distinctive features in these language cases.

To recruit participants, the researcher contacted mutual acquaintances who are studying at universities at the moment, so they may help to look for possible participants with above-mentioned characteristics. Once, a list of possible participants was developed, the researcher contacted with them directly via available resources, e.g., phone, e-mails, addresses and social networks. As the data collection period and university students’ final exam period were overlapping, most of the students were not willing to devote their time for extra activities. Despite this issue, 8 students agreed to participate in the study. Some of them were interested in participating in such projects, because it was new experience; however, one cancelled and refused to participate just before the interview. All 7 students were from the South Kazakhstan region studying in Almaty and Astana. Table 1 includes the participants’ background information.

Table 1

*Participants' background information*

Code of the participant	Language of instruction	Major	Course	Gender
RU1	Russian	Psychology	4 <sup>th</sup>	Male
KZ2	Kazakh	Mathematics	4 <sup>th</sup>	Female
KZ3	Kazakh	Engineering	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Male
RU4	Russian	Medicine	4 <sup>th</sup>	Male
RU5	Russian	Mechanical Engineering	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Male
KZ6	Kazakh	Medicine	5 <sup>th</sup>	Male
RU7	Russian	Pedagogy	4 <sup>th</sup>	Female

This section justified the sample strategy used in this study and will be followed with the description of the research methods utilized to collect data for the study.

### **Research methods**

The sections above described the research design and sampling procedures. The following section explains the research methods utilized to collect data for my study. First, the methods are presented, then, the rationale for using them is explained in details, which is followed with the description of challenges and how they were overcome during data collection.

To conduct this qualitative interview-based study, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were employed. As the purpose of this study was to explore students' experiences which include their social, academic life and intends to 'develop detailed understanding of a central phenomenon' (Creswell, 2014, p.30), interviews 'provide access to what is inside a person's head' (Tuckman, 1972, as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). As semi-structured interviews result greater depth and a

higher response rate in comparison to other methods of data collection (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011), this type of interview was applied to collect the data. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions provide flexibility and convenience, as they allow a researcher not to follow strict order of asking questions from the interview protocol and wording may vary from participant to participant. In addition, open-ended questions leave participants a room to answer more explicitly, and the researcher may follow new emerging themes during the interview, which result richer data. As Creswell (2014, p.240) puts it “participants can best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings”.

Moreover, it is important to highlight that my population sample is language minority people and according to Barron (1999, as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011), not all methods can be applied to study people from any minority background. Therefore, interviewing, particularly, using as much as informal, open-ended interviews is the mostly appropriate and appreciated tool to gather data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

Based on the nature of the topic and review of the literature in this topic, I constructed several categories of the interview questions. They included such categories as educational background, linguistic background and repertoire, students' social integration and involvement, academic integration, challenges and the ways of coping with them. As presented in Appendix A, I developed interview protocol, which include 13 main questions. Moreover, the native language issues emerged during the interviews. To ensure appropriateness of the interview questions, a pilot interview was conducted with a NU graduate student, who has the same background with my participants, after she kindly agreed to help. After getting feedback from the participant, some questions were revised

and the translation of the questions into Uzbek and Russian were revised, as was the original interview protocol was developed in English.

Seven students, three of them from Kazakh and 4 from Russian medium programs, were interviewed in informal settings, particularly, 3 of them were conducted in the researcher's home, 2 in the coffee room chosen by the participants, and 2 in the atrium of the researcher's university. For the reason that the data collection period and the participants' final exam time did overlap, the participants could not devote as much time as it was planned beforehand. Interviews last from 25-40 mins and each of them were recorded to the researcher's mobile phone. During the interviews, the follow-up questions were used as there were newly emerged themes. At the beginning of the interviews, the participants were quite relaxed and open, however, when they were asked questions about their integration period and some other experiences, some of them became reserved. Therefore, I decided to use my own experiences and stories as a tool for solving this challenge. Being from the same community as my participants are, I have gone through the same path they are experiencing now. In order to help them to feel more comfortable and relaxed to speak on above-mentioned themes and tell their stories without feeling of being judged or embarrassed, I tried to 'break the ice' and told them some of my stories. My participants started to tell their stories and even share some funny or sad moments when they were happy, uncomfortable or disappointed. Another challenge were moments of 'off topics'. I had this problem with 2 participants. I needed to control flow of their interview and smoothly come back to our themes when they were talking about things which were not relevant to answer my research questions or the interview questions particularly.

### **Data Analysis Approach**

In the section above, I described the methods employed to collect the data. This section explains how the data gathered during the interviews were analyzed. The seven 25

to 40 minutes interviews were recorded to my smartphone, and transferred to mp3. Then they were transferred to the PC.

Downloaded program 'Listen and Write' eased the process of the transcribing. Each interview was uploaded to this platform and transcribed manually. Once transcribed, each interview was looked through to get a sense of overall picture of the data, then, I started open coding (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003), by highlighting the themes existing in my research questions, and the themes that emerged during the interviews and were not anticipated before the interviews. First, the themes were interpreted and then coded; after these smaller themes were interpreted into larger categories, and finally they were given descriptors. Afterwards, all interviews and codes were reread and double-checked to ensure nothing is missed. The existing categories include the followings:, persistence, integration into new community, integration into academic life, language issues. In addition, those newly emerged categories are access to the HEI, native language issues and a language choice. Once I finished this process, the final categories were further analyzed in order to develop the statements of findings. These categories formed the basis of the findings of the study and is outlined in the findings chapter.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This section will describe the steps taken for ethical considerations. Once the proposal of the research was developed, using that information, the NUGSE Ethics form was prepared. This form included the descriptions of the research design, questions, purpose, participants, data collection procedures, anonymity and confidentiality procedures, risks and benefits. NUGSE Research Committee approved this research on November 2, 2016. As an essential part of the ethics review, consent form was developed (Appendix B), which includes a short description of the study, risks and benefits from the study, participants' rights and relevant contacts.

Confidentiality and anonymity is important in this study. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, participants were promised to remove any personal information that could identify them, to change participants' names while reporting. Their right of withdrawal at any time also was included both, to consent form and ethics form. In addition, they were promised to store the data from the interviews on a password-protected computer, with only the researcher's access to the data, and once analysis is finished all the files would be removed from the computer. Audiotaped interviews were removed from the tape recorder right after the transcribing of the data.

In terms of risks, one possible risk supposed to occur during the interviews - sensitiveness of some questions, which may emotionally affect the respondents. In order to minimize the risk, context-appropriate language was used, questions were set in a way which will not tread on the participants' feelings. The participants were communicated with honestly, treated fairly and the whole information collected during the interview is represented as accurate as possible, interviews are used for promised intentions only.

### **Researcher's Positionality in the Study**

I am a masters student in English medium program, who is from Uzbek speaking community in South Kazakhstan, and whose native language is a minority language. My education background includes both majority language program in bachelors' degree and a native language program during nursery, primary and secondary education. As for the role in the study, I am an insider among the study participants, because both, my and participants' cultural, educational and regional background is the same. As for the participants, being interviewed by the researcher-insider, it enhanced atmosphere of the interviews, raised their trust towards me and increased willingness to tell personal stories.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter explores the methodology of this interview-based qualitative study on the experiences of language minorities in Kazakhstani higher education institutions. All procedures of the data collection, sampling, research methods, data analysis, and finally ethical considerations in the study were systematically described. The following chapter discusses the findings gathered from the data analysis.

## Chapter 4. Findings

This chapter depicts the analysis and presentation of the findings from the data gained during this study, which aimed to investigate Uzbek speaking minority students' integration experiences into a new linguistic, social and academic environment. The questions -

1. What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?
2. Is there any difference in integration experiences for Russian and Kazakh medium groups; and what is the role of a language of instruction choice in this process? -

generated data analyzed in this chapter. It presents the data collected through interviewing seven undergraduate students from different programs at Kazakhstani higher education institutions.

The chapter is organized around the following themes: (a) language of instruction choice; (b) preparation; (c) integration; and (d) persistence. The chapter is concluded with a summary of the main findings of language minority students' experiences at universities.

### **A Language of instruction choice**

In Kazakhstan, applicants in secondary schools have right to choose in what language to take university entrance exams, which are Unified National Testing (UNT) or equivalent, Complex Testing of Applicants (CTA). Applicants may choose either Kazakh or Russian for the language of the test. Moreover, once they enter to universities, they are to be allocated to either Kazakh or Russian medium programs according to their previous choice, a language of test.

In case of applicants, who are graduating from Uzbek medium schools, both options are narrow, because they learn Kazakh as L2, Russian as L3, and never been taught the content in both languages. Thus, in order to find out Uzbek medium students rationale

and practice of language of instruction choice, the participants were asked to relate their experiences and thoughts about choosing either Kazakh or Russian.

Generally, all participants reported that at the time of graduation they had from pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate level of Kazakh, and from no to pre-intermediate level of Russian. Thus, majority of students were more comfortable to use Kazakh.

Three participants out of seven chose Kazakh and consequently entered to Kazakh medium programs. These students, Izzat, Nadira, Agzam, indicated that they chose the Kazakh language for taking test and as a future medium of instruction, because they could understand and speak Kazakh well. For these students, the importance of being able to understand and reflect the questions from test books was the main criteria of choosing Kazakh. Agzam confirmed it by saying that he “could understand and cope with test questions in Kazakh”. Additionally, for Nadira it was not the only reason; she was also concerned about future study at university and status of Kazakh. She pointed it out by saying “Kazakh was a convenient option. I was quite sure that I could function in this language at university and of course it is a state language”. Thus, the participant did not only plan for short time, she also foresaw future use of Kazakh at university level and relied on her ability to use and work in this language. Also, the status of Kazakh influenced her choice. Thus, for her Kazakh as a state language has its prestige and power.

Meanwhile, Izzat explained his choice by reporting:

Uhhm, I had nothing to choose. I did not know Russian at all, except ‘privet, kak dela, poka’. But, my Kazakh was better, relatively better /laughs/. Under average or average level. I chose Kazakh... Hopefully, Kazakh and Uzbek are quite similar.

Thus, his rationale was natural, he chose the one in which he was and he could do better. Moreover, he relied on the similarity of his native language and Kazakh. Here, Uzbek can be seen as a tool, which could help to tackle with a test and further.

Now, let us turn to Russian medium students' case. Other three students chose Russian and entered Russian medium programs. In spite of their relatively low proficiency in Russian, Lola and Dias decided to choose it. They both reported that it is believed that relatively fewer applicants choose Russian, and consequently a chance to get a scholarship in Russian medium programs is higher. This tendency influenced their choice and they took the risk even though Dias has a pre-intermediate level of Russian and Lola had an intermediate level.

However, it was not the only reason of choosing Russian. Both participants positioned the Russian language as the most prestigious language in Kazakhstan. As Lola put it: "Russian is a powerful language. At that time, I noticed that those who speak Russian well are seen as successful and respectable..." Thus, she perceived Russian as a powerful language and its speakers as considerable; her desire to become and to be seen successful in the future was strong, which led her to this path. The prestige of Russian has also influenced another participant's, Shokhrukh's choice, but a bit later. Shokhrukh attempted to take a test in Kazakh 2 years at a run, but he could not succeed, he could not get a state scholarship. The third time, his father decided to "buy a scholarship for him" (in another words, to pay exam takers for good overall scores in test). For this time, he chose Russian as a language of test, although he had very poor Russian. He said:

I was sure that choosing Russian would not be a problem in this case, because I did not have to read test questions. Someone would bring the test key to me and I just needed to fill the form.

As I see it, first, the participant was brave to choose Russian with his little knowledge of it only because he did not have to take the test himself. Additionally, the following quote explains that his main rationale of choice was the prestige and status of Russian in society, particularly, in prosperous cities:

Why? Because of its status. I had been to Almaty, Astana before. All intelligent, knowledgeable and rich people... generally, majority of people speak Russian there. I also wanted to be one of them.

The participant had a desire to become a part of that society, and to be among people whom he listed above. So, this strong desire also influenced his language of instruction choice. However, he did not think about future study in Russian and its possible consequences if he gets scholarship and enters university.

**A unique example.** Islam, who is currently studying at Russian medium program, had quite different and interesting experience. He chose Kazakh when taking the test, because he could function in this language better. As a result, he received a fully funded state grant and was allocated to Kazakh medium program. Surprisingly, having studied in Kazakh medium program for only two days, he changed his mind, and asked the university administration to allocate him to Russian medium department. Very surprisingly, he was accepted, although he had an elementary level of Russian. Therefore, he changed his choice from Kazakh to Russian. He explained his decision in this way:

I liked Russian, but I couldn't speak it. I had plans to settle down in Astana in the future. I also knew Kazakh well, and I did not see the advantage of continuing to study in the Kazakh language. As I noticed that *the majority* speak Russian here, I thought it would be better to learn a new language, but seems I did not look at this decision from the different angle /laugh/, learning not only the language, but also everything... I mean the content...mechanical engineering.

Thus, new society and its features impressed the participant very quickly. The future goals of becoming a member of this society and learning the majority language of the society were the main reasons of his choice. Moreover, he decided to learn a language and the content together, at a time. But, he did not even realize how he is going to learn the content with very low Russian proficiency.

In conclusion, the role of language of instruction choice was essential to getting a state scholarship or at least taking the UNT or CTA tests successfully. According to the data above, the rationale of choosing one or another language depended on three different factors such as (1) an ability to understand and to use this language; (2) the prestige of the language and finally (3) a tool to access university easier.

### **Preparation**

Once students chose the language of the test, they started to prepare for the test itself. Although they knew the content of the test subjects (which are Mathematics, History of Kazakhstan, Russian or Kazakh, and an additional choice according to their future university major) in Uzbek, they needed some time and good preparation in order to be able to take them in Kazakh or Russian. So, I asked the participants to tell about their preparation experiences from what they can recall. According to their practices, all participants first had to buy or get resources (textbooks, test books, supplementary materials) in Kazakh or Russian, because all the materials they used until this period were in the Uzbek language. For instance, Shokhrukh said:

Almost everyone, who was going to take the test, bought 'Shyn kitap' and other mini-textbooks in Russian or Kazakh. Sometimes, the teachers used to bring the textbooks for Kazakh or Russian medium schools. Then we used them when preparing.

Thus, the students first were supplied with necessary resources for the preparation. 'Shyn kitap', the textbooks mentioned by the participant, are the series of textbooks of different subjects such as mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, languages (Kazakh, Russian, English), history of Kazakhstan and the world, geometry and so on. These series are popular and widely used by university applicants and tutors.

Other resources for test preparation were real test books from the previous year's UNT and CTA exams. According to the participants, they used to buy those real 'ex' test books from the universities where usually exams take place. As Izzat explained:

We used to buy from 300 to 500 real test books with answer keys which were from the last UNT and CTA exams. So, we used to prepare using them... by analyzing questions, checking our answers and at least learning by heard. They were the most useful and authentic materials. I do not think I could do well without those materials.

Two other participants, Dias and Agzam also mentioned about preparation using real test books from the exams taken last year. Thus, those test books were the source for analyzing, predicting and studying the questions. Moreover, the participants considered those test books as the most useful. Although test questions change from year to year, the test books helped the applicants to get prepared during the short period.

Another important point regarding language raised by all participants were teachers' role in test preparation. Although teachers teach their majors in Uzbek, they were willing to help students while preparing. Lola addressed teachers' role in this way:

Our teachers of maths, history, biology and other subjects teach in Uzbek for several years or decades. Although they do not understand Russian or Kazakh well, they still tried to help or at least to explain the questions from the test books as they

could. They also used to stay with us at school for extra-unpaid hours. Just to help us...

The quote shows that teachers could help with the content, but not the language. But, the important point is you first have to understand the language to understand the content. In the case above, we see that even though teachers did not have enough language proficiency, the same as their students, they still were supportive and willing to help.

Another participant, Dias, also pinpointed the teachers' low proficiency in Russian:

Well, there were couple of teachers who could use Russian among maths, history and biology teachers. Turned out, even though they were approachable, they were not good at academic Russian. And the only teacher whom I can go and ask for a help was my teacher of the Russian language. So, here the process: I go and show the questions from the test books, translate them into Uzbek with her. Then, I go to my maths, biology teachers for the consultation. Too much time... At the end, I ended up with going to Russian speaking Uzbek tutors of maths and biology. And that was not that cheap I have to say.

Thus, we see that two-way consultation might be time-consuming and inconvenient, and the participant who struggled with Russian himself could not get proper consultation from the teachers. So, private tutors were the only best way to increase his performance in a short period of time.

During the interviews, the participants shared about the main challenge when preparing and taking the test. Clearly, it was a lack of proficiency in Kazakh and Russian. As participants related it, Kazakh grammar and vocabulary were not a big deal for all of them. They studied Kazakh well. However, learning something completely different, for example, physics law, Duhamel's integral in mathematics or genetics in Kazakh or Russian was new and difficult. For example, as Agzam put it:

I knew Kazakh well, and Kazakh and Uzbek are quite similar. However, sometimes I could not fully understand the academic language in the test books... physics, math. Sometimes, we, 10 people, might sit trying to analyze the question and find out what *they* would want us to do.

Nadira shared a similar point:

Well, I knew Kazakh grammar, parts of speech, rules...very well. But, physics and mathematics in Kazakh was unfamiliar. I think we got used to deal with new terms in Kazakh with some effort and help.

Thus, surely, specific terms referring to mathematics or physics are not from the language for daily Kazakh. Moreover, for the students, who studied these subjects only in Uzbek, it caused some challenges to understand and analyze the questions. Although they felt confident in their knowledge of Kazakh, their proficiency of Kazakh was not enough to cope with physics and mathematics content. However, as they admitted they could handle new specific terms with teachers' help and their effort.

Meanwhile, the experiences of the students who chose Russian were not as positive as 'Kazakh' applicants'. As I mentioned above, the students' proficiency of Russian was relatively lower. As a result, it caused some challenges in comprehending questions and analyzing them. For example, Lola said:

The 'Kazakh group' (they used to name mates who took exam in Kazakh) did not have difficult preparation as we [Russian group] did. Because, you know, Uzbek and Kazakh have many similarities and you may somehow tackle the 'weird' terms or forms yourself... I used to collect the questions, which I did not understand and then, once a week, I used to go to tutor. Or... there was another way: just remember the task or question and learn by heart its answer. Uhhhm...I used to do so /laugh/

The students themselves compare and assess the difficulty of the preparation process in two groups, Kazakh and Russian. As she put it, low proficiency in Russian did not allow them to cope with questions themselves. They always needed help from teachers or tutors. In Lola's case, as an alternative, she used to tackle with 'unknown' questions by learning them by heart. As an equivalent example, Dias, addressed the same issue describing it differently:

Each time when I got the results of demo-tests...uhh, yes, we used to take demo-tests once a month in grade 11... I was shocked by my low results. Then I used to double check the answers... And each time I realized how stupid my mistakes were. You know, when you know the correct answer in Uzbek, and [you] cannot interpret them in proper Russian, it is annoying. Sometimes, I had thoughts of changing the language of test to Kazakh; it would make my life easier.

In Dias's case, we can observe how a lack of proficiency in Russian affected student's overall results. Improper translations without help from teachers cost him successful results. Moreover, it might be stressful and challenging, so it led to the thought to change the language of the test to Kazakh, which was easier to him. Therefore, once again it can be concluded that a language of instruction choice also was an important part of the transition process.

All in all, the preparation period was not easy for the participants. However, useful resources, teacher's partial help, tutors, hard work helped them. It also can be concluded that Russian medium groups struggled by having higher language barriers and lower proficiency than Kazakh medium groups.

### **Integration**

As a result, all participants took the exams; four of them in Kazakh, Agzam, Nadira, Izzat and Ikram and three of them in Russian, Dias, Lola and Shokhrukh.

Moreover, all of them became state-grant owners and were placed in either Kazakh or Russian medium programs according to their previous language of instruction choice. However, as mentioned in the language of instruction choice section, Ikram was transferred from Kazakh to Russian medium program by his own request in the beginning of the academic year.

The participants applied to state universities in two prosperous cities in Kazakhstan, Almaty and Astana. So, they left their dominantly Uzbek speaking hometown and school, and moved to dominantly Kazakh and Russian speaking cities and higher education institutions.

Further, the participants were asked to relate how they adjusted to new social, academic life after entering universities. Thus, they shared experiences about their first days at university and their adaptation period, and told their stories. Consistent with the concepts introduced in the literature review, the data revealed two sub-categories such as social integration and academic integration that emerged from the questions about the integration process.

**The Kazakh medium program students' experiences.** The participants started from stories about getting to know fellow-students, making friends. Agzam and Izzat, both from the Kazakh medium programs, said that their mates also were from different cities, the majority were boys, and they quickly became closer. Both said that nobody realized that they were Uzbeks until they said so, because they spoke Kazakh well. Also, Izzat mentioned that his groupmates were predominantly Kazakh speakers and from different parts of Kazakhstan, that is why it was easier to build relationships. He describes his first days:

I am an open person. And I noticed that my groupmates were too. We became close quickly. I tried to participate in group works, and also, tried to support any ideas of gathering or going out.

Thus, his openness and willingness to become a part of a new community was strong. Moreover, he was a 'self-starter', who supported the process of being together and making friends. In terms of relationships with teachers, Izzat said he had positive rapport with them. For example, his teacher once said that he had seen and taught some Uzbek students and he described them as ambitious and diligent students. Thus, Izzat had positive relationships both with his mates and with teachers from the beginning.

Despite the successful social integration, Izzat encountered the first challenge of academic life in the first seminar. (Seminar is a lesson where there is an interaction between teacher and students, students and students; discussion or analysis of several questions on one topic, or analysis and discussion of the topic given in the last lecture). As his major is medicine, he understood that it would not be easy to understand and reflect to some questions, and discuss it within a group in proper way in Kazakh. His Kazakh was quite good in a conversation/general level, but in academic level he was not enough proficient to be able to speak up, discuss, argue or relate his opinion about the topic. Therefore, he had to spend extra hours for translating the materials and do some extra reading of the material in Uzbek available in the internet.

Once Izzat started to get used to use and comprehend specific terms, complex phrases in academic Kazakh, he faced Russian, which was completely an alien language for him. In Kazakhstan, which is Post-Soviet country, there are still good quality text books, books, resources in Russian, which are not translated yet into Kazakh. That is why, there is a tendency among teachers in Kazakh medium programs, to give some readings from resources in Russian. As Izzat put it:

Russian and me were never 'friends'. Although I had learned it as for 6-7 years at school, I never did well. I could not even speak properly. And here, they gave me a task to read about physiology in Russian. It was not the only task. They used to assign readings in Russian quite often. Once, I even went to administration asking them why they do not find enough materials in Kazakh.

Thus, the unpredictable academic problem was the content learning through Russian. He also related how he coped with Russian resources. He either asked his mates to retell the content in Kazakh, or translated necessary materials and asked his peers in the dormitory, who were good in Russian, to translate particular paragraphs. So, in his case, the language barrier, particularly, low proficiency was only and main challenge during the academic integration.

Meanwhile for Agzam, who also reported about quick adjustment into a new community and making relationships with groupmates, integration period were quite successful. As in his mechanical engineering group, they were only boys from different regions of Kazakhstan, they easily got used to each other. However, he said that he was quite shy, and could not fully be involved in social activities or group works. In terms of academic life, he was active and ambitious. He mentioned that in order to comprehend the texts or other materials, he needed more time, because, he still was getting to use learning the content in Kazakh. He also said:

I was slower when explaining the charts or something else. Because, first I needed analyze and construct it in Uzbek in my mind and then tell in Kazakh. It takes time. At the beginning, teachers used to perceive it as, uhhm, let's say, may be learning disability. But, when I realized that it was

influencing my grades, I went and talked to some teachers explaining why I am slow.

Thus, he was not only adjusting to a new community, academic institution, but he was also adjusting to a new language environment. So, he needed some time to become confident and enough fluent to reflect the questions or assignments immediately. In addition, we can see that he was brave to tackle with appeared issue on his grades by admitting his weakness.

Next participant, Nadira preferred to be silent rather than to say something wrong and to show her accent in both inside and outside of the classroom. She was not active with her groupmates, and used to spend time in the dormitory with her roommates. But still she had good relationships within the group. The relationships with teachers varied from teacher to teacher. She stated that couple of teachers did not like when she used to ask some clarifying questions:

When teacher explained mathematics, I tried to listen with all my body. Because, studying in Kazakh was still a new approach for me. Obviously, I used to miss some points or did not understand some cases. That is why I used to ask many questions. Then I noticed that the teacher started to become annoyed from time to time and most times did not want to listen to my questions.

In her case, as a student from different language background, she needed extra instructions or explanations. It seems the teacher of mathematics failed to help the student and was annoyed by too much questions from the student, which can be a natural part of learning a new content. She also said that the ignorance of teacher made her feel uncomfortable among the mates, so she “decided not to bother a teacher with “meaningless” /sarcastic tone/ questions”. As a result, the ignorance caused giving-up clarifying something unclear

and feeling of alienation from the peers, as teacher seemed to treat her differently, or unequally.

**The Russian medium program students' experiences.** Now, let us turn to Russian medium students' experiences. Dias, in medical university, had positive beginning of the academic year. The groupmates were friendly and open. They accepted understandingly his poor Russian, accent and feeling of embarrassment because of his language skills. He could not be involved in social activities at the department, although he was interested and willing to take a part. His low proficiency of Russian was the main barrier, and his Kazakh, as he said, 'sounded awful'. In the dormitory, first year he lived with five other Uzbek peers who also were from his region.

In terms of academic part, it was very difficult to adjust to a new language environment. In lectures, he could just listen, no interaction was necessary; all materials were to be sent electronically. He had to reread lecture or any materials 5-6 times or to ask somebody to translate when it was necessary. However, the most challenging part was to present, discuss, retell, analyze something during the seminars. Thus, lack of confidence and language proficiency were barriers and prevented the successful presentations:

At the beginning, each seminar-session was so stressful. I learned everything by heart, because I could not present anything on my own. But, once the questions were asked, I used to be revealed.../laughs/

Here, the participant's fear of failure resulted in the stress. In addition, inability to express opinion or retell and discuss without memorized utterances finished unsuccessfully. Lola, from the pedagogy department also shared the common attitude by saying:

Knowing the content in one language and being not able to deliver it to the teacher in another language is offending, you can only learn by heart if you

need a good mark. Sometimes, teachers used to assess my language defects rather than the knowledge of the content.

In Lola's case, she also had to memorize in order to be able to retell or report something. Surely, it is natural to get annoyed by inability to express own opinions or views because of the lack of proficiency. Moreover, the language barriers affected her overall marks during the seminars, her lack of proficiency seemed to distract teachers from the main criteria of assessment.

Except the challenges in academic life, Lola's groupmates were sympathetic, and tried to help her if she needed extra explanation or translation. Moreover, thanks to her new groupmate's support she went to university volleyball team recruitment and got accepted. She said that she tried not to be shy and embarrassed because of her accent. She tried to be proud of herself for being from Uzbek medium school, getting scholarship and becoming a part of her new society. These positive thoughts motivated her to learn Russian more intensely and to practice Russian with her new groupmates. Even though she was not actively involved in debates and discussions, she thought that she was not ready for them. Meanwhile, Dias was keen on debates and discussions, but most times suffered from his low Russian proficiency:

Sometimes, when we had some casual debates or discussions on abstract things or let's say...religion, I could not deliver my point of view. Or even worse... I could not argue, and to show my perspective... just because I did not have enough words...vocabulary. I could not find the right words. And usually it ended with laughs of my mates on how irrelevant or imaginary was my point. Then I started to give up these pointless discussions.

Here we can see how a lack of vocabulary and ability to express opinion affected one's relationships, motivation and also on impediment towards socializing, being a part of community.

Next two participants, Shokhrukh and Ikram did not have positive beginning of adaptation and making relationship with peers. Shokhrukh, in psychology department reported:

I was the only boy in our group, and the advisor assigned me to be the cohort leader. However, it was crystal clear that the girls in the group were not happy with it. They did not want Uzbek boy from a rural area to be their leader. A month later, I just refused and another student took my role.

Thus, the participant felt alienated when his groupmates did not accept him at the beginning of the year. This feeling influenced his desire; so as a result, he resigned from the leader's position, which is considered as a good opportunity to build good rapport with teachers. Unfortunately, he could not build successful relationships with groupmates until the end of the first year. Moreover, Shokhrukh was an active participant and a leader of social events and activities in his school. Before coming to university, he planned to be actively involved in university's social life. However, turned out, his poor Russian and challenges in making friends caused some barriers social life. He described it in the following way:

In the dormitory, I was assigned as a leader of boys living in the third floor. After giving up 'group's leader' position, I thought it will work this time. However, it did not. My accent was a problem. I was tired of acting like a good boy who wants to please everyone. I gave up again.

Thus, he had to turn down the second position, because of alienation feeling and his accent. Moreover, he did not want to be seen weak and please others to see him as a leader.

Despite of challenges in social life, he did well in the lessons and assignments. He shared that he worked hard; he might learn by heart, translate everything, and practice his Russian with his peers from hometown. Therefore, his overall results were good at the end of the first semester and year. Nevertheless, open discussions were problematic for him. He admitted having difficulties while expressing their opinion and sharing the previous knowledge during the open discussions. He related the following:

It literally hurts when you have something relevant to add to the topic, but you cannot make it. I never felt myself so helpless, because at school, I was always heard.

As he was an activist and a dominant public speaker in secondary school, he did not used to feel alienation and anxiety until he came to the university. Here, I see how important is to be heard and that he does care about the discussions and participation. Despite of this, he mentioned that these kind of challenges led to much effort and higher motivation to learn the Russian language in a short period.

The last participant, Ikram, who switched from Kazakh medium department to Russian medium, did not even try to speak up except compulsory presentations and speeches in the seminars. As he put it, first days were extremely difficult. His groupmates, majority are boys, were dominant Russian speakers and did not speak Kazakh well. For Ikram, with poor Russian and good Kazakh, it was not a good luck and good option at the beginning. He used to spend a little time with his groupmates. Meanwhile, teachers were advising him to switch back to Kazakh department, because he could understand only 10-20% of the material given by teachers. As he said:

I could understand only a few from the textbook or lecture materials. I used to do home works and prepare for seminars for 6-7 hours. I used to translate everything into Kazakh, because it was convenient. I thought, in case I

cannot explain or discuss it in Russian, I will do it in Kazakh. So, I survived only with Kazakh.

Thus, for him it used took plenty of time to get prepared. The Kazakh language was a good survival tool for him in the seminars. If he could not explain the question, teachers used to allow him to switch to Kazakh. Theoretically, during the first year, he studied in two languages, until he was improving his Russian by a lot of reading and private Russian classes.

By the end of the first year, teachers and his groupmates got used to his bilingual speeches and his own approach. Moreover, his relationships with groupmates became well once they accepted his accent, mistakes, and way of learning.

All in all, each participant has own distinct story. Having analyzed the stories above, I may conclude that students from Kazakh medium programs adjusted to a new academic environment easier and quicker than students from Russian medium programs did. So, the language barriers and lack of proficiency played the major role in this process. However, generally, students' social integration was relatively easier than academic integration.

**Social support during the integration period.** Social support is very important during the adjustment period regardless if you are a majority or minority student. Moreover, it is essential if the language of society and its system are new to the student and one has to deal with any issue coming by this period. The interview participants shared their positive thoughts about support from the peers, and quite neutral position of university administration and teachers in terms of support and help. The students were close to those students whose background was quite similar. "My roommate was always supportive. She is also from the South as me and understands how it is tough to cope with my anxiety, and always supports." (Nadira). Peers' willingness to help also made the

participants to feel more comfortable, “when I had problems with my medical examination or assessment in web portal, my mate helped me as they were his problems” says Agzam, proving the point above. Both, the Russian-medium and Kazakh-medium students tended to make friends with predominantly Kazakh speaking mates, because they felt much more comfortable using Kazakh.

A couple of the participants mentioned that certain teachers were quite supportive, because they knew how difficult was to function with a new language in a new environment. Shokhrukh said that his teacher of anatomy used to help him with the course content, and to build a bridge between him and his groupmates. In addition, despite having more challenges, the Russian-medium students had at least one senior teacher who encouraged them to keep up with studies and social activities. Also, senior teachers were much more understanding and caring to the students who struggled with a language of instruction.

### **Persistence**

This section addresses the presentation of the data on students' retention and persistence. So, the participants' opinions on keeping up with studies, willingness to increase their performance and graduate are presented further. The participants generally persisted because they see an undergraduate diploma as a way to succeed in the future.

Nadira, from pedagogy department said:

In my society, it is believed that if you have diploma, you get a good job. I think, once you managed to enter university, especially free of tuition, it is folly to give up it just because you faced some problems. It is more than ok to have them. At least, I used to settle my nerves thinking of it.

In her case, a common belief, having a good job with diploma, enhances or keeps her desire to finish university. Moreover, tuition waiver is seen as a good opportunity, which

also motivates her to stay at university. Agzam shared the same view by saying “I do not pay for my study and I get monthly stipend. It is worth to take some pains /laughs/”. He also considers having scholarship as a reason to stay at university. It is worth to mention that these two students are from the Kazakh department, who shared their quick adjustment in a new environment.

However, the participants from the Russian department, which faced some challenges while adapting in a new society had quite different stories. They mentioned that parents' influence, teachers' support, and finally fear of being judged in their hometown were the main reasons of not to drop out from university. For example, Shohkrukh said:

When my friend dropped out from medical department, I was thinking of it too. He dropped out, because he could not keep up with studies. But, I tried hard, I could do it. I wanted to leave just because people around me looked at me as I was an alien /laughs/. Or it seemed to me so... I stayed... I am happy with it now... I stayed, because I got this scholarship from the fourth try/laughs/, it would be shame and stupid of me to give it up. And next, I had a teacher of anatomy, who did support and motivate me when I really needed it. Probably, I am here thanks to him.

This rich quote shows potential reasons of dropouts, which are academic failure, challenges of social integration, lack of social support. The student's integration challenges lead to desire to leave the study, however, teacher's support, available scholarship and past hard effort to get it influenced his decision. Ikram also referred social support as a reason to stay at university, however, in his case, it was Uzbek peers' support.

Before changing a medium of instruction, I did not realize how tough it is going to become, I mean, uhmm, study, relationships with Russian speaking friends. I felt stupid, because I did not understand almost anything, plus I was shy to talk to my mates or be involved in discussions, my [poor] Russian did not allow me. In short, I

wanted to go home. But, my friends from my hometown persuaded me to stay...Also, I did not want to let my parents down... they believed and still believe in my bright future.

Here, we can see that struggling with studies, lack of language proficiency, challenges when making relationships may lead to drop out. The participant tackled a desire of leaving a university with peers' support and feeling of duty to his parents. Both cases above show the importance of social support while integrating into a new society, and a crucial role of language proficiency.

### **Summary of Findings**

In conclusion, it has been shown from the analysis that language of instruction choice has significant influence on the test preparation and access to university. The rationale of choosing either Kazakh or Russian depended on several factors such as an ability to understand and to use this language, the prestige of the language and as a tool to access university easier. The participants' native language affected positively the test preparation in Kazakh. The Russian-medium students faced more challenges during the preparation and integration period than the Kazakh-medium students. Social support from teachers, peers and parents is believed to be extremely important for the participants in order for dealing with challenges and to be motivated. Language issues are considered as the main challenge of making relationships and succeeding in academic life. A lack of proficiency and confidence was the main barrier to express personal opinion and to be heard. Finally, owning the scholarship, social support from teachers and peers, duty to parents, fear of being judged for dropping out might be the main factors preventing dropouts and enhancing persistence level.

## Chapter 5. Discussion

In the previous chapter, I presented the findings drawn from the data. In this chapter, I will discuss and synthesize these findings in relation to Tinto's Student Integration Model (1975, 1993) and the empirical literature, which was the basis of this study. The purpose of this study was to explore Uzbek minorities' social and academic integration experiences in majority institutions; and the research questions were:

1. What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?
2. Is there any difference in integration experiences for Russian and Kazakh medium groups; and what is the role of a language of instruction choice in this process?

The chapter is organized and discussed based on the summary of main findings. The first section discusses the rationale of language of instruction choice as connected to preparation. The following section discusses students' social and academic integration experience, which is intertwined with persistence.

### **A Language of instruction choice and Preparation**

As it was stated in the findings chapter, several factors influenced applicants' language of instruction choice. Kazakh was chosen for two specific reasons; first, one thinks that he or she can use and study in this language at university as in the case of Kiswahili choice in Tanzania (Babaci-Wilhite, 2010) and Russian in Estonia (Kemppainen, Ferrin, Ward & Hite, 2010). Second, the fact that it is a state language and one has to know it if he or she is planning future career as a public servant. To clarify the point, there is a belief among people that one has to know and able to function in Kazakh well if he or she plans to work in state/public organizations. The participants themselves referred to the thought that they have to know Kazakh very well, because it is required by administrations. According to the state law on languages from 1997 July 11<sup>th</sup>, in article 4, it is documented

that “The state language of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the Kazakh language. The state language - the language of state administration, legislation, court proceeding and document processing which operate in all spheres of public relations in the entire territory of the state. It is the duty of every citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan to master the state language, which is the most important factor in consolidating the people of Kazakhstan”. ([www.online.zakon.kz](http://www.online.zakon.kz)).

An alternative explanation of Kazakh choice might be that indeed applicants did not have any choice: both Kazakh and Russian as a language of instruction were new practices because their previous language of instruction was Uzbek. They were not used to functioning in these languages. However, Kazakh was relatively closer and better in terms of comprehension of the content, whereas, Russian was completely unfamiliar in the content comprehension. That is why, absence of choice and at the same time necessity of choice made them choose Kazakh, in which they possibly could do better than in Russian.

For other participants, their experience seeing fluent Russian speakers as intelligent and respected ones and here, and the power of Russian in society attracted them to Russian-medium program. The status of Russian as official, as declared in the law on languages (1997), and the higher power and prestige of Russian over Kazakh in Kazakhstan, was the reason of choice. As Qorro (2004, as cited in Desai, Qorro and Brock-Utne, 2010) points out, people’s choice of language education usually is based on the power and popularity of the language in modern social life, which is the case of Russian in Kazakhstan. It might paralleled with the choice of English in Tanzania (Babaci-Wilhite, 2010) and French in ex-French colonial African countries (Albaugh, 2007), where the prestige and power of these two languages affect people’s choice of language of instruction.

Another factor, seeing Russian as a tool access to university easier, was a practical choice, which contrasts with prestige of the language. According to MOES statistics for 2016, the number of applicants to Russian medium programs was four times lower than to Kazakh medium programs (Urakayeva, 2016). However, one has to bear in mind that the number of scholarship awards for Russian medium programs are far less than Kazakh medium programs; but still competitiveness for scholarships in Russian medium programs are not as high as in Kazakh. Surprisingly, although applicants' Russian proficiency was low and not enough to continue education through this language influence of above-mentioned two factors were strong enough to take a risk. Moreover, as the students stated, they and their mates could not afford education in top and higher than average universities; that is why applying for and getting state grants and scholarships is only way to enter quality universities. Therefore, choosing Russian and taking the risk made a sense and played a significant role in transition. Tinto's framework (1975) would define a language of instruction choice a pre-entry attribute, as it belongs to particularly Uzbek language minorities' context in Kazakhstani education. A language of instruction choice as a pre-entry attribute predicted and influenced students' further academic and social integration and success at university.

In terms of preparation, Kazakh medium groups' students had some challenges in comprehension of specific terms, whereas for Russian medium group students' language barriers and low proficiency resulted in clear challenges in content comprehension during the short period given for preparation. In contrast to Latino minorities' case in the USA (Bunch & Endris, 2012), Uzbek minorities are supplied with enough information about placement tests, selection process and application step-by-step instructions. They are supported by school administration for getting useful resources (e.g., books, test books, additional materials in new languages), and their preparation process is controlled by

school principals and subject teachers. However, they are not always funded by school and students have to pay for them. In addition, teachers' willingness to help and support during preparation, as Carter, Locks and Winkle-Wagner (2013) also stated, is extremely important for minority students to succeed in academic life. However, the fact that students took tutors show that even though their teachers supported with the content knowledge, they could not help with the content comprehension.

Furthermore, as the participants put it, because of short time for preparation and tests taken in new instruction language, not all of the students could get into universities with a ranking higher than average. As a result, some of them are placed to lower academic tracks, which is true also about 'color' students in the USA, who often appear to be in lower academic tracks because of poor academic preparation (Carter, Locks and Winkle-Wagner, 2013). Despite the challenges faced, several students in the current study succeeded in getting into university and gaining state scholarships, which leads to the next big step called integration into new university society. So here, also being a pre-entry attribute (Tinto, 1975), preparation process facilitated and resulted students' successful transition. However, discrepancies during preparation caused some students' placement of less desired and low ranking institutions.

### **Integration and Persistence**

Generally, the stories, except Russian-medium students Shokhrukh and Ikram's, all highlight relatively easy social integration; however, academic integration was challenging for each student due to language and content. Easier social integration might be the result of students' individual social involvement abilities and abilities to form relationships with people. Mannan (2007), Gandara and Bial (as cited in Callahan, 2008), and Deil-Amen (2011) in their studies refers to good peer group interaction and extracurricular activities as mechanisms which help and lead to successful social integration. In the current study,

participants' cases of successful peer interaction and at least partial social involvement support the above-mentioned point on successful social integration. As Tinto (as cited in Lyons, 2007) put it, institutional experiences, which include above-mentioned successful social involvement and peer interaction, increases the likelihood that a student will adjust and have feeling of belonging to environment, and moreover, will persist.

Nevertheless, Shokhrukh and Ikram, Russian medium program students, in their first year faced challenges in interacting with others, and being involved in social activities. In their challenging social integration case, language barrier influenced their social involvement, their ability to make relationships with peers, and peer group interaction. Ikram himself commented that being a student with poor knowledge of working language, Russian, among proficient speakers caused his feeling of isolation and barrier to interact with them. Here, the language barrier can be seen as a contextual factor (Tinto, 1975) which has its causes and influence on long integration process. A similar situation of having barriers was observed in Callahan's (2008) study where Latino boys' language use was a barrier to socialize and integrate into the group and they were more likely to feel isolation and drop out from the programs. The lack of socialization and dropping out cases were also explained by lower motivation and confidence on their abilities and skills (Callahan, 2008). Similarly, the participant, Ikram, complained and regretted about his low confidence on his abilities and skills, and lack of self-confidence in his first academic year, which was also a huge psychological barrier, which could cost him state grant and a diploma. According to Bandura (as cited in Carter, Locks and Winkle-Wagner, 2013), students' academic and social self-efficacy of belief and understanding of their own competences and abilities highly influence their motivation and integration into a new community. Therefore, Ikram's low self-efficacy of own abilities and skills might slow down his process of integration into his new environment.

However, despite the language and relationship challenges, the participants treated their challenges as a tool and were motivated to prove that they can cope with them, and they can cope much better than they expected. Here, students' goal and institutional commitments (Tinto, as cited in Lyons, 2007) worked well and enhanced their desire to keep up with studies and perform better. As in Holmes' et al. (2012) research, Latino students' sense of agency also influenced their way of coping with linguistic barriers and motivated them to try harder to achieve their academic aspirations. Therefore, the challenges in some cases can function as motivation, so one can ensure that by resisting they can prove others, and more importantly, himself, that he/she can do it.

While this kind of motivation is important, the most important influence and power was presence of social support. Each participant referred to social support from his or her peers, hometown peers and friends, and support from family to the most necessary and powerful tool when integrating to both the social and academic environments, and this presence of social support helped them to persist in the university. According to Wilcox, Winn, and Fyvie-Gauld (2005) the role of social support in the beginning of the academic life is very crucial; also, a university system is not as important as people in there who can help and support students while they are adjusting the new academic and social life. In case of 'students of color' in Carter, Locks and Winkle-Wagner (2013) and Latino, African-American, Asian, Indian and Middle-Eastern descent students in Deil-Amen (2011), community support, family and peer support was indicated very influential in order to successfully integrate in a new society. However, the literature did not indicate any findings about how influential peer support was within the class or groupmates on minorities easier and more successful social adjustment. The sources of support, which received Uzbek students, are quite rich. While family and hometown friends' support enhanced their desire to overcome social challenges and their psychological well-being,

support from peers in the class and some teachers influenced their academic progress and effort to do well. So, social support facilitated students' both academic and social integration, enhanced persistence level and was a part of institutional experience (Tinto, as cited in Lyons, 2007). As mentioned above, academic integration for Uzbek minority students was relatively difficult process. As a consequence of low proficiency in the language of instruction (which was Russian or Kazakh), students encountered several challenges such as low content comprehension, a lack of and inability of discussion involvement, language barriers while expressing personal opinions, challenges while reflecting on presentations during the seminars, and finally teacher's bias in assessment and approaching questions. As can be seen, all these challenges are language-oriented, which affected students' academic performance and persistence. For the reason that the contexts of studies in the literature and current study are different, there was little matching in terms of challenges in academic life. The reason for that institutional, educational, cultural background of different students in different contexts rarely match one with another, because of contextual features and differences (Tinto, 1975). Therefore, the case of Uzbek minorities' challenges during academic integration is also quite uncommon because of the language issues in transition and learning. However, in terms of teachers' bias, Qorro (as cited in Desai, Qorro and Brock-Utne, 2010) also questioned the presence of teachers' bias in assessment saying that if poor performance has relation to one's abilities in given subjects or abilities in the language of the instruction. To put in other words, teachers might be distracted from criteria of assessment the knowledge of the content by students' linguistic ability to express what they know.

Although students had these challenges and biases, some students also had some sort of support from a couple of teachers, which influenced students' motivation and resistance. According to students, teachers who were interested in students' studies and

way of coping with regular difficulties, advised, and supported, are one of the main reasons how and why they got in their senior year and keep going ahead. Deil-Amen (2011) also referred to teacher-student and student-teacher interactions, and having a faculty member taking an interest in minorities academic achievement, as crucial contributions to minority students' feeling of comfort and inclusiveness. So, positive student and faculty communication always positively influence newcomer students' positive perception of the environment and effort to become of a part of a new academic and social environment. Tinto (1975) says in order to enhance positive relationship and interaction between faculty and students, small learning communities or academic centers may have to be organized; this practice does not only build rapport between stakeholders, but, have positive consequences in terms of students' persistence and integration. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' role and support in students' successful academic adjustment is highly important for minority groups particularly.

Here, it is worth to mention that Terenzini and Wright (as cited in Mannan, 2007) in their studies stated that academic challenges mostly influence student's persistence in his or her first year, whereas social challenges influence persistence in junior and senior years. Nevertheless, this study shows that social challenges as academic challenges may influence student's persistence from the first academic year. Tinto (1975) also in his first attempt to explain his student integration model indicated that students' persistence depended more on students' academic abilities and ways of coping with challenges than abilities to socialize and become a part of a new society. However, having revised and observed several cases, he (Tinto, as cited in McCubbin, 2003) concluded that both, academic and social integration have equal influence on students' persistence, as the findings of my study revealed the same. Moreover, as can be clearly seen above, persistence depends on students' successful social and academic integration into a new

community. Once student has adjusted to the university society well or relatively well and once students' goal commitments are relatively high (Tinto, as cited in Lyons, 2007), there is a low possibility of drop-out cases. The same conclusions about social and academic integration's influence on persistence were made by Callahan (2008), Mannan (2007), and Halpin and Mutter (as cited in Deil-Amen, 2011). Another factor influenced on Uzbek minorities' persistence was the fact of being judged by their home society. It can be explained as a more culturally specific feeling. Although it is very contextual phenomenon (Tinto, 1975), African-American and Latino students from Oropeza, Varghese and Kanno (2010) study also described feelings of duty to parents, community, and peers, and the reason why they were still persisting.

In conclusion, students' pre-entry attributes such as a language of instruction choice, preparation, and cultural background influence, external and contextual factors such as specific challenges, language barriers, social support influence their integration process and persistence level. The higher level of preparation, goals, expectations and social support – the higher students' level of integration both academically and socially, and the lower dropout decisions and cases.

Generally, this chapter discussed the findings of the study. Particularly, the categories on language of instruction choice and preparation, social and academic integration tied to persistence were discussed on the basis of the existing literature and in some cases contextual differences were revealed. In the next chapter, I will conclude and provide potential implications and recommendations based on the findings and discussion of the findings.

## Chapter 6. Conclusion

The purpose of this phenomenological interview-based research was to explore and understand minority students' social and academic integration experiences in majority higher education institutions. The current study aimed at answering the following research questions:

3. What are the Uzbek speaking minority students' experiences of social and academic integration in Kazakh and Russian medium programs in Kazakhstani HEIs?
4. Is there any difference in integration experiences for Russian and Kazakh medium groups; and what is the role of a language of instruction choice in this process?

The conclusions of the study address the following areas: (a) a choice of test language and further language of instruction, (b) social and academic integration experiences tied to persistence. The conclusions are followed by the researcher's recommendations.

### **A Choice of Test Language and Further a Language of Instruction**

The first major finding of this research is that minority applicants choose a language considering such factors as a status of the Russian language in the society, a state-status of the Kazakh language, a tool to access universities easier, an ability to understand and use a language. Having chosen either Kazakh or Russian, students face several challenges until they get used to function in both languages; however, a choice of Russian leads to much harder integration to new linguistic resources.

A conclusion to be drawn from this finding is that minority students are concerned more about the statuses of the languages rather than their ability to use these languages. In addition, for those students, the importance of the language as a tool to easy access to the programs outweighs the importance of the language as a future language of instruction in the university programs. However, as can be also concluded, the fact that Russian is a tool to access the program easier does not mean it is easy to keep up with the program courses.

Therefore, students who choose Russian as a tool of easy access, without being enough proficient in this language, should expect and realize potential challenges in functioning in this language once accepted to the program and to be ready to face and cope with them for successful academic and social life.

### **Social and Academic Integration Experiences Tied to Persistence**

The second major finding of the research is that despite of all mentioned challenges in the findings chapter, social integration was relatively easier than academic integration. In addition, social integration depended more on students' individual capability of creating relationships and adjusting to a new environment, while students needed some sort of external support for successful academic integration. A conclusion that can be drawn from this finding is that despite of challenges faced at the beginning of the academic life, minority students are capable to integrate into a new environment; moreover, they are motivated to overcome the challenges and go further. Another major point to mention is that the majority of challenges encountered by students in academic life are language-oriented. Therefore, as also can be concluded, a language is a main field for minority students, which requires a quite big attention in order to enhance academic performance and succeed in academic life. Additionally, sufficient role of external support should be highly valued, because all participants referred to support as the main reason and result of final successful integration to university society and classrooms.

Another conclusion drawn from the same finding is that the fact that how well a minority student is integrating into a new society and academic life influences and enhances a level of the persistence. Moreover, both, academic and social integration influence students' persistence. So, support factor also has a huge influence on preventing drop-out cases, therefore, one, a teacher, a parent, a peer, or a friend, has to bear in mind that even small support from them may keep those students in the program and influence

their successful completion of the program. Furthermore, quite different and unique factor of persistence of Uzbek minorities turned out to be a socio-cultural factor. Duty to parents and fear of being judged by hometown society for not being able to tackle with problems are quite influential, so some students keep trying to try harder to avoid a failure. As a result, although the factor may not be positive enough, but students are still completing their programs and getting degrees for these reasons.

### **Recommendations for stakeholders**

This section presents several recommendations on language of instruction choice, academic support, enhancing teacher's awareness about approaching minorities and conducting regular team-buildings to enhance peer-peer interaction for particular stakeholders.

**On the language of instruction choice.** Given that there are multiple consequences and challenges of either language of instruction choice that predict the potential level of academic performance and social adjustment, the following recommendation may be appropriate and timely for both minority applicants and their future adjustment process. It can be recommended for secondary school-counselors (*zaveduyushiy po uchebnoy chas'ti libo po rabote s uchenicami-abituriyentami* – staff who are responsible for the work with school graduates-applicants) that before making a choice of either Russian or Kazakh as a language of test and further a language of programs' instruction, they should acknowledge and inform applicants about consequences of either language of instruction choice beforehand. This kind of information may enhance students' real expectations of future academic and social life, so their expectations and realities afterwards would match.

**On social support.** As described and discussed above two chapters, language-oriented academic challenges and challenges while creating relationships caused stress and some sort of alienation from target community. Therefore, it can be recommended that

university administration should launch or open a center for psychological and moral help and support, where students under stress and who might be about to drop out may address to. However, there are only couple of universities in Kazakhstan where such centers are functioning beneficially. So, spreading this practice to other universities may enhance the quality of students' life at university.

**On academic support.** Several language-oriented academic challenges such as language barriers for completing quality assignments, comprehending materials, expressing personal opinions, being involved in discussions might be partially solved by providing students with some sort of academic help. As Habley demonstrates in his paper (2004) "Positive faculty-student interactions and taking advantage of resources that promote academic success such as academic advising, learning centers ... have been demonstrated to positively influence retention by academically and socially integrating students into the university community" (as cited in Demetriou and Schmitz-Sciborski, 2012). Therefore, Learning Resources Centers might be established by university administration for helping students with their different issues in daily academic lives.

**On enhancing teachers' awareness.** As students indicated some discrepancies in communication and relationships with teachers, it should and can be addressed by taking appropriate actions. Therefore, it may be recommended for university administration to provide teachers some sort of information or guidelines about working with minorities, who are from different linguistic and social background. As an alternative variant, administration may conduct the professional development program on "approaching minorities", so teachers can be aware of insights of minority students' cases and perspectives to avoid misleading thoughts and conclusions about their minority students' academic achievement and behavior in and outside of the classrooms.

**On team-buildings to enhance peer-peer interaction.** As the findings show the role of peer-peer interaction in successful social and academic integration is important. Unfortunately, not each student is able to create relationships easily; some students struggle with it for several months. Therefore, the following recommendation goes to the group advisors or curators. In order to break the ice, from the beginning of the first academic year, group advisors and curators may conduct team-buildings from time to time, which can help students to know each other better. The content of the team-buildings should be inclusive and involve all students in the event.

It is worth to mention that if above-mentioned recommendations are considered and taken to actions, not only Uzbek students, but also other minority students may benefit.

#### **Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research**

There are several potential limitations of this research. The first limitation of this research is that the findings of the study cannot be generalized to wider population and cases, because the number of study participants were limited and the features of the participants were distinct. Next limitation of the research is limited time for conducting the research and only interviews were used, so there was a limited use of research tools. Based on the study's limitations, some recommendations can be given for further research to develop a larger-scale research to understand more deeper and wider in terms of population and sites minorities experiences in HEIs in Kazakhstan. While conducting further research it should be considered that based on the limitations of this study, in order to address a researcher's bias and to widen participants number, large-scale study using surveys, questionnaires and interviews should be conducted to find out to which extent the same findings would be covered or what kind of new insights might be revealed. It might give a chance to see the whole picture of minorities' (including other minorities than Uzbeks) position and experiences in HEIs in Kazakhstan.

Moreover, researchers may want to compare and analyze first year and last year minority students' experiences to explore the differences between them, and to find out how students gradually cope with problems, and to understand drop-out phenomenon deeply. Moreover, in the current study, because of a limited number did not allow me to observe the level of minorities' drop out cases at universities, which might be counted as a limitation of the study. However, this limitation can serve as a direction for future research to see if students drop out and why, and to assess overall level of minority students' drop-out cases.

### **Last thoughts of the thesis or reflection to the thesis**

As I come to close this research, I hope that this study could shed lights on the academic life experiences of minority students who are being educated in the institutions where regulations, conditions and needs are set and considered mainly focusing on the representatives of majority groups. Generally, Uzbek language minority students' path in higher education institutions is relatively challenging, depending on a student's individual skills, abilities and commitments. Although they face several challenges while being integrated into a new environment and they tend to strive for success and persist because of social support, personal long-term goals, owning state grants, and reputation in hometowns. Moreover, those students' easier social integration and social relationships may facilitate their academic integration in the forms of peer and teacher support.

This study is a result of openness and willingness of minority participants, who helped me construct the whole picture of their institutional experiences. I am hopeful that the study could deliver the voice of the participants and it can influence the beginnings of small, but beneficial changes of their life at institutions and further research. Also, I am grateful for everything I have learned during conducting and writing this research and hopeful that it is the beginning of my long and productive research path.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

##### PROJECT TITLE: Linguistic minorities' experiences in majority HEIs

Good morning (afternoon). My name is Dilnoza. Thank you for coming. This interview involves two sessions in which I will ask you about your experience as a student at the university. The purpose of the research is to study your experiences of integration in new linguistic, social and academic environment. There are no right or wrong, desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you really think and how you really feel.

##### TAPE RECORDER INSTRUCTIONS

If it is okay with you, I will be tape-recording our conversation. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your answers will remain confidential. I will be compiling a report which will contain all your answers without any reference to individuals.

##### CONSENT FORM INSTRUCTIONS

Before we get started, please take a few minutes to read this consent form (read and sign this consent form). (Hand the participant the consent form). (After the participant signs and returns the consent form, a tape recorder will be turned on).

Session #1: (follow-up questions may emerge and will be asked after the questions below). Some of the potential questions are the following:

1. What type of secondary school did you go to? What were the languages of instruction?
2. Did you receive any academic awards or scholarships?
  - Yes → What type of?
  - No
3. How did you prepare for UNT? (How did the language preparation last?)
4. What was the rationale to enroll/choose the Kazakh/Russian medium program?
5. What do you recall about your first days at the university?
6. Please tell me your experience on making relationships with your peers/groupmates.
7. Please tell me your experience on making relationships with your teachers.
8. Please tell me your experience on making relationships within a society in general.
9. How well have you been able to comprehend the material in the program? (Has this changed over time?)
10. Have you been able to express your opinion or view clearly enough?
11. Have you had enough writing-reading skills to complete assignments?
12. Have you had any other difficulties with the language in the classes?
13. Is this experience similar to your expectations?

Session #2:

The questions of the second session will be modified once the first session have been completed according to the first session's answers. I will go in-depth of the topics, which will be explored in the first session.

Thank you very much for coming. Your time is very much appreciated and your answers have been very helpful.

DQ. Is there any other information regarding your experience that you think would be useful for me to know?

Again, thank you for participating (the tape-recorder will be turned off).

**Appendix B****INFORMED CONSENT FORM***Linguistic minorities' social and academic experiences in majority HEIs*

**DESCRIPTION:** You are invited to participate in a research study on investigating Kazakhstani ethnic Uzbek students' study and social experiences in higher education institutions. You will be asked to be interviewed twice and the interviews will be audiotaped, which will be discarded once they are transcribed and used.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** Your participation will take approximately 45 minutes in a day during 2 days.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** There is a minimal risk to you from your participation in this study. The benefits, which may reasonably be expected to result from this study, are indirect: giving a 'voice' to you to tell your experiences, perhaps your challenges and difficulties during social and academic integration and needs. Information on your participation will be accessible neither to your teachers nor university administration. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your studies and grades at universities.

**PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS:** If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Questions:** If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, assistant professor, Bridget Goodman, [bridget.goodman@nu.edu.kz](mailto:bridget.goodman@nu.edu.kz).

**Independent Contact:** If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ФОРМА ИНФОРМИРОВАННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ*****Социальный и академический опыт представителей языковых меньшинств в период обучения высших учебных заведениях***

**ОПИСАНИЕ:** Вы приглашены принять участие в исследовании по изучении социального и академического (образовательного) опыта представителей языковых меньшинств в ВУЗах Казахстана. Вам будет предложено принять участие в двух интервью которые будут записаны для расшифровки, после чего они будут безвозвратно удалены.

**ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ:** Ваше участие потребует примерно два дня по 45 минут.

**РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА:**

Риски связанные с исследованием минимальны. В качестве ожидаемых преимуществ в результате исследования можно рассматривать возможность рассказать о своем опыте и переживаний. Информация касательно вашего участия в исследовании не будет доступна ни преподавателям, ни другим сотрудникам кафедры. Ваше решение о согласии либо отказе в участии никаким образом не повлияет на вашу учебы и оценки в университете.

**ПРАВА УЧАСТНИКОВ:** Если Вы прочитали данную форму и решили принять участие в данном исследовании, Вы должны понимать, что Ваше участие является добровольным и что у Вас есть право отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время. В качестве альтернативы можно не участвовать в исследовании. Также Вы имеете право не отвечать на какие-либо вопросы. Результаты данного исследования могут быть представлены или опубликованы в научных или профессиональных целях.

**КОНТАКТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ:**

**Вопросы:** Если у Вас есть вопросы, замечания или жалобы по поводу данного исследования, процедуры его проведения, рисков и преимуществ, Вы можете связаться с исследователем, используя следующие данные: Ассистент профессор, Бриджет Гудман, [bridget.goodman@nu.edu.kz](mailto:bridget.goodman@nu.edu.kz)

**Независимые контакты:** Если Вы не удовлетворены проведением данного исследования, если у Вас возникли какие-либо проблемы, жалобы или вопросы, Вы можете связаться с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета по телефону +7 7172 70 93 59 или отправить письмо на электронный адрес [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Пожалуйста, подпишите данную форму, если Вы согласны участвовать в исследовании.

- Я внимательно изучил представленную информацию;
- Мне предоставили полную информацию о целях и процедуре исследования;
- Я понимаю, как будут использованы собранные данные, и что доступ к любой конфиденциальной информации будет иметь только исследователь;

- Я понимаю, что вправе в любой момент отказаться от участия в данном исследовании без объяснения причин;
- С полным осознанием всего вышеизложенного я согласен принять участие в исследовании по собственной воле.

Подпись: \_\_\_\_\_

Дата: \_\_\_\_\_

## РАСМИЙ РОЗИЛИК ФОРМАСИ

*Этник келиб чиқиши камсонли бўлган студентларнинг Қозоғистон олий ўқув юртларидаги ижтимоий ва таълимий тажрибалари*

**ТАВСИФ:** Сиз этник келиб чиқиши камсонли бўлган студентларнинг Қозоғистон олий ўқув юртларидаги ижтимоий ва таълимий тажрибаларини ўрганишни мақсад қилиб қўйган тадқиқотда иштирок этишга таклиф қилинаси. Сизни икки интервьюда қатнашиб, ўз ҳиссангизни қўшишингизни сўранамиз. Ушбу интервьюлар расшифровка қилиш мақсадида ёзиб олинади ва ундан кейин бутунлай ўчирилиб юборилади.

**ҚАТНАШИШ УЧУН КЕТАДИГАН ВАҚТ:** иштирок этиш учун керак бўладиган вақт 2 кун давомида 45 минутдан.

**ХАВФ ВА ФОЙДАЛАР:** Тадқиқотдан пайдо бўладиган хавф жудаям кам даражада. Ўз тажрибангиз ва бошдан ўтказган таъсуротлар ва кийинчиликларингизни айтиб бериш ва улар ҳақида фикр алмашиш тадқиқотдан кутиладиган фойдалар қаторига киради. Ушбу тадқиқотда қатнашингиз ҳақидаги маълумот сир сақланади ва сизнинг ўқитувчиларингиз ҳамда университет маъмурияти ҳеч қачон бу маълумотга эга бўла олмайди. Сизнинг қатнашиш ёки қатнашмаслик ҳақидаги қарорингиз сизнинг ўқишингиз ёки университетдаги баҳоларингизга таъсир қилмайди.

**ИШТИРОКЧИЛАР ҲУҚУҚЛАРИ:** Агар ушбу формани ўқиб чиқиб, ушбу тадқиқотда иштирок этишга қарор қилган бўлсангиз, сиз иштирок ихтиёрий эканлигини ва ўзингиз хоҳлаган вақтда иштирок этишдан бош тортишингиз ёки иштирокингизни бекор қилишингиз мумкин эканлигини тушунишингиз керак. Шу билан бир қаторда, ушбу тадқиқотда иштирок этмаслик ҳам мумкин. Ҳамда, интервьюдаги айрим саволларга жавоб бермаслик ҳуқуқига эгасиз. Ушбу тадқиқот натижалари илмий ёки профессионал мақсадда нашр қилиниши ёки эълон қилиниши мумкин.

### АЛОҚА УЧУН МАЪЛУМОТ:

**Саволлар:** Агар ушбу тадқиқот ўтказилиш жараёни ва тартиби, хавф ва фойдалари ҳақида шикоят, изоҳ, ёки саволларингиз бўлса, қуйидаги тадқиқотчига мурожаат қилишингиз мумкин: Ассистент профессор, Бриджет Гудман, [bridget.goodman@nu.edu.kz](mailto:bridget.goodman@nu.edu.kz)

**Мустақил алоқа учун маълумот:** Агар ушбу тадқиқотнинг ўтказилишидан кўнглингиз тўлмаган бўлса, тадқиқот жараёнида бирон-бир муаммо, савол ёки шикоятлар пайдо бўлса, сиз +7 7172 70 93 59 номери ёки [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz) электрон адреси орқали Назарбоев университети таълим мактабининг тадқиқот қўмитасига мурожаат қилишингиз мумкин.

Агар ушбу тадқиқотда иштирок этишга рози бўлсангиз, илтимос, ушбу формага имзо чекинг.

- Мен берилган маълумотни диққат билан ўрганиб чиқдим;
- Менга тадқиқот мақсади ва жараёни ҳақида тўлиқ тушунча берилди;

- Мен тўпланган маълумотлар қандай ҳолатларда ишлатилишини ва тадқиқодчидан бошқа одам махфий ахборотга эга бўла олмаслигини тушунаман;
- Мен ҳар қандай вақтда ушбу тадқиқотда иштирок этишдан бош тортиш ҳуқуқига эгалгимни тушунаман;
- Юқорида кўрсатилган барча маълумотни тушунган ҳолда, мен ушбу тадқиқотда ўз ихтиёрим билан иштирок этишга розилик бераман.

Имзо: \_\_\_\_\_

Сана: \_\_\_\_\_

**The sample of the transcript**

(From December 23, 2016)

**The researcher:** Why did you change your language of instruction?

**Participant Ru5:** I spent in Kazakh medium group my first two days at university. But, during these two days I observed and noticed that Russian was the common language among students and teachers. It was also common among people in this city. It attracted me and I understood that I also want to speak Russian, learn Russian.

I liked Russian, but I could not speak it. I had plans to settle down in Astana in the future. I knew Kazakh well, and I did not see the advantage of continuing to study in the Kazakh language. As I noticed that the majority speak Russian here, I thought it would be better to learn a new language, but seems I did not look at this decision from the different angle /laugh/, learning not only the language, but also everything, physics, theories and other courses required by the program. I mean the content...mechanical engineering.

My groupmates also asked me why I did not take the test in Russian and start learn it earlier, before the enrolment. I actually do not know why. That might be because choosing Russian was not popular in our school. In addition, teachers who prepared us to the test also were not good in Russian. And I might fail the test and not to receive the state grant. Different thoughts.