

**The Impact of English Medium Instruction on Language Proficiency and Employability:
Perceptions of Nazarbayev University Alumni**

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Abstract

Due to globalization there has been a wide spread of English medium instruction (EMI) across many universities around the world, including Kazakhstan, which offers a variety of benefits both for students and for a country as a whole. In most cases students being taught through EMI report improvement of their English language competency and getting wider opportunities for their future careers and education. However, this issue has not been addressed much in Kazakhstan and there is no research on EMI and how it is perceived by students. Since students are the main stakeholders, it is very important to learn about their views and attitudes towards EMI. Thus, the current study aims to examine Nazarbayev University (NU) alumni's perceptions on EMI and its impact on English language proficiency and employability. The research questions that guide the study are following: 1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI? 2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency? 3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities? To answer these questions, qualitative interview based research method was used and the participants were selected by employing homogenous purposive sampling. The findings revealed that all the participants have positive perceptions towards EMI since it increases ELP of students, develops soft and personal skills and provides an access to international literature and cultures. More importantly is that they highly value EMI as a great opportunity to prepare them for future employability. The study will help in getting more insights about EMI and its possible importance in the Kazakhstani educational context, especially in terms of the Trilingual Policy which has EMI and still seems to be not so attractive for many teachers and parents.

Ағылшын тілін меңгеру және жұмысқа орналасу бойынша ағылшын тіліндегі білім алудың әсері: Назарбаев Университетінің түлектерінің қабылдауы

Андатпа

Жаһанданудың арқасында әлемнің көптеген университеттерінде, соның ішінде Қазақстандағы студенттер үшін де, жалпы ел үшін де көптеген артықшылықтар беретін ағылшын тілін үйренудің ортақ нұсқасы (EMI) кеңінен таралған. Көптеген жағдайларда EMI арқылы оқитын студенттер ағылшын тілінің құзыреттілігін жақсартады және болашақ мансап пен білім алу үшін кең мүмкіндіктерге ие болады. Дегенмен, бұл мәселе Қазақстанда көп қаралмады және EMI бойынша зерттеу және оқушылар қалай қабылдайтынын білмейді. Студенттер негізгі мүдделі тараптар болғандықтан, EMI-ге қатысты көзқарастары туралы білу өте маңызды. Осылайша, ағымдағы зерттеу Назарбаев Университеті (NU) түлектерінің EMI бойынша қабылданған түсініктерін және оның ағылшын тілін меңгеруіне және жұмысқа қабілеттілігіне әсерін зерттеуге бағытталған. Зерттеуге арналған зерттеу сұрақтары төмендегідей: 1. NU түлектері EMI-ны қалай қабылдайды? 2. EMI NU түлектеріне ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейін жақсартуға қалай көмектесті? 3. EMI түлектерінің жұмысқа орналасу мүмкіндіктеріне қандай әсер етті? Осы сұрақтарға жауап беру үшін жеке сұхбатқа негізделген зерттеу әдісі қолданылды және қатысушылар біртекті мақсатты іріктеу арқылы таңдалды. Зерттеулер қорытындысы бойынша, барлық қатысушылардың EMI-ге қатысты оң пікірлері бар екендігі анықталды, өйткені ол студенттердің ELP-ын арттырады, жеке дағдыларын дамытады және халықаралық әдебиет пен мәдениетке қол жеткізеді. Ең бастысы, олар EMI-ді оларды болашақта жұмысқа орналасуға дайындауға тамаша мүмкіндік ретінде бағалайды. Зерттеу EMI туралы көбірек білуге және оның қазақстандық білім беру контексінде маңыздылығын арттыруға көмектеседі, әсіресе EMI

бар үштілді саясат және көптеген мұғалімдер мен ата-аналар үшін сауалдарды шешіп, тартымды етуге тырысады.

Влияние обучения на английском языке на уровень владения английским языком и трудоустройство: Восприятия выпускников Назарбаев Университета

Аннотация

В результате глобализации, в университетах по всему миру, включая Казахстан, наблюдается широкое распространение обучения на английском языке (EMI) которое несет ряд преимуществ, как для студентов, так и для страны в целом. Как показывают исследования, в большинстве случаев студенты, обучающиеся на английском языке, сообщают о повышении уровня владения английским языком, а также об открывшихся перспективах получения хорошей работы и образования в будущем. Однако данный вопрос не был исследован в Казахстане, и в данный момент практически невозможно найти исследований на тему EMI и того, как его воспринимают студенты. Так как студенты являются ключевыми фигурами в EMI, изучение их взглядов и отношения к обучению на английском языке очень важно. Данное исследование ставит цель изучить то, как выпускники Назарбаев Университета (НУ) воспринимают EMI и его влияние на уровень владения английским языком и трудоустройство. Направляют исследование следующие вопросы: 1. Как выпускники НУ воспринимают EMI? 2. Каким образом EMI помог выпускникам улучшить их английский? 3. Какое влияние оказало EMI на трудоустройство выпускников? Для получения ответов на данные вопросы был применен количественный метод исследования, основанный на интервью с участниками, которые были отобраны посредством однородной и преднамеренной выборки. Результаты исследования показали положительное восприятие EMI всеми участниками ввиду того, что оно улучшает уровень владения английским языком, развивает личные и элементарные навыки, обеспечивает доступ к международной литературе и открывает дверь к новым культурам. Более того, участники высоко оценили EMI, так как он

готовит студентов для будущего трудоустройства. Таким образом, данное исследование может помочь узнать глубже восприятия студентов EMI и подчеркнуть важность EMI в образовательном контексте Казахстана, особенно в рамках политики Трехязычия, которое включает в себя обучение на английском и все еще сталкивается с негативной реакцией со стороны некоторых учителей и родителей.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter is aimed at providing an overall picture of the current research by presenting the background information of the study, the problem statement and the main purpose of the research. It also indicates the research questions that guide the following study. Finally, the chapter outlines the significance of the study and provides the structure of the research paper.

Background of the Study

Globalization is undoubtedly having a powerful impact on all spheres of life including education. The Kazakhstan education system has not become an exception. It has ambitiously taken the challenges of the globalization process and undergone a significant number of innovations and changes. One of those was the country's accession to the Bologna Process in March 2010 which marked the beginning of an active integration of the Kazakhstan higher education into the global system (Sagintayeva, 2011). Thus, the tertiary education aimed primarily at ensuring quality education and improving the competitiveness of the country.

In his message, President Nazarbayev highlights that the main objective of the universities in Kazakhstan should be the provision of a world-class education, and the diplomas of the top universities should be globally recognized (Nazarbayev, 2005). Therefore, without consideration of global trends in the educational sphere and implementation of international experience, achieving these goals is not possible. With this in mind, higher education institutions of the country under the influence of internationalization has begun the gradual transition to new standards of delivering educational services, one of which is English medium instruction (EMI).

Over recent years English has become the world's lingua franca "as it indexes prestige, employability, competitiveness and economic success (Hughes, as cited in Miranda et al.,

2016, p. 422). But at the same time, it is also a language that has rapidly become associated with education and education policy initiatives around the world (Islam, 2013). Currently, many universities in different countries, including Kazakhstan, provide English language education, which in turn offers a variety of benefits both for them and for the country as a whole. First of all, EMI allows attracting international students from different countries. Secondly, it brings international pedagogical staff and provides access to a vast amount of sources. Moreover, according to a number of studies, EMI leads to wider employment opportunities through increased English language proficiency since “English language skills enhance a person’s potential to gain employment as well as their earning power” (Erling, 2015, p.51). Thus, the implementation of EMI in tertiary education has been a major step towards the goals set by the country within the framework of globalization.

Statement of Problem

There are several universities in Kazakhstan that offer English medium instruction, including Nazarbayev University. Established in 2010 at the initiative of the President, it aims at becoming a global-level research university. Every year, hundreds of students graduate from the university which according to the university’s vision should be “prepared to take a leading role in the development of the country” (Nazarbayev University Learning and Teaching Strategy, 2015), and therefore to be qualified enough for not only having prospects for a meaningful employment but also for being able to lead their positions.

As some international studies have shown, EMI indeed has a number of advantages for students and can equip them with the skills necessary to succeed in a contemporary globalized world. Those skills include a sufficient English language capability which is mostly reported in the studies (Cosgun & Hasirc, 2017). The studies also note that since English has become

an international language as well as the language of science and technology, a good command of it provides more opportunities for better employment (Erling, 2015; Islam, 2013).

As very few research studies have been conducted on EMI in Kazakhstan on this particular issue, there is a big gap in the literature on an investigation of the issue of EMI from the perspectives of students or alumni. Since EMI is becoming a growing phenomenon in tertiary education of Kazakhstan it is important to learn about perceptions of students themselves in order to know whether this practice is beneficial or not. There is also very few research on investigating the role of English in the labour market of Kazakhstan. Comprising these two big issues I decided to conduct the following research study and examine the perceptions of the NU alumni themselves, who not only studied through the medium of English but found employment in various spheres where they use this language.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this qualitative research is to examine the Nazarbayev University (NU) alumni's perceptions on English medium instruction (EMI) and its impact on their English language proficiency and employability opportunities.

Research Questions

In order to get in-depth understanding of the issue and achieve the research purpose the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI?
2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency?
3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities?

The methodology employed in the study comprises qualitative interview based method with purposive sampling approach. The sample includes ten NU alumni who were interviewed

and after the data was collected, it was transcribed, coded and categorized according to the research questions.

Significance of the Study

As the purpose of the study is to examine NU alumni's perceptions of the impact of EMI on the English language proficiency and employability in Kazakhstan, the findings of the research may be beneficial for various stakeholders. First, the study can help policy makers in understanding the advantages of EMI from students' perspectives, thus, they may consider the findings of the research for future language policy planning. Students will also benefit from this research since they will become aware of the possible outcomes of studying through EMI and hopefully will get rid of the possible fear of studying through a foreign language. The study will also help students as well as teachers and employers by contributing to a better understanding of the effectiveness of EMI for improving competence in English and for preparing future professionals that will be in demand in the labour market. In terms of the Trilingual policy of Kazakhstan, this study might also be helpful for teachers and students to realize the importance of studying in English and look at the reform as a crucial step towards the global world. Moreover, this study will fulfil the gap in the existing literature on EMI in Kazakhstan allowing the researchers to have a source on perceptions of EMI that they can refer to.

Structure of the Study

The research paper consists of six chapters. It starts with the introductory part which serves as the foundation and presents the background, the problem and the purpose of the study as well as the questions and significance of the research. Then the researcher goes deeper into literature to present the role of EMI in education and the rationales for its implementation. Furthermore, the literature review section also presents a number of studies

that display students' and teachers' perceptions on EMI, its impact on English language proficiency, some other various skills and employability as well. The conceptual framework for the study is also developed in the literature review. The third chapter describes the methodology used in the study, the procedures of data collection process and the instruments used. The methodology part also presents the ways of how the data was analyzed and categorized for the further interpretation. The findings chapter displays the main results obtained during the interviews, underpinned by the direct quotations of the participants and the interpretations of the researcher. Finally, in the discussion part, the researcher discusses the findings in relation to the previous studies and reports whether the research questions of the study were fully answered. The last section, conclusion, provides remarks on the limitations of the current research study and the implications of the findings for the larger Kazakhstani context. The recommendations for the research and practice are also presented in the conclusion part.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

The following chapter of the study is aimed at reviewing the literature on English medium instruction (EMI) and its relevance for English language proficiency (ELP) and graduate employability. The main purpose of this study is to examine NU alumni's perceptions on EMI and its impact on their English language proficiency and employability opportunities. The questions guiding the study are following: 1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI? 2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency? 3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities? Thus, the literature review of the study focuses on highlighting the implementation of EMI across the world, perceptions that students have towards EMI as well as the benefits and challenges of the program. The concept of employability is also reviewed in the section, with a special focus on language skills and their importance for finding a good job. The chapter is divided into three main sections and begins with a brief overview of key concepts related to the study. In the first section the English language and EMI are discussed and perceptions of international students towards the program are presented as the core concepts for this study. The second section reviews the literature on employability, skills and abilities expected from graduates, particularly English language proficiency. Finally, the third section focuses mainly on EMI as a facilitator of English language proficiency and its impact on employability.

Key Concepts

In order to make the following study understandable for a reader, this section will provide explanations of the key concepts used throughout the paper. There are four main concepts that are important for the current study: English medium instruction (EMI), perceptions, English language proficiency (ELP) and employability.

English medium instruction. Since English medium instruction (EMI) is an overarching theme of the study, it is essential to discuss the concept from the start. Basically, a medium of instruction denotes the language through which teaching ‘non-language academic or content subjects,’ such as science, takes place (Lo and Lo, as cited in Wanphet & Tantawy, 2017, p. 2). According to Dearden (2014), EMI is “the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English” (p. 2). Rose & McKinley (2018) add that EMI can be also considered as the system of education of delivering content through English. EMI does not only include the exclusive use of English as the language of teaching, but also includes “course textbooks, and examinations” to be provided in English (Chun et al., 2017, p. 952). Moreover, learning through the English medium does not set the aim of learning the language itself but rather focuses on the content. This feature differentiates EMI from CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) where the emphasis in teaching is made on both the language and content (Coyle, 2002). According to Madhavan and McDonald (2014), EMI is typically implemented in tertiary education where universities offer the major programs in business, sciences and social studies taught through the medium of English. Muthanna & Miao (2015) add that “such universities require students to prove their English proficiency through submitting certain certificates of TOEFL, IELTS, etc” (p. 62). However, based on the contextual background, EMI may be also adopted in primary or secondary education schools (Madhavan & McDonald, 2014).

Therefore, based on the information presented above the definition of EMI employed in the current study was the following: “the educational system that uses English as the language of teaching academic subjects and delivering the content in a country where English is not the native language of the majority of population” (Chun et al., 2017; Dearden, 2014;

Rose & McKinley, 2018). This definition fits best with my study since it includes both, the educational system of NU with the teaching methods, textbooks, content in English and the fact that the majority of the population in Kazakhstan does not have English as their first or native language.

Perceptions. Perception is one of the core issues in psychology which in the narrow sense connotes the process of getting to know about the world through the five basic senses. To be more precise, perception is a “mode of apprehending reality and experience through the senses, thus enabling discernment of figure, form, language, behavior, and action” (Munhall, 2012, p. 2). In a broad sense, however, perception is a multifaceted term and there have been a number of definitions made in order to describe and explain the meaning of this concept. According to Angell (1906), perception is a way how an individual react to his or her setting, and this reaction is explicit, systematized, organized and comes from within. Similar to this, Dhingra and Dhingra (2011) provided their explanation of the notion stating that perception means “a process of receiving, selecting, organizing, interpreting, checking and reacting to the sensory stimuli or data” (p. 64). They also add that by doing this people try to attach significance to their setting. McDonald (2012) described the term as the way of looking at the world “colored by many sociocultural elements” (p. 8) because culturally diverse people perceive the outside world in a radically different way (Markus & Kitayama, as cited in McDonald, 2012).

The concept of perception is often used in qualitative research studies allowing investigators to obtain “access to understanding the meaning of experience for an individual, a culture, and or social groups” (Munhall, 2012, p.2). Thus, through the perceptions of the participants their views and “multiple realities” (p.2) can be revealed allowing the researcher to understand what people think on the matter and how they perceive those realities.

Moreover, being “a uniquely individualized experience” (McDonald, 2012, p. 5) perceptions of an individual can reveal something that is new to the other people and, thus, make a valuable contribution to the findings of the research.

This study employed the definition made by McDonald (2012), since all the participants to some extent added some sociocultural elements to their responses. Drawing from the findings of the current study, it can be seen that their perceptions were based on not only their own views but were mostly built upon their sociocultural realities they have been facing during the life.

English language proficiency. English language proficiency (ELP) is another big concept used throughout the study. In general, ELP connotes one’s level of being able to use English in different forms. Different authors, however, may use different notions for ELP as presented in Macaro et al. (2018) such as ‘English ability’ (Huang, 2015), ‘English proficiency’ (Islam, 2013), ‘English language competence’ (Francomacaro, 2011). In the university setting ELP refers to “proficiency in academic English, or academic literacy” which enables students to “participate effectively in a course of study delivered in English” and “gain entry into the labour market or into a further course of study” (Learning Skills Group, 2014, p.1). Wanphet and Tantawy (2017) note that “students cannot process complicated English-medium content without an appropriate level of English language proficiency” (p.20). But on the other side a considerable number of studies prove the fact that EMI can increase the language proficiency of students (Huang, 2015; Rogier, 2012; Yeh, 2014). ELP is typically measured by a variety of specifically organized tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Since the majority students pass IELTS for English entry pathways into Nazarbayev

University this study will take the results of this test as an indicator of ELP improvement of the participants.

Although all the definitions are closely related to each other, the current research study has taken the definition by Learning Skills Group (2014) as the major description of the concept of ELP. First, because it is directly connected to a university environment and, second, it includes gaining opportunities for the labour market. Both of these explanations are directly consistent with the current study's objectives.

Employability. Employability is another broad concept used in the study. It is a comprehensive and volatile concept. Some people understand it as a certain stage of an individual being prepared for a specific working field and profession (Ruby, 2015). Other people view employability as a set of a number of skills that graduates should possess in order to be in demand on the labour market (Corradini, Borthwick, & Gallagher-Bret, 2016; Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014). One of the most known definitions given to employability belongs to Yorke (2004), who stated that this concept refers to “a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes, that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy” (as cited in Tymon, 2013, p.842). Furthermore, some authors define employability as a certain measure which helps graduates evaluate their readiness for the labour market and determine their suitability for employability demands (Thijssen, Van der Heijden, & Rocco, as cited in Tholen, 2015).

Being widely debated topic in a scope of international literature, employability is often viewed from two main perspectives: employment problems (i.e. skills mismatches of graduates) and employability skills, particularly English language proficiency (Boden & Nedeva, 2010; Jonbekova, 2015; Jones, 2013; Niemella, 2016; Tomlinson, 2012;

Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014). This study looked at employability from the perspective of employability skills and, thus, employed the definition provided by Yorke (as cited in Tymon, 2013, p.842).

Conceptual Framework

Based on the definitions of the concepts described above and a number of researches related to the core concepts of my study, I have developed a framework that demonstrates a potential general connection between EMI, ELP and employability:

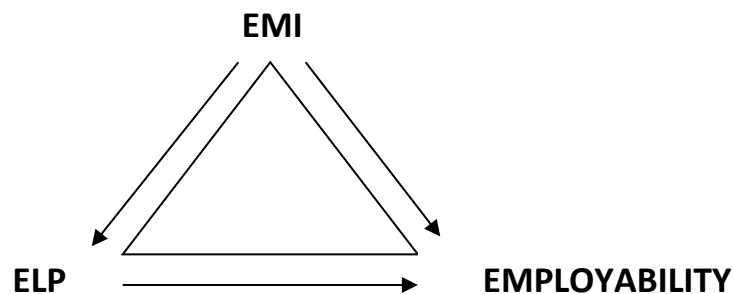


Figure 1. Interrelation between EMI, ELP and Employability.

This framework is designed around three relationships. The first arrow that goes from EMI to ELP means that there is a direct connection between these two concepts. Since the literature about EMI suggests that EMI can have an impact on students development (Corrales, Paba Rey & Santiago Escamilla; 2016; Huang, 2015; Rogier, 2012; Yeh, 2014), this framework implies on the positive influence of EMI towards ELP. The second arrow going from ELP to employability implies that ELP in turn may influence employability of students providing them opportunities to obtain better job due to a high ELP level. There are a number of studies that confirm this positive interconnection of ELP and employability (Cho, 2012; Corrales, Paba Rey & Santiago Escamilla, 2016; Kim, 2011; Yeh, 2014). The other side of the triangle is relationship between EMI and employability which shows that EMI can have a direct impact on employability since it promotes development of a number of skills such as

critical skills or communication that are in demand on the labour market (Civan & Coşkun, 2016; Ibrahim, 2016; Lei and Hu, 2014; Miranda et al., 2016; Rogier, 2012; Yeh, 2014). Thus, by developing this conceptual triangle for this research study I intend to find out these positive relationships of the three concepts.

The role of English and EMI

Since globalization has brought an enormous transformation into the modern world, the English language was the one to be adapted quickly to the changes and having become the universal language (Ali, 2013; Miranda et al., 2016). English is usually associated with globalization because it has covered all spheres of life starting from the internet and technology and ending with media and market (Cho, 2012). Today state governments are promoting a good command of English among the population since it is perceived as economically beneficial for the whole country (Ali, 2013). These ideas are supported by Jambor (2012) who states that it is important to know English in order to be exposed to a global world and be ready to respond quickly on reality's demands.

Being also affected by global trends, higher educational institutions (HEIs) have not remained immune from changes. Striving to be competitive and required in the educational market, universities and intuitions across the world have being adopting English as their lingua franca (Hu & Alsagoff, 2010). In fact, "it is precisely this globalization of universities which has become one of the main drivers of global English" (Graddol, as cited in Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2014, p. 346). This process of universities in responding to globalization, known as internationalization, caused extensive debates within educational society and had a huge impact on the recent changes in education (Baker & Hüttner, 2016).

The prominent step of internationalization and the outcome of English focused educational policies have become the adoption and development of English medium

instruction (EMI) programs at tertiary education level all around the world (Vu & Burns, 2014). These policies were specifically designed to outline the provision of “English teaching as a subject” (Baldauf et al., as cited in Ali, 2013, p. 73) and “English as a medium of instruction (Baldauf et al.; Tsui & Tollefson, as cited in Ali, 2013, p. 73) at various stages of education in the countries where English is not a dominant language.

According to Nguyen, Hamid and Moni (2016) many Asian countries outlined new educational policies and implemented EMI in tertiary education in order to respond on growing demands of internationalization. This idea was also outlined by Hu (2014), who emphasized that East Asia was influenced considerably by wide dissemination of English which in turn led to a high growth of EMI programs in China, Korea and Vietnam. In South Korea, for instance, the number of courses offering EMI has been grown rapidly since its introduction in local universities in 2005 (Chun et al., 2017) . As for European non-English countries, research showed that in 2007 about 2400 programs at European tertiary education were instructed through the medium of English (Wachter and Mairworm, as cited in Islam, 2013). Thus, in the recent years EMI has been disseminated widely across the universities in Europe and Asia. Moreover, programs offering EMI have also reached Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America (Corrales, Paba Rey, & Santiago Escamilla, 2016). With regard to Kazakhstan, it has been implementing EMI on secondary and higher education levels since 1992 - the year of the establishment of the KIMEP University in Almaty with the instruction entirely in English and students “from 28 different countries worldwide, including Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, USA, UK, Germany, China and South Korea” (“KIMEP at a Glance”, n.d.). With signing the Bologna process in 2010 leading higher education of the country to the entrance into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

and intensified trilingual education reform in the country the use of EMI in higher education institutions has become even wider (Seitzhanova et al., 2015).

Rationales behind the implementation of EMI

The need for adopting EMI in universities and institutions is justified by a number of reasons. The internationalization of higher education is the major driving force of the spread of EMI and its implementation in tertiary education. Internationalization is seen by many universities as the way of becoming competitive in a global arena by providing a world class education. Offering courses and programs through the medium of English allows HEIs in countries where English is not dominant to keep up and compete with the universities in English dominant countries (Civan & Coşkun, 2016). Ali (2013) supports those ideas stating that “EMI at the tertiary level is used as a tool to internationalise education in view of its potential as a source of economic development and prosperity” (p. 74).

Studies also have shown that another major reason is a growing desire of universities to attract international students (Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2014; Costa & Coleman, 2013; Hu, 2014; Yeh, 2014). By teaching courses in English, an institution has the ability to attract international students and faculty members while offering its own students and teachers the opportunity to participate in an international research community where a large amount of scientific research is published in English (Graddol, as cited in Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2014). Hu (2014) states that for the Chinese universities it is highly important to attract and cater to students from abroad in order to meet demands of internationalization. The same situation has been taking place at Taiwanese tertiary education where the attraction of international students is seen as the main rationale for EMI implementation (Yeh, 2014). Against this backdrop, the universities adopt English as the language of instruction or provide some English taught programs (ETPs) to attract more international students.

Another rationale behind the implementation of EMI is that in many countries it is perceived as the way to prepare students for a global market and increase graduate employability (Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2014; Cho, 2012; Costa & Coleman, 2013; Hu, Li & Lei, 2014; Yeh, 2014). According to Cho (2012) in some countries EMI is seen as academically and economically beneficial since it provides English learning environment which may help future graduates to acquire English in a high level and therefore obtain better employment in their future. As English has become the language of international communication as well as the language of science and technology, it has also achieved the status of the language of global market (Hernandez-Nanclares & Jimenez-Munoz, 2017, p. 884). In fact, the majority of international companies operate by the means of the English language and a high command of English has always been a basic requirement for potential candidates. With this in mind, the state governments are interested in providing ETPs, not excluding Kazakhstan where EMI is also seen as “a means to develop the country politically and economically” (Dearden, 2014, p. 15).

Not less important, according to some studies EMI provides an opportunity for the local students to have an experience similar to studying abroad. This means that students do not have to go out of the country in order to obtain international education but can stay in their own place. Through the medium of English and the use of it on a regular basis in a classroom setting they can learn the necessary information regarding their field and thus, get prepared for the future workplace (Corrales, Paba Rey, & Santiago Escamilla, 2016).

Research on Students' Perceptions on English Medium Instruction

There have been a number of studies conducted on perceptions and attitudes of different stakeholders on EMI in the world, especially in terms of its impact on English level of students and other impact that EMI may have (Yeh, 2014; Huang, 2015; Corrales, Paba

Rey, & Santiago Escamilla, 2016). In general, studies report positive attitudes and views towards EMI due to a number of reasons. First, EMI allows students to enhance their level of English by providing a natural setting for practice (Corrales, Paba Rey & Santiago Escamilla, 2016; Cosgun & Hasirci, 2017; Hu, Li, & Lei, 2014; Rogier, 2012; Yeh, 2014). Second, it impacts on the growth of motivation towards learning English and broadens horizons of students (Ibrahim, 2001; Miranda et al., 2016; Rogier, 2012; Yeh, 2014). Third, it serves as facilitator for future employability and opens doors for education abroad (Cho, 2012; Corrales, Paba Rey & Santiago Escamilla, 2016; Kim, 2011; Yeh, 2014).

To start with, Yeh (2014) conducted a study involving 476 students in six Taiwanese universities aiming at exploring their attitudes towards EMI and revealing the influence of English language courses on students' learning abilities. The results from the questionnaires reported that 76% of the respondents agreed that EMI can increase English language proficiency. The findings also revealed that 77% of the participants admitted that EMI positively impacted on their listening skills, half of them reported enhanced reading abilities and 47% of students improved their speaking skills. Only a third of the participants acknowledged positive impact of EMI on their writing abilities. In addition, half of the students reported increased motivation to learn English in the EMI setting. Moreover, over a half of students shared their agreement on EMI as the facilitator of their future careers and opportunities to study abroad. Finally, the students (48%) indicated broadening horizons as another benefit of studying through EMI.

A similar research study was conducted by Huang (2015) in the Engineering and the Business Colleges which employed English language instruction. The findings of this study are consistent with the previous research reporting that the majority of students consider EMI as an effective way to boost their English language ability. Furthermore, since the participants

were used to reading variety of sources in English, it helped them significantly in their foreign language learning. However, this study reports not only positive results. The students have also shared that due to low English proficiency, they experienced a high level of language anxiety during their study. In contrary with the last finding, the study by Kim (2011) revealed that students' anxiety was overcome in EMI setting through "giving kindness and diverse expressions in their explanations" (p. 734). One participant admitted that his confidence in speaking increased due to the teacher's manner of instruction.

Continuing on students' experiences in EMI, Corrales, Paba Rey and Santiago Escamilla (2016) conducted a research in one Latin American university involving students and teaching staff. The results from the questionnaires displayed that 64% of students improved their English language proficiency during the study. The reason for that was indicated by the professors who stated that "students were able to employ English in authentic communicative situations, allowing them to become more confident, strategic, and resourceful when using the language" (p. 332). Additionally, it was pointed out by all of the participants that EMI trains students for professional development in future since it allows them to work in English throughout the courses.

To sum up, the presented empirical studies demonstrated that students mostly have positive perceptions and attitudes towards EMI due to several reasons. The most frequent reason is that EMI impacts on students' level of English as well as their employability opportunities. Moreover, EMI may increase motivation towards learning English, confidence and broaden horizons of students. Having identified that the majority of the studies on EMI was conducted mainly on the perceptions of students towards EMI especially on its impact on ELP, yet, there is no research at revealing perceptions on EMI in Kazakhstan. Since students are the main stakeholders it is important to examine their views on this issue.

Employability and Skills

Most of the authors also highlight the importance of HE in preparing graduates sufficient enough to respond on the demands of the labour market. The role of HE is outlined as significantly important since it contributes to meeting “the anticipated economic needs of both organizations and individuals, effectively equipping graduates for their future employment” (Tomlinson, 2012, p. 409). Boden & Nedeva (2010) add that “in this regard a major role of universities is the production of an appropriately trained workforce that fits employers’ needs” (p. 38). From the global perspective, being also influenced by internationalization universities should train future graduates for ‘global citizenship’ and for ‘the global workforce’ as well (Green, as cited in Jones, 2013, p. 96). According to the opinion of Il’insky (as cited in Pak, Pogrebetskaya & Pak, 2015), the quality of HE should outpace the requirements of employers to the extent that allows students to fit exactly to the pick of professional demand after 4-5 years of education. Thus, in terms of employability the role of tertiary education is crucial and HE institutions should be responsible for equipping and providing students with employability skills that will help them to succeed in their future careers.

Employability skills have been discussed in a number of studies since they are of a great interest to many academic scholars and researchers (Jones, 2013; Niemella, 2016; Tomlinson, 2012; Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014). Those skills needed in the progressively flexible job market are constantly highlighted by policy-making bodies because they play a crucial role in providing graduates with all the necessary equipment (DIUS, as cited in Tomlinson, 2012).

There are a number of skills that are relevant to graduate employability. As Jones (2013) points out, those skills often referred to “as ‘soft’ or ‘transferable’ skills, relate to

generic personal and interpersonal qualities which are independent of the field of study” (p. 96). In general, employability skills comprise a huge number of different abilities including “reading, basic arithmetic and other basic skills; problem solving, decision making, and other higher-order thinking skills; and dependability, a positive attitude, cooperativeness, and other affective skills and traits” (Cotton, 2001, p. 1). All of the abovementioned skills as well as those highlighted by Niemella (2016) such as critical thinking, synthesis and analysis are very important for a potential candidate and are highly desired by the employers.

Communication skills are also often expected from a good employee and are crucial attributes for all graduates (Arkoudis et al., 2015). These skills are highly valued especially in the business sphere since they demonstrate worker’s ability to express himself precisely and explicitly as well as to find a common interest with everyone (Niemella, 2016). Furthermore, alongside with communication, employers seek for the candidates with a high level of confidence who “believe in themselves and in making the impossible into the possible” (Niemella, 2016, p. 14).

Globalization has also made its impact on the labour market and employability. As the result of this impact, Fielden (2007) states that: ‘multinational employers now look for graduates with a wide range of life skills that include awareness of other cultures and mastery of more than one language’ (p. 26). Wijewardene, Yong and Chinna (2014) support this idea emphasizing the importance of a graduate’s a good command of English against the background of other employability skills.

Possessing a high level of English language proficiency is an important attribute for graduate employability (Arkoudis et al., 2015). On account of many companies’ willing to extend the scope of their operation to an international level, English has been given a status of a corporate language with the aim to introduce incorporation of economic and networking

considerations (Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014). A high competence and fluency in English has indeed become a strong instrument that enhances individual and global development (Erling, 2015; Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014). According to Erling (2015), those who possess a good command of English are “likely to earn more, and countries who have invested significantly in English language education should also experience a benefit of this in their economies” (p. 64). Hence, in order to enhance their opportunities for getting better employment in future it is very important for graduating students to be highly proficient in English. These opportunities can be also increased by their abilities to interact with foreign people, communication via the internet, having a global vision and extended worldview (Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014).

To sum up, employability includes a set of various abilities and skills that ensure graduates’ smooth transition from the university to a working place and a successful conduction of their work. There are many employability skills and the skills such as communication, higher-order thinking skills, confidence and proficiency in English are mostly required by employers. Among all abovementioned skills English language proficiency plays an important role in the evaluating of students’ preparedness for better future employment (Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014).

EMI and Employability in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan is a multinational and multicultural country which is developing quickly and putting its efforts towards the goal of becoming in the top 30 most developed countries by 2050 (Nurmanbetova, 2015). Moreover, Kazakhstan is a country “with global ambitions, and as many well – developed countries, takes necessary steps towards the aim of creating a well – educated, high-value, low-cost workforce to compete for global market share” (Nurmanbetova, 2015, p. 47). Since globalization has impacted the country in a number of

spheres including education, higher educational institutions became more exposed to international processes and enterprises (Sarinzhipov, 2015). These changes therefore have generated demand for education in English and have led to the increase of universities and schools with the English medium instruction.

With regard to English, it has been finding greater usage in Kazakhstan and has obtained the status of the language of intercultural interaction in business communication (Mazhitaeva, Smagulova & Tuleuova, 2012). Having a good command of English in Kazakhstan is currently a determining factor and one of the main features of a competitive graduate on the labour market (Aimoldina, 2012; Mazhitaeva, Smagulova & Tuleuova, 2012). Moreover, from the recent past English is designated as the requirement for a successful integration into the global economy and is seen as one of the major priorities of the state policy (Aimoldina, 2012).

As for employability, it is “the most pressing issue of the higher education system” (Sarinzhipov, 2015, p. 10). This issue outlined by the former minister of education is caused by a number of reasons such as low employment rate among the graduates and the mismatch between educational attainment and skills demanded by the labour market of the country. Moreover, according to Sagintayeva & Kurakbayev (2015, p. 8) there is also a challenge for the Kazakhstani graduates striving to become highly qualified as it is difficult for them to meet the expectations of employers and at the same time to obtain a comprehensive experience on the job. However, despite these difficulties faced by the graduates, there is a dramatic development of the labour market of Kazakhstan which involves the introduction of new technologies and new vacancies as well (Sarinzhipov, 2015). Therefore in this contemporary and quickly developing world graduates have “to be prepared to enter the domestic and foreign job markets” (Jumabayeva, 2016, p. 11).

Against this backdrop English language proficiency remains to be an important skill of a Kazakhstani graduate especially for business. According to the survey results of the study by Aimoldina (2012), which aimed at investigating the issue of the use of English by business professionals in Kazakhstan, all the participants pointed out the need to use English on a regular basis in their workplace. The majority (86.9%) uses English almost every day and some of the participants (19.3%) use English at least once a week. Moreover, a considerable number of the participants (79.1%) shared their willing to increase their ELP level since they do not totally satisfied with its current level (Aimoldina, 2012).

The role of English in Kazakhstan has been growing therefore and the spread of EMI at secondary and tertiary levels of education illustrates this well. However, there is still little research done on the issue of EMI in Kazakhstan (Dearden, 2014; Osman, 2016; Ospanova, 2017; Prilipko, 2017; Seitzhanova et al., 2015). Dearden (2014) and Seitzhanova et al. (2015) generally view the trend of EMI and the rationales for its implementation in Kazakhstan, whereas Osman (2016) investigated the process of implementation itself. The issue of implementation of EMI is also raised in the study by Prilipko (2017) who focused primarily on practices and challenges of EMI in higher education. Finally, the study by Ospanova (2017) has been the only such study aimed at examining perceptions of students towards EMI, but mostly in terms of their experience with code-switching. Thus, there has been no research focused on perceptions of students as a whole as well as on the impact of EMI on English language proficiency and employability.

To sum up, the role of English is enormous for the Kazakhstani society and education and has been clearly outlined by the government in a number of documents. This in turn has led to a number of educational initiatives as the introduction of EMI at tertiary education of the country. Being also a widely spread across the world, EMI has become a topic of interest to

many researchers. When some of them focused on the revealing the role of EMI and the reasons for its implementation, the others dedicated primarily to exploring the perceptions and attitudes towards EMI of different stakeholders such as students and teachers. The majority of these studies revealed that students perceive EMI positively since it had a favorable influence on their English language proficiency. Moreover, in some studies it was reported that EMI brought a number of other benefits to students, as for example the growth of motivation towards learning English, broadened horizons of students and opportunities for future employability and education abroad. Thus, existing body of literature on EMI and its impact on ELP and employability clearly indicates the beneficial aspects of EMI and its positive impact on the development of students. In Kazakhstan, the number of studies on the issue of EMI is less than satisfactory. Since students are the main stakeholders in EMI it is crucial to learn about their perceptions of EMI and this importance has sparked the conduction of the current study. The following section is aimed at discussing the methodology of the study.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The previous part of the study was devoted to the review of the existing literature on the topic of EMI and employability and building a conceptual framework for the research. This study aims at examining the Nazarbayev University alumni's perceptions on EMI and its impact on their English language proficiency and employability and is guided by three research questions: 1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI? 2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency? 3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities? In this chapter I present the methodology of my study. It includes the description of the research design, research sample as well as the instruments that I used for collecting the data. Data analysis is also presented in the chapter providing the detailed description of the process. No less important, it contains all the ethical issues that were taken into consideration during the data collection procedures.

Research Design

A qualitative research methodology was employed in this study because it allows obtaining more detailed information on the core phenomenon. This coincides with Creswell (2014) statement that in qualitative investigation aims at "developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon" (p. 30). Since I aimed to know more about the perceptions of Nazarbayev University alumni on EMI and employability and gain deeper insights into the topic, this design was considered as the most appropriate for this purpose.

Specifically, the research used interview-based design which made achieving the research purpose more possible. Although interviews are widely used among researchers they remain to be a very useful tool to collect data. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) state that interviews allow participants "to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view" (p. 409). In

fact, this design allowed me to get to know the participants better and lead the conversation in the suitable way controlling the path of dialogue. Moreover, the interviewing process allowed me to hear the personal opinions and voices of alumni since one-on-one interviews enable the researcher to ask sensitive questions, pre-empt responds of participants through their comments or body language (Creswell, 2014). Thus, the answers of the participants were quite thorough and sophisticated and fitted the nature of a qualitative research.

Sampling

Since the study was focused not only on the phenomenon of EMI but on employability opportunities as well, Nazarbayev University (NU) alumni were selected as the main participants of the study. The rationale for choosing NU as the main site is that this university is a model of the best university in the country which offers total instruction through English. Specifically, I used the homogenous purposive sampling which, according to Crossman (2017), is “one that is selected for having a shared characteristic or set of characteristics” (p.2). Hence this method was employed to choose the most appropriate participants by following several criteria: a) they should have graduated from one of the three undergraduate schools (School of Science and Technology (SST), School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS), School of Engineering (Seng); b) they should work in Astana; c) their work should be connected to using English on a regular basis. The rationale for involving only undergraduate students could be explained by the fact that they enroll at university immediately after the school. Thus, it was easier for them to identify whether the changes with their English language proficiency occurred during their 4 years study at Nazarbayev University. The criteria related to the city Astana is connected with the convenience sampling method that was also used in this study and allowed the researcher approaching easily all the participants. With regard to a specific place for interviews,

participants could select by themselves the exact place for the interview, whether it is their working site or a small café. As for the third criterion, only those participants whose work is connected to the English language could provide thorough answers to my third research question which is “What impact did EMI have on NU alumni’s employability opportunities?”.

In order to reach future participants, a recruitment letter was sent to NU alumni through e-mail by Nazarbayev University Career Advising Center (CAC) members since they have an access to a full e-mail data base of all the alumni of the university. The letter stated clearly the above mentioned criteria and included a short description of the study as well as the contact information of the researcher. Those alumni who were willing to participate in the study could reach the researcher by calling her directly or via e-mail. Additionally, the same recruitment letter was posted in the community of NU on the popular social network VK and contained a note for current students to send this information to their graduated friends. Some of the university staff members have also contributed to the participant recruitment by sending the letter to their acquaintances.

Totally, 10 alumni expressed their willingness to participate in the study: four teachers, three managers, a service provider, a translator and a research fellow. All of them graduated from three NU bachelor schools (SST, SEng and SHSS) in 2015-2017 and currently work in Astana. All of them use English to some extent at their work, whether in oral or written form, on a regular basis.

Data Collection Instruments

As it was mentioned before, this study employed interview based research design. The main instruments for data collection were semi-structured open-ended interviews. The open-ended structure of the interview allowed the participants to provide as long responses

as they were willing to. Open-ended questions are the questions “for which researchers do not provide the response options; the participants provide their own responses to questions” (Creswell, 2014, pp. 412-413). The participants therefore were able to respond in their own way. Moreover, semi-structured interviews usually have the same basic questions with exact words usually asked in the same order (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The reason for deciding to use this type of interview is because it is very convenient: all the questions and prompts are prepared in advance enabling the interviewer to control the process. The fact that participants respond to the similar questions enhances the comparability of answers and there is a full data for each individual on the topics given in the interview (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

Data Collection Procedures

Before starting the data collection process interview protocol was developed and printed out in several copies. I also printed out the consent forms that had been written beforehand in three languages (Russian, Kazakh and English). All the instruments were also prepared in the three languages for the convenience of an interviewee. Interview protocols provided a valuable assistance during the interviews allowing me to keep the conversation on track and having probes that were useful indeed. The voice recorder was also used during the interviews with the permission of the participants since their duration was quite long and every phrase and a word were of a great importance. Hence the role of the recorder is enormous.

Before each interview actually started, a participant was asked to get familiarize with the consent form, the statement that they should sign at the beginning of the research (Creswell, 2014). By signing the consent form a person agrees to voluntarily participate in the study and confirms his/her right to withdraw from it at any time (Creswell, 2014). After

that the researcher typically explained the nature of the study, the main topic and the purpose it pursues. Necessarily, the researcher pointed out the issues of anonymity and confidentiality as well as the potential risks and benefits for an interviewee. After that the researcher asked a permission to record the interview with the help of a mobile phone application. All the interviews lasted about an hour.

Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2014) data analysis and interpretation may happen during or after collecting the data and include “drawing conclusions about it; representing it in tables, figures, and pictures to summarize it; and explaining the conclusions in words to provide answers to your research questions” (p. 24). Thereby, it is a quite long process that required a sufficient period of time.

The analysis of the obtained data included several steps: transcription, coding and creating themes. Firstly, all the audio recordings were transferred from the recorder to the researcher’s personal computer into a separate folder. Afterwards the transcribing process took place and lasted for about a week. During the process the researcher used Microsoft word document separately for each interview with a three-column table and put all the transcription into the second column. The rest two were helpful for coding the data after all the interview transcriptions were printed out. Using markers of different colors I started to indicate and highlight words and sentences in the text which were directly connected to my research questions. Based on that, the codes started to emerge and I wrote them down into the two columns. The list of codes was synthesized and grouped under several themes which in turn were later developed by subcategories. Finally, all the themes and subthemes were arranged in accordance with the research questions.

Ethical Issues

With regard to the ethical issues, the first step was to obtain CITI training certificate which allowed me going further with filling the ethics form which was then sent to the NUGSE Ethics Approval Committee. After getting the approval, I could immediately start the data collection process.

Important steps were followed in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. First of all, all the participants were given numbers in all the stages of the study. All possible identifiers (e.g. names, age or workplace) were removed from all the field notes, computer files and all project texts including the final thesis. Consent forms and other documents with the information that can identify the participants were kept in a secure and separate place: a locked desk drawer in the researcher's room. All the digital documents related to the research project were kept in a personal password-protected computer. All audio taped interviews will be destroyed from the computer a year after defending the thesis.

There were no more than minimal risks. One potential risk was that the participants could feel discomfort when answering to the questions which they personally could consider as sensitive. For instance, discomfort about criticism of EMI, especially if he or she works at NU. In order to minimize the risk the interviewer asked questions in a friendly manner and reminded the interviewee that the participation is totally voluntary and he or she could skip any question they were not willing to answer. Another risk was that the time spent for interviews could become an additional burden to participants' working schedule. In order to minimize this risk the researcher offered an interviewee to choose the most convenient time as well as the place for the interview.

This chapter aimed at presenting the methodology for the current research study. This study employed qualitative interview-based method with one-on-one open-ended semi-structured interviews. Using homogeneous purposive sample alongside with convenience

sampling 10 participants were recruited and assigned for interviews. After the data was collected it was transcribed, coded and categorized. The next chapter is focused on presenting the major findings emerged from the data collection which are supported by the direct quotations of the participants.

Chapter 4. Findings

The following chapter is aimed at presenting the findings of the study on NU alumni's perceptions of EMI and their impact on their English language proficiency and employability. In order to achieve this purpose qualitative research method was employed and the study was guided by the following research questions: 1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI? 2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency? 3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities?

Ten alumni from three NU undergraduate schools (SHSS, SST and SEng) were interviewed and the obtained data was properly transcribed and coded. The codes then were systematized and categorized under several themes according to the research questions.

RQ1. How do NU alumni perceive English Medium Instruction?

The first question was aimed at revealing the actual perceptions of NU alumni towards English medium instruction. In general, their perceptions have divided into five major themes that emerged from data analysis: 1. Instrument for English language proficiency (ELP) improvement; 2. Opportunity for better employment and future education; 3. Opportunity for developing soft and personal skills; 4. Access to a wide range of sources; 5. Door to different cultures. Since the theme 'Instrument for English language proficiency (ELP) improvement' is consistent with the second research question of my study and the theme 'Opportunity for better employment and future education' refers primarily to the third research question, these themes will be discussed under these research questions respectively.

EMI as an opportunity for developing soft and personal skills

The findings displayed that all the participants perceive EMI as an opportunity for developing their soft skills and personal characteristics. In general, four major skills were

identified during the data analysis including critical thinking and communication skills, followed by confidence and open-mindedness.

Critical thinking. Half of the participants indicated that EMI helped them to develop their critical thinking (CT) skills. *“At NU we were taught how to think critically. I didn’t have such practice at school”* (Participant 9). *“What I’ve found in the EMI environment is that we started to question every fact that we were provided”* (Participant 1).

Interestingly, that most of the participants connected CT development with reading a lot of literature during their study: *“... critical thinking develops very fast because you start to read one article, reread it, then search in the second, third, fourth... Thus, you’re evolving quickly”* (Participant 1). They admit that due to a constant reading practice they learn to search only for the necessary information in the literature: *“we read all this literature and when we are preparing to a certain topic, we’re already programmed to pick up only the data we need. That is we purposefully search only needed information”* (Participant 3).

The interesting finding was that the participants shared different perspectives on EMI’s impact on CT. For example, one of them said that EMI changed his way of thinking from the soviet mindset to the western type of thinking which he described as rational, actually meaning critical:

I liked that when you study in English you begin to think as the western people. I mean not like the post-soviet people do. Because the western people have a little bit different set of mind. They think more rationally. (Participant 7)

The same participant also pointed out to the change of his thinking as becoming more effective: *“We were taught ... to think more effectively. To think of the ways of saving time and about what we really need and what we don’t”* (Participant 7).

Another participant also expressed an interesting point stating that she became to think differently through EMI. By saying this she actually implied the occurrence of a shift from a narrow way of thinking which she called as ‘one-side’ to a broader way which enables to look at things from broader perspectives: “... *I started to think differently. I’m no longer a one-sided thinker, but I approach judiciously and soberly and look at things from different sides*” (Participant 10).

Overall the findings revealed that EMI develops critical thinking. As it was reported, this is mostly due to the fact that students at NU have to read much literature. By doing this they learn how to select only necessary information and avoid of unnecessary data. Moreover, the participants expressed different perspectives on their changed mindset starting from the shift from soviet way of thinking to the western one and to thinking more differently and effectively.

Communication skills. According to 30% of the participants, communication is considered to be another soft skill gained in the EMI environment. It was found that they perceive it as an opportunity to communicate with the English speaking people all across the world:

It’s not only about learning, it’s also about communication. You can communicate with English speaking world, with international students, which is awesome. Because travelling is very expensive and you can find people on Facebook, Instagram and just talk to them in English. (Participant 4)

Based on this quote that EMI not only helps students to improve their English but based on this improvement it also allows them to be exposed to English speaking people and communicate with them. Moreover, students do not have to travel abroad in order to meet foreign people but they can approach them through the internet and immediately start communication.

In addition to the previous finding, it was found by the half of the participants that EMI helped them to get rid of communication barriers and discomfort while talking to foreign people: *“I think it would be so much discomfort to communicate with foreigners if I didn’t know English”* (Participant 5). *“[now] when you meet foreigners you can just easily talk to them, and it’s pleasurable”* (Participant 6).

Moreover, one participant articulated the importance of learning English through EMI since it may be very helpful when visiting other countries and ask for help if needed:

Thanks to EMI I feel comfortable in any country. I can start conversation, ask for help and I’m sure that I won’t be alone somewhere and will be able to explain something to people. If I didn’t study through English and didn’t practice that much I wouldn’t be able to do that. (Participant 6)

In addition, the participant expressed a total confidence and stated the fact that by overcoming a barrier of making mistakes in EMI he increased his communication skills considerably which the following quote demonstrates best: *“[now] I can be totally drunk but make conversation in English anyway”* (Participant 6).

Confidence. Becoming more confident was to be found as another perception of EMI. Almost half of the participants stated that studying through the medium of English allows students to develop their confidence: *“When you have English medium instruction, it gives you some confidence. I’m very positive about EMI”* (Participant 4). For some participants, this confidence leads to a better acquisition of the English language: *“Here at NU, there is confidence in communication, when you talk for instance with professors... when you learn something new and ask. This helps enormously in the language acquisition”* (Participant 5).

Moreover, all of the participants admitted a great impact of EMI on the way of how they feel about themselves. The majority identified a big shift between their perceptions of themselves before studying at NU and after graduation. The findings revealed that the

university environment helped the participants not only to have a good command of English and become smarter but also gain self-confidence and faith in themselves. This finding can be supported by the following quote:

... what EMI gave to me is that we're not worse [than other people], but we're even better. When we went to Wisconsin, the guys there said that we all came being so smart and intelligible and speaking good English. So, it means that from the viewpoint of hard science we're really not bad. That's why some NU alumni study at MIT and so on... and our English is really good. We got our psychological barriers disappear and now we are like: "we can do it. (Participant 2)

Another interesting finding was that this shift of the mindset of students has also lead to a change of the future expectations of NU students, especially with regard to their career.

This can be supported by the following quotation where the participant compares NU and KIMEP students and relates this shift to a specific NU environment:

For instance, the students from KIMEP apply for BIG 4 like it's their dream job; they have a great desire to work there. But if you ask NU students, [you'll be surprised] because it's their last option. It's true (laughs). They think like if I don't find a job I'll go there. They have other expectations. They study in a specific environment, sit near palms, communicate with others and everybody's so cool, so smart, speaking in English. As the result, they want to have such a lifestyle in their future. (Participant 2)

Finally, it was found that EMI brings confidence to openly express thoughts and share one's viewpoints. Moreover, according to the following quotation, EMI helps students get rid of fear of highly positioned people: *".. I can also express my thoughts in an open manner. Even now at my work I can fearlessly express my view despite the fact who is before me, the head or the general director"* (Participant 10).

Summing up, along with critical thinking and communication skills EMI may also increase confidence of students enabling them to express openly their views and thoughts without any fear. Furthermore, EMI can change self-perception of students making them believe more in themselves and even have higher expectations in their future.

Open-mindedness. Open-mindedness is another personal feature pointed out by third of the participants that characterizes students who receive instruction in English. *"EMI has its own effects. On the way we think, for instance. EMI environment has made us more open-minded"* (Participant 10). By being open-minded the participants meant being less reserved and more exposed to the world. Interestingly, some participants compared EMI students with those who study through Kazakh or Russian and described them as reserved:

..everyone who speaks in Kazakh is more reserved. Russian speaking people are more liberated than Kazakh classes. But those who study in English are great: open-minded, can talk to any topics that you want, and in most cases they don't appreciate the chain of command. (Participant 1)

This view was echoed by another participant who added that students from the universities with Russian and Kazakh medium instruction differ from those of NU in the sense that they do not feel free to speak on sensitive subjects and often keep low profile:

When you talk to students from other universities you can feel some kind of tight. For instance, when you raise an extraordinary topic they start blocking you and feeling embarrassed or start telling that this is right, and that is not. But here, at university, people can listen to you and [you can feel freer]. You become open-minded. (Participant 5)

According to the findings, NU students in turn do not only become open-minded in the EMI setting but also become more open to other people. This includes the ability of not judging others and being tolerate to any individual's own opinion and views. One of the participants supports this finding in the following quotation:

We were taught not to judge others. Thus I've become more open to others. Everyone has their own choice. Everyone has their own voice and opinion. I cannot judge someone for this. I think that this type of thinking is the result of studying through English. (Participant 10)

To sum up, open-mindedness has turned out to be another personal characteristic developed and gained through EMI. Meaning the ability of an individual to be less reserved and more open to a variety of topics from the one side, from another side this skill also

encompasses the feature of not judging other people and giving the opportunity to any of them to express their opinions and views.

EMI as the provider of the access to a wide range of sources

Almost all of the participants have pointed out that EMI provides an access to a wide range of international sources (articles, websites and books), most of which they consider are available only in English: *“Thanks to EMI we were provided by more access to resources. Speaking generally, the knowledge of languages opens the access to new information. And first of all, we had tons of information in English”* (Participant 10).

Many of the participants pointed out the fact that they encountered the shortage of the resources in their native languages during the study and again highlighted that EMI opened the door to the international literature and provided access to new information, especially to the scope of international research studies and advanced science magazines:

... there are few sources in Russian and Kazakh, right? And many English materials aren't translated into them. But the English speaking community is obsessed with research, all the professors, etc... That's why it's easy to find a study in English on any topic. (Participant 1)

The findings on that issue have also revealed that reading literature in English allows students to get familiar with the original source not the translation. This is considered as the one of the significant advantages of EMI: *“... so you don't read the translation but the original version. This is much better because you get at once what the author was intended to say, not someone's translation. This is a big plus of EMI”* (Participant 8).

Some of them admitted that the literature in the native language might also be not of a good quality or if there are some good ones, they might be not available online for free:

... and also researches are mostly in English, there are only few in Russian and not many of them are conducted. So it means that [in the EMI environment] we have much more information than we could have in Russian. The quality is also not high. If there are books published in Russian, I mean good ones, they are often are not available for free. As for English, there are more chances that you'll find the information. (Participant 7)

Interestingly, that one of the participants connected the shortage of sources with academic dishonesty. According to his words, teachers facing the lack of materials in the native language have to behave dishonestly:

In many cases academic honesty is adopted better when we have English speaking environment rather than when we have Russian or Kazakh speaking setting. Because of the fact that teachers have lack of the resources [in Russian and Kazakh] they make academic dishonesty acts. (Participant 1)

Summing up the findings presented above, EMI is perceived by NU alumni as the provider of the access to a wide range of sources in English which in most cases is not available in students' native languages.

EMI as the door to different cultures

The findings revealed another interesting asset of EMI pointed out by few of the participants. According to them, EMI opens the way to other cultures, helps to understand people of other ethnicities and find a common language. According to their perceptions, through English it becomes easier to communicate with the people from all over the world and therefore to learn more about their culture and life. This was articulated in the following quote:

EMI opens the way to English, and English in turn opens the door to different cultures. I travel abroad quite often [...] and English for me is the way of communication. It's an important tool to understand another person, whom you may not ever meet again, to learn their culture, life, the way they think. If we take different foreigners, all of them have their own way of thinking, but they all are connected with one language – English. (Participant 5)

Not less interestingly, the EMI environment makes students not only to be exposed to the culture of the English speaking community but to unconsciously adopt this culture into their life, their set of mind and behavior. As the result, the mentality of students gets changed:

When you study through the medium of English you intentionally or not adopt this culture. Yes, I'm the citizen of Kazakhstan. Yes, I love my motherland, but nevertheless my set of mind is different from the basic Kazakh mentality because I have naturally integrated the culture of that language. (Participant 1)

RQ2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English Language Proficiency?

The collected data revealed that all the participants perceive EMI as an effective instrument for their ELP improvement. Each of them reported development of their English level at least in one of four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) which in their turn improved ability to read a variety of articles/ of different genre literature: *“I think EMI is an effective way for improving your English language”* (Participant 1). *“It’s 100% that my reading skill has improved considerably. As I’ve told, now I can almost freely read various articles, what I couldn’t do before”* (Participant 6).

Some of the participants could also observe the ELP improvement of their groupmates and university friends proved by the results of IELTS examination: *“I think that EMI impacts on the ELP level because ... I saw that all my peers had steadily increased their IELTS exam scores up to 1-1.5 points without any enhanced training”* (Participant 5).

The findings also showed that there are two major reasons why EMI has an impact on students’ language proficiency development. Firstly, according to the responses of the majority, EMI provides all the content and teaching in English, making students thereby use the language on a regular basis in all the possible forms:

EMI had a huge impact on my English proficiency level, because we had to read so much literature! And also the fact that all the instructions were given in English, and that we had to write in English, made our English language increase – whether we liked it or not.
(Participant 1)

Secondly, half of the participants indicated that their English level has also improved due to the EMI’s emphasis on the content rather than on the language itself. They called English as an “instrument” or “bonus” which enabled them to get access to a wide range of information: *“[In EMI environment] the language becomes an instrument, not a goal. When*

you want to learn something you simultaneously increase your English language, because you want to learn something new” (Participant 5).

Moreover, they highlighted the fact that in such conditions they learnt English naturally, without putting much effort. The following quotes best present these findings: *“EMI is a bonus. Without even half trying, just studying and boom! I already speak English”* (Participant 3). *“Thus, here in EMI, my English has improved naturally, without much effort on my behalf”* (Participant 8).

Interestingly, many of them stated the fact that if they studied through the medium of their mother tongue they would be unlikely to learn English by themselves. They admitted, that their English language proficiency therefore would not enhance. This finding can be supported by the following quote: *“In fact, if I hadn’t spent 4 years at the university, I’m 100% sure, my English level wouldn’t increase. I would probably stop learning it”* (Participant 5).

Finally the results showed that EMI is considered to be of a highly effective instrument for the development of functional English. The participants thereby learnt not only the language itself but became aware of using it appropriately depending on a situation. The following quote highlights this finding:

... your functionality of the language increases [through EMI]. Thus, you know what particular word is better to be used in a certain situation. [...] That’s why I think EMI helps a lot. It doesn’t teach you the language, but rather teaches you how to use it effectively. (Participant 1)

As an evidence of their English language improvement the participants shared their IELTS exam scores before and after studying at Nazarbayev University. Interestingly, all of the participants displayed the increase of their IELTS results ranging from 1 point up to 2.5. The scores are presented in the table below:

Table 1. Overall IELTS band score of the participants before and after studying at NU

IELTS score	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Before NU	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.5	5.5	6.5	6.0	6.0	6.0
After NU	8	7.0	7.5	7.0	7.5	7.0	7.5	7.0	7.5	7.0

The second research question was also focused on the certain ways of how participants' language proficiency improved during their study at NU. Based on the responds of the participants it was found that EMI helps NU students improve their language skills: 1) through their studies; 2) through the English language environment.

Improvement of ELP though the content of the program and its delivery

The findings revealed that EMI provides lots of opportunities to learn and practice English while studying. This was indicated by all of the participants. Their responses on this issue are divided into four sub-categories each representing a learning skill (reading, writing, listening and speaking) developed through the different practices at their studies.

Reading. All of the participants indicated that their reading skills improved significantly during the study due to the regular reading assignments which comprised lots of articles and books in English: “... when you constantly read different papers and articles it [good reading skills] comes naturally” (Participant 5). “What impacted my reading skills is that all the books and articles were in English. We were requested to read lots of them, about 100 pages a week. That’s why EMI improved my reading” (Participant 8).

All of them have also noted that their IELTS reading score was higher after graduation than before their enrollment at NU. For instance, one participant stated: “we had to read a lot here, in Biology, and eventually my reading raised up to 8” (Participant 8). Moreover, for some of them after graduation from the university readings in IELTS seemed to be very easy

because at NU they tended to read a great amount of science articles. The following quote articulates it best:

I didn't expect that I would get 9 on the reading section [at IELTS]. Reading practice [at the university] helped me a lot. Thus, after all those science articles, what I read at IELTS seemed to be like a children's story for me. (Participant 5)

Writing. Writing skills improvement was indicated by about 70% of the participants. This improvement occurred mostly since along with reading lots of materials in English students are required to complete many writing assignments on a regular basis: “... *I didn't have a choice (laughs). I had to write and write and write. I had to write almost in all the courses*” (Participant 4). “*Then [after Foundation] at the Bachelor's there was just writing, writing and writing... Moreover, when you read constantly and paraphrase, your writing will improve anyway*” (Participant 1).

Interestingly, that all the alumni who graduated from SST and SEng noted that their writing skills are not as high as of those graduated from SHSS. The reason for that is that writing at SHSS comprises different types of essays while students from SST and SEng are mostly asked to write lab reports which do not require any complicated language.

Listening. The participants reported that listening skills are also naturally developed through studies at the university but not so often as reading and writing. High increase of their listening skills was pointed out by almost a half of them. Echoing one of the previous comments one participant admitted that listening task at IELTS was also very easy for him:

I always thought that at IELTS I mostly cannot listen properly. However, when we took the exam again right after finishing our study at NU, I was bored, since everything was so easy for me. [...] I thought that the speaker's pace was so slow and wanted to say: could you be faster, please?” (laughs). (Participant 1)

The reason for this improvement was the fact that all the lectures at the university are only in English: “*I had a big progress in reading and listening. Since we read a lot, like*

science literature, plus we listen to all those lectures, these skills are developed significantly. For instance, I got 8.5 on Listening” (Participant 3). In addition some lessons at NU include movies and discussions, and students have no other option than to listen to everything and try to understand. Thus, they gradually adapt to the English speech and consequently their listening skills start increasing:

Some lessons include watching movies plus discussions with the professor. You should listen to everything in English, the lectures, and then make notes. You start to understand more and more, and at the end you start a dialog. And if it was very hard before, by the 4th year it was like: ok, I listen to you, I understand you. Everything’s fine. (Participant 2)

Not less important is the fact that almost all the professors at NU are foreigners which was supported by the following quote: *“I got 6.0 on Listening when I came to NU, and 7.5 when I was graduating. It has improved, yes, since all the lectures were again in English, all the professors came from abroad. I had to try hard in order to understand them” (Participant 8).*

Speaking. As for speaking, the participants indicated that it was also improved through studies since students had to speak in English during the lectures and practice it constantly: *“it’s all about practice. When you’re forced to speak at foundation you begin to adapt to it, you start speaking and hearing English speech around. [...] Practice. There is no other way” (Participant 6). Along with the speaking practice, foreign instructors are also the factor impacting ELP of students:*

[My speaking] was affected by the communication with professors because all of them were foreigners and it’s impossible to use my native language with them. I even had to prepare beforehand in order to ask adequate questions. [...] Now I communicate with foreigners without any problems. (Participant 8)

Another reason for the enhancement of speaking is that according to the rule of the university students should use English even with the local teachers: *“we had even to speak in English with Kazakh and Russian instructors. That’s why our speaking improved right after*

foundation” (Participant 10). Thus, all these factors led to ELP improvement of students and as one participant mentioned speaking occurred naturally: *“in the very beginning I always thought about what I was going to tell. Was it correct or not? However, by the 4th year, the words were coming out automatically”* (Participant 2).

Not all of the participants however shared the same views as the previous participants. For instance, one of them did not agree on that English speaking can increase naturally in the EMI environment. For achieving the improvement though one should intentionally put much effort and search for the opportunities to speak. Otherwise, speaking skills of students will not improve even in the EMI setting: *“I think you can significantly develop you speaking skills through EMI if you communicate and deliberately make efforts for that. But if you just write reports and read, then of course, your speaking will not improve”* (Participant 8).

Another participant reported no significant progress in his speaking skills: *“my speaking remained almost the same. Accent hasn’t improved. You understand that you’ve got good listening skills but you’re not able to finish your thoughts while speaking”* (Participant 7). Interestingly, that along with fluency in English his expectations of ELP development included the improvement of his English accent which was not mentioned by any of the rest of the participants. The reasons for his low proficiency in speaking were articulated in the following quote: *“I think it [no progress in ELP] is due to the environment and the fact there are only few native speakers of English. Speaking I think improves only in the natural setting”* (Participant 7). Thus, in order to enhance their English speaking abilities one should go abroad, in the country, where English is the dominant language. EMI of the non-English speaking university therefore is not enough.

English Language Environment

According to the findings, English language environment has also influenced the development of English of NU students. The environment of the university indicated by the participants comprised advertisements, e-mail communication and events that are in 90% in English.

The interesting fact was pointed out by one of the participants who said that the English language environment of NU has a huge benefit since it enables to invite foreign celebrities in the university because students here speak English freely:

For instance, when celebrities come [in Astana] they all go to NU. Because, maybe this is my assumption, but you cannot take US Secretary to ENU or any other university where people don't speak English. But he will 100% come to NU, at least because everyone there speak English. Moreover, there will always be some know-it-all who will start asking questions (laughs). (Participant 2)

Summing up all the expressed perceptions of the participants on EMI as of an instrument for ELP improvement several conclusions can be made. First, EMI indeed has a significant impact on ELP development especially in relation to four language skills which was also proved by the displayed results of IELTS scores before and after studying at the university. Second, there two main rationales for this impact: a). all the content and teaching is delivered in English; b). acquiring the language naturally in an English language environment turning the language to 'instrument' and 'bonus'. Third, EMI improves the development of functional English which means that a student not just learn language but also learns how to use the language properly. Furthermore, the findings also revealed that there are two main ways of how EMI impact ELP of NU students: 1. through the content of the program and its delivery; 2. through the English language environment of the university.

RQ3. What impact did ELP have on NU alumni's employability opportunities?

EMI as an opportunity for better employment and future education

With regard to the third question, the findings revealed that nearly third of the participants perceive EMI as the opportunity for better employment in future. This is mostly due to the fact that graduates who have a good command of English can work abroad or work at the international companies that typically require a high ELP from the candidates. This finding is supported by the quote below:

The fact that we have education in English is a huge advantage for further career development. First of all, for those who will continue their Masters or PhD, or will go abroad. And for those who want to get a job at international companies. (Participant 8)

Apart from the employment opportunities, being a graduate from the EMI university allows them to apply to the international universities without ELP examinations certificates such as IELTS/TOEFL which basically cost a lot of money and require time and effort. Moreover, studying at such universities becomes easier due to the previous experience gained at NU: *“Another plus is that many higher institutions abroad require IELTS/TOEFL certificate. But I can apply to those universities without providing this certificate since I’ve studied entirely in English at NU”* (Participant 2).

I applied for Masters after getting Bachelor’s degree. I was enrolled at the National University of Singapore. The fact that I received my study in English at NU had a great impact on that. Thanks to this, studying at the Singaporean University was not difficult. (Participant 9)

Thus, as it perceived by some of the participants, EMI has another advantage of providing opportunities for better employment and future education abroad.

The last research question was aimed at identifying the influence that alumni’s ELP had on their employability and the role of English as a whole in a labour market of Kazakhstan. While nearly half of them told that their good English proficiency was a determining factor which enabled them to get their current job, the other half stressed some other factors that

impacted their employability. In general, all of the participants consider English language skills as an additional benefit for employability opportunities in Kazakhstan.

ELP is a determining factor

The findings of the data analysis on the third question revealed that for the half of the participants English was a determining factor in obtaining their current jobs: “*without English knowledge of course I’m sure that I wouldn’t get this job since it is directly connected to English*” (Participant 4). Some of the participants mentioned that their interviews have been conducted in English even though the companies are located in Astana: “*even the recruitment interview was in English because they intended to hire someone who knows English*” (Participant 9). In addition, the directors of two participants are foreigners who do not speak any Russian or Kazakh and both participants have admitted that thanks to English they could obtain their current work: “*my supervisor is a foreigner. She doesn’t speak Russian at all. If I couldn’t communicate with her in English I wouldn’t get this job*” (Participant 3). “*My current director is Spanish and I can only speak in English to him. And of course my English knowledge makes my life easier*” (Participant 9).

It was stated by one participant that nowadays people must know English by default. He argued that currently employers do not hire the graduates who do not know English, and even do not look at their CVs: “*... but you must already know English. If you are a financier for instance, you should know English by default. I mean that currently those who don’t have high ELP are not even hired. Even their CVs are left without any attention*” (Participant 7).

It is worth noting that the mostly repeated theme that emerged during the data analysis of all the participants was that the importance of English knowledge for the employers depends on what kind of job a graduate is recruited for. They believe that there a number of

vacancies that require a high proficiency of English as an essential condition. For instance, one participant said that she obtained her teaching position due to English: *“if I hadn’t graduate from NU and hadn’t known English no one would hire on this position. As a teacher I mean”* (Participant 10). Nevertheless, she also admitted that without ELP she could obtain another job at the same school.

Therefore, there are also many other job positions in Kazakhstan that do not mandatorily search for the candidates with a good command of English but rather look for a number of other certain skills such as professional competence: *“thus, we can divide them into two groups. [...] Companies where English is a mandatory requirement and our mainstream companies that mostly require your professional knowledge”* (Participant 9). Interestingly, the same participant acknowledged that he was hired even without sufficient competence in his specialization but only due to a high proficiency in English: *“even though I didn’t have much knowledge on my profession I was applied because I had a good command of English”* (Participant 9).

ELP is an additional benefit

Another half of the participants pointed out that the determining reason for their hiring was not only English but some additional factors. These include the name of the university, networking and professional skills. Thus, the participants do not consider ELP to be the determining factor but at the same time deem it as a huge additional benefit:

“I think what’s currently important [on the labour market] isn’t knowledge, but professional skills. As for ELP, it should be within your competence so you could speak [at least at a basic level]” (Participant 7)

They also believe that ELP is not enough for obtaining a better job: *“ELP of course is obviously beneficial. It’s great if you know it. But this is not enough”* (Participant 10).

Moreover, they think that currently having high English language proficiency is not a surprising phenomenon as it used to be years ago but rather a foundation that people start to build their career on: *“it seems to me that today it’s time when isn’t something really amazing. If before we could count people who knew English, now it’s [widespread] and is more like a huge foundation. It’s crucial since you begin with it, it’s like a starting point”* (Participant 5).

According to one of the participants professional skills that are important for employers encompass communication and leadership skills: *“you can go to a company where English isn’t used at all. The employers there will look at other characteristics [of a candidate] such as communicability, interpersonal skills, leadership and so on; but not ELP”* (Participant 10).

Moreover, it was found that the standards on the work market have increased and even knowing one foreign language is not enough as well as having only basic computer skills: *“it’s such a time now when it’s not enough to know English - you should know English and French. Or it’s not enough to be able to work with Excel – you should already be able to deal with computer programming. Standards rise. You shouldn’t work at simple companies – but work at the top ones”* (Participant 7).

To conclude, the findings on the third research question have identified that all the participants consider ELP as a significant advantage for better employability in Kazakhstan. Half of them admitted a determining role of ELP improved through EMI at NU in getting their current position whereas the other half pointed out other factors that helped them to be hired. However, they did not mention whether those skills were obtained at NU except professional competence which is also considered by some to be a very important requirement in the labour market.

Summing up all the findings of this research several conclusions can be made. First of all, it was found that all the participants have positive perceptions towards EMI. The results

revealed that EMI is perceived as an instrument for ELP improvement, an opportunity for developing soft and personal skills, a provider of an access to a wide range of sources as well as of an opportunity for better employment and future education and as a door to different cultures. The findings also showed that NU's total instruction in English and the environment which is also mostly in English facilitate the development of ELP of NU students. Last but not least, according to all of the participants, high ELP is an important attribute of a Kazakhstani graduate required by the majority of employers. Moreover, as it was mentioned by the half of the participants, English can be a determining factor in order to obtain better employment in Kazakhstan. The interpretation and explanation of these results will be presented in the next 'Discussion' chapter and links will be made to the existing literature and the research question.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The previous chapter aimed at presenting the results of the data analysis obtained during the data collection process of my study. This chapter is aimed at providing interpretation and explanation of the major findings and discussing them in relation to the literature and the conceptual framework. The main purpose of the study was to examine the Nazarbayev University (NU) alumni's perceptions on English medium instruction (EMI) and its impact on their English language proficiency and employability opportunities. In order to achieve his purpose the study answered to the following research questions: 1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI? 2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency? 3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities? Discussion in this chapter is built upon the three main findings that in general are meshed with the conceptual framework of the research.

Finding 1. Practically all the participants expressed positive perceptions of EMI considering it as a provider of opportunities for developing soft and personals skills, for better employment and future studies, for access to wide range of international sources as well as for different cultures.

EMI develops soft and personal skills

The major finding of the study is that EMI can develop a number of soft and personal skills such as critical thinking, communication, confidence and open-mindedness. By critical thinking the participants actually meant changes in their mindsets which led to a new 'rational' or 'effective' type of thinking. It should be taken into consideration that one of them mentioned the shift from a soviet mind to a western mindset saying that the latter is more 'rational'. If to think about soviet mindset I can recall the times of Soviet period and note that the Soviet system actually did not give an opportunity to the people to think freely and beyond the labels. Instead, it intentionally indoctrinated its own ideologies and philosophies of life

into the people's minds. As the result, the soviet people had a limited worldview and were not able to make their own decisions and conclusions and, moreover, to apply them into their own lives. The western people, I assume, in contrary have always been 'free' thinkers rising their children in a free and open atmosphere allowing them to decide themselves how to live and what choice to make. Thus, thinking critically or rationally for NU students can be interpreted as thinking broadly and analytically, from different perspectives as well as the ability to apply this analysis and conclusions into the decision making process.

Interestingly, that the only study I found on the relation between EMI and critical thinking reported totally opposite results in comparison with my study. Sert (2008) conducted a research in Turkey and found that EMI negatively affected critical thinking of students. The reason for that was that due to low English proficiency learners could not understand the content clearly and therefore their abilities to think critically did not develop. In my study, however, even though some of the participants reported challenges in grasping the content, especially in the beginning of their study at university, it did not prevent their skills from development and improvement. I assume that these challenges, on the contrary, caused this development since the students had to adapt to a new foreign language setting and the adaptation in turn triggered the change in their mindset.

With regard to communication skills, the participants noted that through EMI they had an opportunity to become exposed to an English speaking world and improve their skills of communication in English. This is consistent with the statement of Ibrahim (2001) who calls this skill a very important attribute of contemporary people since we live in a globalized world and we all "need a lingua franca to communicate with one another" (p. 122). Rogier (2012) articulated the same notion pointing out the fact that in the UAE the main reason for the implementation of EMI is its importance in developing communication skills in English. This

is partially fits to the Kazakhstani context since some of the participants mentioned the fact that before their study at NU they had barriers of speaking in English, especially in communicating with foreign people. However, during and after their studying at NU they entirely overcame these barriers and now are able to communicate in English with foreigners without any problems.

In addition, it was also found that communication skills are useful not only within a local context but even globally. Being able to communicate in English may help people when they travel abroad in certain cases such as starting a conversation, explaining something to the local people or even when asking for help. This idea was echoed by Kim (2011) who stated that the ability to speak English freely is crucial when it comes to graduates' opportunities to travel abroad in future. Concurring with the abovementioned statements, a participant from the study by Miranda et al. (2016) highlights the importance of the language policy of an institution saying that "the university language policy should train both faculty and students in a foreign language so that they can communicate when they go abroad" (p. 435).

Another finding regarding the skills was that EMI develops confidence of students. This finding somehow is aligned with the previous skill since some of the participants spoke about confidence from the perspective of communication. By making this connection they meant that due to their improved communication abilities their confidence also increased. These findings mirror the results from the study by Corrales, Paba Rey and Santiago Escamilla (2016) who found that when students use English on a regular basis and become aware of its functionality their confidence grows. Similarly the participants from the Rogier's (2012) study pointed out that through EMI student not only enhance their language proficiency but also become more confident in using English. In contrast to these studies however I found a study where no evidence of increased confidence was detected. The majority of participated students

in the study by Cho (2012) reported that EMI did not increase their confidence in English and the students did not become confident while using the language. Thus, it can be assumed, that gaining confidence skill in EMI depends on contextual factors (such as country or university) or individual aspects of a student.

Regarding the fourth skill, some of the participants of my study pointed out open-mindedness as another skill developed through EMI. As I mentioned before in the previous chapter, by being open-minded the participants meant being open to the world, more communicative and less reserved. It is not only about interaction between people, it is also about how individuals themselves perceive the world and to what extent they are ready to accept new information and new realities. EMI provides those new information and realities since it introduces a scope of new literature and materials that students have not probably read before. Moreover, at NU students meet professors from all over the world. Thus, EMI expands the worldview of students making them more open-minded. This finding is in agreement with Yeh's (2014) findings which showed that along with the enhancement of ELP and employability opportunities EMI has led to 'broadening horizons' (p. 313) of the students, which actually is the same as open-mindedness reported in my study.

EMI provides access to new sources

One of the findings regarding the perceptions towards EMI was that it provides an access to a wide range of sources. All of the participants have raised this point since they consider it as the most beneficial aspect of EMI. It is important for them to have this access since there is a lack of quality sources in their native languages (Kazakh and Russian) and these sources are usually very limited in subjects and topics covered. EMI, however, opens a door to an endless amount of resources in English such as books, science articles, websites that students can read without any problems. Hu, Li and Lei (2014) support this finding stating

that through EMI Chinese students not only increase their English language skills but have an access to “cutting-edge knowledge available in English” (p. 100). Civan and Coşkun (2016) also replicate the point about the access to literature and highlight the importance of quality of sources. They say that by providing materials in English, EMI gives opportunity to work with high quality articles and textbooks what cannot be equated with the literature in local languages. The authors also highlight the issue of a large number adding that materials “are better in both quality and quantity in English than in any other language” (p. 1983).

EMI opens a door to new cultures

This issue was raised by the minority of the participants but nevertheless is considered as one of the major findings of my research. This finding indicates that through English learnt and acquired by means of EMI, students became able to communicate with people of different ethnicities and therefore learn more about their cultural background. This issue was also pointed out by the participants in the studies of Ghorbani and Alavi (2014), Miranda et al. (2016) and Wanphet and Tantawy (2017). The participants of all these studies clearly stated the importance of learning English in order to approach other cultures and learn more about other people’s ways to view the world. The same perspectives were revealed in the current study with the emphasis on English as the door to different cultures especially in cases when participants travel abroad and meet many new people. This finding also implies that barriers in English communication are the major hindrance of better understanding cultures of people. Thus, studying through EMI brings more than just learning and mastering English. It brings opportunities to learn new cultures of people of different ethnicities all across the world.

To sum up, the discussion on the Finding 1 has led to some important conclusions and implications. The fact that discussion showed some alignment of presented results with the international literature might prove that EMI is indeed beneficial for developing various skills

of students. In his messages, the president Nursultan Nazarbayev often repeats his desire for the Kazakhstani youth to be highly evolved and well educated humans, keeping their pace with the times. As we live in a globalized world, the skills such as critical thinking, communication, open-mindedness and confidence are essential for young professionals. Moreover, the access to the international research field may help enormously since all the new information learnt by a student through EMI can be applied in the local context and in the different important spheres of life. Being able to communicate with the people of different ethnicities and cultures may also impact on the personal development of students and allow them to introduce the Kazakhstani culture to the other people as well. This, it can be implied that by increasing EMI in the Kazakhstani universities the government may achieve the president's intentions on the youth development and moreover, bring it to reality without any additional efforts because these skills are acquired and developed naturally in the EMI setting.

Finding 2. All the participants expressed positive perceptions towards EMI since it has increased their English language proficiency during their study at NU. There were two major ways of this impact pointed out: though the content of the program and its delivery and through the English language environment.

The positive impact of EMI on ELP is one of the major findings of this study since this point was highlighted by all of the participants when they were asked about their perceptions on EMI. All of them indicated the improvement of their ELP during their studying at NU. As mentioned in the literature review there were several studies conducted on the views and attitudes of students towards EMI and the majority also reported the enhancement of English language level of students as well (Corrales, Paba Rey & Santiago Escamilla, 2016; Huang, 2015; Rogier, 2012; Yeh, 2014). The results from the study of Corrales, Paba Rey and Santiago Escamilla (2016) revealed that 64% of students improved their English language proficiency during the study. Similar findings were reported in the study of Yeh (2014) where

76% of the respondents agreed that EMI improved their ELP. The majority of the participants in the study by Huang (2015) also indicated the enormous role of EMI in their ELP development. The findings of the current study are totally aligned with the results of the presented studies with the only difference in the scope of the respondents.

The reasons for the ELP improvement have been also indicated by the participants of the current study and comprised a total instruction in English which enabled the students to boost their reading, listening, writing and speaking abilities in English to one extent or another. They pointed out that immersion into a total English language instruction allowed them to increase significantly their ELP since they had to use English in all the assignments and class activities. Corrales, Paba Rey and Santiago Escamilla (2016) came to the same conclusion regarding the English medium instruction reporting that in their case “students were able to employ English in authentic communicative situations, allowing them to become more confident, strategic, and resourceful when using the language” (p. 332). The second reason was the English language environment of the university which also contributed to the ELP development of students. Providing the whole instruction in English, EMI gives no other option than using English on a daily basis, whether in a written form or oral. The findings of Rogier (2012) support this notion stating that students in EMI “are using English more than they ever had before” and “they are required to think, read, write and speak in English for courses” (p. 91). In fact, many people do not typically have such practice in a non-English-speaking country such as Kazakhstan. EMI in this sense provides a great opportunity to be entirely engaged in an English language environment and therefore practice English daily in a natural setting.

Presented IELTS results of the participants underpin their positive perceptions displaying indeed a considerable increase of their IELTS band scores after their five years

study at NU. This again is consistent with the results of Rogier (2012) who conducted a research on identifying the impact of EMI on ELP of students in one UAE university and found that there was “a statistically significant increase in all English skill areas on the IELTS test for the participants after four years of English-medium instruction at the tertiary level” (p. 122). The IELTS examination is probably the most popular test on examining students’ English proficiency level in Kazakhstan and for now is the most available way to know about one’s level of English.

To conclude, it can be clearly seen that EMI may have a significant positive effect on the English language competence of students which was also affirmed by the results of a number of the empirical studies. This finding is also in compliance with the conceptual framework and confirmed that there is indeed a positive relationship between EMI and ELP. Since the government has indicated the goal to increase ELP of the population in several official documents (Development and Functioning of Languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan of 2010, 2011-2020; The Road Map for the Development of Trilingual Education for 2015-2020), it is important for the country to provide more opportunities and effective ways for people to learn and acquire English. Therefore, it can be implied that EMI has a great potential to make this goal reality and serve as a foundation for students to become highly proficient in English. Thus, it should be implemented in many universities across the country.

Finding 3. EMI provides an opportunity for better employment in future since a high level of ELP is one of the core skills in demand in the labour market of Kazakhstan.

The findings revealed that nearly third of the participants perceive EMI as the opportunity for better employment in future. This has been another major finding of the study since the issues of employability and employability skills are of a great importance for graduates. It was revealed that EMI has a potential benefit of preparing students for their

future employment due to the fact that English plays a pivotal role in today's globalized world including the labour market. Graduates who have a good command of English can work abroad or work at the international companies that usually require a high English proficiency. This is in line with a number of studies that also confirm the importance of English language competence for employability (Ali, 2013; Corradini, Borthwick, and Gallagher-Bret, 2016; Ellili-Cherif & Alkhateeb, 2015; Hu, 2014; Kim, 2011; Wijewardene, Yong & Chinna, 2014).

Ellili-Cherif and Alkhateeb (2015) for instance state that currently many job positions seek for the candidates who, along with the substantive knowledge in their field, possess high English language proficiency. Kim (2011) also highlights this point saying that a comfortable usage of English is necessary for future employment of graduates. This idea was also articulated by the participants of this study, half of whom obtained their current jobs by means of a good command in English, while the other half reported considerable value of English proficiency apart from other for their current employment.

According to the findings, many participants also admitted that a high competence in English helps not just obtain employment but rather to have access to decent work which includes a higher salary as well as more opportunities for further growth. This finding support Corradini, Borthwick, and Gallagher-Bret (2016), who pointed out that "being able to communicate in a foreign language [...] can be instrumental in building a sustained successful career" (p. 14). Similarly, Cho (2012) outlined an enormous role of EMI for ELP development of students because it allows using English at tertiary education environment and thus ensuring "a better, promising future career for them" (p. 136). In case of Kazakhstan, according to the words of my participants it can be concluded that international companies which operate mostly by means of English tend to offer higher job salaries comparing with the

local companies. Thus, to obtain a vacant position at an international company, a graduate should possess a good working knowledge of English.

Summing up the discussion on the Finding 3, it can be concluded that English plays a huge role on the Kazakhstani labour market and ELP is an important attribute for a graduate in order to obtain better employment. However, if to revisit the conceptual framework it can be seen that these findings supported partially the assumption made with regard to the impact of ELP on employability. When half of the participants defined ELP as the determining factor for obtaining their current positions, the other half reported the importance of other employability skills alongside with English language competence. Nevertheless, this finding confirmed the assumption emerged from the third part of the conceptual triangle which showed that there is a direct impact of EMI on employability since it may help in developing different skills needed for a good employee.

In conclusion, the findings of the study supported the initial assumption emerged from the conceptual framework demonstrating positive relationships between EMI, ELP and employability. They also were mostly in line with the existing international literature on EMI and its impact on English language proficiency and employability. Thus, the major implication of this study is that EMI is worth to be implemented at tertiary education of Kazakhstan and there should be awareness raised about the beneficial aspects of studying through the medium of English. This may help students to improve their employability skills and become prepared and equipped for high demands of the labour market. This will hopefully lead to a more developed and happy society.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The previous chapter was aimed at discussing the main findings of the study in relation to literature and the conceptual framework. This chapter reports major findings of the current study, draws conclusions and provides implications to practice, policy and research.

Limitations of the research are also presented in this chapter. The current study was aimed at examining NU alumni's perceptions on EMI and its impact on ELP and employability. In the purpose of achieving these objectives, three research questions were addressed: 1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI? 2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency? 3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities? A qualitative interview based method was employed in order to find the answers to these questions. After the data was obtained it was transcribed and coded and then presented in detail in a separate chapter. Finally in the discussion chapter the author provided her interpretation of the findings and discussed them in relation to literature and the conceptual framework.

Major Findings and Implications

RQ1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI?

The first conclusion of the study and the answer on the RQ1 is that all of the students have positive perceptions of EMI since it has a number of considerable benefits such as opportunities for developing soft and personal skills, for access to wide range of international sources, for different cultures and for better employment and education in future. Since EMI is quite recent trend in the Kazakhstani education and its number in universities has been growing, it is important to know how students – the main stakeholders – perceive EMI and what benefits it brings to students' development.

Thus, according to these findings, several implications can be made. First, awareness on the positive impact of EMI should be raised. Not all the people in Kazakhstan know about EMI and those who know may differently view EMI, both positively and negatively. Negative views in turn may bring fear of studying through the medium of English and students therefore may lose the opportunity to gain English instruction which may boost their soft and personal skills and open up to them a world of new information, opportunities and cultures. Moreover, the findings also imply that by introducing EMI at universities the government may achieve the goals set in the state documents which intend to build an advanced and well-developed country with highly educated and open-minded people who look forward to the future with confidence.

RQ2. How did EMI help NU graduates to improve their English language proficiency?

The second conclusion related to the RQ2 is that EMI may have a positive impact on ELP of students. EMI seems to be the most appropriate way for students to learn English and maintain their language skills because it provides an entire English instruction that make students adapt to the language as well as provides a natural setting where students can practice their English on a daily basis.

It can be implied thereby that EMI has a considerable potential to increase ELP of Kazakhstani students and help them to increase their fluency and competence in English without putting much effort and paying additional money. Policymakers as well as teachers and parents should take this important point into consideration and EMI hence should be implemented in many universities across the country.

RQ3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities?

Finally, the last but not least it was revealed that EMI had an enormous impact on the alumni's employability due to a high language proficiency they gained at the university. Thus,

it is implied that EMI contributes to future employment of NU students by developing their English level which is currently highly required on the labour market of Kazakhstan. Thus, EMI should be implemented at tertiary education of Kazakhstan which may help students to improve their employability skills and become prepared and equipped for high demands of the labour market.

Limitations and Recommendations

The first limitation of this study is the limited number of the participants (10). This number is relatively small and does not allow generalizing the findings of the study. The second limitation is constraints of time for data collection. Two weeks is quite little time and it is almost impossible to interview a big number of the respondents within these two weeks. Finally, the study involved only one university with EMI which was NU. Thus, it is hard to generalize the research findings and apply them to the contexts of other universities with EMI.

Thus, based on these limitations, I would recommend first to increase the number of participants and the number of sites for obtaining more generalizable data. Moreover, I would also recommend employing quantitative study for examining the impact of EMI on ELP and employability and using surveys for covering a huge number of the respondents.

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Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (English, Russian, Kazakh)

The Impact of English Medium Instruction on Language Proficiency and Employability: Perceptions of Nazarbayev University Alumni

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in an important research study on examining the

Nazarbayev University (NU) alumni's perceptions on English medium instruction and its impact on the English language proficiency and employability opportunities. The study of this topic will help in raising the awareness of benefits and challenges of studying through EMI as well as in answering the important question: does a high level of English proficiency indeed impact on the opportunity of getting more well- paid and prestigious job in Kazakhstan? You will be asked a number of questions that you can answer in your own way and as long as you will be willing to. The interview will be audio-recorded and some written notes might be taken during the interview. Anonymity and confidentiality of all your data is ensured. All the notes and audio tapes will be kept safe until the end of the research and then completely destroyed. The findings of the research might be used in educational conferences, articles, and project papers, however all the names will be changed and unidentified as possible.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take approximately 50-60 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The risks associated with this study are minimal. First of all, we would like to remind you that your participation in the interview is totally voluntary and if you feel discomfort in answering a certain question you may skip it. Furthermore, considering your working schedule and possible work overload, there is a risk that the time spent on the interview might become additional burden and add any stress. In order to minimize this risk we offer you to decide yourself on the most convenient time and place for the interview. Other than that no risks are to be expected from this research. The benefits, which may reasonably be expected to result from this study, are that you will broaden your understanding of English medium instruction and will be able to reflect on your own experience of studying through EMI. You will be also given an opportunity to observe some benefits and challenges of studying through EMI. By participating in this research, you will make though small but important contribution to the body of literature in the scope of EMI and employability. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your employment.

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, Sulushash Kerimkulova, skerimkulova@nu.edu.kz, [+7 775 9999167](tel:+77759999167)

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

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: _____

- The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

According to the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan an individual under the age of 18 is considered a child. Any participant falling into that category should be given the Parental Consent Form and have it signed by at least one of his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

ФОРМА ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ

Влияние английского языка как языка преподавания на уровень языкового владения и трудоустройство: Восприятия выпускников Назарбаев Университета

ОПИСАНИЕ: Вы приглашены принять участие в исследовании по изучению того, как выпускники Назарбаев Университета воспринимают обучение на английском языке и его влияние на уровень владения иностранным языком, а также возможности трудоустройства. Изучение данной темы поможет Вам и другим людям узнать о преимуществах и трудностях обучения на английском языке, а также ответить на важный вопрос: действительно ли хороший уровень владения английским языком влияет на возможность получения более высокооплачиваемой и престижной работы в Казахстане? Вам будет предложено принять участие в интервью и ответить на ряд вопросов в свободной для Вас форме. Интервью будет записываться на диктофон, и некоторые письменные записи могут делаться во время разговора. Все аудио файлы и

письменные записи будут храниться в безопасном месте до конца проведения и защиты исследования. После этого, они будут полностью уничтожены. Результаты данного исследования могут быть в последующем использованы на образовательных конференциях, в научных статьях и работах. Все имена и другие возможные идентификаторы будут изменены или удалены.

ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ: Ваше участие потребует около 50-60 минут.

РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА: Риски, связанные с исследованием минимальны: во-первых, напоминаем Вам, что Ваше участие – добровольное и если Вы почувствуете, что Вам трудно или тяжело отвечать на какой-либо вопрос, Вы можете пропустить его. Более того, учитывая Ваш рабочий график и возможную загруженность на работе, возможен риск того, что время, потраченное на интервью, станет для Вас дополнительной нагрузкой и может вызвать лишний стресс. Чтобы минимизировать данные риски, мы предлагаем Вам самим определить удобное для Вас время и место проведения интервью. В остальном данное исследование не несет в себе никаких рисков для участников. В качестве ожидаемых преимуществ в результате исследования можно рассматривать то, что Вам будет предоставлена возможность расширить свое понимание английского в качестве языка преподавания (EMI). Вы также можете отметить преимущества и сложности обучения на английском языке в рамках Назарбаев Университета. Наряду с этим, Вы сможете внести значительный вклад в образовательную сферу нашей страны определив значимость EMI в нахождении и получении хорошей и высокооплачиваемой работы в Казахстане. Ваше решение о согласии либо отказе в участии никаким образом не повлияет на Вашу работу.

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 без штрафных санкций и без потери социального пакета, который Вам предоставляли. 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

руководителем по дипломной работе, используя следующие данные:
Керимкулова Сулушаш, skerimkulova@nu.edu.kz, [+7 775 9999167](tel:+77759999167)

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.

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: _____

ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫ КЕЛІСІМІНІҢ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ ФОРМАСЫ

Ағылшын тілінің оқыту тілі ретінде тілді меңгеру мен жұмысқа орналасу мүмкіндіктеріне әсері: Назарбаев Университеті түлектерінің қабылдығы

СИПАТТАМА: Сіз НУ түлектерінің ағылшын тілінде оқуды қалай қабылдайтынындығы, сондай- ақ оның тілді меңгеру деңгейі мен жұмысқа орналасу мүмкіндіктеріне әсерін зерттеуге бағытталаған зерттеуге шақырылып отырсыз. Осы тақырыпты зерттеу Сізге және басқа адамдарға ағылшын тілінде оқудың артықшылықтары мен қиындықтары туралы білуге көмектеседі, сондай- ақ маңызды сұраққа жауап беруге ықпал етеді: ағылшын тілін жоғары деңгейде білу Қазақстанда жоғары ақылы және беделді жұмысқа қол жеткізуге мүмкіндік бере ме? Сізден сұхбатқа қатысуға және бірнеше сұраққа жауап беру сұралады. Сұхбат жазу құрылғысына жазылады, әңгіме барысында кейбір жазбалар жасалуы мүмкін. Барлық дыбыстық файлдар мен жазбаша жазбалар зерттеудің аяқталуы мен зерттеуді қорғауға дейін қауіпсіз жерде сақталады. Содан кейін олар толығымен жойылады. Зерттеудің нәтижелері кейін білім беру конференцияларында, ғылыми мақалаларда және мақалаларда қолданылуы мүмкін. Барлық атаулар және басқа ықтимал сәйкестендіргіштер өзгертіледі немесе жойылады.

ӨТКІЗІЛЕТІН УАҚЫТЫ: Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен 50-60 минут уақытыңызды алады.

ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫНА ҚАТЫСУДЫҢ ҚАУІПТЕРІ МЕН

АРТЫҚШЫЛЫҚТАРЫ: Зерттеуге байланысты қауіптер - минималды: біріншіден, Сіздің қатысуыңыз ерікті болып саналады және қандай да бір сұраққа жауап беру қиын деп ойласаңыз, ол сұрақты өткізіп жіберуіңізге болады. Сонымен қатар, жұмыс кестесін

және жұмыстағы ықтимал жұмыс жүктемесін ескере отырып, әңгімелесуге жұмсалған уақыт сіз үшін қосымша ауыртпалық болады және қажетсіз стресс тудыруы мүмкін. Осы қауіптерді барынша азайту үшін Сізге қолайлы сұхбат жүргізу уақытын және орнын анықтауды ұсынамыз. Олай болмаған жағдайда, бұл зерттеу қатысушыларға ешқандай қауіп төндірмейді. Зерттеудің нәтижесінен күтілетін артықшылықтар ретінде Сізге ағылшын тілін оқыту тілі ретінде (EMI) түсінігіңізді кеңейтуге мүмкіндік беретінін ескеруге болады. Сондай-ақ, Сіз Назарбаев Университеті аясында ағылшын тілінде оқудың артықшылықтары мен қиындықтарын да атап өтуіңізге болады. Сонымен қатар, сіз Қазақстандағы білім беру саласына елеулі үлес қосып, Қазақстандағы жақсы және жоғары ақы төленетін жұмыс іздеуде және табуда EMI маңыздылығын анықтай аласыз. Сіздің қандай да бір жолмен зерттеуге қатысуға келісу немесе бас тарту туралы шешіміңіз Сіздің жұмысыңызға әсер етпейді.

ҚАТЫСУШЫ ҚҰҚЫҚТАРЫ: Егер Сіз берілген формамен танысып, зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға шешім қабылдасаңыз, Сіздің қатысуыңыз ерікті түрде екенін хабарлаймыз. Сонымен қатар, қалаған уақытта айыппұл төлемей және Сіздің әлеуметтік жеңілдіктеріңізге еш кесірін тигізбей зерттеу жұмысына қатысу туралы келісіміңізді кері қайтаруға немесе тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Зерттеу жұмысына мүлдем қатыспауыңызға да толық құқығыңыз бар. Сондай-ақ, қандай да бір сұрақтарға жауап бермеуіңізге де әбден болады. Бұл зерттеу жұмысының нәтижелері академиялық немесе кәсіби мақсаттарда баспаға ұсынылуы немесе шығарылуы мүмкін.

БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТЫ:

Сұрақтарыңыз: Егер жүргізіліп отырған зерттеу жұмысының процесі, қауіпі мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрағыңыз немесе шағымыңыз болса, келесі байланыс құралдары арқылы дипломдық жұмыс жетекшісімен хабарласуыңызға болады. Керімкулова Сулушаш, skerimkulova@nu.edu.kz, [+7 775 9999167](tel:+77759999167)

ДЕРБЕС БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТТАРЫ: Егер берілген зерттеу жұмысының жүргізілуімен қанағаттанбасаңыз немесе сұрақтарыңыз бен шағымдарыңыз болса,

Назарбаев Университеті Жоғары Білім беру мектебінің Зерттеу Комитетімен көрсетілген байланыс құралдары арқылы хабарласуыңызға болады: +7 7172 70 93 59, электрондық пошта gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz.

Зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға келісіміңізді берсеңіз, берілген формаға қол қоюыңызды сұраймыз.

- Мен берілген формамен мұқият таныстым;
- Маған зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты мен оның процедурасы жайында толық ақпарат берілді;
- Жинақталған ақпарат пен құпия мәліметтерге тек зерттеушінің өзіне қолжетімді және мәлім болатынын толық түсінемін;
- Мен кез келген уақытта ешқандай түсініктемесіз зерттеу жұмысына

қатысудан бас тартуыма болатынын түсінемін;

- Мен жоғарыда аталып өткен ақпаратты саналы түрде қабылдап, осы зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға өз келісімді беремін.

Қолы: _____ Күні: _____

Appendix B**RECRUITMENT LETTER (English, Russian, Kazakh)****Research Participants Needed!**

Nazarbayev University, Graduate School of Education

Did you get your bachelor degree at NU? Do you work in Astana?

Is your work connected with the use of the English language?

Then you are the exact person that we would like to work with!

You are invited to participate in a very important research which examines the NU alumni's perceptions of the impact of English Medium Instruction on English language proficiency and employability opportunities. The only thing you need is to come to an interview and share your experience of studying through EMI. Participation in the interview will require approximately an hour and you yourself decide the site where it will take place. If you would like to participate, please feel free to contact the researcher.

Assel Shmidt

Phone number: +77076464061

E-mail: assel.shmidt@nu.edu.kz

Ищем участников для исследования!

Назарбаев Университет, Высшая Школа Образования

Вы выпускник программы бакалавриата НУ? Вы работаете в Астане?

Ваша работа связана с английским?

Тогда Вы именно тот, кто нам нужен!

Мы приглашаем Вас, принять участие в очень важном исследовании, направленном на изучение того, как выпускники НУ воспринимают обучение на английском языке, а также его влияние на уровень знания языка и возможности трудоустройства. Всё, что Вам нужно, это ответить на несколько вопросов в интервью, которое продлится примерно 1 час. Место проведения интервью Вы выбираете сами. Если Вы заинтересованы в участии, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с нами по контактам:

Асель Шмидт

Телефон: +77076464061

E-mail: assel.shmidt@nu.edu.kz

Зерттеуге қатысуға қалай қарайсыз?

Назарбаев Университеті, Жоғары білім беру мектебі

*Сіз бакалаврды НУ-де алдыңыз ба? Сіз Астанада жұмыс істейсіз бе?
Сіздің жұмысыңыз ағылшын тіліне байланысты ма?*

Онда Сіз бізбен жұмыс істеуге лайық адамсыз!

Сізді маңызды ғылыми зерттеуге қатысуға шақырамыз. Бұл зерттеу НУ түлектерінің ағылшын тілінде оқуды қалай қабылдайтынындығы, сондай-ақ оның тілді меңгеру деңгейі мен жұмысқа орналасу мүмкіндіктеріне әсерін зерттеуге бағытталаған. Сізге тек 1 сағатқа созылатын сұхбаттағы бірнеше сұрақтарға жауап беру қажет. Сұхбатты өткізу орнын өзіңіз таңдайсыз. Қатысуға қызығушылығыңыз болса, бізбен хабарласыңыз:

Әсел Шмидт

Телефон: +77076464061

E-mail: assel.shmidt@nu.edu.kz

Appendix C**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (English)**

1. How do NU alumni perceive EMI?
 - What do you think about studying through EMI?
 - What are the main benefits of EMI?
 - What challenges did you face when studying through EMI?
2. How did EMI help NU alumni to improve their English language proficiency?
 - What was your English language level when you just started studying at NU?
 - How much do you think your speaking, writing, reading, and listening abilities increased during the study at NU?
 - How easy for you was to communicate in the English language after graduation from the University? Is this the influence of studying at NU?
3. What impact did EMI have on NU alumni's employability opportunities?
 - What role did English play in getting your current job?
 - What additional knowledge and skills also helped you to get this job?
 - What extra benefits does a sufficient knowledge of English bring into your life?
 - What are your thoughts of a high competency of English as a crucially important factor for finding a prestigious and well-paid job in Kazakhstan?

Appendix D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (Russian)

Добрый день. Спасибо, что пришли на интервью. Меня зовут Асель Шмидт, я студентка Назарбаев Университета, Высшей школы образования, 2 курс, специальность Полиязычное образование.

- Можно узнать Вашу школу?
- В каком году закончили бакалавриат?
- А работаете сейчас ...? Расскажите поподробнее о Вашей работе.
- Спасибо. Приятно познакомиться.

Тема моего исследования: **«Влияние английского языка как языка преподавания (EMI) на уровень языкового владения и трудоустройство: Восприятия выпускников Назарбаев Университета»**. И сегодня я хочу поговорить с вами именно об этом. Интервью продлится примерно час. Если Вы не возражаете, я буду записывать наш разговор на диктофон. Спасибо. Как Вы знаете, язык обучения в Назарбаев Университете – английский, что является его отличительной чертой и одновременно позволяет больше использовать английский язык в реальной жизни, а значит больше его практиковать.

ВИ1: Скажите, пожалуйста, для начала, как вы воспринимаете об обучение на английском языке НУ?

- **Что Вам больше всего понравилось в этой программе?**
- (практика языка, расписание, предметы, методы преподавания и т.п.)
- **Повлияла ли данная программа на выбор Вами Назарбаев университета?**
- (то есть, когда Вы выбирали университет, важно ли Вам было, что обучение здесь именно на английском языке?) Почему?
- **Какие положительные стороны преподавания на английском языке Вы можете выделить?**
- **Есть ли, по Вашему мнению, какие-либо негативные стороны преподавания (обучения) на английском языке в НУ?**
- **Насколько сложно Вам было учиться по данной программе?**

ВИ2: Спасибо большое. Теперь, хотелось бы больше узнать о влиянии ЕМІ на уровень владения английским языком.

- Скажите, а когда вы поступали в НУ каким был Ваш уровень владения английским? (i.e. intermediate-advanced, разговорный уровень, IELTS 6.0 и т.п.)
- За время обучения в НУ заметили ли Вы какие-либо изменения в уровне владения английским? Какие?
- Можете ли Вы сказать, что ЕМІ улучшил Ваш английский?
(спикинг/райтинг/ридинг/лисенинг)
- А как Вы думаете, каким именно образом?
- В целом, считаете ли Вы ЕМІ эффективным подходом для улучшения уровня владения английским?

ВИ3: Давайте теперь поговорим о влиянии ЕМІ на трудоустройство.

Вы сказали, что работаете Нравится ли Вам Ваша работа? Насколько часто используете английский язык?

- Скажите, пожалуйста, можете ли Вы сказать, что уровень владения английским языком после окончания университета помог Вам получить данную работу?
- Как Вы думаете, смогли бы Вы ее получить, если бы закончили любой другой Казахстанский ВУЗ с русским (или казахским) языком обучения?
- Считаете ли Вы, что хорошее владение английским языком является преимуществом при получении хорошей и высокооплачиваемой работы в Казахстане? Почему?

На этом, пожалуй, мы закончим наше интервью. Спасибо Вам большое, за ответы и выделено время. Возможно, у Вас есть, что добавить к нашему разговору, либо Вы думаете, что мы не коснулись какой-либо важной темы. Если так, Вы можете это сделать сейчас.

Еще раз спасибо Вам за участие. Ваш вклад очень важен для данного исследования. Результаты будут готовы к концу учебного года, тогда Вы сможете с ними ознакомиться.

Было очень приятно пообщаться с Вами. Всего доброго. До свидания.

Appendix E

SAMPLE FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT (Russian)

А: Теперь поговорим про изменение языка. Каким образом у вас улучшился ваш английский? По секциям.

У: Ридинг например, у меня был 8.5, последний раз когда я сдавала. Когда я поступала у меня было 6. Да, импрувмент. Как я говорила, это именно то, что мы читаем литературу. Даже те же текстбуки. Мы вот это все и читаем и как бы уже когда тот или иной топик мы учим, у нас уже запрограммировано что взять именно ту информацию, которая нам нужна. То есть мы уже целенаправленно ищем какую-то информации. То есть в ридинге то же самое. Тебе нужен допустим, сказать это тру, фолс, или нот гивен например. Ты уже читаешь и уже знаешь что это тру или фолс. Ты уже умеешь определять ту информацию, которая тебе нужна. В этом плане, это вот ридинги. Это статьи которые мы читаем. Это текстбуки которые мы учим. Ну и то же самое когда мы пишем тезис или капстоун, это тоже надо же кучу материала просмотреть. Нужно кучу статей проштудировать. И взять только то, что тебе нужно. И поэтому я думаю ридинг у меня из-за этого улучшился.

Дальше лисенинг. Это тоже, как я помню в основном, то что мы смотрим. Даже бывает когда какую-то тему не понимаешь, ютюб открываешь и начинаешь все это слушать. И это тоже влияет. Даже то что постоянно you are exposed to English и поэтому это тоже на подсознательном уровне ты всю эту информацию можешь спокойно перевести. Там же на самом деле очень медленно говорят, в лисенинге который на экзамене. Влияет конечно, то что ты постоянно разговариваешь, постоянно слушаешь. То есть что хорошо еще то что ты pronunciation да.. то что здесь если бы даже только казахи общались бы все равно не так было бы восприятие.. а то что у нас иностранцы разговаривают на своем native language.. Они все равно как-то по-другому произносят. И то что вот в лисенинге там же вот нейтив спикеры все говорят, и в этом плане мы тоже уже привыкшие к речи. Поэтому я думаю улучшился.. То что постоянно слышишь речь.

Спикинг.. то что ты постоянно общаешься с профессорами, у тебя уже нету такого барьера. То есть обычно когда вот человек учит учит английский, с нуля например. Он учит, и вроде все, грамматику уже знает. Он уже много очень слов знает. Знает как формировать предложения. Но есть всегда такой барьер который нужно преодолеть и потом ты уже заговоришь. И такой вот барьер у меня в начале был. Потому что тяжело как-то было.. К тому же у меня английский более такой академик. Но такого бытового общения у меня не было. То есть с профессорами

просто, о чем то там говорить, это сложно было. А сейчас вот, то что у нас профессора все добрые, friendly, открытые.. у нас есть одна профессор и ее муж. Она с первого курса с нами как семья. И мы вот с ними можем все обсуждать.. даже бытовые темы.. И такой барьер общения уже исчезает. И поэтому в спикинге, когда перед тобой сидит чужой человек, задает тебе вопросы, ты сидишь и боишься. У меня такое было в начале. У меня спикинг 7.0. Когда я поступала у меня был 5.5. Ну рейтинг я говорила, это мой самый челленджинг.

тоже было 5.5 когда я поступала. Когда я выпустилась был 6.5. Ну такой прогресс, не очень большой. Ну еще это оттого наверно что я к экзамену этому никогда не готовилась. У нас в школе например, есть general concert, ты просто объясняешь. Ты ничего не доказываешь. Ничего сам не производишь.

А: А в целом считаете ли вы EMI эффективным для изучения АЯ?

У: Да.

А: Теперь давайте поговорим о работе. Можете ли вы сказать, что знание АЯ помогло вам получить данную работу?

У: Да, конечно. Потому что моя супервайзер, она иностранка. Она русский вообще не знает. Если бы я не смогла с ней разъясниться, то я бы не получила эту работу. Вообще вот знание английского в моей работе очень важно. Так как у нас в Казахстане наука очень долго развивается, для нас очень важно иметь collaboration с иностранцами. В науке это вообще очень важно. И для меня очень важно, что я могу с ними как-то общаться.. Когда она мне скажет например, вот есть такой то человек, тебе нужно с ним пообщаться, что-то обговорить и сделать, я без проблем могу поехать и сделать. То же самое на конференцию поехать. Тоже без проблем. Всё таки English – это language of communication. Все его знают, и ты можешь обмениваться знаниями с другими. И это еще больше развивает тебя, и в работе, и лично то же.

А: А вот если бы вы закончили универ с другим языком обучения, то вы смогли бы получить эту работу?

У: Я думаю да. Это конечно зависит от человека. EMI – это бонус. Ты не напрягаясь, просто учась и хоп! Я уже здесь. А вот для моей подруги например, ей нужно было отдельно учить английский, параллельно с учебой. Отдельно посещать курсы и мероприятия, чтобы развивать его. Отдельно идти в университет чтобы устраиваться на работу. Это прилагается эфорт какой-то отдельно. А здесь, то что у уже есть такой сеттинг, это комфортабл.

А: А в целом вы считаете АЯ преимуществом для получения работы в Казахстане?

У: Думаю да. Опять таки в науке да. У нас уже такое сознание есть, что нам нужно выучить английский, нам нужно пробиваться новый уровень, нужно писать статьи, выигрывать гранты – вот это все, это сознание есть. Поэтому у нас сейчас очень много

<p>открывается вакансий которые требуют специалистов которые знают английский. Я тоже недавно устраивалась. Я думала если не буду продолжать здесь работать, и другую работу тоже искала и была такая вакансия, в национально научном центре нейрохирургии. Это больница. К тому же они ведут научные проекты. Вакансия заключалась в том, чтобы общаться с иностранными коллабораторами, писать международные гранты, чтобы поступали деньги на рисерч.. ну и таких вакансий у нас открывается много.</p>	
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