

**A Correlation Study of EMI Teachers' English Proficiency Level in Kazakhstani
Universities and Their English Development Strategies**

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Date: 24 October, 2023

Dear Almaz Saulebay:

This letter now confirms that your research project titled: “**A Correlation Study of EMI Teachers’ English Proficiency Level in Kazakhstani Universities and Their English Development Strategies**” has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Aisi Li

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ABSTRACT

A Correlation Study of EMI Teachers' English Proficiency Level in Kazakhstani Universities and Their English Development Strategies

This quantitative research study aims to find a correlation between the English proficiency level of English Medium Instruction (EMI) teachers at Kazakhstani universities and the strategies they put into practice to develop their English. Within the educational reform in Kazakhstan, facing growing attention toward the level of English proficiency among university instructors, this research becomes quite crucial due to its focus on the gap identified in EMI teacher language competencies and critical problems in the successful realization of EMI programs. This cross-sectional research, utilizing convenience and snowball sampling methods, examined the self-assessed English proficiency levels of 39 EMI teachers from six universities in Almaty, Astana, and Taraz. It identified the EMI teachers' most frequently applied language learning strategies in developing their language skills. The findings connoted that there were significant relationships between certain formal and informal learning strategies and high English proficiency levels among EMI teachers. More specifically, teachers who scored higher on English proficiency were more likely to take standardized tests, participate in standardized test preparation courses within formal strategies, and engage in social interaction and cultural immersion activities like visiting English-speaking countries and interacting with native speakers within informal strategies. The study added to the understanding of effective strategies in language development in the context of higher education in Kazakhstan. The findings of the study help guide policymaking and teacher professional development and give implications for further research in EMI contexts.

Аңдатпа

Қазақстандық университеттердегі ағылшын тілінде сабақ беретін (ЕМІ) оқытушылардың ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейі мен тілді дамыту стратегиялары арасындағы байланыс зерттеуі

Бұл сандық зерттеу Қазақстандық университеттердегі ағылшын тілінде сабақ беретін (ЕМІ) оқытушылардың ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейі мен олардың ағылшын тілін дамыту үшін қолданатын стратегиялар арасындағы байланысты табуға бағытталған. Қазақстандағы білім беру реформасы контекстінде университет оқытушыларының ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейіне деген назардың артуымен бұл зерттеу ЕМІ оқытушыларының тілдік қабілеттеріндегі кемшіліктерді және ЕМІ бағдарламаларының сәтті іске асырылуындағы маңызды мәселелерді қамту арқылы айтарлықтай маңызға ие болып отыр. Бұл көлденең зерттеуде, ‘ыңғайлылық’ және ‘қар кесектері’ таңдау әдістері пайдаланылып, Алматы, Астана және Тараздағы алты университеттен 39 ЕМІ оқытушысының өзін-өзі бағалау арқылы ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейлері бағаланды. ЕМІ оқытушыларының тілдік дағдыларын дамытуда жиі қолданатын тіл үйрену стратегиялары анықталды. Зерттеу нәтижелері белгілі бір ресми және бейресми стратегиялар мен жоғары ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейлері арасында маңызды байланыстардың болғанын көрсетті. Атап айтқанда, ағылшын тілін жоғары деңгейде меңгерген оқытушылар ресми стратегиялар арасынан стандартты тесттерді тапсыруға және стандартты тестке дайындық курстарына қатысуға, ал бейресми стратегиялар арасынан ағылшын тілінде сөйлейтін елдерге сапар шегу және туған тілде сөйлеушілермен әлеуметтік қарым-қатынас жасау сияқты әлеуметтік өзара әрекеттесу және мәдени иммерсиялық іс-шараларға қатысуға бейім болды. Бұл зерттеу Қазақстандағы жоғары білім беру контекстінде тілді дамыту стратегияларының

тиімділігі туралы түсінікті кеңейтті. Зерттеудің нәтижелері саясат жүргізу мен мұғалімдерді кәсіби дамытуға бағдар береді және ЕМІ контекстінде одан әрі зерттеулер жүргізу үшін ұсыныстар қамтамасыз етеді.

Аннотация

Исследование корреляции уровня владения английским языком преподавателями, преподающих на английском языке (ЕМІ), в казахстанских университетах и их стратегий развития языка

Это количественное исследование направлено на выявление связи между уровнем владения английским языком преподавателей, преподающих на английском языке (ЕМІ) в казахстанских университетах, и стратегиями, которые они используют для развития своих языковых навыков. В контексте образовательной реформы в Казахстане и возрастающего внимания к уровню владения английским языком среди преподавателей университетов, данное исследование приобретает особую важность из-за его акцента на выявление пробелов в языковой компетенции преподавателей ЕМІ и критических проблем в успешной реализации программ ЕМІ. В этом поперечном исследовании, которое использовало методы отбора по удобству и снежного кома, были оценены самооценочные уровни владения английским языком 39 преподавателей ЕМІ из шести университетов в Алматы, Астане и Таразе. Были идентифицированы наиболее часто используемые преподавателями ЕМІ стратегии изучения языка для развития их языковых навыков. Результаты показали, что существуют значимые связи между определенными формальными и неформальными стратегиями обучения и высокими уровнями владения английским языком среди преподавателей ЕМІ. В частности, преподаватели, которые демонстрировали более высокие результаты по владению английским языком, сдавали стандартизированные тесты, участвовали в курсах подготовки к стандартизированным тестам среди формальных стратегий, а также участвовали в социальном взаимодействии и культурной интеграции, таких как посещение англоговорящих стран и взаимодействие с носителями языка среди

неформальных стратегий. Это исследование расширило понимание эффективных стратегий развития языка в контексте высшего образования в Казахстане. Результаты данного исследования помогут в формировании политики, профессиональном развитии преподавателей и дадут рекомендации для дальнейших исследований в контексте ЕМІ.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background Information

The importance of teacher quality is undeniable in shaping educational outcomes. As posited by Misra (2018), teachers are the primary component in any educational system, and their performance significantly determines the efficacy of educational policies (Jian, 2020). This realization has catalyzed an increased emphasis on Teacher Professional Development. Villegas-Reimers (2003) argued that teacher development can improve teachers' subject-matter expertise, pedagogical techniques, and student learning outcomes. Studies have repeatedly found a link between teachers' professional growth and students' academic success (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

University teachers have a critical role in the innovation and transmission of knowledge (Li, 2012). As Zenkova and Khamitova (2017) highlighted, the trend of teaching subjects in English in non-English-speaking countries, especially in higher education, has been gaining popularity. According to Coleman (2006), English has become the language of tertiary education across Europe, thanks to staff mobility, teaching and research resources, graduates' employability, student exchanges, and access to international students.

This trend extends to Kazakhstan as well. According to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Education (No. 319-III, 2007), every educational institution, regardless of ownership type, is required to ensure students' proficiency in the national language, Kazakh, and at least one other foreign language in alignment with the mandatory state standard. Trilingual education, involving Kazakh, Russian, and English instruction, is further bolstered through the State Program for the Development of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2016), underscoring the importance of multilingual learning.

Kazakhstan's university system is being reformed with a focus on professional excellence and global integration. One of the significant trends appearing in Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD programs across the country is the use of English as the primary language of instruction (Seitzhanova et al., 2015). In response, 42 higher education institutions have begun developing and implementing programs where English is the primary language of instruction (Zenkova & Khamitova). Notably, from 2017-2018, 15 core universities have begun transitioning to English-language teaching, especially in natural sciences and mathematics (State Program, No. 123, 2016).

The transition to English will continue, with English expected to become the primary language for specialized courses in Master's programs (State Program, No. 123, 2016). Efforts are ongoing to boost the appeal of Kazakhstan's higher and postgraduate education and enhance its international standing (Concepts of Development of Higher Education and Science, No. 248, 2023). Such efforts include a continued focus on the internationalization strategy, attracting foreign teachers and students, and promoting multilingual education to fully integrate Kazakhstani students into the global academic community (Concepts of Development of Higher Education and Science, No. 248, 2023).

Under such vision and policy, developing academic English proficiency among university teachers is paramount. As Kazakhstan's education system evolves to meet global standards and the country increasingly positions itself as a significant player in the international academic community, enhancing teachers' proficiency in English is essential. Making English an instructional language is a strategic move with far-reaching implications for the future of the educational landscape in this country. The policies and trends in this chapter clearly set an excellent foundation for the issues that the following sections will

discuss. The implications of these changes on Kazakhstan's higher education and the strategies for ensuring a successful transition will form the crux of this research.

1.2 Problem Statement

Many studies have highlighted the challenges of low English proficiency among EMI teachers. Siegel (2020) and An et al. (2021) found that this can reduce student comprehension and participation. Hammou and Kesbi (2023) further emphasized the dissatisfaction of EMI teachers with their own English proficiency, which they see as a major barrier to successful EMI implementation. Martinez (2020) provided a potential solution, suggesting that a minimum English proficiency level of B2 is necessary for EMI teachers. These findings underscore the need for targeted support and training for EMI teachers to improve their English proficiency and enhance the quality of EMI instruction. As for Kazakhstan, universities in this country are working to adopt English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). Despite these attempts, the proficiency level of English among teachers needs to improve, presenting significant challenges to the country's educational advancements.

Some studies highlight that the key obstacle to effectively implementing EMI is teachers' and students' limited English language proficiency (Karabassova, 2020; Zhilbayev et al., 2019, as cited in Yessenbekova, 2022). An analysis by the Information Analytical Centre in 2017 revealed that only 12% of teachers who taught English at 19 universities possessed advanced English language proficiency (C1-C2 levels) (Yessenbekova, 2022). Consequently, the quality of EMI programs could be jeopardized by the limited English proficiency of the educators. Teachers' language skills are not sufficiently developed due to a shortage of English textbooks, inadequate methodological and teaching assistance, and exclusion of English proficiency competence from methodological and standard textbooks (Tazhigulova et al.,

2018). This shortfall in resources results in a profound impact on the quality of language instruction provided.

Several other factors further contribute to the low proficiency levels. The elderly generation of instructors finds it challenging to learn English, and some teachers resist using English to instruct Kazakh students (Oralova, 2012). Coupled with this, there's a notable lack of enthusiasm and readiness to study English among the faculty, and the strategies to improve English competence fall short of their objectives. The inability of some older teachers to instruct in English creates a significant roadblock in the development of EMI (Oralova, 2012, as cited in Yessenbekova, 2022). Teachers familiar with traditional, Soviet-era teaching methods exhibit a marked resistance to adopting EMI, which can undermine attempts to enhance English proficiency among faculty (Fimyar & Kurakbayev, 2016, as cited in Yessenbekova, 2022).

What lies at the root of this low English proficiency may be the lack of effective language training programs for teachers (Karabassova, 2020, as cited in Yessenbekova, 2022). This issue seems to be systemic, extending across the entire educational system in the country. This inadequate training and preparedness to teach English negatively impact students' learning outcomes (Yeskeldiyeva & Tazhibayeva, 2015). The teaching methodologies currently in use do not meet the requirements of contemporary language instruction, hindering efficient language learning (Yeskeldiyeva & Tazhibayeva, 2015).

In summary, there is a significant void in developing programs or methodologies to boost the English competence of EMI instructors in Kazakhstani universities. Given the increasing significance of English in the global environment, addressing these problems should be a top priority in the country's educational policy.

1.3 Research Purpose and Research Questions

This quantitative study aims to establish the relationship between the English proficiency levels of university teachers and the different approaches they use to develop their English proficiency. Several studies have found a strong link between language learning strategies and English proficiency. For instance, Anggarista and Wahyudin (2022) emphasized that using appropriate language learning strategies could lead to proficiency in English. According to Jalo (2005), learners who employ efficient language learning techniques frequently achieve better proficiency levels in the target language. Similarly, Rao (2012) and Ali et al. (2018) found that high-level students tend to use more strategies more frequently, and a strong relationship exists between English proficiency and using these strategies. Cawagdan – Cuarto and Rivera (2018) further identified social learning strategies as a strong predictor of English proficiency. Fewell (2010) highlighted the critical role of the selection of language learning strategies in determining language learning success. These findings collectively suggest efficient language learning techniques can significantly impact English proficiency.

To fulfill the objectives of this study and to validate findings from the prior literature, the subsequent research questions may be proposed. The main research question:

Is there a significant correlation between the English proficiency of EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities and the types of development programs or strategies they use for language acquisition?

Sub-questions:

- What is the EMI teachers' level of English proficiency in Kazakhstani universities?
- What are the commonly used language learning strategies and challenges among EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities?

- What is the correlation between the EMI teachers' English proficiency and the formal learning strategies?
- What is the correlation between the EMI teachers' English proficiency and the informal learning strategies?

Hypothesis:

The guiding hypothesis of this study is that there is a significant correlation between the EMI teachers' levels of English proficiency and the types of development strategies or language learning methodologies they employ. This hypothesis is supported by earlier research demonstrating a link between efficient language learning techniques and English proficiency.

Based on the sub-questions, here are the sub-hypotheses that can be developed to support the investigation:

- Sub-Hypothesis 1: There is a significant correlation between the EMI teachers' English proficiency and the employment of formal learning strategies; teachers with higher proficiency levels are more likely to engage with structured and academic-focused language development programs.
- Sub-Hypothesis 2: There is a significant correlation between the EMI teachers' English proficiency and informal learning strategies; teachers with higher proficiency levels tend to integrate English into their daily lives through activities like watching English media, reading in English, and socializing with English speakers.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this study can provide meaningful information to Kazakhstani politicians, administrators, and teachers—especially those who work in universities. By

describing the benefits and downsides of various language learning strategies and techniques, the study can assist teachers in better tailoring their English learning practices. University administrators may make well-informed judgments about how to enhance their professional development methods while reducing expenses by analyzing the state of English proficiency among university teachers today and the effectiveness of current teacher development efforts. In conjunction with previous studies, this work may enhance university teachers' proficiency in the English language by enabling more informed choices on language learning objectives and teacher training initiatives. Higher levels of English competency among university faculty can improve academic program quality, make universities more appealing to prospective foreign students, and promote the possibility of international collaboration.

Essentially, this study can help take a critical step in breaking down the current linguistic barrier and effectively introducing English as a medium of instruction in higher education establishments in Kazakhstan. It could provide enlightening details regarding effective ways to acquire the English language and pave the way for more research in this field. The results could also have consequences for other non-English speaking countries trying to internationalize their universities and facing similar challenges.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis contains six chapters, excluding the reference list and the appendices. The introduction chapter provides the background to the study, a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, and the significance of the study. The second chapter, the Literature Review, establishes the key concepts and highlights the criticality of English proficiency for teachers in higher education English-Medium Instruction (EMI) settings. It also provides an overview of the current English proficiency levels of EMI teachers in

Kazakhstan, considering various background factors, discusses both formal and informal approaches to language learning, and outlines the conceptual framework underpinning the discussion of findings. In the third chapter, Methodology, the research method, and design are articulated, along with sampling procedures, research sites, data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, and the consideration of ethical issues. The fourth chapter, Findings, presents a detailed analysis of the correlation between the English proficiency level of EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities and the developmental programs or strategies they utilize for language acquisition. The fifth chapter, Discussion, goes further in-depth, comparing the study findings with existing literature and evaluating them through the conceptual framework established earlier. The final chapter, Conclusion, synthesizes the major findings, acknowledges the strengths and limitations of the study, offers research implications and recommendations, and reflects on my learning journey and experiences derived from undertaking this project.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Main Concepts

English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)

Before exploring the development of English proficiency among university EMI teachers in Kazakhstan, it would be helpful to clarify some concepts. English as a medium of instruction (EMI) is the first concept that needs to be considered. To begin with, a working definition of EMI is the practice of instructing academic subjects (excluding English) using the English language in regions or countries where the primary language spoken by most people is not English (Macaro et al., 2016). However, many terms are associated with EMI, including EME (English-medium education), EMEMUS (English-medium education in multilingual university settings), TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages), and ICLHE (integrating content and language in higher education) (Paulsrud et al., 2021). Therefore, Pecorari and Malmström (2018) proposed four features of EMI after contrasting several definitions from recent sources, which they summarize as follows:

1. The language utilized for instruction is English.
2. English needs not to be taught as a subject on its own.
3. The primary goal is not the development of the English language.
4. Most participants in the environment are L2 English speakers.

English Proficiency for Teachers

The following vital term that should be defined is English proficiency for teachers. The description of English proficiency for teachers, particularly those teaching in EMI, calls for a more nuanced view. English proficiency in this context is defined as more than just language knowledge; it is also a distinct subset of language skills adapted to educational settings.

Freeman et al. (2015) describe teacher language proficiency as planning lessons in English and delivering them successfully.

This view is further augmented by De Diezmas and Barrera (2021), who opines that adequate knowledge of English implies the use of formal, informal, and technical language to transmit the subject's contents. Teachers must be proficient enough in front of the different communicative situations that arise inside and outside the classroom (De Diezmas & Barrera, 2021). For example, they must change from technical language during a lecture to conversational language when speaking one-to-one with the students.

Dimova (2020) furthers this discussion by emphasizing that English proficiency also involves the teacher's ability to understand and adapt to the cultural and linguistic diversity in a multilingual classroom. This holistic approach includes effective oral and written communication, appropriate use of academic terminology, and adaptability that accounts for students' varying backgrounds (Dimova, 2020). Universities keen on maintaining high-quality EMI courses are increasingly instituting internal assessments of lecturers' English proficiency to uphold the integrity of their programs (Dimova, 2020).

Teacher Professional Development (TPD)

Another important concept that should be looked at is teacher professional development (TPD). TPD is defined as a continuing learning, education, training, and support action procedure to assist teachers in deciding and implementing valuable changes in their teaching and learning behavior to educate their pupils better (Misra, 2018). In addition, according to Wu (2021), teacher development refers to expanding teacher professional knowledge, improving pedagogy and psychology, improving teaching skills, and improving teachers' overall planning and awareness of their profession. Consequently, TPD can be

considered as the process of enhancing teachers' professional abilities through ongoing learning, instruction, support, and training, which helps teachers make wise decisions and put those decisions into practice, which in turn helps them educate their students more effectively.

2.2 The Importance of English Proficiency for Higher Education EMI Teachers.

English proficiency is highly beneficial for teachers (Faez & Karas, 2019). According to a poll by the Innovative University of Eurasia, 90 % of teachers believe that teaching their courses in English will benefit them (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). EMI in Kazakhstan's higher education system offers various benefits, including professional advancement opportunities, access to valuable sources of information, and enhanced participation in global communication.

Firstly, instructing them on their topics in English is an excellent way of professional advancement. Oralova (2012) claimed that implementing English-language programs would hasten the internationalization of Kazakhstan's higher education system and, as a result of the Bologna process, will undoubtedly boost academic mobility for professors and students. As shown in the survey conducted by the Innovative University of Eurasia, all 20 respondents claimed that instructors' careers would be positively impacted by lecturing in English, primarily by raising a teacher's status and allowing for international academic exchange and labor movement to wealthy nations (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). Teachers will be better prepared to achieve professional goals in Kazakhstani and foreign competitive labor markets (Seitzhanova et al., 2015). Knowing English is considered prestige, as it helps promote a career, find a better job, particularly in foreign organizations, and earn a higher salary (Alzhanova, 2020).

Secondly, English proficiency enables teachers to read materials in English, which can broaden their knowledge since, as Al-Masheikhi et al. (2014) stated, English is a scientific and technological language. It means teachers would access valuable sources of fresh information and innovation and foreign sources (Soe et al., 2020). According to Zenkova and Khamitova (2017), reading expert English literature will increase teachers' competencies and the quality of instructional resources and help them better grasp their topic.

Thirdly, English proficiency would enable participation in worldwide communication (Dearden, 2014). Knowing English improves the motivation of instructors to participate in various international programs, such as internships and grant programs (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017; Soe et al., 2020). Studies showed that strengthening their English language abilities would help them to communicate more effectively globally, improve their professional contacts with international colleagues (Soe et al., 2020), and increase their motivation to produce scientific publications for high-impact journals (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017).

Furthermore, EMI can contribute to realizing the aim of trilingualism in Kazakhstan, which states that every citizen of Kazakhstan must be fluent in three languages; the Kazakh language serves as the official language of the country, while Russian serves as the language of interethnic dialogue and English serves as the language of global integration (Nazarbayev, 2007). Since English proficiency promotes professional advancement, enables citizens to access global sources, participate in international communication, and realize the nation's goal, it is advantageous for university EMI teachers to possess high English proficiency levels.

2.3 English Proficiency Level of EMI Teachers in Kazakhstani Universities

The English proficiency level of EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities needs improvement, and some obstacles prevent it from being improved. To begin with, according to Zenkova and Khamitova (2017) and Seitzhanova et al. (2015), the inadequate English proficiency of students and instructors is a significant problem in Kazakhstani universities. The English proficiency of STEM members is significantly lower than that of the business field (Oralova, 2012). Almaty, Kazakhstan's financial and cultural center, has a higher English proficiency among teachers, especially in higher education, due to more international connections and resources, while other regions may have lower proficiency levels due to less international exposure (Oralova, 2012). Zenkova and Khamitova (2017) said that most teachers at the Innovative University of Eurasia, located in Pavlodar, thought they did not have "enough" English competency to deliver a good service. Out of 20, 15 teachers identified their English level as Intermediate, two as Upper-Intermediate, and three as Low (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). Even though all 20 teachers knew the current trend of utilizing English in schools and universities to teach courses, only six instructors demonstrated their mastery of terminology (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017).

Secondly, there are technical issues. There is a shortage of authentic teaching materials, resources, and facilities (Seitzhanova et al., 2015; Tlemissov et al., 2020; Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). The teachers need to learn more about relevant methodology (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017) because there is no shared methodological foundation (state standard programs) to instruct subjects in English (Seitzhanova et al., 2015). For example, they do not know how to assess examinations, whether they have to score English proficiency or the students' subject knowledge (Seitzhanova et al., 2015).

Thirdly, regarding the psychological aspect, teachers were described as not ready to teach English, inactive, and low-motivated (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). Some teachers had a conservative mentality and were not open to learning new approaches or implementing innovations (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017), while some had cultural issues (Seitzhanova et al., 2015) or were against using English to instruct Kazakh students (Oralova, 2012).

Furthermore, there is a management problem in higher education in Kazakhstan (Seitzhanova et al., 2015). Zenkova and Khamitova (2017) highlighted that university administration pressures teachers, so they must do extensive documentation, prepare syllabi and new materials, and do extracurricular work. However, they have few incentives and support, and their working conditions could be more favorable. (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017).

Due to low English levels and technical, psychological, and management issues, EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities have problems with English proficiency, and there are impediments to enhancing it.

2.4 English Proficiency by Some Background Factors: Gender, Experience, and Learning Environment

English language proficiency is a multifaceted skill influenced by various factors, ranging from individual attributes such as gender and experience to educational environments, including the type of institution, the opportunity to study abroad, and the study of a Ph.D. This section synthesizes research findings on the impact of these factors on English proficiency.

The impact of gender on English language proficiency has been a topic of interest among researchers, with studies presenting mixed findings. Zoghi et al. (2013) observed that gender plays a significant role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) achievement, while

Główka (2014) found that girls tend to outperform boys in English language tasks. Contrarily, O'Loughlin (2002) focused on oral proficiency and found that gender had no significant impact. Tong et al. (2010) supported this by emphasizing that instructional intervention is a more crucial factor in language proficiency than gender.

A number of studies have found a positive correlation between years of teaching EMI courses and English proficiency. Yuksel et al. (2021) and Cosgun and Hasırcı (2017) reported significant improvements in English language proficiency over time, with Yuksel also noting a positive impact on academic achievement. Vidal and Jarvis (2018) stated that there is a sure development of L2 proficiency but only a tiny growth of essay quality and no change in lexical diversity.

Proficiency in English also depends on the environment in which the language is learned. Pellegrino (1998) and Carroll (1967) argued that studying in English-speaking countries could significantly improve one's English, especially when one previously had coursework in a foreign language (Magnan & Back, 2007). The type of universities also matters—according to Farooqui (2007), students from private universities are better at English than state university students. However, Hossain (2019) cautions that despite this advantage, private universities may face challenges like inappropriate curricula and a lack of research that can affect the quality of English instruction. Finally, studying for a PhD can enhance English proficiency due to various factors. Javanmiri and Bdaiwi (2021) argue for the necessity of language proficiency in literary analysis, while Qureshi et al. (2020) point out the influence of psychological aspects like self-confidence on speaking performance. Storch and Hill (2008) note that academic study can improve language skills, with evidence of such enhancement after a semester at university.

2.5 Formal Learning Strategies

The concept of learning can be broadly categorized into two main types: formal and informal learning. Each has its own set of characteristics, settings, and methods, but both are integral to the overall educational experience of an individual.

Formal learning, as defined by Delgrande (1987) and Osherson and Weinstein (2011), involves using formal systems and theories to acquire knowledge and skills. Formal learning is a structured and organized form of education within educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities. Led by trained instructors or teachers, these programs follow a prescribed curriculum designed to meet specific learning objectives (Schugurensky, 2000). A set of rules, regulations, and standards often governs the learning process in this setting. Based on the information, there can be some possible examples of Formal ways to enhance English proficiency for EMI teachers: standardized test preparation courses (like IELTS or TOEFL), English language courses, online courses (platforms like Coursera, Udemy), workshops and seminars.

There are some research results from various literature about the effectiveness of those formal strategies. The debate is whether IELTS preparation courses improve the English language. Hashemzade and Zenouzagh (2022) highlighted that Computer-Assisted Language Learning improved the proficiency level of IELTS learners and also helped increase their engagement. However, Gan (2009) and Hu and Trenkic (2019) found no significant difference in IELTS test scores between students who had taken IELTS preparation courses and those who had not. Gan (2009) also noted that the English proficiency gap among these groups is narrowing, and many other factors, such as university English learning experiences, might cause that gap. In addition, Hu and Trenkic (2019) commented that practice of any kind and

repeated test-taking could inflate IELTS scores without necessarily improving overall English proficiency.

Several studies have found a positive impact of English language courses on English proficiency. Shishan (2020) demonstrated that an introductory English course at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia significantly improved students' language proficiency. Similarly, Ababneh and Al-Momani (2011) pointed out the effectiveness of a vocational instructional program on students' English language proficiency. Ming-mei (2019) has proven a direct relationship between language proficiency and the development of teaching knowledge to English student teachers.

A range of studies have explored the effectiveness of online courses on English proficiency. Rodrigues and Vethamani (2015) demonstrated that an English proficiency program in online learning elevated speaking grades and strengthened vocabulary. Similarly, Chen et al. (2004) claimed that English language skill enhancement was obtained using the web. Novokhatskaya (2020) highlighted the potential of online education, suggesting that it can be as effective as traditional in-class learning. However, Zeng and Wang (2020) noted college English online learning to be scarcely efficient with notable factors such as gender, origin, and English proficiency. These studies collectively suggest that online courses can be effective in improving English proficiency, but the specific factors influencing their effectiveness require further investigation.

Workshops and seminars are no exceptions in language proficiency. Lie et al. (2022) described the fluctuating influence of a teacher certification program in Indonesia on the teachers' English language use. Ortiz-Neira (2019) proved that spoken fluency is boosted by information gap activities postpartum in young EFL learners. Nguyen (2020) and Bone et al. (2019) highlighted the benefits of specific teaching approaches, such as oral presentations and

communicative task-based instruction, in enhancing speaking abilities. All of this form the general statement that seminars and workshops encourage English proficiency, particularly when they are exceedingly oriented.

2.6 Informal Learning Strategies

In contrast, informal learning is a more flexible and unstructured form of education outside formal educational settings (Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Malcolm et al., 2003). It is often learner-centered, with the control of learning primarily resting in the hands of the learner. Informal learning is not highly conscious and can occur in various settings like the workplace, community, or even at home (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Based on the information, there can be some possible examples of Informal ways to enhance English proficiency for EMI teachers: self-study (using resources like books, podcasts, and online articles), peer interaction (with native speakers or more proficient colleagues), observation (watching experienced EMI teachers or English language videos), daily practice, networking.

There are some research results from various literature about the effectiveness of those informal strategies. It has been demonstrated that traveling to English-speaking countries has a positive effect on English language proficiency, especially for immigrants (Espenshade & Fu, 1997). The beneficial effects of high self-perceived English proficiency were revealed in the better academic performance of international students (Martirosyan et al., 2015). However, background variables such as language learning strategies, proficiency, and length of stay might influence these results (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Flege & Fletcher, 1992).

Interacting with native English speakers has positively influenced EFL learners' self-confidence in their English proficiency (Alberth, 2023). This interaction could also positively affect oral performance in terms of pronunciation and fluency (Lu et al., 2014). Moreover, the

type of English teacher, whether native or non-native, can have different effects on language learning outcomes, with native speakers enhancing fluency and lexical complexity and non-native speakers improving accuracy (Ghane & Razmi, 2023).

The effectiveness of various reading treatments in improving English proficiency has also been studied. For instance, Türker (2010) revealed that reading by listening to audiobooks benefits reading comprehension, while Ma et al. (2023) highlighted the benefits of literature circles in developing reading ability. Extensive reading, according to Iwahori (2008), has a positive effect on reading speed and language competence. However, Affendi and Aziz (2020) identified challenges in using literature to enhance English proficiency, suggesting a need for further research in this area.

Several studies showed the efficacy of watching English movies and TV shows in improving English proficiency. Sen et al. (2020) stressed the importance of watching movies and TV, especially by providing foreign-language subtitles. This is supported by Daneshfard et al. (2021), who noted the advanced learners' choice of both English-subtitled and no-subtitled movies. In addition, Fauji and Zuhriyah (2022) noted the benefits of using English-subtitled movies to develop speaking ability. Catherine and Saminathan's (2016) study also demonstrated the beneficial effect of TV on communicative competence; thus, English-language television shows could also benefit language learning.

English learning apps and online platforms also reveal a positive effect on improving language proficiency. Rodrigues and Vethamani (2015) proved that the online learning program improved the acquisition of speaking, vocabulary, and listening skills. According to Hao et al. (2019), mobile apps also improve English vocabulary learning and positively correlate with attitude. Rezaei et al. (2013) reported the efficacy of mobile applications in improving vocabulary learning, confidence, and active participation in class. Further, E-

learning media improved performance and motivation in online English learning (Pratiwi & Toshiaki, 2023).

In summary, formal learning provides a structured and measurable educational approach, but informal learning offers flexibility and learner autonomy. However, both aspects are essential for a person's thorough development, and their combination reflects the real world. No matter how knowledge is acquired through a primary discipline or practice, each method plays its role in each person's permanent education. By using both formal and informal methods, EMI teachers can improve overall English skill development.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Sociocultural Theory (SCT), developed by Lev Vygotsky, provides a compelling framework for examining the strategies EMI teachers use to enhance their English proficiency and the effectiveness of these strategies. There are several reasons SCT proves useful for this line of investigation:

1. **SCT's Emphasis on Mediation and Learning Context:** Vygotsky underscored the intricate connection between learners and their social environment, advocating that learning is deeply affected by sociocultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). The integration of language development within cultural-historical contexts is crucial to educational theory, as suggested by Allahyar and Nazari (2012). Their work indicates how cognitive processes are influenced by their historical and social environment. SCT, anchored in Vygotsky's propositions, suggests that learning is inherently social, shaped by cultural-historical factors (Behroozizad et al., 2014). For EMI teachers working in varied sociocultural environments, their specific contexts likely influence the methods employed to bolster English

proficiency. This enables a multifaceted assessment of how differing sociocultural conditions shape the strategies employed by EMI teachers and the efficacy of these methods.

2. Role of Language as a Psychological Tool: Vygotsky characterized language as a psychological tool transforming internal mental activities (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). Sociocultural theory also points to learning as a fundamentally social construct, positing that language is a bridge for transforming personal knowledge into collective understanding and facilitating communal learning processes (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). As EMI teachers endeavor to enhance their English proficiency, they refine this crucial tool, which aids in fostering effective mediation in their educational context. By understanding how EMI teachers strengthen this tool, we can gain insights into their cognitive and pedagogical transformations.

3. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Learning Potential: The ZPD concept, which delineates the gap between what learners can achieve independently and with assistance (Vygotsky, 1978; Newman et al., 1989, as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995), can be applied to investigate the support systems and resources employed by EMI teachers. Scaffolding from those with more expertise enables learners to undertake tasks beyond their independent ability (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022). Mediators such as instructors and peers are instrumental in guiding learners through their ZPD and supporting their journey from current capabilities to potential development levels (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022). Ultimately, SCT emphasizes the teacher's role in providing scaffolding that supports and enhances student learning (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). This can also shed light on the effectiveness of mentorship, professional development courses, or collaborative engagements in enhancing the English proficiency of EMI teachers.

4. Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Dialogue: SCT's focus on both interpersonal (between people) and intrapersonal (within an individual) dialogues, as critical processes in learning (John-Steiner, 1985 as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995), can aid in investigating how EMI teachers interact with peers, mentors, or even engage in self-reflective practices to enhance their proficiency. Sociocultural Theory (SCT) posits that learning is a fundamentally social process that emerges from interactions within a community, a principle that was established early on in the works of theorists such as Lantolf and Pavlenko (1995). More recent discussions by Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022) elaborate on how SCT views learning and development as interacting processes mediating language acquisition. A particular aspect of SCT, as noted by Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022), is the concept of collective scaffolding, which integrates learner cooperation into the broader scaffolding approach. This concept is pivotal because it implies that university teachers can substantially benefit from peer interactions and collaborative learning environments. Such settings enable sharing knowledge, strategies, and experiences about English language learning, thereby creating a supportive community that bolsters professional growth and language proficiency. These insights derived from the study indicate how SCT's emphasis on social interaction, mediated learning, and scaffolding can effectively inform the exploration of university teachers' development in English proficiency.

5. Activity Theory and Task-Oriented Learning: In Vygotsky's work, activity theory emphasizes the essential role of motives and goal-directed activities in influencing behavior (Harre and Gillett, 1994, as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). By viewing EMI teachers through the lens of Activity Theory, we can gain a deeper understanding of why they select specific methods for proficiency enhancement and how their underlying motives influence these chosen methods, potentially affecting their success.

In conclusion, the SCT is a fruitful lens for analyzing EMI teachers' strategies for enhancing their English proficiency. Understanding the sociocultural, cognitive, and motivational aspects of their learning will provide a better understanding of the success due to different proficiency enhancement approaches. Therefore, the SCT framework is not only theoretically based but additionally informs how teachers' experiences are complex and reinforces the importance of context, collaboration, and intrinsic motivation in language acquisition.

2.8 Summary

To sum up, this chapter has delved into the critical role of English proficiency for university EMI teachers in Kazakhstan, highlighting its importance for professional advancement, accessing valuable recourses, and global academic participation. Despite the benefits, challenges such as limited resources, management issues, and variable motivation levels among teachers impede proficiency improvements. For this reason, a comprehensive approach to formal and informal education seems more appropriate. Furthermore, Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (SCT) provides an appropriate perspective for data analysis, focusing on EMI teachers' attempts to develop their English proficiency.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research used a non-experimental cross-sectional quantitative research design to establish the relationship between the English proficiency levels of university teachers and the different approaches they use to develop their English proficiency. First, I found a quantitative research design appropriate because statistical analysis is performed using numerical data. Since the study aims to correlate EMI teachers' effective approaches or strategies with their perceived English proficiency, quantitative research can objectively measure such programs and strategies (Creswell, 2012). In terms of objectivity, a correlational design is apt for this study for several reasons. The key aim of a correlational research study is to expose and quantify the relationships between two or more given variables (Kumar, 2010). My study seeks to understand the correlation between teacher development approaches and resultant English proficiency levels.

Moreover, correlational research can encompass data from various sources, from self-reported questionnaires about perceived effectiveness to actual test scores, allowing for a comprehensive view (Curtis et al., 2016). In addition, strong correlations can imply predictive relationships. If a specific development program consistently correlates with higher English proficiency, it could suggest its potential effectiveness (Curtis et al., 2016).

Secondly, Salkind (2010) recommends that non-experimental research designs are appropriate tools for understanding the relationship between variables as these designs do not involve manipulating variables. A non-experimental design is appropriate for this study since it aims to examine the relationship between teacher development approaches and English proficiency in real life.

Thirdly, a cross-sectional research design is also appropriate as the study aims to collect data at a specific time. As Creswell (2009) states, cross-sectional designs involve data collection and measurement of a variable at one point in time. This would be helpful for checking the EMI teachers' current level of English proficiency and their involvement in strategies.

In this light, the present proposed research used a non-experimental cross-sectional research design. This design is appropriate in the context of the present study in that it allows the researcher to collect data at one point in time without manipulating any variable. This research design is useful in explorative research and is often applied in cases where the researcher wants to describe the current status of a given phenomenon.

3.2 Population and Sample

The participants for this study were EMI teachers working in six popular universities in Almaty, Astana, and Taraz. The participants were 39 EMI teachers who teach in these universities selected through convenience and snowball sampling. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, selects participants depending on their availability and desire to participate (Creswell, 2012). This sampling method is frequently employed in educational research when time and resources are limited (Creswell, 2012). Snowball sampling is a technique applicable to qualitative research. However, recently, it has been noted for its applicability in quantitative research and online questionnaires. Naderifar et al. (2017) and Leighton et al. (2021) highlight its effectiveness in reaching vulnerable or hard-to-reach populations, such as those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has also been supported by Dusek et al. (2015), who point out the necessity of using social media and targeted snowball sampling in data collection.

In this case, the sample size of 39 EMI teachers was chosen based on the availability of the participants currently teaching in Kazakhstan universities. This sampling is appropriate in this study because the research question focuses on establishing a correlation between effective English proficiency development strategies or approaches among EMI teachers in Kazakhstan and their perceived English level rather than generalizing about the entire population of EMI teachers. As such, a smaller sample size can still provide useful insights into the research question (Salkind, 2010).

As soon as I received approval from GSE's Ethics Review Committee, I contacted the university administrators and explained my research details to them. I provided an overview of the study with the informed consent form to the universities' leadership and answered any questions they had. Then, I send the link to my online survey to the administrators so they can share it with their EMI faculty. I mostly used this indirect method of recruiting teachers because there might be some teachers who did not agree to share their contact information with unknown people, as most of the teachers in Kazakhstan are not used to using or do not have corporate emails; instead, they use personal phone numbers or emails. I emphasized the voluntary nature of their participation and the option to withdraw at any stage. I contacted the administrators until sufficient answers were collected, ensuring that they did not force the teachers to participate but gently asked them if they were willing. However, some administrators were slow to respond; whether they did not consider it important or managed to send the link to all faculty, I could not reach sufficient participants. The important point here was that I received permission from the administrators to conduct my research in their universities; the way I recruited the participants was at my discretion. I chose snowball sampling through my former acquaintances to reach the number.

3.3 Research Site

As I live in Almaty and study in Astana, I initially chose the universities from these two cities for the research sites for my convenience. Moreover, there are lots of appropriate universities to choose from there. I selected them for several reasons. Firstly, all these universities had EMI programs; they provide courses in English de facto. Secondly, they were convenient, open, and accessible, and I had acquaintances there. Thirdly, they were popular, innovative, and among the top-ranked institutions in Kazakhstan. As our studies were online during the data collection period, I was not physically present in Astana, which was why I managed to get only one answer from there. Therefore, I decided to add one more city, which was near Almaty, where I had lived and worked, and there was a university that was appropriate to my research: it had EMI teachers, was well-known, and I had acquaintances there too. It was Taraz. There were six universities in the cities from which I selected the participants. The sites consisted of three state universities and three private universities.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The information for this research was gathered through an online survey (made by Google Forms) that consists of self-administered questionnaires. These questionnaires mainly included closed-ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: background information of the participants, their English proficiency level, and approaches or strategies they used for English proficiency development. There were approximately 20 questions. It took 10-15 minutes to complete and was in three languages – English, Kazakh, and Russian. The online questionnaire comprised an informed consent form on the first page, outlining the study's objectives, time commitment, risks, risk-minimizing procedures, and benefits. After the

participant clicked agree to the consent form, they could proceed to the questions. If they declined, the survey would end.

Salkind (2010) notes that questionnaires are effective data collection instruments for quantitative research as they enable researchers to collect data from a large sample in a standardized way, making data analysis easier and more straightforward. Additionally, Creswell (2009) suggests that questionnaires provide a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population from a sample, making them suitable for collecting data about teachers' English proficiency development strategies.

Furthermore, using closed-ended questions in the questionnaire allows easy statistical data analysis using software such as jamovi (Navarro & Foxcroft, 2022). This enabled the researchers to analyze the data quickly and efficiently, which was particularly important given the relatively large sample size of 39 EMI teachers.

In conclusion, the use of a self-administered questionnaire with closed-ended questions was a suitable data collection instrument for this study as it enabled the researchers to collect a large amount of data about EMI teachers' English proficiency development approaches in a standardized way, which could be easily analyzed using statistical software.

3.5 Data Analysis

As I stopped collecting information, I started analyzing the data using Jamovi software. The analysis was conducted in multiple steps, each designed to answer specific research questions.

The first step in my analytical journey involved generating descriptive statistics. This foundational step aimed to provide an initial understanding of the data's distribution and central tendencies. I calculated the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, minimum, and

maximum for continuous variables, such as their English proficiency levels in various metrics. For categorical variables like sociodemographic characteristics and the types of language learning strategies, frequencies and percentages were determined. Answers for open-ended questions like 'Most efficient strategy' and 'Challenges' were coded and grouped. As O'Dwyer and Bernauer (2014) aptly stated, "Descriptive statistics are the building block of your data's story."

Following the descriptive analysis, I employed comparative analyses using T-tests or ANOVAs to delve deeper into group differences. An independent-sample test was conducted to compare various English proficiency metrics scores for different descriptive groups (by sociodemographic characteristics) with two levels, such as gender and university type, if they studied abroad, and for formal and informal learning strategies with two levels. The homogeneity and normality were tested, according to which Student's, Welch's, or Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted. If the p-value for the homogeneity of variances test (Lavene's) was $> .05$, the Student's test was conducted; otherwise, the Welch's test was conducted. If the p-value for the normality (normal distribution) test was $> .05$, the Student's or Welch's test, depending on the homogeneity test, was reported. If the p-value for the normality test was $\leq .05$, the Mann-Whitney U test was reported.

A one-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of various English proficiency metrics on different descriptive groups (by sociodemographic characteristics) with more than two levels, such as experience, highest academic qualification, subjects taught, and informal strategies with more than two levels. The homogeneity and normality were tested, according to which Fisher's, Welch, or Krukall-Wallis tests were conducted. If the p-value for the homogeneity of variances test (Lavene's) was $> .05$, the Fisher's test should be reported. Otherwise, the Welch's test should be reported. If the p-value

for the normality (normal distribution) test was $> .05$, Fisher's or Welch's tests should be reported, depending on the homogeneity test. If the p-value for the normality test was $\leq .05$, a nonparametric One-Way ANOVA (Kruskal-Wallis test) should be run. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test were used to compare the means within the groups. Pallant (2020) states that "T-tests and ANOVAs allow us to compare group means to see if they differ in statistical significance," thereby providing a nuanced understanding of the data.

The third step involved correlation techniques to identify significant relationships between continuous variables. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the various English proficiency metrics, Experience, Interaction with native speakers or proficient colleagues, Observation and learning from experienced EMI teachers and English video scores. Field (2013) reminds us that "Correlation does not imply causation, but it can guide hypotheses," serving as a roadmap for further inquiry.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

In order to conduct ethical research, I adhered to the NUGSE Ethics guidelines, where I outlined my research's methodology, confidentiality policies, risks, and advantages. Therefore, before beginning the data gathering, permission was obtained from the Graduates School of Education ethical committee. The targeted sample received an email with an invitation to participate in the research project, an informed consent form, and a summary of the research. The respondents were expressly informed that their participation in the research study was entirely optional and that they were free to stop at any time or choose not to answer any of the questions at any point throughout the research study.

My research participants were anonymous as they did not write their names and the names of their universities. I mainly contacted the administrators; the administrators shared the link to the survey with their faculty. Thus, I did not contact them directly in most cases, with some exceptions when I employed my acquaintances for snowball sampling. The survey had no questions about their personal identity, university names, or IP addresses. Even their emails were anonymous, as I used an open-access survey, which does not show the respondents' emails. During data analysis and reporting, findings were presented in an aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual participants. No individual responses were reported in a way that allows for participant identification.

The information gathered from the participants is confidential because I have stored it on my personal computer, which is protected by a passcode. Only I have access to the information, which will be deleted two years after the completion of my study.

3.7 Summary

In summary, the chapter reports on the quantitative research study that sought to explore the relationship between the level of English proficiency and an approach to development among university teachers in Kazakhstan. The study used a non-experimental cross-sectional design of 39 EMI teachers who responded from three cities and were approached through online questionnaires. The study's Data analysis included descriptive statistics, comparative tests, and correlation assessments. Ethical guidelines were followed, providing participant anonymity and confidentiality.

4. Findings

This chapter presents the findings through investigation of the relationship that exists between the strategies or development programs that EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities use to improve their English proficiency. It includes the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants, their degrees of English proficiency in various academic contexts, and the effectiveness of using both formal and informal learning approaches.

A group of people working mostly at private institutions, with slightly more men than women, was identified by the sociodemographic study of participants from Kazakhstani universities. The majority had Master's degrees, and several had PhDs as well. Most of the educators' specializations were in STEM subjects, with business, social sciences, and humanities coming after. Although there was a wide range of experience, the majority had taught in English-medium programs for one to ten years. Geographically, Almaty accounted for the biggest share, with a smaller presence from Taraz and Astana.

Table 1
Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristics	Categories	n	%
Gender	Male	22	56.4
	Female	17	43.6
University type	Private university	20	51.3
	State university	19	48.7
Highest Academic Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	7	17.9
	Master's Degree	21	53.8
	PhD or equivalent	11	28.2
Subjects taught (grouped)	STEM	20	51.3
	Social Sciences and Humanities	11	28.2
	Business, Economics, and Management	8	20.5
Experience (number of years teaching in an English-medium program)	0-1	4	10.3
	1-5	15	38.5
	6-10	13	33.3
	11-15	3	7.7
	More than 15	4	10.3
University location	Almaty	32	82.1
	Astana	1	2.6

Taraz	6	15.4
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4.1 The English Proficiency Level (Self-Assessed) of EMI Teachers in Kazakhstani Universities

The findings imply that the participants were very proficient in English, with the strongest skill being, on average, the ability to read academic texts. With the lowest mean score, academic writing appears to be the most difficult ability for the participants. The greater standard deviations suggest that there was some variety in the results as well, especially when it comes to writing academic papers and engaging in academic discussions.

Table 2

English Proficiency of the Participants

Descriptives	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	39	4.00	4	4.00	0.795	3	5
Reading academic texts	39	4.28	4	4.00	0.686	3	5
Writing academic papers	39	3.46	4	4.00	1.120	1	5
Delivering lectures	39	3.87	4	3.00	0.923	2	5
Engaging in academic discussions	39	3.64	4	4.00 ^a	1.135	1	5

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

There was a positive and statistically significant correlation between all the various English proficiency metrics scores ($r = .572 - .837, p < .001$) with strong to very strong strength.

Table 3

Correlation Matrix Between the Various English Proficiency Metrics

	English proficiency	Reading academic texts	Writing academic papers	Delivering lectures	Engaging in academic discussions
English proficiency	—				
Reading academic texts	0.579***	—			
Writing academic papers	0.680***	0.613***	—		
Delivering lectures	0.610***	0.682***	0.721***	—	

Engaging in academic discussions	0.671***	0.572***	0.837***	0.809***	—
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Note. ^a * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Results suggest that males and females did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores.

Table 4

English Proficiency by Gender

	Gender	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	Male	22	4.09	4.00	4.00	0.750	3	5
	Female	17	3.88	4	3.00	0.857	3	5
Reading academic texts	Male	22	4.27	4.00	4.00	0.631	3	5
	Female	17	4.29	4	5.00	0.772	3	5
Writing academic papers	Male	22	3.41	4.00	4.00	1.141	1	5
	Female	17	3.53	4	4.00	1.125	1	5
Delivering lectures	Male	22	3.77	4.00	3.00 ^a	0.973	2	5
	Female	17	4.00	4	3.00 ^a	0.866	3	5
Engaging in academic discussions	Male	22	3.50	4.00	4.00	1.185	1	5
	Female	17	3.82	4	5.00	1.074	2	5

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Table 5

Independent Samples T-Test on Gender

	Statistic	p
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U 160	0.425
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U 179	0.816
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U 177	0.777
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U 165	0.513
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U 160	0.429

Note. $H_a \mu_{\text{Male}} \neq \mu_{\text{Female}}$

Results suggest that the participants did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in English proficiency, writing academic papers, and engaging in academic discussions scores by their experience, but the participants who had more experience had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in reading academic texts, delivering lectures scores with modest effect size than the participants who had less experience.

Table 6*English Proficiency by Experience*

	Experience	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	0-1	4	3.00	3.00	3.00	0.000	3	3
	1-5	15	3.93	4	4.00	0.799	3	5
	6-10	13	4.23	4	4.00	0.725	3	5
	11-15	3	4.00	4	4.00	0.000	4	4
	15-50	4	4.50	5.00	5.00	1.000	3	5
Reading academic texts	0-1	4	3.25	3.00	3.00	0.500	3	4
	1-5	15	4.40	4	4.00	0.507	4	5
	6-10	13	4.23	4	4.00	0.725	3	5
	11-15	3	4.67	5	5.00	0.577	4	5
	15-50	4	4.75	5.00	5.00	0.500	4	5
Writing academic papers	0-1	4	2.50	2.50	2.00 ^a	0.577	2	3
	1-5	15	3.47	4	4.00	1.302	1	5
	6-10	13	3.46	4	4.00	0.967	2	5
	11-15	3	4.00	4	4.00	0.000	4	4
	15-50	4	4.00	4.50	5.00	1.414	2	5
Delivering lectures	0-1	4	2.75	3.00	3.00	0.500	2	3
	1-5	15	4.00	4	3.00 ^a	0.845	3	5
	6-10	13	3.77	4	4.00	0.927	2	5
	11-15	3	4.00	4	3.00 ^a	1.000	3	5
	15-50	4	4.75	5.00	5.00	0.500	4	5
Engaging in academic discussions	0-1	4	3.00	3.00	3.00	0.816	2	4
	1-5	15	3.73	4	4.00	1.100	2	5
	6-10	13	3.38	3	3.00	1.261	1	5
	11-15	3	4.00	4	3.00 ^a	1.000	3	5
	15-50	4	4.50	5.00	5.00	1.000	3	5

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Table 7*One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's) Test on Experience*

	F	df1	df2	p
Engaging in academic discussions	1.18	4	34	0.338

Table 8*Kruskal-Wallis Test on Experience*

	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
English proficiency	9.12	4	0.058	0.240
Reading academic texts	10.58	4	0.032	0.278
Writing academic papers	5.67	4	0.225	0.149
Delivering lectures	9.79	4	0.044	0.258

There was a positive and statistically significant correlation between experience scores and English proficiency ($r = .338$, $p < .05$), reading academic texts ($r = .337$, $p < .05$), delivering lectures ($r = .350$, $p < .05$) scores with moderate strength.

Table 9

Correlation Matrix Between the Various English Proficiency Metrics and Experience

	English proficiency	Reading academic texts	Writing academic papers	Delivering lectures	Engaging in academic discussions
Experience (cont)	0.338*	0.337*	0.254	0.350*	0.250

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Results suggest that the participants who worked in private universities had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics with a high effect size (0.52-0.75) than the participants who worked in state universities.

Table 10

English Proficiency by University Type

	University type	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	Private	20	4.45	5.00	5.00	0.686	3	5
	State	19	3.53	3	3.00	0.612	3	5
Reading academic texts	Private	20	4.60	5.00	5.00	0.598	3	5
	State	19	3.95	4	4.00	0.621	3	5
Writing academic papers	Private	20	4.00	4.00	4.00	1.026	1	5
	State	19	2.89	3	2.00 ^a	0.937	1	4
Delivering lectures	Private	20	4.40	5.00	5.00	0.754	3	5
	State	19	3.32	3	3.00	0.749	2	5
Engaging in academic discussions	Private	20	4.35	5.00	5.00	0.875	2	5
	State	19	2.89	3	3.00	0.875	1	4

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Table 11

Independent Samples T-Test on University Type

	Statistic	p	Mean difference	Effect Size
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English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	68.5	<.001	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.639
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	90.5	0.002	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.524
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	75.5	<.001	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.603
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	65.5	<.001	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.655
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	48.5	<.001	2.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.745

Note. $H_a \mu$ Private university $\neq \mu$ State university

Results suggest that the participants did not have a statistically significant difference ($p = .17$) in English proficiency by their highest academic qualification, but the participants who had higher academic qualification had statistically significantly higher scores in reading academic texts, writing academic papers, delivering lectures, engaging in academic discussions with modest effect size than the participants who had lower.

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test indicated that the mean engaging in academic discussions score obtained by participants who had a Ph.D. or equivalent ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 0.688$) was significantly higher than that of participants who had a Master's Degree ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 1.111$) and Bachelor's Degree ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 1.069$). However, the engaging in academic discussions scores of participants who had Master's Degrees did not significantly differ from participants who had Bachelor's Degrees.

Table 12

English Proficiency by Highest Academic Qualification

	Highest Academic Qualification	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	Bachelor's Degree	7	3.71	4	3.00 ^a	0.756	3	5
	Master's Degree	21	3.90	4	4.00	0.768	3	5
	PhD or equivalent	11	4.36	5	5.00	0.809	3	5
Reading academic texts	Bachelor's Degree	7	4.00	4	4.00	0.816	3	5
	Master's Degree	21	4.10	4	4.00	0.539	3	5
	PhD or equivalent	11	4.82	5	5.00	0.603	3	5

Writing academic papers	Bachelor's Degree	7	3.14	3	2.00	1.215	2	5
	Master's Degree	21	3.10	3	4.00	1.044	1	4
	PhD or equivalent	11	4.36	4	4.00 ^a	0.674	3	5
Delivering lectures	Bachelor's Degree	7	3.29	3	3.00	0.951	2	5
	Master's Degree	21	3.67	4	4.00	0.796	2	5
	PhD or equivalent	11	4.64	5	5.00	0.674	3	5
Engaging in academic discussions	Bachelor's Degree	7	3.14	3	3.00	1.069	2	5
	Master's Degree	21	3.33	3	4.00	1.111	1	5
	PhD or equivalent	11	4.55	5	5.00	0.688	3	5

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Table 13

One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's) Test on Highest Academic Qualification

	F	df1	df2	p
Engaging in academic discussions	6.32	2	36	0.004

Table 14 *Kruskal-Wallis Test on Highest Academic Qualification*

	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
English proficiency	3.51	2	0.173	0.0924
Reading academic texts	11.27	2	0.004	0.2966
Writing academic papers	10.91	2	0.004	0.2872
Delivering lectures	11.58	2	0.003	0.3047

Results suggest that the participants who had studied abroad had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics with a high effect size (0.50-0.77) than the participants who had not.

Table 15

English Proficiency by if the Participants Have Studied Abroad

	Studied abroad	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	Yes	21	4.48	5	5.00	0.602	3	5
	No	18	3.44	3.00	3.00	0.616	3	5
Reading academic texts	Yes	21	4.57	5	5.00	0.598	3	5
	No	18	3.94	4.00	4.00	0.639	3	5
Writing academic papers	Yes	21	4.14	4	4.00	0.727	2	5
	No	18	2.67	3.00	2.00 ^a	0.970	1	4
Delivering lectures	Yes	21	4.43	5	5.00	0.676	3	5
	No	18	3.22	3.00	3.00	0.732	2	5

Engaging in academic discussions	Yes	21	4.33	5	5.00	0.856	2	5
	No	18	2.83	3.00	3.00	0.857	1	4

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Table 16

Independent Samples T-Test on if the Participants Have Studied Abroad

		Statistic	p	Mean difference		Effect Size
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	54.0	<.001	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.714
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	95.0	0.004	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.497
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	46.0	<.001	2.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.757
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	50.5	<.001	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.733
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	44.5	<.001	2.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.765

Note. $H_a \mu_{Yes} \neq \mu_{No}$

Results suggest that the participants did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in reading academic texts, writing academic papers, and delivering lectures scores by the subjects they taught; however, the participants had statistically significantly different scores ($p < .05$) in English proficiency and engaging in academic discussions with modest effect size by the subjects they taught.

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test indicated that the mean Engaging in academic discussions score obtained by participants who taught Business, Economics, and Management ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.744$) was significantly higher than that of participants who taught STEM ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.152$). However, the scores for engaging in academic discussions of participants who taught Social Sciences and Humanities ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.044$) did not significantly differ from those of participants who taught Business, Economics, Management, and STEM.

Table 17*English Proficiency by Subjects Taught (Grouped)*

	Subjects taught (grouped)	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	STEM	20	3.70	4.00	3.00	0.733	3	5
	Social Sciences and Humanities	11	4.09	4	4.00	0.701	3	5
	Business, Economics, and Management	8	4.63	5.00	5.00	0.744	3	5
Reading academic texts	STEM	20	4.15	4.00	4.00	0.671	3	5
	Social Sciences and Humanities	11	4.36	4	4.00 ^a	0.674	3	5
	Business, Economics, and Management	8	4.50	5.00	5.00	0.756	3	5
Writing academic papers	STEM	20	3.15	3.00	4.00	1.137	1	5
	Social Sciences and Humanities	11	3.73	4	4.00	1.191	1	5
	Business, Economics, and Management	8	3.88	4.00	4.00	0.835	2	5
Delivering lectures	STEM	20	3.60	3.50	3.00	0.940	2	5
	Social Sciences and Humanities	11	4.09	4	5.00	0.944	3	5
	Business, Economics, and Management	8	4.25	4.00	4.00	0.707	3	5
Engaging in academic discussions	STEM	20	3.20	3.00	3.00	1.152	1	5
	Social Sciences and Humanities	11	3.91	4	5.00	1.044	2	5
	Business, Economics, and Management	8	4.38	4.50	5.00	0.744	3	5

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Table 18*One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's) Test on Subjects Taught (Grouped)*

	F	df1	df2	p
Writing academic papers	1.69	2	36	0.199
Engaging in academic discussions	4.05	2	36	0.026

Table 19*Kruskal-Wallis Test on Subjects Taught (Grouped)*

	χ^2	df	p	ε^2
English proficiency	7.94	2	0.019	0.2090
Reading academic texts	1.98	2	0.371	0.0522

Delivering lectures	3.51	2	0.173	0.0925
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Results suggest that the individuals from Almaty have higher self-reported proficiency in all areas compared to those from Taraz. Since there is only one respondent from Astana, the data may not be representative or comparable.

Table 20

English Proficiency by University Location

	University location	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
English proficiency	Almaty	32	4.09	4.00	4.00	0.777	3	5
	Astana	1	4.00	4	4.00	NaN	4	4
	Taraz	6	3.50	3.00	3.00	0.837	3	5
Reading academic texts	Almaty	32	4.34	4.00	4.00	0.653	3	5
	Astana	1	5.00	5	5.00	NaN	5	5
	Taraz	6	3.83	4.00	4.00	0.753	3	5
Writing academic papers	Almaty	32	3.56	4.00	4.00	1.076	1	5
	Astana	1	5.00	5	5.00	NaN	5	5
	Taraz	6	2.67	2.00	2.00	1.033	2	4
Delivering lectures	Almaty	32	3.97	4.00	3.00 ^a	0.822	3	5
	Astana	1	5.00	5	5.00	NaN	5	5
	Taraz	6	3.17	3.00	2.00 ^a	1.169	2	5
Engaging in academic discussions	Almaty	32	3.75	4.00	5.00	1.078	2	5
	Astana	1	5.00	5	5.00	NaN	5	5
	Taraz	6	2.83	3.00	3.00 ^a	1.169	1	4

Note. ^a More than one mode exists, only the first is reported

Overall, the results demonstrate that the participants rated themselves highly, especially in reading and lecturing, with self-assessed proficiency slightly lower in writing and most variable in academic discussions. No gender-based differences were detected; however, more experienced participants and those from private universities had higher proficiency scores. Higher academic qualifications correlated with better English skills, particularly for those with PhDs. International study experience also contributed to higher proficiency levels. Geographic differences emerged, with Almaty-based participants reporting higher skills than

those from Taraz. Overall, experience, education, and the type of university emerged as key factors influencing English proficiency.

4.2 Commonly Used Language Learning Strategies Among EMI Teachers in Kazakhstani Universities and Challenges to Improve their English Proficiency

According to the data on the participation of EMI teachers in various formal learning strategies, the highest participation was in standardized English proficiency tests such as IELTS and TOEFL, with 29 individuals (74.4%) having taken these tests. The second most popular one was English language courses, with 23 teachers participating (59%). Conversely, the lowest participation was in online courses offered by platforms such as Coursera and Udemu, utilized by ten individuals, which made up 25.6%. Regarding preparation courses for standardized tests, such as those for IELTS and TOEFL, 13 individuals (33.3%) had taken these courses. The same number of individuals had also participated in workshops or seminars, representing 33.3% of the surveyed group.

Table 21

Frequencies of Formal Learning Strategies

	n	%
Has taken Standardized English proficiency tests (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL)	29	74.4
Has undergone Standardized test preparation courses (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL)	13	33.3
Has undergone English language courses	23	59
Has undergone Online courses (e.g., Coursera, Udemu)	10	25.6
Has undergone Workshops/Seminars	13	33.3

The data about certain informal learning strategies used by participants showed that reading English literature and viewing English-language media were the most popular methods, with 79.5% and 61.5% of learners employing them, respectively. In contrast, traveling to English-speaking countries was the least popular, utilized by only 17.9% of the learners. Conversing with native English speakers and using English learning applications or

online platforms were moderately popular strategies by 43.6% and 56.4% of learners, respectively.

Table 22

Frequencies of Informal Learning Strategies

	n	%
Employed Watching English movies/TV shows	24	61.5
Employed Reading English books, newspapers, or magazines	31	79.5
Employed Travelling to English-speaking countries	7	17.9
Employed Interacting with native English speakers	17	43.6
Employed Using English learning apps or online platforms	22	56.4

A statistical summary of the methods (as a continuous variable) used by 39 EMI teachers to improve their English skills was as follows. For self-study through books, podcasts, and online articles, the average rating was 2.85 on a 5-point scale, with the most common and median values being 3. Interacting with native speakers or proficient colleagues scores were slightly lower, with an average of 2.27 and the most common median values at 1.5, indicating a less frequent use than self-study. Observing and learning from experienced EMI teachers or English videos was the least employed strategy, with a mean score of 1.44. Both the median and the most frequent score were at 1.5.

Table 23

Frequencies of Using Informal Strategies

	n	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
Self-study using books, podcasts, online articles (cont)	39	2.85	3.00	3.00	1.49	0.000	5.00
Interacting with native speakers or proficient colleagues (cont)	39	2.27	1.50	1.50	1.51	0.000	5.00
Observing and learning from experienced EMI teachers or English videos (cont)	39	1.44	1.50	1.50	1.27	0.000	5.00

The participants were categorized by the most effective learning strategies as follows. With ten references, social strategies were at the top of the rankings and accounted for 25.6% of all strategies. The five counts for self-practice and self-educational strategies totaled up to 12.8% individually. Formal study and media exposure strategies were next, each with four notes and a distinct contribution of 10.3%. There were three mentions of immersion strategies, representing 7.7%. Memory-based strategies accounted for 5.1% by the two acknowledgments. Finally, the remaining 15.4% of the cases involved six cases without response.

Table 24

Frequencies of the Most Efficient Strategy (Grouped)

	n	%
Social Strategies	10	25.6
Self-Educational Strategies	5	12.8
Self-Practice Strategies	5	12.8
Formal Study Strategies	4	10.3
Media Exposure Strategies	4	10.3
Immersion Strategies	3	7.7
Memory-Based Strategies	2	5.1
No answer	6	15.4

The participants faced various challenges in fostering English proficiency. Personal challenges and dispositions were noted six times, accounting for 15.4% of all challenges. Environmental and social factors were mentioned four times, making up 10.3%. Time and resource constraints and slow progress had three mentions each, contributing 7.7% separately. Educational system and course limitations, as well as difficulties in listening, were recorded twice, each with a 5.1% share. Work-related issues, writing research papers, and reading were the least cited challenges, with only one mention each, comprising 2.6% individually. Interestingly, there were four instances, or 10.3%, where no problems were reported. At the

same time, the largest category, 'No Information,' accounted for 12 occurrences, making up 30.8% of the total, indicating a substantial number of cases with no answer.

Table 25

Frequencies of Challenges (Grouped)

	n	%
Personal Challenges and Dispositions:	6	15.4
Environmental and Social Factors:	4	10.3
Time and Resource Constraints:	3	7.7
Slow progress	3	7.7
Educational System and Course Limitations:	2	5.1
Listening	2	5.1
Work-Related Issues:	1	2.6
Writing the research papers	1	2.6
Reading	1	2.6
No problem	4	10.3
No information	12	30.8

In summary, the EMI teachers at Kazakhstani universities mainly improved their English through standardized tests like IELTS, TOEFL, and English courses, while platforms like Coursera and Udemy are less utilized. English literature and media were their top informal learning strategies, unlike travel for immersion. Conversing with native speakers and using language apps were moderately popular. Statistical ratings suggest a preference for self-study over interactive or observational learning. Social strategies were considered the most efficient, but challenges such as personal dispositions and environmental factors were prevalent.

4.3 Correlation Between the EMI Teachers' English Proficiency and the Formal Learning Strategies

Results suggest that the participants who had undergone standardized test preparation courses did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in English proficiency and reading academic texts scores from the participants who had not; nonetheless, the participants

who had undergone standardized test preparation courses had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in writing academic papers, delivering lectures, engaging in academic discussions with modest to moderate effect size (0.393-0.559) than the participants who had not.

Table 26

Independent Samples T-Test on Standardized Test Preparation Courses

		Statistic	p	Mean difference		Effect Size
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	128.5	0.205	3.38e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.240
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	150.0	0.545	4.20e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.112
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	93.5	0.019	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.447
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	102.5	0.039	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.393
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	74.5	0.004	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.559

Note. $H_a \mu$ Standardized test preparation courses $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who had taken standardized English proficiency tests did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in reading academic texts scores from the participants who did not; however, the participants who had taken standardized English proficiency tests had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in English proficiency, writing academic papers, delivering lectures, engaging in academic discussions scores with modest effect size (0.43-0.49) than the participants who had not.

Table 27

Independent Samples T-Test on Standardized English Proficiency Tests

		Statistic	p	Mean difference		Effect Size
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	77.5	0.022	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.466

Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	118.0	0.350	3.70e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.186
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	78.5	0.025	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.459
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	82.0	0.035	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.434
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	74.0	0.019	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.490

Note. $H_a \mu$ Standardized English proficiency tests $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who had undergone English language courses did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores from the participants who had not.

Table 28

Independent Samples T-Test on English Language Courses

		Statistic	p
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	171	0.693
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	147	0.247
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	161	0.489
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	161	0.500
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	160	0.488

Note. $H_a \mu$ English language courses $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who had undergone online courses did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores compared to those who had not.

Table 29

Independent Samples T-Test on Online Courses

		Statistic	p
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	132	0.657
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	118	0.350
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	126	0.520
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	140	0.866
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	121	0.434

Note. $H_a \mu$ Online courses $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who had undergone workshops/seminars did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores compared to those who had not.

Table 30

Independent Samples T-Test on Workshops/Seminars

		Statistic	p
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	142	0.401
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	143	0.396
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	141	0.388
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	154	0.650
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	155	0.666

Note. $H_a \mu_{\text{Workshops/Seminars}} \neq \mu_{\text{No}}$

In conclusion, the study found that participants who took standardized test preparation courses outperformed their peers in writing, lecturing, and discussions, with a modest to moderate effect, despite no difference in overall English proficiency and reading skills. Participants who took standardized English tests also showed higher proficiency in these areas, albeit with a modest effect. No significant benefits were found for those who took English language courses, online courses, or workshops in any of the English proficiency metrics evaluated.

4.4 Correlation Between the EMI Teachers' English Proficiency and the Informal Learning Strategies

Results suggest that the participants who employed travelling to English-speaking countries did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in English proficiency, reading academic texts, and writing academic papers scores from the participants who did not. Nevertheless, the participants who employed travelling to English-speaking countries had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in delivering lectures, and engaging in

academic discussions with a moderate effect size (0.522-0.585) than the participants who did not.

Table 31

Independent Samples T-Test on Travelling to English-Speaking Countries

		Statistic	p	Mean difference		Effect Size
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	85.0	0.303	1.29e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.241
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	65.5	0.065	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.415
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	77.5	0.190	4.07e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.308
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	53.5	0.026	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.522
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	46.5	0.014	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.585

Note. $H_a \mu$ Travelling to English-speaking countries $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who employed interacting with native English speakers did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in reading academic texts scores from the participants who did not; however, the participants who employed interacting with native English speakers had statistically significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in English proficiency, writing academic papers, delivering lectures, engaging in academic discussions with modest to moderate effect size (0.318-0.578) than the participants who did not.

Table 32

Independent Samples T-Test on Interacting With Native English Speakers

		Statistic	p	Mean difference		Effect Size
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	79.0	0.001	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.578
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	127.5	0.067	2.35e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.318
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	118.0	0.041	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.369
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	115.5	0.035	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.382

Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	95.5	0.008	1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.489
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Note. $H_a \mu$ Interacting with native English speakers $\neq \mu$ No

There was a positive and statistically significant correlation ($p < .05$) between how often the participants employed interacting with native speakers or proficient colleagues scores and delivering lectures ($r = .347$, $p < .05$), engaging in academic discussions ($r = .335$, $p < .05$) scores with moderate strength.

Table 33

Correlation Matrix Between the Various English Proficiency Metrics and Interacting With Native Speakers or Proficient Colleagues

	English proficiency	Reading academic texts	Writing academic papers	Delivering lectures	Engaging in academic discussions
Interacting with native speakers or proficient colleagues (cont)	0.242	0.154	0.298	0.347*	0.335*

Note. ^a * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Results suggest that the participants who employed reading English books, newspapers, or magazines did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores from the participants who did not.

Table 34

Independent Samples T-Test on Reading English Books, Newspapers, or Magazines

		Statistic	p
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	124	1.000
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	123	0.985
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	115	0.756
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	110	0.622
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	109	0.602

Note. $H_a \mu$ Reading English books, newspapers, or magazines $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who employed watching English movies/TV shows did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores from the participants who did not.

Table 35*Independent Samples T-Test on Watching English Movies/TV Shows*

		Statistic	p
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	180	1.000
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	165	0.646
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	156	0.475
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	148	0.332
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	152	0.403

Note. $H_a \mu$ Watching English movies/TV shows $\neq \mu$ No

Results suggest that the participants who employed English learning apps or online platforms did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in reading academic texts scores from the participants who did not; nonetheless, the participants who employed English learning apps or online platforms had statistically significantly lower scores ($p < .05$) in English proficiency, writing academic papers, delivering lectures, engaging in academic discussions with modest effect size (0.361-0.447) than the participants who did not.

Table 36*Independent Samples T-Test on Using English Learning Apps or Online Platforms*

		Statistic	p	Mean difference		Effect Size
English proficiency	Mann-Whitney U	120	0.044	-1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.361
Reading academic texts	Mann-Whitney U	139	0.140	-5.83e-5	Rank biserial correlation	0.257
Writing academic papers	Mann-Whitney U	111	0.024	-1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.406
Delivering lectures	Mann-Whitney U	104	0.013	-1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.447
Engaging in academic discussions	Mann-Whitney U	117	0.042	-1.000	Rank biserial correlation	0.374

Note. $H_a \mu$ Using English learning apps or online platforms $\neq \mu$ No

There was a negative and statistically significant correlation ($p < .05$) between how often the participants employed observing and learning from experienced EMI teachers or

English videos scores and English proficiency ($r = -.403$, $p < .05$), engaging in academic discussions ($r = -.371$, $p < .05$) scores with moderate strength.

Table 37

Correlation Matrix Between the Various English Proficiency Metrics and Observing and Learning From Experienced EMI Teachers or English Videos

	English proficiency	Reading academic texts	Writing academic papers	Delivering lectures	Engaging in academic discussions
Observing and learning from experienced EMI teachers or English videos (cont)	-0.403*	-0.280	-0.302	-0.265	-0.371*

Note. ^a * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Results suggest that the participants did not have a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) in all the various English proficiency metrics scores by the Most efficient strategy they reported.

Table 38

One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's) Test on the Most Efficient Strategy

	F	df1	df2	p
Writing academic papers	0.608	7	31	0.745
Delivering lectures	0.378	7	31	0.908
Engaging in academic discussions	0.241	7	31	0.972

Table 39

One-Way ANOVA (Welch's) Test on the Most Efficient Strategy

	F	df1	df2	p
Reading academic texts	NaN	7	NaN	NaN

Table 40

Kruskal-Wallis Test on the Most Efficient Strategy

	χ^2	df	p
English proficiency	2.45	7	0.931

Overall, a study on informal strategies among teachers revealed that while travel to English-speaking countries did not enhance overall language skills, it improved abilities in delivering lectures and engaging in academic discussions. Interactions with native English speakers were associated with better proficiency in writing, lecture delivery, and discussions, but not with reading academic texts. Notably, using English learning apps or online platforms correlated with lower scores in these areas. Observing experienced EMI teachers or English videos negatively impacted proficiency and engagement in discussions. There was no significant improvement in skills based on participants' self-reported most efficient strategies, reading English literature, and watching media, underscoring a gap between perceived and actual proficiency gains.

4.5 Summary

In summary, the chapter focuses on mastering the English language by EMI teachers at Kazakhstani universities. It outlined teachers' backgrounds, English competence, and what learning strategies should be employed to improve their English proficiency. The sample contained primarily participants with a Master's degree, teaching at private universities, and predominantly based in Almaty. Teachers reported having high academic reading proficiency and lower academic writing proficiency. Teachers commonly utilized formal strategies like IELTS and TOEFL preparation courses, while informal methods mostly included reading English literature. The main challenges contained personal attitudes and environmental factors. Formal strategies like standardized test preparation slightly enhanced writing and lecturing skills. Interaction with native speakers was valuable, whereas using apps or observing other teachers indicated limited or adverse effects on improving proficiency. The

findings underline the variant differences that the strategies make in terms of English proficiency among university teachers in Kazakhstan.

5. Discussion

In this chapter, I delve into the study's findings on EMI teachers' self-assessed English proficiency in Kazakhstani universities and explore these educators' language learning strategies. Further, I examine the correlation between teacher proficiency and adopting formal and informal learning strategies for English proficiency. The literature review and the conceptual framework underpinning this study further illuminate the discussion. Together, they present a full view of how English language learning is navigated within the professional setting of university teachers in Kazakhstan.

5.1 The English Proficiency Level (Self-Assessed) of EMI Teachers in Kazakhstani Universities

Analyzing the data of self-assessed levels of English proficiency of EMI instructors among Kazakhstani universities points out a difference between the previous studies and my study on the levels of English proficiency of EMI instructors in Kazakhstan. My findings generally showed that the participants (mostly from Almaty) were highly competent in English, particularly when reading academic materials. However, compared with previous literature, there is a discrepancy. According to Zenkova and Khamitova (2017), most of the Innovative University of Eurasia's teachers rated their English competence level as "intermediate" or even lower during the research. This difference could be because of several reasons, including the place of study (Almaty versus Pavlodar); as Almaty is Kazakhstan's financial and cultural center and has more international exposure, its proficiency could be higher (Oralova, 2012). Moreover, the finding from Yessenbekova (2022) that only 12% of teachers teaching in English in 19 universities had advanced English language proficiency (C1-C2 levels) contrasts with my findings, where no one rated themselves at the extremes

(minimum or maximum). This could be because the universities I had chosen were popular and among the top-ranked institutions in Kazakhstan.

My findings in productive skills showed that confidence in writing academic papers and discussions was lower than in reading. This is concurrent with literature, whereby Martinez (2020) reports that to achieve the production of language in various forms, at least the proficiency level of B2 is required. It also resonates with the concerns Hammou and Kesbi (2023) highlighted regarding EMI teachers' dissatisfaction with their English proficiency, which could impede successful EMI implementation.

The positive and statistically significant correlation between all assessed skills indicates that proficiency in one area tends to relate to proficiency in others, though the strength of these relationships varies. This interconnectivity suggests that sustained improvements in one skill area through my study could drive improvements in others, indicating that language training programs should be comprehensive and cover all aspects of academic English use.

My findings about the role of gender in English proficiency concurred with O'Loughlin's (2002) claim that gender does not impact oral proficiency and Tong et al.'s (2010) argument against gender factors and support for instructional quality in proficiency. However, it countered previous studies that confirmed gender impacts on EFL achievement (Zoghi et al., 2013) and task performance (Główka, 2014).

The previous literature suggests a positive correlation between teaching experience and English proficiency in EMI contexts (Cosgun & Hasırcı, 2017; Yuksel et al., 2021). However, my findings nuanced this view, indicating no significant differences in overall English proficiency, writing, or discussions with increased experience in the context of this study. Instead, similar to a previous study, more experienced participants only showed significant

gains in reading academic texts and delivering lectures (Vidal & Jarvis, 2018). This could imply that while some language skills in the study benefited from ongoing practice, others might plateau, with experience yielding diminishing returns in those areas.

The findings of the study supported those of Pellegrino (1998) and Carroll (1967), who argue that immersion through studying in an English-speaking country expands language mastery. The large effect size in English proficiency and academic skills gained compared to participants not involved in an abroad study supported Magnan and Back's (2007) assertion that particularly individuals with previous formal language education have such marked gains. This suggests that the combination of immersion and structured learning in the study formed a potent mix for developing high levels of language competence in educational professionals.

Consistent with Farooqui's (2007) findings, my study revealed that participants at private universities scored significantly higher in English proficiency across a range of metrics. This suggests a possible institutional advantage in language acquisition for private university affiliates in the study. However, Hossain (2019) cautions that such advantages might not translate into enhanced educational outcomes, citing challenges like inappropriate curricula and a lack of research.

Connecting previous literature with the current findings, the process of acquiring a Ph.D. or equivalent likely exposes teachers to more intensive use of English in a variety of academic contexts, thereby improving their proficiency. The higher scores in various English proficiency metrics, particularly engaging in academic discussions among Ph.D. holders, could be reflective of increased confidence (Qureshi et al., 2020) and improved language skills (Storch & Hill, 2008), as well as the necessity for high language proficiency in analysis as suggested by Javanmiri and Bdaiwi (2021). This could account for the significant difference between Ph.D. holders and those with lower qualifications. In contrast, the absence of a

significant difference between Master's and Bachelor's degrees might indicate a threshold effect where the additional academic exposure of a Master's degree does not translate into a measurable difference in the English proficiency measures used in this study.

My findings challenged Oralova's (2012) assertion that STEM teachers had significantly lower English proficiency than business field teachers by showing no statistically significant differences in reading, writing, and lecturing abilities across disciplines. However, my results aligned with Oralova's findings to some degree, as there were statistically significant differences in general English proficiency and engagement in academic discussions, with Business, Economics, and Management teachers outperforming STEM teachers in these areas. Social Sciences and Humanities teachers' scores were not significantly different from the other groups. In light of Oralova (2012), these findings indicated that while STEM teachers in the study may not generally have lower scores in all English proficiency metrics, they may have specific challenges in communicative aspects like academic discussions.

English proficiency by university location can be discussed as follows. Almaty showed high English proficiency with the best scores in reading academic texts and more variability in writing skills. Astana had a single respondent with perfect scores, but more is needed to draw conclusions about the general proficiency there. Taraz showed lower proficiency, especially in writing papers and engaging in discussions, with notable skill variability. Comparisons indicated Almaty had higher self-reported English skills than Taraz, but the data had limitations due to small sample sizes and its self-reported nature. More comprehensive data would be needed for a robust comparison.

5.2 Commonly Used Language Learning Strategies Among EMI Teachers in Kazakhstani Universities and Challenges to Improve their English Proficiency

My findings regarding 'Frequencies of Formal learning strategies' suggest that participants were highly invested in demonstrating their English proficiency through tests like the IELTS, TOEFL, and English language courses. While there was some interest in continuous learning through test preparation courses, workshops, and online courses, these were not as predominant as proficiency testing and English language courses. This could reflect the individual choices of the participants, the policies of the institutions they work for, or a combination of both.

My findings presented a clear preference among participants for certain informal learning strategies. Reading English literature emerged as the most favored method, highlighting the importance of deep engagement with the language through varied textual contexts (Svalberg, 2009). Close behind was viewing English-language media in their learning regime, suggesting that visual and auditory exposure to the language plays a crucial role in their comprehension and listening skills (Erazo-Avenidaño, 2016; Harsa et al., 2020). Conversely, the less favored strategy was traveling to English-speaking countries, possibly due to practical barriers such as accessibility, cost, or travel opportunities. In the middle ground was conversing with native English speakers, which provides invaluable practice in real-life communication (Saniboo & Sinwongsuwat, 2015). Furthermore, the convenience and interactive nature of English learning applications or online platforms made them popular, allowing learners to study at their own pace and access a wealth of resources at the touch of a button.

My Findings on how often participants use informal learning strategies revealed clear preferences and usage patterns. Self-study through books, podcasts, and online articles

emerged as the leading method, suggesting a strong inclination toward strategies that offer flexibility and control over the learning process. Interaction with native speakers or proficient colleagues stood as a moderately popular choice, which could be attributed to its reliance on the availability of partners and the spontaneous nature of such interactions, possibly making it less consistent as a learning method. Observing experienced EMI teachers or English videos was the strategy that was least utilized. It appears that barriers such as time constraints, access issues, or the passive learning aspect might deter its more widespread adoption.

My findings about the learning strategies preferred the most by participants indicated a varied landscape of approaches, with certain strategies standing out. The most valued of these were the Social Strategies, implying that highly valued activities would involve interaction with others, perhaps because of the recognition accorded to collaborative learning (Andrews & Rapp, 2015). Self-educational and Self-Practice Strategies followed, which signified that learners must be independent and responsible for their study through consistent practices. Formal Study and Media Exposure Strategies were also represented, signaling a combined appreciation for the structured acquisition of knowledge and the use of various media to aid learning. The Immersion Strategies suggest recognizing that people must get along in environments where English is predominantly used, enabling them practical and more natural learning methods. The memory-based strategies appeared less preferred, which may point to an attitude shift from rote learning to engaging, interactive ways. Some of the participants showed an interesting trend of not answering, which could possibly indicate a hesitation among them to commit to a specific method.

My study's findings on the challenges faced by participants in fostering English proficiency can be compared with previous literature to draw several parallels and distinctions. Personal Challenges and Dispositions were highlighted as a significant challenge. This finding

is in line with previous literature, which points to psychological aspects, such as teachers not being ready to teach English, exhibiting low motivation, and having a conservative mentality toward learning new approaches or implementing innovations (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). The resistance among older instructors to learning English and using it to instruct Kazakh students (Oralova, 2012) also corroborates my findings. The literature further supports the notion that the resistance to EMI can stem from traditional teaching methods rooted in the Soviet era (Fimyar & Kurakbayev, 2016, as cited in Yessenbekova, 2022).

Environmental and Social Factors were echoed in previous literature, suggesting that inadequate incentives and support and unfavorable working conditions hinder EMI teachers (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). The current findings strengthen the argument that the environment in which teachers operate is critical to their success.

From the literature, time and resource constraints were reported, and from the technical point of view, the issue lies in the non-availability of authentic teaching materials, resources, and facilities (Seitzhanova et al., 2015; Tlemissov et al., 2020; Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). The lack of a shared methodological foundation is particularly detrimental, as it affects teachers' ability to assess students effectively and hampers the development of their language skills due to inadequate resources (Tazhigulova et al., 2018).

Educational System and Course Limitations were seen as systemic issues. The previous literature suggests that ineffective language training programs for teachers could be the root of low English proficiency (Karabassova, 2020, as cited in Yessenbekova, 2022) and that the current teaching methodologies are not up to the mark for contemporary language instruction (Yeskeldiyeva & Tazhibayeva, 2015).

Work-related issues were mentioned in previous studies as management problems in higher education in Kazakhstan, where teachers face administrative pressures, including

excessive documentation and preparation of new materials (Seitzhanova et al., 2015; Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017).

The participants' English proficiency level might progress slowly due to the following reasons: the level of English proficiency at the start, the effectiveness of the learning method, or the linguistic distance between the participants' native languages and English. Difficulties in Listening highlighted the specific skill area within English proficiency that the participants found challenging. Humans must consciously interpret and effectively process vocabulary and grammar when listening to real-time spoken language (Miller, 2014). This is an even harder task under conditions requiring making sense of more formal or technical language, as in most academic settings (Tanenhaus & Brown-Schmidt, 2007). Writing Research Papers and Reading Challenges recognize high-level language competencies that learners may have difficulty responding to. Writing research papers in English requires a high level of linguistic proficiency, including fluency in coherent arguments and academic conventions (Evans, 2007). Reading, particularly academic texts, demands a strong vocabulary (Huckin, 1995) and the ability to understand complex sentence structures (Ferstl & d'Arcais, 1999).

No problems were also reported, indicating that a certain segment of the population or specific contexts may not face significant challenges in using EMI. This may indicate that the learner's proficiency levels were high, pedagogical approaches had to be far better, or learning environments may have been improving, positively impacting second language learning. The top category, "No Information," seems to reflect a serious data gap, the problematic issue still lying unrecognized or unreported in the research, or just participants' unwillingness to answer.

5.3 Correlation Between the EMI Teachers' English Proficiency and the Formal Learning Strategies

My findings contribute to the nuanced debate on the effectiveness of IELTS preparation courses on English proficiency. While Hashemzade and Zenouzagh (2022) highlighted Computer Assisted Language Learning's effect on a positive note regarding learner proficiency, Gan (2009) and Hu and Trenkic (2019) found no statistically significant improvement in students' general IELTS results due to preparation courses compared to those who did not take it. However, my research has shown that even if these courses do not significantly improve overall English proficiency or reading, they bring about great improvements in writing academic papers, delivering lectures, and engaging in academic discussions. This could explain why the preparation courses in the present study may have been more salient in producing gains in targeted, advanced language skills rather than general English proficiency.

More culturally relevant mediation is evident in the success of standardized test preparation courses, which implies that this may occur within those courses (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). The significant improvements observed in the productive English proficiency areas are most in accordance with SCT's focus on the transforming power of language, indicating that focused preparation can empower teachers to become linguistically equipped to function in an EMI context (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). This also means that if professional development strategies are aligned with teachers' professional development strategies in their ZPD, they are most likely to be empowered and effective in the wake of collective scaffolding and learning from peers, which is paramount in language development (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022).

My findings regarding standardized English proficiency tests suggest that taking the tests did not have a noticeable impact on participants' ability to read academic texts. However, the same participants' higher scores in other areas, namely English proficiency, writing academic papers, delivering lectures, and engaging in academic discussions, align with SCT's emphasis on the importance of sociocultural environment, suggesting that standardized testing, valued in educational contexts, provides a recognized form of language learning (Behroozizad et al., 2014).

My findings showed no significant difference in English proficiency between participants who have taken English courses and those who have not, which contradicts previous research. Shishan (2020), Ababneh and Al-Momani (2011), and Ming-mei (2019) all reported improvements in proficiency following English language instruction. The current results suggest that other factors, such as course quality, instructional methods, and participant characteristics, might influence language proficiency gains.

My investigation sought to expand upon the research conducted by Rodrigues and Vethamani (2015) and Chen et al. (2004), who found improved English proficiency due to online courses. In contrast, my findings did not reveal a statistically significant difference in all the various English proficiency metrics scores between participants who underwent online courses and those who did not. This mirrors the results of Zeng and Wang (2020), where extrinsic factors moderated the effectiveness. Moreover, the potential parity in efficacy between online and traditional learning environments posited by Novokhatskaya (2020) might explain my study's absence of observed differences.

My findings indicated no statistically significant difference in English proficiency, contrasting with previous literature suggesting positive outcomes from workshops and seminars. Lie et al. (2022) and Ortiz-Neira (2019) observed improvements in commitment to

English use and oral fluency, while Nguyen (2020) and Bone et al. (2019) reported benefits from specific teaching methods on speaking abilities. This could imply that these forms of professional development, at least in the contexts studied, were ineffective in significantly enhancing the measured skills.

Language courses, online courses, and workshops did not show significant differences in proficiency levels; according to SCT, this indicates a potential mismatch between the sociocultural needs of teachers and the mediation these strategies offer (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). This accentuates the SCT principle of personalized learning and the need for professional development efforts to provide targeted support that bridges the gap between current abilities and potential development levels (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). It also indicates that these strategies might not fully utilize SCT's principles of social interaction and collective scaffolding, highlighting the potential need for more collaborative learning activities within these programs (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995; Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022). Moreover, these strategies might not align well with the specific academic English needs of participants, reflecting Activity Theory's emphasis on the importance of goal-oriented learning activities (Harre and Gillett, 1994 as cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995).

5.4 Correlation Between the EMI Teachers' English Proficiency and the Informal Learning Strategies

The study's findings about traveling to English-speaking countries and specificity in skill enhancement support the idea that immersion in an English-speaking environment particularly bolsters oral communication skills, as opposed to general language proficiency or written capabilities. This is supported by Espenshade and Fu (1997) and Martirosyan et al. (2015), who also make it clear that language skills can improve in an immersive environment

with the most eminent impact on oral competence since speaking activities are under real-life conditions and allow for real-time feedback. According to Oxford and Ehrman (1995) and Flege and Fletcher (1992), individual variation in language learning strategy use, proficiency, and duration of stay may subsume immersion experiences. The findings mark the value of targeted language learning strategies, especially for oral communication in academic contexts, demonstrating that specific professional skills can significantly benefit from immersion, even if broader language skills do not show the same level of improvement.

The literature review and my findings illustrate the positive impact of interacting with native English speakers on EFL learners. As Alberth (2023) put it, they can build confidence in their language proficiency through these interactions—a parallel to the observed improvements in their English proficiency and the development of academic abilities among participants with high contact with native speakers from my study. Lu et al. (2014) and my findings align on the benefits of oral skills, showing a direct correlation between such interactions and improved lecture delivery and discussion engagement. Ghane and Razmi (2023) introduce a nuanced perspective by suggesting that while native speakers boost fluency and lexical complexity, non-native speakers enhance accuracy. Thus, incorporating both can yield a holistic language learning experience.

According to SCT, the success of being immersed in an English-speaking environment and interacting with native English speakers could be attributed to the presence of scaffolding provided by knowledgeable others, where everyday interactions with native speakers and cultural immersion, acting as mediators, guide the teachers through their ZPD, enabling them to reach higher levels of proficiency than they could on their own (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022; Vygotsky, 1978).

Most of all, exposure to social and interactive cultural activities, such as traveling to English-speaking countries and interacting with native speakers, positively influenced participants' abilities in delivering lectures and engaging in academic discussions. This agrees with the SCT perspective that authentic, context-rich social interactions are crucial in language learning and cognitive development (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). According to John-Steiner (1985) and Lantolf & Pavlenko (1995), learning is enhanced through interactions, suggesting that direct engagement with native speakers and immersion in English-speaking environments fosters a richer, more authentic linguistic and cultural exchange.

My findings contradict prior research, which holds that specific reading strategies improve English proficiency. For example, Türker (2010) found audiobooks to aid in comprehension with visual inputs. This does differ from my study, which shows no significant increase in proficiency from reading alone. Ma et al. (2023) emphasized the role of interactive literature circles, which might suggest the limitations of solitary reading practices found in my findings. Iwahori (2008) recommended the positive influence of extensive reading on proficiency, pointing toward a need for a much wider range of reading materials or a much more structured approach to reading than described in my study. Finally, Affendi and Aziz (2020) noted some difficulties in using literature to enhance language: reading can only be effective depending on the learner's context and strategies. Overall, the essence of the findings is that mastering a language goes beyond just reading; a comprehensive approach, which includes interactive learning and exposure to varied content, is essential for effective language acquisition.

The positive literature on using English movies and TV shows to improve English proficiency, as highlighted by Sen et al. (2020), Daneshfard et al. (2021), Fauji and Zuhriyah (2022), and Catherine and Saminathan (2016), is contrasted by my findings. This discrepancy

may be due to various factors, such as the method and context of media usage, the type of proficiency being measured, and individual learner differences. Thus, visual media enhances overall language skills, but this may not affect the academic language skills needed for the special tasks of academic professionals.

My findings have shown that traditional informal learning strategies, such as reading or watching English content, do not substantially impact English proficiency—aligning with SCT, which views passive exposure to language as insufficient to contribute to full cognitive or linguistic development (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995).

My findings contrast with earlier research (Rodrigues & Vethamani, 2015; Hao et al., 2019; Rezaei et al., 2013; Pratiwi & Toshiaki, 2023) that emphasized the benefits of English learning apps and online platforms in improving language proficiency. These studies highlighted improved vocabulary, speaking and listening skills, and overall positive attitudes toward learning. However, my results indicated that while these apps might enhance foundational language skills, they do not necessarily translate to improved performance in academic-specific tasks like reading, writing, delivering lectures, or engaging in discussions, with the modest effect sizes observed for lower scores. This discrepancy could be due to the general focus of most language learning apps, which might not cover the complex and specialized skills required for academic English. The advanced skills needed for academic contexts, such as critical reading and academic writing, demand more than a broad understanding of the language—they require the application of language in context-specific ways, understanding genre-specific conventions, and mastering rhetorical strategies (Tardy, 2005).

According to SCT, mediators are critical in guiding learners through their ZPD. The impersonal nature of apps may fail to offer the dynamic, responsive scaffolding that a human

mediator can (Allahyar & Nazari, 2012). Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022) add that the impersonal nature of learning apps might not provide the scaffolding and social engagement necessary for significant language development, as envisioned by SCT.

My findings indicate that participants who more frequently observed experienced EMI teachers or English videos had lower general English proficiency levels, particularly in academic discussions with moderate correlation strengths. These negative correlations are statistically significant, suggesting a reliable association, but do not imply that one causes the other. It could be that less proficient participants are seeking out more opportunities to observe and learn or to engage in discussions to improve their English. Thus, a negative correlation was observed. SCT within the ZPD suggests that passive observation alone may not be as effective as active engagement with mediators in social contexts (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022). Mentorship and direct interaction with experienced individuals can provide the responsive, context-specific scaffolding necessary for substantial learning gains, while passive observation may not provide the interactive feedback loop necessary for effective language learning and application.

Solitary activities like reading English materials or watching English media, passive observation, and digital learning through apps or online platforms, did not show significant benefits. This outcome marks SCT's perspective that learning is more effective when it is interactive and situated within meaningful social contexts rather than through isolated or passive activities (Behroozizad et al., 2014).

5.5 Summary

In summary, the chapter discussed the English proficiency of EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities, learning strategies, and their effectiveness compared to past literature using the conceptual framework to guide the study.

Teachers in Almaty showed a higher level of proficiency in English than those in Pavlodar, probably because Almaty has more international exposure. The proficiency of those teachers with a Ph. D. was higher than the others, especially in advanced skills like academic discussions. At the same time, experience mainly boosts reading and lecture delivery.

IELTS/TOEFL courses were desired for formal strategies that were effective for improving academic writing and speaking. They are supported by the sociocultural theory (SCT), which goes into targeted preparation to boost specific competencies. Modern, interactive professional development was needed as language courses, workshops, and seminars have shown limited effectiveness.

Teachers were more into informal strategies of reading English literature and engaging with English language-based media, suggesting a preference for accessibility and independence. Informal strategies that include active involvement, such as traveling or talking to native speakers, do much more to improve English proficiency, particularly in oral skills, than the relatively passive activities of reading or exposure to media. Specialized tools are necessary for academic English since general language apps and observing experienced teachers showed limited or negative academic benefits.

Personal challenges such as low motivation, environmental constraints, and systemic issues like outdated methodologies highlight the need for modernized language education that supports teachers' professional and sociocultural needs.

The findings advocate for a balanced approach combining formal and informal strategies. Active and interactive strategies applied within the learning context experience, based on the principles of sociocultural theory, support the more effective development of English proficiency from academic perspectives.

6. Conclusion

The conclusion of this research encompasses a summary of the major findings of the correlational study. Then, it delineates the study's strengths and limitations, offers insightful recommendations and directions for future research, and follows up with personal reflections.

The research aimed to explore the correlation between English proficiency levels of EMI teachers at Kazakhstani universities and their engagement in various English development strategies. A comprehensive analysis was conducted encompassing a broad spectrum of participants' sociodemographic backgrounds, English proficiency across various academic activities, and the effectiveness of employing distinct learning strategies.

6.1 Summarization of the Major Findings

The study embarked on a journey to explore the multifaceted nature of language acquisition among university faculty, guided by a hypothesis that posited a positive correlation between proficiency levels and strategic engagement in language learning. The main research question was: Is there a significant correlation between the English proficiency of EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities and the types of development programs or strategies they use for language acquisition? The data obtained from 39 EMI teachers across several prominent universities in Kazakhstan revealed a critical insight: a nuanced relationship exists between English proficiency and the adoption of both formal and informal language development strategies.

Concerning the first sub-question, 'What is the EMI teachers' level of English proficiency in Kazakhstani universities?', EMI teachers noted higher proficiency in reading academic texts and delivering lectures. Their proficiency in writing academic papers presented a wider range as did their proficiency in participating in academic discussions. The data also

identified several demographic and professional factors influencing the teachers' English level. For instance, there was no difference in the level of self-assessed proficiency based on gender. However, the experience of teaching EMI classes was associated with a higher level of reading and lecturing proficiency, further supporting the benefits of practical language immersion. Moreover, the self-assessed proficiency proved higher among teachers from private universities and those who traveled to foreign countries, supporting the benefits of environmental factors in language development. Lastly, teachers with higher academic qualifications and those teaching in business, economics, and management reported higher levels of English proficiency, suggesting that field specialization and academic pursuits contribute to language proficiency development.

As for the second sub-question, 'What are the commonly used language learning strategies and challenges among EMI teachers in Kazakhstani universities?', the response was as follows. The EMI teachers in the universities of Kazakhstan improved their English mainly through standardized tests, including IELTS, TOEFL, and English courses. The leading strategies applied by the teachers in informal learning were from English literature and media. Statistical ratings indicated higher tendencies and inclinations towards self-studies than any other form of interactive or observational learning. Social strategies were considered the most efficient, but challenges such as personal dispositions and environmental factors were prevalent.

Finally, answering the third and fourth sub-questions, 'What are the correlations between the EMI teachers' English proficiency and first the formal and then informal learning strategies?', significantly, the study unveiled a statistical correlation between the teachers' proficiency levels and their engagement with specific language development strategies. Teachers who engaged in formal strategies such as standardized test preparation courses and

who took standardized English tests, as well as those who utilized informal strategies involving social interaction and cultural immersion, such as traveling to English-speaking countries and interacting with native speakers, reported higher levels of English proficiency. Thus, the initial hypothesis is confirmed, as the strategic engagement both in formal and informal learning initiatives is likely to improve the English language proficiency among EMI teachers.

Overall, the research highlighted the need for a strategic approach to varied formal and informal language learning activities tailored to individual teachers' specific needs and contexts to improve English proficiency among EMI teachers.

6.2 The Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The study encompasses several strengths. It benefits from a sample covering different disciplines of various state and private universities, which all together has to provide a much broader vision of the problem. The quantitative methodology, characterized by a non-experimental cross-sectional design and the use of self-administered questionnaires, allowed for the collection of standardized data. These data underwent a strict analysis process, using descriptive statistics, T-tests, ANOVAs, and correlation techniques to critically assess the relation between teachers' English development approaches and their proficiency in the same language.

However, alongside these strengths, the study presents certain limitations. Overdependence on self-assessment to gauge the level of proficiency in English may have brought some subjectivity and bias, as teachers themselves could have over- or underestimated. Further, the weakness of this design is that, although it is fit to yield immediate insight, its cross-sectional nature inherently limits understanding of how proficiency and

development strategies evolve over time and limits drawing causal inferences between the variables under the study. Convenience and snowball sampling methods limit the sample representativeness and could impact the findings' generalizability to all Kazakhstan EMI teachers.

In addition, this study's small sample size and the fact that the research was carried out at only six universities with some special characteristics will limit generalization without considering cultural and institutional differences. The involvement of university administrators in the recruitment process may result in selection bias, and it may also create an obligation for teachers to participate. The largely quantitative focus of research also means that it lacks deeper, more nuanced understandings of teachers' experiences and perceptions that may be uncovered by qualitative research.

In conclusion, the study yields valuable insights into the correlation between the English proficiency of EMI teachers and their development strategies in the unique context of Kazakhstani higher education. However, it should be seen in light of the above limitations. Future studies might consider improving limitations, such as collecting longitudinal data, using a more representative sampling, and employing a greater mix of qualitative data collection methods. This will allow the fuller and richer perceptions of EMI teachers in relation to language proficiency development experience.

6.3 Research Implications, Recommendations, and Future Research Directions

This study examining the relationship between EMI teachers' English proficiency and the strategies applied in language development at Kazakhstani universities will have far-reaching implications for educational institutions, policymakers, EMI teachers, and academia. This study focuses on the central role of English proficiency in optimizing the pedagogical

effectiveness of higher education toward further international competitiveness in Kazakhstan. It supports the view that a multi-perspective approach to professional development is necessary, including formal and structured learning settings, with a focus on the vital role of immersion-based informal approaches.

This study signals to educational institutions and policymakers the need to design and implement a comprehensive language enhancement program that would address the various learning needs of EMI teachers. It doesn't just highlight the structured learning opportunities but also motivates the support system in using English in everyday activities among teachers. This would, therefore, mean that there are further mechanisms that need to be implemented to give teachers the incentives that would motivate them to improve their English proficiency through certification, recognition, and international collaboration, among other tangible benefits. Providing funding for teachers to access language learning resources to engage in standardized language courses and study abroad programs is also essential, as these experiences have significantly impacted language proficiency.

The development of the community of practice of EMI teachers could be further conceptualized to share experiences, strategies, and resources while fostering peer support for maintaining motivation and interest in language development. Continued professional development should change from the intermittent interventions to a more strategic and comprehensive approach. These also consist of frequent workshops and seminars about the acquisition of language and teaching strategies of English. The continuous follow-up of these strategies with the developed programs, always modified as suggested by teachers and outcomes, would make them relevant and effectively enhance English proficiency among EMI teachers.

As for teachers, they themselves should utilize personalized language development programs that combine formal and informal approaches to learning. Such strategies should meet teachers' more specific academic needs, such as acquiring mastery in academic writing skills and engaging actively in scholarly discussions. Moreover, the specific objectives set for structured self-study will also help keep a record of the progress required for continuous enhancement in the language aspect.

Furthermore, Interacting with native English speakers or highly proficient colleagues through mentorship programs and technology platforms offers valuable opportunities for authentic language practice. Encouraging teachers to participate in study abroad programs or international collaborations can significantly enhance their language proficiency and academic cultural exposure.

Standardized self-assessment tools, such as IELTS or TOEFL, coupled with reflective practice, will be very effective in pointing out the areas that need improvement and also be effective in tracking the development of language over time. One should also maintain a reflective journal to enable the learning of the challenges and strategies for overcoming them in the use of language across various academic contexts.

The current study opens up several areas of future research. Longitudinal study designs would be necessary to follow the effectiveness and trajectory of teachers' English proficiency over time and the long-term influences of the different development strategies on the teaching effectiveness. Comparative studies could illuminate the effectiveness of programs enhancing English proficiency between regions in Kazakhstan and even with other countries concerning the best practices and cultural factors contributing to language learning success. Further research could also be conducted to demonstrate how an improved level of English in the teachers directly enhances the level of student outcomes and would provide insight into the

role of their language proficiency in EMI settings. Finally, with the rapid advancement in educational technology, investigating the role of AI-based tools, virtual reality, and online platforms in supporting teachers' language development presents a promising area for further investigation.

This study lays the foundation for further strategic, systematic steps regarding the quality enhancement of EMI instruction in the universities of Kazakhstan. By adopting the recommendations derived from this study and exploring the suggested research directions, stakeholders can significantly contribute to the successful implementation of EMI, ultimately achieving the broader educational objectives of Kazakhstan's higher education system.

6.4 Personal Reflections

This research journey has been very enlightening and profound to me, as it gave me the opportunity to delve into the details of English proficiency among teachers of EMI at Kazakhstani universities. This exploration has not only highlighted the critical role of English proficiency for academic success and global integration but has also uncovered the diverse strategies teachers employ to hone their linguistic skills. From the rigorous data analysis to engaging discussions of findings, each step has largely contributed to my academic and personal growth.

In other words, the project has brought to light the complexity of language learning in an academic setting, showing a kind of gradient of strategies that EMI teachers resort to, formally or informally. It was particularly revealing to note that a positive relationship exists between teachers' English proficiency level and involvement in both types of learning strategies. This could usher in new discussions on developing focused support mechanisms that have the potential to make EMI programs effective.

Above all, this study would help further understand the problems and opportunities being undertaken within higher education in Kazakhstan while making a transition to English as the language of instruction. Implication of these findings thus guides policy, practice, and future research to the need for a more holistic development program that attends to the linguistic and pedagogical needs of the teachers in EMI.

Personally, this project has really turned into an exploration that has railed some of my prior assumptions and has opened my mind to seeing the role of language in education in new ways. It was absolutely a great moment to be able to discuss and engage meaningfully with the academic community, learn from such educators, and be part of the conversation on quality education in a multilingual world. As I reflect on this experience, I am thankful for the insight from the learned knowledge and the connection that is likely to be very important in my future educational research.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Declaration of the Use of Generative AI



A Correlation Study of EMI Teachers' English Proficiency Level in Kazakhstani Universities and Their English Development Strategies

Appendix A – Declaration of the Use of Generative AI

I hereby declare that I have read and understood NUGSE's policy concerning appropriate use of AI and composed this work independently (please check one):

- with the use of artificial intelligence tools, or
 without the use of artificial intelligence tools.

(If you have used AI tools as defined in the GSE policy document, please complete the rest of this form.)

During the preparation of this thesis, I used *ChatGPT* to brainstorm ideas and plan; *ChatGPT* and *QuillBot* to rephrase sentences or rearrange paragraphs I had written myself; *Grammarly* to proofread/edit my writing; *CitationMachine* to construct citations and references; and *GoogleScholar* and *Consensus* to find and/or select sources.

I also declare that I

- am aware of the capabilities and limitations of AI tool(s),
 have verified that the content generated by AI systems and adopted by me is factually correct,
 am aware that as the author of this thesis I bear full responsibility for the statements and assertions made in it,
 have submitted complete and accurate information about my use of AI tools in this work, and
 acknowledge that there may be disciplinary consequences if I have not followed NUGSE's guidelines regarding AI appropriate use.

Name: Almaz Saulebay

Signature:

Date: 22 April 2024

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

A Correlation Study of EMI Teachers' English Proficiency Level in Kazakhstani Universities and Their English Development Strategies

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in a **research study** on finding out if there's a link between how proficient university teachers in Kazakhstan are in English and the methods they use to improve their English skills. You will be asked to complete the questionnaire that includes mostly closed-ended questions that will be designed to elicit information about the English proficiency development programs, approaches that EMI teachers have participated in or used, their perceptions of the effectiveness of these programs (approaches), and their perceived English proficiency levels.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The risks associated with this study are minimal. The survey will be conducted anonymously. I do not collect your personal information, employer's name, email address, and IP address. The findings will be presented in an aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual participants. The names and reputations of your university will be protected. The main benefit to the EMI teachers participating in the study is the opportunity for self-awareness and reflection. By engaging with the survey questions, educators will be prompted to reflect on their current English proficiency level, the methods they employ to improve it, and their views on the efficacy of these methods. This introspective process can guide them towards recognizing areas of strength and areas in need of improvement in their language learning journey. 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, please contact the researcher, Almaz Saulebay at almaz.saulebay@nu.edu.kz. Alternatively, you can contact the thesis supervisor for this student work, Dr Aisi Li at li.aisi@nu.edu.kz.

Independent Contact: If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee 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.

ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫ КЕЛІСІМІНІҢ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ ФОРМАСЫ

Қазақстандық университеттердегі ЕМІ оқытушыларының ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейін және олардың ағылшын тілін дамыту стратегияларын корреляциялық зерттеу

СИПАТТАМА: Сіз Қазақстандағы университет оқытушыларының ағылшын тілін қаншалықты жақсы меңгергені мен олардың ағылшын тілі деңгейлерін жақсарту үшін қолданатын әдістері арасында байланыс бар-жоғын анықтауға бағытталған зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға шақырылып отырсыз. Сізден ағылшын тілін меңгеру бағдарламалары, оқытушылар қатысқан немесе пайдаланған тәсілдер, олардың осы бағдарламалардың (тәсілдердің) тиімділігін бағалауы және ағылшын тілін меңгерудің болжамды деңгейі туралы ақпарат алуға бағытталған негізінен жабық сұрақтарды қамтитын сауалнаманы толтыру сұралады.

ӨТКІЗІЛЕТІН УАҚЫТЫ: Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен 10-15 минут уақытыңызды алады.

ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫНА ҚАТЫСУДЫҢ ҚАУІПТЕРІ МЕН АРТЫҚШЫЛЫҚТАРЫ:

Бұл зерттеуге байланысты тәуекелдер минималды. Сауалнама анонимді түрде жүргізіледі. Мен сіздің жеке ақпаратыңызды, жұмыс берушінің атын, электрондық пошта мекенжайын және IP мекенжайын сұрамаймын. Нәтижелер жеке қатысушылардың сәйкестендірілуіне жол бермеу үшін жалпыланған түрде ұсынылады. Сіздің университетіңіздің аттары мен беделі қорғалады. Зерттеуге қатысатын ЕМІ оқытушылары үшін басты артықшылық - өзін-өзі тану және рефлексия мүмкіндігі. Сауалнама сұрақтарына жауап бере отырып, оқытушылардан ағылшын тілін меңгерудің қазіргі деңгейі, оны арттыру үшін қолданатын әдістері және осы әдістердің тиімділігі туралы пікірлері сұралады. Бұл интроспекция оларға тіл үйрену жолында жақсартуды қажет ететін және күшті жақтарын тануға көмектеседі. Зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға келісім беруіңіз немесе бас тартуыңыз сіздің жұмысыңызға еш әсерін тигізбейді.

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, қауіп мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрағыңыз немесе шағымыңыз болса, келесі байланыс құралдары арқылы зерттеуші Алмаз Сәулебайға хабарласуыңызға болады: almaz.saulebay@nu.edu.kz. Сонымен қатар, сіз осы студенттік жұмыстың ғылыми жетекшісі доктор Айси Лимен мына мекен-жай бойынша байланыса аласыз: li.aisi@nu.edu.kz.

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: электрондық поштамен 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 келісімімді беремін.

ФОРМА ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ

Корреляционное исследование уровня владения английским языком преподавателями ЕМІ в казахстанских университетах и их стратегий развития английского языка

ОПИСАНИЕ: Вы приглашены принять участие в исследовании по выяснению того, существует ли связь между тем, насколько хорошо преподаватели университетов в Казахстане владеют английским языком, и методами, которые они используют для улучшения своих навыков владения английским языком. Вам будет предложено заполнить анкету, включающую в основном закрытые вопросы, которые будут направлены на получение информации о программах повышения уровня владения английским языком, подходах, в которых участвовали или использовали преподаватели, их восприятии эффективности этих программ (подходов) и предполагаемом уровне владения английским языком.

ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ: Ваше участие потребует около 10–15 минут.

РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА:

Риски, связанные с этим исследованием, минимальны. Опрос будет проводиться анонимно. Я не собираю вашу личную информацию, имя работодателя, адрес электронной почты и IP-адрес. Результаты будут представлены в обобщенном виде, чтобы предотвратить идентификацию отдельных участников. Имя и репутация вашего университета будут защищены. Главным преимуществом для преподавателей ЕМІ, участвующих в исследовании, является возможность для самосознания и рефлексии. Отвечая на вопросы опроса, преподавателям будет предложено поразмышлять об их текущем уровне владения английским языком, методах, которые они используют для его повышения, и их мнении об эффективности этих методов. Этот самоанализ может помочь им распознать сильные стороны и области, нуждающиеся в улучшении на пути изучения языка. 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, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с исследователем Алмазом Саулебаем по адресу почты almaz.saulebay@nu.edu.kz. Кроме того, вы можете связаться с научным руководителем этой студенческой работы, доктором Айси Ли, по адресу почты li.aisi@nu.edu.kz.

Независимые контакты: Если Вы не удовлетворены проведением данного исследования, если у Вас возникли какие-либо проблемы, жалобы или вопросы, Вы можете связаться с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета, отправив 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.

Appendix C: A Recruitment Email

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Research on EMI Teacher English Proficiency

Dear (Administrator's Name),

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Almaz Saulebay, a student from Nazarbayev University, studying Master of Science in Educational leadership: Higher education, and I am reaching out to seek your cooperation and support for an important research initiative.

Research Overview: My study aims to explore the English proficiency levels of university teachers in Kazakhstan, particularly those involved in English-medium instruction (EMI), and the different methods or approaches they employ to enhance their proficiency. The outcomes of this research can offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of various language learning strategies, with the potential to guide future professional development initiatives for EMI educators.

How You Can Help: I believe that the educators in your esteemed institution can provide invaluable insights for this study. Therefore, I humbly request your assistance in disseminating the research survey among your EMI faculty members. Rest assured, the participation is voluntary, and all responses will be anonymous and confidential, solely used for research purposes.

Benefits for Participants and University:

A clearer understanding of current English proficiency levels and learning methods among EMI educators.

Insights to inform and improve faculty development programs.

A contribution to broader academic knowledge that can elevate the standard of EMI programs nationally.

Next Steps: Should you agree to assist my study, I will provide you with a link to the online survey, which can be shared with your faculty. The survey is designed to be user-friendly and will take participants approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. It will be available in three languages: English, Kazakh, and Russian, ensuring accessibility and ease for all potential respondents.

I understand the responsibilities and commitments you have, and I truly appreciate your time and consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or need further details about the study. I am more than happy to provide additional information or clarify any concerns you might have.

Looking forward to the possibility of your support and collaboration in this endeavor.

Warm regards,

Almaz Saulebay

a student from Nazarbayev University, studying Master of Science in Educational leadership:
Higher education

almaz.saulebay@nu.edu.kz, 87071992044

Тақырыбы: Университет оқытушыларын ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейін зерттеуге қатысуға шақыру

Құрметті (әкімшінің аты),

Бұл хат сізге жақсы жетті деп үміттенемін. Менің атым - Алмаз Сәулебай, Назарбаев университетінің білім беру көшбасшылығы саласындағы ғылым магистрі дәрежесіне оқып жатқан студентпін. Мен сізге маңызды зерттеу бастамасы үшін ынтымақтастық пен қолдау сұраймын.

Зерттеуге шолу: Менің зерттеуімнің мақсаты - Қазақстандағы университет оқытушыларының, әсіресе ағылшын тілінде оқытумен (ЕМІ) айналысатындардың ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейін және олардың меңгеру деңгейін арттыру үшін қолданатын әртүрлі әдістер мен тәсілдерді зерттеу. Бұл зерттеудің нәтижелері тіл үйренудің әртүрлі стратегияларының тиімділігі туралы құнды ақпарат бере алады, бұл болашақ ЕМІ оқытушыларының кәсіби даму бастамаларына басшылық етуі мүмкін.

Сіз қалай көмектесе аласыз: сіздің беделді оқу орныңыздың оқытушылары осы зерттеу үшін баға жетпес ақпарат бере алады деп сенемін. Сондықтан мен сізден кішіпейілділікпен зерттеу сауалнамасын ЕМІ оқытушыларына таратуға көмектесуіңізді сұраймыз. Қатысу ерікті екеніне сенімді болыңыз және барлық жауаптар жасырын және құпия болады, тек зерттеу мақсатында қолданылады.

Қатысушылар мен университет үшін пайдалары:

ЕМІ оқытушыларының қазіргі ағылшын тілін білу деңгейі мен оқыту әдістерін нақты түсінуі.

Оқытушылардың біліктілігін арттыру бағдарламаларын ақпараттандыру және жақсарту идеялары.

Ұлттық деңгейде ЕМІ бағдарламаларының деңгейін арттыра алатын академиялық білімді кеңейтуге қосқан үлесі.

Келесі қадамдар: Егер сіз маған көмектесуге келіссеңіз, мен сізге оқытушылар құрамымен бөлісу үшін онлайн сауалнамаға сілтеме береміз. Сауалнама пайдаланушыға ыңғайлы болу үшін жасалған және оны толтыру қатысушыларға шамамен 10-15 минутты алады. Ол үш тілде: ағылшын, қазақ және орыс тілдерінде қолжетімді болады, бұл барлық әлеуетті респонденттер үшін қолжетімділік пен қарапайымдылықты қамтамасыз етеді.

Мен сіздің жауапкершілігіңіз бен міндеттемелеріңіз қандай екенін түсінемін және сіздің уақытыңыз бен назарыңызды шынымен бағалаймын. Сұрақтарыңыз болса немесе зерттеу туралы қосымша ақпарат қажет болса, маған хабарлаңыз. Мен қосымша ақпарат беруге немесе кез келген сұрақтарыңызды нақтылауға дайынмын.

Осы бастамада сіздің қолдауыңыз бен ынтымақтастығыңызға қол жеткізуді асыға күтемін.

Жылы тілектермен,

Алмаз Сәулебай

Назарбаев университетінің білім беру көшбасшылығы саласындағы ғылым магистрі дәрежесіне оқып жүрген студент

almaz.saulebay@nu.edu.kz, 87071992044

Тема: Приглашение принять участие в исследовании уровня владения английским языком преподавателем ЕМІ

Уважаемый (Имя администратора),

Я надеюсь, что это письмо застанет вас в добром здравии. Меня зовут Алмаз Саулебай, студент Назарбаев университета, изучающий степень магистра наук в области образовательного лидерства: высшее образование, и я обращаюсь к вам за сотрудничеством и поддержкой для важной исследовательской инициативы.

Обзор исследования: Целью моего исследования является изучение уровня владения английским языком преподавателями университетов в Казахстане, особенно теми, кто занимается преподаванием на английском языке (ЕМІ), и различных методов или подходов, которые они используют для повышения своего уровня владения. Результаты этого исследования могут дать ценную информацию об эффективности различных стратегий изучения языка, что потенциально может послужить руководством для будущих инициатив по профессиональному развитию преподавателей ЕМІ.

Как вы можете помочь: Я считаю, что преподаватели вашего уважаемого учебного заведения могут предоставить неоценимую информацию для этого исследования. Поэтому я смиренно прошу вас помочь в распространении опроса исследования среди преподавателей, которые преподают на английском. Будьте уверены, участие является добровольным, и все ответы будут анонимными и конфиденциальными, использоваться исключительно в исследовательских целях.

Преимущества для участников и университета:

Более четкое понимание преподавателями ЕМІ текущего уровня владения английским языком и методов обучения.

Идеи для информирования и улучшения программ повышения квалификации преподавателей.

Вклад в расширение академических знаний, который может повысить уровень программ ЕМІ на национальном уровне.

Следующие шаги: Если вы согласитесь помочь мне, я предоставлю вам ссылку на онлайн-опрос, которой можно поделиться с вашим преподавательским составом. Опрос разработан таким образом, чтобы быть удобным для пользователя, и его заполнение займет у участников примерно 10-15 минут. Он будет доступен на трех языках: английском, казахском и русском, что обеспечит доступность и простоту для всех потенциальных респондентов. Полностью анонимное, не нужно писать ФИО, название университета и даже почту.

Я понимаю, какая у вас ответственность и обязательства, и я действительно ценю ваше время и внимание. Пожалуйста, дайте мне знать, если у вас возникнут какие-либо вопросы или вам понадобится дополнительная информация об исследовании. Я более чем рад предоставить дополнительную информацию или прояснить любые вопросы, которые могут у вас возникнуть.

С нетерпением жду возможности заручиться вашей поддержкой и сотрудничеством в этом начинании.

С наилучшими пожеланиями,

Алмаз Саулебай

студент Назарбаев университета, изучающий степень магистра наук в области образовательного лидерства: высшее образование

almaz.saulebay@nu.edu.kz, 87071992044

Appendix D: Questionnaire for EMI Teachers at Kazakhstani Universities

Part I: Background Information

Gender:

Male

Female

How many years have you been teaching in an English-medium program?

Less than 1 year

1-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

More than 15 years

Which type of university are you currently affiliated with?

State university

Private university

Highest Academic Qualification:

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

PhD or equivalent

Have you studied abroad? (If it was in English)

Yes

No

Subject(s) Taught:

Part II: English Proficiency

How would you rate your overall English proficiency?

Beginner

Pre intermediate

Intermediate

Upper intermediate

Advanced

Native Speaker

How confident are you in: (1- Not confident at all, 5- Extremely confident)

Reading academic texts in English? 1 2 3 4 5

Writing academic papers in English? 1 2 3 4 5

Delivering lectures in English? 1 2 3 4 5

Engaging in academic discussions in English? 1 2 3 4 5

Part 3: Approaches or Strategies for English Proficiency Development

Have you taken any standardized English proficiency tests (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL)?

Yes

No

Have you undergone any formal English training programs or courses? (Multiple selections allowed)

English language courses

Standardized test preparation courses (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL)

Online courses (e.g., Coursera, Udemy)

Workshops/Seminars

How often do you use the following informal strategies to enhance your English proficiency?

a. Self-study using books, podcasts, online articles: - Never - Rarely - Often -

Always

b. Interacting with native speakers or proficient colleagues: - Never - Rarely - Often -

Always

c. Observing and learning from experienced EMI teachers or English videos: - Never -

Rarely - Often - Always

Which informal learning strategies do you employ to practice or improve your English?

(Select all that apply)

Watching English movies/TV shows

Reading English books, newspapers, or magazines

Travelling to English-speaking countries

Interacting with native English speakers

Using English learning apps or online platforms

In your opinion, which strategy or approach has been the most effective in improving your English proficiency? Please provide a brief explanation: _____

Are there any challenges or barriers you've faced in improving your English proficiency? If so, please describe.

Қазақстан университеттеріндегі ЕМІ оқытушыларына арналған сауалнама
I бөлім: Анықтамалық ақпарат

Жынысыңыз:

Еркек

Әйел

Сіз ЕМІ бағдарламасы бойынша қанша жыл сабақ бердіңіз?

1 жылдан аз

1-5 жас

6-10 жас

11-15 жас

15 жылдан астам

Қазіргі уақытта сіз қандай университетте жұмыс істейсіз?

Автономды университет

Мемлекеттік университет

Жекеменшік университет

Жоғары академиялық біліктілік:

Бакалавр дәрежесі

Магистр дәрежесі

PhD немесе баламасы

Сіз шетелде оқыдыңыз ба? (егер бұл ағылшын тілінде болса)

Иә

Жоқ

Қай пән(дер)ді бересіз:

II бөлім: Ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейі

Ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейіңізді қалай бағалайсыз?

Бастаушы

Орташа деңгейден төмен

Орташа деңгей

Орташа деңгейден жоғары

Озат

Ана тілім

Сіз қаншалықты сенімдісіз: (1 - мүлдем сенімді емес, 5-өте сенімді)

Ағылшын тіліндегі академиялық мәтіндерді оқи алатыныңызға? 1 2 3 4 5

Ағылшын тілінде ғылыми мақалалар жаза алатыныңызға? 1 2 3 4 5

Ағылшын тілінде дәріс бере алуыңызға? 1 2 3 4 5

Ағылшын тіліндегі академиялық пікірталастарға қатыса алуыңызға? 1 2 3 4 5

3-бөлім: Ағылшын тілін меңгерудің тәсілдері немесе стратегиялары

Сіз ағылшын тілін білуге арналған стандартталған сынақтардан өттіңіз бе (мысалы, IELTS, TOEFL)?

Иә

Жоқ

Сіз ағылшын тілін оқытудың ресми бағдарламаларын немесе біліктілікті арттыру курстарын аяқтадыңыз ба? (Бірнеше таңдауға рұқсат етіледі)

Ағылшын тілі курстары

Стандартталған тестілеуге дайындық курстары (мысалы, IELTS, TOEFL)

Онлайн курстар (мысалы, Coursera, Udemu)

Шеберлік сыныптары / семинарлар

Ағылшын тілін білу деңгейін арттыру үшін келесі бейресми стратегияларды қаншалықты жиі қолданасыз?

а. кітаптарды, подкасттарды, онлайн мақалаларды пайдалана отырып, өзін-өзі дамыту: -

[] ешқашан - [] сирек - [] жиі - [] әрқашан

б. ана тілінде сөйлейтіндермен немесе тәжірибелі әріптестермен қарым - қатынас: - []

ешқашан - [] сирек - [] жиі - [] әрқашан

с. тәжірибелі ЕМІ оқытушыларын немесе ағылшын тіліндегі бейнелерді бақылау: - []

ешқашан - [] сирек - [] жиі - [] әрқашан

Ағылшын тілін үйрену немесе жақсарту үшін қандай бейресми оқыту стратегияларын қолданасыз? (Қолданылатын барлық нәрсені таңдаңыз)

Ағылшын фильмдерін/телешоуларын көру

Ағылшын тілінде кітаптар, газеттер немесе журналдар оқу

Ағылшын тілді елдерге саяхат

Ағылшын тілінде сөйлейтіндермен өзара әрекеттесу

Ағылшын тілін үйренуге арналған қосымшаларды немесе онлайн платформаларды пайдалану

Сіздің ойыңызша, сіздің ағылшын тілін білу деңгейіңізді арттыруда қандай стратегия немесе тәсіл тиімді болды? Қысқаша түсініктеме беріңіз: _____

Ағылшын тілін меңгеруді жақсарту кезінде сізде қандай да бір проблемалар немесе кедергілер бар ма? Олай болса, сипаттаңыз. _____

Анкета для преподавателей ЕМІ в университетах Казахстана**Часть I: Справочная информация**

Пол:

Мужской

Женский

Сколько лет вы преподаете по программе ЕМІ?

Менее 1 года

1-5 лет

6-10 лет

11-15 лет

Более 15 лет

В каком типе университетов вы в настоящее время работаете?

Автономный университет

Государственный университет

Частный университет

Высшая академическая квалификация:

Степень бакалавра

Степень магистра

Доктор философии или эквивалент

Вы учились за границей? (если бы это было на английском)

да

нет

Преподаваемый предмет(ы):

Часть II: Владение английским языком

Как бы вы оценили свой общий уровень владения английским языком?

Начинающий

Уровень ниже среднего

Средний уровень

Уровень выше среднего

Передовой

Носитель языка

Насколько вы уверены в: (1 - Совсем не уверен, 5 - Чрезвычайно уверен)

Чтении академических текстов на английском языке? 1 2 3 4 5

Писании научных статьи на английском языке? 1 2 3 4 5

Преподавании лекции на английском языке? 1 2 3 4 5

Участие в академических дискуссиях на английском языке? 1 2 3 4 5

Часть 3: Подходы или стратегии для повышения уровня владения английским языком

Проходили ли вы какие-либо стандартизированные тесты на знание английского языка (например, IELTS, TOEFL)?

Да

Нет

Проходили ли вы какие-либо официальные программы обучения английскому языку или курсы повышения квалификации? (Допускается множественный выбор)

Курсы английского языка

Стандартизированные курсы подготовки к тестированию (например, IELTS, TOEFL)

Онлайн-курсы (например, Coursera, Udemu)

Мастер-классы/Семинары

Как часто вы используете следующие неформальные стратегии для повышения своего уровня владения английским языком?

a. Самостоятельное изучение с использованием книг, подкастов, онлайн-статей: -]

Никогда -] Редко -] Часто -] Всегда

b. Взаимодействие с носителями языка или опытными коллегами: -] Никогда -]

Редко -] Часто -] Всегда

c. Наблюдение и обучение от опытных преподавателей ЕМІ или видео по английскому языку: -] Никогда -] Редко -] Часто -] Всегда

Какие стратегии неформального обучения вы используете, чтобы попрактиковаться или улучшить свой английский? (Выберите все, что применимо)

Просмотр английских фильмов/телепередач

Чтение книг, газет или журналов на английском языке

Путешествия в англоязычные страны

Взаимодействие с носителями английского языка

Использование приложений для изучения английского языка или онлайн-платформ

По вашему мнению, какая стратегия или подход были наиболее эффективными в повышении вашего уровня владения английским языком? Пожалуйста, дайте краткое объяснение: _____

Есть ли какие-либо проблемы или барьеры, с которыми вы столкнулись при улучшении своего владения английским языком? Если да, пожалуйста, опишите. _____