

Estudio cualitativo sobre el potencial del enfoque AICLE en Kazajistán¹

Cristina A. Huertas-Abril²; Aigerim Shashken³

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Resumen. En el proceso actual de implementación de políticas plurilingües, especialmente gracias al denominado “Programa de la Trinidad de Lenguas”, la República de Kazajistán se está esforzando por utilizar la educación plurilingüe como instrumento fundamental para lograr la competencia lingüística en tres idiomas: kazajo, ruso e inglés. Al tratarse de una situación de transición, en la que se está debatiendo intensamente, el uso del Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE) puede ser un enfoque interesante debido a su dinamismo, flexibilidad y adaptabilidad al contexto kazajo. Sin embargo, los estudios sobre la implementación del enfoque AICLE en este país son limitados, y aún se considera como un nuevo enfoque en el país. Tras presentar el estado de la cuestión en este país de Asia Central, esta investigación cualitativa examina las percepciones, preocupaciones e incertidumbres de los docentes kazajos en relación con la posible aplicación del enfoque AICLE en Kazajistán. Para realizar el análisis de los datos, seguimos el esquema de teoría fundamentada para establecer las diferentes categorías y temas, realizamos el análisis de contenido y, finalmente, creamos una matriz DAFO. A pesar de los desafíos a los que se enfrentan los docentes kazajos en relación con AICLE (principalmente relacionados con el bajo dominio de la lengua y la falta de materiales didácticos), los participantes en este estudio señalan que AICLE aumenta el interés del alumnado, los estudiantes entienden mejor el componente lingüístico de las sesiones, y AICLE cumple con los requisitos de calidad establecidos por las políticas educativas de Kazajistán.

Palabras clave: AICLE; educación bilingüe; multilingüismo; política lingüística; política educativa.

[en] Exploring the Potential of CLIL in Kazakhstan: A Qualitative Study

Abstract. In the process of implementing multilingual policies, especially the so-called “Trinity of Languages Program”, the Republic of Kazakhstan is making efforts to use multilingual education as a key tool for achieving linguistic proficiency in three languages: Kazakh, Russian, and English. Being a transitional situation, where hot debates are taking place, the use of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) can be an interesting approach due to its dynamism, flexibility, and adoptability to the Kazakh context. The introduction of CLIL in the Kazakh educational system, however, has not been studied sufficiently, and it is seen as a new approach in the country. After presenting the state of the art in this Central Asia country, this qualitative research examines the perceptions, concerns and uncertainties of Kazakh teachers regarding the potential implementation of the CLIL approach in Kazakhstan. In order to analyse the data collected, we followed the grounded-theory scheme to establish the different categories and topics, we applied content analysis, and finally we create a manual SWOT analysis. Despite the challenges that teachers face regarding CLIL (mainly related to low language proficiency and lack of materials), the respondents point out that CLIL increases interest among students, students understand better the language component of the lessons, and CLIL meets the current system of modern requirements of educational standards of Kazakhstan.

Keywords: CLIL; bilingual education; multilingualism; language policy; educational policy.

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² Universidad de Córdoba (España)
e-mail: cristina.huertas@uco.es

³ EMJMD PETaL – Universidad de Córdoba (España), Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa (Portugal) y Marmara University (Turquía)
e-mail: z92shsha@uco.es

1. Introduction

In a globalized society, where countries are deeply engaged in constant international exchanges, foreign language learning (FLL) is an essential skill (Fabo et al., 2017). Consequently, numerous efforts have been devoted to promoting multilingualism, as well as to better understand how FLL can be enhanced (Eurydice/Eurostat, 2012). In this light, bilingual/multilingual education is a key choice: according to Gómez-Parra (2016, pp. 68-69), bilingual education is an opportunity for universal quality education, since mastering content in at least two languages facilitates access to information, offers equal opportunities, and improves work opportunities, among other advantages; therefore, BE is a key parameter to consider when measuring quality education in the 21st century.

At present, Kazakhstan is developing a new education system focused on entering the global space, a process which is accompanied by significant changes in the theory and practice of the pedagogical process. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan into force since 1995 (Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020), which states that “Everyone shall have the right to use his native language and culture, to freely choose the language of communication, education, instruction and creative activities”, the law of innovation in education is being systematically carried out to formulate conditions for the development of the national model of the Kazakhstan’s education system. Furthermore, in our modern society, interaction of people in the intercultural space is a priority for the Kazakh government, and foreign language proficiency is considered as one of the tools to expand professional knowledge and opportunities.

This language learning policy is especially interesting in Kazakhstan as it has been traditionally a multilingual country, with over 130 different languages (Zharkynbekova, Akynova, & Aimoldina, 2017). Nevertheless, the main focus is on three languages, as Nazarbayev (2007, as cited in Dontsov, 2016, p.1) states:

Modern Kazakhstan must be perceived in the world as a highly-educated nation using three languages, i.e. the Kazakh language as the state language, the Russian language as the language for communication among representatives of different ethnic groups, and the English language as the language required for successful integration into the global economy.

In this context, there is an urgent necessity of researching multilingual programmes, where Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) can be an interesting option, considering it is one of the most flexible, dynamic and adaptable approaches to bilingual/multilingual education (Gómez-Parra, 2016; Skinnari, & Bovellan, 2016; Vitchenko, 2017).

After presenting the state of the art in this Central Asia country, this paper examines the perceptions, concerns and uncertainties of Kazakh teachers regarding the potential implementation of the CLIL approach including the three languages – Kazakh, Russian, and English. Six teachers (3 CLIL and 3 non-CLIL) teachers of compulsory education from the Republic of Kazakhstan participated in the research. Based on the aims of the study, the researchers tried to find the answer for the following research questions:

Q1: What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of CLIL in Kazakhstan according to Kazakh teachers’ perceptions and attitudes?

Q2: What are the differences between CLIL and non-CLIL teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of CLIL in Kazakhstan?

2. CLIL in Kazakhstan: From Traditional Language Diversity in Kazakhstan to the Trinity Language Policy

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991), of which Kazakhstan was the last Soviet republic to declare its independence, the language policy has changed significantly. Despite the traditional multilingual idiosyncrasy of the country (Smagulova, 2006), Kazakh language was not a priority before the independence due to the prevalence of Russian as the dominant language in all spheres of public life (Kakenov, 2017). Nowadays, the Republic of Kazakhstan considers multilingualism of utmost importance in current society, as the first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, stated:

Kazakhstan should be seen in the whole world as highly educated country, whose population uses three languages: Kazakh language –the state, Russian as a language of international communication and English language– the language of successful integration into the global economy (Amangeldina et al., 2014, p. 3).

Although up to now the predominant languages in the country are Kazakh and Russian, governmental policymakers have not hesitated to introduce English proficiency as a major concern in the educational system, by means of the gradual implementation of the “Trinity of Languages Program” (Neuendorf, 2016). The program of multilingual learning has entailed the creation of a new educational model that promotes the training of a new generation that is more competitive at the international level in the context of globalization. As Amangeldina et al. (2014) state

Knowledge of Kazakh, Russian and English languages will give to young people the key to world markets, science and new technologies, will create the conditions for the formation of ideological setting for constructive cooperation on the basis of initiation to ethnic, Kazakhstan and world cultures (p.3).

Regarding the advantages of the Trinity of Languages Program, experts highlight that it will allow students to acquire language proficiency in Kazakh, Russian and English (Neuendorf, 2019). Similarly, this language competence will allow Kazakhs young people to be academically mobile and to freely move in international space, as well as in the culture and traditions of different peoples of the world (Nurpeisova, & Azimbayeva, 2015).

In this process of implementing multilingual policies, the Republic of Kazakhstan is making efforts to use multilingual education as a key tool for achieving linguistic proficiency in these three languages. Being a transitional situation, where hot debates are taking place, the use of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Coyle, 2005; Coyle et al., 2010) can be an interesting approach due to its dynamism, flexibility, and adaptability to the Kazakh context (Vitchenko, 2017). CLIL is usually defined as “a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 1). Despite being the ‘European approach’ to bilingual education (García et al, 2009), its introduction in other contexts –such as Japan (Tanaka, 2019), Thailand (Kewara, & Prabjandee, 2018) or Australia (Smala, 2014) among many others– leads us to think it could be an interesting approach for Kazakhstan, especially because it enhances “all types of provision in which a second language (a foreign, regional or minority language and/or another official state language) is used to teach certain subjects in the curriculum other than languages lessons themselves” (Eurydice, 2006, p. 8).

The key concepts of the CLIL approach are included in the 4C model: content, communication, cognition and culture (Coyle et al., 2010). It provides the main subject-content component of a wide range of subject training, as well as meaningful preparation for further professional activity with a special terminological base for foreign languages. The socio-linguistic component is seen as the creation of conditions for the development of communication skills, proficiency in a foreign language and the ability to use the emerging competencies for applied purposes. Cognition component promotes the growth of the motivation of learners, mastering various learning strategies, forms and types of learning activities. Finally, cultural element of CLIL develops intercultural communication skills and understanding of cultural features of other countries and nations (Coyle, 2005).

Effective CLIL takes place through 5 dimensions: progression in knowledge, skills and understanding of content, engagement in higher order cognitive processing, interaction in the communicative context, development of appropriate communication skills, and acquisition of a deepening intercultural awareness (Harrop, 2012, p.56).

The introduction of CLIL in the Kazakh educational system, however, has not been studied sufficiently, and it is seen as a new approach in the country. In this light, and despite the fact of being frequently referred to as core pedagogy of trilingual education in the country, “CLIL did not feature in important official education policy documents” (Karabassova, 2018, p.3). The CLIL approach has been used in the so-called ‘intellectual schools’ and in Kazakh-Turkish lyceums for the last 4 years, while the state schools have been implementing this in extra-curriculum lessons. The results up to now have been positive, and the introduction of CLIL in the Kazakh educational system has had an effective impact. The research carried out by Vitchenko (2017) corroborated this while studying CLIL implementation in the intellectual schools of Nazarbayev, which are designed to become an experimental platform for the development and implementation of modern models of learning programs in the educational system of the country.

In the light of the above, and considering previous research in other contexts, the use of CLIL may have the following positive aspects in Kazakhstan: (i) students would be provided with an opportunity to use the three languages meaningfully (Koike, 2014); (ii) students would have the chance to develop higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) (Coyle et al., 2010; Kane, 2017); (iii) teachers and students would develop their intercultural awareness, which is a relevant issue in the transition process of Kazakhstan into the trilingual education system (Karimsakova et al., 2018); and (iv) students of all abilities may benefit (Harrop, 2012), among others.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

Considering the nature of this exploratory research, the authors agreed to establish the study based on a qualitative design (Patton, 2003). The main purpose of conducting a qualitative study is to examine in detail the opinions and experiences of the participants in order to make sense of and/or interpret the phenomena according to the meaning that the participants attach to them (Denzin, & Lincoln, 2017, p. 3). With this purpose, the methodological procedure of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to make a first approach to the phenomenon. The main aim of the grounded theory is to discover a theory or producing a theory from the collected data (Glaser, & Strauss, 1967; Pidgeon, & Henwood, 1997). Moreover, from a social constructivist point of view, the grounded theory is a kind of interaction with data that leads to the construction of different categories, topics and theories (Charmaz, 1990; 2006). For this study, therefore, we adopt grounded theory in order to find out four categories of strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on the collected data from Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL teachers. Then, and according to this framework, the authors chose all the stages of conducting this research, from raising research questions to data collection and analysis.

3.2. Participants and data gathering

This study was conducted in 2019-2020 academic year in Kazakhstan. We administered an 8 open-ended question instrument to 3 CLIL teachers, and a 5 open-ended question instrument to 3 non-CLIL teachers (see Annex) from the cities of Pavlodar and Shymkent (Kazakhstan). The interviews were carried out in Kazakh or in Russian, as they both are official languages in the country. The participants were selected through criterion referenced (purposive) sampling techniques (Mertens, 2014). The interviewed teachers graduated in Kazakhstan's state universities (Pavlodar State University, Taras State University, Kazakh State Women's Pedagogical University, and Pavlodar State Pedagogical University) in pedagogical specializations. Currently, they are teachers of lyceums and secondary schools of two different cities (Pavlodar and Shymkent). Their teaching experience ranges from 2 to 20 years; however, due to the recent introduction of CLIL in the country, none of them has a big experience regarding this approach. All the participants have received specialized training on the CLIL approach in the organization Ustaz, a Kazakhstani professional learning centre for teaching English and a bilingual component for STEM teachers.

Participants were requested to respond to these open-ended questions on a voluntary basis, and they had to write their responses online via e-mail. According to Patton (2003, p. 2), "Open-ended questions and probes yield in-depth responses about people's experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge. Data consist of verbatim quotations with sufficient context to be interpretable."

3.3. Data analysis

In this qualitative study, the authors applied two online open-ended question instruments to understand the perceptions and attitudes of Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL teachers regarding the implementation of CLIL in Kazakhstan. In order to analyse the data collected, we followed the grounded-theory scheme to establish the different categories and topics, we applied content analysis, and finally we create a manual SWOT analysis (which stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) (Samejima et al., 2006). Content analysis was applied for the purpose of this study as it is "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 21) and that "uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text" (Weber, 1990, p. 9). Moreover, in order to determine the positive or negative mood of the qualitative responses, text processing in the form of content analysis is required.

Regarding the SWOT analysis, it must be highlighted that strengths and weaknesses are the internal (and thus controllable) factors that support and hinder systems, organizations or plans to achieve their mission, whereas opportunities and threats are the external (and thus uncontrollable) factors that enable or not systems, organizations or plans to accomplish their mission (Dyson, 2004). Different stages of SWOT analysis were utilized in this study including: (a) data gathering, (b) content analysis, (c) classifying data into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats, (d) specifying the weight of each factor, and (e) reporting the result.

The authors made a questionnaire-based system in order to automate SWOT analysis process (see Figure 1). The SWOT matrix was built upon the responses of CLIL and non-CLIL teachers in Kazakhstan. The collected qualitative data of the study were in the form of text description which need content analysis before classifying them into the SWOT matrix.

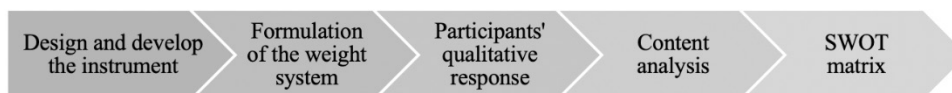


Figure 1. Process of data analysis

The total of weight scores was calculated and then classified the content of each data into relevant SWOT categories: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The Rule Model (Thamrin, & Pamungkas, 2017) was adopted to classify the factors based on the participants' responses (see Table 1).

Table 1. Rule model (Thamrin, & Pamungkas, 2017)

		Score	
		Positive	Negative
Factor	Internal	Strength	Weakness
	External	Opportunity	Threat

The authors categorized the data based on participants' responses into two categories: positive and negative. After that, the positive responses related to internal factors (that is, teachers' issues) were considered as 'strengths', while external factors (related to administrators, policies, decision makers, etc.) were considered as 'opportunities.' Similarly, negative responses related to internal factors were labelled as 'weaknesses', and those related to external factors as 'threats.' In order to check the inter-rater reliability of the content analysis phase (i.e., categorizing and labelling the different responses according to the Rule Model), the authors checked the data analysis. The cross-checking procedure showed high consistency, confirming then the reliability of the analysis.

4. Results

This section reports the findings of the analysis of both CLIL and non-CLIL teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards the implementation of CLIL in Kazakhstan. After data analysis, we categorized the data into four categories: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Before going through the results of the study, it is necessary to point out that the SWOT matrix of this study was designed based on participating Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL teachers' point of view, which might be quite different from other groups (e.g. teachers in other contexts, students, administrators, etc.). To illustrate the different categories, we refer to extracts taken from data gathered through the open-ended questions – the researchers specified a code in brackets to each participant in the sample.

First Research Question: What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of CLIL in Kazakhstan according to Kazakh teachers' perceptions and attitudes?

Findings revealed that, from the positive point of view, the participating CLIL and non-CLIL teachers in Kazakhstan identified common strengths for the implementation of CLIL in their country. According to their reports, (1) CLIL increases interest among students, (2) CLIL requires different types of tasks, (3) facilitates the training of students with subject knowledge through the language component, (4) every CLIL lesson is different, (5) the linguistic subject components can be combined in CLIL lessons, (6) the subject practice accent is oriented with finding solutions in the target language, (7) students are more aware of the language component of the lesson, (8) students understand better the language component of the lesson, and (9) attention is paid to specific vocabulary. Regarding CLIL, one of the participants stated that:

[NCT2] I think it is interesting because when you study under this program (CLIL) you do not only learn the topic of the lesson; you also learn a second language.

Moreover, Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL teachers acknowledge several opportunities provided by this approach for their country: (1) CLIL increases the quality of education, (2) CLIL enhances diversity, (3) CLIL meets the current system of modern requirements of educational standards of Kazakhstan, (4) CLIL is an ambitious project in Kazakhstan, (5) Kazakhstan is developing the CLIL approach now, (6) guidelines are developed by CLIL groups for teachers in Kazakhstan, (7) teachers can develop their own pedagogical competence within CLIL, and (8) the new educational system changes supports the implementation of CLIL lessons. In this light:

[CT3] It [CLIL] contributes to an increase in the quality of education. Nowadays it is necessary for us, because we are changing our educational system to trilingual education.

Regarding the negative aspects, the participants reported several weaknesses of CLIL, including (1) students' lack of language proficiency, so (2) students have problems to understand the content in the target language, (3) teachers usually use the main language to teach (and not the target language), (4) much time is required for preparation, (5) teachers usually feel tired when implementing CLIL, and (6) teachers need specialized training.

[CT3] I think one of the main problems is the low level of language proficiency of my students. Moreover, I have problems when I want to explain the content of the lessons. I use my target language because I am worried that my students cannot understand the content.

Finally, if we pay attention to the threats for implementing CLIL in Kazakhstan, the participants reported issues such as (1) lack of teaching materials, (2) implementation is required although teachers are just starting to master CLIL, (3) stakeholders and administrators do not provide teachers with guidelines to implement CLIL, (4) there is a lack of internal motivation, (5) skills and knowledge are developed in short-term learning courses, and (6) there is a certain obsession for teachers' certification.

[CT2] Implementation of the CLIL system is a very ambitious project, like everything in Kazakhstan. Ambitions, as always, are not justified. Teachers are asked to incorporate into the lesson what they themselves are just starting to master.

Second Research Question: What are the differences between CLIL and non-CLIL teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of CLIL in Kazakhstan?

Different perceptions are reported by Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL teachers. CLIL teachers highlighted more key factors than non-CLIL teachers, although both groups agree on two positive aspects: (1) CLIL increases interest among students (strength), and (2) the new educational system changes support the implementation of CLIL lessons (opportunity).

[NCT3] I am a teacher of History. I think it would be interesting if I applied it (CLIL). I think it would be amazing to teach history in a foreign language. (...) if I taught in English, my students would be more interested and focused on the teaching process.

Similarly, both groups agree on three negative aspects: (1) teachers usually use the main language to teach (and not the target language) and (2) have problems to understand the content in the target language (weaknesses), and (3) implementation is required although teachers are just starting to master CLIL (threat).

[CT2] Unfortunately, most teachers take courses under the influence of external motivation (...). Thus, they are aimed not at obtaining knowledge or skills, but at obtaining a certificate.

Nevertheless, CLIL teachers' responses tend to be more specific and precise, due to the familiarity with the approach and its implementation, as they have been working with the CLIL approach for at least one year.

The SWOT matrix (Table 2) included below presents both Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of this approach in the country.

Table 2. SWOT Matrix for Kazakh CLIL and non-CLIL Teachers, Arranged Based on Frequency

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLIL increases interest among students (CT / NCT) • CLIL facilitates the training of students with subject knowledge through the language component (CT) • Students understand better the language component of the lesson (CT) • Every CLIL lesson is different (CT) • CLIL requires various types of tasks (CT) • The linguistic subject components can be combined in CLIL lessons (CT) • Students are more aware of the language component of the lesson (CT) • The subject practice accent is oriented with finding solutions in the target language (CT) • Attention is paid to specific vocabulary (CT) 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have low level of language proficiency (CT) • Teachers usually use the main language to teach (and not the target language) (CT / NCT) • Students have problems to understand the content in the target language (CT / NCT) • Much time is required for preparation (CT) • Teachers usually feel tired (CT) • Teachers sometimes feel that they cannot explain all their thoughts in the target language (CT) • Teachers need proficiency in the target language (NCT) • Teachers do not usually have an objective assessment of their teaching process (CT) • It is difficult to implement tasks using CLIL for each lesson (CT) • Teachers are aware of their lack of specialized training (NCT)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLIL meets the current system of modern requirements of educational standards of Kazakhstan (CT / NCT) • The new educational system changes support the implementation of CLIL lessons (CT / NCT) • CLIL increases the quality of education (CT) • Kazakhstan is developing the CLIL approach now (NCT) • CLIL enhances diversity (CT) • Guidelines are developed by CLIL groups for teachers in Kazakhstan (CT) • CLIL is an ambitious project in Kazakhstan (CT) • Teachers can develop their own pedagogical competence within CLIL (CT) 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation is required although teachers are just starting to master CLIL (CT / NCT) • Teaching materials are not available (CT) • Knowledge is acquired in short-term learning courses (CT) • Skills are developed in short-term learning courses (CT) • There is a lack of internal motivation (CT) • The school administration and education department do not provide teachers with CLIL guidelines (CT) • There is a certain obsession for teachers' certification (CT)

CT: CLIL teachers

NCT: Non-CLIL teachers

5. Discussion

Teachers' beliefs are essential for every teaching and learning situation, and are an especially influential factor in implementing new approaches (Ferreira, & Kalaja, 2012); consequently, the beliefs of both CLIL and non-CLIL teachers in Kazakhstan are examined here.

The findings of this research are in line with previous studies on the opportunities provided by the implementation of CLIL in different contexts (Georgiou, 2012; Pérez-Cañado, 2016). The state programs of development for languages in the periods 2001-2010 and 2011-2020 are a magnificent opportunity for the introduction of CLIL in the educational system, as both CLIL and non-CLIL teachers reported in this research. In this light, Kazakhstan government's commitment to meet international standards involves fundamental reforms in different areas, among which we can point out the project "Trinity of languages" into force from 2007 (Zharkynbekova, Akynova, & Aimoldina, 2017). The main directions of current language policy in Kazakhstan are conditioned by the multilingual status of the country and its desire for the advancement into the world economic world. There are a lot of challenges now, but there are potential opportunities and conditions for the implementation of approaches like CLIL in order to meet, as the respondents say, the requirements of educational standards of Kazakhstan.

Focusing on the strengths, there is no doubt that even today one of the main aims of the foreign language and bilingual classroom is to stimulate and sustain students' interest. We need to bear in mind that CLIL students may not be always enthusiastically interested in all subject content because it is taught in a language different from their main language – as it is content that they have to learn. Using CLIL, however, may serve as a motivator to learn both the content and the language through which this content is taught (Silvén, 2017). Participants in this study report the increase of interest among CLIL students about studying, finding in agreement with previous research (i.e. Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010; Dale, & Tanner, 2012; Pladevall-Ballester, 2015). This is also connected to the fact of using real materials that enhance meaningful learning, as "students use the language as they learn it rather than spending years 'rehearsing' in a language class for a possible opportunity to use the language some time in the future" (Georgiou, 2012, p. 496).

In the light of the above, it is also interesting to highlight that participants reported that students understand better the target language, and they are also more aware of the language component of the lesson. This is in line with the understanding that CLIL aims at providing opportunities and tools for learners to develop the skills, competences and knowledge required to do different types of tasks in order to enhance the quality of learning achievements in the content area and in the target language (Lasagabaster, 2008; Heras, & Lasagabaster, 2015). We cannot forget that a "clear understanding of the critical connection between language and content and an ability to integrate language and content-based instruction in CLIL pedagogy are imperative" (Ceallaigh et al., p. 76).

In connection with these ideas, and although CLIL has been implemented in Kazakhstan only in certain types of educational centres (mainly private schools and high schools) and only for a limited time, this increasing language awareness may lead to a better language proficiency as happened in previous studies (Rumlich, 2016).

Moreover, the participants stated that the implementation of CLIL lessons required a diversity of tasks in order to provide students with a meaningful use of the target language used to teach the content. Authors like Pohl (2006) have shown how the revised Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson, & Krathwohl, 2001) can be used to level tasks according to cognitive demand, then ensuring the diversity of tasks and also combining lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Moreover, Zwiers (2006) and Meyer (2010) state that it is important to consider that the learning process is more simultaneous than sequential, and consequently students may not have to go through all the less complex thinking stages (e.g. remember, understand), to successfully reach the top of Bloom's pyramid (i.e. synthesize, evaluate, create).

Despite these positive attitudes towards CLIL, the participants also showed a negative side. Students' low level of target language proficiency is the most recurrent concern among teachers. As previous studies have shown, this weakness may have an effect on the amount and the complexity of content matter taught, having unfavourable impact on content learning (Marsh, Hau, & Kong 2000; Yip, Cheung, & Tsang 2003; Ceallaigh et al., 2017).

Another key concern of the respondents is teachers' linguistic competence in the target language. Although the foreign language proficiency of the participants was not measured in this study, 5 of the 6 respondents expressed doubts regarding their own competence, result in agreement with Wolf (2016). The participants assert that, in some cases, teaching content subjects in a foreign language may adversely affect the process of mastering the content itself. Due to the importance given by the participants to explanation, teachers acknowledged that the lack of English language competence pose problems for their teaching process, so they usually had to use their main language (and not the target language) to explain some methods and terminologies. It is interesting here, however, the specific mention to vocabulary, as the identification of content key language (e.g. technical vocabulary, conventional expressions) is an essential step in the systematic integration of language in content instruction (Snow et al., 1989; Cloud et al., 2000). Nevertheless, teachers need to be aware both of the language and content objectives in CLIL (Lightbown, 2014), so that the language is not taught isolated "from the situated learning of content" (Donato, 2016, p. 30).

On the other side, disadvantages reported by the teachers are caused by or linked to external factors. The lack of school support or guidelines is a frequent issue, which is also mentioned by previous research (e.g. Pérez-Cañado, 2016; Wolf, 2016; Gruber et al., 2020).

In this light, it is also undeniable that educational resources are essential in implementing a new approach in a learning system. The lack of appropriate materials was described as the second main difficulty of CLIL teachers. They stressed thus that preparation and implementation of CLIL tasks in their lessons takes a lot of time. The answers of teachers are supported by the research by Bekenova (2016), who describes the deficiency of books and resources as a key challenge for Kazakhstan's educators in their integrated lessons. However, it is interesting to see a little light in this darkness: CT1, who teaches in Shymkent (the third largest city of Kazakhstan), mentioned the importance of a local community of CLIL teachers. This community aims at improving CLIL in the region, so they have developed a series of guidelines for CLIL teachers that has been published in 2020. Technology can be another interesting tool for developing materials. For example, CT2 mentioned the importance of the Internet, especially YouTube, as well as *Spotlight on Strategies (S.O.S.)* (Discovery Education, 2020) to improve the teaching-learning process. This is in contrast, however, with Dvorjaninova and Alas (2017), who considered that one of main problems of ineffectiveness of CLIL is unawareness of teachers about the innovative technology; these authors in their study asserted that teachers face numerous uncertainties regarding technology for CLIL.

6. Conclusion

The introduction of the CLIL approach requires rethinking the traditional concepts of the educational system in Kazakhstan. It entails numerous challenges, but there are, however, potential opportunities, especially due to the language policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

As stated above, the results regarding the negative aspects include the imperfection of educational resources, the insufficient number of classes for language immersion, and the problem of different and low levels of students' foreign language skills, which is in line with previous research (Yip, Cheung, & Tsang 2003; Ceallaigh et al., 2017). Furthermore, there is a lack of effective training programs for teachers to work within the framework of CLIL, both in terms of language and in terms of subject matter.

The result of the study revealed the urgent need of teachers for methodological support and the exchange of experiences on an ongoing basis to improve teaching practice and the development of the teacher's linguistic skills. In this sense, and in a similar context, Korkushko (2018) proposes the involvement of foreign teachers and language assistants for collaborative work, as it can be and the effective way in the introduction of CLIL in the educational system. Sarsekeyeva et al. (2018) suggest that the process of integration can be developed by seminars and educational programs for teachers' competence.

In this study, it was revealed that the lack of materials is seen as a time-wasting process from teachers. Karimsakova et al. (2018) also found out that teachers have difficulties in preparation for lessons. In order to create the educational resources, the cross-departmental sharing and experience of regional schools can be essential. Banegas (2012) asserts that CLIL materials should be published in advance, and training opportunities should be planned for helping teachers to transit into new educational system.

Due to the significance of materials, the regional departments of education should assemble the group of experts and teachers who can work with other departments to publish the materials for teachers. There are 14 regions in Kazakhstan, and the joined effort of teachers can be productive. In this light, Vitchenko (2017) emphasized that poor management negatively effects the efficiency of CLIL approach. Thus, the creation of the necessary organizational and pedagogical conditions for the application of CLIL is possible through the planning and implementation of a set of measures at all levels of education system of Kazakhstan, as well as increasing teachers' interest in professional self-development.

After revealing all the challenges and opportunities regarding the introduction CLIL in the Republic of Kazakhstan, further research is needed to propose strategies that may lead to an improvement in the development of trilingual education, possibly by using CLIL, in the country.

7. References

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8. Annex

Interview for CLIL teachers

No. Question	English	Russian	Kazakh
1	What do you think about the implementation of CLIL in Kazakhstan's education system?	Что вы думаете о внедрении CLIL в системе образования Казахстана?	Қазақстанның білім беру жүйесіне CLIL әдісінің енгізілуі туралы не ойлайсыз?
2	How long have you been a CLIL teacher?	Как долго вы являетесь учителем CLIL?	Сіз CLIL мұғалімі болғаныңызға қанша уақыт болды?
3	What are the main characteristics of your CLIL lessons?	Каковы основные особенности уроков CLIL?	CLIL сабақтарының негізгі ерекшеліктері қандай?
4	What are your strengths as a CLIL teacher?	Каковы ваши сильные стороны как учителя CLIL?	CLIL мұғалімдері ретінде сіздің мықты жақтарыңыз қандай?
5	What challenges do you face as a CLIL teacher?	С какими проблемами вы сталкиваетесь, будучи преподавателем CLIL?	CLIL мұғалімі ретінде сіз қандай қиындықтармен кездесесіз?
6	How do you develop your professional skills to become better equipped to integrate CLIL principles and methodology in your everyday lessons?	Как вы развиваете свои профессиональные навыки, чтобы лучше подготовиться к интеграции принципов и методологии CLIL в ваши ежедневные занятия?	Күнделікті сабақ үрдісінде CLIL принциптері мен әдіснамасын жақсарту үшін сіз өзіңіздің кәсіби шеберлігіңізді қалай дамытасыз?
7	How do you focus on content and language while teaching in the classroom?	Как вы концентрируетесь на содержании и языке во время обучения в классе?	Сабақ барысында сабақ мазмұны мен тілге қаншалықты және қалай көңіл бөлесіз?
8	What makes a good CLIL lesson plan?	Что делает хороший план урока CLIL?	CLIL сабағының жақсы жоспары құруға не көмектеседі деп ойлайсыз?

Interview for non-CLIL teachers

No. Question	English	Russian	Kazakh
1	Have you ever heard about the CLIL approach?	Вы когда-нибудь слышали о подходе CLIL?	Сіз CLIL әдісі туралы естідіңіз бе?
2	Would you be interested in training and learning more about it?	Заинтересованы ли вы в обучении и в том, чтобы узнать больше об этом?	Сіз бұл әдісті оқып білуге және ол туралы көбірек білуді қалайсыз ба?
3	Do you think it would be easy to apply CLIL in your lessons?	Как вы думаете, было бы легко применить CLIL на ваших уроках?	Сіздің ойыңызша, сіздің сабақтарыңызда CLIL әдісін қолдану оңай болар ма?
4	In your opinion, what are advantages and disadvantages of CLIL?	Каковы преимущества и недостатки CLIL на ваш взгляд?	Сіздің ойыңызша CLIL-дің артықшылықтары мен кемшіліктері қандай?
5	What are the conditions of implementing CLIL into the classroom?	Каковы условия внедрения CLIL в классе?	CLIL әдісін сабаққа енгізу шарттары қандай деп ойлайсыз?