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ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF PRESCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS THROUGH COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

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Abstract. This research investigates a new collaborative learning strategy and its potential to significantly enhance preschool English teachers' professional intercultural and communicative competence in Kazakh higher education. This research aims to provide valuable insights into how CL can enhance preschool English language teachers' intercultural and professional communicative competence. Traditional teacher education programs often prioritize linguistic and pedagogical skills while neglecting the intercultural dimensions of teaching. This gap in teacher education presents significant challenges in adequately preparing educators to meet the needs of a multicultural student population. To address these challenges, this study explores the following research questions: the extent to which the Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication Framework enhances preschool English language teachers' intercultural and communicative competence and the perceived challenges and successes of implementing the Framework in multicultural classrooms. The findings are expected to benefit educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers working to improve teacher training programs in Kazakhstan and other similar educational contexts. The results indicate that this innovative strategy is highly effective in improving teachers' intercultural and communicative skills, offering promising prospects for their professional growth in a multicultural educational setting. These findings have significant implications for you as an educator, curriculum designer, or policymaker, inspiring you with the potential of this strategy to enhance teacher training programs in Kazakhstan and similar educational settings.

Key words: collaborative learning, English as a foreign language, intercultural and communicative competence, language learning, pedagogical framework, professional communication, sustained professional development, preschool language teachers

Introduction

This research aims to provide valuable insights into how collaborative learning can enhance preschool English language teachers' intercultural and professional communicative competence. The findings are expected to benefit educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers working to improve teacher training programs in Kazakhstan and other similar educational contexts.

Despite the increasing recognition of the importance of intercultural competence, many preschool English language teachers in Kazakhstan need more training in this area. According to an outstanding Kazakh scholar in language education, Kunanbayeva, traditional teacher education programs often prioritize linguistic and pedagogical skills while neglecting the intercultural dimensions of teaching. This gap in teacher education presents significant challenges in adequately preparing educators to meet the needs of a multicultural student population. To address these challenges, this study explores the following research questions: the extent to which the

Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication Framework enhances preschool English language teachers' intercultural and communicative competence and the perceived challenges and successes of implementing the Framework in multicultural classrooms.

The evolution of Foreign Language Education (FLE) has transitioned from a primary focus on linguistic competence (Chomsky, 1965) to the broader concept of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980), ultimately leading to the adoption of a competency-based approach that emphasizes Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) as a key outcome (Byram, 1997, 2008, 2019) [cited in 1, p.2]. This shift reflects the growing recognition that language education (LE) extends beyond mere language acquisition to develop skills necessary for effective and appropriate communication across cultural boundaries [1-2].

The Council of Europe (2016) has highlighted the role of education in fostering learners' engagement in democratic and diverse societies, positioning them as active citizens and enhancing their career prospects. In this context, culture is increasingly central to modern LE, where understanding specific social groups' cultural practices and beliefs is crucial. The given intercultural research in education, in alignment with the Council's vision, addresses these challenges by providing valuable insights into policy and pedagogy, thereby facilitating the development and implementation of ICC within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, particularly in Kazakhstan.

The demand for preschool teachers equipped with robust ICC has intensified in today's rapidly globalizing world. Such competencies are essential for educators to effectively teach in diverse classrooms and contribute to a more inclusive educational environment [7]. Within Kazakhstan, the need for well-trained preschool English language teachers capable of navigating the complexities of cultural and linguistic diversity is particularly pressing [4, 5-8]. This research addresses this critical need by exploring how collaborative learning (CL) strategies enhance these teachers' intercultural and professional communicative competence (IPCC) in Kazakh higher education settings.

Despite the increasing recognition of the importance of intercultural competence, many preschool English language teachers in Kazakhstan need more training in this area. Traditional teacher education programs often prioritize linguistic and pedagogical skills while neglecting the intercultural dimensions of teaching [4]. This gap in teacher education presents significant challenges in adequately preparing educators to meet the needs of a multicultural student population. To address these challenges, this study explores the following research questions:

- To what extent does the Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication Framework enhance preschool English language teachers' intercultural and communicative competence?

- What are the perceived challenges and successes of implementing the CLIPC Framework in multicultural classrooms?

This research aims to provide valuable insights into how CL enhances preschool English language teachers' IPCC. The findings are expected to benefit educators,

curriculum designers, and policymakers working to improve teacher training programs in Kazakhstan and other similar educational contexts.

Materials and methods

Intercultural Competence in Language Education

Intercultural competence (IC) is the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, which is increasingly recognized as vital in language education [9-10]. This competence allows teachers and students to navigate the complex cultural nuances of language learning and teaching (LLT), fostering a deeper understanding and more meaningful communication [8].

Communicative competence (CC), as initially conceptualized by Canale and Swain (1980), encompasses the ability to use language effectively and appropriately across a variety of communicative contexts [10]. This model includes linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competencies, each essential for effective LLT. As language education evolves, integrating IC within this framework has become increasingly important, reflecting the need for teachers to equip students with the skills necessary to engage in cross-cultural communication.

The growing interest in interdisciplinary studies and examining cultural communication codes has profoundly impacted the education system. Language education, now conceptualized within a triadic language, culture, and communication framework, is central to fostering mutual understanding, recognizing diversity, and promoting respect in multicultural and multilingual societies [7]. The role of IC in EFL classrooms has become pivotal, as new generations must develop intercultural awareness and communication skills to navigate the complexities of globalized interactions [4-8]. These skills enable learners to appreciate and respect significant cultural values, facilitating effective and appropriate interactions with individuals from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Contemporary language classrooms increasingly aim to create environments that raise learners' cultural awareness and enhance their intercultural communication skills, particularly in academic discourse. As Fantini notes, creating conducive conditions for LLT in cross-cultural contexts is crucial, as students may need help with adverse feedback to cross-cultural experiences [11]. Deardorff and Arasaratnam-Smith further emphasize that learners benefit significantly from explicit training in strategies designed to manage social and cultural situations, which leads to a more nuanced understanding of intercultural dialogue [12].

Porto, Houghton, and Byram contribute to this discourse by introducing a model of ICC-driven FLL [7]. Their model integrates critical cultural awareness, emphasizes the importance of understanding individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and advocates for comparative analysis between one's and target cultures. This model is structured around three core components:

- *Critical Cultural Awareness* is informed by Barnett's (1997) framework, which delineates three domains and four levels of criticality. It emphasizes the need for

learners to critically engage with cultural practices and beliefs within their culture and others.

- *Focus on 'Others'* refers to the necessity of engaging with individuals beyond national boundaries who speak different languages. Understanding these 'others' is crucial to ICC-driven FLE, broadening learners' perspectives and fostering empathy and cultural sensitivity.

- *Comparative Analysis* encourages learners to compare and contrast their cultural experiences with those of others, facilitating a deeper understanding of both their own and the target cultures [7, p.5].

This literature review underscores the importance of integrating IC into LE, highlighting how these frameworks and models enhance the professional development of preschool English language teachers. Subsequent sections will explore how CL approaches further support the development of these critical competencies within the context of Kazakh higher education.

Collaborative Learning in Teacher Education

Collaborative learning has become a pivotal pedagogical approach in teacher education, encouraging students to collectively solve problems, complete tasks, and create shared products within a dynamic learning environment [13]. This approach efficiently fosters essential professional competencies among future educators, promoting more profound understanding, critical thinking, and reflective practices.

Nunan emphasizes the importance of creating learner-centered classrooms where students actively participate in the learning process. Nunan argues that CL shifts the focus from the teacher as the sole authority to a more distributed form of learning, where students take greater responsibility for their learning outcomes [14]. This shift is particularly beneficial in teacher education, as it mirrors the collaborative skills and autonomy that future educators must cultivate in their classrooms.

The CL is an invaluable strategy in culturally diverse educational settings, creating environments where students practice and refine their collaborative skills [15]. CL involves coordinated, synchronous activities encouraging group members to co-construct knowledge through negotiation and conflict resolution [12]. As Nunan (1992) suggests, working together enhances learners' linguistic and communicative skills and deepens their cultural awareness and sensitivity, which is critical in multicultural and multilingual contexts [14].

Gillies notes that the intellectual synergy generated by CL leads to mutual engagement and a more profound understanding of the subject matter, often creating new knowledge [15]. Dillenbourg conceptualizes CL as a social contract among participants, establishing conditions that facilitate specific types of interactions. He introduces a four-stage model—*situation, interactions, processes, and effects*—each stage interrelated and essential for triggering effective learning mechanisms and enhancing the likelihood of positive educational outcomes [13]. This model underscores the importance of designing CL environments that facilitate interaction and promote the desired learning outcomes.

Gillies expands on this by describing CL as a sophisticated teaching methodology where learners work in teams to achieve common objectives. These objectives include

exploring ideas, solving complex problems, designing products, conducting experiments, and critically evaluating theories or cases [15]. As Nunan advocates, this approach shifts the focus away from traditional, teacher-centered instruction, emphasizing the active involvement of all learners in intellectually challenging tasks [14]. Such tasks allow students to apply their knowledge in practical contexts, enhancing problem-solving skills and fostering more profound engagement with the material.

In CL environments, the teacher's role evolves from a traditional lecturer to a facilitator and designer of intellectual experiences [8]. Teachers guide learners through exploring and applying content, fostering an environment where students are not passive recipients of information but active participants in the learning process. Through discussions, clarifications, and the evaluation of peers' ideas, learners in collaborative settings develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Nunan highlights that this collaborative approach is especially pertinent in LE, where the social nature of LLT is emphasized [14]. By engaging in CL, teacher candidates experience the benefits of this approach firsthand, which better prepares them to implement collaborative strategies in their classrooms. This preparation is crucial for effectively teaching in diverse educational contexts, where IC and professional collaboration are vital to fostering effective learning environments.

Our goal is to combine intercultural awareness [7, 12] with professional communication skills [10, 11] to address the need for interacting across cultures and managing diverse classrooms. This allows us to define Intercultural and Professional Communicative Competence as the ability of individuals, especially educators, to effectively engage, communicate, and collaborate in diverse cultural settings while utilizing professional language skills. This competence includes understanding cultural diversity, navigating intercultural interactions with sensitivity and appropriateness, and mastering linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic communication skills. It involves reflecting on one's cultural assumptions and biases, solving problems collaboratively, and adapting communication styles to meet the needs of diverse learners in professional educational contexts. Developing this competence is crucial for creating inclusive and effective educational environments, especially in multicultural and multilingual settings.

Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication Framework

This study proposes a framework specifically designed to address the unique needs of preschool English language teachers in Kazakhstan, with the primary aim of enhancing their IPCC through Cl. The framework integrates critical principles of IC, professional communication, and CL, all of which are critical for the professional development of future educators. This holistic approach is tailored to meet teachers' challenges in multicultural and multilingual classrooms. The Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication (CLIPC) Framework comprises five interconnected components (see Figure 1). Each element complements the others,

forming a comprehensive method to enhance the IPC skills essential for effective teaching in diverse educational environments.



Figure 1 - Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication Framework

The Cultural Awareness and Reflection (CAR) component is designed to cultivate teachers' awareness of cultural diversity and its implications for teaching and communication. This element is central to the framework, as cultural sensitivity is crucial for effective teaching, particularly in multicultural classrooms. The research underscores the importance of cultural awareness as a foundational element of IC, which is vital for effective communication and interaction in diverse educational settings [11]. Teachers who are aware of their cultural biases and understand their students' cultural backgrounds are better equipped to create inclusive and supportive learning environments.

In practice, students are encouraged to maintain journals where they regularly document and reflect on their cultural experiences, biases, and assumptions. These reflections are not solely personal exercises but are shared within small group settings where teachers discuss their insights, challenges, and discoveries. This collaborative reflection process fosters a deeper understanding of how cultural perspectives influence teaching practices and student interactions. It enables teachers to become more aware of their cultural biases and proactively address them [14]. Additionally, structured dialogues with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds are integral to this component. These dialogues go beyond surface-level exchanges, delving into the complexities of cultural norms, values, and communication styles. Through these interactions, teachers gain a nuanced understanding of cultural diversity and learn to navigate cultural differences more effectively in their teaching practices [13]. The expected outcomes include increased self-awareness of cultural biases, leading to more culturally responsive teaching practices and an enhanced understanding of cultural diversity, enabling teachers to better support students from various cultural backgrounds.

The Interactive Communicative Activities (ICA) component aims to enhance future teachers' CC through interactive and experiential learning activities. These activities are crucial for developing the practical communicative skills to manage multicultural classrooms effectively. Role-plays and language exchanges provide experiential learning opportunities that bridge the gap between theory and practice,

emphasizing that communicative competence extends beyond language proficiency to include the ability to use language appropriately in different cultural contexts [10-11].

Within their training programs, students engage in role-playing exercises that simulate real-life classroom scenarios involving cultural and communicative challenges. These exercises assign students roles that require them to address specific intercultural issues or manage interactions among diverse students. This hands-on approach allows teachers to practice and refine their communicative skills in a controlled environment, experimenting with various strategies and receiving immediate feedback [10]. Additionally, students participate in language exchange sessions with peers, practicing intercultural communication in English and non-English-speaking contexts using various ICT tools such as online conferences, emails, and social media. These sessions emphasize language skills and the cultural contexts in which these languages are used. Teachers learn to navigate cultural nuances and develop a deeper appreciation for linguistic diversity in their classrooms [11]. As a result, students are expected to improve their ability to handle communication challenges in multicultural settings, thereby enhancing their linguistic and pragmatic skills, which leads to more effective communication with students from diverse backgrounds [4].

The Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) component focuses on developing problem-solving skills through peer collaboration, particularly in addressing intercultural and communicative issues. This component is critical because it reflects the collaborative nature of real-world teaching, where educators often work together to resolve complex challenges.

In this component, teachers work in collaborative groups to analyze case studies that present complex cultural and communicative dilemmas. These case studies are drawn from real-world scenarios that teachers may encounter in their professional lives, such as addressing cultural misunderstandings in the classroom or mediating conflicts between students from different cultural backgrounds. By collaborating on solutions, teachers learn to approach problems from multiple perspectives and consider the cultural implications of their decisions [13]. Additionally, teachers participate in collaborative projects requiring them to apply intercultural and communicative strategies to solve educational challenges. For instance, a group might design a lesson plan incorporating culturally relevant materials or develop a strategy for improving communication between teachers, students, and parents from different cultural backgrounds. These projects encourage creativity, innovation, and a deeper understanding of how to apply IC in practical ways [8-15]. The expected outcomes include strengthened collaborative problem-solving abilities, enabling teachers to address intercultural challenges more effectively, and increased confidence in developing and implementing solutions to educational problems in culturally diverse settings.

The Peer Feedback and Assessment (PFA) component fosters a culture of continuous improvement through peer feedback and self-assessment. This vital component promotes continuous professional development and creates a supportive

learning community. Giving and receiving feedback helps teachers become more reflective practitioners and continuously refine their skills.

In this framework, teachers engage in peer observation sessions to observe each other's lessons and provide constructive feedback on IPCC practices. This process is designed to be reciprocal, with teachers taking turns observing and being observed. The feedback is specific, actionable, and aimed at helping teachers improve their IC and professional communication skills [1-5]. Additionally, regular reflection sessions are held where groups of teachers come together to discuss their progress, share experiences, and set goals for further improvement. These sessions emphasize collaborative reflection, where teachers collectively analyze their teaching practices and support each other in identifying areas for growth [13]. The expected outcomes include an enhanced ability to give and receive constructive feedback, leading to ongoing professional development and creating a supportive learning environment where teachers continuously improve their IPCC.

The Sustained Professional Development (SPD) component aims to ensure the long-term development of intercultural and communicative competence. It is essential for maintaining and building upon the gains made during initial training. Continuous learning opportunities and mentorship are vital to fostering long-term professional growth. This component is grounded in the understanding that professional competence requires ongoing development and reinforcement, particularly in areas as complex as intercultural and communicative skills [11].

The teacher training syllabus regularly holds continuous learning workshops, focusing on the latest research and best practices in IPCC. These interactive and practical workshops provide teachers with up-to-date knowledge and skills they apply in their classrooms. Topics covered include emerging trends in multicultural education, advanced communicative strategies, and new approaches to cultural sensitivity training [11]. The framework also includes a mentorship component where experienced teachers are paired with less experienced colleagues. Mentors provide guidance, support, and feedback as their mentees work to develop their intercultural and communicative competencies. This mentorship relationship is intended to be mutually beneficial, with the mentor and mentee learning from each other's experiences and perspectives [4]. The expected outcomes include long-term intercultural and communicative competence improvement, supported by continuous learning and a robust professional learning community where teachers support each other's ongoing development.

Results and discussion

The participants in this study comprised 35 English language instructors from Kazakh Ablai Khan University and Dulaty Taraz Regional University (Kazakhstan), who actively implemented the CLIPC Framework in their English courses. These teachers were selected through purposive sampling to ensure they had direct experience with the framework. All participants had at least two years of teaching experience and were involved in professional development activities related to IC and CL. The

participants ranged in age from 25 to 55 years, with varying levels of teaching experience. Table 1 provides demographic information about participants.

Participants	Ablai Khan University		Dulaty University		Total
Total	21		14		35
Academic degree	MA	PhD	MA	PhD	
	14	7	11	3	35
<i>Aged 25-40</i>	9	3	8	1	21
<i>Aged 41-55</i>	5	4	3	2	14

Table 1 – Demographic distribution of participants

Data Collection

Data were gathered through a concise questionnaire to assess the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the CLIPC Framework. The questionnaire included ten questions, combining multiple-choice and open-ended formats to capture quantitative and qualitative insights (Appendix A). Questions were formulated to assess their understanding of critical concepts such as cultural awareness, CC, and collaborative problem-solving. Additionally, this section included items that gauged the effectiveness of their CL strategies in their teaching practices.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the participant's experiences and the effectiveness of the CLIPC framework. In quantitative analysis, responses to the multiple-choice questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including calculating frequencies and percentages to identify trends and patterns in the participants' experiences with the CLIPC Framework. For the qualitative analysis, the open-ended responses were subjected to thematic analysis to identify key themes and insights related to implementing the CLIPC Framework. Thematic coding was used to categorize responses into themes such as challenges, successes, influence on teaching practices, student feedback, and suggestions for improvement. These themes were then analyzed in the existing literature on IC and CI in language education.

Calculation Formula:

$$P = \left(\frac{F}{N}\right) \times 100$$

Where:

P = Percentage of participants who selected a specific response

F = Frequency of the particular response (the number of participants who chose that option)

N = Total number of respondents (the total number of participants who answered the question)

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before administering the questionnaire, and they were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Participants were

also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences.

The questionnaire given to preschool English language teachers provided valuable insights into the implementation and effectiveness of the CLIPC Framework. The findings are summarized below:

Question 1 on integrating the CLIPC Framework revealed that most respondents (72%) reported integrating the CLIPC Framework into their English language instruction in every lesson or most lessons. Specifically, 11 instructors (31%) indicated using the framework in every lesson, while fourteen (41%) used it in most lessons. A smaller portion of instructors (17%) reported occasional use, and only 11% rarely incorporated the framework into their teaching (Figure 2). This suggests that the framework is generally well-integrated into the instructors' teaching practices, though there is some variability in the frequency of its use.

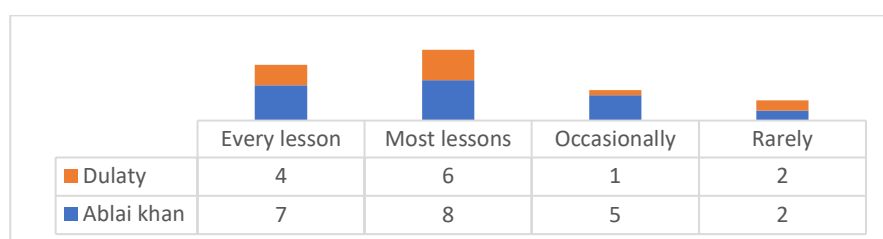


Figure 2 - Integration of the CLIPC Framework

In response to *Question 2* regarding enhancing ICC in English classrooms, a significant portion of respondents (75%) felt that the CLIPC Framework notably improved their students' ICC. Specifically, fifteen instructors (43%) reported significant enhancement, while eleven (32%) observed moderate improvement. A smaller group (17%) noted only a slight enhancement, and 8% did not perceive any improvement (Figure 3). These findings indicate that the framework is generally effective in developing ICC, although its impact varies among instructors and contexts.

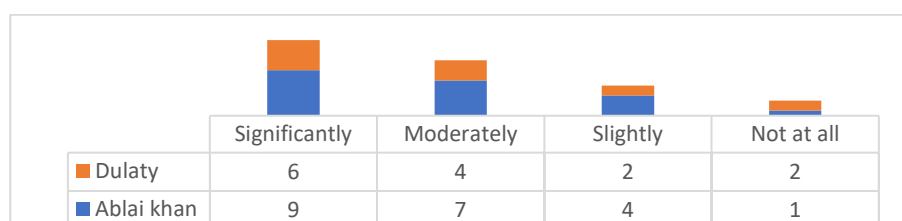


Figure 3 - Enhancement of Intercultural Communication Competence in %

Question 3 asked about the effectiveness of fostering students' professional communicative competence. 77% of instructors found it to be either very effective or effective. Twelve respondents (34%) rated it very effective, while fifteen (43%) found it effective. A smaller group (17%) considered it somewhat effective, and 6% did not (Figure 4). This indicates that the CLIPC Framework is generally seen as a powerful tool for improving professional communication skills, although some instructors believe there is room for enhancement.

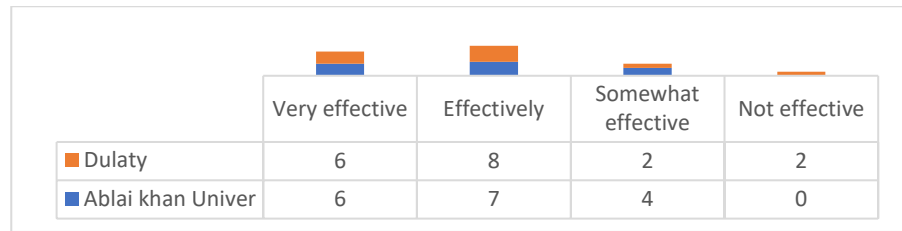


Figure 4 - Effectiveness in Improving Communicative Competence in %

Question 4 on instructors' confidence in applying the CLIPC Framework principles revealed that most instructors (77%) felt confident or very confident. Eleven respondents (31%) reported being very confident, while sixteen (46%) felt confident. Six instructors (17%) were somewhat confident, and only 6% were not confident (Figure 5). This suggests that most instructors effectively implement the framework in their lessons, though some benefit from additional support or training.

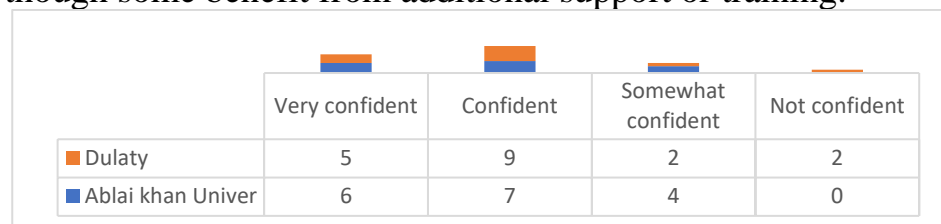


Figure 5 - Confidence in Applying the Framework in %

In *Question 5*, the instructors' assessment of the CLIPC Framework's impact on student engagement in intercultural activities was generally positive. Twelve instructors (34%) reported a highly positive impact, and fifteen (43%) observed a positive impact. However, 20% of respondents felt the impact was neutral, and 3% perceived a negative effect (Figure 6). These results suggest that while the framework successfully engages students in intercultural activities, factors limit its effectiveness in some contexts.

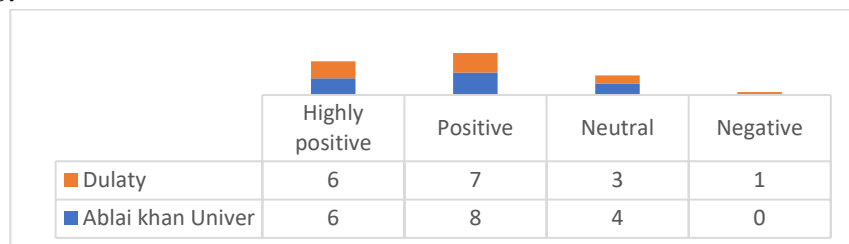


Figure 6 - Impact on Student Engagement in Intercultural Activities in %

In *Question 6*, regarding the frequency with which students demonstrated improved cultural awareness due to the framework, 75% of instructors observed consistent improvements. Nine respondents (26%) reported that their students always showed improved cultural awareness, and seventeen (49%) indicated that this occurred often. Seven instructors (20%) observed improvements sometimes, while 6% noted that it rarely happened (Figure 7). This suggests that the CLIPC Framework is generally effective in enhancing students' cultural awareness, although its impact may vary.

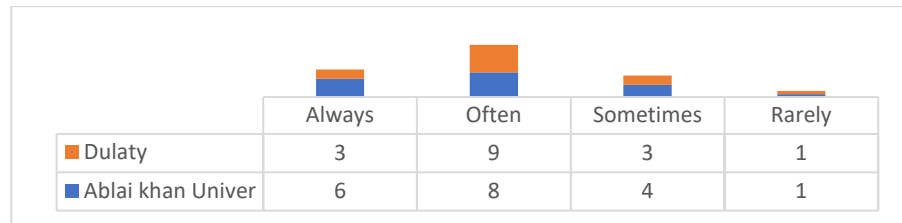


Figure 7 - Improvement in Students' Cultural Awareness in %

Question 7 asked respondents about their likelihood of continuing to use the CLIPC Framework. 74% of respondents indicated a high level of commitment to the framework. Forty percent of instructors (14) stated they were very likely to continue using it, and thirty-four percent (12 people) were likely to do so. Twenty percent of respondents (7) were somewhat likely, while 3% were unlikely to continue using the framework (Figure 8). These findings suggest that most instructors find the framework valuable and intend to continue using it, though a minority may need additional motivation or support.

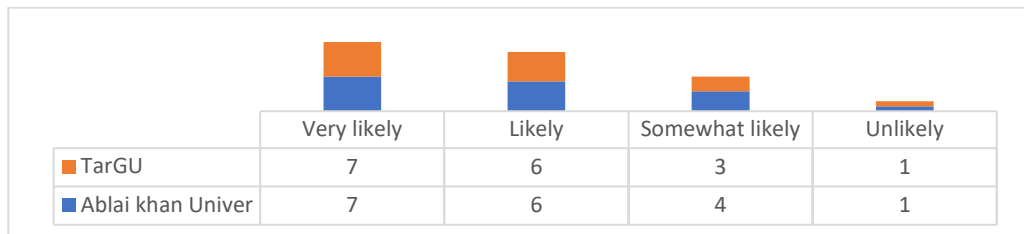


Figure 8 - Likelihood of Continuing to Use the CLIPC Framework

In response to *Question 8* about implementation challenges, instructors mentioned several difficulties implementing the CLIPC Framework. Common issues included student resistance to the collaborative learning approach, challenges aligning CLIPC activities with existing curricula, and time constraints in covering required content. For instance, Respondent 8 claimed: *"One of the main challenges I faced was the initial resistance from students unfamiliar with the collaborative learning approach. It took some time to get them fully engaged."*

Respondent 32 stated: *"I found it difficult to align the CLIPC activities with the existing curriculum, especially given the time constraints we face in covering all the required content."*

These challenges indicate the need for additional support or resources to facilitate more effective framework implementation.

Despite facing challenges, many instructors reported successful outcomes from using the CLIPC Framework in *Question 9*. They shared stories of students becoming more confident in intercultural discussions, increased respect and understanding among students from different cultural backgrounds, and successful collaborative projects that integrated cultural diversity. For instance, Respondent 16 stated: *"After implementing the CLIPC Framework, I noticed a significant improvement in my students' ability to engage in discussions with peers from different cultural*

backgrounds. One student, in particular, became more confident in expressing her thoughts and understanding different perspectives."

Respondent 28: "A successful outcome was when my students collaborated on a project where they had to explore and present cultural traditions from their regions. The depth of understanding and the respect they showed for each other's cultures were remarkable."

These successes highlight the potential impact of the CLIPC Framework on students' intercultural and communicative competencies (Table 2). Further research focused on solutions for these changes.

Challenges in Integrating Collaborative Learning into Language Education	
Challenges	Descriptions
Student Resistance to Collaborative Learning	Some students resisted collaborative learning activities because they were accustomed to more traditional, teacher-centered approaches.
Time Constraints	Integrating collaborative learning activities into the curriculum is time-consuming in planning and execution.
Aligning Collaborative Learning with Curriculum Goals	Teachers found it challenging to align collaborative learning activities with specific curriculum goals and objectives.
Diverse Student Abilities and Participation Levels	Some students have varied levels of language proficiency, cultural awareness, and willingness to participate in collaborative activities, particularly in multicultural classrooms.
Facilitating Effective Group Dynamics	Ensuring positive and productive group dynamics was complex, particularly in multicultural classrooms where students have different communication styles, cultural norms, and expectations.
Assessment and Evaluation of Collaborative Learning	Assessing students' performance in collaborative learning activities was complex, as it involved evaluating the final product and the process, including participation, communication, and teamwork.
Monitoring and Providing Feedback	Providing timely and constructive feedback during collaborative activities is challenging, especially in large classes.

Table 2 - Challenges in Integrating Collaborative Learning into Language Education

For *Question 10*, the CLIPC Framework significantly impacted instructors' teaching practices. Many reported that they became more aware of the need to incorporate cultural awareness activities and felt more confident in addressing cultural differences in the classroom. For instance, Respondent 24 claimed, "*The framework has made me more aware of the need to incorporate cultural awareness activities in my lessons. I have also become more confident in addressing cultural differences openly and using them as a learning tool.*"

Additionally, the framework promoted a more collaborative and inclusive classroom environment, which many instructors found beneficial for their students' learning. Respondent 34 stated: "*It has completely changed my approach. I now focus more on creating opportunities for students to collaborate and learn from each other, which has led to a more inclusive and dynamic classroom environment.*"

The interview findings show that teachers teaching their students under the CLIPC Framework are highly effective preschool English language educators. These students possess unique competencies that this research intended to empower learners to thrive in diverse, multicultural educational environments described below:

Cultural Awareness and Reflection refers to recognizing, understanding, and respecting cultural differences within diverse groups. This skill involves understanding how cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and values influence behavior, communication, and learning styles. Individuals with high cultural awareness and sensitivity are adept at

identifying their own cultural biases and adjusting their behavior to create an inclusive environment that honors the diversity of all participants [1]. This skill is crucial in educational settings where students come from varied cultural backgrounds, as it fosters empathy, promotes mutual respect, and enhances the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Interactive Communication Competence involves engaging in meaningful and effective communication across cultural and linguistic contexts. This competence extends beyond language proficiency and includes using language appropriately in social interactions, considering the cultural nuances and social norms that influence communication. Individuals with this skill express complex ideas clearly and adjust their communication strategies to align with the cultural background of their audience [8]. In educational settings, this competence allows teachers to facilitate discussions, resolve misunderstandings, and promote an inclusive dialogue among students from diverse backgrounds.

Collaborative Problem-Solving Skills involve working effectively with others to address and resolve challenges, particularly in a group setting. This skill requires engaging in constructive dialogue, considering multiple perspectives, and negotiating acceptable solutions for all parties involved. Individuals with collaborative solid problem-solving skills are adept at fostering teamwork, promoting a positive group dynamic, and guiding the group toward successfully resolving problems [13, 15].

Peer Feedback and Continuous Improvement involve giving and receiving constructive feedback among colleagues to enhance professional skills and practices. This skill requires objectively evaluating peers' performance, providing actionable suggestions for improvement, and integrating feedback into one's practices. Continuous improvement is achieved by regularly reflecting on feedback, setting goals for development, and making adjustments to enhance effectiveness [14]. This skill is vital in educational settings to foster a CL environment where teachers and students grow through shared insights and mutual support.

Sustained Professional Development is the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge, skills, and competencies to enhance professional practice over time. This skill underscores the significance of lifelong learning and adapting to changes in one's field, especially in response to new research, technologies, and methodologies. Sustained professional development entails participating in workshops, seeking mentorship, engaging in reflective practice, and staying updated with the latest advancements in the field. For educators, this skill is crucial for remaining adequate and relevant in a rapidly evolving educational landscape, ensuring they provide high-quality instruction and support to their students.

These findings underscore the CLIPC Framework's effectiveness in developing educators proficient in IPCC and leaders in fostering inclusive and effective educational environments. The framework equips teachers with the skills needed to excel in the complexities of modern, multicultural classrooms, making them invaluable assets to their academic institutions. These findings suggest that the CLIPC Framework enhances IPCC among preschool English language teachers. However, its impact varies depending on the context and implementation challenges. The overall positive

reception and willingness to continue using the framework indicate its value as a teaching tool, while the difficulties identified highlight areas for potential improvement.

Conclusion

This study proves collaborative learning is a practical pedagogical approach for enhancing Kazakhstan's preschool English language teachers' professional intercultural and communicative competence. The Collaborative Learning for Intercultural and Professional Communication Framework presents an innovative approach to enhancing preschool English language teachers' professional and intercultural communication competence. The findings suggest that teacher education programs should consider incorporating collaborative learning strategies to better prepare educators for the challenges of teaching in diverse, multicultural environments. By integrating cultural awareness, interactive activities, collaborative problem-solving, peer feedback, and sustained development, the framework provides a comprehensive strategy for teacher education in Kazakhstan. Implementing this framework has the potential to significantly improve the quality of education in diverse and multicultural classrooms, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students. The CLIPC Framework can be integrated into teacher education programs and professional development initiatives in Kazakhstan's higher education institutions. It is designed to be flexible, allowing for adaptation to different contexts and needs. However, the research revealed significant challenges. Further research will focus on addressing these issues. The key solution for them is to ensure that the implementation of the framework is supported by institutional policies prioritizing intercultural competence and communicative skills as core components of teacher education.

As the global landscape of education continues to evolve, fostering intercultural and communicative competence through innovative pedagogical approaches will be essential in developing teachers who can effectively navigate the complexities of the modern classroom.

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МЕКТЕПКЕ ДЕЙІНГІ АҒЫЛШЫН ТІЛІ МҰҒАЛІМДЕРІНІҢ МӘДЕНИЕТАРАЛЫҚ ЖӘНЕ КӘСІБИ КОММУНИКАТИВТІК ҚҰЗЫРЕТТІЛІГІН КОЛЛАБОРАТИВТЫҚ ОҚЫТУ АРҚЫЛЫ АРТТЫРУ

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Аңдатпа. Бұл зерттеу жаңа коллаборативтік оқыту (КО) стратегиясын және оның Қазақстан жоғары біліміндегі мектепке дейінгі ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің кәсіби мәдениетаралық және коммуникативті құзыреттілігін айтарлықтай арттырудағы әлеуетін зерттейді. Бұл зерттеу КО мектепке дейінгі ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің мәдениетаралық және кәсіби коммуникативті құзыреттілігін қалай арттыра алатыны туралы құнды түсініктерді беруге бағытталған. Мұғалімдерді оқытудың дәстүрлі бағдарламалары көбінесе лингвистикалық және педагогикалық дағдыларға басымдық береді, сонымен бірге оқытудың мәдениетаралық өлшемдерін елемейді. Мұғалімдердің біліміндегі бұл олқылық көп мәдениетті студенттердің қажеттіліктерін қанағаттандыру үшін мұғалімдерді адекватты түрде дайындауда елеулі қиындықтар туғызады. Осы қиындықтарды шешу үшін бұл зерттеу келесі зерттеу сұрақтарын зерттейді: Мәдениетаралық және кәсіби коммуникация үшін КО жүйесі мектепке дейінгі ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің мәдениетаралық және коммуникативті құзыреттілігін қаншалықты арттыратыны және көпмәдениетті сыныптарда негіздемені енгізудің түйткілдері мен жетістіктері. Қорытындылар Қазақстандағы және басқа да осыған ұқсас білім беру контекстіндегі мұғалімдерді даярлау бағдарламаларын жетілдірумен айналысатын педагогтарға, оқу бағдарламаларын әзірлеушілерге және шешім қабылдаушыларға пайдалы болады деп күтілуде. Нәтижелер бұл инновациялық стратегияның мұғалімдердің мәдениетаралық және коммуникативті дағдыларын жетілдіруде жоғары тиімді

екенін, олардың көпмәдениетті білім беру жағдайында кәсіби өсуінің перспективаларын ұсынатынын көрсетеді. Бұл тұжырымдар сіз үшін педагог, оқу жоспарын әзірлеуші немесе шешім қабылдаушы ретінде маңызды әсер етеді, бұл сізді осы стратегияның Қазақстандағы мұғалімдерді даярлау бағдарламаларын және осыған ұқсас білім беру шарттарын жақсартуға арналған әлеуетіне шабыттандырады.

Тірек сөздер: коллаборативтік оқыту, ағылшын тілі шет тілі ретінде, мәдениетаралық және коммуникативтік құзыреттілік, тілдік оқыту, педагогикалық негіз, кәсіби қарым-қатынас, тұрақты кәсіби даму, мектепке дейінгі тіл мұғалімдері

ПОВЫШЕНИЕ УРОВНЯ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ И ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЙ КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ УЧИТЕЛЕЙ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА ДОШКОЛЬНЫХ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЙ ПУТЕМ КОЛЛАБОРАТИВНОГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ

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Аннотация. В данном исследовании представлена новая стратегия коллаборативного обучения (КО) и ее потенциал для значительного повышения профессиональной межкультурной и коммуникативной компетенции учителей английского языка дошкольных учреждений в казахстанском высшем образовании. Целью этого исследования является предоставление информации о том, как КО может развить межкультурную и профессиональную коммуникативную компетенцию учителей английского языка в системе дошкольного образования. Традиционные программы обучения учителей часто отдают приоритет языковым и педагогическим навыкам, игнорируя при этом межкультурные аспекты обучения. Этот пробел в обучении учителей создает значительные проблемы для адекватной подготовки педагогов для удовлетворения потребностей многокультурного студенческого населения. Для решения этих проблем в этом исследовании рассматриваются следующие вопросы: в какой степени КО в рамках межкультурной и профессиональной коммуникации повышает межкультурную и коммуникативную компетенцию учителей английского языка дошкольного образования и предполагаемые проблемы, и успехи внедрения КО в многокультурных классах. Ожидается, что результаты принесут пользу педагогам, разработчикам учебных программ и деятелям, работающим над улучшением программ подготовки учителей в Казахстане и других подобных образовательных контекстах. Результаты показывают, что эта инновационная стратегия очень эффективна для улучшения межкультурных и коммуникативных навыков учителей, предлагая многообещающие перспективы для их профессионального роста в многокультурной образовательной среде. Эти результаты имеют значительные последствия как для педагогов, так и разработчиков учебных программ и ответственных лиц, представляя стратегии для улучшения программ подготовки учителей в Казахстане и аналогичных образовательных средах.

Ключевые слова: коллаборативное обучение, английский как иностранный, межкультурная и коммуникативная компетенция, изучение языка, педагогическая структура, профессиональная коммуникация, устойчивое профессиональное развитие, учителя иностранных языков в системе дошкольного образования

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