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COMMUNICATIVE SPECIALIZED PRACTICUM IN ENHANCING LINGUO-PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Abstract. This article discusses aspects of formation of linguo-professional competence among students of the pedagogical faculty of foreign languages. In this regard, under the contemporary conditions of globalization and integration of education systems, the training of competitive foreign language teachers holds particular importance. In connection with new requirements for graduates of linguistic universities, there is a need to train a new generation of teaching staff capable of professional communication in various fields. The professional standard sets the foundations for developing educational programs for training Foreign language teachers, and provides conditions for their continuous professional development. One of the most important components of future teachers' professional preparation is the formation of linguo-professional competence (LPC), which, in addition to foreign language competency, includes the ability to apply it in pedagogical and professionally oriented communication environments. The aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between problem-based learning and the formation of linguo-professional competence of future foreign language teachers by conducting a survey among fourth-year students of the Foreign Languages Teacher Training Faculty who completed the training in the discipline "Communicative Specialized Practicum". The article examines how problem-solving tasks and activities contribute to the mastering of linguo-professional skills in future language teachers, highlighting important definitions, research, and findings.

Key words. linguo-professional competence (LPC), cognitive-problem approach, foreign language education, communicative specialized practicum, competence-based education, professional tasks, cognitive skills, professional growth

Introduction

In the new conditions of development of the communicative and culture creating role of education, a foreign language teacher acts not only as a cultural moderator, ensuring the inclusion of the student's personality in the world community, but also as a guide who restructures the features of their social world's image and communicative behavior. The field of foreign language education is going through rapid and continual change, influenced by new pedagogical theories, technological progress, and the evolving demands of a globalized society. In this context, the development of professional competence among

future English language teachers becomes a key concern. This competence is shaped by the interplay of linguistic, cultural, and educational factors that define modern language teaching practices. Exploring the theoretical foundations of this competence is essential, as it not only enhances our understanding of language education's evolving character but also guides curriculum design, teacher training programs, and professional development initiatives.

Traditional language teaching methods, which often rely on rote memorization and repetitive exercises, have been criticized for their limited ability to promote deeper linguistic understanding and critical thinking among teachers [1]. The need to reform the teacher's function is due, first of all, to a change in the view of knowledge, skills and abilities themselves, which have increasingly come to be defined as a means of mastering professional competence in a foreign language, and not as the ultimate goal of teaching it [2]. English language teaching standards differ across countries based on national educational goals and frameworks for teacher preparation. In Kazakhstan, the implementation of these guidelines, and teacher education practices have become a topic of critical discussion, as English remains the most widely taught and learned foreign language. This highlights the need to examine the competencies of English language teachers and the structure of ELY departments in higher education institutions, particularly through the perspective of internationally recognized standards that identifies a comprehensive framework describing main fields of Foreign Language teaching competence.

This paper aims to investigate how the content of the discipline "Communicative specialized practicum" enhances the formation of linguo-professional competence of future foreign language teachers. The problem-solving technology focuses on problem-solving tasks, encourages future language teachers to apply their linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical knowledge in various professional situations. The study seeks to determine how such practice-oriented modules contribute to the development of core teaching competencies, including communicative interaction, adaptability, and professional decision-making skills.

Theoretical examination of the professional standard "Teacher" permitted to organize the most important areas of professional training of future teachers of a foreign language: creation of a full-fledged communicative situation corresponding to the foreign language of communication; implementation of practical teaching of language proficiency in the conditions of maximal reliability of education; application of technologies and methods of activation and identifying problems in the FL training sphere; designing of flexible and modular teaching strategies, and multicultural orientations to foster tolerance and cooperation; alignment of circumstances for applying flexible teaching, that guarantees the mastering of problem-based and thematic modules of vocation education in accordance with the demands of the labor market; multilingual and multicultural orientation of the educational process to develop values such as tolerance, socio-cultural identification, and skills of cooperation in future Foreign language teachers; designing the educational process in the logic of the competency paradigm. This approach emphasizes active participation in complex language tasks, making it

particularly valuable for future foreign language teachers. It helps them develop essential professional competencies, critical thinking skills, and the ability to adapt to various language-related challenges.

The cognitive problem-solving approach, grounded in cognitive psychology and constructivist learning theories, offers a more effective pedagogical strategy by encouraging learners to actively engage in solving real-world problems. Research suggests that this approach is in line with constructivist principles, enabling teachers to learn through action, reflection, and adaptation [3], [4]. By fostering critical thinking, adaptability, and problem-solving skills in context, the cognitive problem-solving approach can improve both language proficiency and teaching effectiveness - key elements in the professional growth of language teachers [5].

The modern model of competence-based education involves creating conditions for the formation of key competencies necessary for the professional development of a linguistic personality. In its most general form, the competence-based approach is a “priority orientation toward goals – vectors of education: learning ability, self-determination (self-determination), self-actualization, socialization and development of individuality”. The basic categories of the competence-based approach are ‘competence’ and ‘competency’. According to A. V. Khutorskoy, “competence is an alienated, predetermined, social requirement (norm) for mandatory training necessary for effective productive activity in a certain area. Competence is an already established quality of a person (a set of qualities), minimal experience of activity in a certain area” [6]. Competency and competence must be considered holistically and individually. Thus, by competency we mean the ability to act successfully and operate due to acquired skills and knowledge or a set of competencies necessary for professional activity.

Despite the growing body of literature on the concept of professional competence, its application to the specific context of foreign language teacher education – particularly in connection with linguo-professional competence – remains underexplored. One of the comprehensive definitions of “professional competence” is offered by V. N. Vvedensky, who conceptualizes it through various theoretical frameworks, including the personal-activity, system-structural, knowledge-based, cultural [7]. Completing this perspective V.A. Slastenin defines professional competence as a combination of theoretical and practical preparation for the performing a specific type of professional activity. He emphasizes the integration of reflective thinking with a set of communicative and organizational skills that ensure the effective and successful implementation of professional tasks [8].

Definitions by V. N. Vvedensky and V.A. Slastenin highlight the multifaceted nature of professional competence, encompassing theoretical knowledge, practical training, and communicative-organizational skills. However, existing models often lack a clear focus on how these competencies are effectively formed in real educational setting, especially under the demands of modern communicative and cognitive-oriented paradigms. Moreover, the development of professional skills in future foreign language teachers – understood as the ability to solve

language-related professional problems through accumulated knowledge, life experience, and values – requires a more detailed instructional approach. The professional skills of a teacher are considered as the developed skills to solve foreign language professional problems that arise in specific situations of future professional activity, using knowledge, professional and life experience, as well as values [9].

Thus, taking into account the various conclusions of researchers and scientists about the nature of professional education of a foreign language teacher, the linguo-professional competence of a future foreign language teacher develops under the influence of one or another professional activity, requires the formation of a sufficient volume of knowledge, skills and abilities that guarantee successful communicative interaction in future professional activity. Professional communicative interaction can be presented as a tool for applying accumulated knowledge, professional skills of expert action, which solves planned and complex situations in accordance with the set professional tasks that ensures the effectiveness of future professional activity. It should be recognized as fair that “the integrative nature of mastering knowledge, skills and abilities ensures a combination of two ways of knowing the real world - intuitive-heuristic and rational logical, thus contributing to the interconnected development of the cognitive and creative spheres of the linguistic personality in the educational process” [10].

According to the State Educational Standard of Higher Professional Education, higher pedagogical institutions must prepare specialists who possess in-depth subject knowledge and are informed by current trends and advancements in foreign language education, as well as innovations in psychological and pedagogical science. Thus, the core mission of higher education is to prepare future FL teachers who are skilled, competitive, and ready for lifelong professional growth and adaptability. These qualities are encompassed by the broader notion of “professional competence,” which, in our view, forms the ground for shaping strategies in both professional and foreign language education, as well as for selecting relevant methods, tools, and educational technologies [11].

Enhancing teacher education programs and aligning them with perceived competencies and the views of both pre-service and in-service English teachers is essential to improving teaching quality and student outcomes [12].

The development of teaching technology, improvement of forms and types of activities of a foreign language teacher are the most important factors determining the development path of the system of formation of linguistic and professional competence of a foreign language teacher in the modern educational paradigm, since the technology of teaching is a framework, and the methodology is the shell of the teaching process. The development of an educational program, a training module and its sections, the selection of their content and definition of profiles, their integration into the process of formation of linguistic and professional competence of a foreign language teacher are the main components of their professional training.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in this attempt to operationalize linguo-professional competence, taking into account both theoretical foundations and practical training needs. The study presents an original integration of this education strategy into the structure of the discipline “Communicative Specialized Practicum”, providing a context-specific model for shaping the cognitive and communicative dimensions of a future teacher’s linguistic personality.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following question: how can discipline “Communicative Specialized Practicum” facilitate the development of linguo-professional competence among future foreign language teachers?

Materials and Methods

The study is grounded on the design of professional educational course aimed at developing the linguo-professional competence of future FL teachers. The content of the discipline “Communicative Specialized Practicum” is designed to enhance linguo-professional competence within the teaching profession. The course “Communicative specialized practicum” is implemented at the Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages for fourth-year undergraduate students of the Pedagogical Faculty of Foreign Languages of. The curriculum reflects the requirement of the Law on the Status of a Teacher and addresses key professional standards, including linguistic, socio-cultural, ethical, and technological aspects of education.

The methodology involves the use of case-based communicative, and simulation tasks to foster practical language application. The pedagogical model encourages the integration of professional discourse into problem-solving dialogues, collaborative projects, and critical text analysis, writing assignments that focus on developing written communication skills, including essays, reports, or professional correspondence, oral communication exercises that involve discussions, presentations, and role-playing in professional contexts to improve spoken language skills.

The course modules cover:

- ✓ communication in educational institutions;
- ✓ teaching in multicultural and inclusive settings;
- ✓ contemporary pedagogical approaches and teacher certification

procedures.

Each course unit targets a specific area of professional growth:

Unit 1 “Foreign Language Teacher in Contemporary Schools”: This unit helps you understand the specific professional and ethical responsibilities, as well as the unique characteristics of teaching in the context of the law on the Status of a Teacher.

Unit 2 “Teaching and Learning as Two Sides of Education”: This unit examines the interconnected relationship between teaching and learning, highlighting the role of technology in shaping educational practices.

Unit 3 “Do Modern Teachers Need Textbooks?”: This unit explores the changing role of textbooks in education, considering alternative resources and

teaching strategies that enhance learning in the digital era.

Unit 4 “Modern Children: What Are They Like?”: This unit offers insights into the characteristics, needs, and behaviors of today’s children, helping you adapt your teaching methods to better engage and motivate your students.

Unit 5 “Continuous Professional Development for Teachers”: This unit emphasizes lifelong learning, offering strategies for sustained professional growth and addressing the attestation process.

Unit 6 “The School of the 21st Century”: This unit examines the features and innovations of modern schools around the world, including technology innovations, inclusive practices, and the creation of safe and inviting learning environments, and the challenges and threats faced by the educational system. The simulation method (full immersion in situations) and role-playing games are two examples of many interrelated methods and approaches used in modern foreign language teaching practice.

The objectives of the course are as following: to improve the linguo-professional skills of future FL teachers with an emphasis on written and oral communication so that they can use a foreign language to solve real teaching problems; to promote effective communication with students, colleagues, and the educational community, encouraging FL teachers to use their linguo-professional skills in problem-solving tasks related to teaching and pedagogical contexts; to enable FL teachers to integrate their language knowledge with modern pedagogical approaches, such as the use of digital resources and technologies, enhancing the learning process and addressing educational challenges through practical language application; to encourage future FL teachers to recognize the role of language in shaping social and professional interactions, using problem-solving methods to adapt teaching to diverse student needs and foster intercultural understanding; to help FL teachers address modern issues in education (e.g., adapting to technological advances, student-centered learning, and dynamic language change) by applying language skills and pedagogical strategies in real-world contexts; to foster critical thinking and reflection on language use, allowing FL teachers to assess and adapt their teaching methods through continuous self-assessment and feedback, enhancing both linguistic competence and teaching effectiveness.

Instructional activities are organized according to the principle of redundancy, allowing students to revisit linguistic material in varied contexts and apply it creatively in professional communication. Formation of linguo-professional competence of future foreign language teachers through the use of the problem-solving technology, is implemented on the basis of the tasks that are designed to encourage active problem-solving, critical thinking, and practical application of language skills in real-world and professional teaching contexts, for example:

1. *Vocabulary exercises* - to develop of the ability to apply specialized terminologies in teaching situations, helping FL teachers understand and use professional language effectively.

2. *Reading comprehension tasks* - to foster the ability to synthesize

information from professional texts, improving reading comprehension and critical thinking within an educational context.

3. *Text Analysis and Annotation* - to encourage students to critically assess professional materials and use problem-solving skills to suggest improvements, enhancing their teaching practices.

4. *Role-playing exercises* - to develop oral communication skills and the ability to handle real-life teaching situations, promoting the application of foreign language skills in professional contexts.

5. *Case study analysis* - to strengthen problem-solving abilities in a foreign language, enabling future teachers to address educational challenges in their professional careers.

6. *Professional dialogue simulations* - to enhance fluency and professionalism in oral communication, fostering the ability to discuss teaching-related topics in a foreign language.

7. *Writing assignments* - to develop written communication skills for professional tasks, ensuring that future FL teachers can write clearly and accurately in a foreign language.

8. *Problem-Solving Tasks in Educational Contexts* - to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving abilities by addressing real-world teaching challenges in a foreign language context.

9. *Reflection and Self-Assessment* - to promote reflective practice and self-assessment, encouraging continuous improvement in both language proficiency and teaching effectiveness.

10. *Collaborative learning projects* - to foster teamwork and collaboration, while developing professional language skills and pedagogical knowledge to design effective lessons.

These tasks align with the cognitive-problem approach by emphasizing active participation, critical thinking, and real-world application, all essential for the formation of linguo-professional competence of future FL teachers.

Since the greatest advantage of this method is the possibility of integrating social context into foreign language learning, which leads to the formation of students' linguo-professional competence, it is obvious that it should be used active methods are essential for improving students' professional communicative skills. Teachers are advised to consider students' level of foreign language proficiency when implementing role-playing games. This allows them to vary the complexity of the simulation to reflect real-life situations such as greetings, interviews, or attending a conference. In a well-designed system of communicative exercises for 4th-year students, professionally oriented dialogues play a significant role, sparking students' interest by addressing familiar topics in the foreign language.

Results and discussion

The effectiveness of the course was assessed through qualitative observation of students' participation, performance in interactive tasks, and reflective writing assignments. Self-assessment tools and peer feedback were also incorporated to monitor the development of teaching-related competencies and foreign language proficiency.

Let's take a look at the results of the observation conducted at Abylai Khan University, focusing on 50 fourth-year students from the FL Teacher Training Faculty. It's important to note that this article presents findings from a single university, representing the initial stage of a broader study. The survey was designed to assess at the initial stage to what extent linguo-professional skills have been formed after completing the course "Communicative Specialized Practicum". While the questionnaire contained 20 questions, the authors will emphasize the results of 10 key questions related to linguo-professional skills formation and communicative behavior development:

1. How would you rate your overall experience with the "Communicative Specialized Practicum" course?
2. What linguo-professional skills do you feel you improved the most during this course? (Please select all that apply).
3. How relevant were the topics and exercises covered in this course to real-life teaching situations?
4. Did the course content help you understand how to adapt foreign language communication in various pedagogical contexts?
5. How engaging were the activities and tasks in this course?
6. How confident do you feel now in using the foreign language in your future teaching career compared to before taking this course?
7. Which aspect of the course did you find most useful for your future profession as a foreign language teacher?
8. Do you feel that the course structure (practical lessons, assignments) was effective in helping you achieve the learning objectives?
9. Was there anything in the course that you found particularly challenging or difficult to grasp?
10. Would you recommend this course to future FL teachers to develop their linguo-professional competence? Why or why not?

The Google Forms platform was used to conduct the survey, which automatically provides the percentage of answers to a question with multiple answer options.

While analyzing the students' answers, we would like to note that to the first question of the survey "How would you rate your overall experience with the "Communicative Specialized Practicum" course? - 58.6% were very satisfied with how this course was conducted; 31% rated their overall experience with the "Communicative Specialized Practicum" course as satisfied; for 10.3% of asked students were neutral while studying the course.

The high satisfaction rates suggest that the course effectively addressed students' expectations. Positive perception reflects the functionality of course design in supporting growth and communicative engagement.

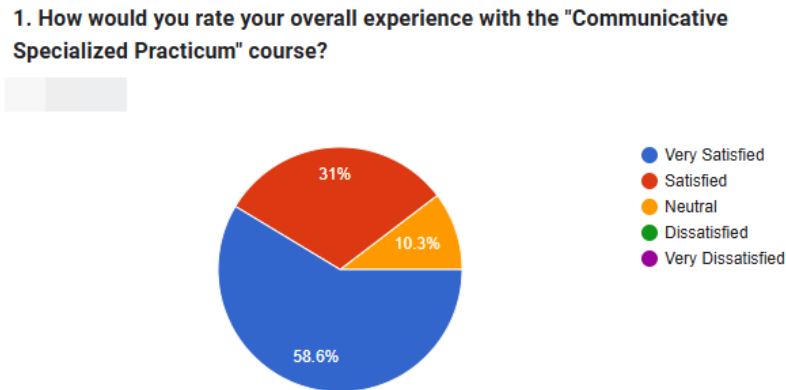


Figure 1 – How would you rate your overall experience with the “Communicative Specialized Practicum” course?

The results for the second question of the survey “What linguo-professional skills do you feel you improved the most during this course?” showed what specific skills (oral, written, pedagogical) did they improved mostly during this course. The students could notice more than one option: 79.3% of students participated in the course “Communicative Specialized Practicum” improved their oral communication skills; 27.6% enhanced their written communication skills; 48.3% learned how to communicate in classroom; 41.4% learned how to plan a lesson; 55.2% acquired new teaching strategies.

The course most effectively supports the development of oral and interactive of teaching skills, essential for classroom communication. However, written communication was the least developed, indicating a possible imbalance in course focus that may hinder the development of full-spectrum competence.

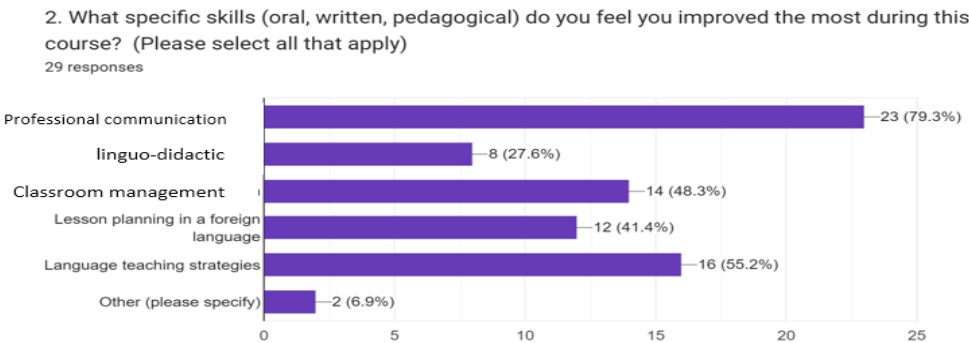


Figure 2 – What linguo-professional skills do you feel you improved the most during this course?

In response to the third question of the survey, about how relevant the topics and exercises covered in this course were to real learning situations, we

received the following results: 51.7% of students answered that the topics were extremely relevant, and 41.4% found the topics moderately relevant. 6.9% found this course slightly relevant.

These responses confirm that the course content aligns well with real-world teaching demands, strengthening the practical orientation of the practicum. The small percentage perceiving low relevance suggests a need for more individualized or diversified content.

3. How relevant were the topics and exercises covered in this course to real-life teaching situations? [Copy chart](#)

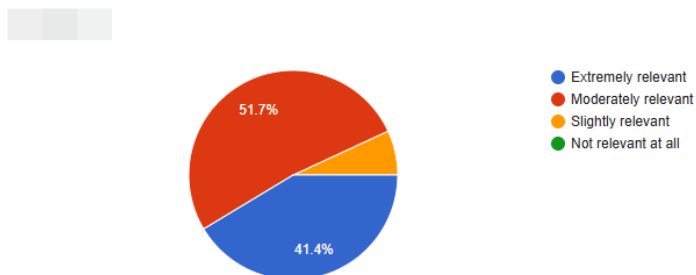


Figure 3 – How relevant were the topics and exercises covered in this course to real-life teaching situations?

In the fourth question, students answered whether the course content helped them understand how to adapt foreign language communication in various pedagogical contexts. And 79.3% of students found that this course helpful for adaptation to various pedagogical contexts. 20,7% of respondent clarified that some examples were useful.

The course provides meaningful insight into classroom language adaption, a core component of linguo-professional competence. The results point to functional materials but also reveal a need to expand the contextual range of examples.

4. Did the course content help you understand how to adapt foreign language communication in various pedagogical contexts? [Copy chart](#)

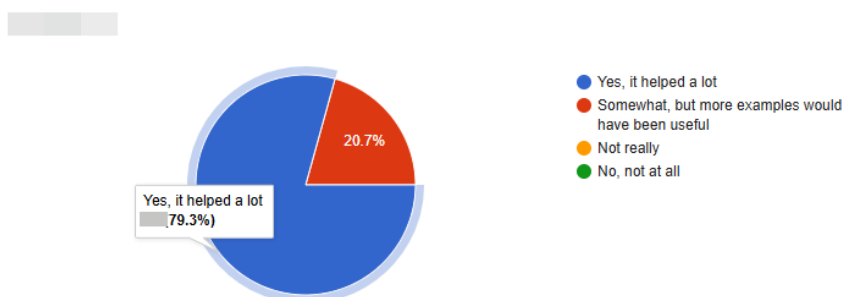


Figure 4 – Did the course content help you understand how to adapt foreign language communication in various pedagogical contexts?

In the fifth question, students answered how interesting the classes and assignments in this course were in a pedagogical and methodological context.

44,8% found the activities very engaging and interactive. The same number of students replied that the classes and assignments were mostly engaging. 10.3% of students reacted neutrally.

The interactive nature of the course was appreciated by most participants, supporting motivation and participation – key elements in developing communicative competence. Future iterations could aim to increase consistency in engagement across topics.

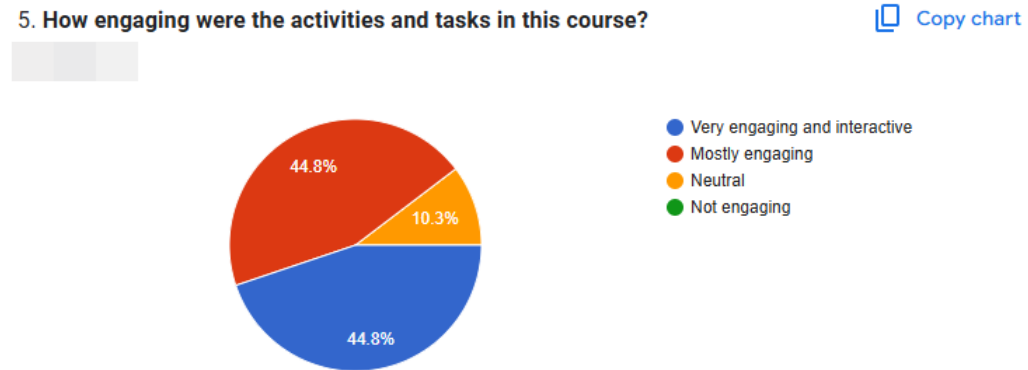


Figure 5 – How engaging were the activities and tasks in this course?

In answering the sixth question, students indicated how confident they felt now in using a foreign language in their future teaching careers, compared to before taking the course. The most students (51.7%) replied that they feel much more confident, 44.8% feel more confident using the needed vocabulary in their future teaching career compared to before taking this course. Unfortunately, there are some learners (3.4%) who did not feel any change in confidence.

The practicum successfully enhanced students’ confidence in using the foreign language in a teaching context – an essential marker of applied linguo-professional competence. The small percentage reporting no change should be explored in future iterations for inclusive improvement,

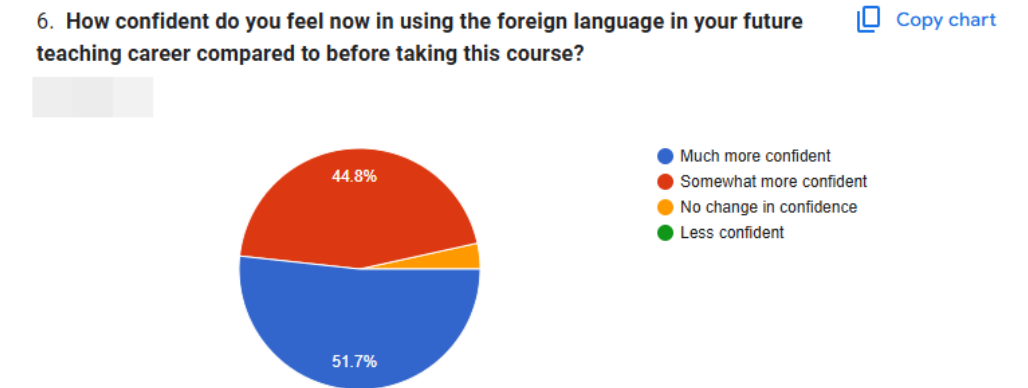


Figure 6 – How confident do you feel now in using the foreign language in your future teaching career compared to before taking this course?