RESEARCH INTEGRATED TEACHING IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

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Abstract

At Nazarbayev University, which aims to become the first research and world-class university in Kazakhstan, it is important to use research to enhance the student learning experience. In this article, we would like to describe the role of research integrated teaching in Kazakh language classes, where both teacher and students interact with each other and use their research skills to review research papers, collect and analyze data and generate and share enthusiasm in the learning process. This article proposes that research integrated teaching in Kazakh language classes are effective. A high level of interaction between the students and me is promoted by bringing a survey into the classroom. Another method of integrating research and teaching is that students publish the results of their studies. The students indicated in their feedback that this interaction is welcomed and appreciated greatly. Balancing the time spent on teaching and research can lead to more realistic expectations of staff performance. Other factors such as career development can significantly affect teaching productivity and effectiveness. From our experience at Nazarbayev University, therefore, we find that it is possible to integrate research into teaching in language classes.

Keywords

Research Integrated Teaching, Integrating Research into Teaching, Language Classes, Nazarbayev University

1. Introduction

Research integrated teaching connects teaching and learning with research and inquiry for students. Research integrated learning in language classes can engage students intellectually with current knowledge, theories and practices, and encourage them to make a contribution in developing language. As our experience in this field showed, active engagement with research can develop students' critical thinking, inquiry, creative capabilities necessary for being lifelong learners (Lodish, 2004).

In 2014, Dr. Loretta O'Donnell held a conversation on the topic 'Ten Practical Ideas for Integrating Research into Teaching', which opened a new horizon in my teaching experience. Since teaching and research should ideally go hand-in-hand in a research intensive university, I asked myself: 'How could teaching and research be optimized in language classes?' Thus, developing a researcher's 'mindset' through different assignments became one of the main goals of the Business Etiquette course, the Kazakh course offered by the Department of Kazakh Language and Turkic studies at Nazarbayev University (O'Donnell, 2014). As this course was designed for students with fluent Kazakh, our experience showed that integrating research and teaching in Kazakh classes is fruitful.

Moreover, we find ourselves spending a significant amount of time revising and refining our materials, our approach and our techniques. We tried to focus on the effectiveness of the course and wondered which strategies worked and which were less successful. Consequently, we found that a combination of research and teaching had a positive effect on the students' success. There is also increasing recognition that students benefit from exposure to the society. These materials will be helpful for those who need articles in Kazakh.

2. Research Objective

The Republic of Kazakhstan today is experiencing a complex and contradictory period in its cultural and linguistic development. This is demonstrated by the concept of the language policy of the country. Thispolicy determines the Russian language as the main source

of information in various fields of science and technology and as a means of communication with the countries overseas. «New Kazakhstan in a New World» (2009) encourage Kazakhstani people to develop three languages: Kazakh as the state language, Russian as a language of international communication and English as the language of successful integration into the global economy. As our new generation, particularly the graduates of Nazarbayev University who are fluent in all three languages, is expected to make a contribution in developing the Kazakh language, this is a good opportunity for current students to start researching the Kazakh language here. Experienced and highly qualified language teachers present different opportunities to students working at different levels.

Teaching the Business Etiquette course to Kazakh students, we realized the lack of scholarly articles in the Kazakh language. Moreover, having investigated Kazakh Wikipedia content, it was clear that topic related to the issue of Business needed to be developed.

2.1Research Questions

1) What is the most effective way to involve students in developing e-resources in Kazakh language; 2) How can language teachers implement research integrated teaching? 3) How should we teach students to do further research and publish their scholarly articles?

Being an observer and facilitator, a language teacher should focus on selecting, organizing and presenting course materials. The main components of Research Integrated Teaching in Language Classes are effective instruction, meaningful learning, learning targets and student achievement.

"While there is presently little data to support the conventional argument that faculty effectively integrate the content of their research into their classes, faculty might link their research and teaching more effectively by introducing students in their classes to the research process."(Prince, Richard & Rebecca Brent, 2007).

2.2Methodology

In this research we used a quantitative method and a pragmatic approach. Moreover, on the 'Business Etiquette' course, students worked both individually and in a group as a 'Monitor'. This approach ensures that something is learned and finds what still needs to be learnt. This leads to effective language learning through research.

2.3Efforts

We realize that most valuable resources are in English. Therefore, students are asked to find business related topics in English and translate them into Kazakh. This starts as a course assignment, where students are expected to translate at least 1000 words. Furthermore, language teachers inspire students to do more by different activities. In order to encourage students to make a contribution, our university cooperates with Kazakh WikiBilim Foundation. There are two ways to put students' research result on Kazakh Wikipedia:Firstly, students choose the research area they are interested or are involved in. Then they search for, read, compare and analyze scholarly articles relevant to this issue in English, Kazakh and Russian. After that, they write their own scholarly articles. The second approach to inspire students to participate in this project is by organizing a wiki-contest among students. For detailed information please follow: https://kk.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%96%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B0:%D0%91%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%BD%D0%0%B5%D1%81

2.4 Outputs

Every year we organize a wiki-competition among students which is very helpful for both language teachers and language learners. In 2016, we also created a Business project with Kazakh WikiBilim Foundation where Business Etiquette students took part. More than 40 Business topics have been translated into Kazakh, and three students published their own articles in Kazakh.

Table 1: *Wiki-competition results*

Year	Number of Participants	Requirement (number of words)
2014	60	not-fixed
2015	33	at least 5 000
2016	45	at least 3 000
2017	49	at least 3 000

Besides this, starting from October 2016, we are working on Business issues on Wikipedia. This is a new project where only Nazarbayev University students are allowed to publish articles/translations/findings on this webpage. Kazakh-English-Russian business terms with an explanation in Kazakh are available on this webpage.

Figure 1: *Business Terms with Explanation in Kazakh language*

2.6 Findings

According to the feedback of students who took part in these wiki-competitions, all these activities helped them broaden their knowledge. The core functions of universities are Teaching, Research and Service to the community, so here are some practical ideas for integrating research into teaching used in our language course:

2.6.1 Problem solving

The lack of teaching and learning materials relevant to Business Kazakh is one of the main objectives of this course. First of all, students are asked to choose a topic relevant to Business issues. Then they collect business terms in three (Kazakh-English-Russian) languages with a Kazakh description. Following this, these students review articles from different sources and analyze them all and express their own ideas about this topic using opinion words in Kazakh. All these assignments lead students to publish a scholarly article on Kazakh Wikipedia. There are two options: translating an article from Russian/English into Kazakh (1) and writing his/her scholarly article on Kazakh Wikipedia (2).

2.6.2 Conducting workshops/seminars

Conducting workshops/seminars on Business Correspondence in Kazakh. Not only NU graduates, but also many NU students as well, do need a basis in Business Kazakh Language. Therefore, Business Etiquette course students are expected to conduct a workshop/seminar on Business Correspondence.

2.6.3 Task-based learning or Moving from theory to real life

Some group projects help students to demonstrate their skills via the Internet, developing a video on various Business topics such as 'Best Job Interviewing Tips for Job-Seekers', 'Business Lunch Etiquette', 'How to Facilitate a Meeting Successfully', 'Telephone Etiquette Tips', for example. These materials are available via the Internet.

2.6.4 Putting good researchers/successful businessmen in front of students

This might be a meeting with a well-known person, who will share ideas about his/her career development. Students can be inspired by their research successes by interviewing them.

2.6.5 Students as article reviewers

To encourage a scholarly perspective, sometimes Business Etiquette course students are given journal articles with a summary. Then they work in small groups, or as individuals, to write the summary and discussion for the papers, then compare and contrast these with the published versions. Students can also act as editors by reading other students' drafts.

2.6.6 Creating Research Group

Finding Advertising Mistakes in Kazakh and writing a message to the owner asking to correct the mistake. Students find this type of assignment extremely interesting and exciting.

2.6.7 Reviewing articles

Sometimes students read original research papers and review articles and give presentations on assigned topics of contemporary interest. Students are assessed continuously through assignments and mid-term tests. There is also the peer review component of the assessment where all registered students must participate in grading each student's presentation.

2.6.8 Writing Article

This is an individual piece of work where a student reviews and analyzes articles and research papers relevant to his/her research area and writes a scholarly article in Kazakh.

2.6.9   Using Survey Monkey

Using Survey Monkey as a tool to get feedback. The feedback and comments generated can also be extremely helpful for all the participants.

2.6.10 Using Moodle

Using Moodle as a tool to access student records and activity logs online and interactive writing feedback directly from teachers, as well as the Moodle system helps to identify students who are failing.

3. Conclusion

According to our findings, integrating research into teaching in language classes has the following advantages: the task-based learning opens a new horizon by stimulating other learning directions. In 21st century, presenting accurate information to a new generation encourages students to make a contribution to social life. All findings and discoveries promote students' interest, which is extremely important in teaching language.

As 'Research is creating new knowledge' (Neil Armstrong), we tried to highlight the importance of integrating research into teaching based on our personal teaching experience. Balancing the time spent on teaching and research can lead to more realistic expectations of staff performance. Other factors such as career development can significantly affect teaching productivity and effectiveness. From our experience at Nazarbayev University therefore, we find that it is possible to integrate research into teaching in language classes.

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