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## **Challenges and Recommendations for Teaching and Learning Kazakh as a Second Language**

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### **Abstract**

This article examines the challenges that arise in teaching and learning Kazakh as a second language, focusing on English-speaking learners. The study investigates the effectiveness of online learning platforms and explores the difficulties encountered by students. Through interviews and textbook analyses, the study explores students' difficulties, and gathers their suggestions for improving Kazakh language teaching resources. The research highlights several areas of concern, including the lack of interactive resources, limited listening materials, and insufficient grammar explanations in English. The study also emphasizes the importance of practical, real-life dialogues and vocabulary relevant to daily communication and the need for updated textbooks that cover diverse topics, such as politics, economics and etc. The article concludes with recommendations for future Kazakh language materials that can enhance the overall learning experience for English-speaking learners based on insights gained from the research.

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## 1. Introduction

The teaching and learning of a second language are a complex process that requires careful consideration of various factors, including the availability of resources, instructional methodologies, and learner needs. This is particularly true for languages with limited learning materials, such as Kazakh, which presents unique challenges for both educators and students. Historically, the development of the Kazakh language and its teaching methodologies faced several obstacles. During the colonial period of Kazakhstan's history, the Kazakh language did not receive adequate attention and support, resulting in a lack of comprehensive teaching materials and limited opportunities for language development (Güney, 2007).

The literature highlights the significant cultural and linguistic impact of the Russification policy implemented during the 70-year colonial period in Kazakhstan. This policy had profound consequences, as proficiency in the Russian language became essential for accessing higher education and employment opportunities. Consequently, the value of the Kazakh language diminished, and Russian took its place. Currently, Russian holds a dominant position and is highly regarded, as it is extensively used in various social domains within the country (Terlikbayeva & Menlibekova, 2021). The dominant presence of the Russian language further complicated the situation, as it served as an intermediary language and hindered the direct acquisition of Kazakh for non-native speakers (Vdovina, 2008). However, recent years have witnessed a growing recognition of the importance of the Kazakh language, leading to increased demand for its study. To gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by English-speaking learners of Kazakh, we conducted a case study involving seven respondents with different backgrounds, learning durations, and purposes. Through a questionnaire, we explored their motivations for learning Kazakh, identified the most difficult aspects of the language, and examined the availability and effectiveness of learning resources. The findings from this study provide valuable insights into the specific challenges encountered by English-speaking learners and offer recommendations to enhance the content and delivery of Kazakh language teaching

materials. In response to the identified challenges, educators can explore innovative approaches to Kazakh language instruction. Incorporating interactive tasks, dialogues, and vocabulary relevant to real-life situations can enhance learners' engagement and practical language skills. Additionally, promoting immersive experiences through conversation partners, cultural events, and homestays can provide learners with authentic opportunities to practice and deepen their understanding of the Kazakh language (Muhamedowa, 2016).

This research aims to contribute to the ongoing efforts to improve the teaching and learning of Kazakh as a second language. By analyzing the experiences, challenges, and suggestions of English-speaking learners, we hope to provide valuable insights for the development of more effective learning materials and methodologies. The following sections of this paper will present the theoretical framework, research methodology, results, and discussions in detail, culminating in recommendations to enhance Kazakh language education.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

To better understand the challenges faced by English-speaking learners of Kazakh, this study draws upon the existing literature on language learning and the specific context of Kazakh language education. Previous studies on language learning methodologies, textbook analysis, and learner experiences provide valuable insights into effective language instruction and the shortcomings of existing materials. Additionally, theories of second language acquisition and sociolinguistics inform the examination of language teaching practices and the sociocultural aspects of learning Kazakh. To better understand the challenges faced by English-speaking learners of Kazakh, this study draws upon the existing literature on language learning and the specific context of Kazakh.

The historical changes in the status of the Kazakh language have had a direct impact on the development of learning materials for Kazakh as a second language. Unfortunately, the topic of elaboration of textbooks on teaching Kazakh as a second language has not been studied in detail, and understandably the main scholarly works have been written in Kazakh. Among the recent works on that topic can be mentioned works by Nurzhanova et al.

(2020), Orazymbetova (2021), Kadasheva et al. (2020), Oraz (2023), Nurbekova (2021) and others.

During the Soviet era, the textbooks for learning Kazakh were primarily designed for bilingual individuals with Russian as their first language. However, these textbooks proved to be ineffective for several reasons. They focused heavily on reading and retelling skills, with a major emphasis on grammar, while neglecting the development of speaking and listening skills. Furthermore, the textbooks predominantly contained literary texts and propaganda materials, lacking practical content relevant to business communication, mass media, and service industries. This approach rendered the learning process impractical and information-heavy, leading to inefficiency in language acquisition. Generally speaking, this is a common tendency for all language teaching disciplines in Kazakhstan education. According to Omarbekova (2020), the use of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in the educational process of Kazakhstan is currently limited. However, it is clear that by thoroughly studying this approach and mastering the mechanisms of its integration into the learning process, the development of language competence in schools and universities across the country could significantly advance and reach a new level in line with Kazakhstan's multilingual policy. Integration of new technologies into the teaching process is one of the hotly discussed research topics. The integration of new technologies refers to a unique approach to teaching foreign languages, which involves the utilization of modern information and communication technology. This approach aims to foster the development of a new educational process that encompasses technological advancements, social and cultural aspects, and modern teaching methods (Adilbayeva et al., 2022). Although traditional culture tends to downplay the importance of creative expression, the findings of this study suggest that such preferences are not universally fixed. The adoption of new teaching methods and techniques creates a favorable environment for transitioning to more contemporary approaches in foreign language instruction. Selecting appropriate educational materials and tools appears to play a crucial role in shaping students' mindsets and fostering an inclination toward modern learning techniques

(Kassaie et al., 2021). Methods of teaching foreign language is usually well investigated in ELT research works. As such Hosseinzadeh et al. (2022) point out the importance of integration of intercultural integration into textbooks. Restricting exposure to other cultures and limiting learners' access to diverse cultural experiences would not lead to cultural literacy, cultural freedom, and the openness necessary in today's diverse world. In light of this, there is a call for materials developers and educators to reassess how culture is integrated into English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks. It is crucial to incorporate cultural elements in a manner that fosters intercultural understanding, reflecting the changing demands of the contemporary world.

The dominance of Russian as the *Lingua Franca* within the Soviet Union further exacerbated the situation. Russian loan words permeated other languages, including Kazakh, and Russian became a compulsory language in non-Russian schools, contributing to the rise of Kazakh-Russian bilingualism (Leprêtre, 2002). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, opened up to imports from the United States and European countries, aiming to attract tourists and expatriates. However, this did not significantly impact the demand for learning Kazakh, as these countries were still closely associated with Russia, and Russian remained the more practical language for business and tourism purposes. Kazakh was not yet established as the language of business communication. This tendency is typical for major colonized ethnic groups. It is well described in Dascomb's (2019) paper "Language Education Policy in Developing Nations from Colonization to Postcolonialism":

The installation of the colonizer's language in the existing or newly introduced formal education system reinforced the de-valuing of local mother tongue languages in colonized nations. The education system offered colonizers a powerful way of naturalizing the linguistic oppression that occurred alongside economic and political oppression. Once gaining independence, nations had the hard task of decolonizing their countries .... Years of linguistic domination affected individuals' identity and they carried this burden into independence (p. 17-18).

Similarly, with the emergence of an independent Kazakhstan in the 1990s, the demand for learning Kazakh as a second language among English-speaking individuals began to grow. However, there was a lack of resources to meet this demand. It is worth noting that between 2001 and 2006, 303 Russian schools were closed in Kazakhstan (Tuimebayev, 2007), indicating a shift in language preferences. According to Vdovina (2008), in 2005, there were 123 private schools in Kazakhstan, with 90% of them being Russian schools catering to the titular nation. This preference for Russian language education among the national elite, including politicians and high-ranking officials, contributed to the limited availability of Kazakh language resources for English-speaking learners.

The results of the national census (Agency of Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan) conducted in 2021 further demonstrate the changing dynamics. Only 9.3% of Russians reported proficiency in the Kazakh language, while 99% of Kazakhs stated fluency in Kazakh. This indicates a growing emphasis on the importance of Kazakh language proficiency among the Kazakh population. The status of the Kazakh language has transitioned from being solely an ethnic language to a minority language that is now evolving into a sought-after state language.

Despite the increasing demand for learning resources, the investment in Kazakh language education did not initially match the magnitude of the demand. The main focus remained on catering to the Russian-speaking audience, and the specific needs of English-speaking learners were not thoroughly studied or given the required attention. As a result, some textbooks were published, but they often replicated the structure and standards of textbooks designed for Russian-speaking learners. These textbooks lacked an understanding of second language teaching methodologies and predominantly targeted native Kazakh speakers. The shortcomings of these early textbooks, including the absence of listening and speaking components. However, even these materials primarily catered to Russian-speaking students.

In summary, the historical changes in the status of the Kazakh language, from an ethnic language to a minority language and eventually a state language, have shaped the development

of learning materials for Kazakh as a second language. While there has been a growing demand for resources to support the learning of Kazakh among English-speaking individuals, the availability and quality of materials have been limited. This highlights the need for the development of comprehensive and effective textbooks that address the specific needs of English-speaking learners and incorporate essential components such as listening and speaking practice.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Participants**

The research was carried out by interviewing seven respondents among Kazakh language learners, assessing their experiences, preferences, and challenges in learning the language. The age range of the respondents was between 24 and 46 years old, with a slight majority of male participants. Respondents were among volunteers who studied Kazakh in different courses with different textbooks and methodologies. On average, the respondents had studied Kazakh for five years.

#### **3.2. Instruments**

This research employed qualitative content analysis and interviews. Both methods were applied separately and independently. To conduct interview there was made up semi-structured interview. Utilizing content analysis helped us collect major textbooks on learning Kazakh for English-speaking students. This was done to make suggestions to improve the quality of the content of future textbooks and identify the weakest parts of existing textbooks. The criteria for selecting the samples were that the textbook or any other resources were specifically designed for English-speaking learners. Eighteen textbooks, two dictionaries, two Internet resource, and one online dictionary in total were found for analysis. The data collected from the textbook analysis and interview were analyzed using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics, providing a comprehensive understanding of the current state of Kazakh language learning materials and learners' perspectives.

#### **3.3. Procedure**

The qualitative content analysis method implied the collection of all possible textbooks



on learning Kazakh for English-speaking students. Those textbooks designed for Russian-speaking students were not included in this list. The analysis of textbooks and Internet resources aimed to find out the following information on the resource:

- a) The availability of the resource for potential consumers which implied its price, options to buy, options to download for free or for a specific charge, and availability of its hard copy or soft copy
- b) The content of the textbook which implied the presence of tasks for reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills
- c) The presence of the most updated vocabulary
- d) The user-friendly format for learners
- e) The weakest and strongest part of a textbook
- f) The level for which it is intended.

The analysis of dictionaries was checked on availability and content.

The interviewing method was used to collect students' feedback on their experience of learning Kazakh. However, due to the comparatively low demand for learning and teaching Kazakh, finding English-speaking Kazakh learners proved to be challenging. Additionally, not all respondents among the limited number of students agreed to participate in the interview, further complicating the process of categorizing participants based on criteria such as their level of Kazakh proficiency, the duration of their Kazakh studies, and the textbooks they used.

To overcome these limitations, the snowball sampling technique was employed to find suitable respondents for the interviews. The process began with the Foundation course at Nazarbayev University, and further participants were recommended by Kazakh tutors and Kazakh learning students through their acquaintances. To complement the interviews, an online questionnaire was created using Google Forms, and participants received it electronically. All respondents were assured of anonymity when providing their responses.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Textbook Analysis

In analyzing the available resources for English-speaking learners, it becomes evident that certain textbooks played significant roles in

the advancement of teaching methodologies for Kazakh as a second language. However, these resources were often difficult to access or limited in their effectiveness.

One such resource is the textbook titled "Introduction to Kazakh" by Krueger (1980). This textbook includes a grammatical outline, Kazakh Reader, Kazakh-English Phrasebook, and Kazakh-English Glossary. However, the linguistic nature of the text makes it challenging for language learners to use effectively. Furthermore, the outdated vocabulary and references to the Soviet era make it less relevant for contemporary learners. Unfortunately, this textbook is also difficult to acquire, with only a few used copies available at exorbitant prices. Another resource is the "Kazakh-English Dictionary" by Shnitikov (1966). Although it was republished by Routledge in 1997 and is available for purchase, its primary focus on vocabulary limits its usefulness as a comprehensive learning tool.

The textbook "Learn the Kazakh Language in 70 Steps Using 200 Sentence Models" by Ayapova (1991) primarily covers grammar and basic vocabulary. However, it lacks available audio materials, rendering the listening tasks less effective. Additionally, the limited availability of this textbook, with only a few used copies found at high prices, hinders its accessibility for learners. The "Manual of the Kazakh Language" by Bektūrova (1996) is a well-constructed textbook suitable for beginner, elementary, and pre-intermediate levels. However, its lack of availability in online bookstores makes it nearly impossible to find. While it focuses on repetitive grammar and vocabulary exercises, it does not include tasks for speaking, listening, or writing skills. Furthermore, the absence of everyday Kazakh dialogues and situational content limits its practicality. Krippes' "Kazakh Grammar with Affix List" (1996) is a concise resource that primarily covers the basic grammar of Kazakh. While it may serve as helpful supplementary material, it is not intended to be the main textbook for learning the language. Kubaeva's "Kazakhskiyii yiazik: Prosto o neveroyiatno slozhnom" [Kazakh language: Simply about the incredibly complex] (2003) is a comprehensive textbook designed for both Russian and English-speaking learners. With Russian and English explanations and instructions provided

side by side, it is suitable for beginner, elementary, pre-intermediate, and beginner-intermediate levels. Although it includes audio, locating the audio source is challenging, rendering some exercises less useful. The textbook lacks speaking, listening, and writing tasks, but it offers practical vocabulary and dialogues for various everyday situations. However, its limited availability in online bookstores makes it difficult to acquire, though it can be found for free on Russian-language platforms. “A Learner’s Dictionary of Kazakh Idioms” by Mukan (2012) can serve as a valuable additional resource for learning Kazakh, particularly for those interested in idiomatic expressions.

“The Kazakh Language: An Educational Manual for Foreign Students” by Zaisanbayev et al. (2016) is a grammar textbook intended for beginner and elementary levels. The explanations and instructions are provided in English, making it effective for learning grammar. However, it does not cover tasks for other language skills. Unfortunately, this textbook is not readily available for purchase. Muhamedowa’s “Kazakh: A Comprehensive Grammar” (2016), published by Routledge and funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, focuses more on linguistic analysis rather than practical language learning, making it more suitable for linguists and researchers. “Colloquial Kazakh: The Complete Course for Beginners” by Batayeva (2013) is one of the most popular textbooks for learning Kazakh. Its user-friendly approach, easy-to-understand explanations in English, and practical dialogues related to various real-life situations make it highly sought after. While it does not provide exercises for all language skills, it covers grammar, vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills development. However, it lacks writing tasks, suggesting its initial design for tourists rather than academic or professional purposes. It is readily available for purchase online and can be used as a primary or additional resource for beginner, elementary, and pre-intermediate levels.

In 1999, the non-commercial joint-stock company “Til-Kazyna National Scientific and Practical Centre named after Shaisultan Shayakhmetov” was established. This organization, which underwent several name changes, was responsible for the development of resources for learning Kazakh and the

creation of standardized tests to evaluate language proficiency. As the only authorized institution to administer such tests and issue certificates, this center played a crucial role in the development of learning resources. From 2016 to 2018, the Republican Coordination-Methodological Center of Language Development, named after Sh. Shayakhmetov, published a series of textbooks for learning Kazakh, consisting of five levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, and C1. These textbooks were among the first to meet the requirements of second language acquisition and encompass tasks for all major language skills. While the textbooks are available for free online, the lack of accompanying audio materials and the presence of propaganda texts pose challenges. However, the speaking sections of these textbooks stand out as particularly well-designed, and the inclusion of units on various topics helps develop vocabulary in different domains. Nonetheless, improvements are needed, such as providing audio in a more accessible format and addressing the uneven distribution of grammar topics.

Musayeva (2015) also contributed to Kazakh language learning resources with her two textbooks, “Kazakh as a Second Language”. These books cover elementary and pre-intermediate levels and adhere to the principles of second language acquisition. However, similar to other textbooks, the absence of audio materials limits the effectiveness of listening tasks. Nevertheless, with proper updates, including contemporary topics and audio texts, these textbooks hold promise.

One of the recent publications from the Republican Coordination-Methodological Center of Language Development is the textbook “Kazakh Language: Universal Textbook for the Kazakh Diaspora Abroad” (2021). This textbook, funded by the Language Policy Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, targets A1, A2, B1, and B2 levels. Notably, this textbook stands out due to its easily accessible audio texts, which can be accessed via QR codes. Moreover, it was published in Turkish, Russian, English, and Kazakh, making it suitable for individual learning. The textbook’s design is visually appealing, and it can be used by both children and adults. However, its limitation lies in offering only four levels, although future editions may expand on this.

The textbooks are available for free online through the same web page.

In addition to textbooks, the advancement of technology has led to the emergence of various online platforms dedicated to learning Kazakh. One such platform is [www.soyle.kz](http://www.soyle.kz), funded by the State Language Development Foundation with support from the Nursultan Nazarbayev Foundation, Samruk-Kazyna JSC, and Samsung Electronics. Another platform, [www.kaz-tili.kz](http://www.kaz-tili.kz), was created by the enthusiasm of Valyiaeva and received recognition from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan for its contribution to the development of the mother tongue. To summarize, the quality of Kazakh learning materials has gradually improved over time. The most common missing part of the textbooks is that they do not cover situational Kazakh and listening tasks. Most texts in books are not relevant, outdated, or have too many propaganda topics. If manuals include everyday dialogues, they do not sound natural but rather as translated text. However, the accessibility of these resources remains a challenge. Many textbooks were published before the widespread availability of the internet, making it difficult to locate them online. Even when available, textbooks are often expensive or lack the option to preview their contents. Therefore, the issue with Kazakh textbooks extends beyond their ineffectiveness or quality—it encompasses their limited availability and the lack of promotion through mass media channels.

#### 4.2. Interview

By analyzing the responses to a list of questions, we can gain valuable insights into

the motivations and needs of Kazakh learners, which can guide the development of effective teaching materials and resources.

The first question was asked to find out the reasons for learning Kazakh.

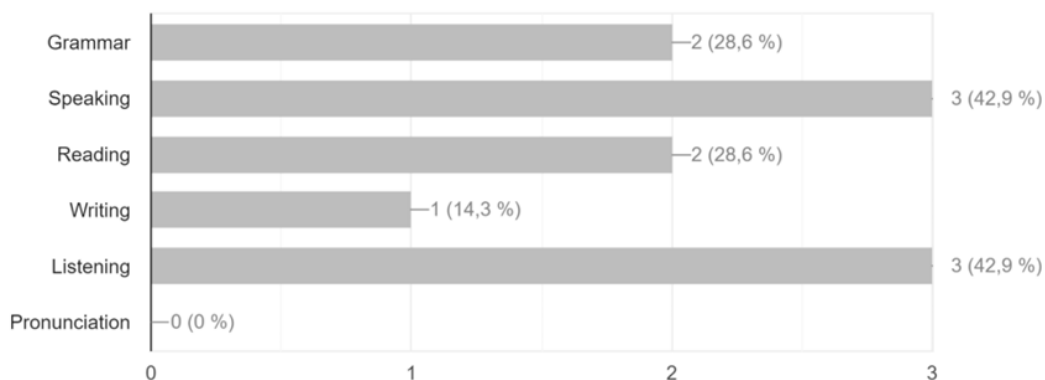
**Table 1**

*Responses to “Why do you study Kazakh?”*

Codes	Frequency
for tourism	0
for hobby	2
for study	4
for immigration	1
for communication with relatives	0

Based on the responses to the first question (Table 1), more than half of the students indicated that they needed to learn Kazakh for their studies and work, while none of the students chose tourism or communication with relatives as their primary reasons. The next most common motivations were for hobby purposes (28.6%) and for immigration (14.3%).

The second question aimed to identify the most challenging aspect of learning Kazakh. According to Figure 1, speaking and listening were identified as the most difficult areas, with an equal percentage of responses (42.9%). This was closely followed by grammar and reading (28.6%) and writing (14.3%). Interestingly, none of the students found pronunciation to be difficult. These responses were somewhat expected, as speaking and listening tasks are often lacking in textbooks, and there is limited availability of adapted content for Kazakh learners in the mass media.



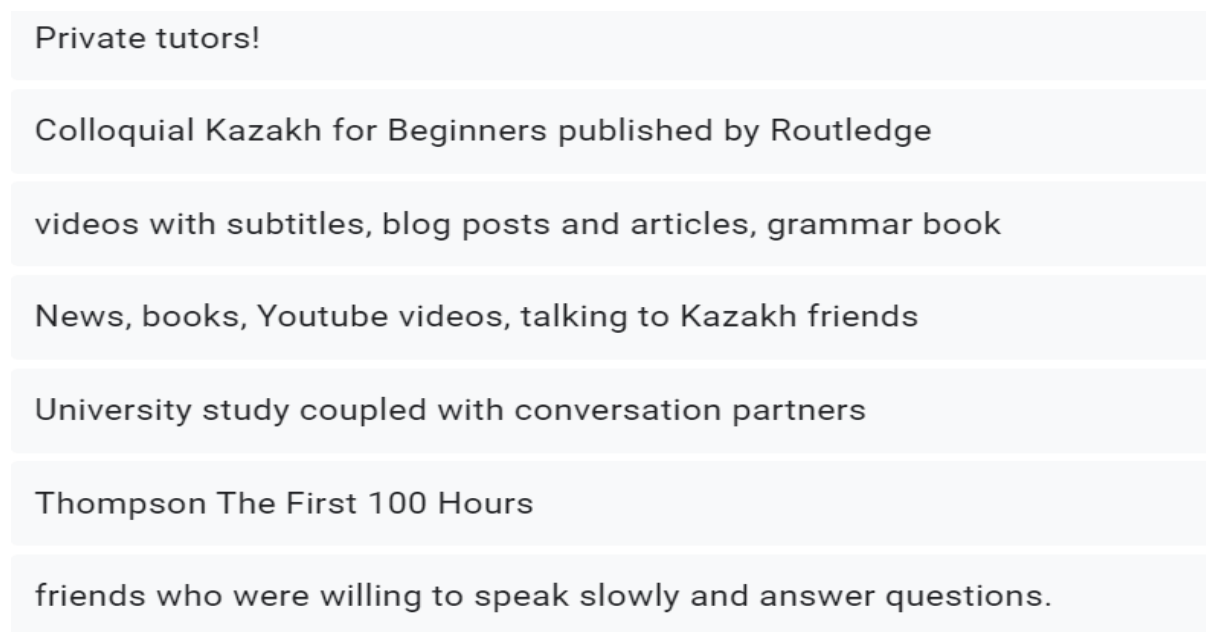
**Figure 1**

*Responses to “What Part of Learning Kazakh do You Find the Most Difficult?”*

These findings highlight the importance of addressing speaking and listening skills in Kazakh language learning materials and resources. By focusing on these areas and providing more opportunities for practice and exposure, learners can better overcome the challenges they face in developing their speaking and listening abilities. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance the integration of grammar, reading, and writing components to create a more comprehensive learning experience.

The third question was aimed to reveal the most helpful resources to learn Kazakh as English-

speaking learner (Figure 2). Private tutors were highly recommended by the respondents. The textbook “Colloquial Kazakh: The Complete Course for Beginners” published by Routledge, was also mentioned as a valuable resource. Other suggestions included videos with subtitles, blog posts, and articles, engaging with news, books, and YouTube videos, and interacting with Kazakh friends. Some respondents found university study coupled with conversation partners to be beneficial, while others mentioned specific resources like “Thompson’s The First 100 Hours” and having friends who were willing to speak slowly and answer questions.



**Figure 2**

*Responses to “Which Sources were the Most Helpful for you to Learn Kazakh?”*

The fourth question asked the respondents about the availability of materials to learn Kazakh. Based on the responses from the questionnaire (Figure 3), it is evident that there are several challenging aspects and areas where improvements can be made in Kazakh language learning resources. One of the most common difficulties reported by the respondents is the lack of adequate grammar explanations. Many concepts are not explained in any available materials, making it difficult for learners to grasp certain grammar points. Additionally, finding intermediate/advanced level language

textbooks in Kazakh (not in Russian) and good dictionaries was also mentioned as a challenge. Listening materials with Kazakh subtitles were highly desired, as well as resources for English to Kazakh-translation without relying on Russian as an intermediary language. The shortage of quality media for enjoyable learning experiences was another issue raised by the respondents. The scarcity of good Kazakh dictionaries and materials for children, as well as simple reading and listening materials, were also mentioned as areas of need.



Grammar materials - many concepts are just not explained anywhere

Intermediate/advanced level language textbooks that were not in Russian. Good dictionaries. Listening material with Kazakh subtitles.

listening materials with subtitles

English to Kazakh and vice versa, there is always russian as intermediary

Quality media to enjoy learning was difficult to find

Good Kazakh dictionaries

Children's books and programs, and simple reading and listening materials.

**Figure 3**

*Responses to “What Kind of Materials were the Hardest to Find?”*

When asked for advice for learners of Kazakh (question 5, Figure 4), the respondents emphasized the importance of starting to speak with native speakers as soon as possible, without relying on Russian as a crutch. Finding teachers who primarily speak Kazakh in their everyday lives was also highlighted, as some teachers claiming to know and teach Kazakh often primarily use Russian. The advice

included not getting frustrated if Russian is used in conversations, being mindful that Kazakh grammar is more focused on written language, investing in spaces to practice speaking and embracing immersion. Learners were encouraged not to be afraid of making mistakes and to ask for help in writing down new words from conversations.

They need to start speaking with natives ASAP and NOT mention that they speak Russian (if that's true)

Find a teacher who actually primarily speaks Kazakh in their everyday lives. Many people claim to know and be able to teach Kazakh, but they usually speak Russian. These teachers usually are not good.

do not be frustrated if people use some Russian in their sentences; be mindful that Kazakh grammars are very focused on written language; invest in spaces where you can get to talk in the language, especially if you do not live full time in the country

do not know

Immersion! Kazakh speaking roommate or frequent village trips. Don't even attempt to learn any Russian, after a few years then it's possible :)

Learn using an interactive method

Don't be afraid of making mistakes, and ask for help writing down new words from conversations.

**Figure 4**

*Responses to “What Would you Advise for Learners of Kazakh?”*

Regarding the topics they would like to see (question 6, Figure 5) in a Kazakh textbook, the responses covered a wide range from everyday communication topics such as dining at a restaurant, banking, and meeting someone’s relatives to traditional aspects like food, music, clothes, and festivals. There was also an interest in topics related to the country’s history, politics, economics, and idioms and idiomatic phrases. The need for helping verbs, dependent clauses, useful vocabulary, and grammar for daily life situations such as ordering food and making complaints were mentioned. Students

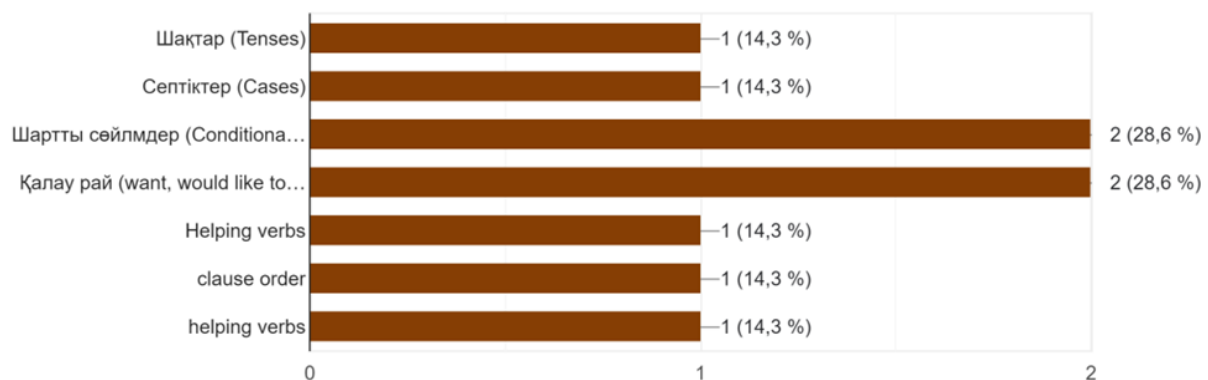
expressed a desire for more idiomatic expressions and dialogues that reflect real-life scenarios, such as visiting the doctor, answering the phone, or taking a taxi. Some students felt that there should be a greater emphasis on spoken Kazakh rather than literary Kazakh, while others mentioned the need for English translations. Repetitive practice and incorporating singing and memorizing songs were also suggested as helpful learning strategies. The respondents expressed a desire for well-rounded and practical content that covers a variety of subject matters.

Materials about helping verbs
At a restaurant. At the bank. Talking to security (in a building or something similar). Meeting someone’s relatives. Wedding speeches
traditional information (food, music, clothes, festivals, etc); history of the country and of the language; some articles about politics and economics (to learn the terms of these fields)
Knowledge about country, people, customs, politics and history
History of the Kazakh nation, economics of the region, spiritual history, and then NormaDay to day activities. Reading about the first 3 topics is more fun though!
Nomadic life and Kazakh family structure
idioms and idiomatic phrases.

**Figure 5**  
*Responses to “What Topic Texts Would You Like to Have in a Kazakh Textbook?”*

The final question (Figure 6) inquired about the most challenging aspects of Kazakh grammar. The results indicated that participants found helping verbs, conditional sentences, and want/would like to grammar to be the most

difficult. On the other hand, other options such as tenses, cases, helping verbs, and clause order were reported to be less difficult compared to the aforementioned grammar topics.



**Figure 6**  
*Responses to “What Grammar Was the Hardest for You?”*

Overall, the feedback suggests that textbooks often lack relevance to readers' everyday lives, focusing more on abstract concepts rather than practical situations and entertainment. Students expressed a desire for diversified and relevant texts that go beyond traditional topics like yurts and nomads. They also emphasized the importance of interactive tasks that involve listening, dialogues with other students, short written compositions, audio materials, situational dialogues, and vocabulary flashcards. The responses indicate the importance of incorporating real-life scenarios and culturally immersive experiences into the learning materials to enhance the student's understanding and connection with the Kazakh language.

### 5. Concluding Remarks

The analysis of existing Kazakh language textbooks reveals several limitations and areas for improvement. Common issues include outdated content, lack of interactive tasks, insufficient listening materials, and limited coverage of practical language use. Furthermore, the interview highlights the difficulties faced by English-speaking learners, such as the dominance of Russian in Kazakh-speaking environments, the need for more speaking and listening practice, and the lack of diverse and relevant topics in textbooks. Students expressed a desire for materials that reflect everyday communication, cover a range of vocabulary and grammar, and provide opportunities for immersive language practice.

The findings of this study emphasize the urgent need for improved Kazakh language textbooks and resources tailored to the needs of English-speaking learners. The identified limitations in existing materials call for a shift in focus toward practical language use and real-life situations. Interactive tasks, listening materials with subtitles, and a wider range of contemporary topics should be incorporated to enhance the effectiveness and appeal of Kazakh language learning resources. Additionally, greater attention should be given to addressing the dominance of Russian in Kazakh-speaking environments and providing opportunities for immersive language practice.

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the challenges faced by English-speaking learners in acquiring the Kazakh language and highlights the need for improved teaching

materials and resources. The analysis of existing textbooks reveals limitations in content and interactive tasks, while the survey findings provide insights into learners' experiences and preferences. The recommendations include incorporating practical language use, diverse and relevant topics, interactive tasks, and immersive language practice in Kazakh language learning resources. By addressing these challenges and implementing the suggested improvements, the development of effective teaching materials for English-speaking learners of Kazakh can be achieved.

Further studies can build on the findings of this research to deepen the understanding of the challenges and opportunities of teaching and learning Kazakh as a second language. One direction for future research could be to investigate the effectiveness of different pedagogical approaches, such as task-based language teaching or collaborative learning, on the acquisition of Kazakh language skills. Another potential area for exploration is the impact of cultural factors on language learning, including the role of cultural awareness and sensitivity in enhancing learners' motivation and engagement. Additionally, studies could examine the effectiveness of technology-enhanced language learning, such as mobile applications or virtual reality, in providing engaging and effective learning experiences for Kazakh language learners. Finally, future research could also explore the impact of language policy and planning on the promotion and preservation of the Kazakh language, particularly in the context of increasing globalization and digitalization.

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