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Young learners' reading-writing skills in English as FL in Kazakhstan

Abstract. This study examines reading and writing skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) of 12-year-old students in the middle schools in Pavlodar (North part of Kazakhstan). The participants were six graders, Kazakh (N=115) and Russian (N=145) native speakers from seven randomly chosen middle secondary schools in Pavlodar. Kazakh and Russian students performed the tests in English assessing reading and writing skills, and responded several questions regarding socio-economic status (SES) in order to explore the interaction of SES and skills in EFL. The results showed that Kazakh students performed better in writing, whereas Russians were better in reading. Moreover, weak correlation between reading and writing skills in English may emerge the effect of non-transparent orthography of English and the deep transparency in Kazakh and Russian languages. The instruments proved to be appropriate for Kazakhstani context although writing tests need further improvements. Apparent independence of reading and writing performances may be due to the compound nature of score in writing, limited number of classes, fewer opportunities for everyday interaction in EFL.

Keywords: reading and writing, skills, assessment, bilingual, young learners, EFL, SES.

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Introduction

To examine the relationship between reading and writing skills in English as the foreign (EFL) among young learners in the middle school is a challenging process, albeit necessary for the further literacy development. In the present research study, we try to define the level of students' receptive and reflective skills in EFL

and analyze the interaction of some background variables on students' reading and writing abilities while learning English. This study may also provide the opportunity to determine the problem in learning process, and develop skills in EFL, as well as let us understand poor results of Kazakhstani 15-year-old students of reading literacy in Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) survey (M=390 in

2009 to M=387 in 2018) (OECD, 2019). We applied reading comprehension tests as a pilot study (c.f. Nikolov & Csapó, 2018) for the first time. The test involved the tasks that assess writing and listening skills, albeit Kazakhstani 6th graders performed a modified version of the instruments, which examines only reading and writing skills. In addition, to maximize the validity of the adopted and modified version of the tests in English, (Nikolov and Csapó, 2010), the students responded several background questions in their native language. The procedure was computer based via eDia online system (Csapó & Molnár, 2019), the methods included both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Theoretical background

Reading and writing are two dynamic phenomena where critical thinking is the main element. Thus, Gebhard et al. (2013) define reading and writing relationship as the complex possess of person's individual perception, thinking ability, and community. Other researchers (Ehri, 1997; Perfetti, 1997) determine that reading and writing have "dual-identity". Furthermore, literature states (Hayes & Simon, 1974; Hayes, Waterman & Robinson, 1977) that reading and writing are cognitive mechanisms because during these processes - a "map" appears from speech to script and/or from script to speech. Although some scholars assume that reading and writing skills are "two sides of the same coin" (Ehri, 2000; Perfetti, 2003) because both decoding (reading) and encoding (writing) processes need comprehension. Another important issue of reading and writing relationship is their interaction, which plays one of the significant roles in the process of language learning. However, researchers claim (Cumming, 2013; Hirvela & Du, 2013; Koda, 2007; Nikolov & Csapó, 2010) that this interaction is possible if a person has a certain proficient level in their mother tongue or native language (L1) before transferring those skills to the target language (L2) or a foreign language. Jim Cummins (1976) called this transferring process a "threshold hypothesis", where the learner has already

achieved "the level of competence" in L1, and further has less "threshold" in L2. Therefore, literacy in reading and writing are extremely essential for that transferring process, as well as for society and the people's abilities to read, write, understand, and apply necessary information for further interaction and cooperation.

For example, Chall (1996 as referenced in Snow, 2006, p. 4) claims that literacy depends on the quality of instruction, which is pivotal for successful progress in reading and writing process. Claire Kramsch (2019) determines "literacy" as the core of communication, where reading and writing, comprehension and practice, culture, language and society, competence and individual differences are in close interrelation and connection. Universal Grammar of Reading (Perfetti & Liu, 2005) defines reading as a "linkage" between language and writing system. The writing system furthermore depends on language that is discovered through the spoken and/or sound element (phoneme, morpheme), and then encoded into written form. In this period, an early intervention and appropriate instruction for further development in reading and writing are required. Researchers (Chall, 1996; Grimm, Solari, & Gerber, 2018; Wolf, 2008) assume that intervention should be in the learner's native language because the development of reading and writing components starts at the age of nine and is expected to be completed at fifteen.

Language lexicon, word knowledge and literacy development of the learner can be determined by assessment of the reading and writing skills. The level of reading and writing skills in the assessing process can be noticed in learning L1 language and then further in L2, where the achievements in L1 has a key component for further development in L2. Several studies (Carreira, Ozaki & Maeda, 2013; Courtney, 2014; Nikolov & Csapó, 2010; Wu, 2003) been frequently implemented and focused contextually in the theory of testing and evaluating reading and writing skills while learning the language. For example, Chomsky in Universal Grammar (UG) divides lexicon in lexical and functional categories, where the former has the "content" words, and the latter

- “grammatical” (as in Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 54). These categories, as “content of words” and “grammatical structure” should be well developed in L1 of the learner, so they could contribute to his/her outcomes in L2 (see e.g., Courtney et. al., 2017; Sparks, 2012).

The current testing process will show the power and the effect of implementing the models of education program in a certain context, where several factors, such as, knowledge of the content, language level, classroom climate, teacher’s role, students’ individual differences may impact the outcomes. Those factors may be permanent and influence young learners’ outcomes while reading and/or writing in L1, and further, in L2, where lexis and vocabulary are essential. Moreover, researchers claim (Netten, Mienke & Verhoeven, 2011; Mullis et. al., 2007; Verhoeven, 2000) that second language learners may have several difficulties in reading literacy skills while learning the language, which is being used in school instruction. Further, this problem can affect and threaten reading comprehension in the second language that may be different from home language of the learners. Thus, learner’s individual differences in L1, L2, and/or EFL during teaching and learning reading and writing skills should be taken into account.

Individual differences of the learners in second language acquisition (SLA)

Individual differences in the second language acquisition could be revealed in language aptitude and motivation (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015), although the fact, that bilingual people have an ability to obtain proficient level in L2 “is not considered to be universal” (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 5). These individual differences may be defined by the learners’ traits and conditions. This current study focuses on how these personal traits and states can be differentiated among 12-year-old Kazakh and Russian students while learning English as FL or L2. Although young learners cannot be proficient in L2 if the number of classes is limited and the required social communication is absent. Researchers assume (e.g., Alderson, 2005; Johnstone, 2009; Nikolov,

2016a) that early language learners may not be proficient in L2 as their language achievement frameworks are based on the “developmental stages” (Nikolov, 2016a, p. 7) that monitor how the learners pass from beginning to intermediate level. On the contrary, well-developed skills and abilities in L1 could be transferred to L2 (Cumming, 2013; Hirvela & Du, 2013; Koda, 2012; Nikolov & Csapó, 2010). But the question is how already developed skills in L1 can be transferred to L2, and what interference is supposed to prevent learners from developing language abilities and reading comprehension in L2. Researchers (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Sparks, 2012) state whether personal traits of the learners and curriculum for FL learning are appropriate and significantly interacted in the classroom process to the learners. This suggests that accountability, assessment culture, the early language programs and curricular should and must be oriented on language and the content of the learners’ knowledge. Because the learners’ aptitude and motivation are significant in the learning process and success in L2, albeit in order to meet those requirements a framework for building tasks and diagnosing the ability level in L2 should be appropriate for learners. Thus, young learners with a limited number of classes in L2 should be considered individual differences in teaching and learning as they can define the words but cannot compose them into the sentences (Benigno & Jong, 2016 as referenced in Nikolov, 2016a, p. 55; Nikolov & Csapó, 2018) or define the letters and the words but cannot recognize the meaning in the sentence.

Education in Kazakhstan

Since Kazakhstan has started to participate in international assessment programs, such as PISA, (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement), IEA – Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the reports of those international surveys became significantly important for teaching quality, literacy development of children in reading, mathematics, and science in secondary

education. Low results of the country indicate that education system in Kazakhstan requires intervention in teaching and learning process, school management, resources, gender, and socio-economic background issues. For instance, PISA-2018 (OECD, 2019) underpinned that mean performance in reading literacy of Kazakhstani 15-year-old students showed lower results than in 2009, where on average only 35% reached Level 2 in reading, which is significantly lower than the results from OECD countries (77%). Negligible percent of Kazakhstani young learners were able to accomplish Level 5 and/or 6 in reading literacy, albeit on average that did not influence the main results of the whole country.

"Education for all, developing common system of education, well-being of the students, and active involvement of knowledge in the process" - are the main principles of "the Law of Education" in Kazakhstan (see Article #56, MES, 2013). The process of teaching reading and writing skills in Kazakhstan traditionally starts from kindergarten/pre-primary school (5-6 years of age), which further continues in primary school (6-7 years of age). However, learning English, as a foreign has become an obligatory subject for all, only since 2013

Traditionally education system in Kazakhstan consists of three stages such as, pre-primary (kindergarten), secondary (primary, middle, and upper secondary schools), and higher education (college, university). Students may apply to vocational, technical schools and/or colleges after lower secondary school (age 15) or after graduating upper secondary (ages 16-18). Basic secondary education is mandatory and free for all Kazakhstani citizens from (ages 7 to 15). The duration of studying in technical schools is 4 years – after grade 9, and 3 years – after 11-12 grades, respectively. High schools and universities have three-tiered levels -bachelor (three /or four years of studying), master (one/two years), and PhD (three/four years).

By School Resources Review (OECD/The World Bank, 2015), Kazakhstan has embarked on profound reforms to improve the quality of education system and is increasingly looking to international standards and best practices.

Even though the level of education attainment in population was high, the performance of Kazakh 15-year-olds in PISA-2012 suggested that there was a considerable room to improve the quality of students' learning outcomes. Kazakh students are on average two years behind their peers from OECD countries, where 45% are low performers, and this proportion is significantly above on average from OECD countries (23%). Language of instruction in schools, school location, type, and students' socioeconomic background in the schools make a difference in students' performance. In this case, national and international assessments suggest marked differences in education outcomes between urban and rural areas.

Implementation of English as a compulsory foreign language in secondary education was announced in August 23, 2012 decree #1080 (MES, 2013) and launched in 2013. The requirements of core curriculum and syllabuses for EFL teaching and learning reading skill is among essential. However, the number of hours being allocated for learning English as the compulsory foreign language is relatively small e.g. per week two hours - in primary school, three/four –in middle and upper secondary regarding the profile and type of schooling (i.e., humanities, science, or mathematics). Reviews of National Policies for Education assume that secondary education in Kazakhstan should refocus knowledge and skills on developing and applying real-life situations define criteria for comprehensive evaluation of the quality in teaching, develop a framework for appropriate school management, as well as to encourage teachers to build up research and creative skills in their students (OECD, 2014). Thus, the importance of PISA for Kazakhstan is obvious as the world measurement may be valuable and crucial for further development of the country in education, politics, and economics. The current study is assessing young learners' reading literacy skills and comprehension in English as FL from seven randomly chosen urban middle schools in Pavlodar. PISA-2018 in Kazakhstan assessed students from sixteen regions of Kazakhstan although the information of which and how many schools participated in

PISA-2018 survey from Pavlodar region was not known.

Methods

Research questions

The present study examines the relationship of young learners' literacy development in English as a foreign language (EFL). The following research questions are under the focus of this research work:

- 1) How does the effect of mother tongue influence the results of learners' performances in English as a FL?
- 2) What is the relationship between reading and writing skills in EFL?
- 3) To what extent do socio-economic variables, reading, and writing in EFL predict outcomes in EFL of bilingual and monolingual learners?

Participants

The participants were 12-year-old learners (year 6) from randomly chosen public seven middle schools of Pavlodar. The samples represented 16% of the schools in Pavlodar city from the total number of 43 schools in Pavlodar city. The students came from Kazakh and Russian families. The number of samples, performing the reading tests in L2 (English), and the background variables such as gender, age, and mother tongue are presented in Table 1 below (see Table 1). Some students who performed the questionnaire session did not attend the language test session therefore, the numbers in English sub-scale tests were different (22 students were absent).

Table 1

Number of participants in the Grade 6 (2018)

Variables	English
N (sub-samples)	282
Gender (male; %)	48
Age (mean, years)	12.00
Age (SD)	.21
Mother tongue (%) Kazakh	43.6
Mother tongue (%) Russian	56.4

Instruments

The original English reading tests booklet (c.f. Nikolov & Csapó, 2010, 2018) included 5 reading tasks, 2 writing tasks, and 2 listening tasks. This pilot project was applied only two reading tests (20 items) and two writing tests (9 items) (Table 2). Listening part in L2 was excluded due to several technical devices in the schools to listen the tracks properly. The applied tests were modified and adapted. Students' socio-economic background measured several items regarding students' mother tongue, age, grade, gender, as well as parents' highest level of education, and number of books at home. The background questions were in students' mother tongue (L1) (Kazakh and Russian).

Parents' level of education in Table 3 demonstrated that most six graders' parents had a graduate degree of education mother's level of education was 25.3% (19.2+4.2+1.9), and father's was 13.9% (10.8+1.9+1.2). However, the vast majority of the students did not know what degree their parents have. The statements the students had to choose regarding parents'

Table 2

Tests booklet in L2 in Grade 6 (2018)

Skill	Task	Input content	No. of items
Reading 1	Find the title of each book	Descriptions of books	10
Reading 2	Find the missing parts in the list	Text 'First Day of School'	10
Writing 1	Write an e-mail to invite your English friend	Answer the following questions	4
Writing 2	Write a blog post about your favorite season	Answer the following questions	5

Table 3

Parents' level of education (%) in the 6th grade (2018)

Parents' level of schooling	All Students	
	Mother's schooling	Father's schooling
Did not go to school	.4	1.2
Grades 1-9, middle school	9.6	10.8
Grades 1-11, secondary school	18.1	18.8
Vocational and technical schools	9.2	14.6
Bachelor degree	19.2	10.8
Master degree	4.2	1.9
PhD degree	1.9	1.2
I do not know	37.3	40.8

highest level of education included the following information: 1) did not go to school; 2) finished grades 1-9, middle school; 3) completed grades 1-11 main secondary school; 4) finished vocational and technical school; 5) has Bachelor degree; 6) has Master degree; 7) has PhD degree; 8) I do not know. These results presented the percentage in the group, not the number of the samples.

The percentage in the group of Kazakh and Russian native speakers were almost the same thus, as we would like to determine the whole picture of the students' socio-economic background. This finding indicated that parents' education is significantly important for further academic development of the child as if the parents' less educated this could negatively influence on further career goals of the person which could reflected on motivation, individual habits, priorities, and on personal characteristics while learning e.g. reading or foreign languages.

Number of books at home was another socio-economic variable that we applied further in the study. The variable was measured by 6-scale: 1) 0-10 books; 2) 20-50 books; 3) 100 books; 4) 200 books; 5) 500 books; 6) more than 500 books. Interesting to know that only 30 per cent in the 6th grade reported that they had more than 100 books and the rest of others mentioned they had around 20-50 books.

Procedures

We instructed all participants before assessment survey, where a personal password code was given for entering the online platform.

Table 4

No. of books (%) in the 6th grade

No. of books at home	All Students
0-10 books	22.7
20-50 books	28.8
100 books	32.7
200 books	9.6
500 books	4.2
More than 500 books	1.9

Students took 30-50 minutes to do the tests in L2 in winter, 2018. Test materials in English, reading and writing skills were administered to sixth graders via the eDia system (Csapó & Molnár, 2019). Reading comprehension tests have several tasks including reading and writing (*Reading test 1, 2, and Writing test 1, 2*) and were distributed into several cognitive operational types as Information Retrieval (IR), Inference (Inf.), and Reflection (Ref.). Scale of the items was coded as 0-1, where "0" – wrong answer, and "1" – right answer.

Information Retrieval (IR) tasks reveal to the process of selecting the required information from the number of paragraphs and texts. These categories were established in PISA-2018 (OECD, 2019, p. 31). IR could be defined as the way of retrieving and determining "a corpus of stored information the portions which are relevant to particular information needs" (Sembok et al., 2008, p. 40; see also e.g., Fagan, 1987; Smeaton,

Table 5

Reliability of the tests

Sub-scales	Test in English	N of items	M (SD) (%)
Information Retrieval	$\alpha=.893$	10	50.0 (28.7)
Inference	$\alpha=.878$	10	50.0 (28.7)
Reflection	$\alpha=.926$	9	50.0 (27.5)

1) How does the effect of mother tongue influence the results of learners' performances in the tests?

1987). The tasks "Match the title of the book" were referred to IR.

Inference (Inf.) tasks involve putting the missing information to a given text, as in puzzle to infer a missing part to make meaning and require an acquisition of a new meaning "from context is the distance between the target word and its cue" (Cain et al., 2004, p. 672-673; see also e.g. Carnine et al., 1984; Daneman & Green, 1986). The tasks "Match the missing part of the text" were referred to Inf. tasks, as the performer needs to make a conclusion from the various recourses or key words around the context in order to understand the meaning of the word.

Writing tasks were deemed appropriate to the Reflection (Ref.) part of the tests, as students had to answer guided questions. The scoring system for writing tasks had 0-1 scale, the criteria of the scores determined relevant. For example, if the student did not write anything and/or the answer was not related to the meaning of the question – a "0" score was earned, and "1" score would be obtained for the right and appropriate answer. Thus, students could earn four points for writing task 1, and five scores for writing task 2. The maximum score for writing skills is nine points.

Finally, after qualitative assessment of the writing part the points were set up to IBM SPSS Statistics 23 computer software for further analysis and revealing the results quantitatively.

Results

The reliability of the instruments in English was very good (Cronbach's $\alpha = .897$) as well as the values for writing component seemed better than in reading sub-scales ($.878 \leq \alpha \leq .926$). Interestingly, Kazakh native speakers outperformed Russian native speakers in English writing tests, albeit mother's level of education did not influence students' performance in either group. See further psychometrics of the tests in English as FL of young learners in Table 5.

Researchers in the last decades have determined that proficiency of students' skills in L1 could have success in L2. The aim was to examine the effect of mother tongue in English language learning. Our hypothesis was that students, with strong L1 language self-confidence were more successful in L2 outcomes. Reading tests were divided and analysed separately in Information Retrieval (IR), Inference (Inf.) and

Table 6. Results in English Test sub-scales

Scale	Mother Tongue	N	M (%)	SD (%)	Cronbach's alpha
Information Retrieval	Kazakh	115	48.42	28.94	.897
	Russian	145	51.25	28.55	.889
Inference	Kazakh	115	49.35	29.31	.885
	Russian	145	50.52	28.31	.873
Reflection	Kazakh	115	53.02	27.98	.937
	Russian	145	47.60	26.87	.916

Table 7

Correlations of Sub-scales in English: Kazakh native speakers

	Information Retrieval	Inference	Reflection	No. of books at home	Mother's education	Father's education
EFL	.838**	.856**	.026	.223*	-.075	-.082
Information Retrieval		.613**	-.067	.131	-.049	-.101
Inference			-.053	.198*	.044	-.020
Reflection				-.002	-.055	-.054
No. of books at home					-.122	-.047
Mother's education						.477**
**p<0.01						
*p<0.05						

Reflection (Ref.) in EFL or L2 (Table 6). The mean of Kazakh native speakers in English Reading tests were $M=50.46\%$ ($SD=28.33$), and Russian performers $M=49.63\%$ ($SD=29.41$). The effect of mother tongue did not significantly influence the results of Kazakh and Russian native speakers in English test. Cohen's d (1988) was very small in all variables IR ($d=-0.11$); Inf. ($d=-0.03$); Ref. ($d=0.17$), which seemed that mother tongue of learners' had little effect while learning English as FL. We suppose that duration of learning the language might relate to the age of the students. In the upper grades, the number of classes in EFL should be more.

This seemed interesting as the information retained that native language while learning English by Kazakhstani young learners did not

reliably affect English as L2. We assume that this might be due to the age of the students, and/or the limit of hours for language learning in the classroom.

2) What are the relationships between reading and writing skills in EFL?

3)

To determine the relationships between reading and writing skills in EFL we examined the correlation of the sub-scales in EFL. The correlation between reading and writing components in English was non-significant: .053 (n.s.). In English sub-scale tasks Information Retrieval (IR) and Inference (Inf.) had strong significant correlation and relatively low with Reflection. The reason for this might be that the new standard was only announced in April 2013

Table 8

Correlations of Sub-scales in English: Russian native speakers

	Information Retrieval	Inference	Reflection	No. of books at home	Mother's education	Father's education
EFL	.881**	.867**	.069	-.149	.243**	.172*
Information Retrieval		.689**	-.037	-.121	.158	.112
Inference			.136	-.265**	.240**	.144
Reflection				-.016	.052	.000
No. of books at home					.103	.042
Mother's education						.667**
**p<0.01						
*p<0.05						

(MES, 2013) and the participants were studying English language (EFL) only their second year as they went to school in 2013 (assessment was conducted in 2018) and most students started to learn English from the age 11 (grade 5). Although for those, who went to school in 2014 started to learn English from the age 6/7 in primary school. The survey was the first pilot assessment study in those schools thus, we consume that this could be one of the reasons of low correlation of Reflection and Inference and Information Retrieval in English, as well as the eDia online platform was implemented for the first time (see Tables 7-9) in Pavlodar.

The tables show the strongest significant correlations (.856 and .867 respectively) between IR and Inf. in Kazakh and Russian native speakers. In order to see the whole impact of the tests on SES (mother's and father's level of education and number of books at home) we compose all operational skills (information retrieval, inference and reflection) in one as English reading comprehension tests as the foreign (EFL).

It seemed interesting that number of books and inference tasks were correlated (.198) positively in Kazakh performers but significantly negatively (-.265) among Russian ones. However, the correlations between mother's and father's level of education and EFL (.243; .172) were found significant in Russian native speakers but not among Kazakh students. In the case of inference tasks, the relationship was significant between mother's education level in the group of Russian performers but not in Kazakh group. The reason of poor correlation between reading and writing in L2 (English) may relate to the age of the students, their individual differences, teaching and learning style or the classroom climate. Another reason could be that writing scripts in Kazakh and Russian languages are highly transparent so the phonological awareness of the words plays an essential role while learning Kazakh or Russian languages, albeit for English, the non-transparent orthography language, spelling process is highly required. Insofar, the correlation of IR and Inf. was strong in L2 language tests, but it did not find in Reflection part.

Table 9

Correlations of Sub-scales in English: all students

	<u>Inference</u>	<u>Reflection</u>
Information Retrieval	.662**	-.052
<u>Inference</u>		.053
**p<0.01		

Students' low achievements in English as FL and no correlation between reading and writing skills could relate to the age of young learners and the limited knowledge in English. Nikolov (2016b) consumes that students' level of "can do statements" and types of the tasks in L2 or FL are framed and limited as their potential in L2 could not be appropriate for strong correlation, as the level of proficiency in L2 is not enough for appropriate reading and writing skills. The relationship between reading and writing was limited and not existed, albeit learners' attitude and motivation to school were positive.

4) To what extent do socio-economic variables, reading, and writing in EFL predict outcomes in EFL of bilingual and monolingual learners?

In order to answer the third research question multiple regression analyses stepwise method was used in each language group separately regarding students' SES variables (Kazakh and Russian) in English test outcomes as the dependent with parents' level of education, number of books and reading and writing in L2 by Kazakh and Russian native speakers. The model in regression analysis pointed that mother's education has the strongest influence on the achievements of reading comprehension tests in English in Russian students and not in Kazakh. In Kazakh and Russian groups, the level of father's education did not influence achievements in EFL. It is interesting why parents' level of education was not significant in the Kazakh native group as the root generation by father's line is significantly important for each Kazakh family. As Kazakh nation has tribe tradition –"ruy" in their nation,

Table 10

Regression analyses

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Reading comprehension tests in English					
	Kazakh native speakers			Russian native speakers		
	R square =.050			R square =.090		
	β (Beta)	t	Sig	β (Beta)	t	Sig
Mother's education	-.048	-.519	0.605	.261	3.239	0.001
Father's education	-.072	-.778	0.438	.011	.100	0.921
No. of books at home	.223	2.432	0.017	-.176	-2.187	0.030

the tradition is required to know seven ancestors by the father's line. It seemed interesting that students whose L1 was Kazakh, achieved better results in writing than those, whose L1 was Russian. Number of books at home seemed to contribute the outcomes in English tests for Kazakh learners better than Russian performers the differences in path coefficients (beta β : .223; -.176) (Table 10) was higher in Kazakh students, albeit negative among Russian ones.

It seemed that Kazakh native speakers use more books and textbooks materials at home for learning English as a foreign language than Russian. The probability value was statistically significant. However, these findings examined only sixth graders from urban secondary schools in Pavlodar city, and not the whole region. Although we consider the fact that, the level of EFL of young adolescents was low as an alarming indicator for schoolteachers, parents, and other stakeholders. Therefore, further assessments of other age groups in several other regions and cities of Kazakhstan are necessary to explore, as this may benefit to modify the process of teaching and learning English language as FL to young learners.

Discussion and conclusion

The learners' reading and writing skills should be well developed in the learners' native language and then further promote literacy in L1 to L2 or EFL. However, "scaffolding" in reading and writing skills require appropriate instruction and intervention in early language stages. Negligible results of the students in English and

low correlation with SES seemed that parents and teachers discuss less and/or not enough with the students about their outcomes in school. Strong correlation was found in the indexes, created by the reading test items: IR (information retrieval) and Inf. (inference) within English, and weak relation to Ref. (reflection). This may indicate that learners in Kazakhstan have to learn more material (theoretical) by heart and perform less practical tasks. The frequency of diagnostic tests in L1, L2, and EFL in the classroom context should have a regular basis for better indication the drawbacks in education; define individual differences of the learners, and provide effective curriculum framework. Young learners should read and write more while learning EFL in and out of school, and teachers should carefully control and assist students in teaching and learning process. SES is essential for students' career goals and job findings, albeit students should be motivated to read more books they would like to read in L1 and L2 and the school administration should manage this opportunity for all students in the school library. Thus, teacher, researchers, parents and other stakeholders in Kazakhstan should shorten the number of "factual information" in teaching and learning materials but increase more critical tasks.

In addition, this current study has several limitations, such as the study suffers the assessment of students' reading and writing skills in their native language, teachers' viewpoints, and the ways of their regular assessment. We did not conduct any questionnaires for teachers and parents of how they motivate their students and

kids to read more books, as well as the absence of interview with the language teachers regarding comprehension while reading and the reading content. The study also did not provide any information regarding factors that may influence students' literacy in reading and writing. These issues require further research investigation in the way of improving teaching, learning process, and development of reading literacy among learners, teachers, and parents. All participants should work and inspire reading process as reading literacy is significantly essential for students' critical thinking, and problem solving.

Future research agendas will be under the scope of reforming program in the middle education in terms of implementing diversify methods in L1 and L2, flexibility, and feasibility for all members in the schooling process. Digitalizing the list of literature books that student should have to read in the middle stage in L1 (Kazakh and Russian), and in L2 (English) languages may increase motivation and literacy (Zickuhr et al., 2012). The list of reading books in L2 (English) should be carefully taken into account, where the language level in the foreign language books for students be appropriately chosen, adaptive, available in paper and electronic version, as well. Accountability of the books and reading materials in the library, computer software, and ICT devices should grow students and teachers' motivation.

Further perspectives of reading and writing interrelationship will be the ways of how to improve literacy level among learners in Kazakhstan in the middle school. These assessment results lead us track to the problems in and out of school classroom management, literacy in reading, writing, foreign language teaching, individual differences of students learning L2 in the middle school. Although students' literacy level in the middle school may be better if the assessment is frequently applied and the students' achievements be regularly discussed with teachers, parents, peers, and other stakeholders. School administration should provide a space for parents to participate in the learning process and help teachers to define children's problems in reading comprehension in L1, L2, and EFL.

Overall, the analysis indicated that regular assessment in reading and writing skills is necessary as this may assist teachers to improve teaching reading and writing skills to young adolescents in native language and English as FL. Although parents' level in education had limited contribution due to young age of the learners, personal traits may affect further outcomes in English. However, parents' role in education in literacy development is a significant factor for reading and writing skills. Thus, further deep investigation and evaluation of more data and variables are required.

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Қазақстанда оқушылардың ағылшын тілін шет тілі ретінде оқуы

Аңдатпа. Бұл зерттеуде Павлодар қаласының орта мектептеріндегі 12 жасар оқушылар арасында ағылшын тілінде шет тілі ретінде (АШТ) оқу және жазу дағдылары тексерілді. Қатысушылар алтыншы сынып оқушылары болды, қазақ тілінде оқитын балалар саны (N = 115), орыс тілінде (N = 145) болды. Бұл зерттеуге қатысушылар ретінде Павлодар қаласының жеті кездейсоқ таңдалған жалпы орта Білім беру мектебінің оқушылары болды. Оқу және жазу дағдыларын бағалау үшін қазақ және орыс тілдерін меңгерген оқушылар ағылшын тілінен тест тапсырды, сонымен қатар, тестілеу пәнінің әлеуметтік-экономикалық мәртебесі (ӘЭМ) туралы бірнеше сұрақтарға жауап беріп, ӘЭМ мен ағылшын тілін үйрену дағдылары шет тілі ретінде (АШТ) зерттелді. Көрсетілген нәтижелері бойынша, қазақ тілде оқитын оқушылар жазбаша тапсырмаларда жоғары көрсеткіш көрсетті, ал орыс тілінде оқитын балалар оқу тапсырмаларын жақсы орындады. Сонымен қатар, ағылшын тіліндегі оқу дағдылары мен жазу дағдыла-

рының арасындағы байланыстың әлсіздігі анықталды. Аталмыш жағдайдың көрсеткіші кирилл емлесін қолданып жүрген қазақ және орыс тілдеріндегі әріптердің жазылуымен байланысты, себебі ағылшын тіліндегі әріптердің жазылуы латын графикасында тұр. Алынған нәтижелерді ескере отырып, жалпы, пайдаланылған құралдар қазақстандық контекстке сәйкес келеді, бірақ кейбір тапсырмаларды өзгертіп, олардың ауыстыруын талап етеді. Талдау барысында білім алушылардың оқу мен жазу дағдылары арасындағы айқын алпақтық анықталды, бұл өз кезегінде жазбапа жұмыстарды бағалаудың қиындығымен, шет тілін үйренуге арналған сағаттың жеткіліксіздігімен және ағылшын тілінде шет тілі ретінде (АШТ) күнделікті қарым-қатынас жасаудың шектеулі болғанымен байланысты деп білеміз.

Кілт сөздер: оқу және жазу, дағдылар, бағалау, екі тілде сөйлеу, мектеп оқушылары, ағылшын тілі шет тілі ретінде, әлеуметтік экономикалық мәртебе

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Навыки чтения и письма у учащихся, изучающих английский язык как иностранный в Казахстане

Аннотация. В данном исследовании проведен анализ навыков чтения и письма на английском как иностранном (АИЯ) среди учащихся 12-лет в средних школах г. Павлодара. Участниками исследования были учащиеся шестых классов, в котором количество детей с казахским языком обучения составляло (N = 115), с русским языком (N = 145). Исследование проводилось среди случайно выбранных учащихся 7-ми средних общеобразовательных школ г. Павлодара. Учащиеся с казахским и русским языком обучения выполняли тесты по английскому языку для определения оценки навыков чтения и письма, а также отвечали на поставленные вопросы, связанные с социально-экономическим статусом (СЭС) испытуемого, с целью определения взаимодействия СЭС и навыков при изучении английского языка как иностранного (АИЯ). Результаты показали, что школьники с казахским языком обучения лучше выполняют задания по письму, а русские - по чтению. Более того, слабую корреляцию, возникшую между навыками чтения и письма в английском языке, может предположительно объяснить тем, что правописание на английском языке во многом отличается от написания букв на казахском и русском языках, где используется правописание на кириллице, в то время как орфография английского языка основана на латинице. Результаты показали, что инструменты в целом оказались подходящими для контекста Казахстана, хотя некоторая часть тестов требует определенных доработок. Также в процессе анализа было выявлено отсутствие взаимосвязи между навыками чтения и письма у учащихся, которые, по нашим предположениям, связано с некоторыми сложностями оценивания письменных работ, недостаточным количеством часов на изучение иностранного языка, ограниченными возможностями повседневного общения на английском языке как иностранном (АИЯ).

Ключевые слова: чтение и письмо, навыки, оценка, двуязычие, учащиеся школ, английский как иностранный, социально-экономический статус.

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