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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE AND DARING GREATLY THROUGH THE PRISM OF ACTION PLAN

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Abstract

The article deals with the result of the action research study aimed at exploring the impact of the epistemic position of the opportunity for the self-development critical and critical thinking, task-based performance, strategy training and reflection on the academic achievement of PhD students and development of their self-determined scientific-research competence in the educational process on the basis of the Matrix Programme. The participants were 33 PhD first-year students of Abylai khan Kazakh University and World Languages. The data obtained in the action research deepened our understanding of how the incorporation and increase of self-dependent work contribute to the development of PhD students' professional and scientific research competence, keen focus on the strategies and self-evaluation in the framework of cognitive linguacultural paradigm. Qualitatively all the students made a noticeable improvement in the course study. The results obtained confirmed our assumption that the most significant thing is daring greatly for changes and innovations that can provide high quality in FL education.

Keywords: competence, critical and creative thinking, task-based projects, strategies, reflection, research, self-development, innovations.

Introduction

The modernization processes in the field of science and education in the Republic of Kazakhstan are aimed at the development of the in-depth integration of fundamental science, innovation technologies and education which provide qualitative training of the new generation of competent specialists capable of intellectual innovative activities and innovative products in the sphere of economics, industry, science and technology of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its relations with other countries in the world.

In this connection, the innovation scientific – educational mission of the University and its scientific schools and laboratories is of vital importance for the integration of Innovation – Science – Education.

Nowadays the quality of training specialists is characterized not only by the high level of their fundamental knowledge, skills and competences, but by the personal characteristics as well enabling them on the basis of the developed competences to fulfill professional tasks and independently find innovative solutions of the problems using experience, different technologies, and methods of research.

Following the modern requirements, as beginning researchers, the post-graduate students (PhD and MD students) are to master a high level of their scientific research (gnostic) competences which are

realized through the whole range of sub-competences: information – research competence, creative – modeling competence, diagnostic – experimental, scientific metalanguage.

However, it is worth mentioning that there is almost total lack of publications devoted to different aspects of the FL educational process in Postbaccalaureate Programme of both MD students and PhD students, namely the formation of their professional and scientific research competences though, of course, our school of thought headed by academician S.S. Kunanbayeva has contributed much in this field (Kunanbaeva 2010, 2014, 2015).

You can hardly find a description of modern action research studies done in cooperation with student – researchers related to their educational process. The purpose of the present paper is to describe an extraordinary experience of work with a group of post-graduate students (1st year PhD students) on the course of the discipline "Perspective tendencies and new scientific research trends in linguistics, translation, and linguadidactics" (3 credits, 1st semester). In addition, the present paper is exploring the impact of the PhD students' self-dependent work on their learning motivation, academic achievements and development of scientific-research competences through the implementation of critical and creative thinking. Task-based performance, reflection and strategy training on the basis of one of

the disciplines as a part of the educational programme.

The objective of the discipline was to introduce PhD students into the picture of the perspective tendencies and modern scientific research trends in the sphere of translation, linguistics, and linguadidactics and help them improve skills and sub-competencies in scientific research activity:

1. Information - research sub-competence which provides the ability of students to select and use different sources of information related to the theme of their investigation;

2. Analytical – synthesizing sub-competence which includes an acquisition of methods of work with scientific literature;

3. Creative – modeling sub-competence which is oriented on the formation of creative ability to model problem solving and new technologies which are of great theoretical and practical value;

4. Diagnostic – experimental sub-competence that provides the ability to use methods of empirical research, of which the method of experiment is the leading one;

5. Scientific metalanguage sub-competence which includes an acquisition of scientific terms as a means for adequate definitions and characteristics of scientific facts, notions, processes, and phenomena.

Humanitarians nowadays are influenced and challenged by many global ideas in different branches of linguistics, cognitive-linguistic, psycholinguistics, psychology,

FLT Methodology,

translation studies, and semiotics the role of which is essential in cognition and communication.

Science, as well as human life in general, undergo too many changes in the course of its development. In science trends and tendencies change and vary depending on the paradigms. "A trend is a strong chance that something will happen in a particular way" (Macmillan Dictionary). We have a tendency to use Internet resources in everyday life. It is normal, for example for FL education development that old trends give way to new ones. Linguasynergy, for example, a modern tendency of the researches has a great future, though it is often used as a byword. A trend is an increasing, growing tendency that produces a result. It may be current, general, growing, long-term, modern, etc.

Bruce M.Mackh (2018) in the book "Higher Education by Design" speaks about two trends adults' self-directed learning in terms of andrology: Heutagogy and digigogy (from an online course). The first student-driven perspective. They are substantially different from the traditional lecture-based courses we usually expect that the students will accept any statement at face value as the wisdom of qualified expert, remaining a passive recipient of the transmitted knowledge. According to the author, adult learners are self-directed and are expected to take responsibility for their

own learning, to try to know the rationale behind what they learn, learning best through experience, think critically and trust their own judgment.

The structures of the Higher Education continue to operate on the models befitting the Industrial Age rather than the Informational Age in which we live now. That is why many specialist specialists in the field of Higher Education speak about the necessity of changing educational paradigm saying that the minimal interaction between the students and teachers, the lack of feedback, individual tasks for professional experience, the lack of interdisciplinary and collaborative approach and the ICT, the ineffectiveness of lectures, the lack of creativity make it necessary to make changes.

Procedure

During 15 weeks 33 PhD students took part in Action Research on the basis of specially designed tasks on the discipline «The perspective tendencies and modern scientific research trends in the theory of linguistics, translation, and linguadidactics» which was a part of their PhD curriculum. The tasks were of 5 types in the context of their profession:

1. Tasks stimulating focus on the course content and critical thinking (questionnaire

and in class discussions);

2. Pragma-professional tasks oriented on the development of professional competences;

3. Tasks oriented on reading authentic scientific literature and critical thinking;

4. Task-Based group projects with the use of critical and creative thinking. Power-Point presentations.

5. Tasks for developing strategies (communicative and cognitive).

It is true that Task-oriented activities give students a sense of purpose and help to focus on the problems related to the spheres of research in translation studies, linguistics, and linguadidactics in terms of the new cognitive linguacultural paradigm. The regular assignments to read and study a portion of information and make up 5 questions to discuss at every seminar proved to be useful.

Type 1 -tasks focused on the general aspects of the course content (and corresponding chapters from the recommended textbooks) were regularly used in the teaching process with the purpose to stimulate PhD students' self-directed cognitive and communicative activity and help them to identify the problems they would like to critically study and design a questionnaire to discuss in class so as to construct new knowledge.

Type 2 –tasks are pragma-professional tasks. They are situational professionally-oriented problem tasks requiring non-standard creative solutions of the problem (many variants possible solutions). Here are some

of them compelled by the students:

1. You are going to conduct a workshop for young teachers on the problem of the relationships between language and culture: language is not only a means of communication but also a cultural code of the nation. What evidence would you give to the central thesis of your report? Why? Provide arguments.
2. Cultural differences are revealed in grammar structures. Translate the following into English considering the cultural difference in the expressing request, order, probability: По газонам не ходить. Курить строго воспрещается! Не сорить! Купание запрещено! Закройте дверь. Give some other examples and your argumentation.
3. At the seminar in cognitive linguistics students discussed the concepts of “friend” and “time” giving example of idioms with the words. Give 5 of your own examples in different languages. Supply argumentative explanations.
4. Students were to create questionnaires for Socratic Seminar, to generate student-driven, student-centered discussions. The questions were supposed to focus students on the studied material and create meaningful discussions on the topic. All the students were to think of the

meaningful questions that could potentially spark interesting discussions

Type 3 –tasks oriented on reading authentic scientific literature and critical thinking include different forms of work (from simple to most difficult) with the articles related to the themes of PhD researches.

1. The expertise of a scientific article according to the scheme.
2. Analyze 2 scientific articles choosing in each on them the main points; compare them; find commonalities and differences.
3. Find arguments to prove whether the main points in the article are valid or not. Express your own attitude to both positions. What contribution does this information make to the problem of your research?
4. Predict possible results of developing theory and practice on the theme of your research on the basis of the critical study of the article and your attitude to the author`s recommendations.
5. Compile annotated bibliography cards on the theme of your PhD dissertation.

Our task was not an easy one because the participants of Action Research were not a homogeneous group of PhD students – all belonging to different specialties, with different types of professional readiness & competences. But the most acute problems that united them all were the problems of Intercultural Communication related to the sphere of linguistics, translation and FL Education. Thus, an interdisciplinary and

collaborative approach created valuable opportunities for students to develop higher-order thinking skills:

Questions:

- What is the theme of your research? Why have you chosen it?
- What perspective tendencies and modern scientific trends do you know in your field of your research?
- Why are the majority of recent investigations centered around Intercultural Communication?
- Why do you think «discourse» has become an “umbrella” term?
- What is Intercultural Communication?
- What ICC? Different approaches to its structure?
- How do you know that you are Interculturally competent?
- What are the main characteristics of translation as a specific type of Intercultural Communication?
- How is the personality of the translator formed? How does he create his final product? How are the conflicts of cultures reflected in the language of translation?
- What are the stumbling blocks in intercultural communication?
- Do you agree that culture controls communication? Why?

The approach adopted in our classes required students to move from theoretical understanding of the problems under study to the experience - based critical Thinking and evaluation of their own studies in terms

of competences.

In constructing the course content, it was necessary: 1) to avoid the so-called "spoon – feeding"; the effect in the educational process and that is why lectures gave an only brief talk on the theme. Those were mainly brief explanations covering the key problems and leaving a huge area of information for the students to explore by themselves and to extend it in relation to the sphere of students' self – development and self – education using innovation methods and technologies such as method of reflections, Internet resources, case – studies, pragma – professional tasks, project works of different types which are aimed at the development of professional competences;

2) it was also necessary not to impose prior standards and categories in terms of the old paradigm. As John Dewey would say in this case “if we teach today's student as we thought yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow.” Taking this into account much attention was focused on the students' self – dependent work, the use of technologies and competence approach. At the lectures students were given only introductory information on the theme and asked to study the related chapters of the textbook or any other related material so that they could have some idea about the next session and have an insight into the theme to try and find some gaps and problems they would really want to know about and discuss in the

classroom.

So, students were deeply immersed into the atmosphere of systematic study constructing scientific knowledge that, by definition, “must be clear, unequivocally defined, unmistakable, demonstrable, repeatable, communicable, logical, rational, verbalizable, conscious.” Maslow A.H. (1966) Besides, according to James Dean Brown (1995), “studies can never be absolute”, “they must be viewed in relative terms: relative to probability, relative to other studies, relative to theoretical framework” and, most of all, studies must be relative to our experience in the field of our research.

Our interest to Socratic Seminars and Critical Thinking has stemmed and gradually developed in the experience with a group of the second year MD students and first-year PhD students since 2016 at the Kazakh Ablai Khan University of the International Relations and World Languages. Socratic Seminar is known as a formal discussion from a text through critical thinking, one of the main tools of which is students’ creating questionnaires to stimulate discussion through sharing new ideas, opinions, perceptions rather than merely retelling what others said or wrote. Mere reproduction of long scientific articles, as well as plagiarism, is not an ethical compass for scientific research, for the mind and intellectual growth.

At the Socratic Seminars, students

are motivationally, cognitively and emotionally involved in the discourse by sharing their ideas, expressing their agreement or disagreement, their judgment, and criticism. Through the collaboration at the seminar, they maintain and develop discourse chain sharing their experience, values, ideas, demonstrating their empathy, cultural awareness, as well as a sense of cooperation. They develop reflection in action and post action, metacognitive awareness and finally make their own research design on the problem. Here we cannot but agree with Deborah Shiffrin (1987) who says that for organization of discourse in the classroom there should be a “discourse community”, which implies that the participants are equally interested in the subject and motivated, communicatively, cognitively and emotionally involved and are aware of the success they can achieve with the feedback and helpful scaffold Vygotsky L.S. (1962) that inspires and supports. Feedback encourages cognitive growth and engagement; in fact, without feedback and support (scaffold) there are no transformative changes. The teacher provides valuable and helpful feedback in the process of the whole performance (linguistic aspects and project dynamics) by preventing communication breakdown and facilitating the process of discourse or project work by encouraging students’ activities.

Nowadays the problem of language and meaning is studied by linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and Methodology of FL Education from different points of view. The variety of researches in this field can be classified into several groups.

Group 1: researches that are based on the well-known, well-established theories and postulates unreservedly following "the trodden path". For example, there often appear some text-books on professionally-oriented FLT in non-language universities on the basis of the old knowledge-based paradigm without taking into consideration the competence approach and new technologies in the context-based FLT.

Group 2: includes researches based on traditional ideas with new "labels" applied to the old context. For example, there is a new trend to regard the structural organization of the text as the result of integrative a synergistic process when the term "synergy" denotes blending or merging of energies as self-organization of the text. Instead, some authors use the new term "synergy" only in reference to "semantic process and syntactical process" in the text which is criticized by Zalevskaya A.A. (2014).

Group 3 includes researcher that purposefully develop new ideas without correlating them with other new tendencies in science.

Group 4 includes researches developing to the new approaches to the problem of language and word meaning, showing that the existing semantic theories and procedures to word meaning analyses are no longer updated. Cognitive linguistics makes it possible to view different phenomena from different angles and change the interpretation of the subject of investigation. For example, without exaggeration, we can say that the polysemy phenomenon is the greatest endowment because it distinguishes a natural language from the compiled language which may become for a language learner one of the obstacles that hinder communication. Cognitive linguistics helps to view meaning on the basis of new conceptions:

- Meaning is constructed. The meaning is not in the text, it is in the mind of the reader - Evans, V. (2006).

- "Meaning equals conceptualization tailored to the specifications of linguistic convention" Langacker R.W. (1987).

- The meaning of a word is phenomenon thought, and on the other hand, it is a phenomenon of speech Zalevskaya A.A. (2014).

In this respect, the "Interfacial theory of the word meaning: psycholinguistics approach" created by Zalevskaya A.A. presents the word as a complex interface of the world of meaning. The interface theory focuses on "live" word meaning and gives

an answer. The questions: what is there beyond the word in the one's head? In the search for the question, it is necessary to take into consideration the dual ontology of the word meaning and the integrative approach to live to mean, focusing on permanent interaction of body and mind, perception cognition, emotions and situations, chains of interference, etc. In other words, the necessity to communicate stimulates the formation of a specific interface between the social and personal, ensuring success in cognizing the world. Socially acknowledged word meaning is fixed in dictionaries, reference, encyclopedia, and the "live" word is in the mind of a person. We cannot deny any longer that one and the same text may be understood differently by different people depending on the immediate situation of communication and the "live" word. So, we can see that interface is a notion that can be applied not only to computers and digital platforms. It is a medium between a complex system such as society, for example. The idea of an interface was discussed from the perspective of philology, translation and FL teaching. We addressed the interface theory as a broad term which refers to a flexible, virtual tool that can be used for teaching (the idea of gamification, for example) as a technique of text analysis in translation and even as future of artificial intelligence which does not only respect the idea but also creates meaning. The theory

opens doors for different types of research on the problem of intercultural communication.

Task-Based Project 1:

Approaches to Contemporary Understanding of Intercultural Communication.

The PhD students were to make interactive mini-lectures and questions for discussion on the basis of the recommended literature Kunanbayeva (2015) such as:

Make up PhD mini-lectures & Questions for discussion.

1. Edward Hall. Context & Meaning (pp 44-55).
2. Michael Argyle. Intercultural Communication (pp 32-45)
3. Richard E. Portes and Larry A. Samovar. - Basic principles of the Intercultural Communication (pp 5-22)
4. Dean C. Barnlund. Communication in a global village (pp 21-32)

Task-Based Projects – 2

1. The problem of discourse and text in philological, translation and linguadidactics research in the context of Intercultural Communication: the state of studies and perspectives of research. (Research Project).
2. The role and functions of situations in the context of Intercultural Communication as the subject of research in inno-philology,

translation, and linguadidactics (Information – Research project)

3. Culture and Communication in the content of Intercultural Communication problems and solutions (Analytical - prognostic)

4. Translation: Communication or Speech Activity? (Research project).

5. Difficulties in comprehension and translation of phraseological units, their cognitive – linguacultural characteristic in trilingualism conditions. (Research project).

6. Creative and Critical Thinking in the classroom in the context of Intercultural Communication: Task-Based approach (Creative project).

7. The role and importance of pragma – professional tasks in the professional training of specialists in the field of inno-philology, translation, and linguadidactics in the context of cognitive – competence approach (Creative project).

8. Information – communicative environment as the basis of modeling professional Foreign Language Communication in the field of training inno-philology, translation, and linguadidactics specialists. (Analytical – prognostic project).

9. Interfacial theory of word meaning (Zalevskaya A.A.): what is the behind the word? (Analytical – prognostic project).

10. Formation of Cognitive Component of Intercultural Communicative Competence of specialists in the field of philology, translation, and linguadidactics: problems

and solutions (Research project).

Task-Based projects described in the paper were enthusiastically received by the PhD students participating in the Action – Research Study and guarded them regarding motivating interesting risk talking challenging, educationally beneficial.

The final presentation of T-B Projects in power-point included a considerable amount of information which was well organized & updated.

Student – researchers, cognitively and emotionally involved discourse, determine the direction and the development of this discourse. This, however, does not imply a passive role of the teacher who coordinates the work and focuses the students' attention on some methodological and linguistic aspects, assists them in developing metalinguistic awareness and adapting appropriate strategies.

In the framework of the discipline "Perspective tendencies and modern research trends in the theories of linguistics, translation, and linguadidactics" from the very beginning PhD students were invited to actively participate in the small scale action-research and to try and find answers to the main research questions: to what extent would your self-dependent work with incorporation of critical thinking, creative reflection and strategy training help you affect achievement to improve your professional, communicative competence and basic research competence thus

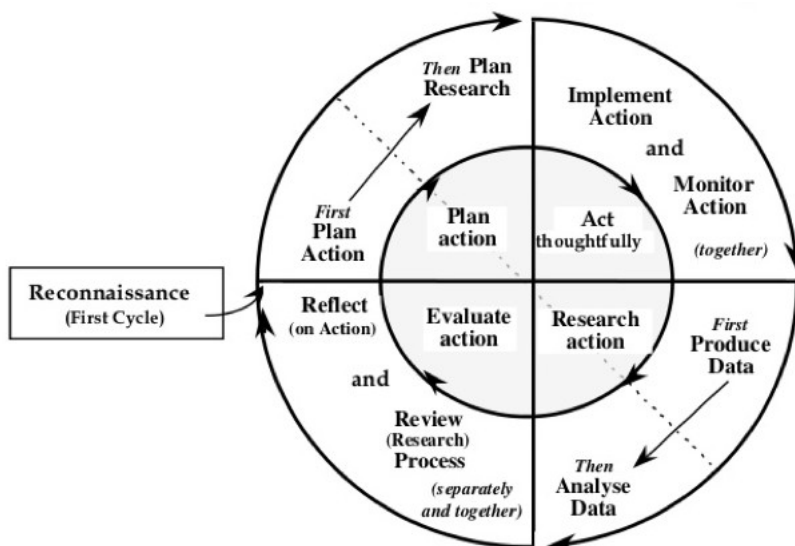
realizing your potential as PhD students?

The idea of action research in FL is not a new one. Action research highlights a series of procedures that teachers can use to improve the process of teaching or to evaluate the success and/or appropriacy of specific activities and procedures Harmer J. (2001). There are many other reasons for conducting action research, for example, to judge the effectiveness of a method, ICT and other innovations, etc. Action research provides such a way of work that links theory and practice into the whole one: ideas-in-action. It is a way of encouraging students to develop research skills.

We should distinguish between applied research and action research. Action research is more rigorous and does not claim

to contribute directly to the solution of the problems. Action research, the contrary, is less interested in obtaining generalizable scientific knowledge than knowledge for a particular (local) situation or purpose. Action research is situational, collaborative, content-based, participatory and self-evaluative. Most scholars think that action research has the scientific – Richards J.C., Nunan D. (1990) believe that innovative potential can contribute the professional development of specialists, especially in encouraging their self – development through action research.

Action research involves a cycle of action and reflection which lead to another research cycle as shown in the scheme by Tripp (2003).



The action research sequence we used in the course was as follows:

1. identifying a problem;
2. thinking of the research questions to gain information (planning);

3. collecting data (using different methods; questions, videotapes interviews, journals, accounts, observations, etc.);
4. analyzing the results;
5. reflection;

6. deciding what to do next - (starting a new cycle again).

In scientific literature, the term “problem” is most often defined as a theoretical and practical difficulty requiring thinking activity for its solution. As to the notion "task," we follow the definition given by Skehan, P. (2001) and others: "a task is an activity in which meaning is primary, there is a common problem to solve, and the task is closely related to real-world activities." From this it follows that depending on the primary importance of meaning that we attach to the problem and the tasks for the solution, we choose ways and strategies.

We have already mentioned the tendency of language learning through reflection. Reflection has many facets and reveals itself in different circumstances, and it involves linking current experience to previous learning (a process called scaffolding – Vygotsky L.S. (1962)

We often find ourselves in a reflective position which is a cognitive process that transforms the state of mind which implies a readiness to ask oneself a question, readiness for self- control and self-organization, readiness for self-analysis and finally alternative thinking (creative and critical). What strategies are essential to be taught to help reflection?

Strategies are a sequence of actions specially designed to achieve the goal. Oxford, R. L. (1990) speaks of 62 strategies

as specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster and more enjoyable, more self- directed, more effective, more transferable to new situations. They may be direct and indirect.

At the Socratic Seminars, students are given opportunities to reflect on the learning process and develop their competences making judgments asking higher -order wh- questions, solving problems and participating in heated discussions on the issues related to their specialties. For instance, why, what, what do you think, etc.

English as the medium of scholarly communication at our seminars displayed a relatively high level of language competence of the majority of students, though code-switching from L1 to L2 was a regular thing to prevent the breakdown in communication because some students had insufficient English language proficiency in realizing intended meanings. Due to this, we must say that the contribution made by the students was totally different. However, they all participated in the discussions irrespective of the language proficiency level. The growth of motivation and self-efficacy belief was evident. Action research is interactive, collaborative and reflective and creative.

Numerous studies were carried out by many scholars on the effectiveness of communicative strategies and learning strategies such as cognitive strategies (grouping, note-taking, inferencing, transfer), metacognitive strategies (planning,

self-monitoring, self-evaluation), socio-affective strategies (cooperation, questions for clarification) were described by Brown D.H. (2000) in his book "Principles of language learning and teaching". Communicative strategy, according to Dörnyei, Z. (1995) include avoidance strategies and compensatory strategies. The most widely used by our PhD students were the strategies of approximation, literal translation and code-switching that was quite natural for some PhD students with not quite sufficient level of knowledge of academic English as the medium of intercourse. However, in our case code-switching from L2 to L2 and L3 was conscious and specially focused to show language and cultural differences or to model language activities in Chinese, Japanese and other tonal words that use pitch to signal differences in world meaning and grammatical distinction which are likely to cause misunderstanding and even failure in oral communication. Our experience shows that code-switching in the framework mentioned above can be a valuable tool and not just an easy option.

Communicative strategies are given special attention to our research, for they are cognitive plans for communication, specific steps that we employ to solve problems in communication. Faerch, C., and G. Kasper (ed.) 1983 speaking about communicative strategies say that they may be "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an

individual presents itself a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal".

Nowadays some scholars regard communicative strategies as elements of strategic competence. In our Action research, the research question was: To what extent do the opportunities for self-dependent from the incorporation of critical and creative thinking, strategies training and self-reflection influence the development of your scientific research activity and help you to realize your potential as PhD students?

We cannot but agree that successful FL discussion depends on many factors (task factors and personal factors) and primarily on the motivation of the participants, on their ability to make some contribution depending on their knowledge, prior experience, on the topics under discussion and the types of thinking (analytical-creative, integrative-constructing, etc.) Kynanbayeva S.S.(2015).

At the end, of course, the PhD students were given the freedom to choose topics for their group Task-based projects related to the course 7 task-based projects – cooperative, self-evaluative reflexive. The positive aspects of task-based projects are as follows:

1. they provide the learners with complex and challenging tasks which encourage cooperation, risk-taking creativity and daring greatly to develop competences;
2. the activity involves different types of thinking (critical, creative) and different strategies (analytical-creative);

3. task-based projects cognitively and emotionally involve students into problem-solving.

4. the structure of the tasks consist of

a) communicative use of language and

b) methodical tasks oriented on competences;

5. there are 3 dimensions for analyses of T-B projects: code complexity, cognitions complexly and communicative strategies;

6. CT+TB provide opportunities to reflect.

The task-based projects described in this paper were well received by the students and the majority of them found the tasks professionally beneficial, interesting, cognitively challenging. For most of them, it was a new type of work and trying something new always involves risk-taking.

It is an axiom of Modern FL Education that “whenever you teach and learn a complex system of cultural customs, values, and ways of thinking, feeling and acting” (H. Douglas Brown).

Students have suggested 5 possible ways of work with scientific sources aimed at the form action of research competence & to sub-competence.

1. Write a short critical review (positive or negative) you have recently read the article (level of knowledge) connected with the theme of your PhD dissertation.

2. On the basis of 2 articles on the theme chose in each of them the main thesis: compare them find the commonalities and

points of difference.

3. Compare the main points of and their scientific value 2-3 articles and say which one do you feel more acceptable for your PhD.

4. Read and analyze some articles on the theme of your PhD. Make prognoses to implement those researches for developing some them and practice of your investigations.

5. Make un annotation cards or the theme of your PhD research.

Simple as it is it revealed some pitfalls they were not aware of. From the small -scale action research we have undertaken it is evident that through engaging students in task-based projects focusing on critical and creative thinking on the basis of scientific texts PhD students form: 1) their communicative strategies for public discussions, 2) scientific-research competence, 3) reflective skills in self-control, monitoring and evaluation thus realizing the potentials of PhD as future researcher.

"Daring Greatly" is the concept introduced by Brene Brown (2012), a researcher, and a famous writer, who explains that vulnerability is crucial in achieving significant results in any field. According to Brene Brown, to achieve success and be creative an individual has to be willing to dare greatly and expose oneself to the vulnerabilities, so as to be able to tap in the immense resources of creativity,

cooperation, and productivity. There are 6 key concepts: shame, vulnerability, empathy, self-compassions, boundaries, and trust.

We observed and interviewed the students' perception of the difficulty of the studied material and analyzed their comments on their own performance. Many of the high performing students were able to acknowledge their insecurities and vulnerabilities and displayed a high level of self-awareness. In contrast, students who did not achieve high results would not give any comments or would give quite short, non-descriptive answers.

1. It was totally different from our previous experience.
2. It was difficult but interesting. The content.
3. The atmosphere was warm. We felt comfortable. The feedback inspired and engaged.
4. Training in critical thinking takes time but very useful.
5. The variety of articles in interesting.
6. It can be applicable to other classes.
7. It challenged students to share ideas and

information for more knowledge. For constructing new knowledge.

8. The work with Questionnaires was thought-provoking.

9. To speaking with your problem project runt of the etc.

Findings and Discussion

The findings reveal significant changes and the complex process the participants underwent in the course of the systemic provision of opportunities for high order thinking on the basis of incorporation of self-dependent learning, task-based projects, strategy training, and reflection.

Table 1. Describes the statistics for critical thinking skills developed in the form of self-dependent learning and questionnaires. The results indicate a significant difference in essential scores of thinking before and after the implementation of the possibilities of the PhD students' self-dependent learning the course content.

Table 1. Statistics of students' questionnaires as elements of critical thinking

No of stud.	CT (Questionnaires) Maximum level				CT (Questionnaires) Minimum level				CT(Questionnaires) Critical level				Average academic score	
	Before		After		Before		After		Before		After %		Before	After
33	15	45,4%	28	84.8 %	16	45.3%	5	15.2%	2	6.06%	-	-	3.8 points	4.7 points

In addition, the qualitative aspect of the questionnaire used by the PhD students in the course of self-dependent learning of the course greatly differs from that at the end: questions focus mostly on the factual information (what, who, when) rather than the information of inferential character (why, what do you think about it?) requiring in-depth analysis and sharing ideas and opinions, arguments and discussion and peer evaluation. These significant differences suggest that complex of methods involved

helped students develop their overall critical thinking particularly concerning questionnaire targeting students' interpretation, evaluation and argumentation.

In terms of the interpretation of the critical thinking skills in Task-based project the improvement may be mainly due to the nature of the professionally-oriented tasks, interest peer scaffolding in the process collaboration project work and the use of technology.

Table 2. Task-based project performance summary

№ of stud.	T-B Project 1			Average score	T-B Project 2			Average score
	Max. level	Min. level	Crit. level		Max. level	Min. level	Crit. level	
33	20	12	1	4,18	27	6	-	4,61

The participants improved their skills to judge and evaluate the information provided either by their team members or during the project presentation made by other groups. They collaboratively constructed their understanding of the most appropriate arguments depending on the

situation exercising their professional skills strategies and competences.

Students demonstrated the potential for the development of professional, personal and scientific research competences as well as the 21st-century skills:

Table 3

Discipline	Competence	Skills and knowledge
Perspective tendencies and new scientific research trends in linguistics, translation, and linguadidactics	1. Scientific competences (instrumental sub-competence, epistemological sub-competence, analytical sub-competence, accumulative information sub-competence)	- <i>scientific knowledge</i> - <i>ability to formulate a research issue</i> - <i>capacity for analysis and grasp of sophisticated IT tools</i>

	<p>2. Project and team management competences</p> <p>3. Personal competencies</p> <p>4. The ICC competence & its several sub-competences (sociocultural subcompetence, conceptual subcompetence, communicative subcompetence, cognitive, linguacultural subcompetence, reflexive-developmental subcompetence)</p> <p>5. The 21st-century skills (core competences)</p>	<p><i>-ability to work in a team</i></p> <p><i>-communication skills</i></p> <p><i>-business culture and management skills</i></p> <p><i>-awareness of the pertinence of the research and its impact on the environment</i></p> <p><i>-creativity</i></p> <p><i>-open-minded approach</i></p> <p><i>-motivation</i></p> <p><i>-adaptability</i></p> <p><i>-vulnerability (daring greatly)</i></p> <p><i>-awareness of the cultural context</i></p> <p><i>-language skills: speaking, reading listening and writing</i></p> <p><i>-metathinking skills, reflection, and self-reflection</i></p> <p><i>-having a new picture of the world build in the mind</i></p> <p><i>-learning to learn</i></p> <p><i>-digital skills</i></p> <p><i>-communication skills</i></p> <p><i>-cultural awareness</i></p> <p><i>- social and civic competences</i></p> <p><i>-sense of initiative and entrepreneurship</i></p>
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Overall, we see that many different competencies are to be developed during

PhD studies. Generally, we can divide them into three categories: scientific, project management and personal competences. Additionally, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) which is vital as students are taught the subjects in English. All the competences are equally important and are to be developed throughout education. However, the competencies are very complex and interconnected; they require a great deal of self-awareness and that are to be developed both in class and independently.

Conclusion

From the small-scale Action Research study, it became evident that through the systemic provision of

opportunities for Critical and Creative Thinking, reflection and Task-based project the PhD students improved their scientific research competence and realized their potential of PhD researchers.

There is also evidence that through engaging students in tasks that focus on Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking PhD students trained their strategies, self-reflection, and self-evaluation which is important for research, for changes and daring greatly. There are some limitations of the research due to the fact that it was short-scale Action Research with a very short duration and only one discipline based that may limit generalization of the findings. At the same time, the Action Research study reveals the necessity for further research taking into account the task factors and personality factors. This is in terms of the never-ending process of cognition.

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