

Advancing English for Media Literacy in Kazakhstan
PROJECT PERFORMANCE REPORT
Association of Teachers of English in Kazakhstan KazTEA

Facilitator's Name: Moldir Yessembayeva
Cohort #: 4
City: Kyzylorda
Period: September, 2022 - December, 2022
Number of Project Beneficiaries/Participants: 25
BA / MA /PhD students among them
19 BA, 6 MA

Please provide as much detail as possible about the project activities over the reporting period. Answers should be as detailed and thorough as possible, they should help paint a picture of program activities. Short replies will not be accepted.

1. Provide a detailed description of the progress made to-date toward the project's objectives and outcomes.

There are 25 members. 19 of them were able to complete all tasks according to the criteria. 17 participants received a certificate of achievement, and 2 of them were awarded with the certificate of participation. The very first progress is that they are armed with the necessary and basic information about the media. Some participants (Aizhan Aibolat and Baldana Turmagambet) took notes of some terms from the course in a special notebook. Today, our participants are able to analyze the information coming to them. The basis of what is called "media literacy" has been formed. Of course, the level of media literacy for each participant is different, since the perception is different. Another important factor is the improvement of the level of English. Our sessions were in English only and this helped some of the students to get rid of the barrier to speaking, and some participants noted our course allowed them to improve their fluency in speaking and listening as well as they had lots of speaking and listening activities. Another very important progress for our participants from Kyzylorda is that they have developed the habit of writing meaningful comments in English on social networks. This was facilitated by some of the criteria of the project, such as expressing your thoughts about each past session on Facebook to the post, writing your answers to the Discussion Forum (there were 5 of them), commenting on the projects of other groups on Padlet. If before the project and before the sessions commenting in English was perceived as something difficult, then by the end of the project, by the last session, this activity had become something familiar and commonplace. This is also a small victory for our participants. The last thing I want to mention is that the participants finally understood why a discussion forum was needed, since at first it was only one of the criteria that had to be met.

2. Describe your target audience. Who is the average person being served and how will your program assist them?

My target audience is teachers of English at schools and colleges. It is the teachers who teach English from the 8th grade and above. Because students of this age category can have a lesson on "Media literacy". It is possible to introduce this topic into the educational process. For example, if the participant is an English teacher at a primary school, the Media course will remain only information for the participant himself and, of course, most of the knowledge will simply be forgotten without further development. And if the participant has

the appropriate classes to share this knowledge, in turn, this will keep the teacher in good shape, as he will need to prepare to introduce this topic. Among the participants were several undergraduate students. I firmly believe that they are not my target audience. Since they are still students themselves, they are not teaching yet, they are not even sure if they will teach at all. They don't feel this process, the teaching process. It is worth recognizing that there are always exceptions. However, based on my experience, I can firmly say that students who are still studying for a bachelor's degree feel very uncomfortable and uncertain among other teachers who are already working as teachers.

3. Is the program on track/schedule to be completed within the estimated period of performance? If not, how do you plan to get the program back on schedule? Will you require additional time to complete any of the activities?

8 sessions of two hours is quite enough. In our sessions, we managed to cover almost all the tasks proposed in the plan thanks to group work. The only thing I want to add is the time when participants work in pairs or in mini groups performing a certain task, it is very important to fix and limit the time to complete this task using a timer. In one of our sessions, we had a guest, Danara Saranova, who conducted a media literacy training that took up almost two hours. My suggestion is to set aside a separate day for ML trainer to conduct the training, in addition to our 8 sessions. Because as I mentioned, her training takes almost two hours, and after so much time and information, the participants do not have the energy and desire to complete our main tasks according to the plan. Of course, as practice shows, this is quite feasible, but it is inefficient.

4. Describe any challenges to implementing the program and how you have addressed or plan to address the issues faced. What lessons have you learned implementing the project that may be beneficial for KazTEA?

The first problem I encountered was that the participants thought it was just an online course and they didn't need to do anything, they would just listen and get a certificate for it. Although the announcement was written about offline sessions, but some participants simply did not pay attention to it. Nowadays, many teachers participate in various webinars and by the end receive certificates by paying 2000 tenge for the certificate. Teachers are used to it. Therefore, most of the teachers who had applied on the Google form were shocked when they realized that they would have to work, study, learn, analyze and create something. In a word - to work. And for this reason, about 30 people refused to participate. And about 20 more people were from distant regions of the Kyzylorda region, such as Aralsk, Kazalinsk, Karmakshi. These regions are very far from the city of Kyzylorda, so about 20 applicants were also crossed off the list. Although at the beginning, the number of teachers who applied for participation was about 70.

I have a question about teachers from distant regions - if there are enough participants, will KazTEA be able to organize a course and sessions for teachers from distant regions and villages?

The next problem I faced was familiarizing the participants with the project criteria for obtaining one of the two certificates. At the very first session, when I presented the criteria for obtaining a certificate, some participants perceived these criteria as something long and complicated. As a result, about 10 of those present at the first session no longer came. I thought for a long time and decided to change tactics. I used a technique called "The foot in the door", the idea is to give information to participants in a dosed manner, and not all at once. At the first session, we should explain to the participants only some of the criteria, but not all. And in a few days, for example, when the participants apply for financial aid, it

will already be possible to explain the remaining criteria through whatsapp. This technique helped me to form an active and strong team, of course it requires patience and work. Therefore , the first two sessions I was still in the process of forming a group . I formed a full-fledged group of 25 people by the third session.

5. Provide success stories, photographs, or other documentation and multi-media to share with KazTEA and RELO to show the program’s progress and impact.

We posted a lot of photos and videos from our sessions on Facebook. Here you will see all the links to these materials and others:

<https://padlet.com/esembaevamoldir29/v12gskftnv0cyx3c> (week 4)

https://www.coursera.org/learn/media/discussions/weeks/5/threads/oWpic25LEe2HBw67Q7_Bow (forum week 5)

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/media/discussions/weeks/3/threads/jyyaNmaNEe2xJQrpAvB8UQ> (forum week 3)

https://www.coursera.org/learn/media/discussions/threads/tl86wF2iEe2OXg7jnQE_Mkw (forum week 2)

https://www.coursera.org/learn/media/discussions/weeks/1/threads/uOwRtFxEe2UERILDC3u_w (forum week 1)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1530853237351297/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 1 photos and videos)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1536666196770001/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 2)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1541278419642112/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (training with Danara Saranova)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1547471262356161/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 3)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1552936421809645/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 4)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1556216618148292/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 5)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1557670484669572/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (forum discussion post)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1567762813660339/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 6)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1567762813660339/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 7)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1572799569823330/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (session 8)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/834481146988513/permalink/1572809919822295/?mibextid=Nif5oz> (some more photos from the final session)

6. What activities are planned to embed learning outcomes in the teaching process as short-term impact ?

Some of the participants (those who teach at high school and college) plan to teach a lesson on media literacy to their students. The main resource for them is a media literacy course on the Coursera platform with video lessons, tasks and additional bonuses. Participants say that this course on Coursera is an excellent resource for forming the foundation of media literacy among students. And this course is not for one lesson, but for several. This is their plan for the third quarter. As soon as they start implementing their plan, we will post videos and photo reports, as well as learning outcomes.