

Cultural Identity of Public Consciousness in Kazakhstan Literature Education: Effects of a New Teaching Method

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Abstract: This study examined the effect of the new teaching method applied in the Kazakh literature course on students' cultural identity and sensitivity, patriotic consciousness, and achievement. In this context, the experimental group experienced innovative teaching methods based on the works of Abish Kekilbayev. This quasi-experimental study examined the effects of educational activities on achievement, social consciousness, citizenship, cultural identity, and sensitivity based on the works of Abish Kekilbayev, a leading Kazakhstanian writer, among second-year university students. The experimental group underwent the new teaching method, while the control group followed the activities outlined in the current Kazakh literature textbooks. The effectiveness of the method was assessed through post-test applications. The results indicated significant differences in students' academic achievement, citizenship, social consciousness, cultural identity, and sensitivity between the experimental and control groups, highlighting the substantial impact of the new method. Similar approaches can be applied to students at various educational levels. Additionally, a comprehensive citizenship and identity education program could be developed by closely examining the works of Abish Kekilbayev and other similar authors in detail.

Keywords: Abish Kekilbayev, cultural identity, citizenship awareness, academic achievement, Kazakhstan literature.

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The methods and techniques selected for designing literature teaching are expected to align with the course objectives, subject matter, students' personalities, teacher expectations and abilities, and the educational environment (Mansurjonovich, 2021). Consequently, it is crucial, as part of the teaching material, to identify the desired outcomes, design a learning experience to achieve these outcomes, and determine suitable activities and teaching methods. For a course centered around text reading, opting for an interactive and exploratory approach that fosters in-class dialogue rather than direct teaching can lead to significantly more productive results. It is important to note that the effectiveness of teaching methods is not universally consistent; it can vary based on the subject matter and content employed (Borich, 2017).

In the teaching of Kazakh literature, emphasis is placed on utilizing literary works as the primary learning material and employing a variety of rich teaching methods for effective implementation (Lazzat et al., 2019). The integration of impactful teaching methods aligning with new, student-centered paradigms is crucial. This approach plays a significant role in capturing students' attention during classroom activities, establishing the teacher as a guide to correct mislearning, assessing students' current levels of understanding, motivating them to internalize knowledge, and nurturing their affective characteristics (Mynbayeva et al., 2018).

Cultural identity, social consciousness, sensitivity, and dedication to both national and universal values stand out as key affective characteristics targeted through literature lessons. Consequently, literature courses go beyond enhancing language skills or knowledge of literature; they also exert a profound influence on individuals' cognitive and affective attributes associated with citizenship.

Cultural identity stands out as one of the most significant attributes that individuals acquire through literature courses. Identity, a pivotal concept, elucidates how a society, a nation, and an individual perceive themselves and position themselves within the context of history and society. It delineates similarities and differences, articulating specific qualities inherent in both individuals and societies. Identity serves as a direct reflection, image, and indicator of society, people, and nations, serving as the fundamental explanatory element of the question "who." Identity is such a central concept that it can contain almost all aspects of a society or a nation, and a person includes those aspects in their sphere. As a mirror concept, identity sheds light on all social and individual life aspects (Alver, 2006; Chan, 2022; Eriksson et al., 2020).

Key domains such as history, tradition, politics, religion, economics, and art serve as active determinants, recorders, and revealers of the boundaries of identity. Identity is shaped by the delineation of these foundational fields, playing a crucial role in the formation of the self and in the process of acquiring its qualities, ultimately becoming an indicator of social continuity (Dogutas, 2020; Edensor, 2020; Vergin, 1993). Assman (2015) posits that identity is inherently a cultural identity, as it is intricately tied to societal structures. Society, being integral to an individual's identity, forms a cornerstone of cultural identity. The shared identity highlighted by Assman holds significance, suggesting that the convergence of individual and social identities gives rise to a self-identity, and at the intersection of these two realms ("we"), a common/national/ethnic identity emerges. Common identity can be understood as "bringing shared belonging to consciousness" (Koçyiğit, 2023, p. 451). Consequently, "cultural identity is the awareness of participating in a culture or declaring belonging to that culture" (Aimukhambet et al., 2023; Brown & Strachan, 2022).

Hofstede (2003) conceptualized culture as a mentality that distinguishes one group of people from others, emphasizing that culture serves as the foundation for perceptions, habits, behaviors, and values (Barutçugil, 2011; Biyan et al., 2018; Şişman, 2011). A shared culture, forged through unity in a common geography, centered around common ideals, history, and aspirations, constitutes the cultural identity of a nation. Societies think, behave, consume, celebrate, mourn, and observe holidays in accordance with the codes of their respective cultures.

It is customary for cultural codes to undergo change and transformation, a process facilitated by internalization through social consensus while retaining the static values of the society (Mora, 2008). Cultural identity is a dynamic and transformative aspect that pertains to historical perceptions, connecting as much to the future as it does to the past. It is not an absolute or fixed concept; like all historical phenomena, it experiences evolution and transformation. Cultural identities are embedded in a specific place, time, history, and initial culture (Larrain, 1995; Storry & Childs, 2022). According to Güleç (1992), the transformation of a society within certain geographical boundaries into a nation occurs during the process of social change driven by market integration, with literature serving as a significant factor influencing this transformation (Du Toit, 2023; Lekhu, 2023; Moloi et al., 2023).

Literature holds a pivotal role among the primary domains contributing to cultural identity. It is inherently intertwined with the social environment, and the historical process significantly shapes identity formation. Therefore, literature emerges as a highly influential factor in both shaping and transforming identity (Alver, 2006; Du Toit, 2023; Slocum, 2019). Jusdanis (1998) contends that art and literature serve as crucial artifacts, produced either individually or collectively, playing a central role in constructing a sense of identity. In this context, literature serves as a tool that facilitates individuals' connection with their land and history, allowing the integration of national symbols into daily practices.

Literature is among the most essential building blocks of a society's/people's identity formation process (Rutter et al., 2023). According to Jusdanis (1998), literature, which is the "diary of a nation" (p. 68), is a constitutive element in the formation of identity and culture. All dimensions of a nation's life are included in literature. Its communication establishes a relationship with the past to expectations for the future and the life experience it puts forward. Today, a nation sees itself in literature and watches itself in literature. As a diary, literature becomes a searchlight that monitors the nation's life every moment. In this regard, literature profoundly influences the thoughts and lives of society, fostering the creation of new narratives. Consequently, literature, having evolved into an institution in shaping a nation and identity in the modern era, has assumed a foundational role. Serving as a repository of narratives that depict the lives and perspectives of a nation and its citizens, literature forms the cornerstone of identity and consciousness (Anderson, 2022; Okunishi & Tanaka, 2023; Shah et al., 2023). The interconnection between national literature and national identity is sufficient to underscore the significance and impact of this ongoing dialogue (Hogan, 2019; Kenyeres, 2019; Makeleni et al., 2023; Mutongoza & Olawale, 2023).

Literature is an element of culture that is effective in the acquisition of identity and personality by new generations. It helps them reach intellectual and spiritual maturity while equipping them with cultural characteristics by transferring national culture to young generations (Alver, 2006). Through literary works, the ideal human type of society is introduced to young generations. The traits, way of life, attitudes and behaviors, way of thinking, and other virtues of the ideal human type are transferred to young generations. Thus, the nation benefits from literature in shaping the character of the newly raised individuals. As an element of culture, literature contributes to the development of the cultural identity of individuals. In works of literature, people find, recognize, and adopt the characteristics of their own nation; they find and appreciate many thought/judgment patterns and gain new horizons; they find traces of history and learn the characteristic features of their country. They see and learn examples of loving, laughing, crying, helping, getting up, talking... unique to their own nation; they socialize and gain national identity (Herrera, 2022; Hyter & Salas-Provance, 2021; Kaya, 2022).

An important function of literature courses is to help students acquire values that are explicit or implicit in the transmission of culture and values, to prepare students for life within the framework of these values, and to positively affect their character and identity formation (Chong, 2023; Chong & Tsubota, 2023; Ladson-Billings, 2021; Tursunovich, 2022). Research

on the acquisition of cultural identity, citizenship awareness and national values indicates that in-class and extracurricular activities have a high impact on the emergence of cultural and national values such as giving importance to family unity, respecting the flag, national anthem, independence, freedom, patriotism and benevolence. (Bendermacher et al., 2017; Setyono & Widodo, 2019).

One concept within the sphere of influence of literature is citizenship and social consciousness. Individuals acquire a sense of citizenship through education and literature and acquire the cultural identity of the society they live in. According to Kepenekçi (2014), citizenship is the nationality that binds an individual to the state. Nationality represents the bond between the individual and the state and does not change according to the ethnic origin of the individual (Kepenekçi, 2014). Crick (2007) stated that “a citizen is a person who lives under the rule of a state and has both rights and duties under the law” (p. 243). According to Töre (2017), a citizen is a person who obeys the law of the state and does not violate the order.

Güngör (2017) said that citizenship is a sociological phenomenon in which social and political rights are acquired, and it is one of the subjects of sociology that affects education, which is a social institution. Aydın and Çelik (2017) stated that citizenship creates a legal bond between the person and the state and that the state has demands from its citizens, and some of these demands are belonging to the homeland, protecting social values and history, and being in unity of purpose with the state. They stated that in addition to the obligations the state imposes on its citizens, it also offers rights. The voluntary willingness of individuals to fulfill their responsibilities and act by caring about their feelings of loyalty and belonging protects the order between the state and the citizen.

The term *citizenship awareness* refers to the conscientious and diligent fulfillment of duties and responsibilities by individuals for the development of the countries in which they reside and to which they belong. The primary trait of individuals possessing citizenship awareness is their commitment to safeguarding the rights conferred by citizenship and dutifully fulfilling the responsibilities imposed upon them by that citizenship (Bozkaya & Ilgaz, 2021; Kilinc et al., 2023).

According to the literature, conceptual and behavioral processes should be used for individuals to learn, explain, and analyze their cultural identity and effective citizenship values and realize effective citizenship functions in social life. In this context, while citizenship awareness is formed chiefly through family and education, literature also plays a major role in forming this awareness (Japar et al., 2023; Yussupova et al., 2023). Language and literature contribute more than any other field to consolidating national consciousness and constructing cultural identity (Guerra, 2015; Stevenson, 2013; Storry & Childs, 2022;).

Writers who dedicate their works to shaping cultural identity and fostering citizenship consciousness play a significant role in influencing their communities, a phenomenon observed in various countries. Following the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, Kazakhstan reclaimed its independence, marking a sustained period of national resurgence. During this era, literature played a crucial role in the construction of national identity and culture. In recent years, in Kazakhstan, literary works have been instrumental in reinforcing the knowledge, skills, and values of children and young people, particularly regarding Kazakh culture and effective citizenship. A notable literary figure, both preceding and following independence, is Abish Kekilbayev. His influence has been profound in shaping Kazakh cultural identity and cultivating awareness of citizenship.

Life of Abish Kekilbayev

Abish Kekilbayev was a writer and politician. He was born on December 6, 1939, in the Myrzayir sub-district of Ondi village of Mangystau district of Mangystau province of Kazakhstan. His great-grandfather Khojanazar Janavoglu was famous, played an essential role in the settlement of Kazakhs in Mangystau, and had an important place in the history of Mangystau. Kekilbayev was the only son of a family of four children. He lost his father at a very young age, and his mother, Aysavle, his older sisters, and the people of his native village reared him. The loss of his father at a very early age, growing up with his older sisters under the tutelage of his mother, and being constantly under the protection of women in the village during his childhood years, which coincided with the war years, played an essential role in Abish's mild-mannered, sweet-tongued, contented personality.

Literary Career

Kekilbayev was a poet, writer, and editor, senator and received many awards (Özdemir, 2023). After graduating from Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in 1962, he began his literary career as an employee of the newspaper *Qazaq adabieti* (*Literary Portal*, 2023). At that time, he wrote mainly literary criticism. From 1963 to 1965, he was the head of the Department of Literature and Art of the editorial office of the newspaper *Leninshil zhas* (*Lenin's youth*). Then, he worked on the editorial board of the Kazakh SSR Ministry of Culture. Additionally, he held positions such as editor-in-chief of the *Yegemen Qazaqstan* newspaper and a literary employee of the *Kazakh adabiety* newspaper.

Political Career

Beyond literature, Kekilbayev played a crucial role in Kazakh politics. He served as the Deputy Minister of Culture of the Kazakh SSR, the second secretary of the Board of the Union of Writers, and the head of the Records Office for Culture and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Kazakh SSR Presidential Administration. He served as a Senator of Kazakhstan from 2002 to 2010, State Secretary of Kazakhstan from 1996 to 2002, and the Supreme Council Chairman from 1994 until its dissolution in 1995 (İbragim, 2010).

Kekilbayev's Literary Style

Kekilbayev, who began his literary adventure with poetry, said that after serious preparation, he began to write stories and novels. Before switching to stories and novels, he translated prose, thus improving his language and style. Kekilbayev proved himself in the Soviet literary environment, where literature and art were scrutinized extensively and works without a particular bent were not published. Due to his quality translations, Kekilbayev was referred to the translation committee headed by Muhammad Nurtazin, Head of the Translation Department of the leading publishing house of the Kazakh SSR "Jazuvii." (İbragim, 2010).

As a result of this decision, Kazakh readers had the opportunity to get acquainted with Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Guy de Maupassant's *Life*, William Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *Romeo and Juliet*, and Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*. These works were a steppingstone in his transition to authorship and contributed significantly to the adoption of the young Kekilbayev in the literary community.

As a nationalist writer, Kekilbayev researched Kazakh history and presented his perceptions to the public through the novel's fiction. His goal was to awaken the public to the truth and expand their horizons of thought. In his novels, he took care to describe khans, heroes,

soldiers, beys, and sultans as they were. At the time when the novel was written when Russian history was taught in Kazakhstan under the name of History of the USSR, he used literature as an effective method of informing the people about their national culture and history (İbragim, 2010).

Kekilbayev skillfully used mythology and philosophy (Kocatürk, 2016). According to Kazakh literary researcher Orda, Kekilbayev was the first writer to build the lyrical epic style in Kazakh prose in the 1970s and 1980s based on folk culture and legends (Orda, 2019). Aitmatov said that Kekilbayev successfully used mythology and legends to raise the intellectual level of his works and argued that this method also increased the aesthetic quality of Kekilbayev's texts. In Abish's works, human psychology was as important as history and folk narratives. As literary scholar Pirali noted, the dream motif and the technique of interior monologue play an important role in reflecting the psychology of the heroes in the author's works. (Pirali, 2019). Kekilbayev took the lead in the successful treatment of philosophical thought and the inner world of man in the Kazakh novel. For this reason, Kazakh literature researchers used the expression *Kekilbayev period* when naming the revival of the Kazakh novel under his leadership (Söylemez & Ateş, 2021).

Literary Works of Abish Kekilbayev

Kekilbayev's first book of poetry, *Altın Shuvaq (Golden Light)*, was published in 1962 when he was Kekilbayev was twenty-one years old. Later, Kekilbayev turned achieved great success as a novelist. He inscribed his name in the history of Kazakh fiction with his historical novels *Añızdiñ aqırı (The End of the Legend)* 1969), *Ürker (Ulker star)* 1981) and *Eleñ-alañ (Dawn)* 198). The novels *Ürker 39 (Pleiades)* 1981) and *Eleñ-alañ (Dawn)* 1983 were constructed as a continuation. These novels have a historical-philosophical character. The novel's information and events were taken from actual documents and fictionalized with literary skill.

In these works, the author depicted the most challenging and complicated fateful moments of Kazakh history as if he had seen them with his own eyes and held them in his hands. The 17th-18th centuries were when the Kazakhs had many internal conflicts and fought fiercely with their external enemies, Russia, China, and the Jonggar Kalmaks. In the novel *Urker*, the details of these turmoils and the political outbursts of Khan Abulhayr creating the danger of the Kazakhs being completely erased from history and the process of unification of the Kazakh Khanate with Russia are described (İbragim, 2010).

Kekilbayev brought fresh air to Kazakh literature at a time when Soviet literature was gradually leaving the strict limits of socialist realism and returning to human reality. After Stalin's death, the gradual move away from crude propaganda in literature allowed him author to write texts that dealt with the human being as an individual. Kekilbayev was very successful in psychological analysis, reflecting human reality without detaching it from the social structure. Regarding the influence of the conditions of the Soviet period, he implicitly directed his social criticism by changing the time and ground by referring to history (Söylemez & Ateş, 2021).

Kekilbayev's work addresses the themes that today's Kazakh society needs. His philosophical themes address humanity, questioning the purpose of life. His poems take lessons from the past and advise us to take firm steps into the future. The balance between the world and the hereafter, and especially the issue of morality, are among them.

Rationale

The basis of culturally responsive literature education is the belief that culture plays an important role in how students learn, understand, and interpret knowledge (Hyter & Salas-Provance, 2021). According to Howard (2010), the foundations of culturally responsive education are to strengthen one's culture for educational excellence by recognizing the complex and challenging nature of culture and to support students' academic, social, emotional, psychological, and cultural well-being. Lim et al. (2016) state that each individual consciously or unconsciously internalizes the culture in which they were born and incorporates cultural patterns. At this point, cognitive and affective processes constituted by cultural values affect people's perceptions and behaviors. However, in education sensitive to cultural values, appropriate methods and techniques should be employed in the teaching process. In this sense, it is recommended that teachers use cooperative learning techniques, activities to develop problem solving, creative thinking and critical thinking, and examples and materials appropriate for cultural diversity (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, [InTASC], 2011).

In schools, every subject and its instructors hold the responsibility of transmitting culture and fostering social awareness. Nevertheless, upon scrutinizing the features and contents of courses, literature courses, and their instructors shoulder a greater responsibility in terms of both the teaching methods employed and the course content. Despite this heightened responsibility, there is a limited number of applied and experimental studies addressing this specific subject.

A planned and programmed literature education embedded in social and cultural activities enables students to learn by doing and having fun. Another benefit of this process, which ultimately leads to the acquisition of cultural and national values, is that each student is addressed in a different way thanks to the utilization of different learning styles. Through these activities, learning can be facilitated and made more permanent by addressing students' verbal, social, intrinsic, and cultural perceptions (Gourvennec et al., 2020; Karimova et al., 2023; Ladson-Billings, 2021).

Despite having a deep-rooted history and culture, Kazakhstan, which was under the rule of the Soviet Union for a long time, inevitably underwent a cultural change in this process and was influenced by Russian culture. After gaining its independence, intensive efforts have been made in cultural areas as in every field, and efforts have been made for its citizens to gain cultural identity and citizenship awareness (Nowicka, 2020).

While every subject and its instructors carry the responsibility of imparting culture and fostering social awareness, literature courses and their instructors assume a greater responsibility concerning both the teaching methods employed and the course content. Irwin (2021) suggests that utilizing quality literary works in literature lessons provides an avenue to teach the spirit of nationhood, imagination, creativity, aesthetics, and philosophy to future generations. Literary texts used in literature teaching should actively contribute to the development of students' cultural identity, fostering a sense of endearment and adoption of the cultural values they encapsulate.

Examining Kazakh literature, it becomes evident that the works of Abish Kekilbayev possess this quality. Kazakh literature, specifically the works of Abish Kekilbayev, is characterized by this quality. This study explores the impact of teaching activities developed from Abish Kekilbayev's works on students' cultural identity, social consciousness, and academic achievement. The results of this research can serve as a model for initiatives aimed at helping recently independent Kazakh citizens embrace their cultural values. Concurrently, it highlights the role of literature in shaping social consciousness. Additionally, there is a

noticeable lack of applied and experimental studies on this specific subject, underscoring the study's importance in addressing this gap in the existing literature.

Research Questions

This study examined whether classroom activities based on the works of Abish Kekilbayev impacted students' cultural identity, social consciousness, and academic achievement. The methods section discusses the practices carried out in this direction. In relationship to this purpose, the following questions were addressed:

1. Do activities based on Abish Kekilbayev's literary works impact students' cultural identity and sensitivity?
2. Do the activities based on Abish Kekilbayev's literary works impact students' citizenship and social consciousness?
3. Do the activities based on Abish Kekilbayev's literary works affect students' course achievement?

Method

Design

This study used a quasi-experimental design in which a researcher selects participants to increase the external validity of the research (Mouton & Marais, 1988). According to Guetterman et al. (2015), the external validity of such studies is high because quasi-experimental research is usually conducted in natural and real-life settings. Although participants are assigned randomly in experimental research, there is no random assignment in quasi-experimental studies (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). In these studies, people are randomly distributed, grouped, and matched to the treatment groups that a researcher has created. Quasi-experimental studies with this type of matching are called matched designs. Accordingly, the study used pretest-posttest experimental and control groups.

In experimental studies, "what students learn can be measured by a test or other measurement tool. If the average scores of the groups in the test differ, this may give an idea about the effectiveness of the methods" (Baldassarri & Abascal, 2017, p. 42). Accordingly, to examine the effect of teaching Kazakhstan's literary products during and after the independence process on achievement, social consciousness, citizenship, cultural identity, and sensitivity, the experimental group of students engaged in activities related to Abish Kekilbayev's works and the control group engaged in activities in current Kazakh literature textbooks. After the application, the effectiveness of the method was evaluated.

The group for the research comprised 67 second-year students studying in the literature department of a university in Aktau, Kazakhstan, in the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. In the literature department, one of the two branches in the second year was randomly selected as the experimental group (33 students) and the other branch as the control group (34 students). In the experimental group, 13 students were female, and 10 were male. The students in the control group were 13 females and 11 males. The academic achievements of the experimental and control groups in the previous semester were equal. The mean of the students' age is 19.3 years. At the end of 4 years of studying literature, these students receive a literature teacher's certificate in Kazakhstan.

Experimental Procedure

The experimental process comprised the following eight steps. First, the literature on the relationship between the literature course curriculum, post-independence Kazakh literature, cultural identity, and social consciousness was examined via a document review. Second, the literary works of Abish Kekilbayev were examined to determine which corresponded to the literature curriculum objectives, and the objectives were classified weekly according to common objectives. Third, a pool of activities for the experimental group was created by considering stakeholders' opinions from the interviews between the instructors and the researchers. Fourth, the pool of activities on Kazakh literature was shown to lecturers. Their expert opinions were taken, and they were asked to implement their chosen activities for six weeks. In the experimental group, activity plans and materials were prepared on the literary works of Abish Kekilbayev and their effects on the formation of cultural identity and Kazakh social consciousness. Fifth, a question pool was created to prepare the achievement test to be used as a pre-test and post-test for the experimental and control groups. An Achievement Test and Cultural Identity and Sensitivity, Social Consciousness, and Citizenship Perception scales were prepared at this stage. Sixth, a pre-test was applied to the classes to determine which of the two classes, the experimental and control groups, was suitable for this level among the classes attended by the researcher's instructors. Experimental and control groups were determined.

Seventh, the research process was implemented in the experimental and control groups. While the activities prepared for the experimental group were applied, the same subjects were taught to the control group using techniques such as question-answer and lecture. Eighth, pre- and post-tests were conducted for both groups in the same weeks, and the results were analyzed.

The Experimental Group

The activities were conducted for six weeks in the experimental group. The instructors of the courses in question led the lesson during the implementation. Before each lesson, the lecturers and the researcher came together to discuss which activities should be conducted and how they should be carried out best. The prepared activities were included in the curriculum without disrupting the natural course of the lesson. When choosing literary works for the activities, the researcher included different genres of Kekilbayev's works, including novels, stories, and poems. Kekilbayev's collection of poems *Golden Rays*, a collection of stories including *A Flock of Cloud*, *Steppe Ballads*, *Face to Face with Time*, *Cranes*, *Steppe Folk Songs*, *Snow in March*, *Ballads of Forgotten Years*, *The End of a Legend*, and *Pleiades - Constellations of Hope*, were included in the lesson.

Activity Worksheets. To implement the activities easily, collect data for the study, and, most importantly, have all students do the activities, activity sheets were prepared for each lesson in which students were asked to answer questions in writing. Activity sheets with the necessary explanations were distributed to the students to help them complete the activities well. Students were given time to answer the questions on the activity sheet, and when they were ready, the activities were carried out with a class discussion in which all students participated. Students mainly worked in pairs or groups to increase interaction between students and discover different perspectives when discussing their answers in class.

Literature Circles Activity. In the experimental group, students formed literature circles and made class presentations. Hill et al. (2001) stated that literature circles comprising small groups in which students engage in in-depth discussions of works of literature help them become critical thinkers by engaging in a dialog with the literary work. Hill et al. (2001) argued that through literature circles, students reflect as they read, discuss, and evaluate ideas in books.

In this context, the students in the experimental group analyzed Kekilbayev's poetry collections, stories, and articles in depth with the literature circles technique.

Students formed literature circles of five people. The researcher provided background information about the work, period, and author. One was a summary of the work; the second was an illustrator summarizing the work with pictures, diagrams, or charts; the third was a vocabulary enricher highlighting important unknown words; and finally, the discussion facilitator developed a list of thought-provoking questions to be discussed in class. In particular, during this process, students were asked to generate discussion questions from Kekilbayev's literary works, and they also worked in groups to evaluate the literary works on their own, creating an interactive environment.

Students generated questions in the literature circles to improve the identified weak points. The literature circles were expected to raise cultural awareness and consciousness by encouraging students to research and ask questions about the literary works and Kekilbayev's personality.

Bloom Taxonomy Activities. The experimental group of students analyzed the works of Kekilbayev from historical-biographical, moral-philosophical, formalist, psychological, cultural, and social approaches. The analysis of works with different literary approaches was carried out directly related to the application part of Bloom's taxonomy. Students who associated Kekilbayev's works with various literary approaches carried out activities at the six levels of the cognitive dimension of Bloom's Taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels. Progressing from knowledge to evaluation, students were enabled to analyze the works through various questions.

By analyzing Kekilbayev's works with various literary approaches, students could look at a work from different perspectives, and a discussion environment was created in the classroom. Students tried to build a bridge between cultural identity, social consciousness, the real world, and the literary world, which is a vital point in experimental practice.

Class Discussion, Group, and Pair Work Activities. Class discussion pair and group work activities were also emphasized. Class discussions were held to evaluate the students' perspectives on the works of Kekilbayev and to obtain their opinions.

Activities to Support Ideas. Students were encouraged to support their ideas with the works of Kekilbayev or related literary works.

Inductive and Deductive Activities. In line with inductive and deductive reasoning, activities were carried out in which students were asked to draw conclusions from the general to the specific and from the general to the specific by using Kekilbayev's literary works. In addition, students were asked to make inferences about Kekilbayev's literary works concerning inductive and deductive activities.

Assumption Activities. Weil (2004) noted that we often make assumptions based on our thinking habits. Our assumptions are closely linked to our history, relationships, class, culture, power, and control. In other words, our assumptions are about ourselves, people, and the world. Assumptions can be defined as beliefs taken for granted, but they are beliefs that we think we know and are rarely questioned. In this context, students prepared activities to reveal their assumptions about Kekilbayev and his Modern Kazakh Literature period. In addition, students tried to form assumptions about the literary works of Kekilbayev.

Control Group

In the control group, the activities were carried out routinely as the implementation of the existing program. In this context, in teaching literature and culture, literature and social consciousness topics, teaching through presentation, question-answer, and repetition techniques were applied. In the control group, firstly, literature and culture, literature and social

consciousness topics were explained to the students by the instructor based on the steps of teaching through presentation. In the second stage, students were asked questions about these topics, and review activities were carried out. In the third stage of the activities, the instructor presented examples from literary works related to literature and culture, literature, and social consciousness. As in the experimental group, the activities in the control group lasted for 6 weeks. In the last stage of the study, post-tests were administered simultaneously to the experimental and control groups and the reporting stage was carried out. At this stage, the results and suggestions based on the findings were reported.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, cultural identity and sensitivity, social consciousness and citizenship scales, and literature course achievement tests were administered to the experimental and control groups.

Cultural Identity and Sensitivity

This scale, which measured literature department students' identification with Kazakh culture, cultural identity perceptions, and sensitivity, was adapted for Kazakh using the scale that Ward and Kennedy (1994) and Nijsten (2016) developed. The scale had two subscales. The first subscale included statements representing the perceptions of Kazakh cultural identity and attitudes towards it, and the second subscale included statements representing sensitivity to Kazakh culture. Both subscales had 20 statements. The scores obtained from the two subscales were converted into total scores. A 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all to 5 = Completely) was used for 20 statements about language, social activities, cultural values, and friendship. See Table 1.

Table 1

Cultural Identity and Sensitivity Scale Statements Examples

| <i>Cultural Identity and Sensitivity Scale Statements Examples</i> | <i>Statement Examples</i> |
|---|---|
| <i>Perceptions of Kazakh's cultural identity and attitudes towards it</i> | I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs. I feel like a part of Kazakh culture. |
| <i>Cultural sensitivity</i> | I have a strong sense of belonging to my own culture and ethnic group. I am interested in studies on teaching Kazakh culture and national values. |

Ward and Kennedy (1994) calculated the internal consistency of the heritage culture identification scale as .93. The researchers conducted an exploratory factor analysis on the Kazakh adaptation and form of the scale. They reported that the findings were structurally similar to the original scales, and the internal consistency coefficients were reported at an adequate level. In this study, the internal consistency coefficients obtained for the Kazakh form were .82 for the cultural identity subscale, .80 for the cultural sensitivity subscale, and 0.82 for the whole scale.

Citizenship and Social Consciousness Scale

The scales that Almarshad (2015), Bozkaya and Ilgaz (2021), and Heater (2004) developed were adapted into Kazakh using a 5-point Likert scale, with scores ranging from 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree. Confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses were conducted on the original scale consisting of 32 items in total. As a result of the factor analyses, a unidimensional structure explaining 53.5% of the trait variance to be measured emerged. Two items with factor loadings below 0.35% were removed from the scale. Thus, the Citizenship and Social Consciousness Scale comprised 30 items after construct validity. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability and item-total score correlations were examined for the reliability of the Citizenship and Social Consciousness Scale. Each item in the scale showed a correlation between 0.38 and 0.83 with the total score. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Kazakh form of the scale was 0.84. The total scores obtained from the scale were divided by the number of items to obtain the average score for each individual. A high average score indicated a high level of citizenship and social awareness.

Table 2

Citizenship and Social Consciousness Scale Statement Examples

Statement Examples

-The flag, national anthem and constitutional independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan are indisputable values for me.

- It makes me happy to be a citizen of the Kazakh state and a part of the Kazakh society

-I am aware of my responsibilities as a citizen of Kazakhstan

Achievement Test

While determining the purpose and scope of the test, the Kazakh Literature Curriculum for the 2022-2023 academic year, the textbook, and the instructor's annual plans were examined. Including all literature subjects in the research was inappropriate, considering the testing method, time, and cost factors. Instead of teaching all literary subjects and all literary subjects, achievements related to the subjects suitable for teaching with literary products related to Kazakh Literature, Culture, and Social Consciousness during and after the teaching process were determined.

A table of indicators showing the relationships between outcomes and subjects was prepared. The researcher prepared a question pool of 35 questions for the subjects and acquisitions expressed in the specification table. In revising the prepared questions, the opinions of three instructors from Kazakh literature and an expert in educational programs and teaching were taken. As a result, 5 questions considered not to reflect the gains were removed from the test. The test, consisting of 30 questions, was applied to a group of 90 literature department students within the pilot application scope. Test reliability analysis was applied for the remaining 30 questions. The KR-20 value was 0.86 in the application question. In achievement tests, tests with a KR-20 value above 0.70 are considered reliable (Taherdoost, 2016). The Kazakh Literature Lesson, Kazakh Literature, Culture, and Social Consciousness Relationship during and after the teaching process, is a reliable and valid measurement tool.

Data Analysis

In the first stage of the study, the normality of the data obtained from the scales and achievement tests was checked. According to the results obtained, significance values were above 0.05 according to both Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results. For data to be normally distributed, the p-value must be above 0.05 (Das & Imon, 2016). The data show a normal distribution. In addition, skewness and kurtosis values were also checked. For the data to show normality distribution, skewness and kurtosis values should be -1.5 / 1.5 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The skewness and kurtosis values of the measurement tools of the study were within the range of -1.5 / 1.5. For this reason, the research data were analyzed with the independent samples t-test of parametric statistical techniques.

Findings

This section presents the findings obtained from the quantitative data. The data obtained from the achievement test, Citizenship and Social Consciousness, Cultural Identity and Sensitivity scales (pre-test and post-test) were analyzed comparatively according to the groups in line with the research problems and shown in tables.

According to Table 3, the pre-test achievement averages of the control and experimental group students before the application were 13.41 for the control group and 13.48 for the experimental group. There was no significant difference between the control and experimental group students regarding pre-test academic achievement ($p > .05$). The results show that both groups were close to each other in terms of academic achievement before the experimental procedures of the research.

Table 3

Academic Achievement of the Control and Experimental Groups Before the Application

| Pre-Test | Group | -n- | Mean | Std. Deviation | -t- | -p- |
|----------------------|--------------|-----|-------|----------------|-------|-------|
| Academic Achievement | Experimental | 33 | 13.48 | 2.49 | 0.131 | 0.896 |
| | Control | 34 | 13.41 | 2.08 | | |

According to Table 4, the pre-test citizenship and social consciousness scale averages of the control and experimental group students before the application were 3.06 for the control group and 3.18 for the experimental group. In addition, there was no significant difference between the control and experimental group students in terms of pre-test citizenship and social consciousness scores ($p > .05$). According to the results, both groups were close to each other in terms of citizenship and social consciousness before the experimental procedures of the research.

Table 4

Citizenship and Social Consciousness Scores of the Control and Experimental Groups

| Pre-Test | Group | -n- | Mean | Std. Deviation | -t- | -p- |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----|------|----------------|-------|-------|
| Citizenship and Social Consciousness | Experimental | 33 | 3.18 | 0.46 | 0.850 | 0.398 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.06 | 0.69 | | |

According to Table 5, the mean total scores of the pre-test Cultural Identity and Sensitivity scale of the control and experimental group students before the application were 3.28 for the control group and 3.33 for the experimental group. There was no significant

difference between the control and experimental group students regarding pre-test cultural identity and sensitivity ($p > .05$). Both groups were close to each other in terms of cultural identity and sensitivity before the experimental procedures of the research.

Table 5*Control and Experimental Group Cultural Identity and Sensitivity Scores*

| Pre-Test | Group | -n- | Mean | Std. Deviation | -t- | -p- |
|--|--------------|-----|------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Cultural Identity | Experimental | 33 | 3.12 | 0.93 | -0.12 | 0.906 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.15 | 0.86 | | |
| Cultural Sensitivity | Experimental | 33 | 3.42 | 1.00 | 0.052 | 0.959 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.41 | 0.96 | | |
| Cultural Identity and Sensitivity Total | Experimental | 33 | 3.33 | 0.84 | 0.295 | 0.769 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.28 | 0.65 | | |

According to Table 6, the average post-test for academic achievement in the Kazakh Literature course in the control group was 17.03, while the average in the experimental group was 18.58. A significant difference was found between the results of the academic achievement tests of the two groups after the application. The academic achievement test results of the experimental group students differ from those of the control group students.

Table 6*Comparison of the Results of the Control and Experimental Group Students' Academic Achievement After the Application*

| Post-test | Group | -n- | Mean | Std. Deviation | -t- | -p- |
|-------------|--------------|-----|-------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Achievement | Experimental | 33 | 18.58 | 2.85 | 2.740 | 0.009 |
| | Control | 34 | 17.03 | 1.57 | | |

According to Table 7, in the analysis of the effect of the activities in the Kazakh Literature course on the level of citizenship and social consciousness, the average of the control group in the post-test was 3.35, while the average of the experimental group was 3.88. A significant difference was found between the results of the two groups' citizenship and social consciousness scale after the application. The results of the experimental group students' citizenship and social consciousness scale were significantly higher than those of the control group students.

Table 7*Comparison of the Results of the Control and Experimental Group Students' Citizenship and Social Consciousness After the Application*

| Post-Test | Group | -n- | Mean | Std. Deviation | -t- | -p- |
|---|--------------|-----|------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Citizenship and Social Consciousness | Experimental | 33 | 3.88 | 0.60 | 2.637 | 0.010 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.35 | 0.98 | | |

According to Table 8, in the analysis of the effect of the activities in the Kazakh Literature course on cultural identity and sensitivity, the average of the total post-test scores in the control group was 3.57, while the average of the experimental group was 3.97. After the application, a significant difference was found in the two groups' cultural sensitivity subscale and total scale scores. The average results of the experimental group students in the cultural

sensitivity subscale and total scale scores were significantly higher than those of the control group students. However, no significant difference was found between the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups in the cultural identity subscale.

Table 8

Comparison of the Results of the Control and Experimental Group Students' Cultural Identity and Sensitivity After the Application

| Post-Test | Group | -n- | Mean | Std. Deviation | -t- | -p- |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----------------|-------|-------|
| Cultural Identity | Experimental | 33 | 4.06 | 0.75 | 1.541 | 0.128 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.74 | 0.96 | | |
| Cultural Sensitivity | Experimental | 33 | 3.88 | 0.89 | 2.055 | 0.044 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.38 | 1.07 | | |
| Cultural Identity and Sensitivity Total | Experimental | 33 | 3.97 | 0.73 | 2.133 | 0.037 |
| | Control | 34 | 3.57 | 0.79 | | |

Discussion and Conclusion

This study examined the effect of the use of literary works (Abish Kakilbayev) in combination with new teaching methods on students' academic achievement, cultural identity and citizenship awareness levels in Kazakh literature courses. The new teaching method based on the works of Abish Kakilbayev was found to be effective on both cognitive and affective dependent variables.

According to the first finding of the study, the new method based on the works of Abish Kakilbayev contributed positively to the academic achievement of students. The results of the academic achievement test, aligned with the first sub-problem of the research, revealed a significant difference favoring the experimental group over the control group after the application. This indicates that the teaching method implemented in the experimental group led to a meaningful increase in students' academic achievement. Active student participation in the learning process is known to have a positive impact on success (Suknaisith, 2014). Ramnarayan and Shyamala (2005) as well as Rojprasert et al. (2013) assert that students who actively engage in the learning process, rather than passively waiting for instruction, tend to be more successful. In the experimental group, students actively participated in the implementation process and dedicated more time to learning activities compared to the alternative method. Consequently, the time invested by students and their active engagement in the process influenced their academic achievement. Furthermore, the shift in students' affective characteristics also played a role in influencing academic achievement.

According to the second finding of the study, the novel methodology rooted in the works of Abish Kekilbayev demonstrated a positive impact on students' citizenship consciousness. The results of the Citizenship and Social Consciousness Scale, administered in accordance with the second sub-problem of the study, indicated a significant positive difference within the experimental group. This outcome underscores that the experimental process, developed based on Kekilbayev's works, substantially heightened the social consciousness of students in the experimental group. The presence of elements related to national consciousness in Abish Kekilbayev's works likely influenced this outcome (Feldmann, 2007; Galtson, 2003; Kerr, 2007). Moreover, active student participation, particularly in the literature circle activity, led to a notable difference in their national consciousness levels (Kadir et al., 2021; Lymanska & Bugayets, 2021). In alignment with this, Demircioğlu and Tokdemir (2008) contended that incorporating active learning-based methods in lessons contributes to the development of values such as love for the homeland-nation, freedom, and democracy. Zhumay et al. (2021)

highlighted the challenges of multilingual education in Kazakhstan and underscored the importance of the Kazakh language in fostering national unity. Hence, teaching based on books written in students' own language can be considered supportive not only for better language acquisition but also for cultivating citizenship awareness.

The results of the Cultural Identity and Sensitivity Scale, which was applied in line with the third sub-problem of the research, revealed that the experimental group showed a significant positive difference. This result demonstrated that focusing on the works of Abish Kekilbayev and actively engaging students with these works increased their cultural identity and sensitivity. Demir (2020) stated that language and literature are the most important cultural elements that form and preserve national identity. In particular, epics, myths, and historical novels that connect national identity to the past increase the functionality of literature for nation-building projects. In this context, literary works function as a manifestation of a nation and as part of the nation-building process (Daly et al., 2020; Elder, 2020; Jusdanis, 1998; Nora, 1997). Cultural identities hold a pivotal role in contemporary social understanding (Woodward, 1997), and this becomes even more crucial for newly independent nations (Nar, 2019). Abish Kekilbayev, through his works, played a significant role in shaping national identity (Söylemez & Ateş, 2021). Teaching grounded in his works demonstrated a substantial impact on students' cultural identity and sensitivity, suggesting that these works resonate with students' emotional and cognitive realms. İbragim (2010) observed that Kekilbayev imparts universal messages by narrating stories from the distant past, connecting students with their ancestors. Consequently, students in the experimental group, actively engaged with the works of an author deeply tied to the past, appeared to foster a sense of belonging, resulting in an increase in their cultural identity and sensitivity. Moreover, Sharipova (2020) pointed out that Kazakhstan, influenced by the Russian language, underwent a language shift later than other Central Asian Turkic countries, changing its alphabet in 2017. This relative delay in cultural identity formation can be addressed through teaching based on the works of Abish Kekilbayev, rooted in Kazakh culture. Such an approach has the potential to expedite identity construction and facilitate the transfer of cultural characteristics.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study revealed a significant enhancement in the academic achievement of students in the experimental group through the program based on the works of Abish Kekilbayev. Furthermore, the post-program levels of citizenship and social consciousness among students in the experimental group were notably higher compared to those in the control group. Finally, the cultural identity and sensitivity of students in the experimental group exhibited a significant increase compared to the control group. These findings underscore the effectiveness of literary works in teaching for elevating cultural identity and citizenship awareness. Moreover, this instructional approach positively impacted students' academic achievement.

In recent years, there have been rapid migration movements all over the world. There has been an intense influx of immigrants to America and Europe, and this situation poses cultural problems for both those countries and the people who migrate there. The results of the research are important in terms of showing the role of literature in gaining cultural identity. This study shows that literature can be used as a tool in solving cultural problems that may arise in the future. The experiment targeted university students, but similar initiatives can be implemented at middle and high school levels, where identity formation tends to be more rapid and impactful. Additionally, a detailed examination of works by Abish Kekilbayev and similar authors could serve as a foundation for developing a citizenship and identity education program. Organizing regular seminars focused on cultural identity and citizenship awareness could further support the cultivation of these qualities among students. Future research avenues may

involve examining literary works that address cultural identity and citizenship awareness through content and document analysis.

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