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Assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS: challenges and changes

Assel Nurgazina

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

in

Educational Leadership

Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education

June, 2019

Word count: 18 595

CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

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Ethical Approval

NUGSE RESEARCH APPROVAL DECISION LETTER

The NUGSE Research Committee reviewed the project titled "Assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS: challenges and changes" by Assel Nurgazina and decided:

☐ To grant approval for this study

Approval: This approval is effective for the life of the study. However, any time you change any aspect of your project (e.g., recruitment process, administering materials, collecting data, gaining consent, and changing participants) you will need to submit a request for modification to the NUGSE Research Committee. Make sure to address all of the information requested on the request for modification form(s). Please be advised that in some circumstances, changes to the protocol may disqualify the project from approval.

Sincerely,

NUGSE Research Committee

CITI training certificate

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my research work to my little daughter Aisha Nurgazina, and my parents Lyutsiya Nurgazina and Tanatkan Nurgazin, who supported me from the very beginning of my getting Master degree at NU GSE.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my research supervisor Dr. Duishon Shamatov for his support, constructive feedback and improvement of my professional development. Dear Professor Duishon, thank you very much for everything you have done for me, for your support and motivation, for being our critical friend, for your professionalism and humaneness.

I would like to thank all GSE professors who contributed to my positive change and professional growth. A special thank is to Professor Kathy Malone for her constructive feedback and professionalism.

Finally, I would like to thank my group-mates Aidana Ramazanova and Gulden Suyundikova for helping me to cope with all challenges and being always acceptable at any time when I needed their support.

Abstract

The education system is a crucial unit of any country. High quality professional preparation of educators and teaching are two key features of developed education system which influence the rating on any country on the world arena (OECD, 2014). The first Nazarbayev Intellectual School was established in 2008 and the last one in 2015. There are now 21 NIS schools across Kazakhstan. These schools are known as the advanced experimental platform which integrates the best Kazakstani and international educational practices. Thus, NIS are the pioneers which implement educational reforms, in particular, reforms connected with changes in curriculum and assessment (OECD, 2014). However, these changes are perceived differently by different teachers. Firstly, more experienced teachers are hired in NIS from mainstream schools. Many conducted studies show that experienced teachers in the most cases are resistant to changes, especially in assessment (Brodfoot et al., 1996; Dassa, 1990). Secondly, other new teachers in NIS are inexperienced teachers who have just graduated from universities. Often they are more ready for changes in assessment and agree changes improve learning and teaching (Yung, 2001). Consequently, the purpose of this qualitative study is to explore assessment practices of both types of teachers who have recently joined NIS, and investigate challenges they face and changes they experience.

Within the qualitative research design, Case study method was used to investigate assessment practice of newly hired teachers. The research sampling included ten teachers with and without prior teaching experience. Two teachers out of these ten were selected as main participants, and individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with them, while, other eight teachers participated in focus group discussions. Non-participant observation was also used as data collection instrument. In compliance with findings, teachers' prior experience and their understanding of new assessment are two main reasons

influencing their present assessment practices. The results of this study facilitate the

existed body of knowledge and provide important recommendations on practical and

theoretical application.

Аннотация

Система образования является важнейшей институтом любой страны. Хорошая профессиональная подготовка педагогов и высокое качество обучения – это две ключевые характеристики развитой системы образования, которые влияют на рейтинг любой страны на мировой арене (OECD, 2009). Первая Назарбаев Интеллектуальная школа была открыта в 2008 году, а последняя в 2015 году. Эти школы являются передовой экспериментальной платформой, объединяющей лучшие казахстанские и международные образовательные практики. Таким образом, НИШ являются первыми в списке согласно реализации реформ образования, в частности, связанных с изменениями в учебных программах и оценивании (OECD, 2014). Однако, по нескольким причинам изменения воспринимаются учителями по-разному. Во-первых, НИШ принимает на работу опытных учителей из общеобразовательных школ. Многие проведенные исследования показывают, что в большинстве случаев опытные учителя устойчивы к изменениям, в частности, относительно оценивания (Brodfoot et al., 1996; Dassa, 1990). Во-вторых, следующую категорию учителей НИШ составляют начинающие учителя, недавно окончившие университеты. Они готовы к переменам чаще и согласны, что изменения улучшают обучение и преподавание (Yung, 2001). Следовательно, цель этого качественного исследования заключается в том, чтобы изучить практики оценивания вновь принятых учителей в НИШ, включая трудности и изменения, которые они испытывают.

В рамках данного качественного исследования применялся метод Кейс стади для изучения практики оценки вновь принятых учителей. Участниками исследования стали десять учителей с опытом и без. Два учителя были выбраны в качестве основных участников, с которыми были проведены индивидуальные

интервью, в то время как остальные восемь учителей участвовали в обсуждении в фокус-группах.

Наблюдение урока основных участников исследования также использовалось в качестве инструмента сбора данных. В соответствии с выводами, предыдущий опыт учителей и их понимание новой оценки являются двумя основными причинами, влияющими на их нынешнюю практику оценки. Результаты этого исследования облегчают существующую совокупность знаний и дают важные рекомендации по их практическому и теоретическому применению.

Аңдатпа

Білім беру жүйесі - кез келген елдің маңызды бір бөлігі. Жақсы кәсіби мұғалімдерді даярлау және жоғары сапалы білім беру – бұл әлемдік деңгейдегі (OECD,2009) кез-келген елдің рейтингісіне әсер ететін дамыған білім беру жүйесінің негізгі сипаттамалары болып табылады. Бірінші Назарбаев Зияткерлік мектебі 2008 жылы ашылды, ал соңғысы 2015 жылы. Ең үздік қазақстандық және халықаралық білім беру тәжірибелерін біріктіретін, озық тәжірибелік алаңымен танымал бұл мектептер Қазақстан Республикасының тұңғыш президенті Нұрсұлтан Назарбаевтың бастамасымен ашылған болатын. Мәселен, білім беру реформаларын жүзеге асырудағы оның оқу бағдарламасы мен бағалаудағы (OECD,2014) өзгерістер енгізуде Зияткерлік мектептер тізімде алдыңғы қатарда болып табылады. Алайда, мұғалімдер өзгерістерді бірнеше себептермен әр түрлі қабылдайды. Біріншіден, НЗМ жалпы білім беру мектептерінен тәжірибелі мұғалімдерді жұмысқа қабылдайды. Көптеген өткізілген зерттеулер көрсеткендей, көп жағдайда тәжірибелі оқытушылар өзгерістерге бейім, атап айтқанда, бағалауға қатысты (Brodfoot et al., 1996, Dassa, 1990). Екіншіден, Назарбаев Зияткерлік мектептері мұғалімдерінің келесі категориясы жоғары оқу орындарын бітірген, жаңа бастап келе жатқан жас оқытушылардан тұрады. Олар өзгерістерге дайын және кез-келген өзгерістер оқу мен оқытуда жақсы болатынына келіседі (Yung, 2001). Сондықтан, осы сапалы зерттеудің мақсаты, жақында НЗМ-ға жаңадан қабылданған мұғалімдердің практикасында кездесетін бағалаудағы өзгерістер мен проблемаларды жұмыс барысында оның қаншалықты сезінуін және құлшынысын зерттеу болып табылады.

Осы сапалы зерттеу шеңберінде жаңадан қабылданған мұғалімдерді бағалау тәжірибесін зерттеу үшін Кейс стади әдісі пайдаланылды. Зерттеудегі қатысушылар тәжірибесі барлар мен жоқтар он мұғалім болды. Негізгі қатысушылар ретінде екі

мұғалім таңдалынды, олармен жеке сұхбат жүргізілді, қалған сегіз мұғалім фокус-топтық пікірталаста болған болатын. Зерттеуде деректер жинау құралы ретінде негізгі топтағы қатысушылардың сабақтарына бақылау жүргізілді. Қорытындылай келе, мұғалімдердің алдыңғы тәжірибесі және олардың жаңа бағалауы олардың қазіргі бағалау тәжірибесіне әсер ететін екі негізгі себеп болып табылады. Осы зерттеудің нәтижесі көрсетілген жүйені жеңілдетіп және оның практикалық және теориялық қолданыстағы маңызды ұсынымдар береді.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1.   Introduction

The education system is an integral part on any country. The success of the country on

the world arena depends largely on the development of the education system, which in its

turn depends on the good preparation of educators and high quality teaching of students

(OECD, 2014). Upon an initiative of the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan,

Nursultan Nazarbayev, autonomous Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) were

established in Kazakhstan (NIS, 2016). In total, there are now 21 NIS schools in different

parts of Kazakhstan.   Moreover, with the recent changes in the curriculum and assessment

of the Kazakhstani education system, a demand emerged to change teachers' assessment

practices to align with the best international teaching practices (State Program, 2011). In

addition, NIS are pioneers in this context and implement reforms connected with the

changes both in curriculum and assessment (OECD, 2014). Teachers are hired to NIS on

the basis of competitive selection. Students are also admitted on the basis of a competitive

selection after Grade 6 and they come from other schools across the country.

As NIS schools were established relatively recently, they have hired teachers both from

the fresh graduates of teacher education programs, as well as more experienced teachers

from other mainstream and private schools. Thus, I use a term "newly hired teachers" in

my thesis to refer both to fresh graduates and more experienced teachers who have joined

NIS. When these teachers are hired by NIS, understandably, they face challenges related

to adapting to the new system including teaching and assessment practices. That is why I

have chosen as a research topic "Assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS:

challenges and changes" for my thesis.

Teachers' assessment practices are directly connected with how teaching and learning interrelate and take place within the learning process (Cowie & Bell, 1999). The main purpose of the modern education is that all learners are educated to become knowledgeable and confident knowers. Consequently, the obtained knowledge must be used as a part of their daily routines now and into the future (Cowie and Bell, 1999). Thus, new approaches to assessment, which relate to argumentation-based, inquiry-based and student-centered teaching are significant in affecting students' achievements and progress. In addition, modern assessment practices are supported with the new approaches to assessment through the applying them within the classroom assessment (Pellegrino, 2012).

In compliance with the above mentioned information, teaching assessment practices which include types of assessment and their implementation must be meaningful and united to the students' learning tasks. Traditional assessment practice in Kazakhstani mainstream schools is based on five-scale assessment, where teachers judge subjectively on the achievements of their students as a part of formative assessment within the academic year. Then, the obtained knowledge is used to pass different standardized tests after Grade 4 (what is called PGK: *promezhutochnyi gosudarstvennyi control* – transitional state control), Grade 9 (state examinations on Math, Kazakh, Russian and one selected subject) and Grade 11 (UNT: United National Testing) what is the considered to be the summative assessment for learners. Therefore, these summative assessments are predominantly based on memorization and factual knowledge, and unfortunately standardized tests do not assess students' complex competencies. That is why teaching practices with regard to contemporary demands of pedagogy should correspond to and align all the three things such as curriculum, teaching and learning around the fixed objectives of education. Consequently, modern assessment practices need to include variable assessment approaches and methods together with the opportunities of students'

development at all ranks for using the obtained knowledge on practice (Varah, Theune &

Parker, 1986).

Newly hired teachers in NIS can be divided into two categories. Teachers who came to

NIS already with teaching experience, and fresh-mates who have just graduated from

universities. The teaching practice of newly hired teachers in NIS can be compared with

the first years of teaching practice by a couple of reasons. Firstly, in the most cases newly

hired teachers come to NIS from mainstream schools. As the matter of fact, they are not

fully familiar or not familiar at all with the assessment system of NIS, which is based on a

criteria-based approach. Secondly, their first years of teaching in NIS can be particularly

challenging because of their developing new understanding and practices. Hence,

mentorship and well-developed induction are the ways to support these newly hired

teachers. Furthermore, both mentorship and induction increase new teachers' efficiency

and job satisfaction. Moreover, they reduce professional burnout and the probability to

leave the profession (Shepard, 1994). Thus, newly hired teachers may enhance their

understanding of the new system of assessment and modulate their assessment practices.

1.2. Statement of problem

Assessment is an ongoing process, which collects the evidences for diagnosing the

prior knowledge of students, and identifying the zones of the further development in

compliance with the students' needs. Consequently, the applied teaching practice should

cover the implications that a learner seeks concerning the phenomena of being assessed

(Gordon & Rajagopalan, 2016).

To support students in achieving their learning objectives, the assessment practices of

teachers must fully correspond to the needs of all students. However, newly hired teachers

of NIS face challenges with fully adapting to the teaching and assessment expectations at

NIS. Gordon and Rajagopalan (2016) stated that the best assessment practices accelerate

the perception of these competences if they justify teaching decisions concerning

assessment, and guide students in achieving their progress. To do so, teaching assessment

practices must be implemented through the development of tasks and activities as the

models concentrated on attention and energy of students and teachers.

Also, newly hired teachers may have difficulties with how to make appropriate changes

in their assessment practices because of a lack of support from school administrators and

more experienced teachers (Luft & Dubois, 2015). As a result, newly hired teachers need

to reflect on how to implement the new approaches to assessment into their own

assessment practices with the help of their colleagues taking into consideration the needs

of all learners. Furthermore, this reflection can be beneficial both for learning and teaching

by means of changes in assessment practices. Thus, newly hired teachers need to make a

shift in the perception of assessment purposes.

As stated above, the newly reformed curriculum, including an improved assessment

system has been implemented in Kazakhstan. Consequently, teachers of Kazakhstani

schools are experiencing difficulties in the implementation of these changes into their

teaching practices. NIS schools were the first to implement these changes in assessment

and piloting them in their own assessment practice, and soon into the assessment practice

of the mainstream schools. With regard to Bridges (2014), "NIS is seen as a model for the

country and a test bed for innovation" (p. 250). Thus, this study may assume that newly

hired teachers in NIS should be acquainted with all changes in assessment system and

implement them in their assessment practices. However, there are many inconsistences on

practice, which are connected with misunderstanding of changes in assessment system and

lack of application of new approaches to assessment on practice. Therefore, this proves

the necessity to conduct a research on to what extent the newly hired teachers in NIS are

acquainted and implement changes in assessment system in their own assessment

practices. Moreover, conducting of this research is justified with a fact that the previous studies have investigated changes in new assessment system, in particular, criteria-based assessment, teachers' perspectives of formative assessment and other assessment types and methods or beginning teachers' assessment practices. However, there is no research on assessment practices of newly hired teachers, especially in the context of Kazakhstan. In addition, there is a lack of such kind of research even around the world, because in most cases newly hired teachers are equaled to beginning teachers, but in the frames of this research newly hired teachers are teachers, who changed their work place from one school to another school, in particular, NIS. Thus, this study investigated the challenges, which newly hired teachers in NIS experience in compliance with the changes in their assessment practices taking into account their prior assessment practices.

1.3. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the assessments practices of the newly hired teachers in NIS in north Kazakhstan. More specifically, this study presents three interrelated steps. Firstly, this study investigated what kind of assessment practices newly hired teachers had prior to joining NIS. Then, what kind of assessment practices they were introduced with in NIS. Finally, what kind of assessment practices they use at NIS now, and how the assessment approaches applied at NIS influence their assessment practices.

1.4. Research questions

Creswell (2014) identified research question as a central question which is explored in study. In compliance with the research purpose, the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What was newly hired teachers' previous assessment practices before coming to NIS?

2. What assessment practices do newly hired teachers use at NIS?

3. What challenges and opportunities with implementation of new assessment approaches in NIS do newly hired teachers experience on practice?

4. In what ways can newly hired teachers' present assessment practices be positively changed?

1.5. Definition of the central phenomenon

According to Creswell (2014) a key concept or idea in qualitative research are identified as a central phenomenon. In compliance with the key idea of this study, newly hired teachers' assessment practices are considered to be the central phenomenon of this study.

1.6. The significance of this study

The significance of this research topic is justified with the necessity to conduct research in this sphere because there is a big gap between traditional assessment, which still exists in mainstream schools, and new assessment, which is applied in NIS.

Firstly, this study investigated how the assessment practices of the newly hired teachers in NIS changed after starting their work in NIS. Next, what assessment practices the newly hired teaches apply, and what challenges they experience. Thus, this research is beneficial for me as an educator, because I develop my understanding of what challenges with assessing students and evaluating their works the newly hired teaches experience, and how to support them. Next, as a researcher I want to contribute to the development of national education sector due to the obtained findings and possible suggestions on how to decline the challenges concerning assessment practices of the newly hired teachers.

The results of the present research will be valuable for the professional development of newly hired teachers in NIS, and will have a positive impact on Kazakhstani pedagogy in general. Finally, there were not conducted any similar research in

Kazakhstan connected with assessment practices of the newly hired teachers in NIS. The

research of this kind in Kazakhstan would contribute to the existing body of knowledge on

the issues and challenges which newly hired teachers experience while adapting to the new

system of assessment. The results of the research can be used both by policymakers when

developing professional training programs for teachers of Kazakhstan, and school

administrators when hiring and supporting new teachers.

1.7. Organization of study

This study consists of six chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology,

Findings, Discussion, and Conclusion.

Chapter One or Introduction presents the background information, which results in the

relevance of investigating the theme of newly hired teachers' assessment practices. This

chapter identifies the significance, the problem statement and research purpose of this

study. Moreover, in compliance with the research purpose, the research questions were set

up and presented in Chapter One, too.

Chapter Two or Literature Review presents the researched theme in the context of

other studies, which reflected the issue of newly hired teachers' assessment practices. The

introduction of this chapter presents the structure of this part. Furthermore, this chapter

identifies the phenomenon of newly hired teacher, and other definitions related to this

phenomenon. Then, this chapter reviews challenges and changes with regard to assessment

practices of new teachers in the context of other studies.

Chapter Three or Methodology justifies the main features and strategies of the

qualitative research design using a case study method. The data was collected through

individual semi-structured interviews, focus-group interviews and lesson observations for

gathering data on how teachers implement their assessment practices working in NIS. In

addition, this chapter presents how the data collection and analysis were organized and

realized. Ultimately, the summary of this chapter presents the possible limitations and potential risks of this research.

Chapter Four or Findings presents the information about findings obtained due to data collection and data analysis stage. Alongside with Chapter Four, Chapter Five presents the discussion, which is based on the findings, obtained within this research. Consequently, the obtained results are discussed in compliance with the justified research purpose and arranged research questions. Moreover, the previous studies conducted in this sphere are compared with obtained data of the present research.

The last chapter which is Conclusion will contain the conclusions rationalized from the previous chapter. This part will summarize the final ideas and thoughts related to the researched issue, and will answer the research questions. There will be also developed specific recommendations, obtained from the analysis of the received findings, and related to the assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will outline the overview of the relevant literature concerning assessment practices of the newly hired teachers. Reviewing literature, I found out that this question either has not been researched in Kazakhstan or has not been published in literature sources yet. However, the countries such as the USA, the UK, New Zealand, Australia, China and Germany have already contributed significantly to this sphere Thus, this chapter is aimed to investigate early existed assessment practices, the implementation of the new assessment approaches, and the opportunities they afford to enhance assessment practices of newly hired teachers.

The reviewed literature was arranged to present the definition of newly hired teachers, the definition of assessment and teaching practices. Next, this chapter presents the challenges newly hired teachers experience in assessment practice. Finally, it describes the opportunities and changes of newly hired teachers' assessment practices.

2.2. Definition of newly hired teachers

The phenomenon of newly hired teachers was investigated by many scholars of pedagogical sphere. Different sources define newly hired teachers differently. Reviewing literature, the alternative variants such as "new teachers", "beginning teachers", "novice teachers" "first-year teachers", "newly qualified teachers" are used to define teachers who have recently started to work, what is close to the meaning of newly hired teachers (see Appendix H for alternative variants of newly hired teachers). However, in the most cases these phenomena characterize only those teachers, who have been teaching less than a three-year or five-year period, or have just graduated from the universities and begin their teaching careers (Bartell, 2004; Bozack, 2008; Kuzmic, 1994).

In the context of the present study, the provided definitions are inappropriate, because this study is aimed to focus on the teachers who have recently worked in mainstream school or graduated universities and started to work in Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS).

Only a few authors took into consideration that newly hired teachers could be not only fresh university graduates, but those ones who decided to change their prior professions or workplaces, and decided to become teachers (Cheng & Cheung, 2004; Flores, 2004; Flores & Day, 2006; McDonald & Healy, 1999). This definition found its reflection in accordance with the classification developed by the specialists of the U.S. Department of Education. The classification includes four descriptive categories of newly-hired teachers: newly prepared teachers, delayed entrants, transfers, and re-entrants (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). First two categories are characterized with less than a year of teaching experience, including attending college or primary or secondary teaching. The category of transfers consists of teachers with more than a year of teaching experience, including working in different school systems in the same or another state, or in a school of a different sector. Finally, the re-entrants are teachers with more than a year of teaching experience, but whose prior activity was complete different than school teaching (see Appendix A for types of newly hired teachers).

In addition, Bozack (2009) states that new teachers carry different backgrounds and experiences, as a result they possess different motivations and levels of preparation to their further teaching practices. Moreover, newly hired teachers' perspectives with regard to teaching profession, and their role in it are directly dependent on their motivations, as well as on the environment they begin to work in (Bartell, 2004). Likewise, Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Bransford, Berliner, Cochran-Smith, McDonald and Zeichner (2008) in their work "How teachers learn and develop" mentioned that newly hired teachers

should possess a range of different approaches to curriculum, teaching and assessment, as well as the willingness to learn and practice new skills.

2.3. Definition of assessment practices

Assessment practice is defined as a continuous cycle of the learning process, which includes three integral parts such as teaching, learning and assessment (Gordon & Rajagopalan, 2016). Black and William (1988) consider that these three components: assessment, teaching and learning are the most challenging when teachers transfer to another school to work, and become newly-hired teachers.

It means that effective planning and objective assessment are directly connected with each other. Moreover, both teaching and assessment tend to support students' learning, therefore they must be planned constructively as balancing features of one activity. The information related to assessment informs the planning process, what results in assessment practice. In addition, both student and teacher feedback are the parts of assessment practice, which improve learning through daily interactions between teachers and students (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie, 2009). Thus, assessment practice is a process which focuses on the use of different approaches both beneficial for teaching and learning processes in order to lead teachers how to teach and students how to learn (Gordon & Rajagopalan, 2016).

Falchikov (2004) states that assessment practice combines both pedagogical content and disciplinary knowledge to understand how students learn. The same as Falchikov (2004), Shepard (1995) states that assessment practice is based on subject knowledge, curriculum specific pedagogy and understanding how students learn. In addition, Datnow and Hubbard (2015) define assessment practice as the ability of a teacher to be data literate in order to synthesize the information into instructional knowledge and practices through processing the obtained data to support students' learning and monitor their progress. As a

result, there is a consensus between many researchers that assessment practice is a reflection of teaching practice in order to improve student learning and progress.

2.4. Changes in assessment practices

The principles of traditional assessment based on the results of final grades are drawing much criticism now. Teachers do not provide any feedback to their students because they only report on the final grades what does not improve students' progress (Black & William, 2009). Moreover, traditional assessment focuses only on controlling the results for the term, year or final exam, what firstly, compares students' works, and then, leads to categorizing students on "excellent" and those, who "failed" to be excellent (Sambell, McDowell & Montgomery, 2012). As Shamatov (1998) stated such comparisons between students result in competitions between them, what soon leads to negative classroom environment. Thus, because of many drawbacks of traditional assessment, the necessity to change it has arisen. New approaches to assessment such as asking open-ended questions or set open-ended issues help teachers not only check students' comprehension but develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as to assess their progress. Moreover, such tasks help to organize differentiation, and assess students' achievements objectively (Caldwell, 2008; Klavir & Herskovitz, 2008; Rosli, Goldsby & Capraro, 2013; Shepard, 1995).

Over time, the assessment practices within both teaching and learning experienced many changes. As a result of these changes it became necessary to integrate different types of assessment into classroom practice. Yung (2001) stated that changes in assessment practices tend to improve learning and teaching by means of establishing specific methods of assessing learning. Sometime later Black and William (2009) came to the same idea in their research works. Furthermore, Biggs (2003) states that large-scale assessment tests do not assess higher cognitive processes, and it is necessary to introduce the alternative

methods of assessment. For example, changes in assessment practices of Australian school education system integrated three specific components of the educational process such as students' outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessment tasks (Biggs, 2003). In China, teachers had to ensure that their curricular assessment practices correspond to the new assessment policy (Yung, 2001). Meanwhile, in New Zealand teachers were adapting to change from formative assessment to continuous assessment, which is based on conceptual development (Cowie & Bell, 1999).

Contrary to the above mentioned examples, other researchers consider that any change is risky and complicated, especially for educators, because there is no consensus between teachers (Brodfoot et al., 1996; Dassa, 1990). In particular, between teaching assessment practices, and assessment reforms admitted by policy makers. It is obvious that teachers, as reflective practitioners, are confused when national or local assessment policies experience any reforms, developed by policy makers, who do not know how it goes on practice. For instance, in France (Brodfoot et al., 1996) and in French Canada (Dassa, 1990) the implementation of the new assessment reform was occasional and inconsistent. However, in the UK changes in assessment system resulted in variety of assessment practices by conflicting with the initial aims of the changes which generated them (McCallum, McAlister, Brown & Gipps, 1993; Gipps, 1999). Thus, any change is experienced slowly, because it is challenging for teachers to analyze and change their practices, which rooted in the whole outline of pedagogy (Shepard, 1994; Shepard, 1995; Shepard, Flexer, Hiebert, Marion, Mayfield, & Weston, 1996).

Shepard (1995, 2000, 2001) suggests several directions how the assessment could be changed. Firstly, the content and approach of assessment need to reflect the ongoing understanding of learning. Secondly, the assessment process should consist of two basic things such as permanent collection and applying of assessment information for monitoring

future actions both on learning and teaching. It is possible to integrate due to proving

constructive feedback and teacher reflection. However, in most cases teachers do not have

enough time to include everything in one lesson. As a result, students are not provided with

feedback or teachers provide feedback for the whole class. It leads to ineffectiveness of

such feedback because students continue to produce the same mistakes. The same

conclusion on ineffectiveness of the whole class feedback was made by Higgins, Hartley

and Skelton (2002) and Tong and Adamson (2015). They state that students apply

recommendations made through feedback to enhance their learning. In addition, according

to Higgins, Hartley and Skelton (2002) students perceive feedback not as a grading

strategy, but as recommendation to improve skills and deepen knowledge.

　　　　Finally, Shepard (2000) suggests including an assessment course into the

curriculum of preparation programs for teachers. Shepard (2000) as many other researchers

believes that it is necessary to concentrate on the trinity of assessment, curriculum and

instruction to improve students' progress and achievements (Gipps, 1999; Pellegrino,

Baxter, & Glaser, 1999; Snow & Mandinach, 1991).

2.5. Newly hired teachers' assessment challenges

　　　　Many researchers agree that the first years of a teaching career are the most

complicated. During first three years a teacher decides whether to stay in the profession or

to leave it (Dillon-Peterson, 1982; Kane, 1991; Veeman, 1984). The study of Varah,

Theune and Parker (1986), concerning the challenges new teachers come across with,

identified the initial years of teaching practice as "sink-or-swim" or "survival" mentality.

Later the same opinion was found out in the study of Kane (1991), who also argued that

new teachers had to learn to swim very quickly in accordance with the all demands of the

teaching practice or to sink due to a lack of survival mentality. There is a consensus of

such scholars as Veenman (1984) and Elias, Fisher and Simon (1980), that for a new

teacher, along with the issues of classroom management, assessing students and evaluating

student work are the highest ranking problems. Bartell (2004) explained this tendency with

a traditional expectation that newly hired teachers carry out the same duties and

responsibilities as the more experienced teachers. Moreover, newly hired teachers begin

their careers with teaching students whom they do not know. It means they need more time

to learn these students in order to identify the areas of improvement to provide them

quality feedback and differentiate tasks (Bartell, 2004; Hattie, 2009). Thus, mentioned

above circumstances result in challenges of the new teachers in their teaching practices,

and in particular, assessment practices.

There are many reasons why new teachers experience challenges in their

assessment practices. However, the most conducted researches defined time management

as the main difficulty new teachers meet with assessment (Confait, 2015; Falchikov, 2004;

Luft & Dubois, 2015). Confait (2015) explains it with a lack of opportunity to reflect on

their beliefs and perspectives about assessment and learning. In his opinion, new teachers

are able to make a difference in learning and teaching due to a change in their assessment

practice. Moreover, he states that new teachers' challenges in assessment occur because of

poor student engagement with the assessment process, meanwhile student engagement is

the best indicator of successful teaching and assessment practice. The same idea was

reflected by Black and William (1998), Falchikov (2004), Shepard (1995). In addition,

alongside with Confait (2015), Luft and Dubois (2015), who learnt the challenges of newly

hired teachers of science, state that many newly hired teachers cannot realize the learning

objective through monitoring student's understanding because they do not use appropriate

assessment strategies and concentrate on teacher-centered learning. Consequently, new

teachers cannot predict difficulties which students can experience next time. That is why

Black and William (1988) and Hattie (2009) suggest that all teachers, not only new ones

should develop a feedback strategy at each lesson which has three functions: (1) motivational, (2) cognitive and (3) affective. On the one hand, it can motivate students and point out their progress, on the other, students have different perceptions and can interpret differently what can lead to misunderstanding and ineffectiveness (Tong & Adamson, 2015). Thus, to predict future actions to be taken new teachers must provide feedback to meet the academic needs of each student.

The same as Luft and Dubois (2015), Weimer (2013) notes that new teachers experience challenges in assessment practice because they concentrate on teacher-centered teaching and tend to meet assessment and curriculum demands, not individual student needs. They lack informal assessment practices, such as differentiation which is based on questioning individual students, creating neither too easy and nor to difficult tasks according to the needs of all students, reviewing students' works and providing feedback (Luft & Dubois, 2015). Moreover, Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2015) reflected on resistance of teachers towards applying differentiation which is based on their prior assessment practices. It means that teachers achieved successful academic results without differentiation. As well as there is a big gap between theory and practice, and they do not know how to apply differentiation on practice. In addition, Sousa and Tomlinson (2011) stated that despite new teachers percept differentiation to be difficult to apply in their practice it helps teach them smarter. To meet the diverse needs of each student and develop professionalism Sousa and Tomlinson (2011) suggest new teachers to offer different learning opportunities to all students.

Ultimately, Stansbury and Zimmerman (2002) confirm that new educators' successful assessment depends on support of experienced teachers. However, Webster-Wright (2009) mentioned that new teachers should not only wait for support of more experienced colleagues, but pay attention at the self-development as well and learn new

things in a new school. Thus, by the reason that evaluation is challenging for the new teachers the more experienced teacher should assist the new teachers in this area as well as new teachers reflect on their practice and improve it themselves.

The reviewed literature distinguishes the challenges experienced by new teachers, and the most of them are connected with their assessment practices due to lack of experience and lack of classroom management skills. That is why, the next section will be followed up with the justification of the conceptual framework.

2.6. Conceptual framework

To justify the purpose to study the assessment practices of newly hired teachers, the framework for theorizing development outlines of newly hired teachers' assessment practices was applied. In compliance with the review of literature, newly hired teachers reconstruct their assessment practice due to the pressure and challenges of change of the work place, in particular their new school (Bartell, 2004). Moreover, the changes in teaching assessment practice over time is the evidence of interaction between assessment forms and assessment functions. Because of the pressure made by the change in assessment practice newly hired teachers alongside with the more experienced teachers have to implement assessment forms to correspond the functions of assessment. Thus, newly hired teachers may assume new assessment forms to perform prior assessment functions (Bartell, 2004). As a result, prior experience influenced newly hired present assessment practices.

2.7. Conclusion

The review of literature concerning the previous conducted studies in the sphere of investigation of assessment practices of newly hired teachers in different countries has shown that there are several aspects which need to be met in future research. With regard to these works there are some research gaps and limitations, which this research work will

try to fill in and explore. First, the issue concerning the definition of the phenomenon

"newly hired teacher" has been given little attention, and in many studies it has been

equaled to the phenomena of "new teacher" and "beginning teacher". Thus, the majority of

studies investigated the assessment practices of beginning teachers. This study tends to

explore the phenomenon "newly hired teacher" in terms of employment to another school,

in particular NIS.

　　　　Next, many studies generally present the challenges experienced by the new

teachers when assessing students. However, none of works takes into consideration the

assessment reform which was implemented in Kazakhstan, and based on the transition

from the traditional assessment to the criteria-based assessment with its new approaches

and methods. NIS schools have already been working with this reform for several years.

However, in terms of mainstream schools, this reform is implemented step by step, which

explains the acquaintance of new approaches to assessment of newly hired teachers in NIS.

In addition, NIS school administrators must support newly hired teachers and enhance their

assessment practices through training programs and mentoring, what was recommended in

already conducted studies (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000). This study will investigate

examining how newly hired teachers adapt to the existed system of assessment in NIS and

change their assessment practices. Thus, the most important action to support newly hired

teachers in NIS will demand a fundamental shift in applying the assessment forms and

changing of assessment practices. Therefore, this study will shed light on the daily

obstacles experienced with the implementation of assessment practices by newly hired

teachers.

　　　　This chapter reflected the key perspectives justified by the previous studies. All the

existed definitions concerning the phenomenon "newly hired teachers" were highlighted

and discussed within this chapter. Moreover, there were presented challenges and changes

in assessment practices experienced by newly hired teachers. The gaps and limitations of

the prior studies with regard to the research topic were justified in the summary section.

Therefore, this study will fill in these gaps and limitations. The methodology of this study

will be presented and explained in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of this study in order to explain the details

of the research design including techniques and strategies applied in this study with regard

to sample selection, data collection methods, instruments and procedures. Moreover, the

applied research design helped to find the answer to the research questions set up in

chapter one. In addition, the data collection and analysis procedures were described,

following by the description of the ethical considerations within the study.

3.2. Research design

A qualitative research design was selected to investigate the topic of the assessment

practices of newly hired teachers in NIS. Thus, this section justified a rationale for a choice

of the qualitative research design as a primary research method of this study. Creswell

(2014) stated that qualitative research design is appropriate when the researcher analyses

data based on interpretive epistemology to understand the issues related to the research

question. As a researcher, I wanted to explore factors which influence assessment

practices of newly hired teachers from their personal perspectives and interpretation.

Furthermore, qualitative research design investigates the issue and fosters researcher for a

detailed and deep cognition of central phenomena (Creswell, 2014). Thus, the collected

data during interviews and observations let explore assessment practices of newly hired

teachers, which is the central phenomenon of the present study. Moreover, Punch and

Oancea (2014) stated that in qualitative research data collection is an inductive process

which leads to specialization of specific themes. Thus, I started from gathering data based

on details in responses of participants, which were categorized into specific themes for

further discussion based on comparison with already existing theories related to the

research theme.

In compliance with the qualitative research design case study method was used to explore the issue on assessment practices of newly hired teachers. According to Punch (1998) case study allows a researcher to investigate the definite situation in details. Consequently, within the case study method I can investigate what factors influence the challenges in assessment practices which newly hired teachers experience in the selected NIS school. As well as what opportunities they have due to implementation of new approaches to assessment. I intensively explored the details for reaching a deeper understanding of the case within the collection of data from participants' experience which is more trustworthy (Baxter & Jack, 2008, Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2004). In addition, case study permitted an investigation of newly hired teachers' perceptions, attitudes and concerns towards their assessment practices in NIS. Finally, case study is applied due to its rich explanatory nature which allowed me as for researcher to be flexible by using such methods of data collection as individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and lesson observations.

3.3. Site and Sampling

This section presents the site and sampling of this research. The research was conducted in one NIS school which is situated in North Kazakhstan where I currently work. The participants are school teachers who have recently started their work in this school respectively.

3.3.1. Research Site

The selected school is one of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and is located in north Kazakhstan. The school is specialized in physics and mathematics and was established in December 2014. Currently, there are 170 teachers who work at the school. There are 614 students from 7th to 12th grades in this school. This school implements the Integrated Educational Program which is based on criteria-based assessment. Despite the

fact that the main subjects in the school are physics and mathematics, much attention is

paid to the development of chemistry, biology, and the study of humanities. Students study

subjects in Kazakh, Russian and English. Thus, students are provided with all conditions

for comprehensive and harmonious development.

The educational process takes eight hours from 8.00 to 17.00 o'clock five days a

week. It is aimed at the maximum assimilation of academic disciplines and educational

work with students.

Having been worked in this school for more than three years I noticed that every

year newly hired teacher experience difficulties in implementing the new assessment

system in their assessment practices because NIS schools are pioneers in implementation

of changes on educational reforms in Kazakhstan. NIS hires strong well qualified teachers

from mainstream schools or graduates of pedagogical institutes both through a rigorous

selection, i.e. a special exam. Both groups of teachers shared the opinion on experiencing

challenges with the new approaches to assessment implemented in NIS what justified my

interest to investigate this issue.

3.3.2. Research Sampling

Data were collected with the help of three main instruments such as face-to-face

individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and lesson observations.

The selected teachers were informed via e-mails where they received the official consent

forms with the explanation of their rights and duties to take part in the study as

respondents. It was considered to be beneficial for the researcher in order to create a

comfortable atmosphere for the participants for getting their assistance and support within

the research.

The participants were selected through maximal variation sampling strategy

(Creswell, 2014) which included next criteria:

a) Teachers with and without prior to NIS teaching experience;

b) Men and women;

c) Science and language subjects;

d) Teachers' willing to participate.

Thus, two teachers were selected as the main participants of this study for conducting individual semi-structured interviews. Each participant was interviewed twice. The first main participant is a woman who is a teacher of English with 10 years of experience. Meanwhile, the second main participant is a man who is a teacher of biology with 2 years of experience. In addition, I also observed their lessons for analyzing their assessment practices.

Eight teachers were selected for two focus group discussions with four teachers in each group. Both groups involved teachers of science and language subjects. They teach Kazakh, English, Mathematics, Biology and Physics. The experienced teachers were selected according to their previous assessment practices who used a traditional 5 scale assessment, and whose teaching experience varied from 6 to 20 years. The second group of participants included new teachers who had not previously used any other assessment models at all because they had just graduated from universities, and those whose teaching experience did not exceed 3 years of teaching in general. Thus, the focus group of experienced teachers included a teacher of Kazakh with 20 years of teaching experience, a teacher of English with 7 years of teaching experience, a teacher of chemistry with 6 years of teaching experience and a teacher of mathematics with 6 years of teaching experience. The focus group of teachers with a small experience included a teacher of English with 1 year of experience in a mainstream school, a teacher of physics with 1 year of experience in NIS, a teacher of mathematics with no experience, and a teacher of biology with 1 year of experience in NIS.

Overall, all ten teachers were interviewed, and their names were coded according to alphabetic order to keep anonymity. The information about gender, participants' total teaching experience and NIS experience, and subjects they teach are indicated in a table below (Table 1). The collected data from interviews and lesson observations were transcribed, coded and structured into categories to justify the research questions of the present study.

Table 1. Information about participants

	Participant	Gender	Total experience	NIS experience	Specialized subject
Experienced teachers	Participant A	F	20 years	Second year	Kazakh language
	Participant B **Main participant**	F	10 years	Second year	English Language
	Participant C	M	7 years	First year	English Language
	Participant D	F	6 years	Second year	Mathematics
	Participant E	F	6 years	First year	Chemistry
Non-experienced teachers	Participant F	M	2 years	First year	Physics
	Participant G	M	2 years	First year	English language
	Participant H **Main participant**	M	2 years	First year	Biology
	Participant I	M	First year	First year	Mathematics
	Participant J	F	2 years	Second year	Biology

3.4. Data Collection Methods

This section provides the information about the instruments and procedures used to collect data.

3.4.1. Data Collection Instruments

The applied data collection instruments included three types which were individual semi-structured interviews with the main participants, two focus-group discussions with the groups of experienced teachers and beginning teachers, and lesson observations of the main participants. The main purpose of application these data collection instruments was to explore each of them in-depth. Meanwhile, the qualitative research defines a researcher as the primary instrument for collecting data. Thus, the qualitative data is interpreted by means of this instrument, rather than through other data collection instruments (Creswell, 1994).

The research was conducted on the base of voluntary participation, and with the adherence of anonymity of participants. Firstly, I met two main participants, and asked them to participate in individual interviews. Then, I identified other eight participants for participation in focus group discussions. Thus, the focus group discussion participants were not introduced with their group-mates in advance, and saw each other only during the interview. Finally, non-participant observation of lessons was done to observe both teaching and learning in order to analyze how assessment practices were arranged to obtain data.

Interview

The purpose of interviews was to collect data on teachers' prior assessment practices in order to learn how their assessment practices were changed after joining NIS, and to learn how the newly hired teachers implemented new approaches to assessment in their assessment practices now. Generally, the questions of the interviews were concentrated on the prior assessment practices which contributed to the improvement of participants' understanding of the new approaches in assessment applied in NIS. Then, the data was compared and analyzed. Thus, the applied methods of data collecting were

effective and appropriate to the research questions. Consequently, the applied methods justified the statement of purpose.

According to Punch and Oancea (2014) in terms of qualitative research interview as the instrument of data collection supports the detailed understanding of "people's perceptions, meanings, and definitions of situations and constructions of reality" (p. 182). The conducted interviews both with the main participants and the focus groups defined the challenges of the everyday assessment of students' achievements, and how the participants coped with them, meanwhile the changes they experienced so far. Likewise, Creswell (2014) justifies "in qualitative research, our approach relies on general interviews or observations so that we do not restrict the views of participants" (p. 227). It means that the participants were not restricted with their responds, they could talk about their perceptions and changes in assessment practices based on new assessment as well as reflect on what they think. Thus, the responds of participants provided me with the opportunity to see the real situation on challenges and changes the participants experienced being hired in NIS.

However, Creswell (2014) states that data collected from interviews can be biased to provide the interviewee the information he/she wants to hear. As a result, to escape bias information as a researcher I selected maximum variation sampling and conducted not only individual interviews but focus-group discussions as well. Focus group discussions gave me the opportunity to ask a bigger number of participants about the same issue. Thus, from January to March 2019 I could conduct four individual interviews (two interviews with each main participant) and two focus group discussions with four participants of two groups: experienced and non-experienced teachers with respect. The information on the number of interviews is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Interview information

Type of interview	Number of interviews	Total	Duration	Number of questions
Individual semi-structured interviews	2 interviews with each main participant	4	60 min	20-30
Focus group discussions	1 with each group	2	70 min	15

Observation

Observation is considered to be an effective instrument of qualitative inquiry to discover complex interactions in social settings (Marshal & Rossman, 2014). As a researcher I decided to conduct lesson observation to obtain deep information and prevent bias by comparing main participants' responds with what is going at lesson while assessing students' performance.

3.4.2. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection procedures started with the process of ethics application submission, and then, in a month continued with getting ethics approval (see Appendix B for timeline of the study). After getting the approval to conduct the research on November 7, 2018, an introductory letter was sent from NUGSE to a gatekeeper (a school principal of the selected NIS school) on asking a permission to conduct a research in the selected research site. The letter mentioned the details concerning the research purpose, the role of participants, possible risks and benefits of the present research. Then, I met the principal of this NIS school to introduce the details of the research questions. The next, after receiving the permission from a gatekeeper I started recruiting the participants according to the criteria which were developed in advance. Thus, I selected the participants who met the criteria and invited teachers for individual interviews and focus group discussions. The

participants were informed about their voluntary participation and all details, rules and

procedures of the research through the informed consent letter. The time and place for both

individual and focus group interviews were negotiated in advance. In addition, the

interviews were conducted when it was comfortable for participants for the sake of

creating the atmosphere of trust and relieve stress. Finally, the interviews were recorded

and transcribed manually in order not to lose or confuse any details of collected data.

Lesson observations were conducted after interviews with the main participants in

order to get accustomed to participate in this research and feel comfortable with the

researcher. Moreover, I got permission from the main participants in advance to observe

their lessons in compliance with their availability, and when it was comfortable for them.

Thus, I have conducted one lesson observation of each main participant's lessons. I was a

non-participant observer and sat at the end of the classroom in order not to distract both

teacher and students. During both lessons I observed what approaches to assessment newly

hired teachers apply in their assessment practices, and whether the information from the

interviews correspond with what I saw on practice.

3.5. Data Analysis

This section describes the methods applied to analyze data. The first stage of data

analysis began when the researcher started transcription to recognize and interpret on the

information received within the conducted interviews, discussions and observations.

Creswell (2012) states that the analysis of qualitative data demands researcher's realizing

on how to answer the research question through analysis of the conducted interviews,

discussions and observations. Thus, the analysis itself included transcription of interviews,

their interpretations and received meanings. The lesson observations also included

interpretation and analysis of data. Furthermore, a large amount of data required selection

and analysis. Coding was used to answer the research question. Different thematic

categories of coding were designed and applied to interpret the collected data according to the research questions. Moreover, the thematic coding was used to identify the details regarding central phenomenon of the research due to the ideas presented by participants. Thus, as a researcher I focused on the understanding of implementation of the new system of assessment, newly approaches to assessment, changes and challenges in assessment practices which newly hired teaches experienced with coming to work in NIS. As a result, the codes were investigated, united into themes and used to interpret the findings of this research.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

This section will describe the process with regard to the following of the ethical considerations within this research. The rules of confidentiality and adherence to anonymity of all the information the participants present or produce were followed in accordance with ethical conformance. The names of participants stayed anonymous. Moreover, the obtained data was not available to school administrators in order not be used in any school evaluation of the participants' performance. Consequently, the school administrators were not informed about what was discussed during interviews to avoid the cases of misinterpretation.

To alleviate with the participants' stress as a researcher I mentioned that all collected data was used only to research the issue of assessment practices, and all the views were reported anonymously in the thesis or any subsequent research publications. The research did not collect personal sensitive information, although it aimed to gather teachers' assessment practices' challenges and changes. In a case of the research publication I will not use any personal information for any purposes that will make it possible to identify the participants.

Regarding research instruments, both individual semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in a quiet place without disrupting environment. I tried to arrange comfortable time for the participants in order not to effect negative their work. The focus group discussion participants were reminded about the risks of following full confidentiality because of the group setting. Moreover, the participants had a right not to answer some of the interview questions, if they considered them to be biased or prejudiced. In addition, the participants might quit the research at any time if they had decided to stop their participation without providing reasons. Another risk was distraction caused due to my presence in the classroom during lesson observations, but it was kept to the minimum by being a non-participant observer and sitting quietly at the back.

The recordings of interviews were transcribed only by me. The consent forms were available for the participants who agreed to take part in the present research. Study-specific benefits and risks were articulated through the informed consent process and in the consent form.

Another potential risk was associated with identifying of the research site. To diminish this risk, the researcher did not mention the original name of the school where the research was conducting by figuring out the research site as "one NIS school". Since there are 21 NIS schools, the research site and sampling were not defined.

There were also some potential benefits of this research. Firstly, the results of the research tend to support the newly hired teachers in adopting assessment practices applied in NIS. Then, the participants started to reflect on how to develop and improve their own assessment practices after being hired to work in NIS. Finally, their participation brought the participants experience due to which they could make some positive changes of their own assessment practices.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter described the methodology applied in the present research. In particular, this chapter included the sections on the research design, sampling and site. Moreover, the procedures of data collection and analysis were further described. In addition, ethical issues have been analyzed as well. The findings of this study will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the conducted research. The study is aimed

to explore the main challenges and changes of the assessment practices the newly hired

teacher in one NIS school in the Northern part of Kazakhstan experience when they start

their work in NIS. The present research will also define the reasons which led to the

challenges in newly hired teachers' present assessment practices to recommend the ways

of their improvement. Therefore, following research questions were arranged:

1. What was newly hired teachers' previous experience concerning assessment
   practices before coming to NIS?

2. What assessment practices do newly hired teachers use at NIS?

3. What challenges and opportunities with implementation of new assessment
   approaches in NIS do newly hired teachers experience on practice?

4. In what ways can newly hired teachers' present assessment practices be positively
   changed?

   The collected data is presented in compliance with the research questions.

4.2. Newly hired teachers' prior assessment experience

During both focus group discussions and individual interviews, the participants

were asked about their prior assessment practices. The most experienced Participant A who

is a teacher of Kazakh said that she worked only in senior grades for the last 10 years, and

prepared students for passing UNT (United National Testing) which was the final

assessment of students' performance and the indicator of the school prestige:

> I could not develop my assessment practices and make them different because all
> days long I only prepared my students to pass UNT during the whole academic year
> round. Students only learnt and memorized the correct answers of multiple-choice
> tasks. So, school's and my own prestige as a teacher depended on how many points

my students got at a real exam. So, I did not experience any difficulties because my assessment practice based on test preparation (Participant A).

Participant B, who is the main participant of this research, before coming to work in NIS worked in 3 different mainstream schools and considered to be newly hired every time. Moreover, within the time working in these schools she has been twice on her maternity leave. She confessed that before coming to work in NIS she did not have a clear understanding of what the assessment is:

Every time in a new school I just oriented on the best students and put the marks in comparison with his or her progress. I thought that a 5-scale assessment let me grade my students objectively. If, for example, there was the average between "4" and "3", I put "4", and did not ask my students to come to the extra lessons and make a correction work (Participant B).

Participant C during five out of seven years of his experience combined his teaching with a position of Deputy Principal for Educational Affairs. He said that in most cases he was overloaded with the administrative work, and had no time to reflect on his teaching and assessment practice. He confessed that he just put the marks also orienting on the best student's performance in the class, the same as Participant B.

Both Participant D and Participant E worked in rural school. They said that their assessment practices based on their personal perception of traditional assessment. In most cases the final mark depended on how their students wrote the final test for the term. This was as a "stimulus" for higher level students because they tried to do their best to get "five". The assessment practice was based on checking homework which showed students' understanding of the topic while they worked individually at home. However, Participant D noticed the cases of students' cheating homework from the higher level peers, and during individual work in class the same students showed the opposite progress in comparison with the result they had after checking homework: "*In such cases I really did*

not know how to assess my students because if I grade them with good marks based on correct completing homework it would be not be objective" (Participant E).

Thus, the prior assessment practices of the experienced teachers were based on their personal perceptions towards understanding of traditional assessment. The assessment practice was based on the performance of the best student. As a result, all tasks were achieved by higher and middle level students, and failed by lower level students.

Talking about non-experienced teachers, the most participants understand the meaning of new assessment system due to their university curriculum which contained a special course on updated curriculum of school education and criteria-based assessment. Their prior assessment practices are based on a year of experience in mainstream schools (Participants F, G, H) before coming to work in NIS, and two participants started to work in NIS immediately after graduating university (Participants I and J). In addition, both Participant I and Participant J had their pedagogical internship in NIS on the final course of their university education, and they mentioned that it helped them with the understanding of new assessment approaches.

Participant F had worked for one year in a mainstream school and applied traditional assessment system. Likewise, Participants G and H implemented both traditional and new assessment practices during their first year of teaching. In particular, Participant G worked in a pilot school of NIS which implemented updated curriculum and criteria based assessment. Participant H taught in Grade 7 of one mainstream school where new assessment had been already introduced. As a result, during our focus group discussion they actively compared both systems. The same as a group of experienced teachers they noticed that *"traditional assessment was oriented on the students with middle abilities, and it did not give the opportunity for teachers to work with the more or less able students within the lesson time"* (Participant G). Thus, reflecting back on their assessment

practices non-experienced teachers distinguished the difference between criteria-based and

norm-referenced assessment model:

> New assessment supplies students with the information about their learning due to
> received feedback from teachers and peer-students, rather than just a mark with no
> feedback. Now we have assessment criteria and descriptors on how to achieve
> learning objective. Students know how their progress will be assessed. In traditional
> assessment teachers just assessed on their own, sometimes it was biased
> (Participant H).

> I do not have any prior practice before joining NIS. However, I think new
> assessment is very effective, I can compare it with the time when I was a school
> student myself, and we got marks based on the perspective of our teacher who did
> not provide us any feedback. Now I try to implement new approaches of
> assessment into my teaching practice because it is based on the idea that students
> also work on improvement of their knowledge (Participant J).

Thus, all non-experienced teachers agree on effectiveness of providing feedback:

> When I was a school student we were assessed using norm-referenced model of
> assessment. When I was graded badly, a teacher did not explain the reason of this
> mark. Now my students know where they were mistaken and they may correct their
> marks. Students feel the responsibility for their education (Participant I).

Thus, data provided by non-experienced teachers show that they consider old

assessment to be ineffective by the same reason as the experienced teachers do. This

ineffectiveness is based on orientation only on the best students. The participants perceive

new assessment as a very effective tool of the modern education throughout life. New

assessment approaches which the participants of this study started implementing into their

practice even before joining NIS allow students to be successful due to deep knowledge,

proper teacher and the personal responsibility for their academic performance.

4.3. Assessment practices applied in NIS

Based on different teaching background and experience newly hired teachers have

different perceptions regarding the effectiveness of demands concerning assessment

practices in NIS. Therefore, assessment practices depend on updated assessment system

which is based on criterion assessment. Thus, the present study was focused to identify the

assessment practices newly hired teachers adapted after joining NIS, and whether their

present practices are affected by previously applied assessment models. As a result, new

teachers may consider new assessment practices applied in NIS to be either effective or

ineffective in comparison with prior assessment experience.

Newly hired teachers have to adopt new assessment practices which correspond to

new assessment functions. For instance, in NIS practice new teachers are demanded to

introduce critical thinking situations or open-ended issues into their classroom activities to

monitor students' understanding. Moreover, to assess students' academic performance

teachers apply the technology of asking open-ended questions and reflection of students'

achievements regardless subject they teach. The experienced participants noted that they

had not used these strategies of assessment in their practice before:

> When I worked with traditional assessment I never used any tasks on problem
> solving or critical thinking. Moreover, students never reflected on their
> achievements. The lesson of English was a simple lesson where I taught grammar,
> students practiced exercises or read and translated texts. There was no connection
> with life or development of practical skills. Now, I have a student-centered
> learning, I prepare some problem-solving situations which are connected with life,
> where students can apply critical thinking and knowledge they obtained (Participant
> C).

> I like working with this assessment, and consider it objective. To check the
> understanding of my students, I try to apply different question. Firstly, it helps to
> develop discourse at my lessons. Consequently, students listen to each other and
> compare their answers. Secondly, I may apply implied differentiation here by
> asking deferent level questions according to Blooms taxonomy. As a result, I can
> assess my students' understanding even without telling them and provide my
> feedback during the whole class discussion (Participant F).

The implementation of new assessment strategies and technologies is based on

teachers' individual perception towards changes in assessment, development of new skills

and knowledge of subject they teach. Consequently, it is not a process of one day, on the

contrary it takes much time to develop new assessment practice. Main Participant B said:

"*my colleagues explained the basic features of new assessment and I observed their*

lessons to understand how to develop new assessment skills in my practice. I would not be able to apply new assessment approaches without experience they shared".

During lesson observation both main participants applied the technology of asking questions to check students' comprehension at the beginning of lesson. The educational process was student-centered. At English lesson students learnt collaboratively in pairs and groups to solve the raised issue on natural disasters together. Teacher developed assessment sheet which consolidated the obtained knowledge on grammar and vocabulary. Likewise, at biology lesson students consolidated the knowledge by presenting posters with solutions on how to prevent heart attack. They also provided their own solutions, and compared them with the real examples from life. During presentation they gave each other recommendations and asked questions with "if" which was one of criteria in assessment sheet, and was focused on development students' critical thinking as it was mentioned by Participant H soon.

Thus, the assessment approaches of newly hired teachers applied after joining NIS are directed to develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills through applying open-ended questions technique and reflection of student and teaching practice. Therefore, the developed tasks are focused on practical significance and connection with life. In addition, assessment practices involve student-centered learning, where teachers monitor students' activity and suggest areas of academic performance improvement. However, the influence of the previous assessment practices makes newly hired teachers adopt to apply new practices in assessment longer. As a result, newly hired teachers need more time to reflect on their teaching and assessment practices.

4.4. Challenges of new assessment practices

Analyzing participants' answers on challenges and opportunities of their own

assessment practices the following challenges were revealed: 1) development of

differentiated tasks to assess students; 2) providing feedback; 3) using different assessment

strategies, 4) time-management. The mentioned challenges refer to one research question

of the present study on challenges and opportunities teachers have when they assess their

students. These four categories are analyzed in the next subsections.

Challenges to develop differentiated tasks

The tasks which teachers develop for their students are the instruments to assess

students understanding. The tasks are produced with regard to learning objectives. In the

process of analyzing collected data it was found out that both focus group and main

participants agree that differentiation of tasks is the main challenge they experience in

assessment practice because of different level students. The participants consider

differentiation to be an effective tool of developing students' academic progress because it

supports deeper understanding of higher level students, and helps lower-level students feel

that they are not weak:

> I offer my students to solve the tasks in groups. Of course, I divide my students to
> have a mixed ability group. While completing task students see the mistakes,
> correct and learn from each other. They solve the task collaboratively, and weak
> students do not feel they are weak. Finally, they even do not know who solved this
> task. So, I called it "implied differentiation" (Participant F).

Moreover, as participants noticed differentiation broads horizons of teaching.

Teachers may apply different resources and develop different types of questions from

lower order thinking questions to higher order ones:

> Differentiation can be based not only on students' perception, but on using different
> resources which our students are supplied with. For example, some students are
> given articles which are easier to understand, I mean the language of instructions
> and content are easier, but others are given the articles on the same context, but

with the academic language of instructions and content for deeper analyzing (Participant H).

However, differentiated tasks take much time to prepare, and the participants are resistant to apply differentiation as the assessment strategy at each lesson (Table 3).

Table 3. Resistance to apply differentiation

Participant H	I will tell you the truth that although differentiation is an effective tool to assess students' understanding and progress I do not apply it at my every lesson, because it takes much time. Maybe I need to develop measurable descriptors to the task.
Participant F	Some students do more but some do less. It is not fair. This is the idea of differentiation. But, how can I assess them equally or objective? Moreover, it takes much time to prepare tasks. I want to give my students more material to learn but differentiation does not allow it.
Participant A	I really do not know whether I apply differentiation correct or not. But I try to divide my students to form a mixed ability pair or group. Usually I face with the problem that higher level students do not want to work with lower level ones. Again it takes much time to organize this work, and it effects negative the whole educational process

However, in the same grade students have different learning style and level of knowledge. Consequently, in order to differentiate correct, first of all teachers must develop clear instructions, assessment criteria and measurable descriptors to tasks. Then, the task must be designed to be suitable and effective (not very easy and not very difficult) to students' levels.

In addition, Participant E also agreed that differentiation is challenging and not effective during lesson time, but effective during extra lessons. He thinks all students need

to get the same information and be prepared the same at lesson, because at summative

assessment tasks are not differentiated. At extra-lessons differentiation is effective to

explain the material individually to lower-level students or to give more academic material

to higher level students.

        During lesson observations of main participants, it was noticed that only Participant

B used differentiation. Participant B, English language teacher, applied a group work at her

lesson. She divided students into 2 groups of mixed abilities. Students behaved differently.

In one group they supported each other, and one more-able student delegated abilities

equally according to criteria and descriptors. In the second group less-able students were

isolated and passive. Thus, differentiation was not effective because of students'

collaboration. On the stage of feedback less able students were offered a list of clichés to

apply but still they struggle to assess their peers. Thus, lesson observation showed that

differentiation is a challenge to implement at lessons for newly hired teachers because it

consumes much time and students do not support each other.

        During conversation with non-experienced main participant (Participant H) after

observing lesson, he said that it was the first lesson in the series of lesson and

differentiation was ineffective. Moreover, Participant H, as Participant E, agree that

differentiation is more effective during extra lessons because it gives the opportunity to

apply the individual approach with each student.

        To sum up, the development of differentiated tasks requires a lot of time and effort.

Previously applied assessment practices showed that working in mainstream schools, the

participants oriented only on the best students and developed one task with no

modifications for one lesson. Prior experience explains new teachers' resistance to

differentiation which they find effective strategy to assess students but time-consuming.

Moreover, any differentiated task must have a clear language of instructions, well-developed criteria and measurable descriptors to monitor students' progress.

Challenges of providing feedback

Together with differentiated approach the participants of the present research mentioned another challenge of their current assessment practice which is a provision of constructive feedback. The participants consider feedback an effective tool of justifying students' learning progress which is the main feature of new assessment system. Feedback points out strong and weak sides of each student. Moreover, both teacher's and peer feedback facilitates the areas of improvement. However, such reasons as a lack of time within the lesson for providing feedback, personalization at peer-feedback, and, consequently, the quality of provided feedback have become the challenges newly hired teachers experience at their assessment practices.

The participants of focus group discussions both experienced and non-experienced noted that the quality of feedback depends on subject specifics. Science teachers (Participants D, E, F, H, I, J) agreed that they challenge to provide written feedback, and explain each detail to students. Likewise, language teachers agreed that oral feedback takes much time, and becomes ineffective because students are only interested in listening to the comments concerning their progress, and do not listen to recommendations to other students. "*Usually it is difficult to give feedback to each student because it consumes much time. So, I give feedback to the whole class regardless the quality of feedback which decreases because of generalization*" mentioned Participant A. According to Participant J during peer-feedback often students take into consideration their personal attitude to peers, they can personalize or be indifferent. As a result, it decreases the quality of feedback too. To solve the issue on the feedback quality the participants offered to be more accurate with

the development of assessment criteria and descriptors in order students to assess their

peers objectively.

Main participant B, English language teacher, noticed that she experiences

challenges with providing feedback to all skills except writing:

> It is very easy to check students' reading or listening tasks because every time we
> have the answers keys. However, I do not know how to provide the constructive
> feedback, and what to recommend to improve these skills. Often, because of a lack
> of time, speaking is assessed in pairs or groups, but not individually. As a teacher, I
> do not take a direct part in assessment, because I observe each pair's speaking, and
> monitor students' progress walking from one pair to another. So, I can miss some
> information or not notice the mistakes of each student (Participant B).

The same information was mentioned by Participant A, Kazakh language teacher,

that it is difficult to notice the mistakes and point out all pluses and minuses while peer

speaking because at this moment she can listen to another pair, and it influences the quality

of teacher's feedback at the end. Thus, providing feedback for students' speaking skills in

teaching languages is a challenge because teachers can miss the information of the

immediate answer of one pair while listening to other students.

During lesson observation of Participant B, it was noticed one more difficulty

connected with the quality of feedback. As a researcher, I noticed that the Participant B

provided her feedback after each stage of the lesson, but she generalized the information.

As a result, higher level students were bored, and distracted from educational process,

some of these students even laid on their desks and did not pay attention on teacher's

comments and recommendations. Therefore, in order to keep motivation of all students its

necessary to apply the individual approach at the feedback stage.

The lesson observation of the second main Participant H, biology teacher, showed

one more detail based of difficulty of feedback provision. During individual interview he

mentioned that it is necessary to start from the positive sides first, then, to point out what

needs to be improved. However, during lesson observation it was noticed that the teacher

tried to correct his students explaining it soon during our individual conversation with low quality of students' academic performance, and the difficulty to find out positive sides in students' works. In addition, the students of this grade sometimes did not follow the criteria mentioned in the assessment sheet, and they tried to point out only positive moments without naming the negative ones. As a result, personalization decreases the quality of feedback and does not allow to assess objectively.

The above mentioned information is the evidence that the provision of constructive feedback is a challenge for newly hired teachers, but all participants agreed that feedback is the effective tool to demonstrate students' progress. The participants pointed out that constructive feedback depends on several factors such as teacher's time management, form of work and the delegation of responsibilities within applying of this form of work, well-developed criteria and descriptors, and academic honesty of students based on objective attitude to each other.

Challenges of using different assessment strategies

New approaches in assessment involves not only teachers to assess students' academic performance but students are also involved into the process of assessment their own progress. According to the responses of participants, the new assessment is implemented through self, peer and group assessment. However, newly hired teachers sometimes find these forms of assessment to be challenging for students themselves because of being unable to assess objectively. Therefore, implementation of different assessment forms is one more difficulty which newly hired teachers face with in their assessment practices. As a result, it can impede learning objectives and change students' and teachers' perceptions towards new assessment.

In compliance with the obtained data different forms of assessment within the lesson are common feature of any teacher's assessment practice, although the results of the

applied assessment form are not always effective. The interesting finding is that the

experienced group of teachers agreed that self-assessment is effective in their assessment

practice. Meanwhile, the non-experienced teachers like to implement peer-assessment

more than self-assessment (Table 4):

Table 4. Different perceptions of peer and self-assessment

Non-experienced teacher: Participant F	Well, I think that peer-assessment is effective form of new assessment. I like to implement peer-assessment more. Firstly, it gives students the opportunity to see the mistakes of each other and do not personally repeat them. Secondly, it helps me to work with passive students because they must speak and provide feedback. As a result, I can assess the whole class. The only thing that is the disadvantage that I cannot listen to all students simultaneously, and monitor the whole process. As for the self-assessment, I do not practice it always because it consumes much time and I need more time at the lessons to solve tasks
Experienced teacher: Participant C	More often I implement self-assessment at my lessons. I think it gives students the opportunity to understand the learning objective better. The important feature of self-assessment is accurate criteria. Students must be bereaved the opportunity to assess unfair. As for the peer-assessment I think it consumes more time and does not allow students to reflect on their academic progress. Also peer-assessment is always based on personal attitude to each other, what disturbs academic honesty

Apart from peer and self-assessment both experienced and non-experienced

teachers distinguished group assessment to be the greatest challenge. Participant D and

Participant I both Math's teachers said that sometimes they apply group assessment to

revise the learnt material. It is not effective because students solve the tasks together, and

the opposite group have little time to check whether solution is right or wrong.

> In order group assessment to be effective we must spend much time to prepare
> accurate criteria and mark-scheme. Also, to meet the needs of all students it is
> necessary to show the alternative solution in mark-scheme. It takes much time, and

not all students in one group can assess objectively, sometimes, they just lack knowledge to supply the opposite group with constructive feedback if their solution was alternative, and the assessing group did not know this algorithm (Participant D).

Thus, the participants apply more often only those forms of assessment which they are comfortable with. Consequently, the participants find it challenging to apply alternative forms of assessment. However, none of participants said that they reject to apply different forms of assessment in their assessment practices.

On the one hand, the revealed data shows that newly hired teachers think that students can conduct self- and peer-assessment rationally, as well as provide a constructive feedback to their peers. On the other hand, in order to make assessment process effective it is necessary to work on appropriate teacher's and students' perceptions towards learning objective, suitable assessment form to this objective and its purpose. Consequently, each participant of the assessment process regardless teacher or student must understand the significance of being evaluator. The obtained data showed that teachers sometimes struggled what assessment form to apply. It led to the problem of ineffectiveness, and prevents students to achieve learning objective. In addition, all participants agreed that often they did not conduct any assessment at lesson regardless students' abilities to assess because it consumes much time, and prefer to check students' works themselves.

Challenges with time-management

All assessment challenges newly hired teachers face with are closely connected with delegation of time, in particular with time management. The participants mentioned that they spend much time on preparation and differentiation of tasks. These tasks must correspond to the learning objective which is followed by well-developed criteria and measurable descriptors, and it is assessed within the whole lesson. Together with tasks preparation they think on what form of assessment is effective to apply. Moreover, the

most part of participants agreed that within 40 minutes it is difficult to explain the material,

check students' understanding, conduct assessment and provide feedback.

During individual interviews both participants distinguished time factor as a main

challenge in their assessment practice.

> After conducting each lesson, I spend much time of reflecting what should be
> changed in order to manage time right. I must apply the individual approach,
> differentiation, different assessment strategies and provide feedback when I assess
> students, but it consumes much time (Participant B).

> My assessment practices changed totally. Now I must justify each mark
> individually to each student. If I give a proper feedback they complete the tasks
> better next time. Tasks preparation, assessment strategies and feedback take much
> time, but if we complete everything in details, next time we have less work because
> students do not repeat those mistakes again. So time management is the main
> challenge I experience in my assessment practice for today (Participant H).

Thus, both experienced and non-experienced teachers mentioned time management

as the main challenge they experience. However, Participant E, chemistry teacher with 6

years of experience, stated that they just need more time to adopt and get rid of assessment

practices applied in traditional assessment. Other experienced participants were quite

positive with it and agreed with participant E. Thus, the responses of participants show that

previously teachers did not spend much time on developing tasks and assessing students'

academic performance. As a result, new assessment demands much time in comparison

with the previous assessment experience.

To sum up, the present research showed the challenges and opportunities newly

hired teachers experience in their assessment practices after joining NIS. The analysis of

data shows that both challenges and opportunities depend on years of teaching experience,

time-management skills and perceptions towards new assessment.

4.5. The ways of positive changes of assessment practices

The present research was also aimed to study the ways how assessment practices of

newly hired teachers were improved through changes they made. Consequently, the study

explored newly hired teachers' perspectives about their needs to improve their assessment

practices working in NIS. As a result, teachers' voices can influence positive development

and improvement of school. In particular, the data presented by newly hired teachers can

better explain the professional needs of new teachers because they cope with these

challenges, and change and improve their practices. Therefore, to give respond to the last

research question "In what ways can newly hired teachers' present assessment practices be

positively changed?" the participants presented their suggestions which were separated

into such categories as professional collaboration and professional development.

4.5.1. Professional development

According to the opinions of the participants the successful work of new teachers in

any school depends on such factors as professional support or effective collaboration with

more experienced colleagues and professional development. Newly hired teachers agreed

that to start applying new approaches in assessment in their own practice they need to have

more seminars and trainings. However, the participants said that many organized seminars

for them had more theoretical character rather than practical. Moreover, newly hired

teachers mentioned that to implement the recommendations from each seminar they need

to have more practice. It means that new teachers need to be trained to modify their

assessment practices according to the needs of updated assessment system:

> To be honest, there are not enough practical seminars on explanation of new
> assessment approaches. It would be good to organize some short-term seminars not
> at school. For example, a three-day seminar out of school. Why out of school?
> Because when we are at school, we are distracted from learning by a big workload.
> Also, at the beginning of academic year, we attended some explanatory meetings at
> school, but I cannot call them training seminars because theory and practice are
> different (Participant C).

> I want to have more practice to understand new assessment better. For example, to
> have more conversations with trainer, who explained me theory, and then,
> controlled my understanding on practice. I mean, he can attend my lessons and
> recommend what to improve. Only after it, I can individually reflect on my practice
> (Participant E).

The responses of participants distinguished an important fact: newly-hired teachers are to some extend familiar with theory of new assessment system, but they need more practice to implement it. As a result, theoretical knowledge becomes insufficient when new teachers face with some difficulties at lesson and do not know how to cope with them. Consequently, new teachers need to attend practical trainings on how to implement new assessment approaches. Participant D added that such trainings will be helpful for developing their reflective practice as well.

During both focus group discussions and individual interviews, the participants described teaching level courses "Effective learning" organized by the Center of Pedagogical Performance of NIS. All participants learnt at the third (basic) level of these courses which are focused on teaching practice. They consider these courses to be effective. However, they said that these courses can be more effective if they are not combined with work.

> Definitely, I believe that these courses were effective. Also, I think I understood the material better because we were introduced with the basic elements of updated assessment within our university curriculum. However, these courses would be more effective if they were out of work (Participant H).

> I attended level courses and I got a general understanding about new assessment approaches there, since I was a teacher who knew nothing about NIS system at all. This one was effective and helped. Now I use the obtained knowledge on practice. (Participant B).

The collected data showed that newly hired teachers need to attend more professional development seminars and workshops to improve their understanding of new assessment. Moreover, the difficulties newly hired teachers experience identified that new teachers need to have trainings on implementation of new assessment approaches, reflective practice of teacher, differentiation and feedback provision which were mentioned in the previous subsection. Furthermore, the years of working experience do not influence

teachers' understanding and perceptions towards changes in assessment system. On the

contrary, non-experienced teachers due to their university curriculum apply new

approaches in assessment more successful than the experienced ones. As a result, the

participants agreed that the effectiveness of their assessment practice directly depend on

professional development and collaboration with colleagues. That is why, professional

collaboration in school will be described in the next subsection.

4.5.2. Professional collaboration

The participants highlighted the necessity of collaborative work with other teachers

to understand new approaches in assessment better. Within both focus-group discussion

and individual interviews the participants regardless their teaching experience mentioned

that they need to be assigned mentors and observe lessons of more experienced colleagues

to improve their assessment practices.

The difficulties of newly hired teachers' practices include lesson planning,

developing tasks, managing time and matching the best form to assess students' progress.

In compliance with the enumerated difficulties, non-experienced teachers are assigned

mentors who help to improve their professional development. However, young teachers

have different opinions on mentoring. For instance, Participants F and H do not have a

special plan to work with their mentors and address their mentors only when they

experience difficulties. Likewise, Participant G does not work with mentor at all because

apart teaching he works as a language coordinator and does not have enough time to

address to work with mentor. Nevertheless, Participant I and Participant J regularly work

with their mentors. Their mentors observe their lessons twice a week and work on the areas

to improve. Participant I mentioned that he tries to observe the lessons of his mentor every

week too. Likewise, Participant J said that they usually develop assessment sheets together

with her mentor.

CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

> My mentor is a very talented teacher. We have a demand from school administrators to observe at least four lessons a month. All teachers of our department try to observe her lessons. There is a real queue to her. When my mentor observes my lessons she gives me a feedback. Sometimes we plan together because both of us teach in Grade 7. It is very effective (Participant I).

> When my mentor observes my lessons he is a non-participant observer. But, he participates in assessment by filling in assessment sheet which we develop in advance together, and after conducting a lesson we compare the results of my and his assessment. For me it helps to reflect what I missed, and for him to design the further plan of mentoring. When I see that we assess similar I am very happy because it means that I understand how to work and assess the academic performance of my students (Participant J).

Talking about experienced teachers, only Participant D has a mentor who is her former teacher and mentors her work voluntarily. Other participants explained that they are not assigned mentors because they have more than three years of teaching experience. However, Participants A and B mentioned they need a mentor's support because of difficulties in implementing the new assessment into their teaching practice. In addition, the experienced teachers were explained new approaches of assessment in the beginning of academic year, but they implement new assessment by "trial and error", regardless of team-planning and teaching experience. As a result, experienced teachers find it important to observe the lessons of more experienced colleagues who can share good strategies of assessment:

> Of course, we ask a help of more experienced colleagues when necessary. But still we need to have mentors because sometimes colleagues are busy, and we cannot distract them every time. Sometimes I do not know whether I apply new assessment right or not. As a result, I find lesson observation of my colleagues effective in understanding new assessment (Participant B).

> I am not shy to ask help of more experienced colleagues because I do not have a mentor. Planning is not a challenge now because we have a team-planning where we discuss what assessment forms to conduct. However, on practice sometimes it is necessary to make immediate changes at the lesson, and I do not know how to assess. So, we also need mentors (Participant E).

Thus, the collected data showed that both categories of participants have the same

difficulties. Consequently, their responses showed that their assessment practices can be improved through professional development and effective collaboration with more experienced colleagues.

4.6. Conclusion

To sum up, the information obtained from findings could respond the research questions of the present study. Both experienced and non-experienced teachers explained the challenges and changes they experience working in NIS. In particular, the participants agreed that new assessment is more effective than the traditional one. Moreover, they are optimistic about its implementing in their practice regardless challenges with development of tasks, time-management of time, provision of feedback and using appropriate assessment strategy. As a result, newly hired teachers want to attend practical trainings and seminars which will help them to cope with the challenges of lessons. In addition, collaboration with more experienced colleagues based on lesson observation and mentoring are effective ways to change assessment practices of newly hired teachers.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion on challenges and changes of assessment

practices of newly hired teachers in NIS in relation to already conducted researches on this

theme. The discussion is organized according to research questions: (1) What were newly

hired teachers' previous assessment practices before coming to NIS? (2) What assessment

practices do newly hired teachers use at NIS? (3) What challenges and opportunities with

implementation of new assessment approaches in NIS do newly hired teachers experience

on practice? (4) In what ways can newly hired teachers' present assessment practices be

positively changed? Thus, this chapter provides the detailed discussion based on findings

and reviewed literature on newly hired teachers' challenges and changes of assessment

practices they apply in NIS.

5.2. Discussion related to RQ 1

According to the first research question "What were newly hired teachers' previous

assessment practices before coming to NIS?" it was found out that newly hired teachers'

prior experience directly influences their perception of new assessment. It means there is a

gap in understanding of new assessment between experienced and non-experienced

teachers. As it turned out, newly hired experienced teachers in the beginning of their

teaching in NIS found it difficult to restructure their assessment practices from 5-scale

assessment to non-grading one. Consequently, their prior understanding of how to grade

students was based on their personal objectiveness of the grade they put. The same belief

was found in the study of Black and William (1988) who state that teacher's prior

experience effects teacher's assessment practice. Therefore, working in NIS they still

struggle on how to connect the learning objective with the tasks they develop, and then,

how to assess their students thoroughly. However, now they have a quite positive

perception of new assessment and consider it to be effective because they can assess all students within one lesson.

Three out of five non-experienced teachers of this research worked both with traditional and new assessment. However, all of them consider old assessment to be ineffective because students only got knowledge through memorization and sought to get a numerical grade. The same idea is reflected by Pellegrino, Baxter and Glaser (1999) who state that traditional assessment only increases extrinsic motivation of students. Likewise, new assessment meets the academic needs of all students and motivates them intrinsically. As a researcher, I think non-experienced teacher's perception of new assessment was shaped due to their university curriculum. They were taught what the new assessment is and how to apply new assessment approaches.

Thus, in a case of implementation new assessment both experienced and non-experienced teachers are quite positive. Experienced teachers seem to be a bit resistant only because students are not graded. Previously they put grades and think students were more motivated to learn, but they agree that it was an extrinsic motivation. Nevertheless, the influence of the previous assessment practices makes experienced teachers adopt to new approaches to assessment longer. As a result, they need more time to reflect on their teaching and assessment practices. However, beginning teachers seem more confident and positive. Firstly, they do not have a big experience to compare the assessment they implement with the traditional one. Secondly, they were explained the features of new assessment through university curriculum. The idea to include a course on assessment into the university curriculum of teacher training was also offered by Shepard (2000) earlier. To sum up, Black and William (2009) state that teachers' understanding of assessment is an important fact for positive achievements of students.

5.3. Discussion related to RQ 2

According to the second research question "What assessment practices do newly hired teachers use at NIS?" it was found out that assessment practices of newly hired teachers have completely changed. The participants of this study started to implement different practices to assess students' academic achievements which they had not implemented before working in a mainstream school. Newly hired teachers find it effective to conduct discourse with students using technology of asking open-ended questions and setting open-ended issues. It helps them to realize differentiation, because open-ended questions can be from factual to debatable. Moreover, the technology of asking questions or setting an open-ended problem supports the development of students' critical thinking. According to the responses of the participants through asking debatable questions they can assess not only students' comprehension but develop their problem solving skills, too. The same conclusion on effectiveness of conducting discussion through asking variable questions in class for assessing students was done by Caldwell (2008). She stated that through asking questions teachers not only check students' comprehension, but can assess them as well. Furthermore, many studies reflected effectiveness of setting open-ended problems to assess students' achievements (Klavir & Herskovitz, 2008; Rosli, Goldsby & Capraro, 2013; Shepard, 1995). Thus, the participants of this study agreed that the implementation of such approaches as asking open-ended questions and setting problem-solving issues helps them to assess their students objectively due to differentiation, but it takes much time. Moreover, the experienced participants noticed that the implementation of new assessment strategies and approaches provides them with the opportunities to improve their assessment practices after joining NIS. Nevertheless, the influence of the previous assessment practices makes experienced teachers adopt to new approaches to

assessment longer. As a result, they need more time to reflect on their teaching and assessment practices.

5.4. Discussion related to RQ 3

According to the third research question "What challenges and opportunities with implementation of new assessment approaches in NIS do newly hired teachers experience on practice?" there were identified the challenges which the participants of the present research experience in their assessment practices. As a result, both experienced and non-experienced teachers agreed that development of differentiated tasks, provision of feedback, using different assessment strategies and managing of time are the challenges which they experience while assessing students. Thus, I will discuss each issue in compliance with already existed researches which were presented in Chapter two: Literature review.

The first issue which distinguished the participants of this study was development of differentiated tasks. As teachers mentioned differentiation is a difficult and time consuming process. Both experienced and beginning teachers mentioned that working in mainstream schools they oriented on the best student in class. Taking into consideration academic performance of this student they created tasks or just used a suggested text-book which offered a range of tasks without differentiation. It led to the problem that some students were excellent in performing these tasks and some students made mistakes or even failed.

Starting their work in NIS newly hired teachers were demanded to differentiate tasks. As a result, not all tasks were designed academically correct or gave clear differentiated instructions because newly hired teachers lack of experience in differentiating. Moreover, students understood that they were differentiated. Despite a positive perception of differentiation, the participants lack of experience to implement

differentiation. Their prior schools did not demand differentiation at lessons. So, the

participants characterized differentiation as time-consuming strategy which increases

students' academic progress

Despite all participants found differentiation to be an effective strategy to assess

students, some of them are still resistant. This point was also expressed in a study

"Overcoming resistance to new ideas" by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2015) who

described the resistance of teachers in one European school towards differentiation. They

described differentiation as an element of transformational learning which explains that

experienced teachers worked successfully without differentiation and achieved good

results in standardized tests, and see no benefit to change their assessment practices. The

same idea was reflected in the response of Participant A whose assessment practice was

focused only on UNT preparation. She noticed that test memorization did not suggest any

differentiation. As a result, it influences negative her assessment practices now.

Moreover, the participants of the present study state that theoretically they know

what differentiation is, but on practice they do not always know how to apply it. The same

was reflected by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2015). To solve this issue Weimer (2013)

suggests to attend more practical seminars or workshops to move the focus from teacher-

centered to student-centered learning for meeting individual students' needs. The

participants of this study also expressed the wish to attend practical workshops or observe

lessons of more experienced colleagues to see how to implement differentiation on

practice.

Differentiation was also reflected by Sousa and Tomlinson (2011) as a strategy

which meets the diverse needs of all students, and on practice teachers may feel its benefit

as it increases academic progress of each student. However, the participant of this study

suggest that differentiation is not effective at each lesson, and they need to master their

teaching skills in order students do not notice that they are differentiated. This corresponds to conceptual framework based on the work of Bartell (2004). It states that prior experience still influences the perception of new assessment and further professional development. Thus, being unable for the newly hired teachers to implement differentiation into their assessment practices results in poor monitoring of students' academic progress.

The second issue which distinguished the participants of this study was provision of feedback. There were conducted many studies which identified feedback as an effective strategy to assess students' academic achievements and define further actions to be taken in teacher assessment practice. The participant of the present study defined feedback as important and effective strategy which points out strengths and weaknesses of student's academic performance and improves their interactions with students. The same definition on effectiveness of feedback was given by Black and William (1998) making accent on the efficiency of descriptive feedback which should support and provide guidance rather than grade. Furthermore, Black and William (1988) and Hattie (2009) also agreed that feedback improves learning through daily interaction between students and teacher. Moreover, Hattie (2009) identified feedback to be effective when it focuses on the areas of improvement concerning learning objective and task achievement only. However, the participants find it difficult during peer-feedback because often students try to personalize forgetting about assessment criteria, task descriptors and learning objective.

The participants of my research avowed that more often they try to provide feedback for the whole class because it saves time and assess a bigger number of students. However, according to participants it does not always work effective because students perceive and interpret the information differently. Tong and Adamson (2015) state that in this case it becomes ineffective because fewer than a half of students believe that whole class feedback is useful as it does not point out their personal progress. This feature is

explained with the fact that students appreciate feedback not for getting grades but for

personal endeavor to improve their learning (Higgins, Hartley, & Skelton, 2002).

Moreover, students can misunderstand the message of the whole class feedback that allows

them to make wrong interpretations about themselves and about others. (Black & William,

1988). The mentioned above information explains the stories of participants when students

listen to only the information about their strengths and weaknesses and do not pay

attention at the information about others. It has a negative effect on the educational process

in general because students distract and start doing their own staff. Thus, the same as

differentiation, feedback consumes much time. To save time teachers try to generalize and

provide feedback to the whole class within the lesson. As a result, feedback can be

perceived and interpreted differently, and make different effect on students' academic

performance.

The third challenge which distinguished the participants of this study was challenge

with using appropriate assessment strategies. The participants of this study implement such

forms of assessment as self-assessment, peer-assessment, group assessment and ongoing

teacher assessment. The interesting finding was that the experienced teachers prefer

applying self-assessment meanwhile non-experienced teachers implement peer-assessment

more often than other forms. Concerning group assessment both groups of participants find

it difficult because it consumes more time, and students do not always understand their

roles during this assessment. Participants agreed that during group assessment students do

not always listen to the presentation of the opposite group because they try to finish up

their own presentation within this time. As a result, it influences negative the quality of

feedback, students start to personalize, judge and lobby interests of their friends from the

opposite group. As a result, students do not understand their responsibilities of their

classmates' progress. Instead of supporting and providing quality feedback, they criticize

each other, and it leads to negative atmosphere. The same issue was mentioned by

Shamatov (1988) who states that competition between students results in negative

classroom environment.

Another issue which distinguished the participants of my study was that teachers do

not always trust the objectiveness of assessment. The participants avowed that both peer-

and self-assessment takes much time. So, teachers prefer assessing students on their own.

Black and William (1998) and Confait (2015) state that teachers experience difficulties

because of poor student involvement into assessment. According to their studies student

involvement is the best indicator of successful assessment. Thus, newly hired teachers

need to implement new assessment strategies correct to improve not only classroom

management but learning and teaching as well (Black & William, 2009; Yung, 2001).

Thus, newly hired teachers need to change their attitude towards implementation of

different assessment strategies. They need to improve their assessment practices moving

focus from teacher-centered assessment, and change students' understanding of their

responsibilities while assessing their own and peers' academic progress.

The last challenge which distinguished the participants of this study was

management of time. In general, the participants of this study mentioned that time

management is a key issue which is connected with all three above mentioned challenges.

Being hired in NIS the participants spend much time on reflection of their teaching and

assessment practices. Then, this reflection influences the development of future tasks,

differentiation, provision of feedback and appropriate assessment form to apply. The

participants find it difficult to integrate everything in one lesson which lasts for 40

minutes. The same point was reflected by Confait (2015) who states that assessment

consumes much time, and time is a key factor for conducting assessment appropriately.

However, the participants of the present research have quite positive perception of new

assessment regardless the challenges they experience, and think they just need more time

to adopt to the changes in their assessment practices. In addition, they mentioned that they

need to be organized some practical trainings on effective time-management to delegate

time correct in compliance with all responsibilities they have.

5.5. Discussion related to RQ 4

According to the fourth research question "In what ways can newly hired teachers'

present assessment practices be positively changed?" it was found out a link between

challenges the participants experience and how these challenges influence the positive

changes in assessment practices of newly hired teachers. The responses of the participants

showed that they need greater support from more experienced colleagues as well as to

attend professional trainings and seminars. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) the same Bartell

(2004) state that mentoring is effective strategy to support new teachers.

Professional development

The participants avowed that they lack of knowledge or other explanatory support

implement correct the challenges they mentioned. Firstly, in a case of experienced

teachers, traditional assessment did not suggest any trainings on assessment because they

graded students according to their own perspective. Secondly, inexperienced teachers

mentioned they lack of practice, they know the theory but it is different from what they

have on practice. The participants mentioned that explanatory seminars or trainings are

organized by more experienced colleagues in the beginning of academic year what

coincides with the adaptation period and not effective. Thus, in the most cases they study

the changes in assessment system and in curriculum in general on their own (Boakye &

Ampiah, 2017; Bozack, 2008).

As a result, the need in professional development programs is explained with a lack

of knowledge on how to conduct new assessment and skills on how to implement it

(Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000). Furthermore, Webster-Wright (2009) states that changes in assessment lead to obtain new knowledge to change the assessment approaches and develop new skills to assess students objectively. Thus, she concluded that new teachers need to be supported through organizing seminars and trainings as well as collaboration with more experienced colleagues (Elias, Fisher & Simon, 1980). In addition, Webster-Wright (2009) suggests that the professional development of new teachers should include self-learning too. It means that teachers can learn from their self-experience through reflection on their own assessment practices. The same was mentioned both by experienced and inexperienced teachers of this study.

Professional collaboration

Professional collaboration is to some extent connected with the professional development of newly hired teachers. However, it is more based on practical cooperation such as co-planning, lesson observation and mentoring. The participants mentioned that out of three mentioned above types of cooperation totally they realize only two: lesson observation and co-planning. Concerning mentoring in NIS, only inexperienced teachers were aligned mentors. However, experienced teachers noticed that they also need mentors in order to understand the changes in assessment, cope with challenges they experience and implement new practices to assess students. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) in their study mention that mentoring is important to enhance teaching and assessment practices of new teachers. The same idea was reflected by Stansbury and Zimmerman (2002). Consequently, professional collaboration should become a support for all new teachers regardless their teaching experience. Moreover, not all inexperienced participants have a productive collaboration with their mentors. During interviews they avowed that they want to improve their relationships with mentors in order mentoring to be effective and have a positive effect on their teaching practice, in particular, assessment practice. In addition,

Stansbury and Zimmerman (2002) state that productive mentoring relationships are based on trust and care what some of participants lack.

5.6. Conclusion

In compliance with the conducted discussion newly hired teachers lack of appropriate support and training while implementing new assessment during their first year in NIS. Consequently, it is not effective for their assessment practice in general. Therefore, they must be supported both by school administrators and more experienced colleagues through high quality explanatory work, professional development trainings and effective professional collaboration. Thus, if the above mentioned recommendations are followed, the assessment approaches implemented in assessment practices of newly hired teachers will improve and develop students' academic performance.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

   This chapter will summarize the findings on challenges and changes of the

assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS. The results of findings on answering

research questions, the limitations of the study, and implication and recommendations for

further research will be presented in independent subsections of this chapter.

6.2 Addressing the Research Questions

What were newly hired teachers' previous assessment practices before coming to NIS?

   The findings of this qualitative research showed that newly hired teachers

experience many challenges implementing new assessment in their practice. However,

these challenges expand their professional horizons and provide the opportunities for

further positive changes of assessment practices. These challenges are connected with prior

assessment practices which invoke resistance of experienced participants to some features

of new assessment regardless their positive attitude towards new assessment in general.

Contrary to experienced teachers non-experienced teachers got accustomed to changes in

assessment faster due the prior knowledge obtained at university where they were

introduced with the new assessment policy in school education. Thus, prior assessment

experience influences present assessment practices of newly hired teachers as it was stated

in conceptual framework based on Bartell (2004). As a result, experienced teachers need

more time in comparison with non-experienced teachers to cope with challenges and

changes of their assessment practices.

What assessment practices do newly hired teachers use at NIS?

   The participants of the present research started to implement new assessment

practices after joining NIS. Their present practices which are based on the development of

students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills allow them to change positively. The

participants agree that through asking open-ended questions they may check not only

students' comprehension but assess them too. The technology of open-ended questions

allows them to implement such assessment strategy as differentiation using variable

questions. Moreover, through setting open-ended issues at their lessons the participants

may listen to students' discussions, provide constructive feedback and assess their students

too. Thus, new assessment practices help to enhance understanding of new assessment and

cope with the challenges newly hired teachers experience.

What challenges and opportunities with implementation of new assessment approaches in NIS do newly hired teachers experience on practice?

Development of differentiated tasks, proving feedback, using appropriate

assessment strategies and time-management were defined as the main challenges newly

hired teachers experience in NIS. The participants mentioned that integration all of them at

one lesson is presently impossible because it consumes much time. It means, they know

the theory, but on practice they do not know how to differentiate, provide feedback and

apply different assessment strategies within one lesson. Thus, their challenges are directly

connected with time management which must be improved. However, the participants

agree that these challenges simultaneously provide them the opportunities for their

professional development. Therefore, regardless their positive attitude towards new

assessment, the participants need to attend more practical seminars and workshops as well

as being supported with more experienced colleagues through mentoring and collaboration

to cope with their challenges.

In what ways can newly hired teachers' present assessment practices be positively changed?

The participants of the present qualitative study have a positive attitude towards

new assessment. They agree that to some extend their prior experience influences their

present understanding of changes in assessment. That is why they avow that collaboration with colleagues helps them to adopt to changes in assessment and influences their positive changes too. However, only non-experienced teachers are aligned mentors, and newly hired experienced teachers expressed their necessity to be mentored too. They noticed that mentoring is an effective support in explanation, understanding and improvement of the present assessment practices.

As for professional development, the participants expressed their wish to attend seminars and trainings which are practice oriented because they do not know how to implement their theoretical knowledge on practice. Thus, the suggestions of newly hired teachers show their willingness to cope with the challenges they experience and positive change their assessment practices.

Finally, the findings of this qualitative study and the existing body of literature have a consensus on that newly hired teacher's prior experience influences their present assessment practices. However, newly hired teachers find new assessment practices effective, and try to implement new assessment strategies into their present assessment practice. To make positive changes they need to attend practical seminars and trainings, as well as being supported with more experienced teachers and school administrators. Therefore, it is beneficial for school administrators and policymakers to pay attention at the issues of newly hired teachers to support their adaptation in a new school.

This qualitative research supplements to already conducted researches on the issues of new teachers, but it expands this concept to all teachers who were hired to a new school regardless their working experience. Consequently, the findings of this research may contribute to the enhancement of newly hired teachers' assessment practices in a sample school.

6.3. Limitations

Despite I could answer the research questions of this study there are some limitations concerning assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS. The limitations are connected with the finding based on voices of newly hired teachers' of only one NIS school. Thus, it is not possible to generalize all challenges and changes which experience newly hired teachers in NIS on the example of one school regardless maximum variation sampling which included teachers of both genders with different teaching experience and who teach different subjects.

6.4. Recommendations for further research

Further research should validate the results of the present research through analyzing and comparing findings on the issue of assessment practices of newly hired teachers of other NIS schools.

6.5. Research Implications

The findings of this research should be used by school administrators and policy makers to support newly hired teachers appropriately, as well as both by newly hired teachers and more experienced teachers to see the common challenges in order to guide new teachers and accelerate professional collaboration.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Types of newly hired teachers
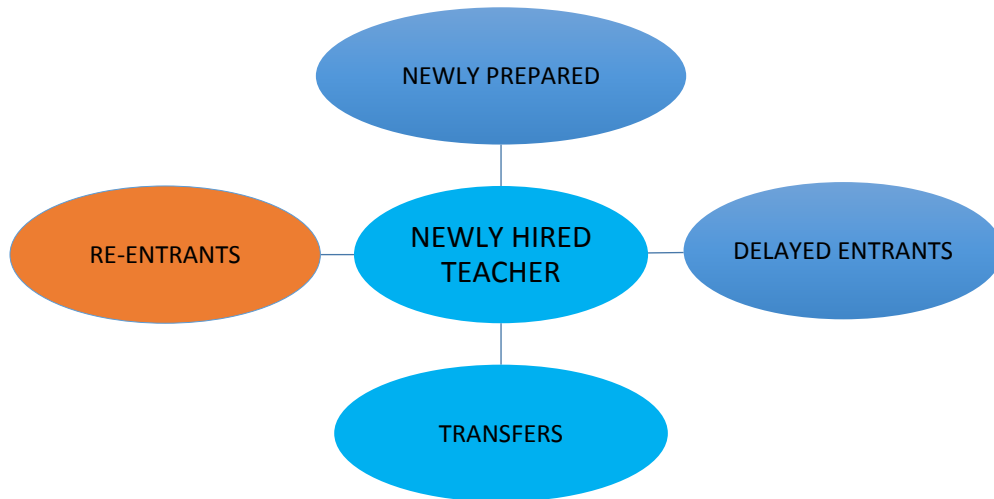
Types of newly hired teachers	Description
Newly prepared *Delayed entrants*	Teachers with less than a year of teaching experience, including attending college or primary or secondary teaching
Re-entrants	Teachers with more than a year of teaching experience, but whose prior activity was complete different than school teaching
Transfers	Teachers with more than a year of teaching experience, including working in different school systems in the same or another state, or in a school of a different sector

(U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Appendix B

Timeline

#	Stage	Date	Time required	Resources	Description
1	Ethics approval	November, 7, 2018			IREC gives approval for further research
2	Sending letter to a gatekeeper	November, 8-15, 2018	1 week	Official letter from NU GSE	A letter contains the information on the purpose of the research.
3	Sample selection	November, 16-30, 2018	2 weeks	Consent letters from NU GSE	The participants are sent an official consent letter, which explains them the theme and the rules of the further research
4	Data collection	December, 1 , 2018 – March, 1, 2019	12 weeks	Interview questions, focus group discussion questions protocols, observation forms, audio recorder	The data is collected in one NIS school in north Kazakhstan. The approximate time of each interview is 60-70 minutes. The place for conducting interview will be prepared in advance. In general, there will be four face-to-face interviews: two with each of main participants, and two focus group discussions. In addition I will observe one lesson of each of main participants to analyze whether the information presented in interview coincides with assessment on practice
5	Data analysis	March, 2-May, 10, 2019	9 weeks	Interview and lesson observation materials: recordings, notes	The information obtained from interviews will be transcribed, coded and categorized. The analysis will be done simultaneously with collecting data
6	Working on Findings and Discussions	March, 10 – May, 30, 2019	12 weeks	Findings of the work	At this stage I will analyze the findings of my work and compare them with the already conducted researches studied during literature review stage.

7	Working on conclusion	June,1-7, 2019	1 week	The research work	At this stage I will work on the conclusions and the feedback provided by my thesis supervisor on chapters 1-5
8	Preparation to thesis viva	June, 8-20, 2019	2 weeks	The research work	At this stage I will negotiate with my supervisor on what to include into viva presentation and speech, and how to answer the questions which could be asked.
9	Thesis viva	June, 21, 2019	1 day	The research work	I will present the results of my research
10	Thesis submission	June, 28, 2019		Final version of research work, two hard copies printed single-sided double spaced, paper format A4	It is necessary to submit 2 hard copies to GSE Office before 5 p.m. on June, 28, 2019. A soft copy is sent to gseassignments@nu.edu.kz

Appendix C

Interview questions

Individual Interview questions for beginning teacher (for focus group interview of beginning teachers)

1. Can you list the areas in your assessment practices which you find most difficult?

2. Why do you experience these difficulties?

3. What are you doing to handle these difficulties?

4. Do you have an assigned mentor?

5. What does he/she do in order to assist you?

6. What types of seminars/trainings/workshops do the school administrators organize for you to explain the details of assessment practices?

7. To what extent are they useful for you?

Протокол индивидуального интервью для начинающего учителя (для интервью фокус группы начинающих учителей)

1. Можете ли вы перечислить области применяемых практик оценивания, которые вы считаете наиболее трудными?

2. Почему вы испытываете эти трудности?

3. Что вы делаете, чтобы преодолеть эти трудности?

4. Есть ли у вас наставник?

5. Что он делает, чтобы помочь вам?

6. Какие виды семинаров / тренингов / мастер-классов школьная администрация организует для вас по разъяснению существующих практик оценивания?

7. Насколько они полезны для вас?

Appendix D

Individual Interview questions for experienced teacher (for focus group interview of experienced teachers)

1. What approaches to assessment do you incorporate in your assessment practice?
2. How do you know what to assess in students' works?
3. How do you incorporate new approaches to assessment in your assessment practice?
4. Give an example of what you did (would do) to engage a student who is bored or passive in your classes in order to assess him/her? What was the outcome?
5. What strategies have you used with a student who performed poorly on assignments or assessment? How do you know these worked?
6. What would you do to determine whether or not your approaches to assessment were effective?
7. How have you adapted your assessment practices to meet the needs of diverse students?

Протокол индивидуального интервью для опытного учителя (для интервью фокус группы опытных учителей)

1. Какие подходы к оцениванию вы используете в своей практике оценивания?

2. Как вы знаете что оценивать в работе учащихся?

3. Как вы применяете новые подходы к оцениваю в своей практике оценивания?

4. Приведите пример того, что вы сделали (сделаете), чтобы вовлечь ученика, которому скучно или который пассивен на ваших уроках, чтобы оценить его / ее? Какой был результат?

5. Какие стратегии вы использовали (используете) с учащимся, который плохо выполняет задания? Как вы понимаете, что данные стратегии работают?

6. Что бы вы сделали, чтобы определить, эффективны ли ваши подходы к оценке?

7. Как вы адаптировали свои методы оценки для удовлетворения потребностей разных студентов?

Appendix E

Observation protocol for studying assessment practices of newly hired teachers in

NIS

Date:

Time:

Place:

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes
(Portrait of informant, Physical setting, event description)	(Personal reflections, insight, ideas, confusion, hunches, initial interpretations)

Протокол наблюдений для изучения практик оценивания вновь принятых

учителей НИШ

Дата:

Время:

Место

Описательные примечания	Рефлективные примечания
(описание участника исследования (поведение, манера оценивания), физическая обстановка (расположение учащихся), формы работы, описание урока)	(Личные размышления, проницательность, идеи, путаница, догадки, первоначальные интерпретации)

Appendix F

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS: challenges and changes
DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in **a research study** on exploring assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS. You are expected to participate in two individual interviews in the arranged specified intervals. You will be asked to answer my questions on you prior assessment practices and those, which you apply in NIS, what was challenging for you and how your assessment practices changed. These questions will be recorded with your permission to make the analysis on the provided data.
The interviews will be transcribed and deleted after to follow the anonymity of your names. Your names will be coded for analyzing and interpreting the data.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take approximately *60 minutes per each interview*

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are several risks associated with this study. One of them is that you can be distracted from your own work with the interviews or observations. As a researcher I will try to arrange time for our meetings which is comfortable for you in order not to make a negative effect on your work.
Next, other teachers or school administrators, who do not participate in this research, can be interested in what we discuss in our meetings. It could also be risky for you, and may influence your decision to participate or express your real opinion on the researched issue. Everything will be done only for the sake of the research and will stay confidential in order not to make harm for you as the participants.
There are also some potential benefits of this research. Firstly, it will shed the light on how to support the newly hired teachers in adopting of the assessment practices applied in NIS. Then, as the participants you can start to reflect on how to improve your own assessment practices. Finally, participation in research will bring you the experience due to which you can make some positive changes in your own assessment practices

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your **participation is voluntary** and you have the **right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled**. **The alternative is not to participate.** You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Independent Contact: If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to at gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz
Please sign this consent from if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;

CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

According to the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan an individual under the age of 18 is considered a child. Any participant falling into that category should be given the Parental Consent Form and have it signed by at least one of his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

Appendix G

The Sample of Interview Coding

Interview transcript	Codes
Researcher: Good morning! Thank you for your agreement to participate in my research on the theme "Assessment practices of newly hired teachers in NIS: challenges and changes". Let's start with the first question: what were your prior experiences before joining NIS? Participant B: Before coming to work in NIS I worked in three different school, and was considered to be newly hired in every school. My total experience is 10 years, however, within 10 years twice I was on my maternity leave. I worked in two different rural schools and in one urban school. These are the mainstream school.	**CODE 1: prior assessment experience**
Researcher: What assessment policies were implemented in these schools? Did they apply new assessment? Participant B: When I worked in rural schools they applied traditional 5-scale assessment. The last school before coming to NIS was an urban school, where I worked applying both traditional and criteria-based assessment. But it was only the first year, so I did not understand much about specifics of new assessment.	**CODE 2: assessment policy**
Researcher: What approaches to assessment do you use in your assessment practice? Participant B: as you know, there are so many approaches to assessment. In daily practice at lessons I try to evaluate my students providing them oral feedback, this happens after each stage of lesson. Often, I do not do it myself, I appoint evaluators, or students take turns evaluating each other. For example, I ask them to listen to each other and prepare feedback on what was good in his answer and what possible to recommend. Usually, students evaluate everything themselves, all the positives are named, all errors are corrected, but if some errors were not taken into account, I name them and give my feedback evaluating their actions.	**CODE 3: approaches to assessment**
Researcher: How do you know what to evaluate in the work of students? Participant B: I assess weaknesses of the students. First, I identify them and work with these weaknesses. Then, I can	**CODE 4: what to evaluate**

apply different assessment strategies - formative work, or it will be oral feedback or testing. Weaknesses make possible evaluate students, because assessing those things which students do not know is impossible and wrong.	
Researcher: Do you mean that firstly, you identify weaknesses of your students, then you work with you students to improve what is difficult, then only assess your students?	
Participant B: yes, you are right	
Researcher: How do you apply new approaches to assessment?	
Participant B: I like to apply peer-assessment, students give each other feedback. This is new for me because previously I did not use it in my practice. I like this kind of assessment, it allows students to develop and monitor each other's mistakes and not repeat them in future. I consider peer-assessment effective.	**CODE 3: approaches to assessment**
Researcher: Is peer-assessment always effective? Okay, you like it and you apply it, but do children always listen to each other and objectively evaluate, despite the fact that this is my classmate or my friend? And how do you cope with such cases, when there are violations of objectivity in peer-assessment?	
Participant B: there are the rules of following academic honesty in our school and students know them. I always remind them of these rules and I ask them not to do "anti-favour" to their friends when they evaluate each other, since the role of evaluator is to ensure that your classmate progresses and improves his knowledge. It is also very important to develop task descriptors in details, since they evaluate each other according to them. For example, if this is a vocabulary check, I describe how many words to use. Providing feedback they say to each other, for example, you used five words, but you need more.	**CODE 5: rules of assessment**
Researcher: Do you use differentiation as one of assessment strategies for assessing your students' achievements?	
Participant B: Yes, I use differentiation, but it is my challenge. Sometimes I do not know how to implement it correct, how to ensure students that I do not differentiate them.	**CODE 6: differentiation is challenge**

Appendix H

Alternative variants of newly hired teachers