

EFL TEACHER AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM

**Trilingual Reform and Kazakhstani Teachers' Agency:  
A Comparative Case Study of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Agency in  
Two Diverse School Contexts**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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in

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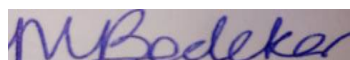
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Dear Nurly Marshal

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You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely



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**Abstract****Trilingual Reform and Kazakhstani Teachers' Agency: A Comparative Case Study of EFL Teachers' Agency in Two Diverse School Contexts**

In Kazakhstan and in many other countries, educational reform or curriculum changes is the responsibility of teachers, who need to be change agents (Fullan, 1993). Yet, policy-makers rarely reflect on how educational reform aligns with teachers' beliefs and values, crucial to implementing new reforms. Therefore this study focuses on EFL teachers' transition to the updated curriculum policy that requires teachers to embrace progressive pedagogies such as communicative language teaching (CLT), the purpose of this study was to explore how educational reform influenced two EFL teachers' agency in two different Kazakhstani school contexts. It was a qualitative comparative case study that consisted of three research tools which were document analysis of the updated curriculum, multimodal questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The study found that the participants' professional identities, self-efficacy and personal beliefs enabled their agency. Meanwhile, parental attitudes about teachers' roles and applying for promotions restricted teachers' agency. Nevertheless, the study concluded that the experienced EFL instructors are agentic in their teaching practice, classrooms, and school contexts despite external and situational constraints. Thus the study recommends that novice teachers' agency needs future attention.

*Keywords:* EFL teachers' agency, updated curriculum, trilingual education, professional identity, self-efficacy, teacher beliefs.

## Аңдатпа

### **Үш Тілді Реформа және Қазақстандық Мұғалімдер Агенттігі (өзгеріс жасау еріктілігі): Ағылшын тілі Мұғалімдерінің Агенттігінің (өзгеріс жасау еріктілігін)**

#### **Екі Түрлі Мектеп Мәнмәтініндегі Салыстырмалы Үлгісі**

Қазақстанда және басқа да көптеген елдерде білім беру реформасы немесе оқу бағдарламаларын өзгерту, өзгерістердің жолсерігі болуға тиіс, мұғалімдердің міндеті болып табылады (Fullan, 1993). Алайда, саясаткерлер білім беру реформасы мұғалімдердің сенімдері мен құндылықтарына қалай сәйкес келетіні туралы сирек ойланады, ал бұл жаңа реформаларды жүзеге асыру үшін өте маңызды. Сондықтан бұл зерттеу ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің оқу бағдарламаларының жаңартылған саясатына көшуіне бағытталған. Осы зерттеудің мақсаты білім беру реформасы Қазақстанның екі түрлі мектеп контекстінде екі ағылшын тілі мұғалімінің жұмысына қалай әсер еткенін зерттеу болды. Бұл сапалы салыстырмалы зерттеу үш зерттеу құралынан тұрды: жаңартылған оқу бағдарламасының құжаттарын талдау, мультимодальды сауалнамалар және жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбат. Зерттеу қатысушылардың кәсіби сәйкестігі, өзіндік тиімділігі және жеке сенімдері олардың ерік-жігеріне ықпал ететіндігін көрсетті. Сонымен бірге, ата-аналардың мұғалімдердің рөліне қатынасы және жоғарылату туралы өтініш беру мұғалімдердің іс-әрекет бостандығын шектейтінін тапты. Алайда, зерттеу ағылшын тілінің тәжірибелі оқытушылары сыртқы және жағдайлық шектеулерге қарамастан, оқу тәжірибесінде, сыныптарда және мектеп жағдайында белсенді екенін көрсетті. Осылайша, зерттеу жаңадан келген мұғалімдер агенттігіне одан әрі назар аударуды қажет етеді.

*Түйінді сөздер:* ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің агенттігі, жаңартылған оқу бағдарламасы, үштілді білім беру, кәсіби сәйкестілік, өзіндік тиімділік.



### **Аннотация**

**Трехязычная Реформа и Казахстанское Свободу Действий (Агентство) учителей:**

**Сравнительное Тематическое Исследование Свободы Действий (Агентства)**

**Учителей Английского Языка в Двух Разных Школьных Контекстах**

В Казахстане и во многих других странах реформа образования или изменение учебных программ ставит учителей проводниками изменений (Fullan, 1993). Тем не менее, директивные органы могут редко задумываться о согласовании реформ образования с убеждениями и ценностями учителей, что имеет решающее значение для осуществления нововведенных реформ. Поэтому данное исследование сосредоточено на переходе учителей английского языка к обновленной программе обучения, которая требует от учителей применения прогрессивных методов обучения. Целью данного исследования было изучить, как реформа образования повлияла на работу двух учителей английского языка в двух разных школьных контекстах Казахстана. Это было качественное сравнительное исследование, которое состояло из трех инструментов: анализа документов, мультимодальных анкет, полуструктурированных интервью. Данное исследование показало, что профессиональная идентичность участников, самоэффективность и личные убеждения способствовали их свободе воли. Между тем, отношение родителей к роли учителей и повышение по службе ограничивали свободу действий учителей. В заключении, опытные преподаватели английского языка активны в своей преподавательской практике, классах и школьных условиях, несмотря на внешние и ситуационные ограничения.

*Ключевые слова:* свобода действий (агентство) преподавателей английского языка, обновленная учебная программа, трехязычное образование, профессиональная идентичность.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Background Information

For more than a decade, the Kazakhstani education system has undergone considerable policy changes, such as an updated, progressive curriculum and the implementation of the trilingual education policy. The primary motivation behind these rapid policy changes is foregrounded in economic and globalization discourses, such as the governments' aspirations to join the ranks of the 30 most competitive countries in the world (Goodman & Abdimanapova, 2020). Interestingly, English has gained capital in the Trilingual Policy because it prioritizes English as the language for international communication and integration into the global economy. Therefore, English is the language necessary for successful integration into the global economy, making it an essential part of educational reform. In this way, educational reform has placed English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers at the forefront of its successful implementation. As a result, Kazakhstani EFL teachers can easily be foregrounded in an accountability discourse because they had to reassess their teaching practices, attitudes, and beliefs (Khegay, 2017; Shamshidinova et al., 2014).

Kazakhstani research shows that policy reforms have put enormous pressure on EFL instructors because their teaching strategies need to address broader societal needs while receiving little or no pedagogical training or support (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016). On this issue, Ayubayeva (2018) investigated primary and secondary EFL teachers' perceptions about teaching in three languages, Kazakh, Russian and English, at three schools 1) a comprehensive village school in Auyl, 2) a gymnasium school in the Audan district, and 3) an autonomous school in the Aimak region. The findings revealed that the participants faced professional identity challenges and that the enactment of their agency was dependent on teachers' school contexts, professional



lives, and their motivation and self-efficacy. Similarly, Goodman and Abdimanapova (2020) investigated primary and secondary 10 EFL teachers' agency from three regions. This study illustrated that the participants had positive attitudes toward trilingual education and teaching content in three languages, English, Kazakh, and Russian. However, EFL secondary school teachers' agency was restricted by demanding curricula, their students' limited language proficiency, and insufficient resources.

In addition, Kazakhstani educational reform has resulted in an interest in teachers' professional identities and job satisfaction. For example, in the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) context, Khegay (2017) investigated ten teachers' perspectives on the impact of educational reform on their professional identities. The results showed positive professional identities in their classrooms and pedagogy, but external reform factors such as formal responsibility, job intensity, and the school administration had a detrimental effect on NIS teachers' identity because they restricted teachers' autonomy and disregarded their voice. Imangaliyev's (2019) mixed-methods study with 131 mainstream teachers at private and charter schools investigated participants' perspectives about their autonomy, job satisfaction, and motivation. This study found that Kazakhstani teachers' lack of autonomy significantly influenced their job satisfaction, motivation, and self-efficacy.

Finally, Qanay and Frost (2020) illustrated the substantial advantages of intervention programmes that encourage Kazakhstani teachers' voices and autonomy. Their narrative inquiry presented the results of an intervention programme at four Kazakhstani mainstream schools. This programme validated systemic and systematic support in developing teacher leadership. For instance, a significant motivator for teacher leadership development was the collaboration and the networking possibilities that the intervention programme offered, which encouraged

participants' voices in decision-making. As a result, the research studies have highlighted the challenges that can restrict teachers' agency, job satisfaction, and autonomy. However, they were not explicit about how Kazakh teachers enact their agency resilience and capacity to be change agents despite educational reform issues.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many developing countries have been engaging in educational reform, where local educational policies are framed in neoliberal-market discourses about the economic pressure related to globalization (Ball, 2012; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Therefore, similar educational reform initiatives foreground changes in curriculum values, teacher evaluation, student assessment, and an increased focus on information and communication technologies (Sahlberg, 2006). In many of these contexts, educational reform or the implementation of curriculum changes is the responsibility of teachers, who need to be change agents (Fullan, 1993). Nevertheless, policy-makers rarely reflect on how educational reform aligns with teachers' beliefs and values, crucial to implementing new reforms. Such a misalignment could be visible in the Kazakhstani context, where teachers must transform their traditional teaching approaches to embrace progressive pedagogies such as communicative language teaching (CLT) (Goodman & Abdimanapova, 2020). Consequently, what signaled agency before has been radically changed. Therefore, research that explores how EFL teachers practice their agency in two different Kazakhstani school contexts can reveal the factors that strengthen or impede their ability to be change agents.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Several studies in the Kazakhstani context indicate how educational reform has impacted teachers' beliefs, professional identities, and job satisfaction (Ayubayeva, 2018; Goodman &

Abdimanapova, 2020; Mukhametgaleyeva & Ospan, 2018; Suyundikova, 2019). This study connects with these previous research studies about teacher challenges. However, it extends the debate about how teachers enact agency to explain how the different ecologies and settings can strengthen or limit EFL teachers' agency. Therefore, this research study will highlight how EFL teachers from Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) and mainstream schools achieve their agency despite Kazakhstan's rapid educational reform processes. Consequently, the study focuses on EFL teachers' identities under constant pressure to transform in a rapidly changing educational policy field, aiming to shed light on how educational reform influences EFL teachers' agency. The following is the research question that will guide this study.

How is educational reform enabling or restricting EFL teachers' agency in two diverse school contexts?

To answer the main research question, I pose the sub-questions below.

- 1) What factors in their various contexts enable or restrict teacher agency?
- 2) How is agency practiced in two school contexts?

### **The Rationale and Significance of the Study**

Educational reforms in Kazakhstan have placed teachers' practices and pedagogy at the centre of classroom implementation. However, studies about CLT implementation focus more on teachers' and learners' challenges and less on the resources that Kazakhstani teachers draw on to effect change in a context characterized by rapid educational reforms. Therefore, the research study will be significant for several reasons. First, it addresses a gap in the literature that focuses on teachers' challenges associated with EFL classroom implementation. Secondly, the study can shed light on teachers' beliefs and values about their roles and the implications for successful EFL pedagogy in Kazakhstan. As a result, this study will be significant for pre-service teacher

trainers, policy-makers, and teachers because it can shed light on the work of language teachers and the possibilities their agency offers for EFL pedagogical change and educational reform.

### **Chapter Outline**

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one provided the background information of the study, the purpose, and the research problem and questions. Then, Chapter two will present a review of the literature, followed by Chapter three, which foregrounds the research methodology and the ethical considerations that underpinned this study. Chapter four will present the findings of the study. Finally, Chapter five will discuss the results, followed by Chapter 6, which concludes the research with a summary of the findings, research limitations, and recommendations for future studies.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This dissertation explores how educational reform influences the enactment or restriction of EFL teachers' agency in two diverse school contexts. The previous chapter provided an introduction and background to the study, and this chapter presents the literature associated with teacher agency and educational reform. The first section will review the literature on educational reform in Kazakhstan, the updated curriculum, and teachers' roles. The second section of this chapter focuses on the notion of teachers' agency, perspectives of agency from various theoretical paradigms, and the conceptualizations of language teachers' agency. The final section reviews research studies on language teacher agency.

### **Educational Reform and Teachers in Kazakhstan**

Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has witnessed a significant historical and social transformation. For example, the Soviet education system was characterized by centralized decision-making, the ideological construction of collectivist cultural heritage, and positivist views about teaching and learning (DeYoung & Nadyrbekyzy, 1997). Therefore, the current reform is a significant paradigm shift from the previous Soviet education, but successful reform is hampered by the soviet legacy that values academic rationalization and technicist approaches to the curriculum (Fimyar, 2014; Kanayeva, 2019; Silova, 2004).

Research has shown that teachers value the Soviet educational legacy for its traditional system because it boosted their prestige and authority. Therefore, it has been challenging to implement new educational reforms aligned with international educational and market trends (Fimyar & Kurakbayev, 2016). Kanayeva (2019) claims that teachers' self-esteem has declined after independence due to losing authority and the changing educational landscape that impacted the quality of their work and life balance. For this reason, many excellent teachers left the

profession in search of other higher-paying positions (Silova, 2005). Additionally, the Kazakhstani educational reform is underpinned by values associated with revitalizing its national identity, yet there is little room for teachers to participate in vision-setting processes because of bureaucratic administration techniques (Kanayeva, 2019). As a result, post-independence, teachers feel that they have less authority and ownership of classroom methodologies, impacting the quality of the profession and educational reform implementation (Bridges et al., 2014; Fimyar & Kurakbayev, 2016).

### **The New Curriculum and Entanglement of Time**

Kazakhstani educational reform is strongly connected with political ideals, visible in the State Programme for Education Development for 2011-2020 (SPED, 2010). SPED (2010) stipulates that schools are required to implement trilingual education using English, Kazakh, and Russian, and a new curriculum and assessment system. In 2015, the Ministries of Education and Science, Culture and Sport, and Investment and Development presented the Roadmap for Trilingual Education (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan [MoES], 2015). Moreover, the implementation of trilingual education was further encapsulated in ‘The 100 concrete steps’, a national plan for implementing institutional reforms in Kazakhstan (Nazarbayev, 2015). However, despite these noble educational intentions, transformation at schools revealed implementation gaps between reform policy and teacher practices (Karabassova, 2020).

To support the implementation of these endeavors, the government has established Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) in collaboration with international partners. The establishment of NIS was seen as central to implementing the new curriculum and transferring its best practices to all schools in Kazakhstan (Shamshidinova et al., 2014; Turner et al., 2014;

Wilson, 2017). Since 2011, the NIS has offered substantial in-service teacher training programmes. Over 52,000 teachers have been educated by NIS Center of Excellence (CoE) coaches across the country (Qanay & Frost, 2020, p. 5). In addition, the MoES has created training programmes to prepare instructors for English language classes that include both English lessons and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology (MoES, 2016). Consequently, these initiatives recognize that teachers remain central to the success of any educational reform (Donnell & Gettinger, 2015; Fullan, 2001 as cited in Johnson, 2006; Haney et al., 1996).

However, the sustainability and efficacy of these initiatives were questionable, especially concerning teachers' pedagogies and assessment (Ayubayeva, 2018). For example, international test results like The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) from 2012 reported that Kazakhstani learners struggled with the applications of school knowledge because of teachers' rote learning pedagogical approaches (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2014a). Nuttal (2009) explains this phenomenon as the entanglement of time, the space where past and present collide. On this point, McLaughlin et al. (2014) illustrated that teachers and students were caught between the highly didactic teaching and assessment methods of the past and the new methods of the present. Consequently, it is imperative to highlight the implications of educational reform on teachers' changing roles and how this can enable or restrict their agency.

### **The Implications of the Changing Nature of Teachers' Role**

Kazakhstani teachers are working under a rigorous policy reform context, requiring a reconsideration of their values and beliefs about pedagogy, assessment, and how learners learn (Kanayeva, 2019). In addition, the new curriculum focuses on developing transferable skills such

as reasoning and critical thinking skills, self-directed learning, digital and technology skills, and the development of communication skills (Goodman & Abdimanapova, 2020). Therefore, the modified curriculum has redefined the role of teachers in what constitutes effective learning and teaching (National Academy of Education [NAE], 2016). For example, teachers are encouraged to adopt student-centered techniques such as scaffolding learning to accommodate learners' diverse abilities and foster cooperative and active learning (Fimyar et al., 2014). In addition, textbooks include new topics and research-based assignments, and objectives have been replaced with learning outcomes underpinned by new ways and forms of assessment such as daily formative and end-of-course summative assessment (NAE, 2016). For this reason, there has been a shift in teachers' roles from being an authority to a facilitator that encourages active learning. Teachers are the key to the success of reform efforts. However, even if teachers perceive the new curriculum positively, if the orientations of educational reform clash with their deep-rooted values and beliefs, it might impact successful implementation (Kennedy, 1987).

Educational reform in Kazakhstan has resulted in many teachers leaving the profession due to workload and remuneration (Kanayeva, 2019). First, the teacher appraisal system in Kazakhstan is insufficient in setting the expected teachers' competencies and skills and shows limitations in assessing teacher qualifications (OECD, 2014b). Second, teachers' workload and low remuneration structures challenge educational reform. Furthermore, any educational reform aligned to social constructivist and problem-based pedagogy can add to teachers' workload because it requires new ways of planning and preparing lessons (Bantwini, 2010). Similarly, findings in the Hong Kong policy reform context illustrated that teachers' workload and administrative pressures were vital issues that hampered implementation at the school level (Cheung & Wong, 2012). Correspondingly, Kazakhstani teachers' workload burdens can result



in policy resistance and the continuation of traditional pedagogies and assessments (Misco, 2010; Wang & Zhao, 2011).

In response to the issues mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Ministry of Education and Science revisited teachers' remuneration. For this reason, the MoES increased teachers' payments by approximately 30% and reduced their workloads from 18 to 16 hours for state school teachers (Information-Analytic Center [IAC], 2018). Furthermore, the former President added the 'Law on the Status of Teachers' that outlines the updated workloads, explains teachers' legal rights, and safeguards them from excessive workload exploitations at schools (Nazarbayev, 2018). Besides, the OECD (2014b) found that additional measures are necessary to strengthen teachers' autonomy, professional discretion, and inclusive decision-making as agents of change in Kazakhstani schools.

Moreover, Hornberger (2009) argues that language policy and education reform informed by bottom-up policies are likely to fail without support from stakeholders. In Kazakhstan, communicative language teaching underpins the trilingual or multilingual educational reform (NAE, 2017). Therefore, teachers' values about grammar-based teaching have become obsolete because they are now required to develop students' communicative competencies. More significantly, teachers would have to assess students' communicative proficiency rather than testing decontextualized rules and grammatical correctness (NAE, 2017). Consequently, investigating EFL teacher agency in the Kazakhstani context can highlight how teachers enact practice and engage with policy (Lasky, 2005; Ketelaar et al., 2012; Priestley et al., 2013).

### **Why the EFL Teacher Agency in Kazakhstan?**

The agency issue is critical for all teachers when they confront educational change because it can shape their resilience and capacity to cope with professional practice (Lasky,

2005). Language instructors' professional identities are frequently challenged during educational reform; English language teaching is thus "not a politically or morally neutral activity" (Richards, 2008, p. 173). For example, they need an understanding of their own dispositions during language curricula reform which can be visible in the selection of their resources, their design and assessment of language activities, and their beliefs about the nature of language learning (Sanczyk, 2020). For this reason, language teachers must cope with educational change and exercise agency associated with language teaching methods, navigate their students' multilingual and multicultural identities, and conduct language assessments to develop students' communicative competence (Tao & Gao, 2021). As a result, "gaining a clearer and deeper understanding of language teachers' agency is never simple, but is always important work, with deep political implications" (Miller et al., 2018, p.2). Consequently, language teachers' agency or lack of agency are essential factors for successfully implementing language education policy in Kazakhstan (OECD, 2014b).

Since educational reform, Kazakhstani EFL language teachers' sense of agency and identity was rooted in the "native-speaker fallacy" that questions non-native English speaking teachers' (NNESTs) competence (Tao & Gao, 2021). For this reason, English-nativeness functions as a language teaching benchmark "against which [English] knowledge and competence can be judged [since] nativeness is valued over professional qualifications and experience" (Yazan, 2018, p. 2). Thus, the "native-speaker fallacy" diverts "attention from the flourishing [...] local pedagogical initiative" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 199). For example, the Kazakhstani government used vast budgets to import (foreign-born, English-speaking) native-speaking teachers from English-speaking countries (Fimyar, 2018). As a result, policy-makers devalued EFL teachers' expertise and local pedagogical initiatives (OECD, 2014b; Hargreaves &

Fullan, 2012; Fullan, 2016). Such a situation in language teaching reform is unfortunate, given that local teachers are critical mediators in implementing new pedagogies (Fullan, 2016).

Finally, EFL teacher agency has not been widely explored in language educational reform (Kayi-Aidar, 2015, Miller et al., 2018). For this reason, exploring Kazakhstani language teachers' agency is essential because they have to cope with educational change that requires a deep understanding of multilingual and multicultural realities in a country where keeping languages separate was the norm. On this point, Yakavets et al. (2017) argue that teachers' initiatives need to be supported through ongoing professional development that can create the necessary environment to activate teachers' agency and voice. Despite support initiatives, EFL teachers' voice and agency in the Kazakhstani context are essential since teachers on the margins are implementing new approaches stipulated by bureaucratic top-down regulations from the center (Bridges et al., 2014).

### **The Notion of Teachers' Agency**

Fullan (2007) was influential in notions of teachers' role in educational reform by identifying four stages: initiation, implementation, continuation, and outcome. Therefore, educational reformers should look beyond implementing new teaching approaches and using new materials. They should also focus on changing teachers' beliefs because it would be more essential than acquiring new teaching skills (Fullan, 2007). For this reason, change is multidimensional because it involves teachers' beliefs about education and skills, which can impact teachers' performance. Accordingly, Fullan (2007) argues that any educational reform would be challenged if teachers' actions, beliefs, and values are not considered in their unique school contexts. Hence, teachers must have a shared understanding of educational reform to develop an agency and accept, reject, or adapt the envisaged change in their unique school

contexts. However, even though Fullan (2007) did not explicitly mention the notion of agency, his research recognized the need for teachers as active participants during policy implementation in defiance of structural education models.

In a structural paradigm, individuals function as part of a social system where all aspects of the system work together to achieve a degree of cohesion (Dowding, 2008). In addition, in education, a structuralist paradigm advocates scientific objectivity and neutrality where educational reform is a matter of improving cultural or societal conditions (Archer, 2003). For example, concerning the curriculum, a structural approach would hold traditional views about curricula as a plan or a sort of blueprint for systematically implementing educational activities (Su, 2012). Therefore, teachers would be viewed as passive receivers that needed to implement the content stipulations. For this reason, previous studies from a structural perspective assumed that “agency and change [were] synonymous and positive” (Priestley et al., 2012, p. 191). Agency was thus seen as natural and projected teachers as technicians in charge of actualizing directives for educational innovation (Tao & Gao, 2017). For example, in a structural paradigm, most professional development or teacher training programmes focus on training teachers to master prescribed skills and knowledge (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). Therefore, teacher training was underpinned by teachers’ acquisition of skills and knowledge, a deficit model of teachers’ agency (Guskey, 2002). However, this deficit model was ineffective and criticized by many educational researchers because it conceptualized change as a natural and completed event transmitted to participants as passive agents of change (Fullan, 2007; Guskey, 2002). As a result, there was a shift toward viewing educational reform as a dynamic and complex process where teachers are active participants who can shape their professional development (Fullan, 2007; Schön, 1987).

Recent studies about agency investigated how individual teachers practice or deny their agency during rapid policy reformulations (Ketelaar et al., 2012; Robinson, 2012; Vähäsantanen & Eteläpelto, 2009). These research studies revealed that teachers' agency was underpinned by various personal values towards reform that manifest in resistance, ambivalence, and agreement with the proposed changes (Sannino, 2010; Vähäsantanen & Eteläpelto, 2009). These recent studies foreground a post-structuralist paradigm that moved from the deficit model of teacher agency. As a result, the following section delves into the many viewpoints on teacher agency.

### **Perspectives of Agency**

Agency is a complex construct because there are several interpretations of what agency is. For example, agency has been “romanticized by some and negated by others” (Robinson, 2012). In addition, in social science, the notion of agency received much attention “as a core, albeit slippery concept” (Eteläpelto et al., 2013). Notable social scientists Giddens (1984) and Archer (2001) have argued that agency can be associated with power, which remains a contentious debate in many educational studies (Eteläpelto et al., 2013). Giddens (1984) argues that agency can illustrate that humans have the potential to alter their own lives and environments while also being molded by societal and individual forces. As a result, teachers' activities are determined by the resources they have access to, which can either lead to empowerment or restrain human behavior. Therefore, this conception of agency helps illustrate the relationship between teachers' agency and their access to resources or symbolic capital (Giddens, 1979).

The concept of agency is widely debated and contested, and there are two popular camps of definitions which are structuralist and post-structuralist. First, Archer (2000), like Giddens, emphasizes that agency is rooted in structures and that social science researchers need to separate

how structure and agency interact through time. Secondly, a critical realism view of agency departs from a clear analytical separation between structure and agency because structure includes ‘culture,’ a vital element that informs agency. As a result, Giddens’ notion of agency has been influential in explaining the structure-agency debate and has informed socio-cultural approaches to teacher autonomy (Eteläpelto et al., 2013; Sawyer, 2002).

Currently, there are three defining conceptualizations of agency: agency as a variable, agency as capacity, and agency as phenomenon/doing (Priestley et al., 2015). However, agency as a fixed variable that is structurally determined does not consider how the social dimension, teachers’ identity, and the contextual conditions in particular situations contribute to the lack or enactment of agency (Priestley et al., 2012; Tao & Gao, 2017). For this reason, agency as a capacity views teacher agency as a dynamic process influenced by participants’ histories, values, and beliefs (Biesta et al., 2015). Agency as a phenomenon includes teachers’ personal aspirations and professional knowledge about curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy (Ketelaar et al., 2012; Sloan, 2006). As a result, the concept of agency has theoretical roots in the ecological, socio-cultural and socio-cognitive traditions that foreground agency as “strongly connected to the contextual conditions within which it is achieved and not as merely a capacity or possession of the individual” (Priestley et al., 2012, p. 197).

### *An Ecological Perspective and Teacher Agency*

In ecological concepts of agency, it is essential to bring to the surface the rationale for agents’ decisions, to let agents analyze and reflect on how their decisions are based on prior experiences and future trajectories. From an ecological framing, agency ‘is always a dialogical process by which actors immersed in temporal passage engage with others within collectively organized contexts of action’ (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 974). For this reason, ecological

proponents argue for three distinct temporal elements of agency which are projective, iterative, and practical evaluative, referred to as the “chordal triad of agency” (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 194). The iterative element represents agents’ decisions based on prior experiences, whereas the projective feature depicts agents’ actions based on their future anticipations, hopes, and fears. Then, the practical evaluative component foregrounds the various decision-making options in light of external opportunities, pressures, and challenges. As a result, from an ecological view, the temporality of agency exists in a particular culture with specific expectations that can constrain or enable how the agency is enacted (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, pp. 132 -148).

Biesta and Tedder (2007) positioned agency within the contextual environments because they argue that the context shapes agents’ beliefs, values, and actions. For this reason, agents’ decision-making and actions are context-dependent; agency is achieved, rather than a predisposed innate ability which means that an understanding of “the achievement of agency thus requires an understanding of the ecological conditions under and through which agency is achieved” (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 46). Therefore, the enactment of agency includes an integral link between individual autonomy, agents’ abilities, the availability of material and symbolic resources, and situational factors. Consequently, an ecological frame relates agency with the contextual resources and time dimensions to connect how agents’ prior experiences and future aspirations impact their agency, emotions, and wellbeing (Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Robinson, 2012; Tao & Gao, 2017).

Robinson (2012) used an ecological lens to conduct a study with seven Australian non-government school teachers. The study investigated how teachers enacted their professional agency in a contradictory policy reform context. The study found that EFL teachers demonstrated initial compliance when they internalized and reflected on their understanding of

the new policy requirements. After this, participants showed their agency through verbalization, negotiation, and collaboration of their expectations. As a result, despite control measures such as performance accountability in the new policy, strong collegial connections allowed teachers to create their professional agency by adapting and adopting policy requirements to match and reshape their practices.

Biesta et al. (2015) explored the conditions that inspire and drive teacher agency and the elements that contribute to its development and advancement in the Scottish school context. This qualitative study included six classrooms and three school administrators at one primary and two secondary schools. The results highlighted that the school discourses had a range of conflicting and ambiguous understanding of pedagogical and assessment reform, resulting in teacher confusion and stress about their role. The results indicated that many instructors failed to situate their job within a comprehensive understanding of educational goals and suggested that specific educational ecologies and teachers' beliefs influence their ability to attain agency. Consequently, this study contributed to understanding how an ecological agency frame unpacks the temporal and contextual situation to explain teachers' enactment of agency.

### ***A Socio-Cultural Perspective and Teacher Agency***

A socio-cultural framing of agency argues that agency is mediated in a socio-cultural environment drawing on a Vygotskian conceptualization of development and learning (Ahearn, 2001; Morris et al., 2001). A Vygotskian frame explains that agents' actions, beliefs, and values occur in specific social contexts, shaped by their access to symbolic and cultural tools (Wertsch, 1993). For this reason, teachers' actions and behaviors in specific social settings and the availability of cultural tools become the unit of analysis to shed light on human agency (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Additionally, Van Lier (2008) foregrounds the connections between agency



and contexts where individuals participate in an activity system at the social level (Feryok, 2012). This activity system is closely connected to Lantolf and Pavlenko's (2001) definition of agency as "a relationship that is constantly co-constructed and renegotiated with those around the individual and with the society at large" (p. 148). Therefore, there is a link between the structure of a social context and the available cultural tools and resources that mediate and interact with the individual's beliefs and values (Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Lasky, 2005). Consequently, the structure and availability of a situational or school context can be a potent mediator to assist or limit teachers' agency based on school norms and externally mandated policies (Lasky, 2005).

Interestingly, Hitlin and Elder (2007) argue for the integral link between agents' actions and their reflexivity about the self and its action or lack of activity during decision-making (Robinson, 2012). Additionally, socio-cultural advocates view agents as possessing autonomy that can demonstrate deliberate action; thus, agents have the capacity and 'the socioculturally mediated capacity to act' (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Another element of agency from a socio-cultural view is that agency is formed through mediated relationships and communities of practice (Ahearn, 2001). Therefore, it is action-oriented and scaffolded in the socio-cultural context where teachers can develop from minimal action to a more powerful agency position (Liao, 2017). As a result, this view argues against teachers as being "pawns in the reform process," stating that all teachers are "active agents, whether they act passively or actively" (Lasky, 2005, pp. 900-901).

Similar to the ecological frame, a socio-cognitive theory conceptualize teacher agency as "a contextually enacted way of being in the world" (Van Lier, 2008, pp. 163–186), involving both what is done and how it is understood to be significant (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). On this issue, Lasky (2005) investigated the dynamic interplay of teacher identity, agency, and context as

they influence how secondary teachers describe their professional vulnerability, particularly in terms of their capacities to fulfill their primary goals in educating learners. The study found that teachers all believed that their primary role was to deliver academic material while simultaneously addressing social and emotional aspects of their students' wellbeing.

Consequently, the results indicated that as instructors grow more assured of who they are as teachers, external mediational systems may have less impact on developing teacher identity and agency.

Moreover, a study in a Chinese institution focused on how instructors use agency during curricular change (Tao & Gao, 2017). This qualitative study included eight English for Special Purposes university teachers and found that their agentic decisions were mediated by their professional identity and past experiences. Furthermore, the results illustrated that participants exercised agency in three significant areas of professional development: learning, teaching, and research. As a result, this study contributes to understanding how agency was perceived and practiced in the university context. Finally, Edwards (2019) conducted a qualitative study about ESL teachers' agency and professional identity mediation during and after an action research (AR) project. The findings showed that agency might be redirected if it cannot be socially resourced from an institutional context due to constraints such as a lack of support, collegial interest, time, or money.

### ***A Social-Cognitive Perspective and Teacher Agency***

From a social cognitive perspective, agency is related to the mind, brain, and behavior (Bandura, 1989; Locke et al., 1984). For instance, they argue that "human behavior is regulated by forethought embodying cognized goals, and personal goal setting is influenced by self-appraisal of capabilities" (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175). For this reason, agency is strongly connected

to agents' self-efficacy; their beliefs and values about an issue can "be self-aiding or self-hindering" (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175). Therefore, agents' cognitive thinking can shape their decisions; a more robust self-perceived efficacy can increase goals and commitment to enact their agency (Bandura, 1989; Taylor et al., 1984). As a result, social cognitive theory sees agency as cognitive processes based on agents' internal beliefs, thoughts, and reason (Bandura, 2006).

In addition, for social cognitive theorists, agency relates to intentionality and individuals' ability to "make things happen and participate in 'their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal'" during times of change (Bandura, 2001, p. 2). Therefore, agency is also the habitus that centers an agent's ability to act and choose a course of action (Bourdieu, 2000). For this reason, social cognitivists are interested in the notion of self-efficacy because they argue that it functions as an essential component associated with agents' motivation to embrace or resist change. As a result, from a social cognitive perspective, agents' mental processes, motivation, feelings, and decision-making processes need deeper interrogation.

However, cognitive theorists do not have a deterministic view of agency. For example, they believe that agency can be individual and collective and that agents' self-efficacy beliefs impact both (Martin, 2010). Individual agency is often seen as autonomy, and collective agency is a collaborative effort to achieve a common goal. On this point, Martin (2010) showed how teachers' individual agency was embedded in pedagogy when teachers used self-regulatory processes such as supporting active student engagement in learning, risk-taking, and problem-solving. In this study, collective agency was achieved when teachers defied bureaucracy because most were trained through post-structural theory about how learners learn and how schools function. As a result, the study found that if individual teachers' self-efficacy, beliefs, and values align with peers, a collective agency can be achieved in a given context (Martin, 2010).

In South Korea, Min (2019) used social cognitive theory to shed light on teacher agency during national curriculum reform. The purpose of the study was to explore how the school culture and its contextual and situational conditions impacted participants' self-efficacy, beliefs, and actions. The survey results indicated that the schools' environmental factors, such as school management and teacher relationships and teacher-teacher relationships, impacted agency. As a result, it is imperative to interrogate language teachers' agency, especially non-native EFL teachers' because they have to enact agency concerning the nature of language learning and teaching, language assessment, and how learners acquire or learn languages.

### **Language Teachers' Agency**

From a socio-cognitive perspective, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and Buchanan (2015) highlighted the significance of the connection between identity and agency and the role of reflection in developing agency. These scholars argue that teachers explore their agency through reflection to understand themselves, their practices, values, and beliefs. In other words, teachers develop their identities when they engage in deep self-reflection that "may lead to a strong sense of agency" (p. 183). Similarly, from a socio-cultural frame Mockler (2011) emphasized that agents' awareness of their values and beliefs impact their professional identity, making them better equipped to enact agency in their classes, schools, and the wider community. Buchanan (2015) also emphasized that critical self-reflection allows EFL teachers to "imagine new ways of being, thinking, believing, and acting" (p. 715). Finally, on this point, Kumaravadivelu (2012) added that both agency and identity are "socially constructed and socially shared," making critical self-reflection essential for language teachers to engage and challenge their beliefs and values in becoming moral agents (p. 59).

Pantić (2015) stated that teachers who view themselves as change agents enact their agency by participating in “school development and professional networking, initiate collaborations with colleagues, and other professionals” (p. 764). The literature highlights three distinct language teacher agency roles that impact teachers’ agency during educational reform (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The first role is a passive technician, representing language teachers who focus mainly on transferring knowledge that does not explore new teaching methods. In contrast, a reflective practitioner is a problem solver attentive to students’ needs and reflects on classroom experiences. Finally, the transformative intellectual goes beyond the first two roles because they reflect “upon ideological principles,” question school practices, challenge social inequalities, and work towards personal and social transformation (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p.13). Therefore, the transformative practitioner exercises their agency and engages in critical reflection to change how they teach and interact with students. In addition, Kumaravadivelu (2012) added that transformative practitioners “play the role of change agents raising educational, social, cultural, and political consciousness in their learners” (p. 56). Unfortunately, Morgan (2009) argues that most language teachers take on a technician role and demonstrate transformative practitioner agency to a limited extent.

Extending the discussion on teacher agency, Kumaravadivelu (2012) argued that language teachers become moral agents when they consciously choose materials, content, activities, instructional strategies, and classroom interaction patterns that center around addressing diverse students’ needs, enriching them as individuals, and embracing their various interests instead of following prescribed curricula and policies. He called for critical pedagogy, where teachers challenge schools’ ideological, discursive, and social domination because language teachers should “initiate, execute, and evaluate classroom-based research projects”

(p. 85) because it can lead to a transformation of self, teaching practices, and classroom communities.

### **Research on Language Teachers' Agency**

Kayi-Aydar (2015) drew on positioning theory to explore pre-service ESL teachers' agency in the United States. The findings of this study showed that teacher identity and agency are multidimensional and context-dependent because the participants position themselves with others in the social context. The study suggested that teachers in preparatory programmes should be allowed to understand their strengths as ELL teachers. Another study conducted by Kayi-Aydar (2017) investigated language teacher agency and identity development in educational and professional contexts using journal entries and four semi-structured interviews. The study found that one participant exhibited a strong sense of agency in the workplace and advocacy for Latino pupils. She showed compassion and adjusted her teaching content and tactics to develop meaningful relationships with students.

Fleming (1998) found that courses must be "individualized and created for specific goals" (p. 30) and that instructors must have agency in assisting students. In this study, Fleming (1998) investigated the perspectives and practices of five adult ESL instructors when they switched to a new curriculum. According to the findings of this case study, ESL instructors exercised agency in terms of being involved in curricular decision-making, such as control over classroom materials and activities. Although the ESL teachers acknowledged that curriculum standards provided direction on curriculum material, they indicated a need for more freedom to address their students' requirements in their unique classrooms. ESL teachers also exerted agency by creating their teaching resources, particularly for multilevel classes.

Jaar (2017) investigated teacher agency and advocacy through engagement in learning communities. According to this case study, participating in collaborative curriculum and activity development transformed bilingual instructors' identities. Bilingual teachers also exerted agency by promoting the importance of bilingualism in education, providing culturally appropriate materials among themselves, and advocating for culturally diverse pupils and communities. However, the study found that lack of funds, continual professional development, and resources were among the structural obstacles multilingual instructors encountered in schools. Nonetheless, the study concluded that teachers' joint efforts and the school's supportive climate allowed these bilingual teachers to voice their concerns and advocate for their immigrant and minority children.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter focused on the literature review about conceptualizations of agency from socio-cognitive, socio-cultural, and ecological perspectives. In addition, it presented literature about language teachers' agency and research studies about EFL teachers' agency in diverse contexts. The next chapter will focus on the research method that underpinned this study.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The study focuses on how educational reform enables or restricts the agency of two EFL teachers from two diverse school contexts. The previous chapter reviewed the literature associated with the language teacher agency and research studies that foreground teachers' agency in EFL classroom contexts. This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and presents the research design.

#### **Research Methodology and Rationale**

The EFL teacher agency is viewed as one of the central phenomena impacting successful educational reform. The notion of teacher agency has been explored through various research methodologies such as quantitative, mixed, and qualitative approaches, depending on what the researcher intends to investigate. First, quantitative research methods concentrate on statistical information and are interested in close-ended data (Creswell, 2014). Second, Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that a qualitative approach “offers the opportunity to ‘unpack’ issues, to see what they are about or what lies inside, and to explore how they are understood by those connected with them” (p. 27). In addition, Dörnyei (2007) argues that a mixed-method approach combines both quantitative and qualitative methodologies that can be time-consuming since they need substantial data collecting and processing (Creswell, 2012).

To get an in-depth understanding of the complex nature of the agency of the language teachers, I used a qualitative approach to conduct the research. Merriam (2016) argues that qualitative research “assumes that reality is socially constructed, that there is no single, observable reality [but] multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event” (p.8). By applying a qualitative approach, I gained an in-depth insight into how EFL teachers “interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their



experiences” (Merriam, 2016, p. 39). As a result, the research design of this study is underpinned by a qualitative approach to illustrate how educational reform enabled or constrained EFL teachers’ agency from two different school contexts.

### **Research Design**

I was interested in exploring how teachers made the meaning of their agency since rapid educational reform in Kazakhstan. According to Creswell (2012), the purpose of qualitative research is to systematically explore a central phenomenon within a particular context from the participants’ perspective. Furthermore, a qualitative approach gives centrality to participants’ attitudes and opinions, allowing researchers to capture their voices (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, this research study followed a qualitative research design because it would allow for an in-depth investigation of teachers’ beliefs, attitudes, and agency opinions.

Additionally, this study was interested in illustrating the complex nature of teachers’ agency in two different school contexts. Dörnyei (2007) states that a case study design helps gather and organize data related to the unique character of a social being or object. Therefore, a case study design allows the researcher to examine the unique contextual factors influencing EFL teachers’ agency. Finally, a case study allowed the researcher to develop new questions or adapt questions as the investigated issue becomes more contextually relevant (De Silva Joyce & Feez, 2016).

### ***Sampling in Qualitative Research***

Qualitative research aims to produce an in-depth examination of a fundamental phenomenon rather than generalize to a population. Thus, to better understand the agency phenomenon, the qualitative researcher selects participants and settings on purpose (Creswell, 2012).

### ***Participants***

Given the study aims, a purposive sampling strategy underpinned the research design because it provided information-rich data about the participants, their perceptions, and experiences in their unique social contexts (Creswell, 2014). In purposeful sampling, also known as judgment, selective, or subjective sampling, researchers choose individuals from a particular population to participate in the study (Patton, 1990). Therefore, the participants for this study were two EFL language teachers at two different schools based on selection criteria. In addition, purposeful sampling allowed me to choose the comparative contexts because the two participants were from two schools with different histories and profiles. Moreover, researchers can also use convenience sampling to base their selection on those with easy access (Creswell, 2014). Subsequently, convenience and purposive samples are common sampling strategies used for case studies, which is why this study also included convenience sampling.

### ***Research Site***

Given that this study is interested in comparing teacher agency in two diverse school contexts, the research site included a Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) and one mainstream school in the southern part of Kazakhstan. These two research sites provided contextually relevant data because one was well resourced, and the other school was a state mainstream school. The rationale for selecting these sites was that these two contexts provided rich comparative data about teacher agency. Thus, by comparing and contrasting the data, I made better sense of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

### **Data Collection Instruments**

De Silva Joyce and Feez (2016) highlight the importance of validating data and research findings using more than one technique to collect data. For this reason, I included various data

sources such as questionnaires, interviews, and documents. First, the multimodal qualitative questionnaire (see Appendix A) consisted of images and language that offered a novel participant experience, given that the world has become more multimodal (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2018). The semi-structured interview (see Appendix B) included an image or ‘case’ of EFL teachers’ experiences associated with educational reform. I envisaged that the multimodal images would create a relaxed atmosphere and provide a more natural interaction between the participants and the researcher. Finally, document analysis (see Appendix C) allowed the researcher to shed light on the orientations encapsulated in the educational reform documents and compare them with teachers’ values and beliefs about implementing trilingual language education. See below the aims of the research instruments.

1. The multimodal qualitative questionnaires aimed to identify common patterns of the language reforms and how they impacted teachers’ agency in their contexts.
2. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to illustrate participants’ views about factors that enable or restrict their agency.
3. Document analysis aimed to understand better background of EFL-specific educational reform and its implications for enabling or constraining teachers’ agency, practice, and pedagogy.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

This study adhered to the established ethical conduct that must underpin all research (Oliver, 2010). First, I got approval from the NUGSE Ethics Review Committee. Then I contacted the participants following a purposive and convenience sampling approach. The next step was to recruit them and send information letters that included the study’s purpose, benefits,

explanations about the participant requirements, and the researcher's responsibility to guarantee the protection associated with maintaining participant confidentiality and anonymity.

Once the participants had indicated their interest in participating in the study, I ensured that I followed the ethical procedures and protocols that govern all research (Oliver, 2010). I prepared soft copies to sign online. Then I met participants online to explain and discuss the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix D). The form contained information about the purpose of the study and how obtained data would be collected, recorded, and used. I also explained how I would ensure participants' confidentiality and anonymity and minimize possible risks. In addition, I highlighted participants' right to withdraw from the research study at any time without giving any reason. Finally, I explained the data collection procedures and the information I would need from them.

Second, I collected and analyzed educational reform documents openly accessible from the education ministry and school websites. Then I asked participants to complete the questionnaire and met with them online to discuss the questionnaire results. Finally, after analyzing the official documents about policy changes and the multimodal questionnaires, I requested to conduct semi-structured interviews to ask more in-depth questions. I scheduled these interviews according to participants' availability and provided them with an approximate duration for the interviews.

Third, I told them about the study's timeframe for fieldwork related to the data collection, which started in late December and continued until February. Howlett (2021) argues that COVID-19 transformed social science research because we can now conduct online fieldwork. Therefore, online fieldwork can provide valuable insights not available through in-person methods, especially when discussing sensitive or personal topics. Furthermore, Gray et al. (2020)

specifically pointed out how a Zoom platform contributed to collecting rich data and positive participant experiences in video conferencing. Due to the global pandemic and the uncertainty of site access, I informed the participants that we would conduct the interviews via the Zoom platform.

### **Data Analysis Framework**

Once the data was collected, it was manually analyzed because it enabled the researcher “to be close to the data and have a hands-on feel for it” (Creswell, 2012, p. 240). I followed a cyclical process that progressed from broad to more detailed analysis and conclusions (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Thus, drawing on Creswell (2012), I analyzed my data thematically through the following stages: (a) collecting data, (b) transcribing data, (c) obtaining a general sense of material, (d) locating text segments and assigning a code label to them, (e) categorizing codes and themes for description to be used in the research report. Finally, I used a constant comparative method to uncover the fundamental themes that ran across the responses, which offered further evidence to back up the themes and categories to find “both the themes that unify the story and the disparate voices that carry, comment on, and disrupt the main themes” (Wertz, 2011, p. 226).

### **Ethical Procedures**

#### ***Anonymity and Confidentiality***

Considering ethical issues from the early stages of research is crucial, where anonymity and confidentiality are the cornerstones of research ethics (Oliver, 2010). Therefore, participants must be informed about their rights to anonymity and confidentiality, including protecting their identities and privacy. For this reason, I preserved my participants’ safety by ensuring that their identities, private details, and information would not be disseminated (Oliver, 2010). To protect

participants' anonymity or confidentiality during the data collection stage and storage of their data, I assigned labels instead of using participant names. Furthermore, I used generic labels for the school names. Finally, I stored copies of recordings and participants' responses and transcripts on my password and biometrically protected laptop.

### ***Research risks***

This study followed the established ethical standards governing research. Nonetheless, ethical issues could occur, especially when conducting qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, as an ethical researcher, I made sure that ethics formed part of each step of my research study to minimize risks before, during, and after the data collection. First, ethical clearance was granted by Nazarbayev University. Before data collection, I reduced risks by informing participants about their rights and my responsibility to protect their anonymity and confidentiality. I also told them about giving their informed consent and their right to withdraw from participation during any research project stage. During the data collection process, I ensured that participants got the interview questions in advance and had the right not to answer any questions that made them uncomfortable. Finally, because of the nature of the research topic, which dealt with teacher agency, it might bring up issues of power dynamics related to the implementation of the reforms associated with incompetence or negative comments about school structures or administrations. I minimised this risk by encrypting data in a password-secured computer and removing personal identifiers from research records as soon as possible. Namely, they were assigned labels as Teacher 1 and Teacher 2. Furthermore, the universities they studied were indicated by a common naming, and the schools they work at are generalised by pointing out the region only. Eventually, to preserve one teacher's identity, I did not directly reference one of the school's websites with its educational programme used for document analysis.

Conducting interviews on the Zoom platform online may also pose some risks to participants' anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality. I anticipated the risks by conducting individual interviews on password-protected online Zoom meetings, obtaining consent-based recordings of the videos or audios, and reminding participants of their right to withdraw and remain anonymous. Furthermore, I reiterated that I would protect their confidentiality by not disclosing their recordings and data to third parties. They would have the right to approve and revise transcriptions and themes.

### ***Research benefits***

There are a few implicit benefits associated with the study. First, participant reflections on the impact of educational reform on their teaching practices and teacher wellbeing could reveal hidden strengths related to their agency. Second, it could lead to participants' sense-making about creating conditions at school that would help them make positive changes or eliminate possible obstacles. Ultimately, the concerns and restrictions or active involvement in implementing new reforms would help school leaders develop a shared understanding of teacher agency and their roles as change agents.

### **Conclusion**

The study focused on how EFL teachers exercise their agency from two diverse school contexts. This chapter presented an outline of the research technique followed by the research design. Next, Chapter four will present the findings of the study.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

This qualitative inquiry investigated how educational reform impacted the enactment or restriction of EFL teachers' agency in two different school environments. The previous chapter focused on the methodology, research techniques, and ethics underpinning this study. This chapter presents the data analysis of documents, which gives a background of EFL-specific educational reform and its implications for enabling or constraining teachers' agency, practice, and pedagogy. The second section presents the multimodal qualitative questionnaire that explored how language teaching reforms affected teachers' practices, followed by a semi-structured interview to gain deeper insights into participants' values and beliefs about their agency in practice. Finally, this section concludes with a summary of the results from each data set. The research questions of this study were:

How is educational reform enabling or restricting EFL teachers' agency in two diverse school contexts?

- 1) What factors in their various contexts enable or restrict teacher agency?
- 2) How is agency practiced in two school contexts?

### **Document Analysis**

I present two types of documents, both publically available online, associated with EFL curriculum reform: the Instructions and Methodical Letter that informs mainstream teachers' pedagogy and assessment practices and the Educational Programme for AEO 'Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools' or 'NIS-Programme' that regulates teachers' teaching practice of secondary school teachers.



*Instructions and Methodical Letter (2021)*

The National Academy of Education (NAE) issued this document in 2021. This document contains the primary curriculum, instructional, and assessment guidelines for the teachers from state schools. For example,

Целью обучения английскому языку на уровне основного среднего образования является развитие языковых навыков обучающихся посредством разнообразных заданий, способствующих развитию анализа, оценки и творческого мышления. Кроме того, учебная программа предполагает работу с широким спектром устных и письменных источников (NAE, 2021, p. 99).

The extract above foregrounds the main aims for EFL teaching and signals how the focus from traditional approaches shifted towards progressive language teaching. For instance, the quote suggests that lower secondary English instruction should develop students' language abilities through tasks that encourage analysis, evaluation, and creative thinking. Therefore, EFL teachers must create conditions where students gain communicative skills in the target (English) language so that their students can deal with various oral and textual materials.

The initial sections of the document provided the secondary schools with the time allocation for Kazakh, Russian and English languages as subjects for grades five to nine, which is 3 hours per week, 102 hours per academic year. In addition, it stipulated that the English language levels indicated in the curriculum of the subject "English" for grades 5-9 are developed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Foreign Languages (CEFR). It also stipulated that teachers need to use the CEFR for English pedagogy and assessment; as indicated in the extract below,

Языковые уровни, указанные в программе учебного предмета «Английский язык» для 5-9 классов основного среднего уровня образования, разработаны в

соответствии с общеевропейской системой компетенций владения иностранным языком (Common European Framework of Reference, CEFR) (NAE, 2021, p.99).

In addition, the instructional letter revealed the pedagogical shift in English language teaching to communicative language teaching approaches. Therefore, English language teachers are encouraged to use extensive communicative tools that promote communicative development through projects, interviews, role-plays, discussions, conferences, competitions, and dramaturgy, encapsulated in the extract below,

Организация образовательного процесса по английскому языку предполагает всестороннее использование коммуникативных технологий (проекты, интервью, ролевые игры, дискуссии, конференции, конкурсы, драматургия и др.) (NAE, 2021, pp. 99-100).

From the above extract, it is clear that if the focus of the English language learning used to be on rote memorization of grammatical facts. Hence, the new reform requires a radical pedagogical shift in the teaching and learning process. The insertions of a communicative approach and the suggested tasks would require teachers to provide ample opportunities to increase student motivation to learn a foreign language. Along with the improving the students' cognitive and communicative development, and advancing their creative potential.

Overall, this document stipulates six recommendations associated with English language teaching; see the sixth recommendation in the extract below,

Педагогам английского языка рекомендуется чередовать и сочетать различные виды заданий: устные, письменные, обязательные, по выбору, общие, дифференцированные, индивидуальные, комбинированные, творческие (NAE, 2021, p. 101).

The above extract emphasizes that EFL teachers should use various English language learning activities associated with communicative language pedagogies such as oral, written, authentic, and creative tasks.

It appears as if the Instructions and Methodical Letter guidelines about suggested topics or content intend to simplify EFL teachers' work. Interestingly, the guidelines below also illustrate that language instructors have some autonomy visible in the extract below, indicating that instructors can unilaterally distribute the hours and lesson pacing in the fourth quarter. The quote below shows,

Педагог самостоятельно распределяет часы и последовательность тем по разделу в течение четверти (NAE, 2021, p.99).

Moreover, the document also encapsulates how EFL teachers need to conduct English language assessments. That is illustrated in the extract below,

Формативное оценивание проводится для определения достижения целей обучения и дальнейшего построения учебного процесса. Оценивание осуществляется через рекомендации в письменной или устной форме. При формативном оценивании педагог должен предоставить обучающимся обратную связь (NAE, 2021, p.100).

The above extract foregrounds the shift to formative assessment; thus, it highlights that teachers need to move from previous examination-based assessments to formative assessments. This extract states what formative evaluation is and that it requires feedback to achieve learning objectives. However, the assessment before was quite simple and consisted of only a 5-point scale. The switch to formative assessment has implications for teachers' self-efficacy and professional identity because it requires new ways of doing, believing, and valuing language assessment.

In addition, the document also stipulates what summative assessment is and how EFL teachers should conduct it. For instance, teachers are informed that summative evaluation should be diverse; teachers need to construct summative assessment tasks for a section and a quarter independently. And they examine all forms of language activities based on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. For instance, the extract below illustrates,

СОЧ предполагает проверку всех видов языковой деятельности: слушание, говорение, чтение и письмо. Задания суммативных оцениваний за раздел и за четверть разрабатываются педагогами самостоятельно (NAE, 2021, p.100).

The main issues emerging from this document relate to changes in teachers' pedagogical, instructional, and assessment practices. First, it indicated the switch to a communicative language teaching approach requiring teachers to shift from previous grammar-based teaching to embracing communicative language teaching principles. The second major shift required teachers to move from assessing the memorization of language rules and grammar toward formative and summative assessments. Lastly, teachers only have autonomy in redistributing the assigned hours and topics and choosing the tasks for summative assessment.

Now I will move on to present the document of the NIS school programme.

#### ***AEO 'Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools' Educational Programme (2017)***

The document was approved by the Board of AEO 'Nazarbayev Intellectual schools' in 2017. It contains the curriculum guidelines that regulate EFL teachers' pedagogical, instructional, and assessment decisions in NIS schools.

In the introduction section, the document paid attention to the broad goal of English language teaching at NIS, which is, "to bring up a highly educated individual, [that are] proactive and able to compete internationally [and] to prepare students to study in leading national and

foreign universities” (para. № 1). It also states that one aim is to implement, “trilingual education in the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools by organizing the educational process in the Kazakh, Russian and English languages” (para. № 36).

As a result, the NIS curriculum document is underpinned by a global and international discourse visible in the first extract, suggesting that EFL teachers have to develop students' English proficiency comparable to world standards. In addition, the aim is that NIS students would be proficient in all three languages, as encapsulated in the second extract. Thus, it raises the stakes for foreign language teachers because students are expected to develop all four language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing in three languages, with a specific emphasis on speaking and writing. This trilingual competence is further unpacked in section 8 about the ‘Content of education’ that states,

The content of NIS education is implemented within the framework of trilingual education. The objective of trilingual education is to form a multilingual individual: a citizen of Kazakhstan who speaks three languages, can successfully communicate in various fields, appreciates the culture of their nation, and understands and respects the culture of other nations (para. № 153).

Moreover, this section explains the practical implementation by mentioning three features which are:

- 1) ensuring level-based learning of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages;
- 2) teaching subjects in the Kazakh, Russian and English languages;
- 3) introducing Language Immersion Programmes as one of the most efficient methods of teaching students the target (Kazakh) language (para. № 155).

This excerpt implies that NIS EFL teachers should play an essential role in teaching these languages as subjects and as a medium of instruction for content subjects. Therefore, NIS teachers should focus on developing future citizens' that possess multilingual competence in

three languages. For English language teaching, the document highlights the objectives as follows,

The English Language content aims to provide the students with opportunities to communicate in English through interactive exercises involving both formal and informal communication by using oral and written presentations. Teaching English in secondary school will ensure achievement of the English proficiency level required to study in upper secondary school (para. № 185).

NIS school assesses students using a criteria-based evaluation system. The extract below demonstrates, for instance,

Assessment of students' achievements is carried out on the basis of criteria-based assessment. The system of criteria-based assessment involves formative assessment and summative assessment. Formative assessment is carried out continuously. It ensures feedback between the teacher and students and allows for timely correction of teaching. Summative assessment is carried out after completing the study of units/cross-cutting themes of the subject programmes or at the end of a particular academic period (term, level of education) (para. № 236).

In sum, the critical issues raised by this document are shifts in instructors' pedagogical, instructional, and assessment approaches. First, it indicated the switch to a communicative language teaching approach and focused on trilingual education policy. The second major shift was EFL assessment, requiring teachers to move from teaching the memorization of language rules and grammar towards formative and summative assessments that develop learners' communicative competence. Besides, EFL teachers facilitate language abilities and cognitive skills and shift their pedagogy to Western-like communicative competence.

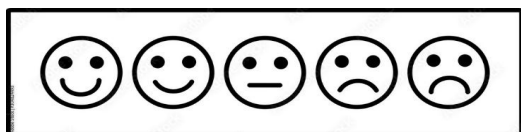
### ***Findings from the Document Analysis***

The methodical letter for state schools focused on the need to embrace CLT, while the NIS document explicitly focused on trilingualism and globalization. First, both documents stipulate the EFL teaching guidelines that signal a shift from previous behaviorist teaching methods to developing students' communicative competence. Second, both documents encapsulated the assessment methods for EFL teaching, which are unfamiliar to them. Third, this assessment shift is another conceptual change for EFL teachers: from testing language rules to formative and summative assessment. Thus, these significant changes would affect the EFL teacher agency and their professional identity.

### **Multimodal Questionnaire Analysis**

The multimodal questionnaire aimed to illustrate teachers' perspectives on the new reform, and how it affected their professional practices in their respective school contexts. It consisted of three sections with 15 questions. Section one focused on the participants' demographics and educational backgrounds. Section two foregrounded teachers' beliefs and values about curriculum changes and language learning. Statements from this section were adapted from Hull and Uematsu (2020). Finally, Section three used a multimodal image to identify teachers' perspectives about the impact of educational reform on their unique school contexts.

For this reason, the multimodal questionnaire incorporated language and images for participants to describe their feelings about educational reform. Figure 1 depicts the emoticon ranging from positive to negative, (☺) –excellent- appreciative-neutral-unsatisfied-negative (☹). I will now present the data emerging from the three sections of the questionnaire. To protect the identity of the participants, I refer to them as Teacher 1 and Teacher 2.

**Figure 1***Emoticons****Participants' Profiles***

The questionnaire revealed that both participants were female language teachers aged 40 and 50 years with teaching experience ranging from 15 to 30 years. In addition, they were both well-qualified, holding foreign language undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Educational leadership and Psychology (see Table 1). Finally, the questionnaire revealed that the participants have diverse experience and were teaching at different schools. For instance, teacher one taught English at Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) for nine years, while teacher two taught English at a state mainstream school for 16 years.

**Table 1***Backgrounds of the Participants*

| Name          | Gender | Age         | Teaching Experience | Education   | Context                 |
|---------------|--------|-------------|---------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Participant 1 | Female | 40-50 years | 20-30 years         | a neighboring country university (bachelor); a university in the north Kazakhstan (master's)    | NIS (9 years)           |
| Participant 2 | Female | 40-50 years | 10-20 years         | a university in the south of Kazakhstan (bachelor); a neighboring country university (master's) | State school (16 years) |

***Teachers' Beliefs and Values about Educational Reform***

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of seven questions that focused on teachers' values and beliefs about educational reform and how it impacted their practices. This



questionnaire revealed that Teacher 1 (appreciative emoji) and Teacher 2 (neutral) had different perspectives about the school administration's involvement in their classrooms. They also had different beliefs about spending additional time revisiting parts of a lesson that their students did not understand. Interestingly, one area where the participants shared similar values and beliefs was a prescriptive EFL curriculum. We can conclude that school context resulted in these diverse values and beliefs.

**Table 2**

*Teachers' Beliefs and Values about Educational Reform*

| Participants | When my school principal tells me to teach in a certain way, I will do my best to teach that way, even if I don't want to. | If my EFL students do not understand what they are learning, I will take more time with the material, even if some planned topics are not taught in class. | I prefer an EFL curriculum that tells the teacher exactly what to do so that I don't risk making the wrong decisions. |
|--------------|--|--|---|
| Teacher 1    | 😊  | 😊  | 😐   |
| Teacher 2    | 😊  | 😐  | 😐   |

*Teachers' Beliefs and Values about Language Learning*

This part of the questionnaire illustrated teachers' beliefs about language learning in the multilingual context of Kazakhstan. The teachers' emoticons for using students' mother tongues indicated a difference in their language learning beliefs. It is noteworthy that despite the switch to trilingual education, using their students' mother tongue in the EFL classroom showed divergent views: teacher 1 was not in favor of using students' L1, whereas the other teacher was appreciative of it. However, they both believed that using students' L1 would lead to confusion, suggesting that despite Teacher 1's appreciation of students' L1, a monolingual bias underpinned their language orientation (Grosjean 1985; Valdés 1997) orientation. Finally, emojis for their

teaching and the role of learners indicate positive values and beliefs about how their teaching connects with the everyday world and the importance of encouraging students' voices in the learning process.

**Table 3**

*Teachers' Beliefs and Values about Language Learning and Learner's Role*

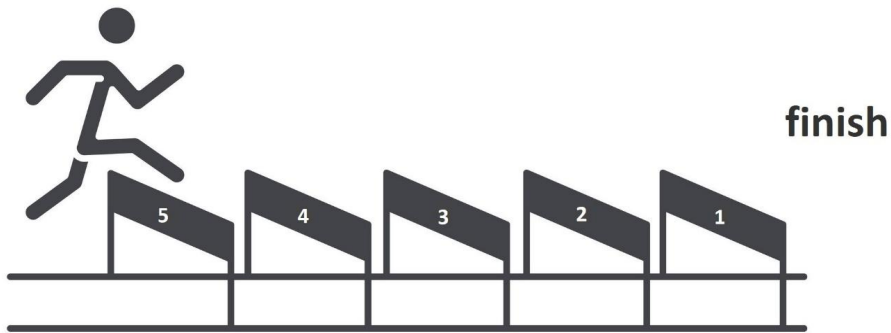
| Participants | I use students' mother tongue (Kazakh/Russian/Other) while teaching the English language. | I think using the mother tongue or students' L1 in an English learning classroom will confuse them. | I think what my students learn in my class would be helpful for them in other courses and/or in everyday life. | I think EFL students are equal participants in the learning process, and they can sometimes tell what works for them best. |
|--------------|---|---|--|--|
| Teacher 1    | ☹   | ☹   | ☹  | ☺  |
| Teacher 2    | ☺   | ☹   | ☺  | ☺  |

***Teachers' Perspectives on Educational Reform***

The third part of the multimodal questionnaire consisted of a multimodal image. The instruction was that the participants had to imagine that teaching was a race with obstacles or challenges. The finish line represents the curriculum goals to be achieved, and they had to indicate how they would overcome these challenges to finish the race (see Figure 2). The teachers had to plot five obstacles: Obstacle 1 (Education – initial education), Obstacle 2 (Teaching training – continuing professional development), Obstacle 3 (Resources and materials), Obstacle 4 (Physical environment), and Obstacle 5 (Environment - roles, power differential, trust, and other contextual factors). They had to list the obstacles in order of importance (ranging from 5 as the most significant to 1 as the least essential obstacle) and indicate how they would cope with them in their unique contexts.

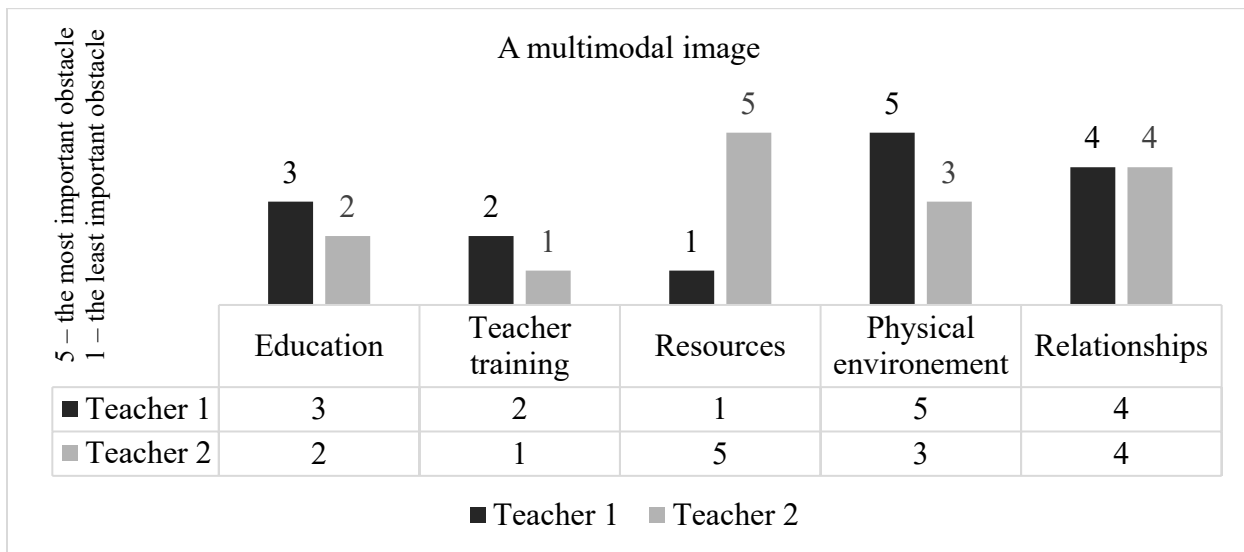
**Figure 2**

*The Track and Obstacles*



**Figure 3**

*Teachers' Perceptions of the Obstacles*



From the above, we can see that both participants indicated that external variables such as the "physical environment," "relationships," and "resources" as the most significant hurdles to achieving the curriculum aims, over which they have no control. Interestingly, their "education" and "teacher training" were considered minimal obstacles, suggesting that both instructors were confident in their training as facilitating their capacity to cope with the educational reform.

### ***Findings from the Multimodal Questionnaire***

The questionnaire revealed that both participants were well-qualified, holding undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in teaching foreign languages and leadership and psychology. In addition, it showed that they have teaching experience ranging between 15 to 30 years and that they teach in different school contexts, state and NIS schools. The main findings of this multimodal questionnaire were: 1) instructors appeared neutral about following a prescriptive curriculum, 2) even though they had different perspectives about the use of students' L1, their language beliefs were similarly underpinned by language as a deficit orientation, 3) teachers are student-centered in their instruction and place students at the core of the teaching and learning process and 4) that external factors are more likely to be the obstacles to achieve curriculum goals, and teachers' individual experiences and degrees were not obstacles but resulted in their self-efficacy.

### **Semi-Structured Interview Analysis**

This section presents the data from two respondents' interviews to show their perspectives about educational change and how it impacted their school contexts (NIS and a State School) and their practices. The interview consisted of two main sections that focused on teachers' professional identities, values, and beliefs about educational change in their local contexts.

### ***Educational Change and School Contexts***

During educational reform, teachers' beliefs can impact the implementation, initiation, and continuation of new educational outcomes. The NIS school is a well-equipped western-style autonomous school with three language medium instruction, whereas the second school is a standard state-funded institution.

**NIS School Context.** The first section of the interview focused on local school contexts and how it enables or limits teachers' capacity to deal with educational reform. It is noteworthy that the availability of material and symbolic resources and situational factors held positive implications for teachers' professional identity. For example, Teacher 1 explained, "There is a new rule in school. We are allowed to leave the school. It is not a prison anymore. When you finish your lessons, you can go home and return if you have lessons."

In continuation, she mentions her surrounding context and the available resources, "Working at NIS gives us an opportunity to use the library. For example, we have a library full of English language books. So, it allowed me to read with my students together." In addition, she was appreciative of the role of the department, "If you take the Department, for example, the Department listens. Because when I have something to offer, it is considered."

These extracts suggested that the school context and the environment enabled this teacher to flourish because some contextual conditions would probably contribute to the positive enactment of agency. However, there was another contextual condition that could impact this teacher's identity. For example, Teacher 1 indicated,

The administration does not care if you are a good teacher or not. What is essential for them is to have a good relationship with them. So, they are good at catching the wrong sides of you, but they never tell you. They never appreciate what you do well. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

She also explained that teachers' work is under continuous evaluation in this context, which could create a contextual restriction that would probably hinder teachers' agency. She commented,

Evaluation is a humiliating thing. To get your next level, you need to prove it [through] a report, where you need to write something about what happened within five years. [...]

then you go and present in front of the attestation commission, where five people sit. Then they can tell you [...] you do not deserve this promotion. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

The above extracts indicated that the situational contexts (flexibility, resources, and departmental support) created enabling conditions for this teacher to flourish. However, the last two quotes suggested that some contextual conditions such as the administration and promotion practices might result in tensions and frictions, which could restrict teachers' agency. For instance, the lack of leadership support and feelings of incompetence related to demonstrating professional competence could put teachers' self-esteem, motivation, and commitment at risk.

**Mainstream School Context.** Interestingly, there seem to be different contextual conditions shaping Teacher 2's professional identity at the mainstream school. Teacher 2 explained,

I am lucky that I work in a school where there are still a lot of positive factors. First, the administration takes a significant initiative, supporting all our undertakings, from participating in projects and working with young teachers to supporting the holding of seminars, webinars, and coaching sessions. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

The extract above suggested that the school context is intertwined with workplace learning at the individual and social levels. Also, with school management support, this teacher was involved in positive identity negotiation because of the socio-cultural and material conditions created in the work context. She also said that it is not difficult to work with the administration. For example,

I guess I am lucky because I work in such a school. The administration ensures that each teacher if desired, speaks three languages. Everything is done for this. We have been successfully participating in the international project "Teacher Leadership in Kazakhstan" for three years. That is, nothing will be handed to you on a silver platter. Moreover, it

would help if you tried a little yourself, and put in some effort, then there will be some results. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

The extract above indicated that the school context has resulted in Teacher 2 feeling in control of her actions to make choices and engage in activities. In such a context, this could result in higher degrees of teacher commitment and responsibility to meet the goals of the school administration. She continued to talk about opportunities in her school context,

Firstly, we have electives for teachers. For example, as an English teacher, I can learn the Kazakh language with the help of my colleagues. Then we have mathematics teachers who are already learning English with our help because they need it in their practice. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

However, Teacher 2 mentioned how one contextual factor impacted her professional identity. On this point, she commented,

Now the greatest difficulty for me, as a teacher and for my colleagues, is that education has become perceived as commonness [where] teachers [are also] perceived as commonness. We often hear the phrases, you must do this, you must do that, you get paid money for this. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Even though the situational context (administrative support and professional development) created enabling conditions for Teacher 2 to make choices and engage in activities such as learning languages and participating in seminars. However, external conditions such as parents' attitudes about teachers' roles could result in tension, restricting teachers' agency and negatively impacting teachers' professional identity.

To sum up, in the NIS context, the extracts revealed that flexibility, resources, and department support could enable teachers' agency. In contrast, situational factors such as promotion and administrative support can restrict teachers' agency and negatively impact their professional identities. For instance, in a mainstream school context, administrative support and

professional development enable teachers' agency while external situational factors like parents restrict teachers' agency.

### ***EFL Teachers' Professional Identities***

Despite their diverse contextual circumstances, both teachers have several significant characteristics; they experience the daily reality of teaching in their unique school contexts, which shape their personal and professional identities. They are both accomplished and experienced English teachers who have enhanced their professional identities enabling them to act as change agents. Teacher 1 explained,

Today, I had four lessons. First, I come to school, and I try to prepare my handouts beforehand. Every teacher should be a leader because it is the key to success. We can be leaders in our classrooms. I can change what I do not like. In school, I can be a situational leader. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

In addition, Teacher 1 mentioned how her work at the center of measurement in Nur-Sultan shaped her professional identity. She said,

We had a Peace Corps volunteer in our school, so I used this volunteer's knowledge to improve my English. Then I found out they needed a language and culture facilitator [so] I went to the Peace Corps to work as a Kazakh language teacher. Meanwhile, I was trained how to teach English too. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

These extracts indicated that even though Teacher 1 professional identity was connected with being an English teacher, she viewed herself as a leader in her classroom, which appeared to be associated with her motivation to improve her English teaching capacity. On her professional identity, the second participant commented,

I combine two positions. One is the deputy director for educational work (for curriculum and discipline), and the other is an English teacher. I am already at work at 10 o'clock in



the morning. From 10 to 2, I work as a deputy director and solve problems. From 2 o'clock to 7:35, I have English lessons. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Therefore, her professional identity was associated with two roles because she positioned herself as a teacher and a deputy director. Interestingly, the following extract indicated that she was also a teacher-mentor of a young teacher,

In school, as a teacher, I have a slightly different role. Here I can show that I am a leader. I can lead. It is very easy to suppress with your authority. However, a big plus is to make sure that a teacher who doubts himself suddenly gains confidence since he communicates with me; participates in seminars, webinars, and coaching with my influence; and almost every day draws some small share of his confidence from me. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

From these extracts, it is clear that the two participants have different professional identities associated with their positioning. However, it also showed that each participant's beliefs, motivation, and leadership indicated the enactment of their agency. For instance, Teacher 1 is solely responsible for teaching English; she is agentic in her professional growth and revealed her methods of pursuing better jobs and improving skills. In contrast, Teacher 2 is responsible for teaching and administration and is a teacher-mentor for new teachers. For this reason, their positioning, beliefs, and personal motivation have resulted in them believing that they are in control of their own situational contexts that enable identity connections through their human relationships and work pursuits such as improvement of their teaching skills and learning new languages. It also indicated that they had shifted identities over different phases of their professional lives, now projecting themselves into the future and shaping their life course through their goals, aspirations, social exchanges, and action plans. For example, they were eager to move from traditional education methods to develop their learners to think autonomously, engage actively and express themselves clearly and freely. Therefore, the extracts have shown

that these teachers' professional identities are an ongoing process of integrating the 'personal' and 'professional' parts of being a teacher.

### *EFL Teachers' Self-efficacy*

Engaged teachers are perceived to implement innovation more than reserved teachers. In each school context, the school management is creating conditions for teachers to develop self-efficacy with the school goals. For example, the school environment shaped professional commitments, interests, beliefs, and values. The data revealed that the participants' self-efficacy, beliefs, and identities may have impacted their coping with institutional and external conditions in their given contexts. Various situational conditions that influenced their self-efficacy and actions. For example, Teacher 1 indicated,

Unfortunately, I did not have any training. Nobody taught me what learning objectives are and how to derive lesson objectives from those learning objectives, I had to address some international teachers in our school for many years to understand. So, I am using my own experience. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

We see how Teacher 1 experienced no change during reforms and classroom practice, but she heavily relied on her prior experience, motivation, and self-efficacy. Therefore, she turned an adverse condition into a positive self-development opportunity. In addition, Teacher 2 experienced change and her situational factors positively, but also mentioned that change concerns the 'teaching style of the teacher', indicative of her position as a deputy director.

Changes are gradual. Somewhere in the last five years, considerable changes have taken place. We were trained [and] this is what we were prepared for as teachers. I can say that teachers [...] seem to accept changes slowly because every change concerns the way of life and the teaching style of the teacher. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Teachers 1 and 2 continued talking about educational reform challenges and how they practiced self-efficacy. Teacher 1 commented,

When I looked at this new reform, I had to look at learning objectives [that] I could not understand because nobody trained [or] explained what they are. I did not give up and kept asking for help. And then, I would write lesson objectives not related to those learning objectives because I could not understand them. That was challenging because it stole my confidence. I hate not being confident. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

Despite the lack of training, Teacher 1 showed her persistence and self-efficacy because she continued to mediate her agency using available resources in her context. On this point, even though, Teacher 1 experienced vulnerability, she demonstrated self-efficacy by searching for help. In contrast, Teacher 2's position has resulted in her commenting on how teachers deal with changes and how difficult it was for them to accept changes,

Besides being constant in their decisions, teachers are hard to convince of something else. They are also susceptible and vulnerable; they take everything to heart. Sometimes, until the teacher internalizes something, he will not accept it. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

The above extracts indicated how positioning changes the participants' perspective of educational reform. For example, the first teacher's position as an English teacher resulted in her focus on how to learn, whereas the second teacher's position as an administrator resulted in her focusing on the factors to become a better teacher. For example, Teacher 2 said,

Many factors influence the title of a good English teacher. Just coming to classes, knowing English, and being able to speak it is not enough. The most important thing is to be a good teacher of the subject, a teacher who knows why he comes to the lesson. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Teacher 2's position as a mentor teacher also impacted her self-efficacy, which contributed significantly to her identity (re)formation as an EFL teacher. She commented on how it shaped her teaching philosophy and confidence.

When my mentors came to my lesson, it was an event for me. I had a lot of mixed feelings, and I was anxious and worried. Nevertheless, there was such a drive. Perhaps this somehow encouraged me to become better and better. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Interestingly, despite the changes, the participants revealed tenacity and perseverance.

For Teacher 1, her tenacity seems to be a personal trait associated with her consistent commitment to enhancing her practice which seemed mediated through her motivation to make pedagogy her top priority.

I feel comfortable when I teach and reflect. It is good when I think about what I did and what I'm going to do. It gives me confidence. It is safe to know what to do. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

Teacher 2 also revealed tenacity and perseverance in changing her pedagogy. For example, she commented,

Previously, let us say five years ago, it was a little different. Namely, you learned and read, you translated, you received information, and that is it. Now we are trying; even my colleagues try to bring in something new each time. This updated curriculum significantly changed my worldview as a teacher and my lessons. Because now, I cannot say that my lesson is divorced from life; on the contrary, I must do everything so that my lesson is just the same as life. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

To sum up, both participants' decision-making options were shaped by personal characteristics of persistence and resolve. We saw how temporal (past and present) are infused in their professional actions and decisions. In dealing with specific challenges, identity and self-efficacy appeared to be dominant themes in the participants' responses. Teacher 1 experienced change as a professional challenge where the lack of training and limited support enacted her self-efficacy in addressing her challenges. In contrast, Teacher 2's positioning has shown her view of change as a positive and gradual process; her self-efficacy functions as an essential

component of agents' motivation to embrace or resist change. However, a common shared feature was the participants' showcasing their vulnerability when dealing with changes. They seem to be critical in their reflections as well. Cognitive agents' cognitive thinking can influence their decisions; more self-perceived efficacy can lead to higher aspirations and commitment to enacting their agency. Teachers may "imagine new ways of being, thinking, believing, and behaving" when they engage in critical self-reflection.

### ***EFL Teachers' Beliefs***

This section illustrated these two teachers' beliefs about curriculum and assessment and learners and language learning.

**Curriculum and Assessment.** The enactment of agency was visible in these teachers' decision-making about classroom practices that are most beneficial for their students irrespective of prescribed curriculum reforms. Teacher 1 shared confusion about the curriculum in the following quote, "When I looked at this updated curriculum for the first time, I could not understand it. And I could not agree with it."

The next extract shows how Teacher 1's professional experience in enacting agency creatively by engaging with the curriculum as a document that can be adapted or critiqued. Despite the confusion, the enactment of agency and originality is explicit; she does not simply reproduce the curriculum expectations. For instance, she commented,

The curriculum might not know the conditions under which I teach. And the curriculum might not know the needs of my students and their actual situation in the school and my classroom. The curriculum might exist as a programme, which we need to follow. The curriculum can tell me about the topics and the concepts, but it cannot tell me what to do and how. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

However, Teacher 2's belief about the curriculum connects with the position as a deputy director, where she needs to lead the implementation of the educational reform. The quote below suggests how leadership manages and encourages teachers' commitment and motivation during times of change. She said,

Therefore, I understand that now the most important thing is the result. The result in the process of teaching and learning does not always involve the discussion of any solutions. So basically, we accept decisions that come from above [...] it is easier to accept what has already been decided, even if you disagree. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

As a result, Teacher 2's position limits explicit agency in how Teacher 1 adapted and engaged with curriculum reform in authentic classroom contexts. Teacher 1's enactment of agency is also visible in assessment practices. She exerts her professional identity, beliefs, and values associated with teaching, learning, and assessment. She explained their views and attitude toward summative assessment,

I still cannot entirely agree with this assessment. I have my own assessment. I say to the students, ok, do not rely on this assessment; this is a one-time assessment. I think it is not a fair assessment system. It is not a sound system at all. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

Teacher 2 believes that assessment is subjective, and again, we see how positioning does not allow for explicit disagreements with the new forms of assessment. For example, on the issue of assessment, Teacher 2 commented,

Both formative assessment and summative assessment do not constitute only a score. You give a child a high score so that he would have an incentive later with summative assessment. I believe that both formative assessments and summative assessments are subjective. There is such a fine line. Sometimes it happens that evaluation can be a punishment. However, a teacher should use this punishment as an opportunity for the child to improve. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Educational reform in Kazakhstan requires changes in teachers' practices, leading to new expectations and increasing demands on teachers' quality and competencies. The extracts showed that teachers are working towards building their own professional identity; each teacher is unique and defines their practices based on personality traits, feelings, beliefs, and expectations. In the previous extracts, the participants' enactment of agency seemed to be connected with their professional identities formed in the mind, body, and heart. For example, Teacher 1 thinks that external factors such as curriculum and assessment are flexible, or she can change them, and she does so to care for the learners' needs. As for Teacher 2, she aligns her thinking process with the curriculum changes and implementation; she acts following them because of her position. Positioning and their roles emerged as a significant factor in teachers perceiving themselves as agentic figures.

**Language Learning and Teaching.** In the new educational reform, EFL teachers must shift from imparting knowledge to becoming teachers that facilitate autonomous learners. These new roles require various teaching approaches and styles that can limit teachers' agency or impact their sense of self. For example,

Sometimes you get stressed. Sometimes you want to cry. Then you stop. And then you say, I am going to work because I have good students [...] When I reflect, I know what to do following lessons with these students. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

The above extracts highlight the impact of the new reform on teachers' practices. It also showed Teacher 1's tenacity and how her reflexivity connects time (past, present, and future). On this issue, Teacher 2 appreciates how the new approach to teaching encourages her to change and adapt her lessons. She explains,

Five years ago, the situation was a little different. Now the learning process is not tied to the same sources of information; it is tied to life situations. Therefore, if I, as a teacher,

give the child the opportunity to feel that the knowledge that he receives in the lesson will be necessary for him later in life, in authentic situations, then I have achieved my goal. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

Concerning multilingualism as a resource and the use of students' home languages in their classrooms, both teachers expressed negative judgment. First, Teacher 1 shows her attitude towards the usage of L1 or her students' mother tongue in the EFL classroom,

I have not been using L1 or L2 at all in my classes. And I have to use their mother tongue from time to time to make sure that they are listening to me and understanding me. So, I am against using L1 in the lessons. I want them to think in English, to speak in English. They can make mistakes. But no L1. (Teacher 1, February 8, 2022)

Secondly, Teacher 2 was also against using students' mother tongue as a resource in English language classrooms. She explained,

The more I allow my students to use their mother tongue, the more I allow them to push the learning goal aside. If I give them the opportunity to use their native language, I allow them to feel sorry for themselves. (Teacher 2, February 19, 2022)

These extracts indicated that teachers are expected to demonstrate high communicative levels of English. This section illustrated teachers' beliefs about curriculum and assessment and learners and language learning. The extracts indicated how updated curriculum and assessment could be perceived differently depending on the context. Teachers' professional identities are the factor that can influence this perception. Secondly, teachers' beliefs about language teaching and learning revealed language as a deficit. Consequently, their language orientation might limit their agency regarding learners' language needs. The assumption is that the monolingual perspective of these teachers resulted in viewing the languages as a problem, not as a resource.



### **Summary of Semi-structured Interview Findings**

Several factors contributed to the restriction or enhancement of EFL teachers' agency. For instance, situational factors such as schools' context and resources initially impacted professional identity, self-efficacy, and beliefs. First, resources and department support enhanced teacher agency in the NIS school context. For state schools, context-enhancing factors were administrative support and professional development opportunities. Restraining factors were related to teachers' evaluations and administrative support for NIS schools and parents' beliefs about teachers' role in mainstream schools. Second, two participants have diverse professional identities linked with their positions, but it also demonstrated that each participant's views, motivation, and leadership suggested agency enactment. Third, their self-efficacy was central to enabling their perseverance in enacting their agency to achieve curriculum and assessment goals and meet their learners' needs. However, their language orientation was the restraining factor in meeting the learner's language needs.

### **Conclusion**

This qualitative case study of two EFL teachers from two diverse contexts presented data from document analysis, a multimodal questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview. Therefore, this chapter presented findings from three instruments used in the study for triangulation. The next chapter will focus on how these findings match the literature and discuss the results relevant to the theories of agency and other empirical studies.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

This study explored how two English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers from two different schools enabled their agency in their schools. The previous chapter presented the study's findings from three research instruments: documents, a multimodal questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. This chapter will discuss the study results associated with three research questions. To address the main research question, I will first discuss the findings for the two sub-questions below. The main research question was:

How is educational reform enabling or restricting EFL teachers' agency in two diverse school contexts?

- 1) What factors in their various contexts enable or restrict teacher agency?
- 2) How is agency practiced in two school contexts?

### **What Factors in Their Various Contexts Enable or Restrict Teacher Agency?**

The study found several factors contributing to EFL teachers' agency restriction or enhancement. Hence, I will first shed light on the factors that restricted teachers' agency and then discuss the factors that enabled their agency. First, the questionnaire revealed that both participants indicated that external variables over which they have no control, such as the "physical environment," "relationships," and "resources," as the most significant hurdles to achieving the curriculum aims. Interestingly, their "education" and "teacher training" were considered minimal obstacles, suggesting that both instructors were confident in their training as facilitating their capacity to cope with the educational reform. This finding is consistent with the results of teachers' agency during the South Korean phase of national curriculum reform, which found that the schools' environmental factors and school management have negatively impacted teachers' agency (Min, 2019). However, even though external variables in two school contexts

could restrict agency, the Kazakhstani teachers' self-efficacy and professional beliefs enhanced their autonomy and capacity to make decisions in their unique contexts.

Second, the interview results indicated that external factors such as parental attitudes about teachers' roles and applying for promotions restricted teachers' agency because they questioned both participants' professional identities. However, even though these external factors could limit teachers' agency, their actions illustrated teachers' "achievement of agency" (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 46). For this reason, the results demonstrated that despite the diverse contexts, the teachers' past and present experiences functioned as resources for their future aspirations (Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Robinson, 2012; Tao & Gao, 2017). The study thus found a relationship between teachers' actions, beliefs, and values and their access to symbolic and cultural tools (EFL experience, postgraduate degrees, and professional identities) that allowed them to "constantly co-construct and renegotiate with those around [them] and with the society at large" (Lantolf & Pavlenko, p. 148). Consequently, the study found that the external and situational conditions, such as the norms of their schools and externally mandated policies, can be powerful mediators that assist or limit teachers' agency (Lasky, 2005).

Third, I will now discuss the factors that enabled the participants' agency. The questionnaire revealed that both participants were well-qualified, holding undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in teaching foreign languages and leadership and psychology. For this reason, the study found that the participants' enactment of agency connected with their professional identities that were formed in the mind, body, and heart (Bandura, 2006). For example, the results showed that both participants' experience and professional identities have resulted in a range of positive agentic practices. As a result, the study found that the participants demonstrated projective, iterative, and practical evaluative agency, known as the

“chordal triad of agency” (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 194). In the Kazakhstani context, the EFL teachers demonstrated 1) the iterative element because their decisions were based on their prior experiences, 2) they portrayed projective agency based on their future anticipations, hopes, and fears, and 3) they enacted practical evaluative agency in their various decision-making options when facing external opportunities, pressures, and challenges. As a result, this study demonstrated that teachers’ experience and being well-qualified enabled their agency as capacity influenced by their histories, values, and beliefs (Biesta et al., 2015).

Lastly, another noteworthy finding of the study was that teachers’ self-efficacy was a significant factor in dealing with situational and external obstacles. Teachers were clear about their “goals, and personal goal setting [which was] influenced by self-appraisal of [their] capabilities” (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175). For this reason, the study found that these participants’ self-efficacy, beliefs, and values about educational reform were “self-aiding” (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175) because they could “make things happen” and participated in ‘their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal” (Bandura, 2001, p. 2). As a result, the participants’ cognitive thinking shaped their decisions, and a more robust self-perceived efficacy has resulted in increased goals and commitment to enact their agency (Bandura, 1989; Taylor et al., 1984).

### **How is Agency Practiced in Two School Contexts?**

The results illustrated that despite teachers’ vulnerability during educational reform, they demonstrated agency connected to their resilience by seeking help and capacitating themselves. The study found that both participants’ practiced their agency because their decision-making was related to their characteristics of persistence and resolve. Despite the apparent obstacles in terms of social, cultural, and material limits on their work, the Kazakhstani teachers were very efficient in getting the job done (Biesta et al., 2015). EFL teachers’ roles that influence teachers’ ability to

be change agents during educational reform changed from passive technicians to reflective practitioners (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Another significant finding was that the participants' practiced agency through reflexivity about pedagogy and learners' needs. In my study, the two teachers explored numerous factors that have formed their identity through reflection on the past and present (Lasky, 2005). They seemed to be critical in their reflections, which contributed to greater ambitions and commitment to practicing their agency (Bandura, 1989; Taylor et al., 1984). As a result, the findings of this study concur with Buchanan (2015), who found that when teachers engage in critical self-reflection, they imagine new ways of being, thinking, believing, and doing (Buchanan, 2015). Nonetheless, this study disagrees with Morgan (2009), who found that teachers mostly perform a technician role because the findings of this study show that the EFL teachers in the current research moved towards reflective practitioners. They are reflective, but given the top-down approach to educational reform, they are not transformative in their agency yet. And they do not "play the role of change agents raising educational, social, cultural, and political consciousness in their learners" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 56).

### **How is Educational Reform Enabling or Restricting EFL Teachers' Agency in Two Diverse School Contexts?**

The study found that the educational reform documents are clear in their expectations for the EFL curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment reform. However, they merely provide the what (guidelines) without adequate means (how) teachers need to implement. For this reason, the study found that EFL teachers would probably be restricted when adopting new language teaching methods and assessment methods to implement trilingualism. Interestingly, despite the lack of how to implement the updated curriculum that could limit participants' capacity to

embrace change, their professional identities, self-efficacy, reflexivity, and positioning have enabled agency (Lasky, 2005; Sannino, 2010; Vähäsantanen & Eteläpelto, 2009). Previous studies in Kazakhstani contexts revealed that teachers lacked autonomy, which significantly influenced their job satisfaction, motivation, and self-efficacy (Imangaliyev, 2019). However, this study found that the participants' professional identities allowed them to navigate these changes; what would have been restrictive became agency enablers because of their self-efficacy, experience, and postgraduate degrees.

The results highlighted that participants' positioning played a crucial role in enhancing EFL teachers' agency. The literature illustrated that power dynamics, social positioning, and changing organisational impact agentic choices of teachers (Tao & Gao, 2017). The data showed that Teacher 2 was agentic in her mainstream school supporting the top-down changes because she holds a school administration position. In contrast, Teacher 1 only occupies the role of a teacher, but she was still agentic at her classroom level and implemented changes due to the supportive environment created at her school. For this reason, this result contradicted the notion that individuals can only make agentic moves if they are given the position to do so and can speak from the positions made accessible inside their collectives (Davies, 1990). Therefore, the study found that positioning, experience, and professional identity enabled decision-making and challenged situational restrictions (Kayi-Aydar, 2017).

Interestingly, the results highlighted that despite various external and situational factors restricting teachers' agency, their professional identities, self-efficacy, reflexivity, and positioning had enabled agency because of their professional identities and beliefs. Contrary, for NIS subject teachers, external reform factors such as formal responsibility, job intensity, and the school administration had a detrimental effect on NIS teachers' identity because the external

conditions restricted teachers' autonomy and disregarded their voice (Khegay, 2017). The results also diverge from Goodman and Abdimanapova (2020), who illustrated that demanding curricula, students' limited language proficiency, and insufficient resources restricted secondary school EFL teachers. As a result, the study found that two EFL teachers' professional identities and beliefs enabled their agency.

Finally, the study illustrated that the participants embraced student-centeredness in their instruction and placed students at the core of the teaching and learning process to provide "rich and valuable learning opportunities for their students (Priestley et al., 2012). Therefore, the study found that educational reform has resulted in participants' enacting agency because of teachers' strong sense of responsibility to their students (Biesta et al., 2015). However, it is noteworthy that the appraisal for promotions, assessment, and the use of their students' L1 can restrict teachers' agency. Teachers would need professional development (PD) to reveal their monolingual bias that L1 is a barrier to language learning (Manan & Tul-Kubra, 2020). Given their strong sense of responsibility to their students, trilingual education PD would contribute to their multilingual professional identities to shift their orientation of languages as independent and autonomous entities (Grosjean 1985; Valdés 1997). Therefore, teachers' traditional multilingual views would probably restrict EFL teachers' agency in the Kazakhstani context despite the objectives of trilingual education.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the results of this study related to the three research questions and the literature about EFL teacher agency and educational reform. The next chapter will summarise the main findings, offer recommendations for further research, and address some limitations that impacted this study.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

The previous chapter presented and discussed the study results. As mentioned throughout this thesis, the purpose of the study was to explore and compare the agency of two EFL instructors from two contexts to illustrate the factors that enable or restrict their agency. Therefore, this chapter concludes with a summary of the main results from documents, questionnaires, and interviews about how teachers practice agency. Finally, this chapter presents the research implications and limitations and makes recommendations for future research. The main research question and sub questions were:

How is educational reform enabling or restricting EFL teachers' agency in two diverse school contexts?

- 1) What factors in their various contexts enable or restrict teacher agency?
- 2) How is agency practiced in two school contexts?

### Summary of the Main Research Results

#### *The Factors Enabled or Restricted Teacher Agency in Two School Contexts*

This study concluded that factors such as parental attitudes about teachers' roles and applying for promotions restricted teachers' agency. Despite these limitations, teachers achieved agency in their contexts with the interplay of their professional identities, experience, and qualification. Moreover, teachers' self-efficacy was a significant factor in dealing with situational and external obstacles.

#### *Agency as Practiced in Two School Contexts*

In both contexts, regardless of the apparent obstacles social, cultural, and material limits on their work, the Kazakhstani teachers were very efficient in getting the job done. These teachers demonstrated agency connected to their resilience by seeking help and capacitating



themselves. Besides, participants practiced agency through reflexivity about pedagogy and learners' needs. Two teachers engaged in critical self-reflection; they imagined new ways of being, thinking, believing, and doing during changes. As a result, EFL teachers' roles that influence teachers' ability to be change agents during educational reform changed from that of a passive technician to a reflective practitioner.

### ***Educational Reform and EFL Teachers' Agency***

In spite of the challenges of how to implement the updated curriculum that could limit participants' capacity to embrace change, their professional identities, self-efficacy, reflexivity, and positioning have enabled agency because of their professional identities and beliefs. Therefore, the study found that educational reform has resulted in participants' enacting agency because of teachers' strong sense of responsibility to their students. However, teachers would need professional development (PD) to reveal their monolingual bias that L1 is a barrier to language learning. Furthermore, given their strong sense of responsibility to their students, trilingual education PD would contribute to their multilingual professional identities to shift their orientation of languages as independent and autonomous entities. Consequently, teachers' traditional multilingual views would probably restrict EFL teachers' agency in the Kazakhstani context despite the objectives of trilingual education.

### **Implications of the Findings**

The current study is one of the few early attempts to investigate teacher agency in Kazakhstan's educational system explicitly. The findings have a wide range of consequences for educational policymakers, school administrators, and EFL teachers. First, the study addressed a gap in the literature that focuses on teachers' challenges associated with EFL classroom implementation. Secondly, the study explored teachers' beliefs and values about their roles and

the implications for successful EFL pedagogy in Kazakhstan. As a result, this study is significant for pre-service teacher trainers, policymakers, and teachers because it sheds light on the work of language teachers and the possibilities their agency offers for EFL pedagogical change and educational reform.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The scope of the research was two EFL instructors from two separate schools in an urban setting in Kazakhstan. Therefore, this was a small-scale research study that only included the teachers' viewpoints; there were no observations to see how teachers practiced agency in their unique contexts. Thus, the findings of this study cannot be generalized. Nonetheless, the study pointed out that Kazakhstani teachers were agentic, embraced change despite their contextual conditions, and created optimal conditions in their schools and classrooms for their learners to flourish. It opens up the possibility of delving deeper into teacher agency in EFL classrooms. It is worth noting that the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and the political circumstances in Kazakhstan posed substantial challenges throughout the data gathering procedures.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The findings of this study demonstrated that, despite external and situational constraints, experienced EFL instructors are agentic in their teaching practice within their urban school environments. As a result, future studies should focus on the following topics: novice teachers' agency, large-scale mixed methods studies about teacher agency; school administrations' view about agency and how they practice it; and the rural teachers' agency.

### **Conclusion**

This journey was a turmoil of emotions and tons of thinking, with ups and downs. To begin with, the concept of agency was so intricate that it took me numerous mind maps and

concept maps to distinguish theoretical underpinnings. On the other hand, it was an excellent learning opportunity. This experience undoubtedly expanded my thinking capacity. Nevertheless, I had many doubts about my reading and writing skills. It turns out I should not be able to write flawlessly from the start. And one of the things that kept me going was the desire to understand myself as an educator in the same way that the participants of this study did. Moreover, I felt that one individual might impact the system. Furthermore, this study endeavor showed me that an agent and a structure have a multifarious interaction. The agency is somewhere between this complex intertwining. At last, I got to the conclusion that any academic work of any size represents valuable amount of time, dedication and effort invested in it. But only when I finished this thesis did I realise what it was about all along. Learning is a fascinating process.

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## Appendix A

### Multimodal questionnaire

#### *Section A: drawing a profile of a teacher*

##### *Personal details: Please indicate*

1. Your gender
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other
  
2. Your age
  - 20-30
  - 30-40
  - 40-50
  - 50-60
  
3. Teaching experience
  - 2-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-30

4. Your higher education institution

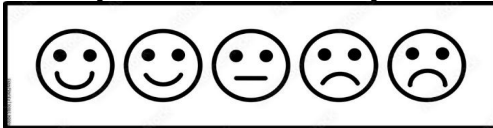
| University/College | Degree: BA; MA; PhD | Major |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------|
|                    |                     |       |
|                    |                     |       |
|                    |                     |       |
|                    |                     |       |

5. Your school context
  - NIS (Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools)
  - State mainstream school
6. Please list the most influential/useful professional development programs that helped your teaching to improve (***If not***, skip the question).
7. Do you allow your students to switch to their L1 during EFL classes?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Other (sometimes, rarely)

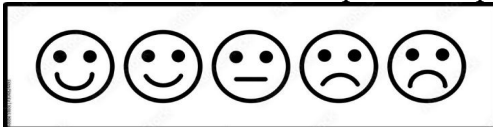
**Section B: Teachers' beliefs and values about curriculum orientations, language learning and learner's role**

Read the statements and indicate what you feel about them by picking the relevant emoticon. In this section the smiley face emojis from left to right represent different levels feelings “satisfied or happy with” to “not feeling satisfied or happy”.

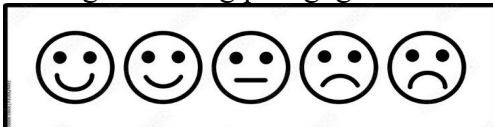
8. When my school principal tells me to teach in a certain way, I will do my best to teach that way, even if I don't really want to.



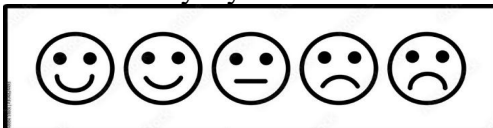
9. If my EFL students do not understand what they are learning, I will take more time with the material, even if some planned topics are not taught in class.



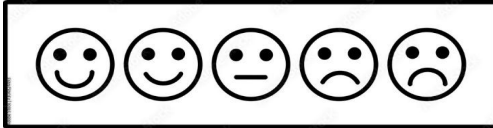
10. I prefer an EFL curriculum that tells the teacher exactly what to do so that I don't risk making the wrong pedagogical decision.



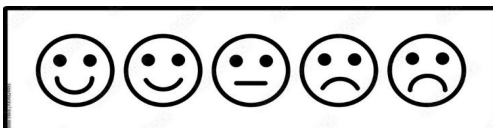
11. I think what my students learn in my class would be helpful for them in other courses and/or in everyday life.



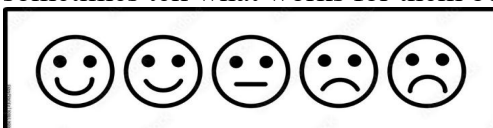
12. I use students' mother tongue (Kazakh/Russian/Other) while teaching English language.



13. I think using the mother tongue or students' L1 in an English learning classroom will confuse them.



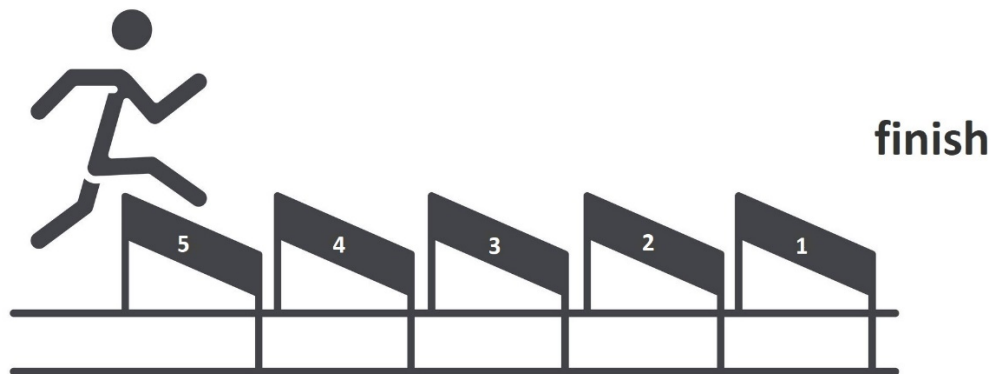
14. I think EFL students are equal participants in the learning process, and they can sometimes tell what works for them best.



***Section C: Teachers' attitudes towards changes in the curriculum***

Imagine that teaching is a race with obstacles or challenges and that the finish line represents the curriculum goals to be achieved. And to finish the race, you have to overcome some challenges. Please, put on the track the obstacles in order from the list below, starting with the most difficult. After that, write what things can help to jump over some of them.

1. Education
2. Teacher training
3. Resources (materials)
4. Physical environment (building)
5. Relationships (roles, power differential, trust)



### Мультимодальды сауалнама

#### *А бөлімі: Мұғалімнің профилі*

#### **Жеке деректер: Белгілеңіз**

1. Сіздің жынысыңыз
  - Ер адам
  - Әйел адам
  - Басқа
  
2. Жасыңыз
  - 20-30
  - 30-40
  - 40-50
  - 50-60
  
3. Жұмыс тәжірибеңіз (жылдар)
  - 2-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-30
  
4. Жоғары білім

| Колледж/Университет | Деңгей: Бакалавр;<br>Мастер; PhD | Мамандық |
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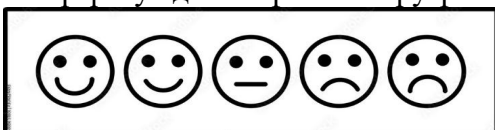
5. Қай мектепте сабақ бересіз
  - НЗМ (Назарбаев Зияткерлік мектебі)
  - Жалпы білім беретін орта мектебі
  
6. Сіздің мұғалім ретінде оқытуыңызды жақсартуға көмектескен кәсіби ықпалды / пайдалы бағдарламалардың тізімін беріңіз (егер ондай болмаса, бұл сұрақты өткізіп жіберіңіз).
  
7. Ағылшын тілі сабағында оқушыларыңызға ана тіліне көшуге рұқсат бересіз бе?
  - Иә
  - Жоқ
  - Басқа (кейде, сирек)



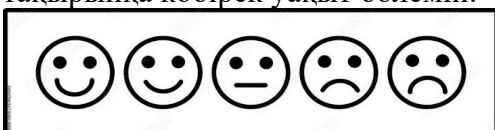
**В бөлімі: Оқу бағдарламасына, тілді үйренуге және оқушының рөліне қатысты мұғалімдердің сенімдері мен құндылықтары**

Мына сөйлемдерді оқып шығып сәйкес эмодзи таңдау арқылы олар туралы не ойлайтыныңызды көрсетіңіз. Бұл бөлімде эмодзилер солдан оңға қарай «қанағаттанған немесе бақытты» және «қанағаттанбаған немесе бақытты емес» сезімдерінің әр түрлі деңгейлерін көрсетеді.

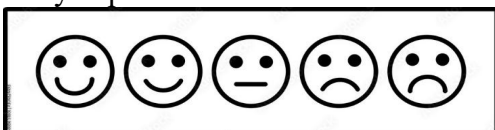
8. Мектеп директоры маған белгілі бір әдіспен үйрету керек десе, мен қаламасам да, сол үйрету әдісін жүзеге асыру үшін бар күшімді саламын.



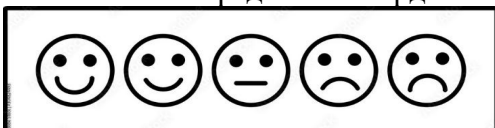
9. Егер менің оқушыларым ағылшын тілінде не үйреніп жатқанын түсінбесе, жоспарланған тақырыптардың кейбірін кейінге қалдыру керек болса да, түсінбеген тақырыпқа көбірек уақыт бөлемін.



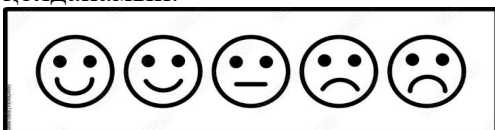
10. Мен мұғалімге қате педагогикалық шешімдер қабылдауға тәуекел етпеу үшін не істеу керектігін айтатын ағылшын тіліндегі оқу бағдарламасын ұнатамын.



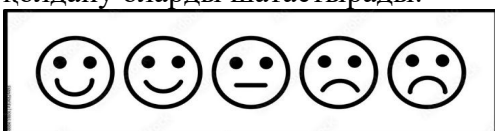
11. Менің оқушыларымның менің сыныбымда үйренген нәрселері басқа курстарда және / немесе күнделікті өмірде олар үшін пайдалы болады деп ойлаймын.



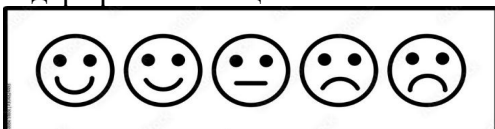
12. Мен ағылшын тілін үйрету кезінде оқушылардың ана тілін (қазақ/орыс/тағы басқа) қолданамын.



13. Менің ойымша, ағылшын тілін үйренген кезде сабақта оқушылардың ана тілін қолдану оларды шатастырады.



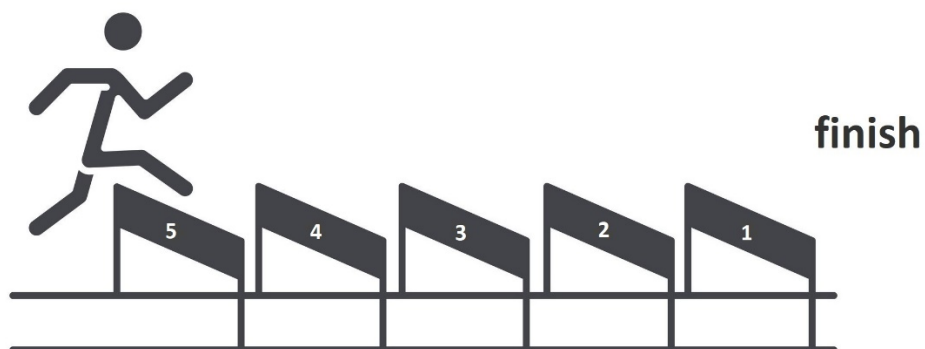
14. Менің ойымша, оқушылар оқу үдерісінің тең құқылы қатысушылары, кейде олар өздері үшін не жақсы екенін айта алады.



***С бөлімі: Оқу бағдарламасының өзгеруіне мұғалімнің көзқарасы***

Мынадай жағдай елестетіңіз. Оқыту – кедергілермен жүгіру жарысы, ал мәре сызығы -оқу бағдарламасының мақсаттары. Осы жарысты аяқтау үшін бірнеше кедергілерді жеңуге тура келеді. Жүгіру жолындағы кедергілерді төмендегі тізімнен ең қиыннан бастап ретімен орналастырыңыз. Осыдан кейін олардың үстінен өтуге көмектесетін нәрселерді жазыңыз.

1. Білім беру жүйесі
2. Мұғалімдердің біліктілігін арттыру
3. Ресурстар (материалдар)
4. Физикалық орта (ғимарат)
5. Қарым-қатынас (рөлдер, күш динамикасы, сенім)



## Мультимодальная анкета

**Раздел А: Профиль учителя****Личные данные: Пожалуйста, укажите**

1. Ваш пол
  - Мужской
  - Женский
  - Другое
  
2. Ваш возраст
  - 20-30
  - 30-40
  - 40-50
  - 50-60
  
3. Стаж работы в годах
  - 2-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-30

## 4. Высшее образование

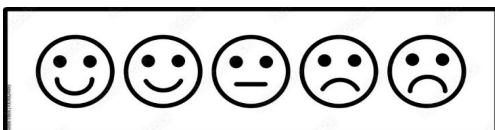
| Колледж/Университет | Уровень: Бакалавр;<br>Мастер; PhD | Специальность |
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5. В какой школе вы преподаете
  - НИИШ (Назарбаевская Интеллектуальная Школа)
  - Общеобразовательная школа
  
6. Перечислите наиболее влиятельные / полезные программы профессионального развития, которые помогли улучшить ваше преподавание (если нет, пропустите вопрос).
  
7. Разрешаете ли вы своим ученикам переходить на родной язык во время урока английского?
  - Да
  - Нет
  - Другое (иногда, редко)

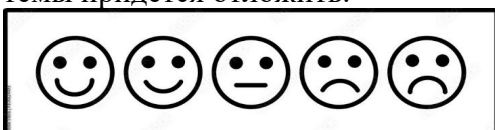
**Раздел В: Убеждения и ценности учителей в отношении ориентации учебной программы, изучения языка и роли учащегося**

Прочтите утверждения и укажите, что вы о них думаете, выбрав соответствующий смайлик. В этом разделе эмоджи слева направо представляют разные уровни чувств от «удовлетворен или счастлив» до «неудовлетворен или не счастлив».

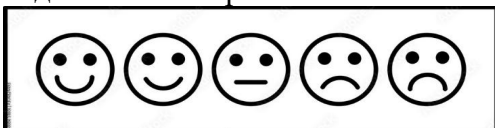
8. Когда директор школы говорит мне учить определенным образом, я сделаю все возможное, чтобы преподавать таким образом, даже если я действительно не хочу этого.



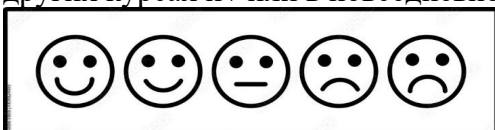
9. Если мои ученики не понимают, что они изучают на уроке английского, я потрачу больше времени на изучение материала, даже если некоторые запланированные темы придется отложить.



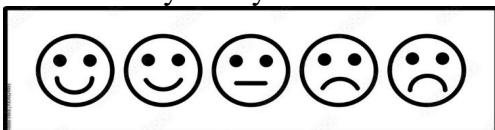
10. Я предпочитаю учебную программу по английскому языку, которая точно говорит учителю, что делать, чтобы я не рисковала принятием неправильных педагогических решений.



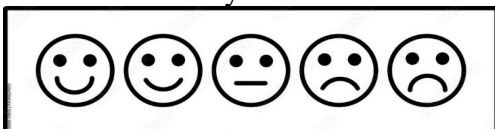
11. Я думаю то, что мои студенты узнают в моем классе, будет полезно для них на других курсах и / или в повседневной жизни.



12. Я использую родной язык студентов (казахский/русский/другой) при обучении английскому языку.



13. Я думаю, что использование родного языка учащихся в классе для изучения английского запутает их.



14. Я думаю, что студенты являются равноправными участниками учебного процесса, и иногда они могут сказать, что для них лучше всего.

***Раздел С: Отношение учителей к изменениям в учебной программе***

Представьте, что обучение - это гонка с препятствиями, и что финишная черта представляет собой цели учебной программы, которые необходимо достичь. И чтобы финишировать в гонке, вам предстоит преодолеть несколько препятствий. Расставьте препятствия на беговой дорожке в порядке из списка ниже, начиная с самого сложного. После этого напишите, какие вещи могут помочь перепрыгнуть через них.

1. Образование
2. Подготовка учителей
3. Ресурсы (материалы)
4. Физическая среда (здание)
5. Взаимоотношения (роли, динамика власти, доверие)



## Appendix B

### Semi-structured interview questions

**How is educational reform enabling or restricting EFL teachers' agency in two diverse school contexts?**

**1. What factors in their various contexts enable or restrict teacher agency?**

**2. How is agency practiced in two school contexts?**

1) Teachers' Professional Identities:

- Describe a typical day at your school and your classroom
- What was the focus of your EFL training prior to the recent educational changes?
- Describe how the educational reforms are different from your previous training
- Describe an EFL lesson or practices before the changes?
- Describe an EFL lesson or practices now or after the changes
- What is different between then and now?
- What challenges do you experience and how you deal with such challenges?

2) Teachers values and beliefs about the change:

- Tell me more about your school, classroom, and students
- Describe a typical EFL lesson
- What schools factors impact your EFL teaching?
- Which factors are positive and why?
- Which are negative and why? How do cope with it or address these factors?

3) Questions about Institutional changes and local contexts:

- What is your role in the classroom and on a larger scale (in school and education in general) and as a member of the school community?
- What responsibilities do you have aside from teaching?
- In the school, how is the work of teachers evaluated? What is your opinion about these evaluations?
- How are the processes for learner assessment?
- What impact does accountability have on your work as a teacher? (Reports, school inspections)

### Жартылай құрылымдық сұхбат сұрақтары

**Білім беру реформасы екі түрлі мектеп контекстіндегі ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің агенттігіне (өзгеріс жасау еріктілігіне) немесе іс-қимыл еркіндігіне қалай мүмкіндік береді немесе шектейді?**

- 1) **Әр түрлі контексте қандай факторлар мұғалімнің іс-әрекет еркіндігіне мүмкіндік береді немесе шектейді?**
- 2) **Екі түрлі мектеп жағдайында мұғалімдер агенттікті қалай қолданады немесе жүзеге асырады?**

1) Мұғалімдердің кәсіптік кімдігі:

- Мектептегі және сыныптағы әдеттегі күнді сипаттап беріңізші?
- Білім берудегі соңғы өзгерістерге дейін сіздің ағылшын тілін үйрету дайындығыңыз неге бағытталған болды?
- Білім беру реформалары сіздің алдыңғы біліміңізден қалай ерекшеленетінін сипаттап беріңізші?
- Өзгеріске дейін ағылшын тілі сабағын немесе тәжірибесін сипаттаңыз беріңіз
- Ағылшын тілі сабағын немесе тәжірибесін қазір немесе өзгергеннен кейін сипаттап беріңізші?
- "Бұрын" мен "қазір" арасындағы айырмашылық неде?
- Сіз қандай проблемаларға тап боласыз және мұндай мәселелерді қалай шешесіз?

2) Мұғалімдердің өзгерістерге қатысты құндылықтары мен сенімдері:

- Мектеп, сынып және оқушылар туралы көбірек айтып беріңізші?
- Әдеттегі ағылшын тілі сабағын сипаттап беріңізші?
- Ағылшын тілін оқытуына қандай мектеп факторлары әсер етеді?
- Қандай факторлар оң және неге? Қайсысы теріс және неге?
- Онымен қалай күресуге немесе осы факторларды жоюға болады?

3) Институционалдық өзгерістер және жергілікті жағдайлар туралы мәселелер:

- Сыныпта және одан да үлкен көлемде (мектепте және жалпы білім беруде), сондай-ақ мектеп қоғамдастығының мүшесі ретінде сіздің рөліңіз қандай?
- Тіл үйретуден басқа қандай міндеттеріңіз бар?
- Мұғалімдердің жұмысы мектепте қалай бағаланады? Бұл бағалау туралы сіздің пікіріңіз қандай?
- Оқушыларды бағалау процестері қалай жүзеге асырылады?
- Есеп беру сіздің мұғалім ретіндегі жұмысыңызға қандай әсер етеді? (Есептер, мектеп инспекциялары)

### Полуструктурированные вопросы интервью

#### Как реформа образования расширяет или ограничивает свободу действий/воли

(агентство) учителей английского в двух разных школьных контекстах?

1. **Какие факторы в их различных контекстах способствуют или ограничивают свободу действий (агентство) учителя?**
2. **Как осуществляется свобода воли (агентство) в двух школьных контекстах?**

#### 1) Профессиональная идентичность учителей:

- Опишите типичный день в вашей школе и вашем классе?
- На чем было сосредоточено ваше обучение преподаванию английского языка до недавних изменений в образовании?
- Опишите, чем образовательные реформы отличаются от вашего предыдущего обучения?
- Опишите урок или практику преподавания английского языка до изменений?
- Опишите урок или практику преподавания английского языка сейчас или после изменений
- В чем разница между "тогда" и "сейчас"?
- С какими проблемами вы сталкиваетесь и как вы справляетесь с такими проблемами?

#### 2) Ценности и убеждения учителей в отношении изменений:

- Расскажите мне больше о вашей школе, классе и учениках?
- Опишите типичный урок английского языка?
- Какие школьные факторы влияют на ваше преподавание английского языка?
- Какие факторы являются положительными и почему? Какие из них являются отрицательными и почему?
- Как вы справляетесь с ними? Какие есть пути устранить эти факторы?

#### 3) Вопросы об институциональных изменениях и местных условиях:

- Какова ваша роль в классе и в более широком масштабе (в школе и образовании в целом), а также как члена школьного сообщества?
- Какие обязанности у вас есть помимо преподавания?
- Как в школе оценивается работа учителей? Каково ваше мнение об этих оценках?
- Как осуществляются процессы оценки учащихся?
- Какое влияние подотчетность оказывает на вашу работу в качестве учителя? (Отчеты, школьные инспекции)



## Appendix C

### Document analysis protocol

**Project: Trilingual Reform and Kazakhstani teachers' agency: A comparative case study of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher's agency in two diverse school contexts**

Name or Type of Document: \_\_\_\_\_

Data received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of document: \_\_\_\_\_

Significance or Purpose of Document: \_\_\_\_\_

| Types of documents               | Comments: Relationship to Research Questions |
|----------------------------------|--|
| NIS curriculum syllabus          |  |
| Mainstream methodical letter CLT |  |
| Lesson plans (if needed)         |  |

**Additional Comments/Reflections/Issues:**

### Құжаттарды талдау хаттамасы

**Жоба: Үш тілді реформа және қазақстандық мұғалімдер «агенттігі»: Ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің агенттігінің екі түрлі мектептен салыстырмалы зерттеуі**

Құжаттың атауы немесе түрі: \_\_\_\_\_

Алынған деректер: \_\_\_\_\_

Бекітілген күні: \_\_\_\_\_

Құжаттың маңыздығы немесе мақсаты: \_\_\_\_\_

| Құжат түрлері   | Зерттеу сұрақтарына қатысты түсініктемелер |
|---|--|
| НЗМ оқу бағдарламасы                                    |  |
| Коммуникативті әдістеме бойынша негізгі әдістемелік хат |  |
| Сабақ жоспарлары (қажет болған жағдайда)                |  |

**Қосымша пікірлер / ойлар / мәселелер (проблемалар):**

### Протокол анализа документов

**Проект: Трехязычная реформа и казахстанское «агентство» учителей:  
сравнительное исследование «агентства» учителей английского языка как  
иностранного в двух различных школьных контекстах**

Название или тип документа: \_\_\_\_\_

Полученные данные: \_\_\_\_\_

Датирование документа: \_\_\_\_\_

Значимость или цель документа: \_\_\_\_\_

| Типы документов  | Комментарии: относящиеся к вопросам исследования |
|--|--|
| Учебный план НИШ   |  |
| Основное методическое письмо по коммуникативной методике |  |
| Планы уроков (при необходимости)                         |  |

**Дополнительные комментарии / размышления / проблемы:**

## Appendix D

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

#### **Trilingual Reform and Kazakhstani teachers' agency: A comparative case study of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher's agency in two diverse school contexts**

**DESCRIPTION:** You are invited to participate in a research study that explores teacher's agency (the ability to act or resist changes in the curriculum) in light of rapid educational reform processes, how the different ecologies and settings (school context) can strengthen or limit teachers' agency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) implementation, and how teachers are coping with systemic changes or challenging them. You will be asked to participate in an online interview, due to the COVID 19 restrictions in Kazakhstan. The interviews will be informal and will be conducted in English, Russian or Kazakh languages depending on your preference. If you express your agreement, the interview will be video/audio-recorded. In addition, you will be requested to complete a questionnaire about your profile, beliefs and attitudes regarding teaching and learning foreign languages. Finally, you will complete a multimodal questionnaire (putting in order obstacles on a picture) associated with a goal of the curriculum and how you achieve and fulfill its goals. Your name and the name of your school will be anonymous during all stages of the study, including documents, electronic files and the dissertation itself. All the collected data, recordings and study-related documents, including consent forms, will be saved on a personal USB flash drive of the researcher and stored in a secured box that will be password protected.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** Your participation for each instrument will take between 20-30 minutes.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** The risks for participants associated with this study are very minimal. To reduce any potential risks of the study, participants and their institution's identities will be hidden; thus, their names will be changed in the documents and data stored in a secured place. No information from interviews will be shared with third parties. The interview time will be negotiated with every participant and will not interfere with their teaching schedules or other work related responsibilities. Therefore, participants will not skip or reschedule lessons, and the study will not interrupt their regular work schedule.

There are a few implicit benefits associated with the study. First, participant reflections on the impact of educational reform on their teaching practices and teacher wellbeing could reveal hidden strengths and weaknesses related to their agency. Second, it can lead to participants' sense-making about creating conditions at school that will help them prosper positive changes or eliminate possible obstacles. The concerns and restrictions or active involvement in implementing new reforms will help school leadership develop a shared understanding of teacher agency and role as agents of change. Another benefit of the research is that I will provide recommendations on how to take advantage of the teachers' agency to use for whole school development. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your work, status or school you work in.

**PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS:** If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary. As such, you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. The alternative is not to participate and 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:**

**Questions:** If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, please contact the Research Project Supervisor for this student work, Assistant Professor Michelle Bedeker, at [michelle.bedeker@nu.edu.kz](mailto:michelle.bedeker@nu.edu.kz)

**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 speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- 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 previous information, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫ КЕЛІСІМІНІҢ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ ФОРМАСЫ**

### **Үш тілді реформа және қазақстандық мұғалімдер «агенттігі»: Ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің агенттігінің екі түрлі мектептен салыстырмалы зерттеуі**

**СИПАТТАМА:** Сізді білім беру реформасының жылдам үдерістері уақытында мұғалімнің «агенттігін» (оқу бағдарламасындағы өзгерістерге әрекет ету немесе оған қарсы тұру қабілетін) қарастыратын зерттеуге қатысуға шақырамыз. Және де осы зерттеу қоршаған ортаның әр түрлі жағдайлары мен білім ортасы (мектеп контексті) қалай ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің агенттігін күшейте алады немесе шектеу қоятынымен қатар мұғалімдер жүйелік өзгерістермен қалай күресетінін немесе оған қарсы тұрғанын зерттейді. Қазақстанда COVID -19 шектеулеріне байланысты сізден онлайн сұхбатқа қатысу сұралады. Сұхбат бейресми түрде болады және сіздің қалауыңызға қарай ағылшын, орыс немесе қазақ тілінде жүргізіледі. Егер сіз келісім берсеңіз, сұхбат бейне / аудиоға жазылады. Сонымен қатар, сізден тәжірибеңіз, наным-сезімдеріңіз бен шет тілдерін оқыту мен үйренуге деген көзқарасыңыз туралы сауалнама толтыру сұралады. Дәл осылай сіз оқу бағдарламасының мақсатына және оған қалай қол жеткізіп іске асыруға болатынына байланысты мультимодальды сауалнаманы толтырасыз (суретке кедергілер қою). Құжаттарды, электронды файлдарды және тезисті қоса алғанда, зерттеудің барлық кезеңінде сіздің аты -жөніңіз бен оқу орнының аты жасырын болады. Зерттеуге қатысты барлық жиналған деректер, жазбалар мен құжаттар, оның ішінде келісім бланкалары зерттеушінің жеке USB-дискісінде сақталады және құпия сөзбен қорғалған қауіпсіз компьютерде сақталады.

**ӨТКІЗІЛЕТІН УАҚЫТЫ:** Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен әр кезең үшін 20-30 минут уақытыңызды алады.

### **ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫНА ҚАТЫСУДЫҢ ҚАУІПТЕРІ МЕН АРТЫҚШЫЛЫҚТАРЫ:**

Зерттеуге қатысушылардың тәуекелдері өте аз. Зерттеудің кез келген ықтимал тәуекелдерін азайту үшін қатысушылар мен олардың институттарының жеке басы жасырылады; осылайша олардың атаулары қауіпсіз жерде сақталатын құжаттар мен деректерде өзгертіледі. Сұхбаттан алынған ақпарат үшінші тұлғаларға берілмейді. Өңгімелесу уақыты әр қатысушымен келісіледі және олардың жұмыс кестесіне немесе басқа жұмыс міндеттеріне кедергі келтірмейді. Осылайша, қатысушылар сабақтан қалмайды, ал бұл зерттеу олардың қалыпты жұмыс кестесін бұзбайды.

Бұл зерттеудің бірнеше артықшылықтары бар. Біріншіден, білім беру реформасының педагогикалық тәжірибеге әсері мен мұғалімдердің әл-ауқаты туралы қатысушылардың ой-пікірлері олардың жұмысына байланысты күшті және әлсіз жақтарын ашуы мүмкін. Екіншіден, бұл қатысушыларға мектепте оң өзгерістер енгізуге немесе ықтимал кедергілерді жоюға көмектесетін орта құруына әкелуі мүмкін. Жаңа реформаларды іске асыруға белсенді қатысуды қалайтын мектеп басшыларына мұғалімнің рөлі мен оның өзгеріс агенті ретіндегі рөлі туралы ортақ түсінікті қалыптастыруға көмектеседі. Зерттеудің тағы бір артықшылығы - зерттеуші мұғалімдердің «агенттігінің»

артықшылықтарын бүкіл мектептің дамуы үшін пайдалану бойынша нұсқаулық береді. Сіздің осы зерттеуге қатысуға шешіміңіз сіздің жұмысыңызға, мәртебеңізге немесе сіз жұмыс істейтін мектепке әсер етпейді.

**ҚАТЫСУШЫ ҚҰҚЫҚТАРЫ:** Егер Сіз берілген формамен танысып, зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға шешім қабылдасаңыз, Сіздің қатысуыңыз **ерікті** түрде екенін хабарлаймыз. Сонымен қатар, **қалаған уақытта айыппұл төлемей және сіздің әлеуметтік жеңілдіктеріңізге еш кесірін тигізбей зерттеу жұмысына қатысу туралы келісіміңізді кері қайтаруға немесе тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Зерттеу жұмысына мүлдем қатыспауыңызға да толық құқығыңыз бар.** Сондай-ақ, қандай да бір сұрақтарға жауап бермеуіңізге де әбден болады. Бұл зерттеу жұмысының нәтижелері академиялық немесе кәсіби мақсаттарда баспаға ұсынылуы немесе шығарылуы мүмкін.

### **БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТЫ:**

**Сұрақтарыңыз:** Егер жүргізіліп отырған зерттеу жұмысының процесі, қауіп мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрағыңыз немесе шағымыңыз болса, келесі байланыс құралдары арқылы зерттеушінің магистрлық тезисі бойынша жетекшісімен хабарласуыңызға болады, профессор Мишель Бедекер, [michelle.bedeker@nu.edu.kz](mailto:michelle.bedeker@nu.edu.kz).

**ДЕРБЕС БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТТАРЫ:** Егер берілген зерттеу жұмысының жүргізілуімен қанағаттанбасаңыз немесе сұрақтарыңыз бен шағымдарыңыз болса, Назарбаев Университеті Жоғары Білім беру мектебінің Зерттеу Комитетімен көрсетілген байланыс құралдары арқылы хабарласуыңызға болады: электрондық поштамен [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz).

Зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға келісіміңізді берсеңіз, берілген формаға қол қоюыңызды сұраймыз.

- Мен берілген формамен мұқият таныстым;
- Маған зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты мен оның процедурасы жайында толық ақпарат берілді;
- Жинақталған ақпарат пен құпия мәліметтерге тек зерттеушінің өзіне қолжетімді және мәлім болатынын толық түсінемін;
- Мен кез келген уақытта ешқандай түсініктемесіз зерттеу жұмысына қатысудан бас тартуыма болатынын түсінемін;
- Мен жоғарыда аталып өткен ақпаратты саналы түрде қабылдап, осы зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға өз келісімімді беремін.

Қолы: \_\_\_\_\_

Күні: \_\_\_\_\_

## ФОРМА ИНФОРМИРОВАННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ

### Трехязычная реформа и казахстанское «агентство» учителей: сравнительное исследование «агентства» учителей английского языка как иностранного в двух различных школьных контекстах

**ОПИСАНИЕ:** Вас приглашают принять участие в исследовании, в котором изучается «агентство» учителя (способность действовать или противостоять изменениям в учебной программе) в свете быстрых процессов реформы образования, как различные экологические условия и окружения (школьный контекст) могут усилить или ограничить «агентство» учителей английского как иностранного, и как учителя справляются с системными изменениями или бросают им вызов. Вам будет предложено принять участие в онлайн-интервью из-за ограничений COVID 19 в Казахстане. Собеседования будут неформальными и будут проводиться на английском, русском или казахском языках в зависимости от ваших предпочтений. Если вы выразите свое согласие, интервью будет записано на видео / аудио. Кроме того, вам будет предложено заполнить анкету о вашем профиле, убеждениях и отношении к преподаванию и изучению иностранных языков. Так же, вы заполните мультимодальную анкету (поставить препятствия на картинке), связанную с целью учебной программы и тем, как вы достигаете и выполняете ее. Ваше имя и название вашего учебного заведения будут анонимными на всех этапах исследования, включая документы, электронные файлы и саму диссертацию. Все собранные данные, записи и документы, связанные с исследованием, включая формы согласия, будут сохранены на персональном USB-накопителе исследователя и храниться в защищенном компьютере, который будет защищен паролем.

**ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ:** Ваше участие по каждому этапу займет от 20 до 30 минут.

**РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА:** Риски для участников, связанные с этим исследованием, очень минимальны. Чтобы снизить любые потенциальные риски исследования, личности участников и их учреждения будут скрыты; таким образом, их имена будут изменены в документах и данных, хранящихся в защищенном месте. Никакая информация из интервью не будет передана третьим лицам. Время собеседования будет согласовано с каждым участником и не будет мешать их учебному расписанию или другим рабочим обязанностям. Таким образом, участники не будут пропускать или переносить уроки, и исследование не будет прерывать их обычный рабочий график.

Есть несколько преимуществ, связанных с этим исследованием. Во-первых, размышления участников о влиянии реформы образования на их педагогическую практику и благополучие учителей могут выявить скрытые сильные и слабые стороны, связанные с их деятельностью. Во-вторых, это может привести к осознанию участниками создания условий в школе, которые помогут им добиться позитивных изменений или устранить возможные препятствия. Обеспокоенность и ограничения или активное участие в реализации новых реформ помогут школьному руководству выработать общее понимание роли учителя и его роли как проводников перемен. Еще одно преимущество исследования заключается в том, что исследователь даст рекомендации о том, как использовать преимущества «агентства» учителей для развития всей школы. Ваше решение участвовать



в этом исследовании не повлияет на вашу работу, статус или школу, в которой вы работаете.

**ПРАВА УЧАСТНИКОВ:** Если Вы прочли данную форму и решили принять участие в данном исследовании, Вы должны понимать, что Ваше участие является добровольным и что у Вас есть право отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время. В качестве альтернативы можно не участвовать в исследовании. Также Вы имеете право не отвечать на какие-либо вопросы. Результаты данного исследования могут быть представлены или опубликованы в научных или профессиональных целях.

**КОНТАКТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ:**

**Вопросы:** Если у Вас есть вопросы, замечания или жалобы по поводу данного исследования, процедуры его проведения, рисков и преимуществ, Вы можете связаться с супервайзером студента, используя следующие данные, Профессор Мишель Бедекер, [michelle.bedeker@nu.edu.kz](mailto:michelle.bedeker@nu.edu.kz)

**Независимые контакты:** Если Вы не удовлетворены проведением данного исследования, если у Вас возникли какие-либо проблемы, жалобы или вопросы, Вы можете связаться с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета по телефону +7 7172 70 93 59 или отправить письмо на электронный адрес [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Пожалуйста, подпишите данную форму, если Вы согласны участвовать в исследовании.

- Я внимательно изучил представленную информацию;
- Мне предоставили полную информацию о целях и процедуре исследования;
- Я понимаю, как будут использованы собранные данные, и что доступ к любой конфиденциальной информации будет иметь только исследователь;
- Я понимаю, что вправе в любой момент отказаться от участия в данном исследовании без объяснения причин;
- С полным осознанием всего вышеизложенного я согласен принять участие в исследовании по собственной воле.

Подпись: \_\_\_\_\_ Дата: \_\_\_\_\_